

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Sunday 5/6/2012

As I stated, let's take our Bibles and turn over to the book of 2 Corinthians. Last week we saw a tremendous study on the life of Moses. As good as that was and as informative as that was, in truth, it is just one small sliver, just one small dimension of his life. There is so much to learn from him. Paul used him in this chapter, and that is why we went back and looked at it. Paul used him and his experiences on Mount Sinai. He used all of that to show us what Moses went through and the end result of his life to show us about what we should be in ministry.

I always enjoy reading about Moses and his encounter with God. We saw the four aspects of his life; we broke it down. Truthfully, everything in the Bible, every book in the Bible, the Bible itself has a breakdown to it. I think that is a mistake that many people make when they try to study the Bible. I say it many times, the Bible is like one of those 5,000-piece picture puzzles that you buy at some place and then stay up all night and put it together. You look, dump them all out on the table, and there are 5,000 pieces to it. They are all in a big pile, and nothing really makes any sense.

When you look at that pile of puzzle pieces, that is exactly what the Bible is like. What helps you with that when you want to put it together, when you finally want to get it all working for you, is I have always just looked at the picture on the box. It is important to understand the picture that you are putting together. It helps you visualize what you do when you see a picture of the completed process. That is why it is so important that you learn the overall understanding of the Bible. So many people try to get into the Bible and figure it out without understanding the big picture of the Bible. Of course, that is exactly the wrong way to do it, and you never learn the Bible that way, just like you will never get the picture put together that way.

The second thing you do is you separate all the pieces out and you find all the corner pieces, the framework pieces. You will find that when you put a 5,000-piece picture puzzle together, it goes a lot faster, even though it never goes really fast. It goes a lot faster when you frame out the ends first, the framework. Once you get that done, then you add to it. As you add to it, looking at the picture on the box, you can match the pieces up, and in a process of time, the puzzle is complete. That is the way the Bible is.

When we talk about the men in the Bible, when we talk about the aspects of ministry, when we talk about all of the things that we are talking about, we teach you the basic framework of the Bible. We show you how to frame it out, understanding the things that really make the Bible understandable, and then understand the picture of it, and then work from there to put it all together. This is why Paul used the life of Moses. We broke him down into four sections because that is what you do. You break the Bible down, you break the books of the Bible down, you break the chapters of the Bible down. When you want to study a man's life, there are some tremendous guys to study, and women too. The way you do it is to always not just look at the entire story. That story will break down into different sections. In Moses' case, it broke down into four. You should have those now.

I. The Burning Bush and Moses' Shining Face

Remember that the reason why God picked Moses, and Paul picked him to display ministry, is because of the burning bush experience. That is where he had his encounter with God. I might say to you, and this is true of everybody here today if you are saved, everybody here today that is saved will have a burning bush experience in your life. It will not be like Moses when he was up there and he looked over there and saw this bush burning but not being consumed, which is a picture of the nation of Israel, by the way. God spoke out of that bush. I am not saying that it is going to happen that way to you, but what I am saying is this: every child of God, at some point in your life, God will meet with you like He met with Moses, and He will call you like He called Moses. In Moses' case, he responded to that call. Your case may be different, but you will have that experience.

I could not pinpoint it in your life. I am not saying that all of you have had it already, but I am saying this: at some point in your life, God will meet you, and He will lay Himself out to you, and He will call you to do something for Him. Your doing it or not doing it will be based on just like the story of Moses. It is an incredible study, an incredible story. We saw how that when he came down from that mountain after he got the law the second time, his face was shining from being in the presence of Almighty God. The glory of God was on his face and in his face, and everybody saw it.

We also saw how that when he came down from that mountain and started talking to the ordinary people, Aaron and the people around him, they were afraid of him. Here was a guy that went up one way and came back something else. Is not that so true when you have a real encounter with God? The Bible says you are a new creature in Christ Jesus when you are truly saved. All things are passed away, all things become new. That is a great story there because it illustrates that when you really do have the power of God in your life, it will also be in your face. That is what God uses, and that is how people see the Lord Jesus Christ.

We also studied how the people were afraid of him. So what did he do? We talked about this: they put a veil on his face. That veil on his face is a picture of him. We talked about it last week, kind of dialing it down a couple of notches where you are not going after everybody and saying things that you probably should not say and basically scaring people with your zealous attitude of not knowing how to control your own spirit. This is absolutely incredible material for us who are trying to learn to minister the Word of God. It answers so many questions because throughout this study, and I know we are studying the book of 2 Corinthians, you want to keep focused on what we are accomplishing here. We are accomplishing for many of you learning insight into dealing with people.

Today, as last week, you learned these are the things you need to learn because this study last week that we looked at answers so many questions why people claim to be saved. We have been talking about this for the last couple of weeks. The Lord is kind of just like a slow-moving rain front, just kind of camped over the church here, and we have been dealing with it. This is why He answers so many questions why so many of God's people who claim to be saved are empty in

reality. It just gives you great insight, and it is dealing with people. These are the insights you need to have.

We learned a great lesson that our faith shows where our heart and our body are at. We learned a new word, the word "countenance." We talked about how that when you have God in your heart, your countenance shows that. We know now that the epistle written on our hearts that we talked about in 2 Corinthians 3:1-3, that are written of all men, are now the result of several things. We are kind of building these things. Spending time alone with God. Last week we talked about Moses putting on the veil when he talked to the people, but he took the veil off when he spent time with God. Spending time alone with God without the veil is where you begin this process.

Then you have to begin to cultivate the right relationship. No relationship just happens by itself. You or the person, or both of you, have to cultivate that relationship. If there is somebody out there that you want to meet, or somebody out there you want to have a relationship with, or somebody that you would like to have your friend, it just does not happen because they will call you up and say, "I was thinking that we ought to be friends today." You have to cultivate that relationship. It is the same way with God. The reason why many of God's people do not have any relationship with God is simply that fact: they have never cultivated it.

Getting the right spirit. We talked about the witness of the Spirit. Getting the right Spirit in our heart to minister through God's Spirit. We talked about letting God's glory fill us with God's power through His being all-sufficiency in our life, and all that showing in our faces.

II. The Moon and Sun Analogy

The truth is, this concept about your face and shining with the glory of God, it is all through the Bible. I was thinking this week, last night was the night that the moon was closest to the planet Earth. I am surprised I did not get 20 emails on it; usually people send it to me. It was on the news; it was in the paper. I came out last night to take the dogs out about 10:30, and my neighbors down the street here were having a moon party. By this time, they could not see the moon no matter where it was. In fact, I saw several pointing at a street light. I think that they thought that was the moon. Three sheets in the wind and two blown away, the moon could be anything you wanted it to be.

