Picture in Picture

Historically, Christianity has been through many phases: original first century; over-organization with various non-biblical administrative power positions; reform and rejection of those power positions; return to Bible-based Christianity (*solo scriptura* or Bible only) with no man-made creeds; etc.

Even modern Christianity is having its phases: just give me Jesus; give me pomp and circumstance whose pageantry impresses my emotions; Jesus yes, church no; I just want a church that focuses on love (love unites, doctrine divides): I just want a personal religion so I can be close to Jesus on a mountain camping trip (no church stuff). On and on it goes as people (even some true Christians) ignore the Testament Jesus died to ratify - all the while never understanding Jesus' words in John 12:48:

> ***The one who rejects Me and does not accept My teachings has one who judges him: the word which I spoke. That will judge him on the last day.***

It is quite interesting to note that whatever the approach, biblically based or not, mankind struggles with sin on a personal, individual basis. Often it is precisely *because* one has chosen an approach that puts self first and Jesus (and His word) second, or even farther down the line (usually subconsciously, of course).

At this point, let us branch out and examine that common struggle of temptation and sin. In that struggle, the first choice should be to put Jesus first and to do so by staying in the word and recognizing it is the power of salvation, not our emotional responses (Romans 1:16).

But let's get very practical for a moment. I read of a man who was struggling with what he watched on TV (apparently things not fit for Christian consumption). He was not having great success in that struggle. Then he had a great (and very practical) idea: tape a picture of Jesus to the top corner of his TV screen! (We all know there are no pictures of Jesus, so I suppose he simply found some artist's image and printed it.)

It worked! Every time he was tempted, the image of Jesus before his eyes gave him the strength (self-discipline - Galatians 5:23) to say "no" to self and "yes" to Jesus. My TV has a feature called "picture in picture." It allows me to watch a main channel yet see an inset image of another channel (think Dallas Cowboy game on one channel and Denver Bronco game on the inset). In like manner, the man in question could watch a "proper" program on his TV screen while his printed picture of Jesus was also on the screen.

Keeping our eyes on Jesus (and His word, John 12:48) is the answer. Focus on Hebrews 12 for a moment - verses one and two contain this admonition:

> *…let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us**, fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith.*

As the man with the TV learned, *the more we fix our eyes on Jesus, the more strength and self-discipline we have!* 1 Peter 2:21 calls us to walk in the step of Jesus. Where are you in your personal struggle to walk, "in His steps?" Maybe we all need more "picture in picture" in our daily lives.

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