

Know Who You Are

By: Lenny Chapman

*Are you sure of who you are?
Is everything that you say and think of yourself the total truth?
When you look in a mirror, do you see the same as others see?*

There are so many things that we concern ourselves with. Often, we can get caught up in the little things, allowing them to fill our life with anxiety, while letting the more important things go without concern. This is the lesson taught by Jesus and recorded in Matthew 23. ***“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”*** ***“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence,”*** (Mat. 23:23-25). This message should ring loudly to every Christian that lives today. Jesus had much to say about the ones who claimed to be godly, yet lived a life of hypocrisy (Mat. 6:2; 6:5; 7:5; 15:7; 16:3; 22:18). Within these verses, and many others, the Lord stated clearly how damaging the behavior of the religious hypocrite is. This person will not only lose their own soul, but in many cases can, and will turn others from the truth.

A Christian is to have no part of hypocrisy in their life, for the apostle Paul wrote, ***“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”*** (2Cor.3:18). To complete this transformation, one must be able to identify their weaknesses by clearly looking into the mirror each day asking the question, “Who am I?” An honest answer to this question is imperative to one being able to take any needed positive corrective action. The Master Teacher did not hesitate nor tiptoe around this issue trying to be “politically correct” when it came to saving a soul. Jesus often spoke of the true value of one’s soul, and that understanding motivated Him to say to the group gathered, ***“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye”*** (Mat. 7:3-5). He was not trying to be mean or inconsiderate by saying it. He was being truthful and this saying is to be considered in that same way today, directing us to be truthful with ourselves. There is a famous quote by George Herbert that says, *“The best mirror is an old friend.”* Is there any older friend we have than Jesus?

When you look in the mirror what do you see? Do you look any deeper than what is visible at first glance? This type of “surface thinking” wrongly believes that beauty is only skin deep. Hopefully a Christian knows better than that, for it is not what is on the surface but what is in the heart that really counts. ***“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...”*** (Proverbs 23:7). All of us take time to “look good,” but in essence taking care of the surface is the easy part, it is much harder keeping the heart unblemished and beautiful. To do this, one must choose the Holy Scriptures as his personal (magnifying) mirror.



Through God’s providence we have the Bible. Although tried and tested throughout the years, the Holy Scriptures have maintained their integrity as God’s inspired word. One only must set down with the Bible and read, to understand how God views beauty. Before God, nothing is hidden. He knows the hearts of all men. For those who desire a greater place one day, they must choose to be honest with themselves today. This is achieved by asking God to help us see ourselves through His eyes. It was David who asked God to ***“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*** (Psalm 51:10), and likewise we too should ask the same from God. After approaching God in prayer, pick up your Bible and find a quiet place to read. Focus with an open and honest heart, and desire to find ways of improvement during each session of reading. James wrote, ***“But be***

doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.” (James 1:22-24).

Do not be like the one James describes who leaves the mirror and forgets what kind of person he was. Know who you are!