A lady, I heard her call my name, and she came down the street there, and she says, "I am surprised you are not out looking at the moon. The moon is..." You could see the moon was coming up, and it was huge. I mean, it was absolutely huge. I, Mr. Professor, she says, "I cannot believe that you are not out there looking at the moon. It is the closest that it is to the Earth, and it is absolutely huge, like there is Apollo 13 where the landing site was and all that stuff."

I said to her, "Well," and I was going to leave it alone, but she kept pushing it. So I said, "Here is my big bubble-busting pen. Here we go." I said, "Well, you know what, hon? Truthfully, the reason I am not out here is because I know you see the moon is really big right now, but it is not any bigger than it normally is." I said, "When you look through the moon as it is coming up over here, you are looking through about 300 miles of dirt, dust, pollution, and everything. What that dust does, we call it light refraction. It scatters the light, and the moon looks like it is 16,000

times bigger than it is. It is not really. It is looking through all the dirt, scatters the light, and makes it look that way."

"The same moon that looks as big as the pizza that you just got from Papa John's, when it gets up higher and overhead, you are looking through about 10 or 20 miles of dirt. There is no light refraction. That big old moon you saw over here will now go back to be the size that it was. The moon did not change; the atmosphere distorts the moon." So what they are, truthfully, yes, yesterday was where the closest the moon was to planet Earth, but you would not see the difference. The guy kept saying, "Well, it looks a little brighter, but I do not see it any bigger." I said, "Well, have another beer. It will get bigger and brighter the more you drink. It is like the girl you are with, the more you drink, the better she looks, or that can go both ways too, by the way."

I said, "I do not want to bust your bubble, but I have a dog inside. It is now waiting on the floor because you will not let me go." So now here we go, I am going to bust your bubble. She says, "Oh, yeah." Truth of the matter is, it does not look any bigger. It did not get much bigger, and you could not tell the difference. But all through the Bible, that moon is an incredible thing. What I wanted to tell her, but I did not, is I wanted to tell her that all through the Bible, that moon and the sun are a key. All the way back in Genesis 1:14, here is what he says:

Genesis 1:14

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

That is the sun and the moon. In Christianity, going back to the shining, the glory of God in our face, being the light, we talked about the ministry being life and light. That is a picture, and everything in the Bible is a picture. Romans 1:19-20 says, "The invisible things of him from the creation are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." When you look at that sun and the moon in its relationship, you realize that what you have a picture there, and why God made that and said two great lights, one to rule the day, one to rule the night, that that is a picture of Christ and the church.

The sun is a type of God. It is a type of Christ, and it has its own glory. The moon is a type of a Christian. Luke 25:5 says, "Behold the moon and it shineth not." What are you talking about? I saw it shining last night. No, you did not see it shining last night. What you saw last night was the moon reflecting the light of the sun in its face. How many times have you ever heard over the years, "See the face of the man in the moon?" If you look at the moon from our standpoint, you would see that all the features up there kind of make some kind of ugly-looking face, and it is the man in the moon.

That moon is a type of the Christian, and that sun is a type of God the Father or Christ. The moon does not shine by its own light. It reflects the light of God in the face of the moon, just like you and I should; the glory of God should reflect in our face as the church. That is why the Bible says He made a greater light to rule the day. That will be the millennial reign of Christ. And the lesser light to rule the night. That is the Church Age. Right now, the Church Age is called the

night. The sun is not here. The sun came to Earth, died on the cross, and went back to Heaven. So the sun is no longer here. The only light that is here now is the light that is reflected from the moon. That is why you do not see the sun at night. When the sun goes down, darkness comes, the moon comes up, and the moon lights the night. The night is the night. You and I are the only light here, but it is not your light or my light. In your face, like the face of the moon, we are reflecting the light of the sun. See how it works? It is all through the Bible. So this idea of Moses' face shining when he comes down off the mountain, that goes all the way back to the type taught in Genesis.

I will tell you something else. When science says an eclipse takes place, then what happens? The sun blocks the light from the moon, and the moon goes dark. You cannot see it. Somebody says, "Oh, that is a great scientific thing that happens, a great event scientifically." People all over the world photograph it, travel all over the place to see it. But in reality, if you take it from the Bible, that is not what you have. What you have is anytime the world comes in between the sun and the moon, it is going to block the light out. You have a picture of an eclipsed Christian. So this glory in your face is all through the Bible. He picked Moses because Moses is a great example of that.

III. The Proof of Salvation: Ministry

Today, I want to finish this great chapter. I want to add to what we saw last week, and I have given you a basic little briefing on it and a recap of it, and now we are ready to go. I want to put the finishing touches to this outstanding chapter, which really defines ministry. In the Bible, we find it in the greatest book on ministry, and that is the book of 2 Corinthians. Simply, what we have gotten out of this so far, with all the things that we have seen, all the great principles that we laid out, it comes down to one basic fundamental truth: the proof of our salvation is nothing more than our ministry, fulfilling the very reason that God has saved us.

Now I want to read 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. Here is what it says:

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

That "glory to glory" is the Old Testament glory to the New Testament glory. You want to put a little OT and a little NT by that so you remember it. Even as the Spirit of the Lord. Now let me begin this passage by opening up with a word of prayer, and then I want to point out some things to you that I think will help you.

Let us pray. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Pray You will bless this time. Bless those that are here, give us the things that we need. Pray for the group down in Wichita today as they are teaching the Word of God and making their way back. We pray for all of the things that we have asked You to watch over today and bless the rest of the day as we go to

restart and out on the streets, and Lord, all of that. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now I want to give you something here first of all that I think is very important, and you want to mark this in your Bible for future reference. It is found in 2 Corinthians 3:17. It says:

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

This is one of the greatest verses in your Bible that shows you the aspect of the Trinity. We know the Bible teaches that God is a triune God. He is a Trinity. We have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; all three are one. Many people do not believe that today, but the Bible teaches that very clearly and plainly. The greatest verse in the Bible on the Trinity is 1 John 5:7, and most of you have that marked in your Bible. It says:

1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

I have told you many times, but it is interesting that all the new Bibles take away from the deity of Christ other than the King James Bible. You will find in all of your new Bibles, 1 John 5:6-7 will not be there.

Going back to 2 Corinthians 3:17, it says, "Now the Lord," that is God the Father, "the Lord God is that Spirit." You see, God is the Spirit. God and the Holy Spirit are the same one. "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." So the Spirit of the Lord is the same as the Spirit of God, which is God Himself, and that is called the Holy Spirit in the Bible, sometimes called the Holy Ghost, sometimes called the Spirit of the Living God. But it is a great verse that shows you the deity of the Holy Spirit of God, that the Holy Spirit of God is very God. It is not a separate identity in the sense of three different distinct things that are not connected. They are all in a Trinitarian mindset of laying out all being the same and all being equal but having three distinct parts.

