



The Glory # 9

Hello everyone. Welcome to "Notes From The Presence." I love the subject of God's glory. Personally, I spend as much time as I can in the glory and presence of God.

In our last article, we looked briefly at one of my favourite scripture verses in the entire bible. Today, I would like to spend a bit more time on this incredible passage.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory.

I would like us to notice the word "transformed" in the above verse. It is the Greek word "metamorphoo." Its root word is "meta," which means to affect a sequence of change. In the case of "metamorphoo," it is a change in character, a transformation, or a transfiguration. Do you remember when Jesus went up onto the mount of transfiguration? Here is the transfiguration account as recorded in the gospel of Mark:

Mark 9:2-3 Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

The word translated "transfigured" here is the exact same Greek word as we have been discussing, "metamorphoo." In this passage, Jesus went up to a mountain with three of His disciples, had an encounter with the glory of God, and was transformed before them. His garments became white and He was altered in appearance and character. One additional meaning of the word "metamorphoo" is to become "other." To say it an "other" way (no pun intended), it means to be changed into something other than what you are, or to advance to a further stage of life - to be changed.

Now let's return to the 2 Corinthians passage. Our verse describes someone looking with an unveiled face into a mirror. I have a question for you. Think back to the last time you looked into a mirror. What did you see? Yourself of course. However, what the person in this verse sees is not himself/herself, but the glory of the Lord. I suspect the reason for this anomaly is that in the New Covenant our lives are now "hidden in Christ" (Colossians 3:3-4). I would like to remind you that a mirror reflects 100% of the light directed towards it back to the viewer.

So, where is the mirror that we look at in Christ? The mirror, without doubt, is the mirror of the presence of the Lord. The presence of God reflects His glory. They are one and the same. When we spend time in God's presence, we are in a position where His face is shining upon us. We have access to this glorious place "in Christ." Through Him we can come with an unveiled face. We are, in essence, face to face with our Father God. This is a profound thought and a profound place to be found. Here, His glory is reflected into our lives. Here, as we gaze upon Him, we are transformed. We become "other."

I would like us to ponder the craziness of this verse for a moment. You see, we are programmed for one thing as humans - working hard for everything we get. This "labour mentality" was handed down to us as a residue of the curse of Genesis chapter three. When it comes to being changed into the image of Jesus, we somehow think the same rules apply. We think we need to work for our change. This work comes, for the most part, in the form of self-discipline. It also comes in the form of attaching negative emotional energy to the process of repentance. In doing so, we can create an unpleasant personal place, a signpost that we will hopefully stay away from for a long period of time.

I just have one thing to say here. If we think we can be transformed into the image of Jesus by self discipline and hard work, think again. There is absolutely nothing we can do in and of ourselves to morph into His image. No amount of work, discipline, blood, sweat, or tears will work. There is only one thing that is effective. There is only one transforming or transfiguring agent. It is the glory of God. The glory of God is found in His presence. It is found face to face with our Father God because His glory emanates from His face.

Do you wish to be more like Jesus? I beg you, don't try to work for it. Self help and self improvement programs will not be effective here, even if they incorporate spiritual disciplines. Your transformation will be found only in one place - in His presence. It will be found in the stillness of gazing upon Him. It will be found in the context of His word (which contains His glory), worship, time spent with Him, intimacy, and turning your

eyes by faith upon Him. It is profound to me that the most life transforming environment we could possibly enter is actually a place where we can do no work. Helen Howarth Lemmel put it beautifully when she wrote:

*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.*

So what exactly has the person of 2 Corinthians 3:18 done? He/she has “turned to the Lord,” looked at Him with an unveiled face, and yielded to wave after wave of glory. As we behold the risen Christ in His glory, we are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory—a profound and simple picture of the Greek word “metamorphoo!”

There is one more thought I would like to put forward today.

1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

We have been talking today about the process of metamorphosis in the presence of God. When an insect goes through the different stages of it's life, it literally changes into a different form at each junction. We, as humans are called to much the same type of life - a life of constant change. Each time the glory of God is shone on our lives we change more and more into the image of Christ. However, there is one final and glorious change that is coming.

One day soon, when Jesus appears, we will finally see Him just as He is. His face will be shining brighter than the sun in all of its strength. The glory radiating from Him will be unlike anything we have ever experienced. In that moment, His glory will be so strong that it will instantly complete our "metamorphoo" into His image. We will be like Him, for we will see Him just as He is. Our bodies will be fully glorified in His presence, our spirit and mind instantly transformed and renewed in the twinkling of an eye. Then, we will live out the rest of our existence in the same form as He is - fully transformed and changed by His glory! I for one, can hardly wait for that day.

My question for you today is: how far do you want to go now? Press in for the glory now. Ask daily to see His glory just as Moses did. Only through resting (not working) in His glory can we be transformed into His image.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real - even so come Lord Jesus!