

REMOVING THE VEIL

Text: 2 Corinthians 3:3-18

In this portion of the scripture we just read, Paul is making a comparison of two glories. The glory in the giving of the law and the glory in the establishment of grace (which he calls the ministration of the spirit). When Israel had provoked the LORD to wrath by worshiping the golden calf and dancing nude before it, Moses threw the two tables of the ten commandments and broke them at the base of the mountain. God told Moses afterwards that He would not go up to the promise land amid the people because they would provoke Him to destroy them and that He would not go Himself before the people in their wars with the Canaanites but He would send an angel to go with them. Moses pleaded with the LORD to change His mind and Moses found grace in the eyes of the LORD. So God renewed the covenant that was made with Abraham and told Moses He would go with them. Then Moses makes a unique request - **Exodus 33:18** And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

What was Moses asking? God communicated regularly with Moses but He always vailed himself with a cloud. When Moses would go to the mountain or to the tabernacle to meet with God, a pillar of a cloud would appear and God would talk out the cloud. Moses was asking God to take off the veil...in other words, let me see you as you really are. This was God's response - **Exodus 33:19-23** And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. *So the LORD passed by Moses and for the first time, there was no veil of a cloud covering Him and Moses beheld the back parts of the glory of God.* It was at this time that God gave Moses the law again since he had broken the original tables. Moses comes down from the mountain with the two new tables of the law, but this time it was different. **Exodus 34:29** And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. Moses's image was changed, his face literally shined. It scared the people to the point they would not come near him. So, Moses had to put a veil over his face while he talked to the people, but when he went in before the LORD he took the veil off. God always had a veil between himself and mankind because of sin. Inside the temple of God, in the holy of holies, resided the ark of the covenant and God's presence would manifest on top of the mercy seat between the two

cherubim. That room was veiled off from the rest of the sanctuary and no one was aloud back there except the high priest on the day of atonement. And even he couldn't go in without blood. There's always had to be something between God and us because of our sinfulness and His holiness. So this occurrence with Moses on mount Sinai where God passed by with no covering is a BIG DEAL.

This experience changed the image of Moses. His appearance was altered just because he looked at the glory of the LORD with nothing between them. Now this shine didn't last the rest of his life, it was temporary. It wore off because the law was also temporary. Eventually that glow went away. All of that pertained to that dispensation but we're now in a different dispensation because of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. How did this dispensation start? With God removing His veil - **Luke 23:44-46** And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. *In that act, God was inviting everyone who would come to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins to draw near to Him with nothing between them and behold the His glory.* Paul makes the statement that if we (the saved) stand with open face (no veil) and behold the glory of God, it will change our image like it changed Moses's image - **2 Corinthians 3:18** But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Moses physically beheld the glory of God and it showed on his flesh. We are invited to behold the glory of the God spiritually so that His glory will shine on our inner man.* So the question on the floor is "How do we behold the glory of the Lord?" By two components working together simultaneously – The Spirit of God and the word of God.

Now if you just read the Bible to meet a quota, or just to gain information, or if you don't understand what you read at all....next to nothing will happen. BUT if the Spirit of God gets in your Bible reading, His word becomes 3D and real to you, then you start beholding His glory. **Hebrews 4:12-13** For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Did you see how that the word of God is alive and that he goes from talking about a book to talking about a person? Why is that? Because before Jesus was born into this world, His original name was the Word of God! The whole Bible is about Jesus Christ because He is the living Word of God and we hold in our hands the written word. When we read the written word with the help of the Spirit of God, we're actually beholding the living Word. Paul said that if we want to look more like Him, we have to spend more time looking at Him. But there is a catch...you must look at Him open faced. God has taken down his veil but you can have one up that keeps you from beholding His glory.

Unbelief – The Jews had a veil of unbelief over their hearts that kept them from seeing Jesus Christ as their Savior and Messiah. When the law was read, the veil went up on their hearts and it blocked them from seeing Jesus for who He really is. Is there any unbelief in you? Has God shared anything with you that you refuse to believe? Has God moved you to do something only for you to refuse to do it? That's unbelief and unbelief is a veil that keeps you from being open faced with God.

Sin – Sin blinds the eyes. **Proverbs 28:13** He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy. If you want to behold the glory of the Lord you must take the veil that you have used to cover your sin off - **1 John 1:6-9** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Hurt – When Jacobs sons threw their brother Joseph into a pit and told their father that Joseph was dead, the Bible records that Jacob rent his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son for many days...but the next verse reveals something deeper. **Genesis 37:35** And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. *You know what Jacob is saying “I refuse to heal from this hurt”* People that wallow in their wounds get stuck, they get sour and they stop living. Stop moving. Stop growing. God said He is the Lord that heals us. Jesus said that he came to heal the broken-hearted. When people are wounded, they cover it up and hide it sometimes even trying to hide it from God. The only way to heal from your hurt is to stand open faced before God and let Him see your hurt, confess it and ask Him to do for you what you can't do for yourself.

The only way our image changes to look more like Him is for us to behold each other with no veil in between us.