

2 CORINTHIANS 3 | *Ministers of a New Covenant*

A Letter from Christ

1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. 3 And you show that you are a letter from Messiah delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

Sufficient to Be Ministers of a New Covenant

4 Such is the confidence (πεποίθησις) that we have through Messiah toward God. 5 Not that we are sufficient (ικανός) in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency (ικανότης) is from God, 6 who has made us sufficient (ικανόω) to be ministers of a new covenant (διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης), not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

The New Covenant's Greater Glory

7 Now if the ministry (διακονία) of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory (δόξα) that the sons of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass. part.), 8 will not the ministry (διακονία) of the Spirit have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation (κατάκρισις), the ministry of righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) must far exceed (περισσεύω) it in glory. 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses (ὑπερβάλλω) it. 11 For if what was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass. part.) came with glory, much more will what is permanent (μένω) have glory.

Boldly Beholding and Being Transformed

12 Because we have such a hope (ἐλπίς), we are very bold (παρρησία), 13 not like Moses, who would put a veil (κάλυμμα) over his face so that the sons of Israel might not gaze at the outcome (τέλος) of what was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass. part.). 14 But their minds (νόημα) were hardened (πωρόω, aor. pass.). For to this day, when they read (ἀνάγνωσις) the old covenant (τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης), that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Messiah is it taken away (καταργέω, pres. pass. ind.). 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts (καρδία). 16 But when one turns (ἐπιστρέφω) to the Lord [Jesus], the veil is removed (περιαίρέω, pres. pass.). 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, freedom (ἐλευθερία) [from the old covenant for a life of new covenant service]. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding (κατοπτρίζω, pres. mid.) the glory of the Lord [Jesus], are being transformed (μεταμορφόω, pres. pass.) into the same image (εἰκόν) from glory into glory (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν), as from the Lord [Jesus], the Spirit (ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος).

Commentary

1. Introduction.

- a. 2 Co 2:14-7:4 has been called the “great digression.” One thought leads to another in an outpouring of spiritual wealth unsurpassed in any of Paul’s other letters.
- b. Paul’s opponents in Corinth are Jewish legalists, or Judaizers, who want to impose the Mosaic covenant and law on Gentile believers in Corinth. They wanted them to be circumcised, follow dietary restrictions, and abide by the Jewish calendar, in other words to become Jewish.

2. The Aroma of Messiah (2 Co 2:14-17).

- a. **2 Co 2:14-17** 14 But thanks be to God, who in Messiah always leads us [as captives or victors] in triumphal procession (θριαμβεύω), and through us spreads the odour (ὄσμη) of the knowledge (γνώσις) of him everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma (ὠδία) of Messiah to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a stench (ὄσμη) from death to death, to the other a fragrance (ὄσμη) from life to life. Who is *sufficient* (ικανός) for these things? 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers (καπηλεύω) of God’s word, but as people of sincerity (εὐλικρίνεια), but as from God in the sight of God we are speaking (λαλέω) in Messiah.
- b. Jesus always leads us in triumphal procession (v. 14).
 - (1) θριαμβεύω: “*lead in a triumphal procession*, in imagery... of the Roman military triumph... *to lead in triumph*, in imagery of Roman generals leading their troops in triumph....” (BDAG, 459).
 - (2) Jesus is, without exception, continuing to advance his work. He is building his church.
 - (a) **Mt 16:18** 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- c. We are the aroma of Messiah. Through us he is spreading the knowledge of him everywhere (v. 15).
 - (1) “This fragrance is spread throughout the world by the apostolic preaching and works” (BDAG, 728).
- d. The response to our aroma isn’t up to us. Our aroma is of death for some but of life for others. We are a stench to some and a fragrance to others (v. 16).
 - (1) “In Paul’s mind there is the picture of a Roman Triumph and of Christ as a universal conqueror. The highest honour which could be given to a victorious Roman general was a Triumph. ... In an actual Triumph the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol in the following order. First, there came the state officials and the senate. Then there came the trumpeters. Then there were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land. ... Then there came pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships. There followed the white bull for sacrifice which would be made. Then there walked the wretched captives, the enemy princes, leaders and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed. Then there came the lictors [minor judicial officials] bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres. Then there came the

priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning in them. And then there came the general himself. He stood in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory sceptre with the Roman eagle at the top of it, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter. After him there rode his family, and finally there came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting *Io triumphe!* their cry of triumph. As the procession moved through the streets, all decorated and garlanded, amid the shouting, cheering crowds, it was a tremendous day, a day which might happen only once in a lifetime. That is the picture that is in Paul's mind. He sees the conquering Christ marching in triumph throughout the world, and himself in that conquering train. It is a triumph which, Paul is certain nothing can stop. We have seen how in that procession there were the priests swinging the incense-filled censers. Now to the general and to the victors the perfume from the censers would be the perfume of joy and triumph and life; but to the wretched captives who walked so short a distance ahead it was the perfume of death, for it stood for the past defeat and their coming execution. So Paul thinks of himself and his fellow apostles preaching the gospel of the triumphant Christ. To those who will accept it, it is the perfume of life, as it was to the victors; to those who refuse it, it is the perfume of death as it was to the vanquished. Of one thing Paul was certain—not all the world could defeat Christ. He lived not in pessimistic fear, but in the glorious optimism which knew the unconquerable majesty of Christ.”¹

- (2) When we proclaim the gospel message, we are pleasing to God regardless of the response of those who hear it.
 - (3) Christians are a troublesome lot. Because our primary reference point is a God who is outside of space and time and outside the historical flow of events, we are a thorn in the side of Secular humanism, Marxism, Postmodernism, and the New spirituality.
- e. As the aroma of Messiah, we don't peddle God's word. We're not hucksters (καπηλεύω). Rather, we speak with integrity (v. 17). Our motives are pure (εὐκρίνεια).
- (1) We don't seek money, sex, power, or popularity.
 - (2) We must not water down the gospel message or change its meaning.

3. A Letter from Messiah (2 Co 3:1-3).

- a. **2 Co 3:1-3** 1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation (συστατικός), written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. 3 And you show that you are a letter from Messiah delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.
- b. Paul is defending his ministry yet again before the Corinthians. But he really shouldn't need to (v. 1). This is because the Corinthians themselves are the greatest proof of his apostleship. They themselves *are* his “letter of commendation”

¹ William Barclay, 204-6.

- (συστατικός)(v. 2). The Corinthian church herself, despite her flaws, is the greatest proof that Paul is an apostle of Messiah Jesus (1:1).
- (1) Letters of recommendation were common in the early church (Ac 18:27; Ro 16:1).
- c. In fact the Corinthians are a letter from Messiah delivered by Paul and his team to the world (v. 3). The Corinthians are making Jesus known (φανερῶω, pres.), objectively, through their corporate church life (v. 3).
- (1) Their Christian lives are the strongest proof of the genuineness of Paul's apostleship.
- (2) The consistent Christian life is the most powerful sermon in the world.
- (3) A good letter must be legible, clear in its message, and reflective of the personality of the author.²
- d. This "letter" is written with the Spirit of the living God and on tablets of human hearts (v. 3). So it is a New covenant letter and not an Old covenant letter.
- (1) By grace though faith in Jesus, the Corinthian believers have become participants in the New covenant, with all of its amazing benefits.
- (2) This is not something we agree to or feel. It happens to us automatically at the moment we trust in Christ.

