

“THINGS THAT ARE SEEN”

“*The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal*” (2 Cor. 4:18)

A. The Context of 2 Cor. 4:18—Suffering and Persecution

1. In what ways do you suffer (poor health, injuries, financial hardship, offenses)?
2. How do you respond? (Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Cor. 12:7-10).

B. What Do You See?

1. Other people: How do you view people around you?

“*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God*” (1 John 4:7).

“*Diotrephes loves to have the preeminence*” (3 John 9).

- a. Someone to exploit, take advantage of?
- b. Someone to compete against, dominate, control?
- c. Someone to envy, emulate, imitate?
- d. Someone to ignore?
- e. Someone to love, serve, help, befriend?

2. Writing instruments: What do you write to your friends (especially text messaging)?

“*My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer*” (Psa. 45:1 NIV).

“*The lying pen of the scribes has handled [the Word of God] falsely*” (Jer 8:8 NIV).

- a. Bullying?
- b. Flirting, seduction?
- c. Gossip? (Rom. 1:29; Eph. 4:15).
- d. Lying to or about someone? (Eph. 4:25).
- e. Encouragement? (Heb. 10:25).
- f. Meditations from Scripture? (Psa. 119:13,46,172).
- g. Thoughts about the Lord? (Mal. 3:16).

3. Electronic devices with screens: What do you look at?

“*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*” (Matt. 5:8).

“*Whosoever looks on a woman to lust...*” (Matt. 5:28; 1 John 2:16).

“*If your right eye offend you...*” (Matt. 5:29).

- a. Sensuality (pornography)?*
- b. Soaps?
- c. Sports?
- d. Scenery?

- e. Spirituality?
- f. Scripture teaching?

4. Reading material: What kinds of books/magazines do you read?
“Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:13).
“Many ... brought their books together and burned them” (Acts 19:19).

- a. Romance novels or other books laced with sex and foul language?*
- b. Secular magazines for teens (such as *Seventeen*)?
- c. Other novels that have no educational or spiritual value?
- d. Literary classics?
- e. Educational books (such as history, geography, science, nature, biography, etc.)?
- f. Do-it-yourself books on making, building, fixing, baking, sewing, languages, etc.?
- g. Books on the history of the Christian Church?
- h. Stories of great Christians, missionary work?
- i. Inspirational books concerning practical Christian living?
- j. Bible commentaries?
- k. The Bible itself?

5. Houses, furnishings, motor vehicles, or other big ticket items: What do you shop for?
“Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Psa. 127:1).
“What have they seen in your house? (2 Ki. 20:15).

- a. House beautiful?
- b. Extra rooms for show only?
- c. Inexpensive fixer-upper?
- d. Vehicle engine suited for the autobahn or the Indy 500?
- e. “Green,” economical subcompact that is suitable for 99% of needs?

6. Clothes: What styles do you wear?
“They were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made aprons” (Gen. 3:7).
“God made coats of skins and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21).
“I covered you with fine linen and silk ... but you trusted in your own beauty” (Ezek. 16:15).

- a. Provocative?
- b. Designed to accentuate outer beauty?
- c. Modest? (1 Tim. 2:9)
- d. Designed to accentuate inner beauty? (1 Pet. 3:4)

“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven ... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:20,21).

*Ten reasons not to look at pornography or read sexy romance novels:

1. Unscriptural (Lev. 18; Matt. 5:28-30).
2. May lead to even worse sins (2 Sam. 11).

3. Causes boy/girl friend, fiancé/fiancée, or spouse to disrespect and/or distrust you, thus creating severe marital problems.
4. Produces unrealistic expectations concerning relationship with one's own spouse.
5. Gives false view of ideal body type, leading to dissatisfaction on both sides.
6. Destroys communion with the Lord and ability to worship Him properly (Matt. 5:8).
7. Destroys prayer life (Psa. 66:18).
8. Destroys ability to discern the Lord's will (Matt. 6:22,23; John 7:17).
9. Makes effectual service for the Lord impossible (Matt. 6:26).
10. Ruins testimony before the unsaved.

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