It is like your body. If you know anything about your anatomy, you know spiritually and physically you are a body, soul, and spirit. That goes back to Genesis 1-2. We also know that when God created man, He created him, it says, "in our image." He is using the word "our" because it is the Trinity speaking. So God is a Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God has a body, soul, and spirit. God's soul is God, God's body is Christ, and God's spirit is the Holy Spirit. So when God made you and me, He made us a body, soul, and spirit. We are a Trinity too in that sense, in a physical sense. You want to get that down because that will help you in future reference someplace if you want to prove that the Holy Spirit of God is very God.

IV. Liberty in Ministry

Then 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." We have talked about our liberty in Christ before as it pertains to us as Christians and our conduct under grace versus law. In fact, when we came through 1 Corinthians, we did a very lengthy study on it, so we will not necessarily go back through that all again. But just to refresh your mind and to get in the flow of things here, 1 Corinthians 6:12 said:

1 Corinthians 6:12

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

I am not under the law anymore. I do not have any law pertaining to me. I am under the New Testament grace. That has been the whole concept here. "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient." Now, "expedient" is just another word for "wise to do." As a Christian, I can do anything. I am not under the law, but there are things that are not wise for me to do. There are some things in the Bible that are direct things that we are told not to do. But there is a lot of grace and a lot of liberty in what we have and where we go, what we do, who we go with, what we do, and how we act. This is where this great concept comes in. All things are lawful, but not all things are expedient.

Then he goes on and says, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." There is the real key. I have liberty in my life. I can do whatever I want to do, but I never want to put anything in my life that takes control of my life more than the only thing that should control my life, and that would be the Holy Spirit of God. You have people who become alcoholics, become drug addicted. When that happens, that drug controls them. That drug takes charge of their life. That alcohol now controls their life. They have now been brought under the bondage of something and the power of something other than the Holy Spirit of God. It just kind of works like that.

The other great verse is also in 1 Corinthians 10, and it kind of goes along hand in hand. It says in 1 Corinthians 10:23:

1 Corinthians 10:23

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

There it is. Those are the two things that you want to always make sure if you want to keep your liberty in a good perspective. Nothing in your life should have power over you that you do or you allow more than God. I have seen it. I have seen Christian girls and Christian guys get hooked up with somebody that they should not be hooked up with in a relationship. They quit coming to Bible study. They quit coming to church. They quit ministering. They kept doing all this. Why? Because something now has more power over them than the Holy Spirit of God. You see it all the time in people's lives, and you learn those things as you deal with people why they do.

The second thing here: "all things are lawful, but not all things edify not." There should never be anything in your life or my life that we allow that does not edify us for the work of the ministry to do what God wants us to do. Those two things alone will be your success as a Christian or your downfall as a Christian when it comes to your liberty. A great teaching: liberty is for our edification. When you do not use it that way, then 1 Corinthians 8:9 takes place, and it says:

1 Corinthians 8:9

But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

And 1 Peter 2:16 says:

1 Peter 2:16

As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

That is what happens many, many times. Romans 14:7 says there is somebody always watching your life. If you are a Christian, you may not know it, you may not see it, but they are always watching your life. When you misuse your liberty, when you let something else have more control over you than God's Holy Spirit, and when you get into things that do not edify you as a Christian, then this is where the downfall comes in. It is something that will be very simple. Most of the Bible, most of the personal practical things in the Word of God, most of this aspect of understanding a relationship with God and how it works and how simplistic it is, it is not very hard. It is just understanding some simple principles. I am going to show you here as we develop this one of the most simplest principles in the world that will either make you or break you, and basically pretty much says where you and I are at today.

As this verse stands here, all that I said is true in a practical sense, but the context of this verse is liberty and ministry. We can take a practical application to it, but as the verse stands in this chapter, he is talking about liberty and ministry. The passage teaches that the New Testament, which gives life through the Holy Spirit of God and light, is given to the minister, our liberty, to minister without the constraints of the law. You see it in our own church service, and we get a better understanding of what that means. We do not have any formalism here, if you have not figured that out yet. There is no rigid formal structure to what we do. We follow the Holy Spirit of God in our liberty. I think you ought to have fun in your relationship with Christ.

In the Old Testament law, they did not have that. In the Old Testament law, you were always under the watchful eye of the law. They had ordinances they had to follow. They had rules. They had a format. They had a specific structure which could never be deviated from. Here, the Holy Spirit of God is in charge. He leads and guides us to do what He wants or gives us the freedom to do what we want within the guidelines of the Word of God. When the Holy Spirit of God is living inside us, 1 Corinthians 6:19, and He is in charge, when it comes to our meeting together and having church, every aspect is very loosely controlled. That is really liberty. It is like having the freedom to do whatever you want to do.

Most churches, or many churches, still have a ritual schedule and structure every Sunday. Here, nothing is orchestrated. Nothing is canned. Nothing is artificial. From the music to the preaching, it all goes. If it changes, it changes. In many ritualistic churches, somebody flicking lights off during the service would have given everybody a heart attack. They would all have thought the same thing: "How could God be here?" I have news for you, it was God flicking the lights, which are probably back there. The thing is, we get caught in those things and that formalism and all that stuff, and many churches still do.

The Roman Catholic Church, as we think of it, and again, this is not a criticism, but it is a truth, they are very structured in what they do. When the Reformation took place, the Lutheran Church, the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, sometimes even before the Reformation, they all came out of the Catholic Church, and they all held to a real form of ritualism. You have to do everything at the right time, the right way. Everything is the same way. Everything has to go Sunday after Sunday. If you break the sequence, it is like God is not pleased. Yet I find Baptist churches many times do the exact same thing. You sing, you pray, you kneel, you stand, and you sit on command. We call that worship, and that is not worship.

We get the idea that worshiping God has to do with a building, and that is not true. You would be surprised that people out there, God's people, think that if you laugh in church, it is a sin. If you have fun in church, it is a sin. If you speak loud in church, it is a sin. If you do anything out of what we in our mindset ought to be what goes along with God, it is because we have a really bad understanding of who God is. God likes to have a good time just like we do. You say, "How do you know that?" Because look at all the fun we have, and He has not killed anybody yet. It is liberty in ministry. It is liberty in your worship.

