

Gratitude: Mirror of the Soul, 2 Corinthians 3:18; Mirror Metaphor: Outline of James

Grace orientation to life brings the events of the day into focus through the lens of God's perfect plan. We are saved by grace, we grow in grace, and we are sustained by grace.

Doctrinal adjustment to reality occurs when we discern events from the viewpoint of biblical truth. There are no problems for which the plan does not have an explanation or a solution.

A personal sense of destiny is bound up in one's realization of priorities in life. Doctrine is number one therefore doing your duty as outlined in the Word becomes one's way of life.

If you do your duty, God will lead and guide you along the trail of life to the ultimate objective: glorifying Him, magnifying the Word, and receiving escrow blessings.

Increasing wisdom develops an understanding of who and what God is. From this knowledge comes a gratitude which results in a personal love for God.

Appreciation for God is based on an understanding of his policies towards us: righteous standards administered by perfect justice and expressed through lovingkindness and longsuffering.

Being the beneficiary of such unmerited favor motivates the believer to view his fellow man in a different light, expressed through unconditional love.

Once the conflicts commonly found in the Jornada are conquered through these problem-solving devices then the believer begins to "max" out his happiness.

With all challenges, threats, and problems brought under control by divine power, the believer may enjoy a tranquility of soul that, according to Paul in Philippians 4:7, goes beyond all human understanding.

This is the point at which glory is transformed into glory.

2 Corinthians 3:18 - But we all, with an unveiled face [believers under the filling of the Holy Spirit minus the 3 arrogant skills and the removal of strong delusion] looking into a mirror [Scripture] to produce a reflection [the Shekinah Glory reflected into our souls], namely, the glory of our Lord, are being transfigured [metamorphoo] into that same image from the source of glory [Christ: the indwelling Shekinah Glory] to the attainment of glory [spiritual maturity: experiential sanctification] from the source of the Holy Spirit [mentorship].

God has designed us so that we can go into our own soul and resolve our own problems.

The manner by which this is accomplished, according to 2 Corinthians 3:18, is by looking into the mirror of the Word.

B. The Mirror Metaphor Found in James 1:19-25

Our first order of business is to place this passage into its proper context, so let's start with an outline of the book of James:

I. Salutation. (1:1)

II. Exordium (Polemical introduction): Guidelines for Orientation and Adjustment to Testing. (1:2-18)

III. Statement (declaration or assertion of the theme to be addressed): Respond Rather than React to Testing. (1:19-20.)

IV. Arguments: (Discourse intended to persuade through elaboration upon the statement leading to a conclusion): A Three-Step Procedure for Dealing with Testing: (1) Be swift to hear; (2) Be slow to speak; and (3) Be slow to anger. (1:21-5:6.)

V. Peroration (Conclusion of the discourse): Patience is the Virtue Necessary to Endure Testing. (5:7-20.)

Our interest is centered on the first of the three-step procedure for dealing with testing: "*be swift to hear.*" We will therefore start our study with the Statement and then take a look at the first Argument.

James 1:19 - So then, my beloved fellow believers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

James 1:20 - for the anger of a person does not achieve virtue from God.

This is James' opening statement and sets the theme for his epistle. He has introduced in his Exordium guidelines for dealing with testing. Here he issues the specific process and procedure for it. We will briefly note the three responses James recommends for handling testing.