



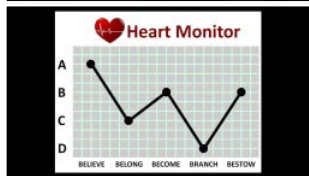
Mirror Mortals

Reflecting the Word We've Heard

May 25, 2025

Today we're *reflecting on reflecting*, rather than *deflecting*, the word that we've heard!

Do you sometimes hate the mirror? Or, just avoid the mirror? Like when you have cold sore or you've put on a few pounds? How about magnifying mirrors?



You ladies are *mirror masochists*. They *exaggerate* every wrinkle, pimple, and *blemish*! I'd be like, "Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the," "Not you!" Two months ago we *gave* ourselves a *spiritual physical*. Well, it's time for a *checkup*. So, **have you become a slightly sharper image of the mind and heart and courage of Christ?** If not, why not? Are you *using* His Word like a mirror? Because, **we study the mirror so we can adjust accordingly.** Stray hair. Eye booger. Booger-booger. Same goes for God's Word.

Do not *merely listen* to the Word, and so *deceive* yourselves. Do what it says. [Immediately *adjust accordingly*, according to *what* you see *reflected*; otherwise] [You're] like someone who *looks* at his face in a mirror and, after *looking* at himself, [and *seeing* what's *needing* immediate *attending*, instead] goes away and immediately [gets *distracted* and] *forgets* what he *looks* like. But whoever *looks intently* into the *perfect law* that gives *freedom*, [the way we *look* into a mirror] and *continues in it* [daily, like we do with our mirrors]—not forgetting what they have *heard*, [in *God's Word*] but *doing* [something about] it—they will be *blessed* in what they do. — James 1:22-25 NIV

Love it or hate it, **the mirror just says it like it is.** But, *unlike* the wicked queen in *Snow White*, **we must honor the mirror's honesty.** Otherwise, when we see our *faults* and *flaws* reflected in the *mere mortals* in God's Word, we'll go our way, get *distracted*, and *forget* what we saw. But Scripture *liken*s itself to a mirror, because **the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to make us like the Son of God.** But, *not* when we read it like a *rule book*. That *attempt* profoundly and *famously failed* with the *Pharisees*. It's gotta be read like a *relationship book*. Because the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to make us like the Son of God **through the people of God who populate its pages.** Mere mortals with messy lives, just like us.

[Do not] be *ignorant* of the *fact*, brothers and sisters, that our *ancestors* ... all *ate* the *same* spiritual food and drank the *same* spiritual drink ... Nevertheless, God was *not pleased* with most of them ... Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ... and were written down as warnings for us ... No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to [all] mankind. ... But [try to remember] when you are tempted, [that] He will also provide a way out so that you [unlike them] can endure it. — 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 NIV

For everything [in the Bible] that was written [about the people] in the past was written to teach us [in the future], so that through *endurance* and the *encouragement* of [the stories of the glories in] the Scriptures we might have *hope*. – Romans 15:4 NIV



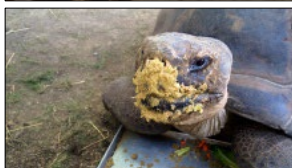
As opposed to, say, murdering an innocent man to cover up an adulterous affair, like grandpa David did. “But it’s hard to relate to those olden-days people.” C’mon. **People are people. And sin is sin.** And time is relative when it comes to our relatives. Do you relate to John Tyler, our 10th president, who was born in 1790, during Washington’s first year in office? No? Well, know who does? His grandson, Harrison Tyler, who’s still alive! He’s 96. His father was 75 when he was born in 1928. His father’s father, John Tyler was 63 when he was born in 1853. How weird would it be to be able to say, my grandpa was born during George Washington’s first year in office?! Then again, Jesus calls us His children. And He’s called the Son of David. So, how weird is it, that our grandpa David was born 3,000 years ago? David is also a child of God, making Jesus His own Grandpa – but I digress. Stop singing it in your head. **The problem isn’t the past; it’s your personal connection to it.** For instance, the sinking of the Titanic seemed like the dark ages to me, till a pharmacist at Haggen happened to mention that his mom’s brother was among those who drowned when it went down, and how devastating it was for his mom and the family. **Time is relative.** As are our relatives in Scripture.

[You see] Jesus did many other miraculous signs ... which are *not recorded* in this book. But these are written that you may believe [for yourself] that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. – John 20:30-31 NIV

[Because] Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself. – Luke 24:27 NIV

[Because] Concerning this salvation, the [OT] prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. – 1 Peter 1:10-11 NIV

[Because] All Scripture is God-breathed and is [very] useful [for those for whom it was written] for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV



Is this because we respond so well to rules? Nope. Once, in Waikiki, we saw these huge, wild turtles. I had no desire to touch ‘em, or even get close to ‘em ... till I was told it was illegal. Then I was like, “Touchy-touchy.” And then I was told it’s illegal to feed ‘em! So I was like, “Have some more Doritos, dude!” I didn’t do either of those things. But Shar did ... one of ‘em. Point is, **it’s not about rules; it’s about relations.** And not just ours and God’s. Because, **it’s not about commands as much as connections.** Because every God-breathed story was recorded back then to enlighten and inspire and embolden us here and now.