4. Sufficiency as New Covenant Ministers (2 Co 3:4-6).

- a. **2 Co 3:4-6** 4 Such is the confidence (πεποίθησις) that we have through Messiah toward God. 5 Not that we are sufficient (ικανός) in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency (ικανότης) is from God, 6 who has made us sufficient (ικανῶω) to be ministers of a New covenant (διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης), not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- b. Paul is confident as a minister of the New covenant (v. 4). Today, we are to share his confidence.
- c. However, Paul is quick to say that his sufficiency (ικανότης) is not from himself but from God (v. 5). God has made him (and his team) sufficient (v. 6).
- (1) *ικανότης*: state of being qualified or adequate for someth., *fitness, capability, qualification*" (BDAG, 473).
- (2) Our Christian service is God working through us rather than our independent service to him. God is the one who makes us qualified.
- d. From v. 6 to v. 14, Paul compares the Old covenant to the New covenant. To follow along, we must understand a few things.
- (1) The Old covenant is the Mosaic covenant.... See *Mosaic Covenant* and *Mosaic Law*.
- (2) The New covenant is.... See *New Covenant*.

5. The New Covenant's Greater Glory (2 Co 3:7-11).

- a. **2 Co 3:7-11** 7 Now if the ministry (διακονία) of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory (δόξα) that the sons of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass. part.), 8 will not the ministry (διακονία) of the Spirit have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation (κατάκρισις), the ministry of righteousness

² Thomas Constable, *Notes on 2 Corinthians*, 54.

(δικαιοσύνη) must far exceed (περισσεύω) it in glory. 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses (ὑπερβάλλω) it. 11 For if what was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass part.) came with glory, much more will what is permanent (μένω) have glory.

| SUMMARY OF CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | economy | (old) | new | v. 6 |
| 2. | type | letter | spirit | v. 6 |
| 3. | result manward | death | life | v. 6 |
| 4. | vehicle | stone | Spirit | v. 7 |
| 5. | result Godward | some glory | greater glory | vv. 7, 8, 10 |
| 6. | purpose | condemnation | righteousness | v. 9 |
| 7. | duration | temporary | permanent | v. 11 |
| 8. | symbol | veil | mirror | vv. 13-18 |
| 9. | initiator | Moses | Christ | vv. 12-14 |

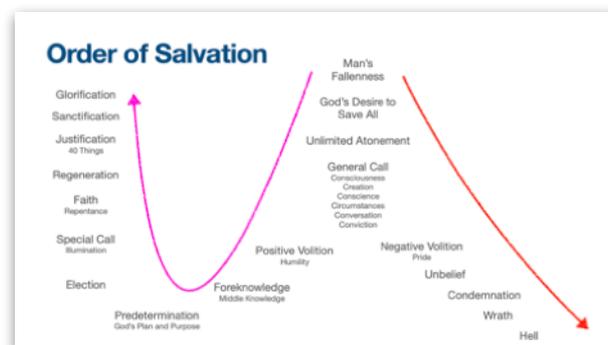
- b. The Old covenant of the law kills, but the New covenant of the Spirit brings life (ζωοποιέω)(v. 6).
- (1) The Mosaic covenant imposed rules and offered no enablement or help. The New Covenant offers a new way of life with enablement through the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) The Mosaic covenant was impossible for Israel to measure up to, and it announced a death sentence on all who fell short of it. By contrast, the New covenant, built upon promises and the substitutionary death of Christ, leads to life through Spirit enablement.
 - (a) **Ro 8:3-4** 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
 - (3) The Mosaic covenant isn concerned with the letter of the law, but the New covenant is concerned with our intentions.
- c. The Old covenant came with glory, but the New covenant has even more glory (vv. 7-8). In fact, the Old covenant has come to have no glory at all (v. 10)!
- (1) **Ex 34:29** 29 When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.
- d. The result of the Old covenant is condemnation before God, but the result of the New covenant is the imputation of Jesus' righteousness from God (v. 9).
- (1) The purpose of the Mosaic covenant was to show all humility the futility of trying to please God through rule-keeping. We simply cannot do it. We stand condemned. The New covenant, by contrast, only gives. It is a covenant of grace that is entered into by us through faith, not rule-keeping.
- e. The Old Covenant was being brought to an end (καταργέω), but the New covenant is permanent (μένω)(v. 11).
- (1) καταργέω: "to cause someth. to come to an end or to be no longer in existence, abolish, wipe out, set aside...removed" (BDAG, 525).

