

## 2Corinthians – Week 10

- I. Review quiz on chapter 3
- II. Last time: 2Cor. 3:12-18
  - A. The hope that comes from the new covenant energized Paul and his companions to speak boldly as ministers of this glorious covenant!
  - B. Paul uses Moses' veil twice in a figurative way...
    - i. Regarding the Message of the gospel:
      - 1. He did not "veil" the message – it was spoken with plainness of speech!
    - ii. Regarding the hearts of unbelievers:
      - 1. Those (esp. Jews) who reject Christ have a veil over their hearts!
  - C. The covenant of the Lord Jesus brings freedom!
    - i. Freedom to speak boldly and plainly!
    - ii. Freedom from death and condemnation!
    - iii. Freedom to behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces!
      - 1. And as we behold Christ, we are being transformed into His image, one degree of glory at a time!
    - iv. All this is made possible through the transforming power of the Spirit!
- III. Continuation
  - A. Chapter 4 outline
    - i. Paul's obligation to make the gospel message plain and clear (vv. 1-6)
      - 1. There must be no veiling of the truth (vv. 1-2)
      - 2. The only veiling is in the hearts and minds of those who are perishing (vv. 3-4)
      - 3. The message itself is clear: Jesus Christ is Lord (v. 5)
      - 4. God has revealed this message to us so that we can reveal it to others (v. 6)
    - ii. The gospel has been entrusted to human vessels! (vv. 7-5:10)
      - 1. Christians compared to jars of clay (v. 7)
      - 2. We are subject to all kinds of attacks, yet not defeated (vv. 8-9)
      - 3. Suffering for the sake of the gospel reveals Jesus to others (vv. 10-12)
      - 4. The hope of the resurrection sustains all true believers (vv. 13-14).
      - 5. The trials of ministry result in blessing to others and thanksgiving to God (vv. 13-14)
      - 6. Paul contrasts the present and future condition of the true believer (vv. 16-18)
        - a. Outward man is decaying; inward man is renewed day by day (v. 16)
        - b. Light affliction is momentary; the glory that awaits is eternal (v. 17)
        - c. The things we see are temporary; the unseen things are eternal (v. 18)
  - B. In chapter 4, Paul continues his theme of being a minister of the new covenant...
    - i. "[God] has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant" (2Cor. 3:6)
    - ii. 2Cor. 4:1 (ESV), "*Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.*"
      - 1. Paul mentions two things about his ministry:
        - a. It's origin (God's mercy) and it's result (courageousness)
      - 2. This ministry, earlier called the ministry of the Spirit and righteousness (cf. 3:8-9), was given to Paul solely by God's mercy!
        - a. Here, Paul shows that it was God, not himself, that appointed him to be a minister of the new covenant, thus knocking any assumptions that he was being arrogant or self-confident...
          - i. "*I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,<sup>13</sup> though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief*" 1Timothy 1:12-13 (ESV)

3. Like Paul, we too are who we are in Christ solely by the mercy of God!
    - a. We all deserve hell but out of His great love for us, God sent His Son to die for our sins and to rise for our justification!
  4. And realizing the tremendous hope we have prevents us from giving up or shrinking back!
    - a. Paul did not act cowardly but rather courageously in the face of barriers!
      - i. His boldness in Christ led him to speak the truth plainly, unlike the false teachers (most likely the Judaizers), who most likely were plaguing the Corinthian church, telling them to surrender to Moses' Law for salvation.
- iii. 2Cor. 4:2 (ESV), *“But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.”*
1. The false teachers were being crafty and distorting the Word of God, especially regarding the old and new covenants.
  2. Paul did not behave like those who were *“peddlers of God's Word”* (cf. 2Cor. 2:17), who dilute God's Word with false teachings.
    - a. He spoke plainly so that every hearer's conscience would know the truth, even though all may not accept it as in the case of verses 3-4, where Paul addresses those whose hearts remain veiled!
  3. This passage describes the false teachers today:
    - a. They use disgraceful and underhanded ways to gain converts, doing whatever they could to the gospel to “sell” it!
      - i. Example: exclude hell, exclude discipleship, exclude obedience; exclude holiness; etc.
    - b. They distort the word of God to make it more “attractive”
      - i. They convince people that certain passages negate others.
        1. For example: Many use Romans 10:9 to denounce passages like Acts 2:38 or Mark 16:16.
      - ii. They conform the world's philosophy to the church, rather than conforming the church to the word of God.