

2 Corinthians 3:7-18, Superiority of the New Covenant

(cf. **Exodus 34:29-35**; also Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 7:10-14; 8:2-4)

⁷ Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ⁹ If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! ¹⁰ For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹ And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

¹² Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. ¹³ We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ 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.

Questions

1. This section was setup by at the end of the previous section (cf. 2 Cor. 3:6) which causes Paul to reflect upon Ex. 34:29-35. Identify the ways Paul contrasts the Old Covenant with the New Covenant.
2. Clearly glory is a keyword in this passage. Compare and contrast what glory means and how it is used in popular culture versus in the Bible.
3. How can Paul say the Old Covenant brought condemnation and yet the law is good (Rom. 7:12, 14; Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:2-4)?
4. Paul says when the old covenant is read, a "veil remains" but Christ takes it away. B.B. Warfield once said: "The Old Testament may be likened to a chamber richly furnished but dimly lighted," by which he meant that the Christ reveals things in the Old Testament that were previously hard to see (e.g. Trinity, Incarnation of Christ, mission to the gentiles). How does Christ "remove the veil" of the Old Testament?
5. Compare and contrast what is mean by the freedom of the Spirit in v. 17 with its popular usage. Why does it matter?
6. How does the Spirit work to transform us into an ever-increasing glory? How has God's Spirit worked to change you over time?
7. What role does "contemplating the Lord's glory" have upon our growth in Christ and the way we share the gospel?