

A Letter of Grace

2 Corinthians

A Greater Glory
(3:7-18)

1

Introduction

- Review
- What exactly is Paul doing? What is he responding to?
 - Response to false teachers/Judaizers/super-apostles?
 - Appropriate to other letters and contexts, but is out of place in the flow of what he has been saying and defending in this section of the letter
 - Instead, Paul is justifying his boldness in speaking (and writing) due to the work of the Spirit in those who know, love, and want to be like Jesus
 - All about “glory” - various forms used 13x in this section

2

The Ministry of Death (7-8)

Now if the ministry of death,
carved in letters on stone,
came with such glory that the Israelites
could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory,
which was being brought to an end,
will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?

3

The Ministry of Condemnation (9-11)

For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation,
the ministry of righteousness must *far exceed it* in glory.

Indeed, in this case,
what once had glory has come to have *no glory at all*,
because of the glory that *surpasses it*.

For if what was being brought *to an end* came with glory,
much more will what is *permanent* have glory.

4

Hope and Boldness (12-14a)

Since we have such a *hope*,
we are *very bold*,
not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face
so that the Israelites might not gaze
at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.
But their minds were hardened.

5

The Veil Removed (14b-16)

For to this day, when they read the old covenant,
that *same veil* remains unlifted,
because *only through Christ* is it taken away.
Yes, *to this day* whenever Moses is read
a veil lies over their hearts.
But when one turns to the Lord,
the veil is removed.

6

Spiritual Freedom, Beholding, and Transformation (17-18)


Now the Lord is the Spirit,
and where the Spirit of the Lord is,
there is *freedom*.

And we all, with *unveiled* face,
beholding the glory of the Lord,
are *being transformed* into the same image
from one degree of glory to another.

For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

7

the ministry of the Spirit, in turning to Christ

	
Old Covenant (Moses)	New Covenant (Jesus)
ministry of death	ministry of the Spirit
carved in letters of stone	written on the heart
being brought to an end	is permanent
ministry of condemnation	ministry of righteousness
once had glory	far exceeds in glory
has come to have no glory at all	has surpassing glory
being brought to an end	gives hope
needed to be veiled	veil is removed
hardens minds	brings freedom
veil remains unlifted	beholds the glory of the Lord
	...thus, transforms to same image of Christ's glory

8

Application

- The Old Testament Scriptures are not tossed aside, but rather are unveiled and made glorious as revealing the need for Jesus
- Obedience to God's law apart from the righteousness of Jesus either produces condemnation or self-righteousness
 - Obedience to God's law as fruit of faith in Jesus produces hope and an exaltation of Christ's righteousness
- Seeing God's face in the OC was deadly
 - Seeing God's face in Jesus Christ is life-giving

9

Application

- The New Covenant community is to be marked by glory, boldness, and transformation
 - This is in part because, instead of condemnation and shame, there is openness in our walking together in the light of Christ with forgiveness, mercy, and grace
- Be cautious of teachings that move back toward Old Covenant practices, telling us we are missing out if we don't recover the practices found there - as Christ and the New Covenant is a greater and surpassing glory

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