

BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS
THE EXCELLENCY OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRATION
2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18

Introduction

Where is the proof that the Gospel is what we say it is? Isn't that what the world wants to know? How do you know the Gospel is true and works?

Now we can share and often do share proofs from **science** (as we have with the *"Unlocking The Mysteries Of Genesis"* video series that we just completed last Sunday afternoon). We can and do share proofs from **archaeology, medicine, history, and other places** that may or may not be accepted by unbelievers! Understand that many, if not most, unbelievers are not looking for a reason to believe, they are looking for reasons to remain in their unbelief!

But what effect do these things have on our faith who are believers? Well personally for me it validates the faith that I have and even causes my faith to increase!

But let me tell you that I really don't need those proofs personally, because there is a much better proof that the Apostle Paul talks about in this chapter!

It's not proof that unbelievers may readily accept, but it is actually more powerful than any of the other proofs we might examine. The proof is that of changed lives! I'm talking about visible fruit—hearts and lives that have been touched and changed!

Vs 1

Paul is asking here, *"Do we really need to give you our pedigree or show you some form of approval from us or anyone else that we are God's ministers?"*

Now Paul did have a pedigree before he got saved that could put others to shame! (Cf. **Philippians 3:4-9**)

Also, understand that there were some false teachers around at this time who had started carrying forged letters of recommendation to boost their authority and to be received of Churches.

Paul says, *"No, we don't need to have that"* — for this reason:

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Vs 2-3

The proof of the effectiveness of any ministry isn't whether or not it has a recommendation from some other big wig preacher that everybody knows!

The proof lies in the epistles that are written in the fleshly tables of the heart of those who have been affected by the ministry! What Paul was saying is, **the proof lies in the changed hearts and changed lives of people!**

He said to these Corinthians, "YOU are our proof!"

Vs 4

This gives me confidence. I know the Bible is the Word of God! I don't need any convincing! When I was growing up in Church, I believed it was the Word of God! When I went to Bible School, I believed it was the Word of God! I still believe it is the Word of God!

I think that intellectually it can be determined that it is the Word of God! (There are many excellent scholarly proofs such as *"Evidence That Demands A Verdict"* by Josh McDowell and *"The Case For Faith"* by Lee Strobel, etc.)

But today I don't need those intellectual demonstrations anymore! I'm way past that!

I believe it is very, very simple—**the proof of the Word of God is in what it has done and what it does!** You've heard the expression—*"The proof is in the pudding."* God put it like this in *Psalms 34:8: "O taste and see that the LORD is good . . ."*

The proof of the Word of God is in what it has done and is doing in the lives that it is manifest in!

Vs 5

We have already sensed the weakness of the apostle Paul in this epistle of 2 Corinthians. But Paul could say and would say later in this letter, *"For when I am weak, then am I strong"* (2 Corinthians 12:10).

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God is not looking for some big somebody He can use! If He had wanted that, He couldn't use me and He couldn't use you and He couldn't use anyone else!

Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:24-31

God chooses the weak things of this world, the little things, the insignificant things to accomplish His purposes! That way it is clear Who is doing it and Who should get the glory! Our sufficiency is of God!

Paul Contrasts Between The Old And New Covenants (3:6-18)

Vs 6

(i.e. The Old Testament and the New Testament.)
There is a contrast here in several different ways!

Think about that phrase—*"Not of the letter, but of the spirit."*

In the Old Testament, more specifically in the Law, the letter kills! The letter of the Law actually brings our condemnation! The Law shows us to be guilty sinners! (Cf. **Romans 7:5-13**)

Those letters which were written on the tablets of stone condemned man!
The Mosaic Law has **never once** given life to ANY that are born of Adam!
That is the contrast he is making here. The letter of the Law kills! *"For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."*

Name me somebody, anybody who was saved by the Law! Not even Moses, the law-giver, could not be saved by the Law? Because He was a murderer!

David broke the Law even though he was a man after God's own heart! He was both a murderer and an adulterer! NOBODY can be saved by keeping the Law! The Law kills us; it condemns us!

Vs 7

The old covenant, the Law, was a ministration (*aid; service*) of death! When it was delivered it brought condemnation!

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When it says that it was written and engraved on stones, we know he is specifically talking about the Ten Commandments.

It *"was glorious."* How so? Think about this for a minute:

It is the will of God!

It was written by God! (Holy = It came from God!)

It is good, even though it condemns us! (Just =It rightfully condemns!)

There is nothing wrong with the Law!

The problem is with us!

It shows us that we are sinners!

It is good = in that it prepare the sinner for Christ!

And then it states here how glorious it was when it was given:

"So that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away."

That glory on Moses' face faded...it slowly disappeared!

Vs 8

If the giving of the Old Testament (the Law) was glorious, how much more so the giving of the New Testament (or the Gospel of Grace!)

Vs 9

"The ministration of righteousness" is the Gospel, the Righteousness which we have in Christ Jesus. (Cf. **Romans 10:1-10**)

Vs 10-11

"That which is done away" is the Law. Notice that it is *"done away."*
"Done away" means *"to be or to render entirely idle or useless."*

If the law was *"done away"*, then how much more glorious is that which remains—i.e. that New Covenant? He is making a contrast between the giving of the Mosaic Law and the giving of the Gospel of grace in Christ Jesus! The glorious nature of the Gospel of Christ doesn't fade!

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The glory of the Law...the glory of Moses being in the presence of God faded!
But, the glory of Christ rests upon us who are saved!

The manifestation of Christ and His Holy Spirit are continually with us and
upon us! Can somebody say, GLORY!!!