



Reflections and Revelations Newsletter
(June 5, 2009)

REFLECTIONS IN THE MIRROR

James 1:22 - 25 (NKJV): ²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵But 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."

Yesterday, as I was going through my day, the words "Reflections in the Mirror" came to my heart. As I began contemplating what they mean, James 1:23 came to mind, but I wanted to capture the verse in context to see what the Holy Spirit would speak to my heart. So, let us begin this journey.

Even as we look at this verse in context, it is a very personal verse: "deceiving yourselves," "his natural face," "observes himself." The picture this paints for me is I am alone in the mirror. No one else is standing there with me. So, I'm standing there in the mirror looking at myself, and I have to ask myself, "What do I see?"

Well, as I contemplated walking away from the mirror yesterday and forgetting what I look like, the thought that stirred in my heart is this: What would life be life for each of us if we spent as much time praying and asking God to fix us and our ways as we do asking Him to fix others and their ways? Okay, I don't know about anyone else, but I can tell you that question causes me to say, "Ouch!"

The foundational scripture for Women of Worship, Women of Witness is **James 1:22**, we are to "be doers of the Word and not [just] hearers only (NKJV). So, here's what comes to mind. I'm standing there in the mirror and God is showing me the things in me He wants me to fix. However, while He's talking to me about what I need to work on, all I'm hearing is "Yeah, my husband needs to change X, Y, and Z," or "You know what Lord, life sure would be better if my co-worker would just do what you're telling me right now." In other words, we deflect what the Lord is speaking to us on to someone else feeling like our lives would be better if the other fellow would just shape up and be like we want them to be!

I spent more years of my life like that than I care to contemplate even now. So, believe me when I say, I don't even want to think about the times I fall into that very trap myself. God knows it is so very easy to do! I think that's why He tells us we deceive ourselves and forget what manner of man we are! We look at ourselves and as we walk away from the mirror, we forget the sin in our own lives, because we are too busy focusing on someone else's faults!

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Whenever we deflect onto others and want them to change to be who we think they should be, we are indeed failing to be doers of the Word. Why do I say this? Think about it. Jesus gave us two commandments that summed up all the law and the prophets:

Matthew 22:37 - 40 (NKJV) ³⁷Jesus said to him, “**You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.** ³⁸**This is the first and great commandment.** ³⁹**And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’** ⁴⁰**On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”**

Now, can I tell you a little secret? For years, I thought this was something new Jesus was saying! Have you ever heard it preached Jesus gave us these new commandments? Well, let’s bring a little of God’s truth to this situation. Jesus was actually quoting from the Old Testament!

Deuteronomy 6:5 (NKJV): ⁵“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Leviticus 19:18 (TLB): ¹⁸“Don’t seek vengeance. Don’t bear a grudge; but love your neighbor as yourself, for I am Jehovah.”

Is not Jehovah, the One who meets all of our needs? Is it possible that Jesus is telling us to not look to others to meet our needs, but to look to Him?

Now, I have to tell you, when I learned what Jesus said was not a new commandment, but He was indeed teaching us something from the Old Testament, two things happened. One, I gained a greater respect for the Old Testament; and two, I realized I needed a greater understanding of how to process the New Testament in light of the Old Testament and the Old Testament in light of the New. However, that is a continuing work in progress, so we will not go any deeper into that today. However, Father, I ask for Your Holy Spirit to teach each of us how to process what is found in both the Old and New Testament through the Cross, so that we can understand what You are speaking to us from Genesis to Revelation on any specific subject we need to understand in order to be a doer of Your Word and not a hearer only!

So, let’s go back to our reflection in the mirror. Okay, so here we stand in the mirror, and if nothing else, in order to be a doer of the Word, we must love the Lord our God and we must love our neighbor. We must love! Yet, how often do we walk away from the mirror with our hearts filled with love? In speaking for myself, I can say it’s not as often as I want, though it is more than it used to be. In this growth process, I have learned the more I learn to love, the more peace I have. The more I learn to love, the more joy I have. The more I learn to love, the more grace I have to give and the more grace I receive.

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However, keep in mind, when I say love, I am not saying I believe people are allowed to do anything they want. What I am saying is I am not the one who can change their heart. God is. I am also saying I am not the one who will have to give account for their actions when they stand before God. They are. So, if I can't change them and I don't have to give account for their actions, why should I allow them to keep me in a state of upset and steal my joy? After all, it's not really the person that's stealing it. It's me giving it away.

Yes, there are times when I have to ponder things and take them to the Lord, because something happening around me is creating turmoil in my heart. But, I can honestly say, I strive to never look for the solution to my turmoil outside of me. I seek to abide in God's love towards me that I may extend His love to others. In that abiding, I find peace. In that abiding, God directs my path that I may find the answers I seek. In that abiding, I walk in love.

So, each day when we look at ourselves in the mirror, it seems we have two choices. We can either listen to what the Lord is speaking to us about us then live our day to work on those things, or we can choose to focus on what others are doing to us and live our day stressed out by those things. What will be our choice? We can walk in love or not. If we are not walking in love, what are we doing?

Proverbs 10:12 (NKJV): “¹² Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.”

While hatred may seem a harsh word to interject here, if we really think about it, the more we focus on how someone else is hurting us, the more our feelings towards that person turn sour! In other words, the more that person becomes like an enemy to us, and in all honesty we have but one enemy -- Satan. He is the enemy to our soul, and he knows just how to come at us to stir up strife in our soul. Are we going to continue to allow him to create strife in us towards others through our wounds, or are we going to allow the blood of Jesus to heal us that we may love others as He loves us?

Father, I pray every soul that reads this writing, including me, will be touched by the power of Your love. I ask that Your Holy Spirit would shed Your love abroad in our hearts that we may love the Lord God with all of our hearts, placing our trust in Him that He may direct our paths. I pray every spirit of rebellion, every spirit of independence, every spirit of pride be cast out of each and every soul that is ready to receive Your love. I pray each of those souls would then be filled with Your love, fully and completely, that when those demons seek to return, they will find the house clean and filled! For those who are not yet ready, Father, I ask that You would lead and guide them by Your Holy Spirit that in Your time, they will be ready to receive all the love You want to lavish upon them! I thank You Father, for You know each of us and what we are or are not ready for, so I ask Father that Your will be done in each soul that reads this writing! Father, I thank You, and I praise You for who You are and for where You

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have brought us to. I thank You and I praise You for where You have yet to take us. I pray each of us will submit our hearts to You that we may resist the devil so he will flee. I pray we will indeed be doers of the Word -- Your Word that teaches us how to love -- that we would not walk away from the mirror and forget who we are by looking to change others while there are yet things in our heart You seek to cleanse in us! We thank You, and we praise You Father. In Jesus' name. Amen!

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