

Fanning it into Flame
Sunday, May 29, 2011
Seeing Clearly

I enjoy riding my motorcycle during this time of the year. The many fragrances that fill the air from all the flowers that have recently blossomed make it a sensory delight. But I also realize that I need to keep alert because of something I have learned about drivers. We all have the tendency to see things through our own preconceived ideas. The problem for the bike rider is that the driver of a car or truck is looking to see if another car or truck is coming that they need to watch out for. When the motorcycle appears it doesn't register as one of the vehicles they're looking for so they pull out. While this doesn't happen in every case, many accidents have happened in this way.

I believe we can also have a tendency to see God through our own personalities and preconceived ideas as well. We have been conditioned by legalistic religious paradigms, the media, and our own experiences that can have negative affects on how we believe. **Psalm 18:24-26 (NIV)** ²⁴ *The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.* ²⁵ ***To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd.*** (emphasis mine) Notice how each characteristic had a corresponding action from the Lord. In **Matthew 7:1-2 (NIV)** we are taught not to judge: ¹ *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged.* ² ***For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.***" (emphasis mine) Then in **Romans 2:1 (NIV)** we get a little more insight into this: ¹ *You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.* (emphasis mine) I've found in dealing with people that liars don't believe you. They think you're trying to get something over on them. A thief is very guarded because they think you might try to steal from them. The one thinking their spouse may be cheating on them turns out to be the one who is having the same thoughts. (Certainly this is not in every case, but there is a tendency here) We need to do a personal inventory to make sure we're thinking clearly.

Paul tells us in **Romans 12:2 (NIV)** ² *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.* We need our minds renewed. We need them cleansed from the old wounds, disappointments, and personal failures. We need to get past spiritual disappointments as well. Maybe God did not answer our prayers the way we wanted him to. We must see through the eye of faith. We must see clearly! God is for us. We can't allow any other thought to enter in. We may not understand why we had to go through what we did or why we're going through what we're going through now, but know this: God is good! A renewed mind will enable us to truly know God's will.

Romans 8:13-17 (NIV)

¹³ *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,* ¹⁴ *because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.* ¹⁵ *For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* ¹⁶ *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.* ¹⁷ ***Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*** (emphasis mine) Sometimes hard things happen, but God works all things together for good to those who love him and are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28) We are children of God. We have a rich inheritance. Let's not allow old wounds to throw us off track. No negative thinking for us. We have a destiny and a legacy to pass on to those who come after us. Let's expect God to work on our behalf. Put on the back burner the things we don't understand. God will make it all clear some day. In the mean time, this makes for a much better way of living. If God be for us, who can be against us!