- (2) μένω: “to continue to exist, remain, last, persist, continue to live” (*BDAG*, 525).
- (3) Paul uses these same two words in 1 Co 13 to describe prophecy and knowledge (καταργέω) and *agape* love (μένω).
- (4) **He 13:20-21** 20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the *eternal covenant*, even Jesus our Lord....
- (5) The point is that the New covenant Paul preaches is greater than the Old covenant preached by his Jewish legalist opponents.

6. Beholding and Being Transformed (2 Co 3:12-18).

- a. **2 Co 3:12-18** 12 Because we have such a hope (ἐλπίς), we are very bold (παρρησία), 13 not like Moses, who would put a veil (κάλυμμα) over his face so that the sons of Israel might not gaze at the outcome (τέλος) of what was being brought to an end (καταργέω, pres. pass. part.). 14 But their minds (νόημα) were hardened (πωρόω, aor. pass.). For to this day, when they read (ἀνάγνωσις) the Old covenant (τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης), that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Messiah is it taken away (καταργέω, pres. pass. ind.). 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts (καρδία). 16 But when one turns (ἐπιστρέφω) to the Lord [Jesus], the veil is removed (περιαιρέω, pres. pass.). 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, freedom (ἐλευθερία) [from the old covenant for a life of new covenant service]. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding (κατοπτρίζω, pres. mid.) the glory of the Lord [Jesus], are being transformed (μεταμορφόω, pres. pass.) into the same image (εἰκόν) from glory into glory (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν), as from the Lord [Jesus], the Spirit (ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος).
- b. New covenant ministry is characterised by confidence (v. 4), hope (ἐλπίς), and boldness (παρρησία) (v. 12).
 - (1) ἐλπίς: “the looking forward to someth. with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment, *hope, expectation*” (*BDAG*, 319).
 - (2) παρρησία: “a use of speech that conceals nothing and passes over nothing, *outspokenness, frankness, plainness...* ‘Openness’ somet. develops into *openness to the public*, before whom speaking and actions take place... a state of boldness and confidence, *courage, confidence, boldness, fearlessness*, esp. in the presence of persons of high rank” (*BDAG*, 781).
 - (a) **Eph 6:19** 19 ...And also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel....
- c. Moses veiled his face because he didn’t want the Israelites to observe the fading glory of the Old covenant (v. 13).
 - (1) **Ex 34:34-35** 34 Whenever Moses went in before Yahweh to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, 35 the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.
- d. The minds (νόημα) of most Jews are hardened toward Messiah and the New covenant (v. 14). A veil lies over their hearts (καρδία) when the Torah is read (vv. 14-15).
 - (1) **Ac 15:21** 21 For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.

- (2) νόημα: “that which one has in mind as product of intellectual process...*thought*, gener...*design, purpose, intention*...the faculty of processing thought, *mind, understanding*” (BDAG, 675).
- (3) καρδία: “as center and source of the whole inner life, w. its thinking, feeling, and volition...of inner awareness” (BDAG, 508).
- (4) **Ro 11:25** 25 ...A partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.
- (5) **2 Co 4:4** 4 In their case the god of this world [Satan] has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God.
- (6) Most Jews today refuse to recognise the New covenant and see its connection to Jesus. They fail to understand the point of the Mosaic system was to point to justification by grace through faith in Messiah. This is the primary message of *Galatians* and *Romans*.
- e. When anyone, Jew or Gentile, turns (ἐπιστρέφω, aor.) to the Lord Jesus, the veil lying over the heart is removed (v. 16), so that he or she may believe the gospel message.
- (1) ἐπιστρέφω: “to change direction, *turn around*...to cause a pers. to change belief or course of conduct, with focus on the thing to which one turns, *turn* act. trans., in a spiritual or moral sense...to change one’s mind or course of action, for better or worse, *turn, return*” (BDAG, 382).
- (2) Note the order of salvation. First positive volition, then illumination, then faith. See *Order of Salvation*.



