



REFLECTING GOD'S IMAGE

Mirrors and the Moon

July 30, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

John 17:1-26 • (Read the whole passage.)

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV) • “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

Genesis 1:26 (NIV) • “Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’”

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NIV) • “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV) • “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

James 1:22-25 (NIV) • “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does

not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) • “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

2 Peter 1:19 (NIV) • “We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”

Romans 12:1, 2 (NLT) • “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

2 Corinthians 2:15 (NIV) • “For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "REFLECTING GOD'S IMAGE"

Before showing up on the first day of school or meeting a future employer, many people make an effort to look their best. As many say, "first impressions are the most important." The same applies to how people perceive citizens of God's kingdom. We are called to reflect the image of the King. However, the reflection of God's image should be something that emerges from us naturally. The moon doesn't try to be a night-light—it simply reflects the light of the sun naturally. Furthermore, our reflection should be continuous and not momentary patches of light.

We tend to get preoccupied with whether people think well of us or not. However, one of the greatest joys for a citizen in God's kingdom is to be about what others think of God. Looking into a mirror, you can see whether or not you look sad, happy, mad, upset, or depressed. Our lifestyle also speaks volumes about us: what kind of language we use, the music we listen to, how we interact with the young, old, and everyone in between. This lesson is focused on how we can reflect God's image and embrace a lifestyle that reflects God's character.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "REFLECTING GOD'S IMAGE"

As a result of this lesson, we would like the students to be able to:

1. Recognize the reality that we can reflect God's image in all aspects of our lives.
2. Identify with Bible characters and others today who reflect the image of God.
3. Develop a determination to overcome the obstacles with which the devil has shrouded God's reflection in our lives.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) several mirrors of different sizes, oil, dust or flour, markers, mud, toothpaste, paper, pens or pencils; (Activity B) Bibles, one flashlight per student or pair; optional: blind-folds.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • Bibles.

2 BRIDGING

A. THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimfaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Gather a variety of sizes of mirrors. Smear one with oil, one with dust or flour, another with markers—draw all kinds of distracting things (smiley faces, tic-tac-toe, etc.). Have some covered with mud or toothpaste so you cannot see clearly. Leave some mostly clear with a little part covered. The idea is to have varying degrees

of clarity in the reflections. Save one mirror that is completely clean.

Get set • Have the students divide into the same number of groups as there are mirrors. Give each group paper and pencils. The groups will rotate from mirror to mirror, describing what they can see in the reflection and what is hard to see—the level or quality of the reflection.

Go • Say: **As your group looks into the mirror, please describe how well or how poorly you can see your reflection** (i.e., colors are noticeable but patterns are not, you can tell when someone is wearing glasses, the shape is totally changed, for some, part of the mirror is clear and the rest is not, etc.). After the students have rotated around all the mirrors bring them together to debrief.

Debriefing • Ask: Which mirrors were easy to see the reflection in? What mirrors were the most difficult? Why? What can this exercise teach us about being a reflection of Christ to others? What are some things we do to muddy up the reflection? What are some things we do to clean up the reflection?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • The purpose of this exercise is to show that the more people who practice the business of reflecting light, the more light exists for us to effectively do what we need to do. You'll need a Bible, as many flashlights as there are students or a flashlight per pair. (Small inexpensive flashlights can be purchased at a dollar store.)

Get set • Find a part of your church that is dark enough that when the lights are off, you need a flashlight to see. Hide the flashlights. Then have the students wander in the dark finding the flashlights. Each pair or individual needs to have one by the end.

Go • Say: I've hidden some flashlights, and it's your job to find them. There are enough

flashlights for everyone (or pair) to find one. When you find a flashlight, turn it on and then help someone else find one. Continue to help others find flashlights until each person has one. The game is complete when everyone has found a flashlight. Upon completion, gather the group into a large circle and have the students point their lighted flashlights into the middle.

If flashlights or a dark space is not available, simply blindfold students and separate them over a large area. They are not allowed to take off their own blindfold. They should help someone else take off theirs. Then they are to freeze where they are. They are allowed to help only one person. Continue until all the blindfolds are removed.

