

MercyMail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

by Steve Higginbotham (January 10, 2019)

The story is told of a missionary who once visited a very primitive tribe of people. These people had very little contact with the outside world, and they were totally unfamiliar with many things we take for granted. One of the things they had never before seen was a mirror. The only way they knew what they looked like was the very poor reflection one can sometimes see in the water. One day, the missionary hung a mirror on a tree. The tribe's chief happened to walk past the mirror, so he stopped, stood there, and looked at it for quite some time. Then he walked directly to the missionary and asked him to explain. The missionary explained what a mirror was and that it was a reflection of what he looked like. The chief promptly walked back to the mirror, took it off the tree, and smashed it on the ground. The missionary asked him why he broke the mirror to which the chief replied, "Because the face that was being reflected was ugly."

When I heard that story, I couldn't help but think that in spite of all our sophistication, we still behave quite primitively at times. God's word functions a mirror to our soul. We can look at it and learn exactly what we look like to God and others. Sometimes, the reflection is not very flattering. So we're left with a choice. Do we try to destroy the mirror? Do we refuse to look in the mirror again? Or do we do what we can to improve the way we look?

I know what the tribal chief did, but what do you do? Give it some thought.

"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. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:23-25).

(Permission to reprint these articles)