

Love Brings Clarity

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[0:00] Well, as we come to study God's Word, we come this evening and we read in a passage that many of you will know many of you will have read and some of you maybe even had this passage read at your wedding service.

And I want this evening to maybe touch and overlap a wee bit on what Thomas spoke of this morning. As he spoke of the mystery and the security.

We can find our passage in verse 12. For we now see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope and love abide.

These three, but the greatest of these is love. A passage that's, as I say, known to us. But a passage that has so much to teach us.

[1:14] Even as we come on a night like tonight. In a week that we thought wouldn't come. But as we prayed, we do not know what this world holds for us.

But we trust in the one that does. As we turn to this passage, we're reminded of what it says in 2 Timothy 3.16. That all scripture is breathed out by God.

And is profitable for teaching. For reproof. For correction. Be complete. Training in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete.

Equipped for every good work. I give the title tonight for our sermon. Love brings clarity.

And hopefully as we go through the passage. And as we listen to what God has to say to us. We will see the love of God. And it will maybe bring clarity.

[2:18] Even slight clarity into the situation that we face here. As we seek God's guidance. And as we seek God's direction. Three points.

How we see now. How we will see. And how we are seen. If we look at the passage.

If you've got your Bibles open. Or if you're following on the screen. Verse 12. For we see in a mirror dimly. But then face to face. Now I know in part.

Then I shall know fully. Even as I have been fully known. And many of you here will have learnt that passage. In the authorised version. Where it says.

For now we see through a glass darkly. But then face to face. Now I know in part. But then shall I know. Even as I am fully known.

[3:18] What does it mean. To see through. A mirror dimly. Or to look. Through a glass. Darkly.

Why does Paul write to us. In that way. Well we know that if we look through a dark mirror. Or if we try and look through. Glass. Darkly.

If you can imagine trying to look through. A brown bottle. We never ever. See the full picture. Our vision. Is obscured.

In some way. First of all. Think. Of what it says. In the ESV. It refers to being in a mirror dimly.

Not sure if you've been in an old house. Or maybe there's been a mirror. Hanging in a wall. For a number of years. And the reflective. Elements. Of the mirror.

[4:15] Have maybe started to peel off the back. And it's become pitted. And you look in the mirror. And you wonder. What you're actually seeing. Is it your own face?

For those that maybe haven't been in. An old house like that. Maybe you've stepped out of the shower. And the mirror's obscured. And you wipe.

Across the mirror. In the hope that it's going to bring some clarity. But the heat in the room. Starts to mist. The mirror up again. And you don't really see. All that there is to see.

When we look into a mirror. What is it? That's at the center. When we look into a mirror.

We're looking at ourselves. We're looking at ourselves. We're focusing in on ourselves. And if that mirror. Is dark. If it's misty.

[5:11] We very often. Look further in at ourselves. And start to see. All. That our face. Is about. And we focus.

Purely. On ourselves. We lose the vision. Of what's happening. Around about us. We become the center. Or. As we learned.

Many of us. In the authorized version. To look through a glass darkly. Similarly. We don't get the full picture. Our vision is obscured.

We can't really understand. All that's going on. Brings us. To a dangerous point. As we look in. On these things. No one likes. Being in the dark. No one likes. Not having. The full picture. We want to be able. To understand. It's in our nature.

[6:10] To try and discern. What's actually there. We try and fill the void. Our thoughts. Run away with them. With ourselves. And sometimes.

When our thoughts. Run away. When we're in a situation. That we don't understand. Sometimes. We start to speak. And we start to say things. And what does Paul.

Teach us. In the passage. That we read through. We look at the beginning of the chapter. Verses three. Verses one to three. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels.

But have not love. I am a noisy gong. Or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers. And understand all mysteries.

And all knowledge. And if I have all faith. So as to remove mountains. But have not love. I am nothing. If I give away all I have.

[7:11] And if I deliver up my body to be burned. But have not love. I gain nothing. Paul gives us a warning. About the way that we are to speak.

And in situations. When we don't. Have all. The understanding. That we would maybe want. We don't know. The situation. We're seeing.

As through a glass darkly. Teaches us here. That we need to pause. Not just to make a noise. Not just to speak.

Thinking that we have knowledge. I don't know. Is the microphone. Getting feedback. You have an insight. Into a situation.

And you speak. Thinking. That you know. Everything that's going on. Paul teaches us. To take the gaze off self. Not to try and elevate self.

[8:12] Because of our own knowledge. Our own understanding. He teaches us. To speak. In love. As one commentator. Puts it. Paul says.

That whenever a person. Foregrounds knowledge. And backgrounds love. He is nothing. Or as another. Puts it. If I speak in the tongues.

Of men and of angels. And love. Love does not motivate. The control of my speech. I am only. A resounding gong. Or a clanging cymbal.

Instruments used. To produce. A variety of sounds. That command attention. But only frustrate. Their audience. Unless accompanied. By music. Or words. That interpret.

The meaning. Similarly. To have the gift. Of prophecy. Which conveys. Insight. Into the mysteries. Of God's activity. And knowledge. About God himself. Or a faith.

[9:08] That can move mountains. Is of no value. Unless these abilities. Are motivated by love. As they are used. Within the body of Christ. James.

Writing. In a similar vein. Says to us. In chapter 1. Verse 19 to 20. Know this. Know this. My beloved brothers. Let everyone be quick to hear.

Slow to speak. Slow to anger. For the anger of man. Does not produce. The righteousness. Of God. Be quick.

To listen. Slow to speak. Feel. Feel that you have to fill the void. Silence is good. Don't feel. That you have to fill the void.

And if you do feel. That you need to. Fill that void. Stop. And ask yourself. The question. Is what I going to say. Been spoken in love.

[10:11] Or is it. Out of selfish. Desire. We see through. A glass darkly. Or we see. As looking in a mirror dimly.

How do we change the focus. From looking through. A dimly lit mirror. Or looking through. A glass darkly. Thomas.

This morning. Pointing us. In John 3.16. To believe. In the only. Son of God. We previously looked.