People get the idea; you see it all the time in churches: "Come to our worship. We have a 9 o'clock worship service or 11 o'clock worship service." They talk that way because they do not know the Bible. There is no worship service. You do not have a service to worship God. You worship God in your spirit and the Word of God that God has given you. That is spiritual worship. You worship God in spirit and truth. The Bible says that. People say, "Well, this does not look like a church." What does a church look like? You think it is a steeple in a building. You know how it goes: "Here is the church, there is the steeple, open the door, and there are all the people." That is how you think it is. Want to see that again? Here is the, just to work with your kids. Here is the church, there is the steeple, open the door, there are all the people. That is how it works. I have a sermon on that. You cannot do it with sore fingers.

There is nothing holy about this building, any building. What makes it holy is the people that are in this building if you are saved. Your body is the church, not the building the church is in. This is the same wood, the same carpet, the same ceilings, the same light bulbs that they have down at the bar. You can put it anywhere. You do not get sanctified carpet or sanctified ceilings that make this place holy. What makes a building anything special, if anything at all, is the people that are sitting in it. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. You. That is the whole concept.

People do not understand that. So they go through the ritual. They have to do the Lord's Prayer every Sunday. They have to do the Apostles' Creed, the Augsburg Confession. They go through

all of those different things, and then they think that is church. It is a rigid formalism, and that is not what is in liberty. The Old Testament, they did not have that grace and liberty that we have. They had specific things. They had things that they had to follow. They had specifics of who could minister, who got ministered to. The Sabbath was vital. That is why you have many churches that have a formalism. They just could not handle that the Sabbath is no longer for you and for me because the Sabbath is Saturday in the Bible. So what do they do? To bring it along with their mindset of formalism, they make the Sabbath, which is Saturday, the Sunday for Christians. It is not. I do not know what to tell you. We studied it last week in Colossians 2. The body is of Christ. You are not under these things anymore. We have liberty. That is what he is saying here: liberty to minister, liberty to praise God, liberty to laugh, liberty to praise the answer back to Heaven, liberty to do all of those things. They never did that in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, with the priest, if he went into that Holy of Holies and he did not have the right clothes on the right way, and he sweated the wrong way, he got killed. I am sure God, I do not have that happen to anybody preaching today, or me in particular, I am thinking of. Back then, the calendar of their year was based on their religion. They had Holy Days. They had the Feasts. Again, you see mainstream Christianity. Colossians 2 says that there is no Sabbath for us. There are no Holy Days, no holidays. There is nothing that we do, no structure within the year that we hold. Yet, in Protestant churches, in many Baptist churches, they always have two Holy Days, Easter and Christmas, that they try to jump into here and try to make it in spite of what the Bible says. We have been through it many, many times, and I am not poo-pooing Christmas or Easter. I am just telling you what the Bible says. I have two new puppies. Poo-poo is a great word that I have been using a lot this week. I hope it works better with you than it has with them. But none of that is the New Testament ministry under grace and liberty. They were under the law, and it was very strict. It was very hard. They could not have a lot of things that they did. But we have the grace and the liberty in ministry to do that.

V. The Bible as a Mirror

Now, look at 2 Corinthians 3:18, and we see another great principle. It says:

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

I like that verse, "but we all with an open face." You notice it said nothing about an open mouth? It absolutely said nothing about beholding with an open mouth. You do not witness with your mouth. My great friend and buddy in the Lord that I won to Christ many, many years ago, Greg McClintock, he used to say, "Every Christian ought to witness," and then he would add to it, "and sometimes even use words." That is so true. The greatest witness you have is not what you say. The greatest witness you have is beholding in your face. That is a tremendous thought. That is a tremendous principle. Now, we have that backward, completely backward.

From here on in 2 Corinthians 3:18, the Bible is now likened to a mirror that you look into. This, without a doubt, is one of the greatest aspects and one of the greatest studies that you are ever

going to find anywhere in the Word of God in your relationship with Christ. This is why Paul, again, uses it. It is an incredible thing.

Now I want to get along with that James 1:22-25. This is a great passage. He says in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that we with an open face beholding as in a glass, a glass. Now that is a mirror. I like a looking glass. In James 1:22, and you want to get this passage lined up to this one and vice versa, here is what it says:

James 1:22

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

James 1:23

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

James 1:24

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

James 1:25

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

You see that thing went? It went from "doers of the Word" to "doers of the work." You know why? Because you cannot do the Word without getting into the work. When you say you do the Word but you do not do the work, I like James 1:22 because it says right there what I have been telling you for the last 10 years: "But if ye be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." God's people deceive themselves today. They deceive themselves in the sense that they want to pretend that they are a Christian; they hear the Word of God, but they never do anything with it. The Bible now has sought you out. The Bible now has laid us all bare. This whole concept and this whole study is such a simple thing to do. He says you do not do it with an open mouth; you do it with an open face. It is not just about hearing the Word of God; it is about being a doer of the Word of God, and then he changes that to the doing of the work of God. Doers of the Word, hearers of the Word. When you hear the Word of God and you do the Word of God, there is ministry. Doing something with what you have heard and what God has done in your life.

James 1:23: "Here is 99% of God's people today. If any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass." It says there that "for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." Now the first thing I want you to see there, it says "natural face." That is what you and I really look like on the inside. The Word of God is likened to a mirror. When you look into that mirror, you see a reflection. But the reflection that you see is not always what you think you look like. Tell me, do you think you look really good when you look in a mirror? No, I am serious. You

think, "Oh, this is really nice, it is nice." You are always going around, "How is my hair look? How is my face look? How are my clothes? Does this fit? Does this make you look fat? Does this do that? Does this color coordinate?" All the time. When you ask yourself that all the time, you ask people because do you really want somebody to tell you, "Yes, that dress really makes you look fat"? Do you want somebody to say, "You spent money on that haircut"? Do you really want somebody to tell you? No, you do not. You are asking them so they will bolster up what you desperately hope is true. Your friends will lie to you, but a mirror never lies to you. It is your natural face, not the painted-up one that we pretend. It is the one, and that is what the Bible does. This is why men do not read the Bible. This is why people do not get in the Bible. This is exactly why: because they look into it, and they do not like it.

"He beholdeth himself, and then goeth" – notice, "He goes his way," not going God's way. "He goes his way, and straightway," as quickly as you can, "forgetteth what manner of man he was." That is exactly what 99% of God's people do today. When you are going to deal with people, you are going to have people in all your life that if you get into this thing and you do what you have aspired to do, you are going to be working with people all the time, and you are going to be dealing with them. These are the things that you learn. People will try to fool you. People will try to pretend with you. People will talk the talk. Everything will come out of their mouth. It is supposed to be the right things they say. It is never an open mouth; it is always beholding the open face. When you get these things down, it is hard to get fooled. If you get them down good, it is impossible to get fooled because it clearly says that if you are a hearer of the Word, then you are going to be a doer of the Word. The Word is now, you cannot just say, "Well, I am doing the Word." No, he changed the Word to work. That is ministry. To me, it makes it absolutely incredibly simple.

