

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 28TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

CREENTIALS (2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-6) AGAIN?

Paul planted the church at Corinth. He had proven himself to be a messenger of Christ. Now, some are demanding he give an account of his authority, with references.

- **Some will always question our "authority" to share the gospel. God's Word and work will always have an answer to that question.**

LETTERS

The "false apostles" had brought letters of recommendation to show that their words were worthy of obedience, but who wrote those letters? Paul's letters were living people who had been changed by following Christ. They were the real evidence that everyone could see.

- **One of the greatest testimonies of God's power is our changed lives!**

THE AUTHOR

The "false apostles" focused on the external things that couldn't change lives. Because the people were the living letters written by Christ Himself, they could not be erased like ink or broken like stone. The Spirit of God had written on their hearts.

- **The Spirit of God uses the Word of God and writes it on our hearts. Obedience comes from that internal transformation!**

CONFIDENCE

Paul had confidence in what Christ had done in Corinth. It wasn't his pedigree that made him effective; it was the source of the message: the Spirit of God.

- **We can have confidence in the grace of God, given by the Spirit of God, as He transforms us and others into living letters that glorify God.**

GLORY (2 CORINTHIANS 3:7-11) DEATH AND GLORY

Paul switches from defending his authority to explaining the difference between the old and new covenant. The old covenant (law) written on stone and shared by Moses revealed sin. It came from God, and God's glory was seen on Moses' face. God was glorified, but the law brought condemnation and death.

GREATER GLORY

The new covenant (ministry) came directly from the Spirit of God and revealed grace that brings the righteousness of Christ to all Believers.

- **Following Christ means we have been forgiven, given the righteousness of Christ, the Holy Spirit, freedom, and eternal life. Are we glorifying God for what He has done?**

WE (2 CORINTHIANS 3:12-18) BOLDNESS

Paul recognized the greater glory, saw changed lives, and was ready to share Christ's message with everyone. Moses had hidden his face, but Paul had nothing to hide.

- **Too many Christians live in fear of the law when we should be bold in our faith. Do people see us or the veil we hide behind when they look at us?**

WHICH VEIL?

Paul had seen many Gentiles come to follow Christ, but many of the Jews could not see Christ as the Messiah. Their hearts were veiled, and their veils could only be removed by Christ.

- **One veil can cover our faces in fear, and the other can cover our hearts in unbelief. Which veil are we wearing?**

TURN TO THE LORD

Paul said whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed, and the Spirit of the Lord brings freedom.

- **Following Christ means freedom from sin's cruel leadership, guilt, and fear. In Christ, we have the freedom to resist sin and live under the leadership of Christ. Have we let Christ remove the veil?**

WE ALL...

Paul had confidence that every veil would be removed and every Believer would see the glory of the Lord in themselves and other Believers.

- **We can all see the transformation taking place in us and others. God's goal is to transform His followers to the likeness of Christ. Are our goals aligned with God's?**

IMAGE

- We want people to see us as good.
- **We know ourselves better than others.**
- **The image we want others to see is usually based on what the world sees as good or strong. How much "dressing up" are we doing? Are we afraid to let anyone see who we really are?**

CONFORMITY

- We conform.
- **No matter how "strong" we think we are, we all follow something/someone.**
- **We look for laws to follow, plans that work, and people that approve. But we can't keep the law, find the right plan, or please everyone around us. So, we hide and try not to stir things up.**

VEILS

- The law has revealed our weakness.
- **God offers to remove the veil(s).**
- **As we follow Christ and meditate on His Word, we see Christ as He transforms us to be more like Him. Instead of veils or even reflections, we can radiate the glory of God. Will we live like this, or will we keep hiding?**