



Empowering People to Change the World

## **Look in the Mirror – A Renewed Mind**

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### Announcements

James 1:21-25 – anchor passage

**“Therefore lay aside [aorist tense...should be having laid aside] all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”**

### Looking in the mirror

- When I was a kid, I remember going into the master bathroom in my parents' house. This is where my dad always cut my hair with a Flowbee; if you've never seen one, they're a trip. He bought two just in case one breaks and I remember one day he told me to look in the mirror and tell me which arm he was holding up. “Left!” I said without thinking, and then immediately realized my error and looked behind me to see my dad holding his right arm in the air.
- As I sat there slightly embarrassed at my silly mistake, I had a thought that stuck with me: *I have never actually seen myself.* I've looked in the mirror every day at least once to make sure I wasn't walking out of the house looking like Alfalfa from the Little Rascals, and I've seen loads of pictures with myself in them, but I have never actually seen my own face. And the way I think I look, is actually backwards from the way I really look.
- Have you ever taken a selfie with your front facing camera on your phone? And you think it looks alright until you open the picture you just took, and it scares you half to death! It looks nothing like you! That's because you've been seeing the mirror image of your face your entire life. You don't *actually* look like what you think you look like.
- That's what's interesting to me about this passage in James. He tells us to **“receive with meekness the implanted word”** and says *the way we do that is by acting on it.* **“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves,”** James compares the self-deceiving man to a guy who looks in the mirror and then turns around and forgets what he looks like! **“He is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.”**
- Let's say I had some wild dreams last night and I woke up with half my hair going up and the other half going left, I've got drool on my face and my shirt is inside out. Then I walk to the restroom to get ready to preach today and look in the mirror, but instead of taking a shower, brushing my teeth, shaving, doing my hair really good...I just put on my slippers and drive to

church. Now as soon as I walk on stage, you guys would be having a very different Sunday morning experience. You'd never forget it, but I doubt you'd be coming back to hear the rest of Pastor Steve's series on Kingdom Health.

- That's how silly it is to be a hearer of the word, but not a doer. I'd be walking around wondering why everyone is pointing and laughing at me. It's obvious why, but I forgot what I look like. James is trying to tell us:
  - **The Word of God is like a mirror.**
  - When we look at the Word, we are looking at ourselves.
  - **It shows us what kind of man we are.**
  - And thank God for His Word, because without it, I wouldn't believe half the stuff it says about me. It says things about me that don't seem true, that don't feel true, but according to God's Word, they *are true*. And when we don't believe and receive with meekness what God says to us in His Word, we're just like silly old Josh coming to work with crazy hair, drool on his inside out shirt, and an unshaven face. And the enemy is the one pointing and laughing at us.
- Transformed by the renewing of your mind
  - Last week, Pastor Steve referred to the power of our minds being renewed to the truth. Let's read that passage again in Romans 12.

**“I beseech[urge] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world [present age], but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).**

- **This word for conformed is *suschématizó* and means to be poured into a mold or to fashion yourself based on a mold.**
- This present age is trying to shape you, whether you like it or not. But God has made provision for us to be transformed instead! And we participate in this transformation by renewing our minds to the truth. The inference is that as we change our way of thinking from how this present age of the world thinks and we start aligning our thinking with God's Word, we are transformed.
- **The word for transformed is the compound word *metamorphoo*.**
  - Which is where we get the word metamorphosis from—when a caterpillar enters the cocoons then comes out as a butterfly. So, if you want to go from being a creepy crawly

creature down in the dirt to a soaring, beautiful one, renewing your mind is the way to do it.

- What I love about this word is it comes:
  - **From meta, which means to *change after being with* and morphoó which means *form embodying inner essence*.**
- So, putting them together, transformation could mean something like *to change from the inside-out after being with Christ*.
  - See the world wants to *conform* you from the outside in; it's focused on changing what you do, how you look, what you say.
- **God wants to *transform* you by showing you who you are.**
  - And when you see who you really are, your outward behavior, appearance, and reality will change in alignment with this inner essence.

