

## Mirror Time

In Dadeville, Alabama, two men got into a Bible-quoting contest outside one of their apartments in the summer of 1996. Gabel Taylor, 38, the brother of a preacher, got into a shouting match with another Dadeville resident as to who knew the most Scripture. They began fighting over one particular passage, and the fellow who lost the contest went into his house, got his gun, shot Taylor in the face and killed him. – *News of the Weird*

Hmm? Perhaps, knowing God's Word just for the sake of knowing more than the other guy falls short of what God had in mind when He gave it to us.

Too many professed Christians deceive themselves into believing that they are pleasing God because they regularly expose themselves to His Word. They may attend church regularly and sit under its teaching. They may read and memorize vast portions of it. They may develop a sense of its grand story-line to the point that they grasp all the ins-and-outs of the narrative with what is called a "holistic" understanding. They may teach the Bible to others who in turn admire their expertise. Incredibly, they may even convince themselves that they love God's Word. It is, after all, the story of His loving redemption of mankind.

Surely, God must be pleased. Is there anything else He can expect of a man.? In a word, "yes." That man could do what God's Word says:

<sup>22</sup>Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.  
<sup>23</sup>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 <sup>24</sup>and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. <sup>25</sup>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.

Occasionally, I awaken in the morning with a thought in my head that must be recorded before it gets away. The shower, the toothbrush, the floss – they can all wait. I have to get downstairs to my study and type out this pearl of wisdom. Sometimes, it is indeed worth recording. Other times, the extra hour of sleep would have proved just as useful. In any event, I eventually wander back upstairs. I have encountered my wife on such occasions. Without a word, she has been known to start chuckling. That's usually my cue that I have some sort of a "bed-head crisis" happening. Of course, I would catch something like that without her. I'll take a shower and pass by a mirror a time or two before I venture into public. That's why we have mirrors, right?

When you hear God's Word, but do not obey it, it is exactly like ignoring what you see that needs to be attended to during your morning mirror-time. When you look into the mirror of God's Word, it shows you where you need help. The Word shows you the sins you need to confess. It convicts you of the sins of omission that you need to address. It exposes where your loyalty to God is compromised by other affections. You cannot walk away from what you see there and pretend that you have pleased God simply because you have looked. The most talented student of the Bible as well as its most eloquent spokesmen are just "glorified listeners" when they don't address what they see.

The need to repent ... to deny yourself ... to forgive someone ... to abandon an idol ... to submit to authority; the Bible might reveal a spiritual need that is just as obvious as that horrible thing on the end of your nose. So, what will you do about it now?

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