



Part 6: Rediscovering Joy In Your Faith *2 Cor. 3:6-18*

When my spiritual joy is drained, the first question I need to ask is: Am I resting in grace or trying to be religious? In this passage, Paul makes five distinctions between what often passes for Christianity (legalism) and true Christianity (grace).

Five diagnostic questions to help me rediscover my joy:

1. Am I _____ or _____?
“...the letter **kills**, but the Spirit gives **life**.” v. 6

2. Am I _____ or _____?
“Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face **of Moses** because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry **of the Spirit** be even more glorious?” v. 7,8

3. Am I _____ or _____?
“If the ministry that **condemns** men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that **brings righteousness!**” v. 9
“For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if what was **fading away** came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which **lasts!**” v. 10-11

4. Am I _____ or _____?
“Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are **very bold**. We are not like Moses, who would put **a veil over his face** to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away.” v. 12-13

“Unlike Moses, **we have nothing to hide**. Everything is out in the open with us. He wore a veil so the children of Israel wouldn’t notice that the glory was fading away.” v. 12(Message)

5. Am I being _____ or _____?
“But the people’s minds were **hardened**, and even to this day whenever the old covenant is being read, a veil covers their minds so they cannot understand the truth. And this veil can be removed only

by believing in Christ. Yes, even today when they read Moses’ writings, their hearts are covered with that veil, and they do not understand. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, then the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives **freedom**.” v. 14-17

The simple solution: _____

“But we all, with unveiled faces, **beholding** as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
v. 18 (NKJV)

A great description of the switch from legalism to life:
“They suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal presence, not a piece of chiseled stone. And when God is personally present, a living Spirit, that old, constricting legislation is recognized as obsolete. We’re free of it! All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.” v. 17-18
(Message)

Daily Meditations

Here’s a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today’s topic!

This week’s memory verse: “*Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives freedom.*” *2 Cor. 2:17*

Monday

Read 2 Corinthians 3:6-8. In this entire section of Second Corinthians Paul is contrasting the old covenant (obeying the Old Testament law) with the new covenant (trusting in Jesus).

What are some words Paul uses in these three verses to describe the *old covenant*?

Is it possible for churches to be more *old-covenant-like* than *new-covenant-like*? How so?

It’s interesting to me that while Paul says the old system ultimately kills, brings death, and fades, Paul says it still has a kind of glory! In what way can today’s legalistic systems have an impressive aura of glory to them, although their impact is, in the end, condemning?

How have you found it to be true in your life that the letter kills but the Spirit gives life?

Thank God today for His grace-- that His spirit has revived your heart! Rejoice in Him!

Tuesday

Read 2 Cor. 3:9-11. How does Paul describe the old covenant vs. the new covenant in verse 9?

Do you feel more *condemned* or more *holy* today?

What would Paul say to you about your answer?

In Romans 8:1-3, what does Paul say about the answer to the condemnation of the law?

Thank God today that if you trust in Jesus you are no longer under condemnation!

Wednesday

Read 2 Cor. 3:12-13. Paul says something interesting here about the reason Moses continued to wear his veil. Why does he say Moses wore the veil?

In what ways do legalistic systems encourage hiding behind a veil to mask our fading glory?

By contrast, Paul says "we are very bold". The word translated in the New International Version as "very bold" literally means open or transparent-- bold in self-revelation. In what ways does the new covenant encourages openness?

How does Paul model openness and self-revelation here in Second Corinthians?

Ask God to help you to be honest and transparent with those around you, since the new covenant is about God's holiness, not your perfection!

Thursday

Read 2 Cor. 3:14-17. Paul says that there is a veil over people's minds when they read the old covenant-- until they turn to Christ.

What do those who've turned to Christ see in the Old Testament that otherwise can be missed?

What does verse 17 say the Lord gives? How have you seen this to be true in your life?

Thank God for His freedom! In prayer, give thanks for specific ways He has freed you!

Friday

Read 2 Cor. 3:18. This is such a great summary of *grace!* According to this verse, how is change achieved in our lives?

Who does the transforming in our lives?

What is our part, according to this verse?

Read The Message translation of verses 17-18 at the end of the notes from this past weekend. How can you more consistently and effectively "behold" God's image?

Spend time in prayer today simply "beholding" Jesus. Ask Him to transform you into His image!

Saturday

Review any devotions you may have missed and memorize that verse on page two! Please pray for this weekend's service. Thanks!