

# Looking Into the Glory of the Lord 1

Life can be incredibly difficult. And it seems the more dedicated we are to Christ, the more difficult it becomes. Jesus never promised anything other than trials, troubles, difficulties, pressures, and temptations for His own, John 16:33. But yet, he did promise to love us, never forsake us, and in the midst of all those struggles, trials, chaos, and confusion to be a present help. So how do we deal with life? How do we triumph or overcome? How do we keep moving forward? The answer to this is given in 2 Corinthians 3:18-4:6. As believers we can understand the fullness of God, which will sustain our spiritual life. To succeed, we must keep our eyes fixed on the glory of the Lord.

## I. A Brief Review of Paul's Troubles

- A. Affliction and Suffering
  - 1. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4: *He comforts us in all our **affliction**...*
  - 2. 2 Corinthians 1:5: *For just as the **sufferings** of Christ overflow to us, ...*
- B. To What Degree?
  - 1. 2 Corinthians 1:8: *We were completely **overwhelmed**—beyond our strength—we even despaired of life itself.*
  - 2. 2 Corinthians 1:10: *He has delivered us from such a terrible death, and he will deliver us.*
- C. Heart Anguish
  - 1. 2 Corinthians 2:4: *...with many tears out of an extremely troubled and anguished heart...*
  - 2. 2 Corinthians 2:13: *I had no **rest** in my spirit...*
- D. At the brink of death: 2 Corinthians 4:8-10, 12, 16-17; 6:4-5; 8-10; 7:5-6; 11:23-28.
- E. The burden on his heart for brethren: 2 Corinthians 11:3: *But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be seduced from a sincere and pure **devotion** to Christ.*
- F. Paul didn't allow all this to destroy him. He looked continually at Jesus. What happens when we do that?

## II. We find Clarity

- A. 2 Corinthians 3:18: *We all, with **unveiled** faces, are looking as in a mirror ...*
  - 1. There is nothing blocking our vision of the Lord.
  - 2. All we need to know about God... is revealed to us in His word.
- B. Never is God more clearly revealed than in the face of Christ.
  - 1. Hebrews 1:3a: *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the **exact** expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*
- C. He is: in control; loving; merciful. So what is to fear? What is to be concerned about?

## III. We find Transformation

- A. 2 Corinthians 3:18: *We all, ...are being **transformed** into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.*
- B. You are being changed into the very image in which you look.
- C. This is the aim of Christianity
  - 1. Philippians 3:14: *I pursue as my goal the **prize** promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.*
  - 2. What was Paul's goal for the Galatians? 4:19: *My children, I am again suffering labor pains for you until Christ is formed in you.*
  - 3. Look at 1 John 2:6: *The one who says he remains in him should walk just as he walked.*

## IV. We Find Strength

- A. 2 Corinthians 4:1: *Therefore, since we have this ministry because we were shown mercy, we do not **give up**.*  
NASB: "we do not lose heart. Phrase carries the sense of abandoning oneself to cowardly surrender.
- B. 2 Corinthians 4:1 - "Therefore..." Because of the glory & mercy we have received ... we keep going.
- C. 2 Corinthians 4:1 "we have this ministry." He possessed it. How could he ever quit?

## V. As We Close...

- A. If you're going to live as a Christian ... and triumph over difficulty ... you must fix your eyes on Jesus.
- B. It will bring clarity, transformation, and strength to your life.