**“But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him” (1 Corinthians 6:17).**

- God has already changed your inward reality.
- When you gave your life to Christ, you joined yourself to Him and you now contain His Spirit in union with your spirit.
- As you spend time meditating on His Word, that inward reality of Christ in you will overtake your outward reality.
- For every one verse that the bible says Christ is in you, it says ten times that you are in Christ. I think that's because it's easier to believe that Christ became a man than it is to believe that I'm becoming like Christ.
- Everything God wants you to believe about yourself is written around the phrase “in Christ”. Because that's who you are and where you are!

**“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:4-6).**

- When people ask you where you are the next time you're running late, tell them you're in Christ!
- Transformed by beholding.

- I want to take us to another passage that talks about transformation and the mirror of God's Word.

**“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).**

- This passage brings us back to the mirror of God's Word. Remember from our anchor passage **“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty”** is the one who is blessed in all he does.
- The context of this passage is referring to when Moses came down from the mountain and his face shown with a *glory* to the point that he had to wear a veil so that the Israelites were not afraid. And when they read the Old Testament, Israel is still looking at it with a veil.
- Paul then teaches that when we turn to the Lord, the veil is removed *in Christ*. We have an unveiled face to behold the law of liberty which is again compared to a mirror.
- What's amazing about this comparison is that it says we are beholding the **“glory of the Lord”** and **“being transformed [metamorphoo] into the same image”!**
- This **“glory to glory”** is not saying that we get upgraded from one glory to the next, to the next, to the next; it's saying that Moses had a glory, but we are being transformed into the image of Christ's glory.
- So, from the former glory of the law of Moses to a present glory of the law of liberty. This is good news, because I don't have to wait for God to give me an upgrade from one glory to the next. He's already given me all things pertaining to life & godliness through the knowledge of Jesus!

**“His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises [God's Word], that through these [promises] you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:3-4).**

- I'm not asking for something, I'm *discovering what I already have in Christ*. I'm partaking in His nature through the knowledge of Him and His great and precious promises. And I do it by looking in the mirror of His Word.
- See there's a better mirror than the one on your bathroom wall. There's a better way to see yourself. There's a better way to find yourself. It's found in the perfect law of liberty—God's

Word. And as you look at it, and act on it, you'll find that it's transforming you into the image of Christ's glory.

## The Same Image

- If we are being transformed into the same image of Christ's glory; what does that look like? I'm so glad you asked, because I can't wait to tell you.
- We've been talking about the power of God's implanted Word to transform us, which is the Greek word *metamorphoo* which means to be changed in alignment with an inner reality after being with Christ.
- This word *metamorphoo* is only used two more times in the bible and it's two Gospel accounts of the same story. Let's read Matthew's account:

**“Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured [*metamorphoo*] before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him” (Matthew 17:1-3).**

- I love that Jesus was transformed this way, because it gives us a context for what transformation really looks like. His face was shining, and His clothes were lightening, and Moses and Elijah just couldn't stay away!
- It's interesting to me that different parts of the bible are named after these three guys. Moses represents the law, Elijah represents the prophets, and Jesus, as we know, *is the Word of God*.
- I love to think this way when I go to the secret place. I'm sitting there meditating on scripture and it's like those three guys are standing in the room talking to me through the Holy Spirit. Jesus wanted Peter, James, and John to see the Kingdom of God in power before He went to the cross.
- They saw it here on the mount and through His work on the cross, He has welcomed us all into the same kind of transfiguration. He has welcomed us into the conversation He was having with Moses and Elijah.
- That mount of transfiguration conversation happens as we renew our minds by meditating on His Word. I'm walking into my prayer closet and it's like the C.S. Lewis Wardrobe that takes me into the glory realm of God!
- Finding a Word from God...in the Word of God

- This makes me want to get off this stage and into the secret place! I want to devour this book searching for a Word from God in the Word of God.

