

HOW TO ADJUST YOUR SIDE-VIEW MIRROR

(This excerpt from *The Age of Reason* promotes highway safety and is provided as a public service by TheSwordbearer.org)



Driving mirrors are important to driving safety because they allow us to quickly and conveniently see without having to turn our heads. But the improper adjustment of side-view mirrors is so common today that it has resulted in the widely-used term “blind spot.” Let’s look at how side-view mirrors *should* be used...and therefore how they should be adjusted.

Tradition can affect people of all levels of intelligence because tradition causes us to assume something is correct just because it’s the way “everybody” does something. Tradition feeds our natural laziness and breeds widespread ignorance by causing people to assume there is no need to investigate certain “basics” or “fundamentals” because they are “common knowledge.” Consider how tradition affects motorists and puts them at risk by causing blindness. One of the benefits of this example is you can witness the truth of it every day.

Obviously, driving a car is no big deal. It requires neither intelligence nor skill. And many drivers have been doing it for many years and are therefore what you’d call experienced drivers. If you ask any driver why his **side**-view mirror is called a side-view mirror, he will answer either, “Because it’s mounted on the side of the car” (an incorrect answer), or, “Because it’s used to see out the side of the car.” If he gave you the incorrect answer ask him why the **rear**-view mirror is called the rear-view mirror. He’ll answer, “Because it’s mounted on the rear of...uh...no, it’s mounted toward the *front* of the car. So I guess it’s name reflects the fact that it is used to view what’s out the rear of the car.”

Now, if you were to pull up behind him at a traffic light and look in his rear-view mirror you'd see his eyes because he is correctly using his rear-view mirror to view things to his *rear*. Now look in his side-view mirror. You will *also* see his eyes because he is incorrectly and redundantly using his side-view mirror to view the very same things to his rear that he sees in his rear-view mirror! (You should not be able to see his eyes in his side-view mirror until you pull out into the lane to his left and begin pulling up toward his left *side*.) What you now know about this guy is *he is blind* to traffic that comes up alongside him because his side-view mirror is not performing its intended function. In order to see traffic out to the side he must therefore compensate for his lack of a side-view mirror by turning his head.

If your mirrors are aimed properly you will be able to see the car *behind* you in your *rear-view* mirror. As that car moves into the left lane and begins getting closer you will see it moving off the left side of your rear-view mirror (and also out the left side of your side-view mirror if you are incorrectly and redundantly using it as another rear-view mirror). The car you are watching is now moving into the "blind spot" that most motorists (those who don't know what a side-view mirror is for) on the road have. However, in this example you have properly aimed your side-view mirror so you can see out to the side. Therefore, as the car moves out the left of your rear-view mirror it simultaneously moves into your side-view mirror. As the car continues to pull up further alongside of your vehicle you will notice it beginning to move out of your side-view mirror. However, at that same time it will begin moving into your peripheral vision – even though your head is still pointed forward. With the two mirrors aimed properly the passing vehicle will *always* be visible in your rear-view mirror, your side-view mirror, or your peripheral vision. There is no such thing as blindness when you do it right.

A good way to initially adjust your side-view mirror is to put the side of your head against the closed driver's window. Adjust the side-view mirror so you can just see a slender part of the side of your own vehicle. Most of what you see in the mirror will be out to the side of your car. Then with your head up in the normal driving position you'll look over at your side-view mirror and see a strange sight – a view out to the side! Most people at this point (to use a Bible application) would listen to their body complain that it preferred the traditional view it is used to; because so many Christians – the majority – just *can't* be wrong, and would surrender to the will of the body by continuing to use the side-view mirror as another rear-view mirror. A Swordbearer, however, would cautiously drive his car with the mirrors set correctly in order to see if these things be so. Amazed that he no longer has a blind spot, and that he doesn't even have to turn his head, he'll overrule his body's objections and force it to submit to doing things the right way. By being a doer of what is right he will gain understanding *that other drivers lack*. By continuing to learn and do more and more things correctly – instead of making the single doctrine of driving mirrors a hobby horse in order to show that he's "better" than most other drivers – the Swordbearer becomes a mature and wise driver.

In the future when you stop behind another motorist at a traffic light and see his two eyes in his side-view mirror, you'll reflect upon the fact that in all probability you are looking into two OFF flags because that person apparently never mastered basics like driving mirrors – and in all probability he also never bothered to see if the doctrines his church taught him really are in accordance with the Bible. He only *thought* he was right...because he lazily accepted all the "answers" he got from tradition.

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.