

## God's Mirror

There is a band from the Upper Peninsula Michigan, called "Da Yoopers". On an album called "Old Age Ain't for Sissies" is a song that includes the words "I still feel like da same old guy, but den I look into da mirror. Some old guy's looking back at me . . . holy c\_\_\_, I need another mirror!"

This is funny, but the more you think about it, the more you see. Nobody likes looking in a mirror and realizing they aren't what they used to be, especially if in their prime they were exceptionally good looking. Hollywood people take it hard, and so resort to all kinds of surgeries or botox treatments, etc. to try to ward off the inevitable. The humor though is to think that the fault is in the mirror.

But wait, do we really do that ourselves? What if someone tells us something we don't want to hear? Is our response to go elsewhere, looking for someone to validate our position? Someone who will lend a sympathetic ear? Do we avoid them and say "I'll just find another friend!"? Not all criticism is correct, or fair, but if we cannot sincerely consider their rebuke, it is like someone who says "I need another mirror". "I need another church." "I need a different version of the Bible." "I need another job." "I need a different girlfriend."

This is also a cause of marital problems. Perhaps a man's wife is reflecting things in him that he doesn't want to see or admit, so he goes looking for another mirror – a mistress, another wife, more time at work, a better car - anything that will confirm what he wants to believe about himself, or at least allows him to avoid that unpleasant image in the mirror. Or the woman is frustrated because the man won't talk or listen. She is getting no "reflection", and so becomes susceptible to someone who will give her the attention she craves. She "gets another mirror".

We use mirrors to see what we look like, and how other people see us. We then respond in a way that we think will enhance that image. A man seeks a "trophy wife" – not merely for her beauty, but because he thinks she will make HIM more respectable. An old man ditches his faithful but faded wife for a young beauty. Why? Not just for the "you-know-what", but to prove he still has it, and to impress others. He is deceiving himself, trying to prove that he is "da same old guy". Kids will pass up better looking and respectable dates for the quarterback or the cheerleader. Why? Instant respect from their peers. Others seek political power, not to solve problems and govern well, to get power and wealth, but mainly to be esteemed in the eyes of others. One gets a flashy car, not because it is good in itself, but for what it says about him. Another bullies others or treats them rudely, not just out of meanness, but of a desire to elevate himself before others.

Another common problem is narcissism – where people fall in love with their own image. Mirrors are not meant for us to admire and love ourselves, but to give us the feedback we need to make ourselves better people.

### What do we know about glass or mirrors?

Probably the earliest "mirror" was reflection in water. In Bible days they did have glass, although not as clear or distortion-free as today. [Look up "Ancient Roman glass" on the internet.] In fact they even invented metal-backed glass mirrors in the first century A.D., but back then mirrors were usually polished metal, like bronze. In Ex. 38, the "laver of brass" in the Tabernacle-service was made from the women's looking glasses.

Glass is interesting because of its physical behaviors with light. Light can be transmitted through glass, it can be bent by it (lenses), can be separated by it (prisms), and it can be reflected (mirrors). The shape and quality of the glass determines whether an image is true, distorted, inverted, enlarged, cloudy, or colored.

**Glass is something we look through.** 1 Cor. 13:12 – "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." If the glass is cloudy, or has bubbles or cracks or inclusions, the image is distorted. Before salvation, we were spiritually dead, and so were in effect wearing black glasses, like a blind person. At salvation, the light of Christ shines on us and we begin to see. At first it isn't much. Like the blind man, "I see men as trees walking." As we continue maturing spiritually, the glass gets progressively cleaner and clearer.

Sometimes we are hindered by the colored glass of a denomination, or an unscriptural teaching, or unconfessed sin. We need to allow the light of Christ to shine through, and for the Holy Spirit to peel away the shading so we can comprehend spiritual truth more reliably. We can do this by study of the word, by prayer, seeking God's face, and by faithful participation in the fellowship of a local church.

Heb. 4:12 – "For the word of God is quick (living), and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the

heart." God's living word pierces the darkness of our hearts and brings His light to bear on our innermost being. Here again, we see that "Word", "life" and "light" are closely related.

**"Glass" can also refer to a mirror, even if it was really polished bronze.**

Jas. 1:23-24 – "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: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was,"

When we look into the mirror of God's word, or some other way He uses of revealing ourselves to ourselves, we need to be not just willing, but desiring to see the truth, and to obey it. Some people will never mature because they want to believe a lie, that they are what they are not. Others don't even look in the mirror because they have no willingness to change.

But the most interesting thing about God's mirror is that it can actually transform us into His image. The more we allow Christ to live in and through us, the more we will be like him. That is the work of the Holy Spirit, making us holy, and bringing us into conformity to Christ.

2 Cor. 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."

Ultimately it will be perfected at His appearing, when "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1 Jn. 3:2)