

03 | Looking in the Mirror

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Well, welcome back everyone to part three of this series, Being Right with God. Today, we're going to go ahead and jump right back into this series. Today, we're gonna be talking about something called Looking in the Mirror. Looking in the mirror. Have you ever looked at yourself in the mirror? I know, an odd question, but have you? The answer is probably yes. If you're saying no, you're lying. The answer is yes. We've all looked in a mirror. Often times I try not to look in the mirror right when I wake up, because when I do, I see a reflection of myself I don't want to see. In fact, my hair looks crazy, I look tired because I just woke up. When you look in the mirror, what do we see? It's so simple, this is quite practical. But when we look in the mirror, we see a reflection of who we are. You and I know this, we're seeing a reflection of who we are. And today I want to introduce something to you, that when we look into God's Word, God's word is a mirror for us. And when we look into God's Word, we begin to see the reflection of who we really are. Before we continue, I want to quickly recap what we talked about in our second teaching, this great exchange. How God took our sin and He exchanged it with His righteousness. And this is the new us, in fact, we read this scripture second

Corinthians 5:17 and it simply says this, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new." And in the second teaching, we learn this that we are new because of Jesus. And today I want to talk about this. Do we really believe that? Do we really believe that we are new creations?

I mentioned this that God's word is the mirror in which we must see ourselves in. Let me say this again. God's word is the mirror in which we must see ourselves. I want to read to you, James chapter one versus 22 to 25, it says this, "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." Verse 25, "But he who looks" I love that, "he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer, this one will be blessed for what he does." I want to emphasize verse 25, it says this, "He who looks in the perfect law of liberty, he will be blessed." You know what it's saying? That whoever looks into the perfect law of liberty, when we look into God's word, we will begin to see ourselves for who we really are.

Can I tell you, when I caught this revelation as a young, younger girl. I caught something that changed my life. I kind of

want to expose myself and maybe introduce a couple of things of who I am and what God has walked me through in the last couple of seasons of my life. When I was younger, I think when I was in my early twenties, 20, 21, 19, I struggled with a few things. And the first thing I struggled with was deep insecurity. I was a really, really insecure person. In fact, I was so insecure, I was kind of like that, "Yes, man." I would just agree with everyone, I would just do what everyone was saying, because I didn't know how to say "no." I was very insecure, struggled with a lot of timidity, I was afraid of people. Fear of man really crippled me at a young age. I was afraid of what people thought of me. I was afraid of failing. I had a lot of different fears I was struggling with. And the third thing I had, I had this fear, which was ironic enough, I had this fear that I was going to miss God's plan for my life. I was going to miss, I wasn't going to walk in purpose. And if you would have met me at 19, 20, 21, you would have met a girl who loved God. I love the Lord. Passionate about Jesus. But I was dealing with a lot of things in my life. Fear, insecurity, timidity. Didn't know how to overcome these things. And I remember one day, it's so simple. But I remember one day I really got into this habit of just reading the Bible every day. Just a simple habit. I decided, you know, I'm going to read my word every single day. Not because everyone told me, but because God's word is truth. I don't know if you know that, but God's word is truth. It's the truth. And I just got into

this habit, I'm going to read my Bible every single day. And one day I started reading my Bible just a chapter a day. And I'm in Ephesians 2:10. And I'm reading, and I'm reading, I'm like, "Yeah, this is so good." I'm highlighting, I'm circling, and I finally get into the scripture.

It's Ephesians two, verse ten, and the Scripture simply says this, that "We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in it." And I remember when I got to that scripture, something inside of me like awoke, and I didn't know what it was, but for the first time, as I'm reading this particular passage, I started to see myself in a different light. I started to see myself a little differently. And here's why. The beginning of the Scripture says this "For we are His workmanship. We are His workmanship." And what happened to me that day, I realized, "Oh, man, I am God's workmanship." Like, God created me. Like that changed me, that that little phrase changed me. He said, "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus." I recognized that day, "Man, I'm created in the image of God. Something changed. Can I tell you? When that revelation came to me, I realized insecurity did not have to stay in my life. Why? Because I wasn't living for me, I recognized, "No, I'm created in His image. I'm fearfully and wonderfully made." God's Word all of a sudden spoke straight to my insecurity. It spoke straight to the light, and it opened up my eyes to recognize, "Wait one minute, I'm created in the image of God,

I'm created in the image of God." And it just took off that insecurity so quick.

