

Title: Mirror, Mirror: When God Asks the Questions

Text: Romans 14:10-12

"Mirror, Mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?"

And do you remember the point in the story of Snow White when the mirror was brutally honest with the arrogant queen? That she was no longer the fairest of them all but there was now another that was fairer than her?

The Bible is a mirror. It is the very word of God that is deeply honest and accurate about who you are and what you look like!

We may have an impression of who we are, but we will not have an accurate understanding until we look into the unflattering Word of God.

Main Idea: Who Do You Think You Are?

For those of us that tend to judge others on their Christian walk, this passage of Scripture is specifically for you! And sometimes we need to be reminded not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but with sober judgment, remembering that we are sinners saved by grace, and everything we have - especially our position in Christ, is by His grace alone. This is what the mirror of God's Word tells us!

So then, why, if everything you have is from the Lord by His grace, would you think you are in a position to judge another follower of Christ?

Remember last week's sermon? Our fellow Christians are the Lord's servants. They give an answer to the Lord for the way they live their Christian life. They ultimately will give an account to Christ on how well they have managed this life. And you don't need to play God for them.

This doesn't mean we don't help each other grow in faith and speak truth into one another's lives. This is good, and this is what the "one another's" of the Bible are all about. Certainly, we need to judge or assess where our brothers and sisters are at spiritually in order to help them grow. Paul is not talking about assessment in this passage, Paul is talking about pridefully looking down on others in a condemnatory way! Stop that!

Paul gives three concepts to help us turn from our natural tendency of judging others to a healthier way of self-assessment.

And the first way is by asking a rather personal question...

1. Why Do You Think So Little of Your Fellow Christian? (vs. 10)

Romans 14:10 ESV

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;

Paul starts with a penetrating question directed at the individual.

“Why do YOU judge your brother or sister in Christ.”

“Why do YOU view your brother or sister with contempt?”

Now, before we move forward, I want you to know what the word “despise” or “contempt” means.

“contemptible, despise, least esteemed, set at naught.”

Another form of this word means *“to make utterly nothing.”*

So, we could translate this to say, **“Why do you think of your brother or sister as if they are nothing?”**

What? How could we have the pride-filled audacity to look at a brother or sister in Christ and think of them as worthless and valued at nothing?

I think this begs the legitimate question, does this judgmental person truly understand the gospel?

This judgmental mindset certainly is not rooted in Christ!

Romans 14:10

(PNTC Ro): Twice in this verse Paul uses an emphatic you, first of the weak who is inclined to condemn the strong for doing what the weak considers sinful, then of the strong who is tempted to despise the weak (cf. v. 3). The meat eater and the vegetarian, the day-keeper and the non-day-keeper, all alike are subject to the one Lord who will in due course sit in judgment on them all. Any judgments that they may pass are irrelevant, and in the light of the assize (inquiry) they all face they should not presume to anticipate the divine judgment. - Leon Morris “The Epistle to the Romans”

Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, hit this mentality in the head when he addressed the division they faced in their church...

Philippians 2:1–8 ESV

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests,

but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

So, if we are to have the mind of Christ, it will be a humble mind that assesses ourselves in an accurate way by not thinking higher of ourselves than we ought to think.

And, according to this text, we are to look at others as better than ourselves, not beneath ourselves!

And just in case you need a little motivation to get this right, Paul reminds his Christian readers that there will be a time when they will stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

What is this? I thought we were no longer under judgment. After all...

Romans 8:1 ESV

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

So if there is no condemnation, why will Christians be judged?

Paul is not referring to a condemnatory judgment like Christ will impose on the unbelieving world. Rather, it is a judgment based on how we lived the Christian life. It is a judgment like that of the Olympics when one is rewarded for a race well run.

Another name for this is the Bema Seat judgment. And references for this judgment are in Paul's letters to the Corinthians...

1 Corinthians 3:12–15 (ESV)

*¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—
¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*

1 Corinthians 4:4–5 (ESV)

⁴ For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

2 Corinthians 5:9–10 ESV

So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

God's judgment seat" is only for believers in the Lord. What is here called God's judgment seat is the judgment seat of Christ in [2 Corinthians 5:10](#). Because God judges through His Son ([John 5:22, 27](#)), this judgment seat can be said to belong to both the Father and the Son. The issue of the believer's eternal destiny will not be at stake; that was settled by his faith in Christ (cf. [Rom. 8:1](#)). Each believer's life of service will be under review in which some loss will be experienced (cf. [1 Cor. 3:12-15](#)), but he will be rewarded for what endures (cf. [1 Cor. 4:4-5](#)). This judgment of believers climactically demonstrates God's lordship. - BKC

There is more to consider regarding this concept, but what I want you to know is that there is great motivation for you and me to walk in a way that is pleasing to Christ.

Show pic of the biker at church...

None of us have arrived. We are all broken people who have been redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ. None is better than another. All growing into the image of Jesus day by day, week by week, little by little. We are all beggars helping other beggars find bread.

