

# Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:24



Northside Church of Christ  
4217 Highway 39 N  
Meridian, MS 39301

Place  
Stamp  
Here

## Looking In God’s Mirror

By Mike Riley

When we wake up in the morning what do we do? Do we simply get out of bed, put on our suit, grab our car keys, and make our commute to work? Do we walk into the office a disheveled mess, looking as if we had just crawled out of bed – our hair wild, tie crooked, one blue, and one brown sock, our face in dire need of a shave? Perhaps we know someone who does this, but most of us get up in the morning and spend a little time in front of the mirror.

As men, we spend time with a razor, trimming away our growth of beard, and combing our hair. The ladies take time to primp and put on make-up. We give attention to certain details to make us look “professional,” or at least “presentable” to the outside world. We do these things, because most of us look a mess in the mornings.

In making application of the above in a spiritual sense, what do we do after we hear a sermon? Do we shake the preacher’s hand and say “good lesson” – walk to our car, make the trip home, and forget about everything we’ve heard, or do we hear the call to action presented in the sermon? Do we examine ourselves against what has been taught from God’s Word (2 Corinthians 13:5), or do we simply walk away with a “warm fuzzy feeling” that we’ve spent a few moments of our precious time listening to God’s word presented, then give it no more thought?

Continued on next page...

### SUNDAY MORNING

Triple E  
Edify, Exhort,  
Evangelize  
When Shovels Break  
8:30 AM

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Thru the Bible in  
52 Weeks - Titus  
9:30 AM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship Service  
10:30 AM

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Study of the Book of Acts  
7:00 PM



Please visit our  
website  
[nscocmeridian.com](http://nscocmeridian.com)

Information about our  
congregation  
Sermon Audio Archives  
Previous Bulletins  
Member Pages



Like our Facebook Page



“Study to shew thyself  
approved unto God, a  
workman that needeth  
not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the word  
of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15



## Grace And Works By Mike Riley

Some in the church have a denominational view of Ephesians 2:8-9. This writer does not question their sincerity, but their understanding and knowledge. A clear statement of their position is, “We do not contribute one whit to our salvation” (Rubel Shelly, quoted in Yokefellow, vol. 18, no. 4, p. 3). They take the phrase, “not of works” (Ephesians 2:9) as the main emphasis that destroys any other understanding of the passage. Salvation comes, they teach, by grace only. If “we do not contribute one whit to our salvation”, then there is nothing for man to do. He is entirely passive in the salvation process, and God is the sole actor. If anyone is saved, it is the independent act of God. If anyone is lost, it is God’s fault and He alone is to blame.

### Grace Referred To In Past Tense

In the scriptures, grace is referred to in past tense. Titus 2:11 says, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Grace “happened” for all men. The grace referred to by Paul in this passage is not something that comes to each saved man as the future unfolds, but it is some past favor. The apostle points back to the cross when the Lamb of God died for the sins of the world. If there is nothing for man to do, then salvation is universal, because Jesus died for all (John 3:16-17; Romans 5:6-21).

### God Created A Plan Or Process Of Salvation

Notice again in Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace are ye saved....” This blends with the revealed expression of divine sovereignty. God creates a plan. He created a process of salvation. Grace reveals the plan to all men to either receive or reject through faith (Romans 10:17; Acts 28:23-24). The phrase, “obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:26) assumes a sovereign God. He established a plan and determined that those submitting to the plan receive salvation. It is certain that if God has a plan, He follows that plan.

### God’s Plan Affirms Man’s Free Will

God’s plan of salvation affirms the free will of man. God does not ban free will. He grants it! The plan of salvation demonstrates that those who follow the plan “shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). Man cannot compel God to save him. Salvation is “not of works lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:9). The plan comes from God’s will and not by man’s works which he devises. Paul did not want men to think they had done some “great thing” by which they forced God to save them. Salvation is by grace (the plan made known – Titus 2:11-12). It is also by submission to God. Elsewhere Paul calls it “obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:26). The saved man does not boast (Ephesians 2:9) but submits to God’s plan of salvation by grace through faith (Romans 10:16-17).

### Conclusion

Those who abuse Ephesians 2:8-9, making the phrase “not of works” mean any works – any activity, takes the passage out of its biblical context and promotes what Paul condemns. They accuse the Bible of teaching salvation by works when it only teaches God’s plan of salvation, which really declares salvation by grace. Paul says our salvation is by grace through faith. Saving faith requires obedience to every law of God (James 2:14-26). We do not obey our own plan of salvation but God’s plan of salvation revealed by His grace. Therefore, there is no boasting. Truth is the word of God understood (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:17). God’s sovereign will says, “I have a plan”. God’s grace is included in that plan.

This writer fears that far too many Christians give little heed to what is presented in God’s word. They hear the sermon, leave the building, and forget everything that was taught, not making any application to their lives.

James tells us:

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.” James 1:22-24 KJV

The picture here is of one who sees that he needs to make changes in his appearance, spiritually speaking. He has noticed his disheveled look, and realizes he needs to do something about it. But as soon as he turns away from the mirror, he forgets what he needed to do to make himself appear presentable before God.

On the day of judgment, man is going to answer for how he made application of the “mirror” of God’s Word (Matthew 7:21; John 12:48). While the teacher has a grave responsibility in teaching God’s Word (James 3:1), the hearer also has a responsibility to deal with what he hears, and make proper spiritual application of it in his life (Mark 4:21-25).

James says:

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” James 1:25 KJV

One who “continues” in the word, (James 1:25) does not get a “warm fuzzy feeling” from sitting through the sermon, but rather is convinced, convicted, and makes the necessary changes in his life.

Brethren, let’s resolve to spend more time looking in God’s mirror!

## Announcements

- Baby Shower for Auburn Rowell on May 23rd following worship service. Meal will be pot-luck and everyone is encouraged to attend.

## Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments (Maxine Powell)
- All those affected by COVID-19
- Greg Powell (recovering knee surgery)
- Ann Lowe (Keren Thrash mom, stroke)
- Tommy Buchanan (heart surgery Monday)
- 
- 

## Communion Preparation

- Sign up sheet for 2021 is in foyer
- May - Potts
- June -
- July -

## May Birthdays & Anniversary’s

- Austin Dudley - 4th
- James Johnson - 19th
- Lauren Wooldridge - 7th
- Anthony Juliano - 30th
- Larry & Connie Montgomery - 20th
- Tristan & Auburn Rowell - 23rd
- Shay & Robbi Cooper - 31st

**Every Sunday Morning**  
**@ 8:00 AM**  
**on WTOK-TV**



## Sermon Notes

## Men to Serve

Announcements/Opening Prayer - Don Potts  
Scripture Reading - Titus 2:1 - 5  
Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell  
Head of Lord’s Table - Shay Cooper  
Assist on Lord’s Table - Camden Cooper  
Scripture Reading - 1 Corinthians 11:23 - 29  
Closing Prayer - Rick Carlberg

- Comcast Cable 6**
- Comcast Cable 431**
- Comcast Cable 1011**
- DirecTV 11**
- DirecTV 396**
- Dish Network 11**
- Over-the-air 11.3**