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PROPER PERSPECTIVE

BY JUSTIN HAYES

MY EXPERIENCES, PERSONALITY, AND INFLUENCES PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK OR CONTEXT WITH WHICH I WILL VIEW AND UNDERSTAND THAT SITUATION...AS A CHRISTIAN, MY FRAMEWORK... SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY GOD.

WHEN

I was in elementary school, I remember learning about different types of art all throughout history. Having a brother who was an artist, this section of study intrigued me. I remember specifically studying a type of art called “Perspective Art.” Now, all art has perspective, but these images contained one obvious subject and at least a second subject. The subject of the image would change based upon the viewer’s angle, distance from, and attitude in relation to the image.

The word “perspective” is a word that is in common usage in the English language today. The word and concept comes from Medieval Latin in the late 14th century, *perspectiva ars* meaning “science of optics”. The meaning in today’s English is roughly the same:

PERSPECTIVE (NOUN): a particular way of viewing things that depends on one’s experience and personality.

Simply put, perspective is the understanding of perceived or observable items or situations as filtered through one’s experience, personality and influences. It is the ability possessed by every human being to reconcile within himself that which he perceives and observes. However, I have

come to understand that just like in those “Perspective Art” images, my understanding of what I perceive or observe will change depending on my perspective. Over these twelve and a half years of ministry it has been displayed clearly over and over again the need to pay close attention to my perspective, and to adjust my perspective as needed.

I understand the role that my experiences, personality, and influences play in my understanding and opinion of any given situation. My experiences, personality, and influences provide a framework or context with which I will view and understand that situation. However, as a Christian, my framework or context must not be determined by my experiences, personality, and influences: it should be determined by God.

As a Christian and a missionary, I understand the need for accurate context in preaching. My understanding of the context of any given passage of Scripture will determine whether or not that passage is expounded accurately. The same is true for my personal context. If my personal context is not determined by God, then my perspective will be off (Proverbs 14:12). Having a proper godly perspective is a mark of spiritual maturity (1 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Corinthians 14:20).

God’s desire for us is that our perspective be a by-product of godly thinking and influences. A proper godly perspective will affect every aspect of my life. If my perspective

is right, my thoughts will be right. If my thoughts are right, my reactions will be right. I will not cultivate bitterness toward others for God’s perceived blessings in their life when I don’t perceive those same blessings in my life. My perspective is not determined by my fluctuating emotions or my life experiences, but by the faithfulness and promises of God.

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

An artist creates his masterpiece with a specific perspective in mind, and if we desire to see this masterpiece as he does, we must seek out his perspective. The same is true of God. God is the Creator and Designer of this world, and as Christians we must seek out His perspective for His masterpiece. The Christian life should be one of adjusting our perspective to match that of our Creator and heavenly Father. With a proper godly perspective, come what may, whether trials or triumphs, blessings or disappointments, times of waiting or action, we can respond correctly (Philippians 4:11-13).



JUSTIN AND GRACE HAYES are missionaries to the country of Spain.



HIS GUIDANCE OF GRACE

BY JIMMY PAK

It was around 7:25am when I stepped into the North Auditorium for the first Bible class at West Coast Baptist College back in 2001. I knew God had called me to full-time ministry, but in my mind that particular morning, I was somewhat questioning whether this was the right course for my life. As this was on my mind, the Bible teacher that morning came to the pulpit and said these few words, “Let us pray.” The LORD used these three simple words to confirm in my heart that I was in the right place at the right time. Prior to attending WCBC, I was in a secular education with unbelieving college professors without God’s direction or prayer, and those three words gave me a great assurance that He was setting the right course for my life in His will and in His environment. As I look back, I realize that His abundant grace and direction has continually guided me even in missions.



JIMMY PAK and his wife, Sarah, are missionaries serving in Japan. Jimmy graduated from West Coast in 2005.

Upon graduating, God led me to meet my wonderful future wife, Sarah, who also graduated at the same time. We were wed at LBC in 2007, where we were both on staff. I was the bus director at the time, and my wife was a financial secretary. As we were busy in ministry, we both had a heart for missions, but it was not a clear calling at the time. We needed His guidance of grace once again to know His perfect will. We prayed and prayed for His will to be done, but it seems as though God was taking His time in making this clear with us. After being in full-time ministry for a decade as a bus director and also as an assistant pastor, the Lord surprisingly called us to a country, that I myself never dreamed of going. This country was Japan. It was only after the calling I got to know that Japanese people are the second largest unreached people group in the world with only .58% professing to be Christians out of 127 million people. I had my doubts at first, but the Lord assured me once again that it was His will. One way was through the testimony of my wife. Soon after I received the call, I shared the calling with her, to which she replied, “When I surrendered to missions back in my teen years, I asked God to take me to Japan if He wanted me to become a missionary.” I did not know this until I was called! It was once again God proving Himself to be faithful, patient, and perfect in His will as He had already prepared my wife’s heart to His future calling for the both of us. We are also grateful for the counsel of Dr. Paul Chappell, Dr. Don Sisk, and my home pastor, Pastor Timothy Choi who God used to guide and assure us in this calling.