James 1:25: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James 1:25 says, "hearer of the Word and a doer of the work." We need to get this. This will answer a lot of questions for you. As I said, dealing with people, the Bible shows us the Word of God is like a looking glass, a mirror. It shows us our natural face. James 1:25 calls it "the perfect law of liberty." That is the Word of God. The New Testament law of liberty is simply the biblical principles that we read and apply that gives us the freedom to do the ministry and makes us more like Christ in everything we do.

I have said it many, many times, and this is so important. This is what people forget. This is where they get caught and trapped. It is like old Mel used to say, "God has a wrench that will fit any nut in this world." That is so true. He also used to say that the Bible is the only book that when you begin to read it, it begins to read you. This is what men do not like. This is what people do not like. People want to do what is right as long as they do not have to change who they are. That is the way it is.

All the years of my ministry, I had people come into me and sit down with me and say, "Bob, my life is a mess. Bob, I have troubles. I have this. I have that. I have problems with my kids. I have problems with my husband. I have problems with my wife. Or I have been divorced. My kids do not want to do what is right." I have heard every scenario in the world. I tell them, "Look, I am

sorry that all that happened, but there is good news. The good news is we can fix all that." "Oh, I will do it! I will do it! I need this, and I need that." I say, "I will tell you what you need. You need accountability, and you need structure because that is what is lacking in your life." "All right, all right, I am ready to go! I am ready to go!"

Let me tell you something. You start to work with that person. You start to get that person in the Bible. What happens? When they start, everybody wants to look at themselves in the mirror at a glance. Nobody wants to study who they really are in that mirror. You know why? Because it shows you your natural face. It shows who you really are and who I really am. I will be honest with you, we just do not. It takes a special kind of person to want to be able to put up with that. But that kind of person is the one that God takes and does something with.

All my life, they start to get in. You put somebody to work with them. You start working with them. You start helping them. Then, what? Six months later? Oh, six months. Two months later. Two months later. Putting them into the book. Making them change and look at the bad choices that they made. Now try to correct them and try to force them to look in that mirror. Where three weeks ago, four weeks ago, a month ago, "Oh, yes, anything you wanted!" Yes, as long as you did not have to really do the work. Now when you have to get down to it, you have to fix things. You have to change things. You have to alter who you were. You have to look in that mirror, that book, every day. Now it is not as fun anymore, is it?

On one hand, I was your best friend on Monday. Now I am your enemy on Tuesday. Now I was great, and you were going to help me, and I was so excited. Now something has changed. Now you, who made a million mistakes, who have made all kinds of problems in your life, now because you do not like looking in the mirror. It is not about anybody you work with. It is not about your circumstances. It is not about your situation. It is about we do not like to look in that mirror and see our natural face. When we do, that is where the rubber meets the road. Now suddenly, we who knew nothing about life, we who made a mess out of life, we who made a mess out of our marriage, a mess out of our kids, a mess out of everything in our life, suddenly now think that I know more about it now than you do. Hit the road. Your life has been a disaster up one side and down the other. Now because you are in this thing, what, six months, seven months, a year, maybe less than that. Now you are faced with the real hard everyday things that you now have to get into. What did you think? You were going to say, "Oh, I want to do what is right," and you were going to go to sleep, and a big good godly fairy came down? I am no big good godly fairy, I want to tell you that right now. And sprinkle the spiritual fairy dust on you, and you, without doing anything, changing anything, ever having to deal with any disaster in your life, you just wake up, and it does not work that way. You broke it, you fix it. That is how it works.

Now, see how simple that is? That is so simple. This is why men do not read the Bible. This is why you will find that in church, they will be in churches for 40 years, 30 years, 20 years, and they do not know any more about the Bible and the Word of God or God or doing anything more now than they did the day they walked in the door. This is why men will study prophecy. They will study end times. They will get into all of the Revelation stuff, and then they will try to fool you that they are really in the Bible. But when you look past that, you see the number one

ingredient in your life and my life is not the book of Revelation. It is not the end times. It is not all that is going to happen and is unfolding around us, though that is important. The real proof of your ministry is your life is your ministry. "I do not have one." Ha ha, you do not have any proof. See how simple that is? I love things in the Bible that when everybody leaves, you know where you are at. I have been in church services and heard guys preach when I left, I was not sure where I was. But at least today when you leave here, you will see how simple it really is. You are either a hearer of the Word or you are a doer of the Word. If you are a hearer of the Word and a doer of the Word, it translates as a doer of the work. It is just that simple.

When this book comes to you, and you are faced with a mirror as this man was here, you have two choices. You can correct the problem you see in yourself, or you can ignore what you see and forget what manner of man you are. James 1:25 says, "whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein." There is the key: not just looking in it, continuing in it, staying with it every day of your life. Getting a process in your world and your life, staying in that book with God, without the veil. Getting the glory of God in your face, seeing that glory. You will either be a doer of the Word or the work, or a forgetful hearer. I will tell you what, all my life, some of God's people could not wait to get out of a church service so they could forget what they heard. You say, "How do you know that is true?" Because they never do anything with it.

Do you ever get to the point in your life where God's people, they just hear the Word of God, they feel the conviction, they hear things like Thursday night, last Sunday, and today, and yet nothing changes? If you had preached these three messages 150 years ago, there would have been empty seats. Everybody would have been on their face, prostrate before God. Nothing moves God's people anymore today. Nothing really gets to them anymore. We have a hardened heart to the place where we have come to church 20, 30, 40 years, do nothing for God, give nothing to God, be nothing for God at all. Come and hear sermons every week, sit around the Holy Spirit of God working in people's lives, and walk out with our proud look and our tail up. We ought to have our tail between our legs and be ashamed of ourselves with what we do not do with the Word of God. I am just being honest with you. I am not mad at anybody. I am just telling you what it is, with great plainness of speech as Paul said last week.

Here is how this thing works. Right now, if you are a young Christian, and even in my case many, many times, maybe on a different level, when I get into that book and I see the Word of God and I read it, we do not see everything the way God wants us to. Young Christians, many times baby Christians, they do not see much at all. But the Bible says that we will all with an open face behold in a glass the glory of the Lord. You know how that works? Right now I look into the book. You look into the book depending on where you are at spiritually. You do not see a lot. The Bible says that what we do see as we look into this thing is we get a reflection. 1 Corinthians 13:12 says:

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know even as also I am known.

