

LIVING IN LIGHT OF THE POWERFUL NEW COVENANT

2 Corinthians 3

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you? ²You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. ⁴Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. ⁵Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as *coming* from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, ⁶who 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. **2 Corinthians 3:1-6 NASB**

- Paul rejects the criticism of the false teachers and the Judaizers who have mocked his apostleship.
- Paul refers to the Corinthians themselves as his ‘letters of recommendation’...they are ‘living letters.’
 - He is confident about the work the Holy Spirit has done in the hearts of these people so he speaks boldly.
 - He declares that “Our adequacy is from God.”
 - The Spirit of God, the new covenant is by the Spirit of God...the letter kills but the Spirit gives life!
 - This word for adequacy, or sufficiency, is only found here in the **NT**.

⁵Not that we are fit (qualified and sufficient in ability) of ourselves to form personal judgments *or* to claim *or* count anything as coming from us, but our power *and* ability *and* sufficiency are from God. ⁶[It is He] Who has qualified us [making us to be fit and worthy and sufficient] as ministers *and* dispensers of a new covenant [of salvation through Christ], not [ministers] of the letter (of legally written code) but of the Spirit; for the code [of the Law] kills, but the [Holy] Spirit makes alive. **2 Corinthians 3:5-6 AMPC**

- Adequacy, fit, qualified and sufficient in ability.
- Our power, ability, and sufficiency are from God.
- They are ministers of the Spirit, ministers of the new covenant.
- The law gives only external standards to go by, but no power to live up to what has been eternal in stone.

- But now there is a **new covenant** and the standards are imprinted in our hearts and minds by the Spirit of God who prompts us and enlightens us by working within us to cause growth and change in us and through us.

⁷ 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, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? ⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. ¹⁰ For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses *it*. ¹¹ For if that which fades away *was* with glory, much more that which remains *is* in glory. **2 Corinthians 3:7-11 NASB**

- If the giving of the ‘letters’ engraved on stones was accompanied by God’s glory, how much more glory will be involved in the ministry of the life in the Spirit?

²⁷ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” ²⁸ So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. ²⁹ It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony *were* in Moses’ hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him. ³⁰ So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers in the congregation returned to him; and Moses spoke to them. ³² Afterward all the sons of Israel came near, and he commanded them *to do* everything that the LORD had spoken to him on Mount Sinai. ³³ When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, ³⁵ the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him. **Exodus 34:27-35 NASB**

- Forty days of praying and fasting in the very presence of the Lord! Wow!
 - Moses had a glow on his face from living in the light of God’s glory shining upon him.

- When Moses came out of God’s presence glowing, he came with a word from the Lord and people gathered to hear it...and to see the powerful effect it had on Moses.

¹²Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in *our* speech, ¹³and *are* not like Moses, *who* used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. ¹⁴But 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. ¹⁵But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; ¹⁶but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there* is liberty. ¹⁸But 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 3:12-18 NASB**

- The people of God were very ‘tuned in to Moses’ face,’ but not as focused on the words God gave him to speak.
 - Their attention was to the level of ‘glory’ that remained shining on the face of Moses and not the power or purpose of what God spoke when Moses was with Him.
 - Their minds, their thoughts, their process of thinking got hardened.
 - They missed the purpose of the fading of Moses’ countenance...they were supposed to see and understand that the temporary ‘glory’ was about the covenant that Moses brought...they missed the true nature and meaning of the old covenant itself.
 - This could be why the ‘veil’ still remains un-lifted when the old covenant is read.
 - Important point of notice: the veil is not moved so people can get close enough to God to believe...no...it is when someone turns to the Lord, this is when the veil comes down and truth can be seen and accepted.
 - This turning can be a genuine change of mind or thinking.
 - It can also be a turn of attention or ‘notice’...like a ‘wink’ it causes momentarily, to think about God or think about Him differently.
 - Intercession is of incredible value here.
 - It says that their minds (hearts) were hardened (**v14**) so you can pray for hardheaded, hard hearted people to ‘turn’ to the Lord, too. This prayer applies to non-Jewish people, too!

- Liberty, freedom, release! Freedom from legalism, freedom from condemnation, guilt, shame, rejection, fear and bondage.
 - Freedom to know God and love Him and grow in Him.
 - Believers have an unveiled face...

And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His *very own* image in ever increasing splendor *and* from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit. **2 Corinthians 3:18 AMPC**

- The powerful process of transformation unto the likeness of Jesus.

³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, ⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵*We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ **2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NASB**

- Our weapons are ‘mighty before God’...**v4 AMPC**
 - They are ‘divinely potent to demolish strongholds.’ **V4 New English Bible**

“...for the weapons of our warfare are not human but mighty in God’s sight, resulting in the demolition of fortresses, demolishing reasoning, and every haughty mental elevation which lifts itself up against the experiential knowledge which we believers have in God...” **V4 Wuest’s Expanded NT**

- We have weapons:

○ The Word	○ Power
○ The Holy Spirit	○ Compassion
○ Love	○ Prayer/Intercession
○ Praying in the Spirit	○ Persistence

We are out to destroy ‘speculations’ or arrogant reckoning as **Weymouth** translates the word. These are things that are primarily lies or mis-information that help build the ‘house of thoughts’ that are the strongholds that need destroyed so people can be freed to see and embrace the truth.