

PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A CARNAL WORLD

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 3:4-16

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THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING THE RIGHT HEART FOR HIS MINISTRY

Part 3

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Law, Grace, Love Condemnation, Jesus, Moses

Introduction to the Text; 2nd Corinthians 3:4-16

2Cor. 3:4-16

2Cor. 3:4-6 And we have such trust **through** Christ **toward** God. **:5** Not that we are **sufficient** of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our **sufficiency** is from God, **:6** who also made us **sufficient** as ministers of the **new covenant**, not of the **letter** but of the **Spirit**; for the letter **kills**, but the Spirit gives **life**. **2Cor. 3:7-11** But if the ministry of **death**, written and engraved on **stones**, was **glorious**, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, **:8** how will the ministry of the **Spirit** not be more **glorious**? **:9** For if the ministry of **condemnation** had glory, the ministry of **righteousness** exceeds much more in glory. **:10** For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. **:11** For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. **2Cor. 3:12-16** Therefore, since we have such hope, we use **great boldness of speech** - - **:13** unlike Moses, who put a **veil over his face** so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. **:14** But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is (*can only be*) taken away in Christ. **:15** But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. **:16** **Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord**, the veil is taken away.

We had neighbors who had a blind son.
Blindness is a tragic thing. Yet I have seen some blind people who have an extremely powerful sense of awareness and even some kind of “soul-sight”.

**It’s been said that “Seeing is believing,
But in Christianity, believing is seeing.”**

We’ve been talking about the GREATNESS of the Second covenant –
really it’s not so much a second as in “Another” as much as it is the
“FULFILLMENT OF THE FIRST. With all that the first demanded and required and showed us – it brings to us the satisfaction of the same. – namely Jesus Christ is the very substance of the Scriptures.

Matt. 5:17-18

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. :18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

1.) Than absolute assurance v. 4-6

1a.) Into the presence of Almighty God v. 4-5a

1b.) Into the acceptance of Almighty God v. 5b-6a

1c.) Into the life of Almighty God v. 6b

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

2.) Than multiplied glory v. 7-11

2a.) The **great** glory

v. 7-8

2b.) The **greater** glory

v. 9

2c.) The **greatest** of glories

v. 10-11

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

3.) Than being able to **see**

v. 12-16

THAN BEING ABLE TO SEE

3a.) To see **the promises** of God

v. 12-13

Verse 12-13

Therefore, since **we have such HOPE** (*concrete expectation*), we use **great BOLDNESS** (*publicity, out-spokenness, directness*) **of speech** - - :13 unlike **(VS)** Moses, who put **a veil over his face** so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was **passing away** (*expiration date*)

Peter, a Jew whose personal veil had fallen off said;

Acts 10:42-43

And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge of the living and the dead. :43 To Him all the prophets witnessed that, **through** His name, whoever believes **in** Him will receive remission **of** sins.”

Verse 12

Therefore, (1) since **we have such HOPE**, (*in the present tense – now*) we (2) use **great BOLDNESS of speech**

I sympathize with people who are not Christians when they might walk in here or catch a conversation among us - - because we're certain and confident and excited and aware because what we experience in life is **wrapped in HOPE** which is manifested in the **BOLDNESS** we enjoy...

At Jesus' death in Jerusalem, the veil of the temple was torn from top down to the bottom exposing the entrance into the holy of holies. That veil had kept the common man out from the presence of God. Only the high priest could enter into that place.

Great *polus*, *pol-oos'*; vast, abundant, excessive, multiplied many. **(the high priest never had such boldness)**

Boldness *parrhesia*, *par-rhay-see'-ah*; a plain, out-spokenness, a frankness, a directness. A confidence. **(the high priest never had such authority)**

Contrary From Moses' Encounter

*The moment Moses left the presence of God he began to lose his tan. From being with God his face began to reflect, radiate the glory of God. **God's glory had gotten on him - but not in him.** So as Moses descended from Mount Sinai his **glory-tan** began to fade and so he veiled his face so that people could see the fading glory.*

As far as they knew his face was still glowing under that veil.
Just like it did when he first came down - **EXTERNAL THINGS NEVER LAST.**

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

THAN BEING ABLE TO SEE

3b.) To see the Word of God

v. 14-15

John 1:1-3,14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. :2 He was in the beginning with God. :3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. :4 In Him was life, and

the life was the light of men.... :14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Verse 14-15

:14 **But their minds were blinded.** For **until this day** the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is *(can only be)* taken away in Christ. :15 But **even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.**

Verse 14a

But their minds were blinded. (WHY? - - HOW DID THAT HAPPEN?)

For until this day **the same veil remains** unlifted
in the reading of the Old Testament,

It is **intellectually** impossible

To **NOT** see Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. It is **logically** impossible –
historically impossible – **emotionally** impossible – **reasonably** impossible
To **NOT** see Jesus Christ in the Old Testament.

Verse 14b

because the veil is *(can only be)* taken away **in Christ.**

Jesus Christ Alone has the power, is qualified, is authorized
to remove the grip of the Law from man.

Sight **allows** us to **appreciate** what's around us.

Sight **provokes** us to **worship** God in that sunset or that wave.

