

# Letters to the church in...



# Corinth

**Focus:** 2 Corinthians 3:1-18

## Lesson 20-The Glorious Revelation of Christ and His Spirit

- **The miraculous evidence of changed lives (v.1-5)**
  - (v.1-3) Paul and his fellow laborers did not need some “letter of recommendation” concerning their work. The evidence of their work and of the gospel’s work was **the evidence of changed lives!** The Power of God transforms our hearts and minds. **It changes our lives!** It makes us different from before, but happier, more satisfied, and better off than before. **“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...” (2 Cor. 5:17).**
  - (v.3) The evidence is not written down on some kind of stone tablet—**NO, it is a living reality!** Jesus Christ changes our lives! **“Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God...”**(and not in Theory either, but in reality!)
  - (v.5) “...our sufficiency is of God.” **“For it is God who works in you...” (Philippians 2:13).** The mysterious transformation that has taken place in the hearts of those who’ve come to know and love God was a Divine work, not merely some kind of human work. The Lord gives strength, grace, and His Spirit to His workers. “...and lo, I am with you always”- Jesus (Matthew 28:20).
- **The revelation of the Covenant which was passing away, compared to that which would last forever (v.6-11) (The covenants and the glory of Christ and His eternal Spirit)**
  - (v.6) **“...the new covenant” “not of the letter but of the Spirit...” “...the letter kills...”**—Paul is here speaking of the two covenants. There is the “old covenant” and the “new covenant” which the Bible mentions. Details about these two covenants can be found in the book of Hebrews (ref. Hebrews ch.8,9,10). **In the Old covenant** there was an earthly sanctuary; there were earthly priests—the Levites; there were continual animal sacrifices which brought death to the animals; there were the Ten Commandments written on stone tablets and placed inside the Ark of the Covenant. **In the New covenant** there is only a Heavenly Sanctuary and Jesus Christ is the only priest who mediates for us (ref. Heb. 8:1,2,5; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1,2). Jesus Christ is the Lamb who died for our sins (John 1:29; Heb. 10:1-14)—He was the one and only sacrifice that was truly needed! The old stuff was just pointing forward to Him; In the New Covenant, the Ten Commandments are still here too—**Jesus writes them upon our hearts and minds, not just upon the stone tablets—He wants them to be a living reality in our lives by His grace, as He’s always wanted—both New and Old Testament times (Hebrews 8:10; 10:16).**
  - (v.7, 8) **“...the ministry that brought death...came with glory...”** But, **“the ministry of the Spirit...”** revealing Jesus Christ (by God’s eternal Spirit) **“was even more glorious!!”** The revelation of God’s Laws from Sinai was a glorious thing. Moses’ face could not be seen

because of the extreme glory of God that had shown upon him (ref. Exodus 34:1,29,30). But, if we only stopped there, what hope could we possibly have as sinners? **(Romans 6:23)—we need Jesus Christ, our Savior from sin! Romans 8:1-4** speaks of the ministry of God's Spirit. Three "laws" are mentioned by Paul in Romans 7 and 8. **(1)** "The Law of the Spirit of Life" (8:2)—the Power of God's Spirit at work within us who are converted. **(2)** "The Law of sin and death" (8:2; 7:19-21,23,24)—the carnal, sinful nature working to destroy us, even though we know what is good and right. **(3)** "The Law of God" which was righteous and good, and which Paul [and we today] desired to do (8:3,4; 7:22)—we are weak in the flesh, but Christ gives us **the power of His Spirit—a power that works from outside of us, to give us the daily strength needed to be overcomers!**

- **What is the ministry of God's Spirit like? (John 14:26; 15:26; Romans 5:5; 8:10-15)**
- (v.9) If the Law of Sinai was glorious, How much more, the revelation of Jesus Christ?!!—**the righteous One!!—A LIVING EXAMPLE of the Ten Commandments. Not just in the stone, but in person!** "He is without sin" "He knew no sin" (Heb. 4:15; 2 Cor. 5:21). He is our righteousness, and our example in righteousness (Jeremiah 33:16; John 16:8,10; 1 Peter 2:21,22). He lived perfectly by God's commandments, and so should we. [but we are not condemned if any has sinned—we can still find peace with God through confession and the forgiveness of Christ—1 John 2:1,2; 1 John 1:9). **And the new covenant?!! Not just the death of the lambs and animals, but the one death of Jesus Christ—once and for all!!**
- (v.10,11) "The Law came through Moses, but grace and truth through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Jesus Christ, THE CURE FOR SIN, is the most beautiful and glorious revelation of all. We can be forgiven and be at peace with God through Him (Rom. 5:1). We can learn to live a righteous life through Him. (the lasting covenant through Christ is the greatest!)
- **Beholding Jesus Christ—the Lord, Our Savior, and God's righteous One (v.12-16, 17-18)**
  - (v.12-16) The eyes of many were blinded to the truth. They would read over the Old Testament [and look at the Old Covenant], but somehow, many had failed to let their minds be open to Jesus Christ. It was like a spiritual blindness—a veil. But, when they found Jesus Christ, that veil was taken away.
  - (v.17,18) **As we behold Jesus Christ daily, we are changed into the same image "from glory to glory."** (even as by the working of God's Holy Spirit within us—to purify and to cleanse us daily). It is a law that **"By beholding, we become changed."** (whether good or bad, but let us BEHOLD JESUS CHRIST).

*Question (s) for the Heart:*

**Would you like to keep your eyes on Jesus Christ and His righteousness, that you might become more like Him in His perfect love? \_\_\_\_\_** Is it your desire to be daily led by His Spirit to overcome sinful tendencies? \_\_\_\_\_