Every time you find yourself thinking about or, worse yet, talking about someone you believe to be inferior to you because they are engaging in a preference that you won't engage in - stop and repent! Right then and there. Repent and ask God to forgive you of your immense pride and arrogance. Ask Him to bless the person that you are thinking poorly about are gossiping about. Be grieved by your very poor attitude and purpose to walk in humility.

And then serve that person.

Review - Who Do You Think You Are?

Why Do You Think So Little of Your Fellow Christian?

2. Your Salvation Does Not Negate Your Stewardship (vs. 11)

Romans 14:11 ESV

for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

You and I have received a beautiful gift from God if we are in Christ. What is this gift? Salvation from God's wrath against us. He, by His grace and through the shed blood of Christ on the cross, redeemed us and provided for us a beautiful promise. Life with our Creator forever.

I mean, just take a minute and appreciate what you have in Christ.

Forgiveness of Sins:**Ephesians 1:7**

explains that in Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

Spiritual Growth and Fruitfulness: Being in Christ allows believers to grow spiritually and bear fruit. As stated in

John 15:5

Jesus is the vine and those in Him are the branches, and whoever abides in Him will bear much fruit.

Peace and Reconciliation with God: As per

Romans 5:1

being justified by faith in Christ, we have peace with God.

Also...

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

teaches that God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

New Creation:**2 Corinthians 5:17**

says that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. This implies a profound spiritual transformation for believers.

Salvation and Eternal Life:**John 3:16**

emphasizes that those who believe in Jesus Christ will have eternal life.

Romans 6:23

also indicates that the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And this just scratches the surface of what God has for us.

1 Corinthians 2:9 ESV

But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—

But with this amazing gift from God comes a responsibility to God!

We have been entrusted with great stewardship.

We are not simply saved to sit and revel in our salvation while waiting for the Lord to return to take us home. No, that is an indication that you are not saved.

We are to use the time, talents, and gifts we have been entrusted with to reach others for Christ and make them reproducing disciples as well.

We are to be Christ to all that we encounter.

We are to love others with the same love Christ loves us with.

Paul is clear throughout his writing that we are not saved to sit, soak, and sour. No, we are saved to work.

Ephesians 2:8–10 ESV

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 4:1–3 ESV

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

This ridiculous notion that I “get saved” and then live anyway I want without any conviction of sin or change of life is a heresy of the highest order.

No, you were saved to serve!

If God lives in you, you will not remain the same!

And you have a responsibility to cultivate this in your life. You must seek to grow. You must seek to learn. You must put forth an effort to be like Christ. This is not earning your salvation or your sanctification. If you are not saved, you wouldn’t care about any of this. It is the authentically saved person that seeks after God and His truth.

And, again, we see some profound motivation.

At the Bema Seat judgment scene in the future, we see a vivid picture of all of us, every follower of Jesus since time began, bowing their knee and confessing with their tongue that Jesus Christ is the KING and LORD of EVERYTHING!

You, my fellow believer in Jesus, will bow and confess before Christ that He is Lord and King of your life. I hope it is your earnest desire to have your future words match with your present life!!

Parable of the talents...

Matthew 25:14–30 ESV

“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Folks, this is us! What will you do with what your Master has entrusted to you?

What are you doing in your Christian life and walk to “walk in a manner of the calling to which you have been called?” You will give an account to Jesus about this!

Structure your life for growth!

How are you structuring your life to be the obedient follower of Christ He has called you to be?

Regular Bible Study and Prayer: Dedicate specific time daily for studying the Bible and praying. This helps you understand God’s word and His will for your life.

Living out Christ-like Values: Strive to embody Christ-like values in all aspects of life, such as love, kindness, forgiveness, humility, and patience.

Community and Accountability: Participate in a Christian community, a church fellowship. This provides the support, encouragement, and accountability necessary for spiritual growth.

Be a Disciple and Make a Disciple: The Great Commission is clear. Believers/disciples are to make more disciples. Regardless of what you do for a living - doctor, nurse, CPA, Lawyer, factory worker, garbage collector, retired, or whatever you do, your main, eternal, and glorious privilege is that you are commissioned by God Himself to make disciples.

You and I will stand before the Lord and publicly recognize him as Lord and King. And because of this reality, we must spend our energy serving the Lord, not judging our fellow servants.

Review - Who Do You Think You Are?

Why Do You Think So Little of Your Fellow Christian?

Your Salvation Does Not Negate Your Stewardship

And one last motivation to live for the Lord...

3. God Will Have A Word With You (vs. 12)

Romans 14:12 ESV

So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

The prevailing view of God for those who believe in Him is that He is a benevolent grandpa who gives into our every whim. Or at least that is what He should be like. God is love. Because He is love, He should give me whatever I want whenever I want it. When He doesn't give me what I want, I become upset and either blame him for my lack of happiness or stop believing altogether.

Well, a soft, cushy, all-loving God who never stands in our way may sound nice, but that is a false God. This kind of God is impotent and of no value whatsoever.

It is the god of permissive pleasure designed by our own wicked hearts allowing us to justify our sinful desires. This God does not exist. And if we follow this nonexistent God, we will be forever doomed to an eternity in Hell-prison.