- (3) **Ro 11:23** 23 And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.
- f. Where the Spirit of the Lord Jesus is, there is total freedom (ἐλευθερία) from slavery to the Mosaic covenant and the Mosaic law (v. 17)
- (1) ἐλευθερία: “the state of being free, *freedom, liberty*... Esp. of freedom which stands in contrast to constraint of the Mosaic law, looked upon as slavery” (BDAG, 316).
- (a) **Ro 8:2** 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Messiah Jesus from the law of sin and death.
- (b) **Ga 5:1** 1 For freedom Messiah has set us free. Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.
- (c) We have absolute and permanent liberty from the Mosaic covenant, not partial or temporary freedom from the law.

- (2) Our freedom is not a license to sin but a license to serve.
- (a) **Ga 5:13** 13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

| Freed from... | For... | Romans |
|---------------|---------------|--------|
| Death | Life | 5 |
| Sin | Righteousness | 6 |
| Law | Grace | 7 |
| Flesh | Spirit | 8 |

- g. Every (πᾶς) believer, with face unveiled, *may* continually behold (κατοπτρίζω, pres.) the glory of the Lord Jesus (v. 18).
- (1) κατοπτρίζω: “the noun κάτοπτρον is the most common term in the pap for mirror...look at someth. as in a mirror, *contemplate someth.*” (BDAG, 535).
- (a) **1 Co 13:12** 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part. Then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.
- (b) **2 Co 4:6** 6 For God, who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Messiah.
- (2) When we look in the mirror, who do we see?
- (a) Ourselves, like Narcissus in the Greek myth? “I’m great.”
- 1) This is the primary problem of 21st century Western culture. Expressive individualism. We look inward at ourselves, thinking we are the centre of the unnerve.
- (b) Others, like the witch in Snow White? “So and so is great.”
- 1) “Comparison kills contentment.”
- (c) Messiah Jesus, like the boy who looked at the stone mountain? “Jesus is great.”
- 1) “You remember [Nathanael] Hawthorne’s story of ‘The Great Stone Face.’ He tells of a lad who lived in the village below the mountain, and there upon the mountain was that image of the great stone face, looking down so solemnly, so seriously, upon the people. There was a legend that some day someone was coming to that village who would look just like the great stone face, and he would do some wonderful things for the village and would be the means of great blessing. The story gripped this lad, and he used to slip away and hour after hour would stand looking at that great stone face and thinking of the story about the one that was coming. Years passed, and that one did not come, and still the young man did what the boy had done, and went to sit and contemplate the majesty, the beauty of that great stone face. By and by youth passed away and middle age came on, and still he could not get rid of that legend; and then old age came, and

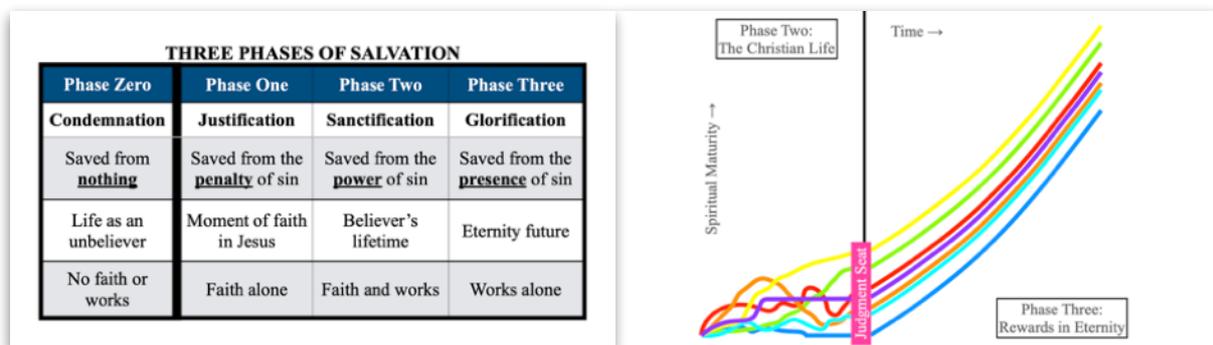
one day as he walked through the village someone looked at him and exclaimed, 'He has come, the one who is like the great stone face!' He became like that which he contemplated. If you want to be Christlike, look at Jesus. If you want to grow in grace, contemplate Jesus. You find Him revealed in the Word, so read your Bible and meditate upon it."³

