

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: God's Word as a Mirror

SERMON REFERENCE: James 1:22-25

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #5490

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) James 1:22-25
 - i) "Beholding his natural face in a glass" refers to someone looking at their physical features in a mirror.
 - ii) "Perfect law of liberty" is symbolism for the Word of God.
- b) Jeremiah said the Word of God is like a hammer.
 - i) Jeremiah 23:29
- c) David said the Word of God is a lamp.
 - i) Psalm 119:105
- d) Hebrews says the Word of God is a sharp sword.
 - i) Hebrews 4:12
- e) Jesus said the Word of God is a seed.
 - i) Luke 8:11
- f) James said the Word of God is like a mirror.
 - i) James 1:25

2) BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD IS A MIRROR, I SEE MYSELF REFLECTED

- a) Not only do we read the Bible, the Bible will read us.
 - i) The Bible has a picture of me.
 - (1) If I want to see me, I just simply look into the Word of God.
- b) A mirror does not lie.
 - i) But a mirror can be very brutal.
 - ii) Photographers can manipulate an image to make beauty appear.
 - (1) "When there's beauty, we take it; where there's none, we make it."
- c) One man takes a casual glance
 - i) James 1:23
 - (1) "Beholding" refers to a person who just glances into the Word of God.
 - (a) Someone who is in a hurry.
 - (b) He runs past the mirror and quickly forgets what he sees.
 - (c) Similar to looking at your watch and forgetting the time.
 - (2) Many morning devotions are mere glances.
 - (a) Open the Bible and glance in it.
 - (i) "I have done my duty."
 - ii) We do not pause because we do not really want to see.
 - (1) A gnat bounces all over the place.
 - (2) A honeybee pauses on a flower and draws out the nectar.
 - iii) God does not reveal much truth to people who just glance.
 - (1) This person often forgets where they read and what they read.
 - (2) If asked if the passage meant anything to him, if honest, he would say very little if anything.
- d) One man take a careful gaze.
 - i) James 1:25
 - (1) "Looketh into the perfect law of liberty" literally means: to peer into something, to look, to scrutinize, to look intently.

- (2) John 20:5
 - (a) John looked intently in the empty tomb.
 - (b) He concentrated on whatever was and was not there.
 - (3) 1 Peter 1:12
 - (a) The angels desired to look into and understand the prophecies.
 - e) We, as Christians, need to do more than just nibble at the Word of God.
 - i) We need to sit down and absorb and look into the Word of God because it is the Word of God that is the mirror that reveals us.
 - f) If we look at ourselves in a literal mirror and see a dirty face or disheveled hair, we would fix it; we would want to make it right.
 - i) When we read the Bible, we need to remember what we see.
 - (1) Write down the things you need to correct and then correct those things as you read the Bible.
 - (2) Psalm 119:9
 - (a) When the Word of God condemns you and reveals your filth, take heed to it.
 - (b) "Way" in this verse refers to "a rut."
 - (c) Sin puts a muddy rut in to our lives.
 - (3) John 15:3
 - (a) "Clean" is the word from which we get our word "catharsis" from.
 - (i) The Word of God does not just cleanse outwardly; it flows through our lives.
 - (4) 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - (a) "Open face" means that there is no veil over our face.
 - (b) "As in a glass" means "as in a mirror."
- 3) BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD IS A MIRROR, I BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS
- a) God's purpose for our lives:
 - i) To show us what we are by nature.
 - ii) To show us what we ought to be by grace.
 - iii) God purpose in the Word of God is to make us more like Jesus.
 - (1) That image was marred when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden.
 - iv) Romans 8:29
 - (1) It is God's desire that we be like the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b) God does not wait until the rapture to make us like Jesus.
 - i) He wants us to be like Jesus today.
 - ii) He wants us to go from glory to glory.
 - (1) There are three stages of glory.
 - (a) When you first get saved, that's glorious.
 - (b) But when you learn the ministry of the Holy Spirit, that's more glorious.
 - (c) And when you learn "death to self," that's most glorious.
 - c) If the Bible is a mirror, who do I see in the mirror; myself or Jesus?
 - i) You should see both.