Our God, the God of the Holy Scriptures, certainly and unequivocally is a God of love. In fact, He is the very definition of Love.

1 John 4:7-10 (ESV)

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Love is defined on His terms, not ours. We don't get to define what love is; that is not our right.

Love, self-sacrificial love, is an action that does what is best for another.

God created us even though He didn't need to – LOVE.

God redeemed us (at great cost to Himself) although He wasn't required to – LOVE.

God will share eternity with us by fitting us for Heaven – LOVE.

And one day, God will have a word with you on how well you LOVED.

This is what Paul is driving at in this last portion of the text we will cover this morning.

Paul says that God is going to have a “word” with us. We will account for the life He has entrusted to us.

It is interesting that the word “account” here in the text may sound familiar to you if you've been a Christian for a while.

The word is “Logos.” And Logos simply means word.

There are three primary uses for the word logos in the New Testament:

1. Logos in its standard meaning designates a word, speech or the act of speaking ([Acts 7:22](#)).

2. Logos in its special meaning refers to the special revelation of God to people ([Mark 7:13](#)).

3. Logos in its unique meaning personifies the revelation of God as Jesus the Messiah ([John 1:14](#)).

Since the writers of the New Testament used logos more than 300 times, mostly with the standard meaning, even this range of meaning is quite large. For example, its standard usage can mean:

- an accounting ([Matt 12:36](#))
- a reason ([Acts 10:29](#))
- an aural display ([Col 2:23](#))
- a preaching ([1 Tim 5:17](#))
- a word ([1 Cor 1:5](#)) - Facebook from Logo Bible Software

And God will have a word with you one day in heaven.

Verse 12 indicates this will be a personal conversation.

Romans 14:12 ESV

So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Have you thought about this event that will take place in your future?

Remember, this won't be a condemnatory conversation.

Rather it will be one of review and reward. How did you live out the life He gave you? And even though He is my loving heavenly Father, there is a bit of fear and trepidation when I consider having this "one-on-one" with Jesus.

And I'm sure we will discuss when I did some right things.

And I'm sure will talk about the myriad of failures I've had over my Christian life.

But what will be most beautiful about this accounting is the discussion of how Jesus applied His grace to my life and every situation. How He worked through each chapter of my life, especially my Christian life, to make me more like Him.

I think I will leave this meeting with Christ, praising Christ for what He Has done in my life. Because without Christ, I have no hope. Without Christ, I would still be lost in my sin.

It seems to me counterintuitive to think that God would reward me at the Bema Seat Judgment when He has accomplished everything for my salvation and sanctification.

How can I take credit for what He has accomplished? I can't, and therefore the result of that meeting will be me praising him more than Him praising me.

But, I still must press on and be and do what pleases my Lord because HE is worthy!

Alexander Maclaren has this very insightful comment, "Nothing that can be taken from me is truly mine." [1] Think about the big pearls of your life: Your job, your family, your friends, your freedom, the various pleasures of your life, your health, your money, your independence.

All of these things can be taken from you, and one day all of them will be. Every pearl you gather in this life you will have for a time, except for one: Jesus Christ. He can never be taken from you. He is the only pearl that you can ever truly say, "Mine."

Jesus Christ will stay with you in every circumstance of life. When you walk through the fire, He will be with you. He will walk with you through death. When you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, His rod and staff will comfort you.

He will stand with you on the other side in the presence of the Almighty, where He is able to present you without fault and with great joy. Jesus Christ alone is able to say to you, "I will never leave you; I will never forsake you."

...If you are still trying to work out if it is really worth being fully committed to Jesus Christ, you have not yet seen the true value of this treasure. If you feel that it would be too hard to give up your sins, you have not yet seen the unique glory of Jesus Christ

When you see the value of all that Christ is, of all that He has done, and of all that He offers, and when you see that He is the only treasure that you can have always, you will say: "What do I need to do to get this treasure? How can I get this pearl?" When you see the glory of Jesus, you know you have to make it yours and you'll be ready to do whatever it takes.

He is more than worthy!

Yes, one day you and Jesus will have a word together about the life you've lived. And I pray His Words to you are this - *"Well done my good and faithful servant."*

And I know that if you have the opportunity to hear those words, your word in return will be...

You are worthy! Of all blessing and honor and glory! You are worthy!!

What do you do with this information? Very simply, live your life in light of this beautiful conversation that you will have with Jesus!

Review - Who Do You Think You Are?

Why Do You Think So Little of Your Fellow Christian?

Your Salvation Does Not Negate Your Stewardship

God Will Have A Word With You

Conclusion

Do you see Paul's point in this passage? Don't be so obsessed with how your brother or sister in Christ is handling their lives; instead, be obsessed with having a life that is pleasing to Jesus!

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 ESV

So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

How can you know what is pleasing to Christ? Look consistently into the MIRROR of His Word and it will be revealed to you!

Connection Group Reflection Questions

Who are you praying for daily?

Who are you engaging with weekly?

Who are you sharing the gospel with monthly?