But it didn't stop there. I kept reading. I was like, "This, this is a fantastic scripture, 'Created in Christ Jesus for good works.'" Oh, friends that like blew my mind, "Created in Christ Jesus for good works." You want to why that blew my mind? Because for so long I thought I wasn't created for good works. For so long I thought, "God, am I going to miss the plan? God, do I not have purpose?" And that Scripture so plainly said, no, "God created you in His image." And guess what? For good works. Can I tell you? I recognize that I was created for purpose. I was created for good works. And in the Scripture, it just gets better. It continues, it says that "He created us for good works, which God prepared beforehand." Oh, my gosh. You want to know why that set me free? Because I recognized for the first time ever that God was so intentional with me. You know God's intentional with you. I recognized that God is intentional with me, that He thought this through, that before I was even born, before I was even in my mother's womb, He knew who I was. He knew my name. He knew the purpose I'd walk in. He knew my story. And as I was reading that as a young girl, I began to realize, "Oh, God, not only am I new in You, not only am I created in Your image, but God I'm created for good works, which You prepared for me beforehand." Which, guess what? If something is prepared already, you know, all you got to do is partake in it.

Isn't that crazy? Like when someone prepares a meal for you, all you got to do is eat it. You don't got to make it, it's already ready for you.

Can I tell you what that last part of that scripture says, "that God prepared beforehand that you should walk in it?" Oh, when I read that, I recognized, "God is saying, 'Nicole, you've now got a choice. I've prepared it. I was intentional with you. I love you. I created you in My image. I've created you for good works. And He's saying, "Choose Nicole. You have to choose." The word says "that you should walk in it." It's not a guarantee, you and I, we have to choose to walk in the plan God has for us. And I remember when I read this and I got this revelation, "Oh, I'm going to walk in that purpose." Friends, it changed my life. I saw myself completely different. I no longer walked with this attitude of, "oh, I'm nothing in life. Got nothing going on for me. Oh, I just am." No, you know, when I read the Scripture, it opened my eyes to recognize, "No, there's purpose for me." It allowed me, and it made me walk differently. Not in a cockiness, but in a security that I know, this is what God's Word said. And like I said, God's word, it is the mirror in which we ought to see ourselves. Can I tell you, when we open up God's word, we begin to see ourselves for who we are. We begin to see ourselves for who God has called us to be. God has said some things to us. God has given us promises. God has given us an identity. And if we are not reading God's word, if

we're not looking in that mirror, I love what it says, we read this in James, "He who looks in the perfect law of liberty." When we look into God's word, we begin to see," Oh, this is who I am. This is who I am."

You know, I'm reminded, and it's kind of silly. I don't know if you've ever seen The Lion King. And I think it's young Simba, like young Simba, but he's like looking in the pond. I think there's like a pond, and he's looking at himself. He's looking down, he's looking at himself, and he's young. But his reflection that he sees is this bold, older lion. I thought it was so funny because oftentimes we can look at ourselves and we're like, "Oh, this is, I don't know if this is who I really am. I don't know." But when we look into God's Word, that perfect law of liberty, you know what we do? We see the reflection of who we are. We see, "I am the righteousness of God." You know, the enemy will come, the devil will come and will lie to us. And he'll say, "That's not who you are. Nope. You're still, you're still stuck in sin. You're not really new." He'll bring guilt. He'll bring condemnation. I love what the Bible says, "That there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." But friends, if we don't open up God's Word, if we don't read, if we don't observe God's Word, can I tell you, we're not going to see who we are. We're not going to see who God has called us to be. God has called us. God has given us an identity. We are found. We are created in His image. But

if we're not opening up God's word, oh, it's not going to change us.