Many of the most vivid stories recorded, deliberately focused on exposing the debauchery and disobedience of mere mortals like us, so we'd see ourselves reflected in the Word, and be warned.

[You see] The message *they heard* was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. [They were like a guy who looks in a mirror and leaves the thing hanging from his nose] ... Let us, therefore, make every effort ... so that no one will fall by [ignorantly] following their example of disobedience. For the Word of God is living and active. [And filled with wild stories of sexual immorality and murder and greed and betrayal and hatred ... and its consequences. Which makes it] Sharper than any double-edged sword, [because] it penetrates ... [if you let it] [and] [then it] judges the thoughts and attitudes of the [reflective] heart. – Hebrews 4:2, 11-12 NIV

[So] Accept instruction from His mouth and lay up His words in your heart. – Job 22:22 NIV

Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge. – Proverbs 23:12 NIV

[And] I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you – Ezekiel 36:26 NIV

For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power – 2 Timothy 1:7 NAB

[So] Stand firm in the faith; be courageous; [and] be strong. – 1 Corinthians 16:13 NIV

The wicked [may] flee ... but the righteous are bold as a lion. – Proverbs 28:1 ESV

And not a cowardly lion. “But I don’t understand so much of it.” Is that really the problem? Mark Twain said: “**It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it's the parts that I do.**” But, either way, it's vital to your spiritual health that you hurry up and ...

Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. [Hand Him your heart and He'll train your brain] Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is. – Romans 12:2 NLT

[But] When anyone hears the Word ... and does not understand it, then [goes away and forgets it] the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. – Matthew 13:19 NKJ



Have you heard of “Wicked”, the story of the witch of Oz? Do you know the story of wicked King Saul and the witch of Endor? Do you remember Endora from Bewitched? Where do you think she got her name! Now, which do you connect with more, and relate to the most, between the Scarecrow (who needed a transformed mind), the Tin Man (who needed a beating heart), and the Cowardly Lion (who wanted to be as bold as ... well, a lion)? Which would you ask of God, if He was willing to **fill your brain with truth**, OR **fill your heart with love**, OR **fill your nerve with courage**? Well, congratulations! He's more than willing to grant you all three! If you're willing, He's filling! But, be honest, especially with yourself, do you relate to the scarecrow, tin man, and cowardly lion more than to, say, Abraham, Isaac, and cowardly Jacob? Why is that? Why do you have a stronger connection to made-up creatures in a fantasy world? “Technicolor?” Maybe, a bit. But mostly it's because, because, because, because, because, because: **You see yourself in them.**

Their *faults* and *flaws* and *sorrows* and *pain* and *desires* and *struggles* and *set-backs* and ... *victories*. You see, you're not really relating to a *brainless scarecrow*, or a *heartless robot*, or a *spineless lion*. **You're relating profoundly with a reflection of your own mind, soul, and spirit.**

And, rightly so. We were *created* to *do* so. But *if* and *when* you *allow* the *Spirit* of the *Lord* this *kind* of *access*, with *all* the *stories* He's *coordinated* and *collected* and *curated*, they'll *penetrate* your *mind* and *heart* and *spine*, even to *dividing* *soul* and *spirit*! Because, **God's narratives aren't mere stories, they're mirror stories.** Painfully honest mirrors.

For man is made in God's image and reflects God's glory. – 1 Corinthians 11:7 NLT

And therefore: **the more openly we reflect on it, the more clearly we reflect of it.** And therefore:

We all, with *unveiled face*, [not hiding or covering up anything] beholding [in His Word] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, [in each story of the Lord] are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory [from story to story] – 2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJ



“But how do you relate to cultures so unlike our own?” I don’t know; how do you relate so effortlessly to a *dancing scarecrow*, a *rusting robot*, and a *cowering lion*? **It’s not about their culture, it’s all about your connection.** If I asked you to recount the plotline of the Wizard of Oz, how would you do? But, **if I asked you to recount the storyline of God’s Word, from Adam to Malachi, how would you do?** “Who’s Malachi?” “Was he a Munchkin?” Why is that? It’s because, with the Wizard of Oz, **your brain is simply arranging the pieces that are living in your heart.** So, *don’t* let the wicked one come and *snatch away* what’s been sown in your heart. Instead:

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom – Colossians 3:16 NKJ

[Like when] Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” – John 18:38 NAB

[Or when] [He said to the woman] “Has no one condemned you?” – John 8:10-11 NKJ

[Or when He said] “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” – Luke 22:48 NIV

[Or when] The rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. – Luke 22:60-61 NKJ

“Receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear” – Ezekiel 3:10 NKJ

Welcome the Word that has been planted in you – James 1:21 NAB

For you have been *born again*, not of *perishable seed*, but of *imperishable*, through the *living* and *enduring* Word of God. – 1 Peter 1:23 NIV

People haven’t changed. God hasn’t changed. **He’s waiting in His Word, as He did in His Garden.** So, **make the connection, and check your reflection.** And make every effort, this week, to allow His Spirit to use His Word to make you a clearly brighter and bolder reflection of His Son, by reflecting on the enduring and astonishing love of His Son. And then **just immediately adjust accordingly.**