Debriefing • Read Matthew 5:14, 16 aloud and then **ask:**

1. Why did Jesus call us the light of the world?
2. What is significant about the phrase "a city on a hill can't be hidden"? How does that apply to the idea of reflection?
3. How can we share our light to show others the way to Jesus?—Adapted from The

Gigantic Book of Games for Youth Ministry, vol. 1 (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1999).

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story or stories:

Story One. Dustin recently moved into a new house that has a small pond with a waterfall in the yard. He was showing some friends around when they noticed the pond was full of green stuff. Because of the slimy mess, there was no way to tell how deep or shallow the pond really was. Dustin said, "The pond needs to be cleaned, and when the water can flow freely through the system, then the waterfall will work. After that, it is much easier to keep clean."

Disease, gunk, and other bad things tend to flourish in stagnant water, but when there is a free flow of water coming and going, the water is cleaner.

Ask: How is that similar to our lives? What causes the green stuff to grow in your life? What tends to work as a good cleaning exercise for you? (Without proper daily time with Jesus, our lives can become full of green stuff so that people can't even see Jesus in us. Other things such as music, movies, TV, friends, and even school and work can muddy things up.)

Say: Every day we need to clean out the unnecessary green stuff so people can see the reflection of Jesus in our eyes, actions, words, and expressions.

Story Two. Cameron came home from school one day with a great project for himself and his father. Cameron said excitedly, "We need to find a white flower and pick it, and then put it in a vase with water. And then we put drops of blue food coloring in the water and see what happens."

His father asked, "Why?"

It was a science project Cameron had heard about from someone else, and he was eager to see what would happen. Sure enough, not immediately, but after a while the white flower began to turn a bluish cast. Imagine that!

Ask: How does what we put into our lives affect what shines out of our lives? Can people hide and fake it? For how long?

Debriefing • Say/Ask: It is possible to have so many things compete for your heart and mind that you reflect many different loyalties. In the pond story, we discussed how it is possible that many material things can muddy up our relationship with God, causing our reflection of Him to become poor. How can we learn to recognize when we are "muddied up"? After we have recognized we need a good spiritual bath, how do we help others who want to hose themselves off without offending them or coming across as superior?

Find and read the following references together. Discuss how they relate to what you have just been discussing: **Matthew 7:3-5; Matthew 23:25, 26; John 15:3, 4.**

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

As citizens in God's kingdom it is only reasonable to reflect the ways of the King and the kingdom. If you have ever been near a fair-skinned person who spent too much time in the sun, you not only can see the color of the sun on their face, you can feel the heat of the sun reflect off of them. (This applies to all pigmentations but is probably most notable with fair-skinned people.) They are not trying to be red. They do not exert energy trying to emit warmth—they are red and they are warm, thanks to the sun. It is so important to understand that the source is not in us but comes from the King. We are merely reflectors. We are meant to say and do and feel and think and live and give and work for the same things Christ did. When Jesus taught the disciples to pray He charged them to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." In a sense, God is asking us to be reflectors of the lifestyle of heaven.

Ask: What do you think are the main attributes of the lifestyle of heaven? What are the rules?

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath's section of the lesson.

Ask: What do we know about how mirrors function? How the moon functions? What parallels can we draw between these things and our own lives? Refer to Beginning Activity A if you did not do that activity. Discuss the principles involved.

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Suppose a friend invites you to his house to

watch a movie you know your parents would not approve of, and frankly makes you a little uncomfortable.

Ask: How would this challenge, and your response, allow you to reflect God's image? If you were to examine your life as if you were looking into a mirror, what parts of the mirror would be fuzzy or completely covered? What parts are clear and reflect the image well?

Distribute or call attention to the student lesson. In the Friday section there is a graphic representing a mirror. Have students individually make a few notes about things that are clear in their lives and things that can make the reflection fuzzy. If appropriate for your group, have the students choose someone to pair up with and share their mirrors and encourage each other to clean away what is getting in the way and to affirm each other of their clear reflection.

