

Review

1. Paul's **ministry and motives** were under attack so he appealed to the "heart intensive" ministry he had been in with them...vs. 3 human hearts - Paul had done heart surgery...
2. Paul quickly switched gears to bring up the glorious news of the ministry He enjoyed because of His great confidence in an "all sufficiency in God" reality. Vs. 4
 - A. Paul had been taught by God that he had to rely on God - God had allowed him to come to the brink of death to "make" him this reliant, it's this desperate reliance - deep faith that brings power. (in my weakness I am strong!)
3. Distinction between ink/stone and spirit/heart - old ministry vs. new
 - A. Glorious but coming to an end vs. 7b
 - B. New ministry "Ministry of the Spirit" more glorious vs. 8
 - C. Old Condemnation Ministry vs. Righteous Ministry which far exceeds it in glory vs. 9
 - D. Th extent of the difference in glory is eclipsed so greatly that the old has comparatively NO glory at all!!!
 - E. Old ministry ends, new ministry is permanent.
- 4 Such a hope - means we are "very bold!" - much outspokenness

Contrasted With

5. A Covenant where fear of "fading/temporality" was cause for a veiling of the glory...by Moses!
How was it temporary?
 - A. The People were frightened by the glory they was radiating from Moses after encountering God
The glory faded when God finished meeting with Moses (Exodus 34:33)

Huge Thingy #1

 1. Moses' shining face was evidence that he had indeed met with God

Huge Thingy #2

 2. Moses' glory frightened the people (God scared them)

Huge Thingy #3

 3. Moses' glory fades IT IS TEMPORARY! (when he leaves God's presence - the backside of God passing by is the best he was aloud - the glory begins to fade)

Two other facts evident and contrasted in the OT are linked

 - B. The Holy Spirit was not universally given
 - C. The Holy Spirit when given did not stay (given for specific purposes)

The glory faded...was temporary
The work of the Spirit was temporary

A fading glory was not God's end game...
Faithful Jewish people expected more...

Faithful men and women - a small remnant were looking for future glory...
They had no idea what lay in store!

New Testament Hint

Matthew 11:11 Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he

John was the forerunner of Jesus Christ
John stood against sin

How greater?

He is secure in Christ!
He is blessed with every spiritual blessing Eph 1
He has the Holy Spirit for one HUGE thing!

What was the Old Covenant Really About?

OT - Exodus 34 - look at the second giving of the law vs. 1
The law was meant to lead them to obedience and a real understanding of God's grace
6 The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,

The rest of the story is warning:

, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." 8 And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. 9 And he said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

The Emphasis Was On Holiness/Warning

...BUT... it was always meant to turn people around...to get to their heart!

Joel 2:12

Return to the LORD 12 "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

Richard Pratt comments it out this way...

Israel turned from God's grace and reduced Moses' covenant to a system of works righteousness.
Except for a faithful remnant, **Israel reduced the Law to an external written code.**

The Unveiling of the New Covenant Could Not Be Seen Because So Many Hearts Were continuing in SELF-IMPOSED BlindNESS!

2 Corinthians 3:12-18

The Glory of Christ's Ministry - which was the power source behind Paul's...
Is FULLY REVEALED - UNVEILED in full glory!!!!!!!!!!!!

....only to the hardened is it veiled....

Hardened vs. 14

But their minds were **hardened**. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. - 2 Corinthians 3:14

(Odd fact KJV mind blinded) - actually to **become calloused** or hardened!!!

The Jewish believers were bring hardened...growing calloused - collectively the majority remained to this day...

MARK 6:52 THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE LOAVES - BUT THEIR HEARTS WERE HARDENED...(their minds could not comprehend...but that was not the real problem - I don't understand how God does that - I would not have understood...but by faith - if my heart is soft - I will choose to believe in the bread maker!

When your heart is hardened...your mind will follow.

Notice the TEXT

But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. - 2 Corinthians 3:14

They can't come to **think** that they blew it!

They can't come to terms with the fact that it was only temporary.

They can't come to terms with the fact that the Old Covenant would be replaced at all.

They reinvented the grace of the OT with works righteousness.

They rejected Jesus Christ...

The veil is still in place!!!!!!!

Commentary: because of this hardened condition - first the heart hardened and then the mind...

Their actions were on auto-pilot.

Romans 9

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;

31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.

32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." - Romans 9:30-33

Verse 16

But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. - 2 Corinthians 3:16

Jesus settles it all.

He corrects, and he rebukes, He trains in righteousness...

His death, burial, and resurrection corrects everything.

His teaching and His life cannot allow by definition any blindness.

The blind will receive their sight.

Isaiah 61 prophesied - Jesus announced it in Luke 4

He healed the blind which no one had ever done.

But with the gospel, my he cross, forever removed was a works salvation - righteousness!!!!

Jesus took the veil off!!!!!!!

The eyes are free...

The Person Is Free!!!!

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. - 2 Corinthians 3:17

Whatever you believe about the thrice person God we serve...

We also believe and state that God is one...three in one...yes. And ONE

The Lord is the Spirit!
Christ works - the Spirit works!!!
Free to see the glory of Christ

The Person Seeing the Glory of Christ is himself Transformed!!!

And we all, with unveiled (unhardened, free, eyes not veiled) 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. - 2 Corinthians 3:18

Salvation happens and freedom happens...

Pursued Closeness

But ongoing freedom, to see God.. depends on pursued closeness.causes degree by degree transformation!!!!!!

Who has intrinsic glory?
God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus

We get hooked up with "things" how?
By sight!

1 John 2 lust of the eyes...
Jesus Matthew 5 if you look at a woman with lustful intent...
David looked at Bathsheeba
Eve saw that the fruit was...

When we see Jesus...
When we are freed to really see...being near Him is enough.

Closing Thoughts....

A dear friend was praying for me...once...
And I was in a state of being overwhelmed...at the time.
He said - help my brother simply focus on you Lord.

That was it...I knew it the minute he prayed it.

I was worrying about things I had to do.
Overwhelmed with too much to do and not enough time or strength to do it all.

His simple prayer for me, his intercession almost instantly tweaked my melon.
Peace flooded my soul because it caused me to rejoice in my Lord.
The Spirit filled me.

Everything got done.

What was wrong on the day of being overwhelmed?

I had forgot the one important thing: To pursue a closeness = to pursue Him! To keep looking -
constraining my vision on Him!

Paul said - "the love of Christ constrains us"

How can it constrain it if our gaze is elsewhere?
Keep bringing it back into subjection to Him!!!!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

That glory - changes us.
Being with Him - pursuing Him for Him changes us.

When we are in love - we just want to "be with" that person.
Who are you with - we say.
I'm with so and so.

Our love affair with Christ will cause us to want to be with Him!
Being with Him - in His Word - to know Him is life eternal - to know Him means I have found Him in
His Word.

Knowing Him in prayer - seeing Him act is such a faith builder!
Waiting on Him - allowing His timing to be ok with me.

Obedying His Word - such communion in that.
Such a closeness in obedience.
Moses was the friend of God - and it was said of Him He was faithful in all His house!

the Word
Prayer

Obedience...

One more...fellowship of believers...

Koinonia - a close intimate relationship - the church...

these are the means of pursuing God.

The Gospel - Jesus told Pilate - I was born to testify to the truth.

we are ambassadors for Christ - there is such closeness to God when our hearts turn towards the lost.

Acts 2:42 they devoted themselves to prayer, the apostles teaching, breaking of bread and fellowship