

## The Mirror Doesn't Lie

If you've heard me teach or preach for very long, you know that one of my favorite books of the New Testament is the book written by the brother of Jesus, James. James writes about practical Christianity, living as Jesus Christ has instructed us to live. Again, if you've heard me speak, you know that one of the passages found in James 1 is a favorite as well. It deals with a mirror.

James 1:22-25 says this:

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.”

I don't know about you, but when I wake up, I really don't look my best. My hair's a mess, my eyes are full of “sleep,” and I have stubble all over my face. The mirror tells me to comb my hair, wash my face, and shave. Then, albeit not really that great, I look my best. I have listened to what the mirror says and have made the changes and improvements it called for. Anyone who has any pride in their appearance at all will make the necessary changes.

James doesn't spend much time on the physical appearance and the changes that need to be made. He simply draws a parallel. If we look into God's word and don't make changes based on our spiritual “appearance,” we show a lack of pride in the way we portray ourselves spiritually to others.

Jesus told a different type parable with the same message when He spoke of the foolish builder who built his house on the sand. Jesus says in Matthew 7:26-27 that the person who hears Jesus' words and doesn't do them is destined to have his “house” collapse. Our “house”—our lives – are to have as their foundation the truth of Christ.

If we look into the “perfect law that gives freedom,” and don't see Christ's life reflected in us, we must make changes. As a reflection of Jesus Christ, we should see positive attributes that the Word urges us to have. If we see evil thoughts, immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, or folly (Mark 7:21-22), those attributes need to be done away with. If we clean ourselves up and begin our life with, say, the fruits of the Spirit from Galatians 5, we will better reflect Christ. The “mirror” of the law that gives freedom will reflect love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We will look as we should as we put forth our example to others.

If we look into the word of God, we should strive to find the “unattractive” things

we see and make our spirit “attractive” to others. The changes will be profound, both in us and in the people around us.