



## Lenses: Close | February 21, 2018

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

Sometimes when it comes to our closest relationships, we tend to focus on all the things that are wrong, rather than the things that are right.

#### Key Verse

##### Philippians 4:8-9 (NIV)

*And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.*

#### Discussion

In the late 90's and early 2000's 3D images called auto stereograms became very popular. They were images made of bright bold colors that if you stared long enough at them revealed image hidden inside. These pictures were maddening because they split people into two camps...those who could see the images and those who couldn't.

1. Do you remember these 3D images? Could you see them or not? (If you have no idea what these are look them up quick and see for yourself)
2. What makes it difficult for you? What is the secret to seeing them?

These concept of these auto stereograms are not that much different from success in significant relationships. The longer we are in a relationship with a significant other the more faults and brokenness we are able to see on the surface and the more difficult it becomes to see beyond these surface cracks. It can become very easy in the closest relationships we have to view our significant other through a lens that only sees the madness.

3. Can you recall the beginning of a relationship you have had with a significant other? How did you view that person in the beginning?
4. What are some of the things in a significant relationship of your where you see faults that make it hard to see what may be hidden inside?

In Philippians 4:8-9 the Bible asks us to focus on the true and admirable things in other people. The secret to seeing the hidden image of an auto stereogram is being able to look beyond the surface. God desires us to focus on the things that are deeper; to look into the person and see the hidden image beyond the junk that builds up over time. It's almost as if we need a different lens through which to see our significant relationships.

5. When you begin to see the bad in your significant relationships, what are some things you can do to change your lens?
6. Think of your most significant relationship, what are three things that make that person significant to you? Are they easy to see or difficult?

#### What's Next?

Relationships are hard. Typically we see them through a broken or blurry lens. God has asked us to choose to see people in our lives through an entirely different lens...one that focuses on the good. This week, as you live out your faith and grow with your significant other, take time to put on the lens that allows you to see deeper and view the good inside them. Choose to see your significant other with the proper lens.

If you have a significant relationship that is struggling, try making a list of all of the good things that are hidden beyond the difficulty and read that list regularly.