

2 Corinthians 3:18 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.

Central idea – The Spirit of God transforms us. He calls on us to cooperate and to do the part He assigns us to do – to behold the glory of the Lord – but He is the One who works deep within our characters to change us.

Developing the Discipline of Grace

1. At the beginning of the sanctification process, God replaces our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh. What do you think it means to have a heart of flesh, as opposed to one of stone?

2. Why can't the Holy Spirit make any progress with a stone-hearted person?

3. a. The Holy Spirit's goal is to make us like Christ. You could choose almost any story in the Gospels that portrays Christ and say to yourself, "God wants to make me like this." Read Mark 1:40-42. What does this tell you about what the Spirit intends you to become?

b. How do you feel when you consider that this is part of God's agenda for you?

4. On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (always), indicate the extent to which you are conformed to the character of Christ, as measured in the following statements:

I hate sin in my own life, because of the despicable nature of it, not because I worry about what others would think.
1 2 3 3 5

My entire goal is to the will of God, no matter how inconvenient or unpleasant that may seem to be at the time, simply because it is His will.
1 2 3 4 5

Not only have I stopped lying, cheating, gossiping, and thinking impure thoughts, but my speech and thought-life are focused on others' well-being.

1 2 3 4 5

I aim to please God and edify others in all that I say and do, rather than just getting through life as comfortably as I can

1 2 3 4 5

5. Think of yourself in a room in which the lighting is controlled by a dimmer switch as described in chapter 6. When you first walk in, the light is dim and everything looks neat and clean. This impression disappears as the lights come up and illuminate more brightly the contents of the room. What are some sins in your life that you see now that you didn't notice when you first committed yourself to Christ?

6. a. How does beholding the glory of Christ in the gospel help to transform us?
 - b. In practical terms, how do we go about beholding Christ's glory in the gospel?

7. a. On your own, write down an area of sin in your life on which the Holy Spirit has been shining His spotlight.
 - b. Consider your answer to 6b. How could you apply in to the area of sin you just named?

8. In your struggles with sin, do you find it personally helpful to remind yourself that sin is a defeated enemy? Why or why not?

What's the point of all this?

Our specific responsibility in the pursuit of holiness, as seen in 2 Corinthians 3:18 is to behold the glory of the Lord as it is displayed in the gospel. To behold the glory of Christ in the gospel is a discipline of grace. Meditate on Matthew 22:36-40 when you get a chance.