

The Glory

[God] also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory. Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. . . . 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, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:6-16,18).

Most Christians still live under the regime of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament.

While the Old Testament is glorious, and in another place we will examine how understanding it fleshes out the comprehension of the glory of our current covenant, its power and glory are as nothing when compared to the covenant we currently have with God. Under the Old Covenant the glory of God which could appear to His people was limited. True, it was limited to a glory which was so powerful that the Israelites could not even look upon Moses' face after he gained a quick glimpse of that glory. True, the glory was enough to shake a mountain, to overturn a domineering kingdom, and to part a sea. True, the glory of God's presence was enough to make

a life-changing impact upon anyone who experienced it. But all this is no more than a shadow of the glory of the New Covenant – a shadow which is totally eclipsed when the power of the New Covenant is allowed to blaze forth. The glory of the New Covenant is that we are being changed into the image of the One who holds all this glory and power. We are becoming like Him!

But this power is received on the inside where it is not immediately visible.

2 Corinthians continues in chapter 4:16-18: “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Because of the importance of looking through spiritual eyes at those things which are (naturally) unseen, Paul says again in the following chapter, at 2 Corinthians 5:16: “Therefore from now on we recognize [literally: we observe] no man according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.” These verses explain why we must become spiritual, view people through spiritual eyes, and act in a spiritual manner.

But the term “spiritual” has become religiousized and no longer carries its original meaning. Though the term, “supernatural,” does not convey everything in the meaning of “spiritual,” being spiritual does include becoming supernatural. Supernatural means, by definition, “that which is beyond the natural or physical realm,” that is, that which is beyond the realm of our flesh. So, from time to time, where appropriate, I may interchange the terms spiritual and supernatural as a reminder of what it means to be spiritual. We need to become supernatural creatures if we are to become like God. We need to become supernatural creatures if we are to receive the blessings of His covenant. We need to become supernatural creatures if we hope to become obedient to God’s design and purpose for our lives. The Bible we read is a supernatural Book about a supernatural God with whom we have a supernatural covenant.

The next verse of 2 Corinthians says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new

creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV).” Learning how to be “in Christ” is the purpose of this writing, learning how to walk in that supernatural nature which has been recreated entirely new, entirely righteous, and which can receive all the blessings that Christ has for us. Most importantly, that nature can have an intimate relationship with God, a relationship which will be enjoyable for God and for us.

The final verse which I intend to quote from this section of Corinthians is also the first verse I quoted at the beginning of this writing: “[God] made [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God *in Him* (2 Corinthians 5:21).” The most important need of our lives is to be “in Him!”