- (1) As a Christian, when you got saved, you are a part of Jesus.
- (2) Looking in to the Bible will show you who you are by nature and who you can become by grace.
 - (a) The more you grow, the more you will see Jesus in your reflection.
 - (i) We are crucified with Christ.
 - (ii) We are risen with Christ.
 - (iii) Christ is in us and we are in Him.
 - (iv) This is why we are called Christians.
 - 1. A Christian is somebody who is like Jesus.
 - (b) We ought to look in that mirror and see the image of Jesus reflected on the other side.
 - (i) When we look at our reflection in the Word of God and see our own image, that leads to confession and cleansing.
 - (ii) When we look at our reflection in the Word of God and see Jesus, that leads to consecration and sanctification.
- ii) The Bible mirrors Jesus. If you read the Bible and do not see Jesus, you need to re-read the Bible.
 - (1) Acts 10:43
 - (a) All the Old Testament prophets wrote about Jesus.
 - (i) Do not get the idea that the New Testament takes up and starts with Jesus and the Old Testament is about Moses, or the laws, or the history of the Hebrews.
 - (2) Luke 24:27
 - (a) Jesus is in all the Scriptures.
- d) The more you look in the Bible, the more you become what you are looking at.
 - i) 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - (1) "Changed" is the same word in Matthew 17:2 that is translated "transfigured."
 - (2) We are transfigured by reading the Bible.
 - ii) "Transfigured" is the word we get our word "metamorphosis" from.
 - (1) A change of form.
 - (2) A metamorphosis is not an outward change; it begins on the inside.
 - (a) The Shekinah glory did not shine down on Jesus; it shone out of Him.
 - (i) It had been in Him all along.
 - (3) A metamorphosis is simply the inner nature coming to the surface.
 - (a) The inner nature of Jesus was glory and is glory.
 - (b) Jesus' inner nature was veiled by His flesh but during His transfiguration it came to the surface.
 - iii) We are also changed from glory to glory; we are transfigured.
 - (1) As we look into and obey the Word of God, a change takes place within us.
 - iv) What is the inner nature of a Christian?

- (1) It is Jesus.
 - (a) Jesus is in us.
 - (b) Jesus is our inner nature.
 - (2) The more we look in the Bible, the more the nature of Jesus responds to what we see and changes us from the inside out.
 - v) Romans 12:1-2
 - (1) "Transformed" in this passage is the same word for "metamorphosis."
 - (2) How do we renew our mind?
 - (a) By looking in the Word of God.
 - (3) When we recognize our sin and ask for forgiveness, we get cleansed and forgiven.
 - (4) Then when we go back to the Bible, we see more of Jesus.
 - (a) We go from one stage of glory to the next stage of glory.
 - (i) We do not stop growing.
 - e) Fable of "The Ugly Duckling."
 - i) A swan who did not realize he was a swan and swam with a flock of ducks.
 - ii) He went in search of a place to fit in but could not find one.
 - iii) He sees some swans and thinks that they are the most beautiful of creatures.
 - iv) Eventually, in shame, he bows his head and sees his own reflection in the water; only then does he realize that he too is a swan.
 - f) When we first see Jesus, we are humiliated.
 - i) "Compared to Him, I am nothing."
 - ii) But we will be like Him.
 - iii) Psalm 17:15
 - iv) As a Christian, our inner nature is not the old Adam, but the new Adam; the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - g) We become like what we worship.
 - i) If we worship money, we become materialistic.
 - ii) If we worship power and prestige, we become hard, cold and callous.
 - iii) If we worship an idol, we become spiritually dead.
 - iv) Psalm 115:4-8
 - (1) At first man molds the idol, and then the idol molds the man.
 - (a) We become like what we worship.
- 4) CONCLUSION
- a) Do you want to be a great Christian?
 - b) God has given you a mirror to look at each morning.
 - i) If your face is dirty, get clean; then continue to read.
 - c) Find Jesus in the Word of God.
 - i) Praise Him
 - ii) Worship Him
 - iii) Look for Him.

- d) You will begin to be more like Him as the inner nature, which is Jesus, comes to the surface.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16