

The Glory That Excels (2 Cor 3)

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Introduction: The Corinthians had a sight problem, in that they failed to see the priorities of God.

- A. In this setting there were men who were trying to compete for the praise of men.
 - 1. This problem was evident in Paul's first epistle. **(1 Cor 1:11-12; 3:5-7; 4:6)**
 - 2. When brethren have this attitude towards men, there will always be those who seek such attention. In the second epistle the problem has reached this stage. **(2 Cor 10:12)**
 - 3. Sadly Paul had to defend himself against false charges from these men because they viewed him as a competitor for this human glory. **(2 Cor 7:2; 10:10)**
- B. In this kind of carnal atmosphere men often miss the divine priorities on other things as well. **(John 5:43-44)**
 - 1. Judaizing teachers also prey on the carnality of brethren in their attempt to mix the Old and New laws.
 - 2. In this epistle we will see a detailed explanation of God's purpose for the Law of Moses.

I. The Sufficiency of God. (3:1-6)

- A. Paul's work with the Corinthians gave him an easy defense of his ministry. **(3:1-2)**
 - 1. While it is sad that Paul had to make such a defense, he still had a powerful comeback, their own conversion!
 - 2. Paul's work with the Corinthians showed the proper function of a servant of God. **(Acts 18:8; 1 Cor 4:15)**
 - 3. There were certain attacks upon Paul which logically would deny the Corinthians own conversion! Paul used similar logic in his defense of the resurrection from the dead in **1 Cor 15**.
 - 4. Often the dissatisfied trouble maker has no concern for consistency.
 - 5. The Corinthians were written in the hearts of Paul and others. He really cared for them while the trouble makers only wanted their glory. Can you tell who really cares for you? **(Gal 4:17)** (Ex. Boston Movement)
- B. The sufficiency comes from God. **(3:3-6)**
 - 1. Sufficient = able or competent. This shows the power and wisdom of God!
 - 2. Earlier the sufficiency was shown in the way God has revealed the gospel. **(2:16)**
 - 3. Now the writing of God's word on the hearts of the Corinthians is another example of the power of God. **(3:5-6)**
 - 4. The power is not in men but the gospel of Christ. **(2 Cor 4:2, 5)**
 - 5. If the gospel is not written on our hearts we have never been converted!

(Rom 8:9; Heb 8:10-11; 10:16-17)

6. How does the Holy Spirit write upon our hearts? **(Eph 1:13; 3:3-5)**

II. The Glory that Excels (3:7-12)

A. The Old Testament Law was a ministry of death? Why?

1. Because it was never meant in itself to save. Men could not keep it perfectly. **(Heb 8:6-8,13; Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:20)**
2. God wanted men prepared to receive their Saviour. If salvation came through the law then Jesus died in vain. **(Gal 2:19-21)**
3. How then were those under the first covenant saved? **(Heb 9:15-16; Rom 4:1-6)**

B. When the two covenants are compared one is “better” or “more glorious”.

1. This is illustrated by the veil placed upon Moses face.
2. While there was a glory to the Old Law we need to see the greatness of the New and submit to it. **(Jn 1:16-17)**

III. The Blindness of Israel (3:13-18)

A. We have a hope and a confidence that causes us to stand. **(2 Cor 4:13-15; 5:10-11)**

1. Is this true of you? Do you know this hope?
2. This confidence cannot come from the flesh.

B. Israel however continued looking at the earthly side of things and thus was blind. **(3:14-15)**

1. Why were they blind? They failed to have honest hearts. **(Luke 8:15)**
2. If you talked to these men they would point you to their heritage, the temple and many things God had done in the past. Jesus had deal with such things from the Jews. **(Matt 3:9-10)**
3. This blindness was foretold. **(Matt 13:15)**
4. Where do you place your trust?

C. In conversion this kind of heart must be changed. **(3:16-18)**

1. What was your conversion like? **(1 Thess 1:9)**
2. What is the future work of God in us? To make us more like His son. **(Rom 8:29)**
3. Are you still being changed?

Conclusion: Yield your heart to God.

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