

GROUPS

Flip the Script | Filter Rightly

Seeing everything through the lens of Jesus brings peace of mind (2 Cor 4:16-18). We each have lenses through which we interpret our experiences, and typically those lenses fail to see reality accurately because we have been blinded by the enemy. Our distorted lenses, our cognitive biases, creates false narratives that dictate how we respond and behave in the world. But for those who follow Jesus, our Heavenly Father wants to give us new lenses through which we interpret life rightly. One lens is the cross and resurrection of Jesus through which we interpret our past and present. The other is His return and the reward of heaven, through which we interpret our future.

GETTING STARTED

In *Winning the War in Your Mind*, Craig Groeschel writes that we condition our brains to repeatedly reinforce what we already believe, creating neural pathways or brain ruts (pg. 68-69). How have you seen brain ruts (i.e. cognitive biases, spiritual lenses) play out in your life and/or in the lives of closest relationships? Why is creating a new mental trench of truth more critical to overcoming our existing brain ruts than just behavior modification? What else stood out to you from chapters 4-6?

GO DEEPER

1. According to 2 Corinthians 4:4, our enemy (the god of this age) has blinded the minds of unbelievers. What does this mean, and what are his tactics to create blindness? How do we identify and evaluate what lenses or cognitive biases we use to interpret our life experiences?
2. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 teaches us that we do not lose heart by fixing our eyes on what is unseen and eternal (Jesus). In fixing our eyes on Jesus, why is it important to have both the lens of the cross and Jesus' resurrection as well as the lens of His return? What do each of these lenses help us interpret?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What is one lens – one brain rut or cognitive bias – that God is highlighting for you personally that needs to change?
2. How well are you seeing everything through Jesus, through His death and resurrection, and through His return? What needs to shift for you to fix your eyes more on Him and to establish Him as your lens through which you interpret your life experiences?

PRACTICE IT NOW – GROUP ACTIVITY

We have been given the ability and authority to break strongholds of unhealthy lenses, brain ruts, and cognitive biases. Break into smaller groups of 2-3 people (possibly even by gender) to purposefully pray against and to break a mental stronghold. Use this prayer as a template:

Lord, I thank You that You have made me in Your image to think and believe like You do. I confess the sin of believing lies that are distorting both my true identity in You and my perception and interpretation of situations around me. I ask You to forgive me. As you expose the enemy's lies today, I choose to forgive myself as well as all those who have spoken lies over me and have contributed to my ungodly lenses. I renounce the lies, break agreement with the enemy, and choose to accept what is true.

Today, I renounce and break agreement with the lie that _____ (insert your lens or cognitive bias). I receive God's truth that says _____ (insert what Scripture teaches to be true). I choose to accept and embrace what is true, and I affirm that I have the mind of Christ. In Jesus' name, amen!

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I have a heavenly perspective of my earthly circumstances. I declare that my mind is being renewed and transformed daily to think like Jesus. By dwelling on all that God speaks over my life, I will defeat every toxic and destructive thought that tries to take my mind captive. Because I have been seated with Him in heavenly places, I have the mind of Christ in every situation I face. I choose to filter every experience and circumstance of my life through the filter of God's Word, for this is abundant life (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Ephesians 2:1-6; Colossians 3:1-4; John 10:10).

PODCAST

As an additional source of encouragement and insight, check out our weekly podcast, Beyond Sundays, at anchor.fm/beyondsundays.