We do. That is the Word of God. But then face to face, now I know even as I also am known. There is coming a day when we have the rapture of the church, and we are face to face with God, and we get His mind that we will know everything, just like you will know everything on the planet, just like you know everything about yourself. But now, we see through the glass darkly. We do not always see it all. There is a process to learning how to see it. Right now we do not get it all. With the rapture, we will face to face, yes.

But 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, "changed into the same image from glory to glory." Here is what happens. Right now young Christians get into that book. They do not really see the Lord as He is. But what they get in that mirror is two reflections. The first reflection they get is of their own selves, and they see what manner of man they are. Then the second reflection they get is the glory of the Lord. They get that through, like we studied last week, the life of Moses. You can study the life of Joseph, the life of Daniel, the life of Abraham, the life of Noah, anybody in the Bible. What you see in their life when you study them is a glimpse of an image that is based on the Holy Spirit of God revealing Himself to you. Through that, you see God's glory.

You have to see, when you get into that first thing the first time, the first thing you see is yourself. You have to look at yourself. You have to get yourself out of the way. This is what men will not do. This is why people get into the Bible, start the Bible, they get help, they want help, and then three, four weeks later they do not want help anymore. They will blame it on you, they will blame it on me, they will blame it on the church, they will blame it on the birds, they will blame it on the sun coming up or the daylight savings time. That is everybody. But the reality of it is, the truth goes back, if you really know and you are working with people, the bottom line is they looked into the mirror, they did not like what they saw, they were not willing to change what they saw, so they decided not to change it. Where it once was "thank you," now it is "no thank you." It is not just "no thank you," it is "no thank you, I am blaming you." That is how it works. It always works.

These young Christians, they get a reflection of who Christ is. From there, the more I expose myself, "continue therein," the more I expose myself to that Word of God looking into that mirror without the veil, face to face, the more I build my relationship with God to be His friend. The more I spend time in that book, the more I spend time in that mirror looking at me first, realizing who I am, and then seeing more and more of God's reflection, the more I see Him, the glory, the more I see of myself and who I really am, my true condition. Then it makes me correct myself. I cannot look at myself and say, "I am satisfied with that." I cannot have the Word of God point back at me and say, "This is who you really are," and if I am honest, say, "I am happy with that." When I see God's glory and I see my scenario of where I am at, I have a choice now. I am either going to want to stay who I am, or I want to be more like Christ. That is your choice. It is the mirror, the Word of God, and looking into it that produces that, and that is why, at the end of the day, bottom line, people do not get into that book.

You play with the Word of God. You use it where it is convenient. You like preaching that identifies your good points. You do not like things that identify your bad points. Nobody likes to be pointed out to the mistakes they made in life, and I have news for you, that is part of life. You never learn to fix what is wrong if you do not find out what is wrong. That is not my job to tell

you what is wrong. Many times I get clobbered just because I am preaching a book that I had nothing to do with. You think my sermons are tough? The bottom line is, I did not write that book. He wrote it, and I am just telling you what He said. You want to take it up with somebody, take it up with Him. Oh, by the way, you will. You will, one way or the other.

The more God's reflection I see of Him, I become a doer of the Word, and in time, a doer of the work. First inwardly, then secondly outwardly. This process, the longer I do it, is that transformation of me and changes me into the image of God that people now see in my face. But it all starts with a mirror. That is why he says, "changed into the same image from glory to glory." It was the same glory in the Old Testament, same glory in the New Testament. The New Testament is more glorious, but it was the same glory. You and I are changed into that glory.

You need to know this and understand this: this process only takes place in God's church. Ephesians 4:11-14 says:

Ephesians 4:11

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Ephesians 4:12

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:13

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Ephesians 4:14

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Here it comes, three things. You know them already:

- For the perfecting of the saints (hearers of the Word)
- For the work of the ministry (doers of the Word)
- For the edifying of the body of Christ (your liberty, 1 Corinthians 10:23)

Ephesians 4:13 goes on and says, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man," that will be Jesus Christ, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Here it comes, but speaking the truth, Ephesians 4:15, "in love may grow up into him," not unto Him, "into Him."

This morning, if you are saved, there should be a process in your life of being a hearer of the Word of God, a doer of the Word of God, and a doer of the work of God, that through that

process of seeing His face and spending time with Him and Him spending time with you through the Holy Spirit of God enriching your life, that every day you are closer and you grow up, not unto Him, more transformed into Him, and that is when they see the glory of God in your face.

Mel Sabaka used to say many things; one of the things I never forgot he said. He says, "You have to love Jesus Christ more today than you did yesterday. You have to love God more this year than you did last year. You have to love God more this month than you did last month." That is the process. I know when I meet Him at the rapture of the church, I am going to be like Him, but when that takes place, you had to have transformed yourself in every aspect of my life and your life to that point where it is a very simple process because you have been working at it every day of your life. Looking in that mirror, looking in that mirror, looking in that mirror.

This is the simple process that has to take place, and it all starts with me, my own personal life; it starts with you and your life. People like to blame everything on their circumstances. People like to blame what they do or they do not do and what somebody else either did to them or did or whatever or is doing. People like to always blame their circumstances on their mom or their father or their job or whatever. It all works that way. The truth of the matter is, it starts with you and me getting honest with ourselves and looking into that mirror and seeing the natural face of what manner of man we are, and then choosing, choosing, choosing to fix it. That simple? I cannot fix it for you; all I can do is fix it for me.

All my life I have seen husband and wife relationships go back and forth in murderous conditions. Terrible. Situations that many times end in divorce, many times just lead to all kinds of problems. I have seen it all in my life. All the couples are different, all the circumstances are different, all the ages are different. Some had children, some did not, not children by another marriage, some did not. All the scenarios are totally different. But there is one common denominator that pulls it all together: the reason why they will not get it fixed is because they will not individually look into the mirror and change themselves first.

Husband, you want to fix your marriage? You want to change your marriage? Then change yourself. Quit being under the radar with what you do. Quit hiding what you do. Quit being in secret about all of the things. You go to church, you carry your Bible, you do everything you are supposed to do. But come on, you know this morning as well as I do, inside your heart it is black as the sides of the bottomless pit. You know why? Not because you are a bad guy, not because you are a bad person. One simple thing: when you look into that mirror, you do not like what you see, and then you move right on.

