

# Proper Perspective

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“Perspective” was originally the science of optics. It is now used in conversation to describe a mental view or disposition; it’s how one views life. For this little piece, perspective is your viewpoint about life.

How we view life is vital to our happiness as well as to our eternal destiny. May I offer a few suggestions about a good perspective?

**Begin by getting a proper view of life.** Culture is a poor measuring stick. Look around you. People everywhere are more interested in being somebody than in being a good somebody. They have elevated success to such a high place that character and excellence don’t seem to matter. Society rules. It calls the shots. It’s more interested in money than character, more concerned about leisure than accomplishment, more dedicated to pleasure than piety.

And we are immersed in a cult of youth. Today, if you’re old, you’re of no account. You sort of get in the way. Look at the advertising—television, magazines, newspapers, billboards—they’re all recommending youth as the main ingredient in a contented life. If you’re old, you’re ugly, so buy creams that make you look young (even though you’re not). If you’re old, you don’t understand, so just keep quiet and let the young, knowledgeable intellectuals speak. Furthermore, if you’re old, you’re out of date, out of touch, and you would do well to just get out of the way. And what ever happened to wisdom, having been “down the road”? Worldliness has replaced wisdom.

**Take a more serious view of life.** Soberness is the best way to view life. “It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for this is the end of all mankind, and the living will lay it to heart,” we are told in Ecclesiastes 7:2. Now that doesn’t mean that you go around with a sad look as if you’re on the way to a funeral all the time, but it does mean that a serious-minded person is one that has deduced what life is all about, that it’s short at best, and that life, after all, is mostly a probationary period during which we are to equip ourselves for the really superior life reserved for the faithful. That’s reason for being serious, don’t you think?

**Listen to the right stuff.** Yes, I said, listen. There is great value in learning to listen. We are within the mark when we use the terminology “pay attention.” It suggests that we owe our attention. “Take heed how you hear,” Jesus said in Luke 18:8. Listening is so important; and the right kind of listening imperative. We sometimes listen to the wrong things. We elevate the inferior to a place of the superior. One of the most obvious displays of that is seen in our propensity for listening to gossip. We almost relish in it.

Why is it that we listen attentively to the wrong things and tune out the right? We need to learn to listen to the right things. There's great benefit in that. "Don't take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant curse you" (Ecclesiastes 7:21). If we don't listen to the wrong things, we won't be so often upset.

**View God's wisdom as the standard in your life.** God's ways are always superior. People in this age seem to think that God's word is out of touch with reality, that it has no practical value for living in today's world. Nothing could be further from reality. It still "thoroughly furnishes a man unto every good work" (II Timothy 3:17), just as it always has. It's still "quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12), just as it's always been, and it's still true that there is "one that judgeth," He says—"the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Without the word of God we are lost at sea with no compass. When we try to direct our own path, we not only look hopelessly foolish, we are hopelessly foolish. "It is not in man to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23) is as true today as the day it was first penned by the prophet.

**Realize that God has a plan.** He has a plan for man's salvation from sin, as well as for his continued faithfulness. He has revealed to us His true nature—not only his love, but His wrath as well. He has shown us in Jesus Christ an example of the quality life, one dedicated to service to both God and man. He has given us a mutual encouragement in the church, one that edifies, inspires courage, ennobles, and gives us an abiding hope. He has given us faith to know, hope to anchor, and love to hold everything together. He has marriage laws; then laws for husbands and wives. He has laws for rearing children, as well as laws for children being reared. He has laws regarding integrity—in business, in pleasure, in duress or peace. And He has given us assurance of great rewards, rewards so wonderful they defy understanding, much less adequate description.

How do you view life? It's up to you what perspective you choose, you know.