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Say/Ask: When you look at the life of Christ you can remember dozens of stories that paint a picture of what God is like. Jesus, in fact, made the claim, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." If you could relive any story in the Gospels and be there to be a personal witness to the event, which story or event would you choose? Why?

Read **John 17** out loud in class. Ask the students to imagine this prayer being prayed by Jesus Himself.

Ask: As you listen to the prayer, what part of the prayer do you identify with? In this prayer, what is Jesus really asking God to do in us?

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What does reflecting God's image look like every day?
2. Do you have to make no mistakes in order to reflect the likeness of God to others? Explain?
3. How did the disciples do at reflecting the image of God to others? (Refer to **Acts 4:13, 14.**)
4. Who in your life reflects the image of God to others? Why did you choose them?
5. In what area of your life do you want to more fully reflect what God is like?
6. Do you think it would be easier to reflect God's image if you had been there with Christ (as the disciples were) rather than never having seen Him in person? What does Peter say about that in **1 Peter 1:8, 9?**

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

In most cases, such as the moon or a mirror, the work of reflection isn't work at all. The moon is just a satellite hanging out around a planet—in the right spot at the right time. Some say, "The moon is beautiful tonight!" The moon is beautiful every night, but it is the light of the sun that makes the moon even noticeable. Is that the way it is with you?

Or maybe reflecting God's goodness is a lot like being a mirror. While some of us may be dusty or dirty, we have the potential to reflect Christ to others. What will that reflection be like? Our world has clouded up and obscured a clear picture of what God is like. God is ultimately calling on you and me to be the reflection of Him other people can see.



STUDENT LESSON

REFLECTING GOD'S IMAGE Mirrors and the Moon

July 30, 2022

Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 82, 83

MIRRORS AND THE MOON

Have you ever seen mirrors that make you look fat, tall, skinny, and short, and distort your features so that you can hardly tell that it's you? Mirrors have varying degrees of depth that, even though it may not seem like it, alter your image just a tiny bit. So a reflection of yourself will never be completely perfect, even if you look right into a mirror. In a similar way, even though the reflection may not be precise, others can still see what God is like by looking at you.

The story is told of a boy named Miguel

who was walking home from school one Friday afternoon. He noticed another boy struggling to carry a large stack of books that were teetering back and forth. When the books hit the ground, Miguel ran to help. Miguel found out the boy's name was Eddie, and Miguel helped him carry all his books home. He then invited Eddie over to play video games. It didn't take long for Miguel and Eddie to become great friends.

During school and after school, all the way through high school they were inseparable. When the day came for high school graduation, Eddie, as the valedictorian, was required to give a speech to the rest of the graduates and guests. He said:

“I had given up. I was so alone, and I felt that my life didn't matter to anyone. So I cleaned out my locker for the last time and made my decision to commit suicide. As I carried a stackful of books from my locker I spilled them everywhere. I wanted to die right there on the spot. But then Miguel came along and helped me. Not only did he help me, but he became my friend. What began as a little gesture of kindness became the beginning of a friendship, which in turn, has made all the difference in my life.”

As Miguel heard the speech he wondered if God hadn't placed him in the right place at the right time with the right frame of mind.

Reflecting God's image to others may not be as hard as it seems. Just watch how the moon reflects the sun!

Sunday

RESPONDING

- » Read Ephesians 5:8-10.
- » You finish the scenes:
Scene 1: Liz was a girl in school whom everyone liked. Always nice to everyone, Liz would walk through the hallways every day with a smile on her face, saying hello to everyone. Liz also had a wonderful singing voice, which she used to sing in church and in the school choir. One day she was practicing in the music room for special music when one of the younger students came noisily into the room. Liz stopped what she was doing and listened kindly to the younger student. What did she do to reflect Christ?

Scene 2: Vaughn was a student whom other students looked up to. He could often be found playing ball with people who weren't even very good. During some free time Vaughn and some students were playing ball. Some friends invited Vaughn to play with them in a basketball game. They were exclusively asking Vaughn and not the other players. What did Vaughn do to reflect Christ?