Want to change your kids? Do you? It could be a lot of time. "I need to fix my kids." Then why do you start by fixing yourself? That would be my choice. You have problems in your marriage, husband? Change the things about you. Sit down and make a list. Be honest. Look in the mirror. But you will not. You will not at all. You know why? Because you will not look in that mirror. You will look around the mirror, you will take a quick glance at the mirror, you will walk through and say, "I do not like that," and you move right on. But you will not "continue therein."

Wives, you want to come to the place where you become better in your relationship, or you want to become better with your kids, or you want to do anything that God wants you to do? It is

simple: fix yourself first. Do not worry about fixing him. Do not let him worry about fixing you. You cannot do that. The problem is your marriage will never survive until both of you want to look into that mirror and deal with the manner of man you see and then fix it. That is a problem for many people. It is a problem. I have seen people with sin issues. I have seen people who have made every mistake in life. Their life is an absolute disaster. Yet the tragedy is they could fix it. The funny part is they say they want to fix it, up to the point they have to look at the hard reality in that mirror of the mistakes they made, and they have to realize that somebody knows more about the problems than you do, and then they get in that book, and they change about themselves whatever they have to change, without blaming somebody else, without going off and coming to the point where you think that it is everybody else's problem. It is our problem. It only gets changed by looking in the mirror. When you look in the mirror, you see what the problem is. That is the way it works. It works just that way.

VI. Seven Characteristics of the Mirror (Word of God)

Now I want to give you, and if you are ever going to be a pastor or you are ever going to get into ministry or you are going to be a ball captain or you are working, whatever, but when you deal with people, I am going to give you seven characteristics of a mirror and the Word of God. This thing is right on the money. Seven characteristics of mirrors and how they represent the Word of God in our lives. If there is nothing that does not just kill us, it is this:

1. Broken mirrors always give a false image.

You have to start with the true Word of God in your life. New Bibles do one thing well: by changing the key words and ordering the text in over 60,000 places, it gives us a distorted view of everything, especially ourselves. You cannot track the key things. That study of Moses last week would have been impossible to take. You cannot get out of it because a broken mirror always gives a false image.

2. You need light to see yourself in a mirror.

You cannot see yourself in the mirror in a dark room. That light is the Holy Spirit of God in your life. This is what happens when you get into that mirror and you look into it, then the Holy Spirit of God kicks in. The Bible says that "the entrance of Thy Word giveth light." That light is the Holy Spirit of God. He is the true light, the light of every man that is coming into the world. The Bible says that "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." That is all exactly what the Holy Spirit of God is. When we look into that mirror and we see our natural face, the Holy Spirit of God turns the lights on. You look pretty good when you look in the mirror in the dark.

3. You should start each day with a look in the mirror.

You do that physically. Every morning when you drag your dead carcass out of bed and go to the bathroom and look into that mirror and you say to yourself, "Boy, do I have some work to do today." Physically speaking, it never ceases to amaze me. Physically speaking, every morning you are looking at a mirror, and then you fix what is wrong with you before you leave the house. Some of you folks would not think about going out and facing the world the way you look in the mirror when you first see yourself. For some reason, it takes women a lot longer than it does men. I am not sure why that is, or maybe it used to.

But it is a thing where women will stay in there for hours. They will just work on it and just work on it and work on it. They have to get a job in a body shop; they do great work. Bravely spoken.

You will get up in the morning, and you will never look in the mirror of God's book. You will get up in the morning and you will pamper yourself, clean yourself, brush your teeth, fix your hair, do everything, put your makeup on, get everything ready to go, and you will not take five minutes and never look into that book and God's ministry to prepare yourself for what is out there for you. God in serving Him and in ministry for Him is about as far from your thought process as it could ever get.

4. A mirror does not lie. It shows what we really look like.

We lie to ourselves when we look into it, and by that, we deceive ourselves. This is man's fundamental issue with God, churches, preachers, preaching, messages, and the Bible. Great story. We all grew up with the kids, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. She always had an enemy that was the wicked witch who always was angry at Snow White's beauty and always would look into a mirror and say, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?" The mirror would come back and say, "Not you, you ugly witch." Mirrors never lie. You laugh at that little story, and that is the little thing we have all heard. But we all do that every morning when we are looking in the mirror because we have deceived ourselves. No ministry, doing nothing for God, absolutely zero in our life of anything that counts for God that proves we are even saved. Then we have the audacity and the guts to stand in the mirror and say, "God, I look pretty good." Well, you get into His mirror, and He will show you what manner of man you really are.

It is easy when there is no book and there is no mirror; you just deceive yourself. I think the story of Snow White is one of the greatest stories in the Bible, as far as all the stories that we put together of a little kid story, they are all found in the Bible. You had Snow White. She is not called Snow White for anything. She is Snow White because she is a picture of the church. Once you have been saved, you have on white raiment. You are Snow White today. She had a wicked witch who, by the way, did not like her because she was Snow White, and it goes back to the mirror, mirror thing. This is why some of God's people, as I said many, many times, this is why some of you God's people who are phonies do not like the real deal. You are just like the wicked witch. You say, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, how do I look today?" And he says, "Not as good as Snow White." "Well, I hate Snow White."

In the Bible sense, you know what happened. The wicked witch gave her forbidden fruit, was poisoned, and she died. Happened in Genesis 1-3 if you are paying attention. She stayed dead till one day her prince showed up. He came from Photomat. "Someday my prince will come." That prince showed up on a white horse, got down. What did he do? Kissed her, she came alive. He lived happily ever after. One day one of my great ancestors took a poisoned fruit, and it killed me. One of these days, one day my prince showed up and kissed my soul with the Word of God, and brother, gave me life. Today, as raunchy as I look and as ugly as I look on the inside, I am Snow White.

So what about the seven dwarfs? Read Isaiah 11. There are seven spirits of the Holy Spirit of God over there. It all fits you there. You want a good one? "Mary had a little lamb."

Sure she did. Matthew 3, Luke 4. "Whose fleece was white as snow." Absolutely. You bet she did. That Lamb was spotless for the sin of the world. "Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle, and the cow jumped over the what?" Cow, Baal worship, moon, church. Oh yeah, it is all in there. It is all in there. But that is just what you get. It is a thing where that is the way it works. We look into the mirror. We do not like what we see. So we deceive ourselves. When that mirror shows us we are not right and it shows you Snow White, then you get mad at Snow White. That is why God's people absolutely slander, clobber, murder, characterize other God's people who are doing what is right when they are not. It just goes back to Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Just that simple. You are a mirror on the wall.