We entered full-time deputation in January 2017. We are praying for His guidance once again in our deputation trail as we aim to be in Japan by the end of 2018. An encouraging verse that I came across through the burden and calling of missions was found in Isaiah 64:4, “For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.” It is wonderful to know that God already knows what is prepared for our lives. All we need to do is to be faithful and wait. His guidance of grace never fails.



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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

BY JON GUY

F YOU WANT TO BE AN ASSET AND NOT A LIABILITY IN MINISTRY, to your pastor, to your church family, or to your boss, it is essential to learn the disciplines of getting things done. We all enjoy the success of an accomplished project, but we also know there's always more to get done than we seem to have time to do. Proverbs 12:24 says, "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute." Here are some keys to diligently getting things done.

LEARN TO MANAGE YOURSELF FIRST.

Self-leadership is not as much about making good decisions every day as it is about making a few critical decisions in the major areas and then managing those decisions day to day. The classic example is the New Year's resolution. The decision at the beginning of a new year to exercise, read more books, or finally tackle that project is easy. What is sometimes difficult is following through and managing that decision until it's complete. Focus on setting the right priorities and then managing those priorities daily. Write out your priorities, review these priorities regularly, prioritize your week and your day according to these priorities. Make sure the top of your to-do list reflects your highest priorities. Remember, when you say yes to the right priority, you are at the same time saying no to a thousand other potential priorities.



LEARN TO CAPTURE THE VISION OF YOUR LEADER.

In a word, I'd call this alignment. You will never manage projects well if you are not properly aligned with your pastor, manager, or boss. Being out of alignment always causes resistance to forward momentum. Alignment must also be frequently assessed and adjusted because the tendency of alignment is that it deteriorates. Alignment also means that I am championing a vision that is not my own. This can be a challenge, because the vision we are championing didn't originate with us. You can champion a vision that is not your own by making

that vision your priority by asking, "How would my pastor/boss want this done?", and by looking for ways to add to and increase that vision. What's amazing is that as you do these things, you will soon find that the vision that once belonged to someone else will become your own!

BUILD A COMPREHENSIVE AND WORKABLE PLAN.

Once you are managing the right priorities, and have aligned your vision with your leader's, now you're ready to get to work! So what's the plan? This plan must be comprehensive—it must capture



everything you are needing to accomplish. This plan must also be workable—happy talk doesn't get things done, but due dates do. I would break it down into three steps. First, write out every project on your to-do list. I take time every November to do this for the coming year. If you are not capturing every project, then it is likely to either be forgotten or pester you every day robbing your focus until it's complete. Second, write down detailed tasks that will lead to the completion of each project. It's important here to note there is a difference between a project and a task. Think of a task in terms of being a single step to complete. Think of a project as requiring multiple steps (or tasks). Conducting VBS

would be a project. Ordering water balloons for the 5th grade activity is a task. Third, assign due dates to each task. Due dates hold me accountable to make sure I actually complete the task. If you will put a plan like this together and then act on it, you will be miles ahead on your journey to getting things done.

EXECUTE YOUR PLAN.

The plan outlined above needs to be put into an electronic system that will help you keep track of your projects, tasks, and due dates. This is critical! Find a productivity program or app that will remind you daily of the "tasks" that are

due that day. Not tomorrow's tasks or next month's tasks, but today's. Then each day, be sure to complete or time-activate forward those tasks. So on a given day, you will be working on any number of tasks related to a couple dozen projects. You are not responsible to finish each of those projects, but every day you will be making progress toward the completion of them. You will be amazed to find how much more you can accomplish and how much clearer you can think because you're not bogged down with a thousand details you're hoping you won't forget. It's all in your system, and the system will remind you what needs to be done each day.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE.

Here are just a few final thoughts with respect to getting things done. Be efficient, not just busy. Good can be the enemy of best. Make sure that you are reviewing your priorities and that your work flow is reflecting your highest priorities. Know when you are most productive. Some people work best in the morning, others feel more creative in the evenings. It's not that one way is right and the other wrong, but make sure you know yourself and that you are using your sharpest hours of the day to tackle your important projects. Follow through on tasks, reply to emails and texts, and keep a clean in-box. If you're working your project management system correctly, quickly get dates assigned to projects and tasks that have been given to you and put them into your system. Continue to manage yourself well. Whenever you sense your system is breaking down, you're getting overburdened, or you're missing deadlines, you may need to pull over and make some adjustments.

Finally, and maybe this is not what you wanted to hear, as you start finding yourself being more productive, reliable, and efficient, just be ready, because you will most likely be given more to do.



JON GUY is the worship leader at Lancaster Baptist Church. He oversees Striving Together Publications and manages major church conferences and events.

