

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

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.

I remember the first encounter I ever had with a Bible

It was the evening of Tuesday, February 9, 1971 – why? Because Earlier

That Day - **The Sylmar Earthquake Hit at 6:00:41am**

(I thought that if I slept with the Bible next to me – God would not allow me to be killed)

I never opened it to read it – I just held it near.

Knowing it was important. Not knowing why.

Jer. 31:31-33

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel (*Israel first then the world*) and with the house of Judah - **:32 not according to the covenant** that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My **covenant** which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. **:33** But this *is* **the covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: ***I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.***

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

1.) Than absolute assurance

v. 4-6

THAN ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE

1a.) Into the presence of Almighty God

v. 4-5a

Verse 4-5a

:4 And we have such trust **through** Christ **toward** God. **:5a** Not that we are **sufficient** of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves

And we have such trust **THROUGH** Christ **toward** God **through** *dia, dee-ah´ - as a highway. To come and go on the same route. (like an interstate or freeway) an ongoing occasion to traffic back and forth.*

“We knew of God and About God, ***but it wasn’t until we knew Him through Jesus Christ that everything changed.***”

Jesus Christ was That Promised “GREAT HIGH PRIEST”
The one who was to be ISRAEL’S DELIVERER. He was the
SON OF GOD. from the Old Testament scriptures....

Personally:

I have no doubt the Bible is Gods word to man. At first pass I was impressed with its historical accuracy and then its prophetic accuracy. Then I was impressed with how it was able to get inside of me and take control. Then, after awhile its greatest proof for me was how it transformed and empowered my life & peoples lives - - no wonder the Bible is feared.

Its been said that the proof is in the pudding. Well God put it this way;

Psa. 34:8

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good;

Verse 5a

:5a Not that we are **sufficient of ourselves**
to think of anything as being **from ourselves**

sufficient hikanos, *hik-an-os'*; from ἵκω hiko (ἱκάνω hikano or ἱκνέομαι hikneomai, akin to 2240) (to arrive); competent (as if coming in season), i.e. ample (in amount) or fit (in character): — able, + content, enough, good, great, large, long (while), many, meet, much, security, sore, sufficient, worthy.

**Christianity is not a higher form of living or a pious lifestyle.
It's not ascent-ism - - In fact those things are hindrances to real Christianity.**

**We cannot better ourselves to become “Christian or Christianized”
“well pastor - I live by the golden rule”**

Properly Placed Sufficiency

Phil. 3:2-6

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! :3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, :4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: :5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; :6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Properly Placed Sufficiency

Phil. 3:7-9

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. :8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ :9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ,

You cannot live a Christian life until you have a Christian life to live.
– H.A. Ironside

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

THAN ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE

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

Verse 5b-6a

:5b but our **sufficiency** is from God,
:6 who also made us **sufficient** as **ministers** of the **new covenant**.

“Our **sufficiency** is from God”

this is a very sobering and humbling reminder.

The word **sufficiency** carries *with it that God is the source of all we need to survive. In the context it is speaking of our faculties of reason and logic and understanding.*

Without God we would be unable to think clearly and responsibly. The sign of a weakening mind is it's inability to focus or to stay engaged. If that happens in the life of an unbeliever they are heading toward destruction. Their minds lose the ability to make the right decisions.

Mark 5:15

Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one *who had been* demon-possessed who had the legion of demons, sitting and clothed and in his **right mind**.

AS A CHRISTIAN – THAT'S OUR MINISTRY TO “OTHERS”

Paul is not speaking to a seminary class or pastors . . .

sufficiency A bestowed quality or state of existence. To be fully adequate. Competence; adequate substance or means. In finance the term used is to possess ample wealth, stock or funds.

Eph. 3:8

To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, **this grace** was given, **that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,**

2Cor. 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

**The wealth of His Righteousness that we should preach
the Wealth of His Message**

a disruptive faith

The Christian experience is not easy. It's not comfortable. And yet once you have encountered Jesus Christ you are compelled to press on into Him more.

The Christian faith is a **disruptive faith**. It is an unsettling faith. What I mean is it wiggles down deep inside of you and turns things over. It makes demands of you on the inside. – A.W. Tozer

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER THAN ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE

1c.) Into the **life** of Almighty God

v. 6b

Verse 6b

not of the **letter** but of the **Spirit**;
for the letter **kills**, but the **Spirit** gives **life**.

A clear reading of the Old Testament Law

Reveals that there is no provision for salvation in the Law itself.

How was Abraham declared righteous
before the Law was ever given?

(God the Spirit) El-Shaddai means **God Almighty** or **All Sufficient God**. El speaks to the power of God Himself. **Shaddai** meaning to feed or to nourish.

The word can mean breast, which implies that **EL Shaddai signifies one who supplies, and satisfies all our needs.**

How did king David relate to the Lord in his life – not from the Law?

