

by ***Mike Davies***

If you have ever visited a funfair hall of mirrors you will have been amused at the images reflected by the mirrors. These images are distorted because the mirrors have been designed with curves and bends. Only a perfectly straight mirror produces an accurate image of what is placed before it. In a hall of mirrors this is cause for much hilarity but such mirrors in everyday life would prove problematic. For a mirror to be truly useful it needs to provide an authentic reflection of the original.

When Jesus walked the earth, He could claim with conviction 'if you have seen me you have seen the Father' (John 14:9). In His character, His nature and in His actions and words (which themselves were dictated by the Father) Jesus showed us what the Father is like. That is why Paul could write that He is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15).

Man had originally been tasked with glorifying God in creation, having been made in His image, but chose to decide for himself how to live his life: what to think and how to behave. So sin entered the world and has infected mankind ever since. Every man is affected by sin which distorts his nature, just like one of those mirrors. Therefore what fallen man reflects is not the true image of God but a grotesque, blasphemous distortion. This is one reason why God so hates sin.

Jesus came to save mankind from Sin: to restore us back into the image of God so that we could fulfill our God given purpose of glorifying Him as He always intended. To this end He saves us, and to this end He places us in His church- where we are built together into Him (Eph 2:22). For it isn't just as individuals that we need to be a true reflection of God. As the church we need to reflect to the world what God is like. God has chosen the church to be the vessel for revealing His glory (Eph 3:10).

Jesus said, 'I will build my church', He is the master builder. But then He delegated to men the responsibility of ensuring that the church properly reflects Him: this is primarily the role of apostles, working in partnership with elders of local churches, to ensure that churches are being built on the foundation of Christ and according to the pattern laid down by Him. For this reason Paul calls himself a master builder (1 Cor 3:10). This is a tremendous responsibility and requires such men to be, as far as possible, true and authentic representations of Jesus - in the same manner that Jesus was an accurate and authentic representation of His father: in nature, in character and in total obedience to

Him. Failure to do so will result in a church that doesn't reflect Jesus accurately – it will be a grotesque misrepresentation just like one of those images in the hall of mirrors.

Paul was not without sin (no man is) but was a model to any who are called to a leadership role in the church. He could point out to the churches that they knew his way of life as well as his teachings (1 Thess 2:10)- and he could exhort them to 'follow (imitate) me as I follow (imitate) Christ.' (1 Cor 11:1)

So it is that those who are on a leadership team need to not just reflect the nature and character of Jesus, but that of the team leader. By this I don't mean becoming a pale imitation or trying to be something that we are not. Rather, within our own gifting , calling and individuality to seek to accurately reflect the values, life, and teachings of those who lead us.

I have the privilege of travelling the world ministering to churches. I am not an apostle but work in an apostolic field and I am sent by apostolic leaders. If they have a responsibility for building the church by representing Jesus exactly, then I in turn have a responsibility to be an exact representation of them: in my life and my teachings. Paul himself would say of Timothy, 'He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. '(1 Cor 4:17)

This principle holds true for leaders of local churches also. Once a man is recognised as an apostle, there is a responsibility to accept him as an apostle, as a representative of the Lord Jesus Himself. Acts 2:42 tells us, 'they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching.'

I cannot afford to let my own preferences, character quirks or pet theologies become distortions in the mirror that I am. I need to have my life, words, and character as straight as possible so that what I reflect is a true image of the one who sent me. In doing so I then represent not just the team leader well but I display the nature of Christ, and help to build a church that looks like Him.

As we all do this, like well-made mirrors, we will all reflect back the same image. We will reflect the image of Jesus to the church and to a world that is lost and so desperately needs Him.



### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mike serves in [Joshua Generation Church](#). He loves to see people equipped to effectively serve the Kingdom of God. He is married to Chantal and they have two beautiful daughters. You can follow him on [Facebook](#).

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