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ALUMNI UPDATE

BY STEPHEN HOUK

It will be eight years this June since my wife Susannah and I moved to the beautiful San Francisco Bay area. We had only been married for six months, and college graduates for one month, but we were ready to tackle any challenge. Little did we know that the Bay Area isn't Lancaster, a place I knew since I was two years old. Growing up in the home of a preacher, it wasn't always noticeable or clear what my parents went through on a daily basis...and to be honest, I took it for granted. The first two years of being in the Bay Area, we quickly realized that not everything was taught in the classroom at West Coast, nor could it have ever been anticipated. The first few years were rough. Being in a multi-ethnic area, where English is a second and sometimes third language, was hard getting used to—God brought the mission field here! Through it all, our pastor, Alan Fong, has been very gracious and helped us along the way in growing with a mentality that ministry is not just cleaning or serving, it is when we are used to share the life-changing truth of the gospel with people.

Over five years ago we had the privilege to start a Bible club on the college campus at UC Davis, about 15 minutes west of Sacramento. The following year we expanded to San Jose State University. God has truly blessed over the years as we recount the students saved and developed into servant leaders today. Many of those students grew up in the church here, and we believe that the preaching of God's Word transforming their heart is what kept them faithful and growing in their college years.



Also, a huge blessing over the last three years has been to see many of our neighbors come to church. To the left of us lives a sweet Hispanic couple, who from the day we moved into our home, has showered us and especially our kids with love. This has been a constant lesson to us to love our neighbors. They claim to be Catholic, but are not faithful in attending their church. On our Friend Day in October I was rushing through the auditorium to get something for our college class. When I looked up, lo and behold, there they were, Enrique and Raquel, waiting for the service to start. It caught me off guard. God reminded us that it is He that works in the hearts of people, and we are just instruments He can use.

We have seen our HOA president, Doretta, also attend our church. She has had many trials in her life, and is a cancer survivor. She loves our church, and has come three times this past year.

Another family we are praying and reaching out to is the family living behind us who uses one of our parking spaces. Rafaella is a single mother with three daughters. She works in the public school system, and has such a tender heart. She loves seeing our kids all dressed up for church, and she always is very open

to attend. Each Christmas we give our neighbors a gift from our family—this year, Rafaella and her daughters gave us a gift. God is truly working in their hearts. Please pray for these families, that God will allow us to see them reached with the Gospel this year.

The Bay Area is a very difficult and liberal area. But over the last seven years, we have learned the greatest obstacle we face is quite simply...us. When we make excuses about someone's culture or religious background, we really are just voicing our unbelief in God. God has shown us amazing things, but He has shown us that He is the one that produces fruit. We are thankful that God has not "written off" the Bay Area, and that there are several churches that are faithfully spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ here. It is our great honor to be serving along Pastor Fong and a great group of West Coast alumni here at Heritage Baptist Church. It is our prayer that we give our all for Jesus in 2017.

STEPHEN AND SUSANNAH HOUK have been serving at Heritage Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Alan Fong since 2009.



WHEREVER YOU ARE, BE ALL THERE

BY SUMMER GREEN

Jim Elliott said, “Wherever you are be all there.” Sam and I have spent the last 15 years loving on teenagers. Why do we still work with teens? Working with teens is only supposed to be a stepping stone to bigger and better things, right? For us, we have never viewed teen ministry as something to get out of, rather an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of young people. Over the past decade and a half we have seen hundreds of teens from all walks of life come and go. What used to be a group of 95% public school kids, is now 50% public 50% private/homeschool.

FOR US, WE HAVE NEVER VIEWED TEEN MINISTRY AS SOMETHING TO GET OUT OF, RATHER AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

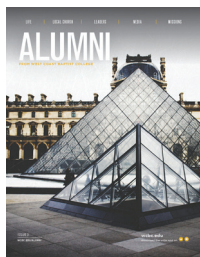
When we started out in 2002, no teenager carried a cell phone and social media wasn't heard of. Times change, teenagers change but, our God stays the same. We have found comfort in the fact that Jesus hasn't changed and isn't going to change. His message will always be relevant. Because of His unchanging message, we don't worry about being relevant with pop culture. We are finding great satisfaction in pointing their hearts towards Christ.

While Sam is focusing on simply studying the Bible with the boys, I have introduced my girls to Bible journaling. I'm teaching my girls how to spend time with God, take notes, talk to Him about what He's shown them, and then CREATE! Bible journaling is a way to engage with the Word of God; to record personally and in a creative way what God is doing in your heart. I must confess, I am not a writer. Since being asked to do this article I have lost five lbs. and haven't slept a wink! However, if asked to draw a picture of what God was doing in our lives now, that would have been much easier. As a visual learner, Bible journaling has allowed me to connect to God's Word in a more personal and meaningful way. Being able to share that with teen girls has been so special for me. To look across our youth room and see journaling Bibles on laps of numerous teen girls gets me all giddy! My desire is for every teen girl to fall in love with God and His Word...Lord, may those Bibles come alive!

Over the years the Lord has allowed us trials, He has shown us miracles, He has covered us with His grace and showered us with His blessings. What have I learned? All I need is Jesus. He is enough! So here we are, 15 years later. This is what we do. We LOVE teens. I'm thankful the Lord has allowed me to do it with my best friend. (Oh, and the cutest little 4 year old miracle you ever did see!)



SAM AND SUMMER GREEN serve at Bible Baptist Church in Everett, Washington, where Sam serves as the youth pastor.



ALUMNI ISSUE 3

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