**THE OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS WERE SAVED BY BELIEVING THAT
THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES ABOUT THE MESSIAH
WOULD BE FULFILLED.**

Psa. 51:11-13

Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. :12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. :13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

WE ALL LOOK BACK AT THOSE PROPHECIES HAVING BEEN FULFILLED ABOUT HIS COMING BIRTH, LIFE, DEATH & RESURRECTION - - HIS MESSIAHSHIP

Gal. 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

2.) Than multiplied **glory**

v. 7-11

2a.) The **great** glory

v. 7-8

Verse 7-8

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?**

MORE glorious, **MORE** glorious, **MORE** glorious

glorious *doxa*, *dox'-ah*; from the base of 1380; glory (as very apparent), in a wide application (literal or figurative, objective or subjective): — dignity, glory(-ious), honour, praise, worship.

Rom. 3:19-22

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. **:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. **:21** But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **:22** even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.

1Tim. 1:11

according to **the glorious gospel** of the **blessed** God

(the happy God)

throughout history Greek scholars have struggled to put the contemporary meaning of the word “Blessed” in the translation for fear of appearing disrespectful. “Blessed” sounds appropriate. But if Paul was speaking this verse to us today he would say it in English and it would be just like this...

“according to the glorious gospel of The **Really Really Happy God**

God’s sacrifice for mankind’s sins was Jesus Christ, Who provides the atmosphere, the arena, the theater, the place - - where God and man can meet again!

Nearly 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus Christ...

Is. 53:11

He (*the father*) shall see the labor of His soul (*the son*), and be satisfied (*atonement*) .
By His (*the son*) knowledge My righteous Servant (*the son*) shall justify many, For
He (*the son*) shall bear their (*our*) iniquities.

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER THAN MULTIPLIED GLORY

2b.) The **greater** glory

v. 9

Verse 9

For if the ministry of **condemnation had** glory,
the ministry of **righteousness exceeds MUCH MORE in glory.**

Rom. 7:21-25

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. :22
For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. :23 But I see
another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing
me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. :24 O wretched man
that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? :25 I thank God—
through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Rom. 8:1-2

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who
do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. :2 For the law of
the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER THAN MULTIPLIED GLORY

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

v. 10-11

Verse 10-11

: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**

and that **“WHAT REMAINS”** is God’s Eternal Gospel of His Grace.

Col. 1:26-27

the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been **revealed to His saints**. :27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of **this mystery** among the Gentiles: which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**.

Silly little cults who come along trying to say the gospel needs enhancement

excels *huperballo*, *hoop-er-bal’-lo*; to cast or to throw beyond the point, to surpass with exceeding greatness.

Eph. 3:20-21

Now to **Him who is able** to do **exceedingly abundantly above all** that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, :21 to **Him be glory** in the church by Christ Jesus to **all generations, forever and ever. AMEN**.

The glory of the biblical promises.

The glory the gospel message // The glory of the birth of the Christ
The glory of the ministry of Jesus // The glory of the miracles of Christ
The glory of His death // The glory of His resurrection
The glory of His Church // The glory of His soon return...

Rev. 1:1,14-15

The Revelation (**glory**) of Jesus Christ - - **:14 HIS HEAD AND HAIR WERE WHITE LIKE WOOL, AS WHITE AS SNOW, AND HIS EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE; :15** His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, **AND HIS VOICE AS THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS;**

Rev. 19:11-16

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. **:12 HIS EYES WERE LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE, AND ON HIS HEAD WERE MANY CROWNS. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. :13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. :14** And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. **:15** Now out of **HIS MOUTH GOES A SHARP SWORD**, that with it He should strike the nations. And **He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. :16** And **He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

Rev. 20:11

:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, **FROM WHOSE FACE THE EARTH AND THE HEAVEN FLED AWAY. AND THERE WAS FOUND NO PLACE FOR THEM.**

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER

3.) Than crystal clear vision v. 12-16

THAN CRYSTAL CLEAR VISION

3a.) To see the promise of God v. 12-13

Verse 12-13

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

Peter, a Jew who's 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 witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.”

Verse 12

Therefore, (1) since **we have such HOPE**,
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 - - we're certain and confident and excited and aware because what we experience in life is wrapped in HOPE which is manifested in our BOLDNESS

At Jesus' death in Jerusalem, the veil of the temple was torn from the 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.

Boldness *arrhesia, par-rhay-see'-ah*; a plain, outspokenness, a frankness, a directness. A confidence.

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 the radiance of 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.**

GOD NOW DWELLS INSIDE HIS PEOPLE. THE GLORY GLOWS FROM WITHIN

**NOTHING CAN BE GREATER
THAN CRYSTAL CLEAR VISION**

3b.) To see **the word** of God

v. 14-15

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,

Verse 14b

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

Verse 15

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

Rom. 11:1-2

I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. **:2** God has not cast away His people whom He **foreknew**.

Rom. 11:8,11

Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day." :11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

Christian – be very careful that you do not put the Jewish unbeliever in the same category as a gentile unbeliever. - - yes both are lost and need salvation through Jesus Christ but the Jew has been blinded by God unlike the gentile unbeliever who has been blinded by satanic, demonic powers.

NOTHING CAN BE GREATER THAN CRYSTAL CLEAR VISION

3c.) To see **the heart** of God

v. 16

Verse 16

Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

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

Rev. 19:10c

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING GREATER THAN...

God's Love for You? How He Has Displayed and Revealed His Love?

>>>> **The Cross, The Christ, The Call** <<<<<
Come Forward for Prayer

End of Study

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