

# On the Same Page

“But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.” (James 1:25 NAS95)

## The Value of a Mirror

I have spoken recently of figures of speech, and the Bible is full of them. James talks about a man looking in a mirror, but as soon as he walks away, “he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was” (Jas 1:24). Spurgeon in his *John Ploughman’s Pictures* tells a similar story. He describes showing a mirror to a blind man so that he can see the soot on his face, which is, of course, fruitless. But he goes on to say, the man without eyes has the advantage for he is in the dark *and he knows it*.

We found last Sunday that the man born blind in John 9 could actually see some things much more clearly than those who were fully sighted. He could see that there was something different about Jesus, that He was a prophet and a man come from God. He could see in Jesus an authenticity that led him to belief in Jesus as the Son of Man, something that others simply could not or were not willing to see. Spurgeon goes on to tell of other forces that lead sighted people to blindness.

One such condition is simple unreasonableness or willfulness. Some would call it being mule-headed and stubborn. There is an arrogance to it as well. Spurgeon concludes, “We pity the poor blind; we cannot do so much as that for those who shut their eyes against the light.” I have wondered about Jesus’ figure of speech in the Sermon on the Mount about not casting pearls before swine. I think it might fit here.

“Prejudice shuts up many eyes in total darkness.” Pre-judging means that a person has already made up their mind. Arguments will likely do no good. Spurgeon gives the curious illustration: “when he has said a thing he sticks to it like a cobbler’s wax.” I have to confess that I’m not sure the role of wax in shoe repair, at least back in the 1800’s. More clear is: “one man can lead a horse to the water, but a hundred cannot make him drink.” Or, “he is as stubborn as he is stupid, and to get a new thought into his head you would need to bore a hole into his skull with a centre-bit.” (You can get away saying those things when you quote someone who is dead.)

So what is my excuse of your excuse for failing to heed the mirror of the Word you have heard, the truth you have seen, and yet have not responded with appropriate action? We wouldn’t think of going about with soot on our faces, but then we may go about with soot in our hearts, knowing full well that Jesus said that out of the heart come all kinds of evil things. We wouldn’t fail to respond to warning signs from the car that we are driving, but we ignore the warning signs given by



## Forever-Family Fellowship

**We will teach and practice truth-and-love relationships with brothers-sisters in Christ that must survive/thrive in the present because we believe that these relationships will last forever**

## All-Week-Long Worship

As the local body of believers gathers each Sunday for worship, **we will inspire a worship experience for all age groups that will travel with you all week long.** What we do on Sunday will assist you in your singing, in your praying, in your devotion, and in your witness.

Conversely, it is as you worship all-week-long that you will be prepared to enter into gathered worship on Sunday.

## Day-to-Day Discipleship

As followers of Christ, we are disciples every single day. Respect for and commitment to Scripture is essential. **We will show you how to interact with and respond to God's Word, both as individuals, and in groups.**

## Moment-by-Moment Mission

God, the Architect of the world and of our lives arranges appointments and interruptions. Each of us is called to represent His Son for the glory of His Name. **We will cultivate a mind-set for moment-by-moment mission, whether close to home, or far away.**

the Spirit and the lack of comfort and assurance with God that go with it. In fact, we can become almost used to it. And so, we pray for one another, as Spurgeon does, in these verses:

A dark and blinded thing is man Yet full of fancied light!  
But all his penetration can Produce no Gospel light.  
Though heavenly truth may blaze abroad, He cannot see at all;  
Though Gospel leaders show the road, He still gropes for the wall.  
O Lord, Thy holy power display, For Thou the help must find:  
Pour in the light of Gospel day; Illuminate the mind.  
Behold! How unconcerned they dwell, Though reft of sight they be;  
They fancy they can see right well, And need no help from Thee.  
Speak, and they'll mourn their blinded eyes, And cry to Thee for light;  
O Lord, do not our prayer despise, But give these blind men light.

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## **Glorious Freedom** by Richard Sibbes

**In a wicked man there is nothing but flesh, and therefore there is no resistance. And we must understand the nature of this spiritual liberty in sanctification. It is not a liberty freeing us altogether from conflict, and deadness, and dullness, and the like; but it is a liberty enabling us to combat, not freeing us from combat. It is a liberty to fight the battles of the Lord against our own corruptions, not freeing us from it. That is the liberty of glory in heaven, when there shall be no enemy within or without.**

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### **Notes:**

**Sunday school classes for adults and youth resume meeting this week at 10 a.m.**

**Thank you to all who helped with many activities during the Christmas season, and then again with last Sunday memorial for Shelley Rogers.**

**Ladies Bible Study resumes this Tuesday, 10 a.m. with a study of Ezra and Nehemiah**

**Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 26**

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### **Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.**

**Last Sunday, January 5,** we observed the Lord's Table in our morning worship gathering, and continued our devotion in a Communion series called **Gospel Conversations**. We come to John 9 and "**The Man Born Blind,**" and think about just three aspects of this story. [Listen to the message here](#)

**This Sunday, January 12,** we begin a Winter sermon series on the 3-chapter letter from Paul to Titus. In this first message, we need to understand what is different about this young man, Titus; what is different about this place called Crete; and what is the same for believers everywhere and all the time. I will call this message "**A Distinctive Man in a Strange Place with a Solid Message**" (Titus 1:1-4).

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