Sight **brings** **pictures** to our minds and creates thoughts and imagination.

There's a Great Example for Us

Mark 10:46-52

Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, (1) **sat by the road begging.** :47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, (2) **he began to cry out** and say, (3) **“Jesus, Son of David, (messiah) have mercy on me!”** :48 Then many warned him to be quiet; (4) **but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, (messiah) have mercy on me!”** :49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. ¶ Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.” :50 (5) **And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.** :51 So Jesus answered and said to him, **“What do you want Me to do for you?”** The blind man said to Him, (6) **“Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”** :52 Then Jesus said to him, **“Go your way; your faith has made you well.”** And **immediately he** (7) **received his sight** and (8) **followed** Jesus on the road.

What sets his faith off like a bomb? – “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by”

He had just enough faith to...

To begin to cry out unashamed

Faith Redirected.

He had just enough faith to...

Believe that Jesus could in fact be the promised Messiah.

Faith Increasing

He had just enough faith to...

To literally act upon what was happening around him

Faith Reacting

He had just enough faith to...

Take Jesus at his offer and receive the gift

Faith Securing

He had just enough faith to...

To decide this One is worthy of my devotion

Faith Ongoing

I have a question in all of this – where did his faith come from?

He could not see a thing. He **had never seen** a miracle. He **had never seen** Jesus at work. He **had never seen** the light of day.

Where did his faith come from?

He had heard about Jesus. **He had heard** Jesus healed people and was raising the dead, **He had heard** Jesus was cleansing the lepers – **He had heard** about Jesus Christ.

And what about you today? Where does your faith come from?

Do you have just enough faith to...
Believe that Jesus Christ can help you

Miracles & Wonders & Answers Cannot Save

*You might watch a miracle - but a miracle cannot open someone's eyes
You might see a wonder - but a wonder cannot cause someone to believe*

*Some man sees the sunrise and walks away and thinks,
"My I was so lucky to have seen that sunrise."*

Verse 15

:15 But **even to this day**, when Moses is read,
a veil lies on their **heart**.

There's an earthly Proverb that's very true today.

"There are none so blind as those who will not see."

Matt. 13:13-16

Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. :14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah (6:9-10) is fulfilled, which says: "Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; :15 For **the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed,** Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' :16 But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

August 7th, 1859 - Charles Spurgeon

“Our spiritual blindness is of such a kind that it makes us think that our vision is perfect in all things; whereas, when we are enlightened by Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, we then discover that our previous sight had indeed been a great blindness of the soul. Spiritually, we are blind. We are unable to discern our lost estate; unable to behold the blackness of sin or the terrors of the wrath to that is to come. It is only after our eyes are opened that we can see just how closed they were.”

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

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THAN BEING ABLE TO SEE

3c.) To see the heart of God

v. 16

Verse 16

Nevertheless when one (*it = the heart*) **turns to the Lord,**
the veil is taken away.

**When “One” – the “Anyone”, or the “Whoever One”, “You Da One”
(revelation takes place - - and continues to take place)**

turns epistrepho, ep-ee-stref'-o 1. To change from one form or substance into another. the converting of water to a gas or into ice. 2. To go from one state of reality to another state of reality.

Are you of the Old Covenant Judaism Today (Based On Works)

Salvation is achieved by (1) Living a holy and righteous life dedicated to Yahweh, the God of Creation. (2) fast, (3) worship, (4) observing the holydays.

Are you a Hindu Today (Based On Works)

You have a 3 step process (1) One is of devotion to , (2) The second is of knowledge obtained from an enlightened one. (3) The third is of works (karma), where one can through fulfillment of responsibilities achieve salvation.

Are you a Buddhist Today (Based On Works)

Your life's goal is Nirvana. Through 8 levels of transcendental blissfulness you can arrive at the state of nothingness--becoming a Buddha.

1. Right Understanding / 2. Right Resolve / 3. Right Speech / 4. Right Action / 5. Right Occupation / 6. Right Effort / 7. Right Contemplation / 8. Right Meditation = you then achieve "Buddha"

Are you a Muslim Today (Based On Works)

For the Muslim, your purpose for living is to be like Mohammad and please the "Allah" of Islam so as that one might possibly earn Paradise.

Are you of any Cult Today (Based On Works)

(Works, Self-Merit, Performance)

John 3:15-18

That whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. :16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. :17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. :18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Rom. 3:23. Rom. 10:9. Rom. 10:10. Eph. 2:8-9

Rom. 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **Rom. 10:9-10** If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **Eph. 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING GREATER THAN...

*Are you like blind Bartimaeus this morning
Cheer up because his faith **perceived its opportunity** when
Jesus was passing by. Can you see this morning like he did then?
That Jesus is passing by you now - this morning?*

Heb. 3:7-8, Heb. 4:1-2

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice, :8 Do not harden your hearts... 4:1-2 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. :2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

Will You Today

Take what you have heard and mix it with faith?

(faith is an action verb – it moves and lives and acts upon what it knows)

Will You Today Respond To Christ's Offer?

>>>> The Cross, The Christ, The Call <<<<

Come Forward for Prayer

End of Study

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