**“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh” (Proverbs 4:20-22).**

- This verse is the reason I try to memorize at least the chapter location of every verse that God has used in my life to transform me. When I’m dealing with sickness or I’m tempted to act like a sinner instead of a saint, the first thing I do is take my authority as a son and speak to problem and command it to leave.
- And I’ll start quoting scripture! But if they persist, I’ll go grab my bible.
- **I’ll start finding a Word from God in God’s Word.**
- When I open the bible and read off the page, it does something to make me believe it in a way that just recalling something doesn’t do. I’ll point at the page and say “it is written…” and I can immediately feel faith rising inside me.
- I believe that when we look at God’s Word, we’re looking in a mirror that is more accurate than the mirror above the sink in my bathroom. I want to believe the mirror that transforms me more than the mirror that conforms me.
  - Maybe we can all commit to looking at ourselves in the mirror of the Word more than the mirror on the wall.
  - Pastor Al always says “God has never looked in your mirror and wish He saw someone else or something else. He’s excited every time He looks at you.”
  - I want to see myself that way. I want to be transformed into the image of His glory just like on the mount of transfiguration. I want to build a lifestyle of being transformed as I renew my mind to the truth every day in the place of prayer and intimacy with God.

**“His delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:2-3).**

**“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8).**

**“He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions” (Psalm 107:20).**

**“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples” (John 15:7-8).**

- These are all fruits of transformation. James said to receive the implanted Word which is able to save your soul.
- I want to identify every area that the mirror on the wall doesn't match up with the mirror in the Word and plant those seeds until they match. Until I look like Christ not just in my spirit, but in my soul, my mind, my heart, my emotions, my decisions, and even my physical body.
- If we want to receive this Word, be doers and not just hearers of it, it really demands that we *understand it*. In the parable of the sower...

**“But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matthew 13:23).**

- When your reality doesn't match up with the truth in God's Word, it's not a problem with the Word, it's a problem with your understanding of the Word.
- If God says He loves you, but you feel like He hates you, you really don't *understand* His love. If God says you're His friend, but you are afraid of what He's going to say every time you pray, there's a problem with your understanding of friendship with God
- God wants you to know that when He looks at you, He sees His beloved son or daughter in who is all His delight. He wants you to know that He accepts you, loves you, likes you even, and that nothing will snatch you from His loving hands.
- I had a hand covered in warts that wouldn't go away and kept getting worse. Then I learned that I could speak to mountains and command them to move if I believed that what I said was going to happen.
- I spoke to those little mountains and said “grace, grace! I command you to become a plain! Be healed in Jesus' name!” to them every day.
- In less than two weeks, all the warts were gone and they've never come back!



- Imagine if I had planted that seed and not seen the fruit of the miracle after two days and dug it up by saying “well I guess God’s Word doesn’t work.” Just keep watering! Just keep planting! Just keep opening God’s Word and looking at yourself until you believe what it says!
- Communion – I found a Word from God in the Word of God

**“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep” (1 Corinthians 11:23-30).**

- I read this passage a couple weeks before Easter of this year. The Lord spoke to me as I read verse 29 and meditated on it “You do not discern My body.”
- I began to ask the Lord about what He meant by this and I saw a picture of these little communion cups we use at The Road. In the picture, I took a pair of scissors and cut the part of the cup off that contained the bread and threw it in the trash can. Then I drank the juice.
- The Lord said, “You believe in the power of My blood to forgive your sins, cancel your debt, and change your nature. But you do not believe in the power of My body to heal yours.”
- I really didn’t realize that it was the stripes that healed me. That He didn’t have to go through the beating and the bruising. The wages of sin is death, not torture.
- As I humbly received this Word of God from the Word of God, I was set free from over a decade of acid reflux and irritable bowels. I used to carry a bottle of tums around with me everywhere. At the worst of it, I even packed extra pairs of underwear to work because of the unpredictability of my digestive system.
- I now discern the Body of Christ as my healing. By His stripes, I was healed.