

What Do You See in Your (Spiritual) Mirror?  
Hebrews 13: 1 – 3  
February 28, 2010

Remember the queen in the story of Snow White? When she would pass the mirror she would stop and ask the question, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?" And the mirror would reply, "You are," and the queen would be content, because she knew the mirror could only tell the truth.

What truthful thing has your mirror told you lately? No, I'm not talking about your bathroom mirror, or the mirror in the hallway; I'm talking about the mirror that allows you to see into your heart. His name is the Holy spirit of God. Listen to Psalm 77, Verse Six (KJV): *"I call to remembrance my song in the night; I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligence search."* Honestly, we don't like to hear what the Spirit has to say about our heart, and so we try to avoid looking at it too often.

But this morning, I challenge you to stop and look at your heart even though we find it a bit unnerving. The Holy Spirit can only tell us the truth, and God the Father knows we need to be confronted by the truth about the true condition of our heart. Our focus this morning will be on a portion of Scripture in Hebrews Chapter Three, specifically verses One through Three. Please stand as we read these brief verses (read).

**Look At Your Heart!** The first question the Scripture asks is...

**1. Have you attempted to deepen your relationships with members of the church family (Hebrews 13: 1)?**

A. I am a part of the Wilkerson family. I had no say who became my mom or dad when I arrived in the world; for that matter I had no say about who became my brothers and sister, even though I would have negotiated a couple of trades!

1. But despite all that, we share a common goal: the best interest of the Wilkerson family. That means sometimes we must put away our differing agendas and pull together, work through problems, and solve things so we can achieve the best outcome for the Wilkerson family.

B. Well, you and I are members of a spiritual family. We cannot control who is a part of our spiritual family – I'm sure you might make some trades, if you were the general manager.

1. But, just like our biological family, we have to put our differences aside and pull together, because we have a common commitment to the family of Christ.

2. I don't think we do that very well. Too often we are more acquaintances than family members. We need to improve our sense of common commitment to the family of God.

C. So I am proposing a project to facilitate becoming more of a spiritual family.

**Action Step: Write down two names of people you don't know as well as you would like (Romans 12: 10); show honor to them over the next 30 days by:**

**a. Praying for them specifically (1 Thessalonians 5: 25);** whenever we have your prayer time, move their names to the front of your prayer list. If you don't know what to pray about specifically, ask them.

**b. Encouraging them directly (1 Thess. 5: 11);** choose carefully your

words to them over the next 30 days, and do not allow any unwholesome, unproductive, or judgmental word come out of your mouth towards them. Whenever possible build them up with words of encouragement.

**c. Performing acts of service to them (1 Peter 4: 10)**; find a way to serve each of those two people at least once over the next days. It could mean taking them a happy note; or helping them with a task they can not do on their own – let your imagination run free!

The second question the Holy Spirit asks you is...

**2. Have you attempted to improve your relationship with a church member you really don't care for (v. 2)?**

A. Now God is asking us something that is a little bit more challenging: look outside your comfort zone, outside your circle of friends and look for that person you would not associate with under normal circumstances and show hospitality to them.

**Action Step: Add that name to your list, and seek to include them in activities you plan for friends (Romans 12: 16).** \* The key word is "humility." These people are not in our circle because we are to prideful, and choose not to humble ourselves.

1. The truth is if you can humble yourself, anybody can be included in your circle.

B. Just think how this church would be changed if no one visiting this church felt like an outsider, if no one felt unwelcome.

1. And if that is not happening, it is because our hearts are not fully right with our Heavenly Father.

The third question the Holy Spirit asks you is...

**3. Have you really put yourself in the place of someone in the church who is hurting (v. 3)**

A. God is asking you to do something that is even more difficult; the circle gets smaller and smaller, a little more uncomfortable. I believe this is the most uncomfortable circle.

**B. Action Step: Add a name of someone who is hurting (Romans 12: 15; Psalm 35: 14);** this is the fourth name on your list.

1. This person is struggling, and here is what I want you to do for this person:

**a. Pray daily for them before praying for yourself**

**b. Perform an act of self-sacrifice on their behalf**; perhaps it might be seeking to alleviate their suffering by a practical act on your part; maybe it might be symbolic to send them the equivalent of one day's wage as a sign of solidarity with them.

Love is sacrifice. It must cost you something, just as it cost the Father His Son's life. What many want to today is to speak of love that is from the bargain bin of our lives – cheap love at no cost to us. Sorry, God is not going to let you get away with that type of love.

Now, let's take a moment and mediate on the four names you have written on your personal list. Will you accept my challenge and make this personal list your personal mission; seek to develop a deeper understanding of two people in the church you don't

know very well; strive to show hospitality to one person you don't really care for; and finally, seek to minister grace and mercy to someone in the church who is hurting. In four weeks, I intend to give us an opportunity to share the victories and celebrate breakthroughs in the church family. Will you take that challenge?

Let's pray!