I want to read a couple of scriptures to you about what God says we are in His Word. What does God's Word say we are in His Word? The first is this, and I'm going to just bullet point these things, maybe I'll read some scriptures. But the first is this, God's Word says this, that we are new in Christ, new creations. In fact, I read this earlier, but second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new." This is great news, because when the enemy wants to come and tell you, you ain't new, guess what you get to do. "No, God's Word said I'm new." Come on, that's good. When the devil wants to lie to you and say, "Yeah, but you just said that." No, there's no condemnation. God said, I'm new. No, I'm new. I'm forgiven. I'm free. We are new in Christ. What else does God's Word say? God says this, "that we are the righteousness of God." We talked about this recently. We are the righteousness of God. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." That Him is Jesus, that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Can I tell you, oftentimes the enemy will tell you, "No, that's not you. You're not in right standing with God." And if we don't open up God's word, oftentimes we'll believe it's true. But when we see what God says, we can combat what the enemy is saying and say, "No,

no, nope, nope. This is what it says. I'm the righteousness of God in Him. I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus."

What else does the Word of God say? In Isaiah 53:5, it says this, "But he was wounded," that's Jesus, "for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." You know God's word promises us healing. Did you know that? That when we open up God's word, we can recognize not only am I saved, not only am I a new creation, not only am I the righteousness of God, but here on Earth, I can stand on the promises of God, because God's Word says this, "That if I'm sick, I can go to Him and He would heal me. God's Word says this, that if I need healing for something, I can go to Him and I can say, 'God, I thank you that I'm healed in the name of Jesus.' We could lay hands and we would see people recover." Can I tell you, when we open God's Word, I'm trying to convince you today that as we open up God's word, not only do we begin to see who we are, but we begin to see the promises that we have.

I've got two more, it says this, Luke 10:19 says this, "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. And nothing shall by any means hurt you." You know what the Scripture is giving or saying to us? That Jesus has given us authority. Jesus has given us authority. I'm telling you, this changed me. When I started

to recognize that I don't have to believe every lie, that I don't have to believe everything that was coming at me, but I had authority to trample over serpents and scorpions. He's given us authority in His name. Friends can I tell you, when we just open up God's word and we read it, we begin to see who we are. We're new creations. We're the righteousness of God. We're healed. He's given us authority. And this last verse, Isaiah 54 says "and no weapon formed against you shall prosper. "I love that, "no weapon formed against you shall prosper." He's promising, "Hey, listen, weapons are going to be formed, but for you they won't prosper. It won't harm you." And I've learned this in my life, and as I begin to wrap up, I've learned this. Man, God's Word, not only is it a mirror, but it's something I could stand on. It's something I put my faith in. I can say "No, this is what God said, I can put my faith in Jesus. This is what He said. This is who I am."

So back to what I was saying with my story, with my insecurity, with my timidity, with my fear. You know what God's Word did? It broke those things off. It just highlighted things to me. This is who I am. And all of a sudden, I start to believe it. And because I believed what God said, my life became, my life became, my life became, who God has called me to be. By no means am I my perfect in any way. Oh, no. But can I tell you what I recognized? I look at my younger self and I thought, "Man, if you just keep catching what God is saying," I'm so glad

that at 20 the Lord revealed that to me, because it's changed me. At 26 it's changed me. I recognize, I can walk in the fullness that God has for me. I can live the life that God has for me. I'm the righteousness of God. I'm free from sin. I'm going to heaven. Why? Because I'm looking into God's Word, and I'm allowing God's word to tell me who I am.

Can I tell you one last thing? Allow God to tell you who you are, not the world. Allow God's Word to be the truth in which that you and I choose to stand on, not what anything else is saying. God's Word is true. God's Word will set us free. And when we read God's word, it is the mirror in which we see ourselves. Can I pray for you? Father, I thank You for today. And I thank You for Your Word. God I thank You for what you're speaking to us today. God, I thank You that Your Word is the mirror that we view ourselves in. Your word is the mirror that we look at ourselves in. God, I thank You for Your word. God, I thank You today, that You would speak to us and remind us who we are. And God give us the strength to open up Your Word and read it. Lord, we love You and we bless You. And we thank You, in Jesus' name, we all say amen and amen.