- (3) Over the past 100 years, we have become a visual-based culture rather than a writing-based culture. See *Amusing Ourselves to Death* and *Flickering Pixels*.
- h. As we all gaze at the Lord Jesus, we are gradually and progressively being transformed (μεταμορφόω, pres.) into his image (εικόν) from glory into glory (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν) (v. 18).
- (1) We become what we watch.
- (2) μεταμορφόω: “to change inwardly in fundamental character or condition, *be changed, be transformed*” (BDAG, 639).
- (a) Illustration: from caterpillar to butterfly.
- (b) **Ro 12:2** 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (μεταμορφόω, pres.) by the renewal of your mind....
- 1) Do not underestimate the importance of the *mind* in becoming like Christ.
- 2) Beware of sharply distinguishing between heart and mind.
- (c) **Ga 4:19** 19 ...My little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Messiah is formed in you!
- 1) We are in Christ by definition. Now will Christ be in us?
- (d) **Php 3:20-21** 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Messiah, 21 who will *transform* our lowly body to be like his *glorious* body....
- (e) **1 Jn 3:2-3** 2 Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
- (f) We are being transformed now, and one day we will be fully transformed.
- (3) εἰκόν: “an object shaped to resemble the form or appearance of someth., *likeness, portrait*...that which has the same form as someth. else (not a crafted object as in 1 above), *living image*...that which represents someth. else in terms of basic form and features, *form, appearance*” (BDAG, 281-82). This word is used in reference to:
- (a) Man.
- 1) **Ge 1:27** 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.
- (b) Idols.
- 1) **Ro 1:23** 23 ...And exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images (εἰκόν) resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.
- (c) Jesus.
- 1) **2 Co 4:4** 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image (εἰκόν) of God.

³ Henry Ironside, 92.

(d) Believers.

- 1) **Ro 8:29** 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image (εικόν) of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
 - 2) **1 Co 15:49** 49 Just as we have borne the image (εικόν) of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image (εικόν) of the man of heaven.
 - 3) **Col 3:10** 10 ...And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image (εικόν) of its creator.
- (4) δόξα: “the condition of being bright or shining, *brightness, splendor, radiance* (a distinctive aspect of Hb. קְבוֹד . . . a state of being magnificent, *greatness, splendor*, anything that catches the eye...honor as enhancement or recognition of status or performance, *fame, recognition, renown, honor; prestige*” (BDAG, 257).
- (a) We apparently go from glory to glory to glory to glory for all eternity.



(b) **Jn 17:22-24** 22 The *glory* that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to *see* my *glory* that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

(c) See C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*.

- i. It is the Spirit who accomplishes this (v. 18).
 - (1) If we keep beholding the Lord Jesus, we will be transformed into his image. This is a promise.
 - (2) We imitate those whom we watch. This is a law of human nature.

7. Application.

- a. Keep beholding the Lord Jesus Christ that you may be transformed into his image.
 - (1) Meditating on Scripture, journaling, fasting, praying, practicing good time management, limiting screen time are practical ways to do this.
- b. Live a New covenant life by the Spirit and not an Old covenant life by the letter of the law.
 - (1) Focus on loving God with all you are and your neighbour as yourself. You won't have any problem then, fulfilling the spirit of the law.
- c. Be a more confident Christian and a more confident church.
 - (1) What we have is far better than anything else in the market.

www.firmfoundation.org.nz | mail@firmfoundation.org.nz | 027 557 9314

Conversational Evangelism | Inductive Bible Study | Expository Bible Teaching | Biblical Worldview Training

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