5. Unlike a picture which reproduces and holds the image at the time it was taken, a mirror is alive.

You can look at a picture of you taken back in 1970, and here you are all grown up today, and you look at the picture, and you are the same way you were back there in 1970. But a mirror is alive. A mirror always gives you the exact up-to-date true image of us and everything about us and the way we look when we look into it. That is why men do not read the Bible. People like to live in the past. That is how you get around it sometimes. You live in the past.

I talked to a couple one time years ago, and they had a wayward son, and he was lost as a goose, and it happened several times. I said, "Well, what about your son?" I said, "He does not seem to care about church, does not come to church, does not do anything." The mom popped up and said, "Oh, you know what? Yeah, he does not, but he was saved. He was saved 20 years ago." I thought to myself, that is the most stupidest statement I ever heard in my life. Who cares about a silly statement that you were saved 20 years ago when you are not doing anything today? Do you think your statement that you were saved 20 years ago means absolutely anything if 20 years later you were as worthless as you were back then? Do you think that gains you any credibility? I seriously question your decision 20 years ago if your life is not where it needs to be today, and you have to go back 20 years to prove you were saved. My Bible says the way you prove you are saved, Paul, they questioned him. He says, "You want proof of my ministry? You, because you would not even be here if I did not win you to Christ." Your proof is 20 years ago? What? For 20 years, you just kind of got lost someplace? Looked like a wrong bus and wound up in Seattle? People are strange. Your salvation is not based on what you did 20 years ago. Your salvation is based on what you are doing today.

6. No matter how many mirrors you have, they always show you the same thing about us. Mirrors never lie.

I always enjoy how people shop around, even if it is with me. They will come in and they will tell me, "Bob, I have this problem, I do this," and I will say, "Well, this is what the Bible says, I will help you with it, lay it all out." You know what they do? They will shop it around and find other people. You know why they will do that? They do not want to hear, they do not want to look in the mirror. They want to find somebody that will agree with them where they are at and take up their cause where they are at without them having to look in the mirror and change anything. Your tactics are so old they went out with armor. It is just that simple. Some people shop for opinions. They go around wanting to know what everybody

thinks about it. You talk to me, and then you will say, "Well, I gave you what the Word of God says," and next thing you know, somebody calls me up and says, "Well, so and so asked me to help them," or "This person wants me to do this." I said, "What?" All that translates down, folks, when you get to the counseling ministry, is they took a look in the mirror, and they knew that when they came to talk to me, I had a big mirror, and they were going to have to look in that mirror, and they would rather go to somebody where they are stupid and dumb and do not have a mirror and let them find the answer they want instead of what the answer they need. That is how that works.

7. No matter how many mirrors you do have, it will not do you any good unless you look into them and use them.

That requires getting honest with yourself. That requires you quit deceiving yourself. Some of you would not think of going to church without your Bible, but you do not use it or open it from Monday to Saturday. Most of you have five, 10, 20 different Bibles at home. You have one for work, one for study, one for church, one for restart, and you do not look at any of them. Having a bunch of Bibles does not make you right with God and make you a Christian anymore than me buying you a \$40,000 grand piano makes you a musician. They do not work unless you can play it. Going to church will not solve your problems. Reading the Bible will not solve your problems. Getting honest with God, then going to church, getting into the Word of God to solve your problem, and then looking in that mirror and then fixing what you see.

Thursday night we got a good answer, the thing I said last week about how Mel Sabaka said that not every Christian is going in the rapture of the church. Now we got a good understanding of godly sorrow versus worldly sorrow. Now you can see the two men in the Bible, they both did the exact thing. They both were with Christ. They both witnessed. They both preached. They both did this. They both did that. They both confessed. They both repented. They both did everything they were supposed to do. One died and went to Heaven. One died and went to Hell. It is godly sorrow versus worldly sorrow. What you do not see today is godly sorrow in people's lives, and that pretty much wraps it up.

VII. The Great Stone Face and Reflecting Christ

I do not know if you know much about a guy by the name of Nathaniel Hawthorne. He is a writer. He wrote back in the early half of the 1800s. He writes short stories. I have always enjoyed his works because I do not know if he was saved or not, but I knew this: he always threads the moral theme into his short stories that always usually go back to the Bible. I do not know if you ever read this in school or not, but he once wrote a story called "The Great Stone Face."

In that story, it was a legend that was told about a mythical, yet famous, old New Hampshire landmark that was a rock formation that when you looked at it, it looked like an old man's face was on that formation. They called it "the old man of the mountain." The legend went that someday that man whose face was in that rock was going to return. There was a young boy that was caught up in all of the folklore and all of the things that he went along with it. He was so

caught up with it, every day he would stop and he would study the look at that face. Then he would go through town, and every stranger that came into town, he would look and see if that was the face on the rock. He did this all of his life. Some pretty famous people came through that town, but to that little boy's dismay, not one of them ever fit the description of the face that was in the rock.

Then one day, years, years, years later, when he was now an old man, as he was walking down the street of that town, another little boy pointed to him and cried out and said, "There is the old man of the mountain! He has finally come!" He looked around and he realized that a crowd of people was looking at him, and he realized that they were talking about him. He had looked at that mountain formation for so many years. He studied every feature of that face on that rock for so long that in time and over the process of years, because he studied it and he looked at it so intently and he looked at it, what it did and tried to figure out every feature, now his own face took on the features of that face in that rock, and he did not even know it.

That is the way it ought to be with us as Christians. If you have not figured it out yet, the face in the rock is God, Deuteronomy 32. In that face of God is the face of Jesus Christ. Yes, He is coming back someday, and you and I should look for His coming every day. But just like this story here and the story of Moses last week, the more time we spend in that book and that looking glass, looking at God's face, face to face, the more like this little story, we take on the features, the character, the attitude, the very appearance of Christ, and people see that in our face. In time we grow up into Him, and we take on His character, His features, His characteristics of the face in the rock.

Stephen Olford was a great preacher. I used to always enjoy him. He was not a great fireball of a preacher, but he always had great content. I heard him preach one time on the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and how it should affect you and me. I never forgot it. I do not remember the whole sermon, but I remember the one thing that stuck with me. He said this: "Did you ever go out on a bright sunny day with no sunglasses on or nothing? And for just like 10 seconds, stare right at the blazing sun and look at that sun for as long as you can." He said, "You know what? When you turn away from it for the next 30, 40, 50 seconds, all you see are little suns." He said, "That is exactly the way it ought to be with God's people. When the world sees us, they ought to see little suns. You ought to see the glory of God in your face and my face and your life and my life through the ministry, not just a hearer of the Word, but a doer of the Word, not just a doer of the Word, but a doer of the work." That is where the real witness and a real testimony and a real glory of God comes from. When the world sees us, they should be blinded by the glory of God, and all they should see is Jesus Christ.