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 5:1-3; 1 John 2:6.
- » When we realize that everything we do has an impact on who we become then we will guard our minds and hearts from wrong thoughts and feelings. It is by looking at Jesus that we become changed into His likeness. As we become more like Him, we begin to treat others as He did. And as we treat others as Jesus would, we reflect His love to them.
- » What are you doing to become more like Jesus? _____

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- » With whom will you share the love of Jesus this week? _____

 - » Below are two verses that are scrambled. Can you separate them and write out the correct verses? Both are from the New King James Version. Hint: knowing the books of the Bible will help you.
 - » Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, 19, 20 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, 1 whom you have from God, whatever things are just, Philippians and you are not your own? whatever things are pure, For you were bought at a price; 6: whatever things are lovely, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, Corinthians whatever things are of good report, 4: which are God's. if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—8 meditate on these things.

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read 2 Corinthians 4:6.
- » Paul calls us to "contemplate the Lord's glory" (2 Corinthians 3:18, NIV). A mirror reflects that which is right in front of it. The moon reflects the light from the sun. We are not different. If we have our eyes, heart, hands, and mind fully focused on Christ, His reflection will appear in our lives. The result, according to Paul, is that we become more and more like Jesus.
- » As Christians, we are learning what it means

to follow Christ. So we practice kindness when we don't feel like it. We forgive others when we don't want to. We show love to the unloving because it is the right thing to do. The more you follow Christ, the more like Him you will become, and the more natural these traits will be. It changes you.

- » "As we study the Example, as we behold the character of Christ, note His life of humility, patience, self-denial, and love, we become changed" (Ellen G. White, "Learn of Me," *Signs of the Times*, January 26, 1891).
- » Be sure of this, however, that unless the Son is your focus, you will not shine. There is no moon without the sun. There is no mirror reflection without someone standing there. You know the song "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine"? Your "light" is a "reflector light" of the love of Jesus!

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the blanks after looking up the texts in the New International Version (go to Biblegateway.com).
1. "And we all, who with unveiled faces _____ the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his _____ with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the _____" (2 Corinthians 3:18).
 2. "For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, _____; and to _____, _____; and to _____; and to _____, _____, and to _____, _____, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is _____ and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins" (2 Peter 1:5-9).
 3. "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil _____ you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is _____, so be holy in all you do; for it is _____: 'Be holy, because I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:14-16).
 4. "When they saw the _____ of Peter and John and realized that they were _____, ordinary men, they were _____ and they took note that these men had been with _____" (Acts 4:13).
 5. "For you were once _____, but now you are _____ in the Lord. Live as children of _____ (for the fruit of the _____ consists in all goodness, _____ and _____) and find out what pleases the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8-10).
 6. "For God, who said, 'Let _____ shine out of darkness,' made his _____ shine in our _____ to give us the _____ of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).
 7. "The Son is the _____ of God's glory and the exact _____ of his being, sustaining all things by his _____ word. After he had provided _____ for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the _____ in heaven" (Hebrews 1:3).

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read 1 Peter 1:14-16.
- » Review the memory text.
- » When God told us to “be perfect,” He meant to go and spend time with the outcasts, the less-popular people at school, the sad and the broken. He calls us to extend grace to them in the same way He extended grace to us. Do you remember the first time you realized what Christ had done for you? When did you first understand what unconditional love is? That is the “perfection” God is looking for. Every one of us is endowed with the capacity to love unconditionally—but only by surrendering our selfish nature and focusing on God’s perfect character will we be able to do it. The more we practice love like Jesus, the more we experience it ourselves. As we receive it from God we can reflect that experience to others.

Friday APPLYING

- » Read 2 Peter 1:5-9.
- » “It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His, that one looking at him sees Christ’s own character shining out as from a mirror” (Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places*, p. 337).
- » We won’t be able to reflect Jesus overnight. Allowing our reflector “lights to shine” takes time and effort. Try taking a few minutes each morning and ask God to help you show His love to others. Write in the mirror below three to five ways you want to reflect God’s love to others this week. Journal your thoughts and experiences around the mirror throughout the week on the next page.



