

TEACHING NOTES ON 2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 – TRANSFORMED BY HIS FACE

2 Chron 7:14. The LORD's face. We humans connect so much through being face to face. Prov 2:1-6. Moses knew the LORD face to face in some sense. (Read Yahweh for LORD in all caps in OT. In NT 'Lord' is almost always Jesus Christ). We can read or hear true things from the Word, like in a teaching, but to really understand them takes desire and effort to seek the LORD. If you really want something in your life from God—study it, meditate on it and pray. It's exciting, interesting and fun to do so.

The main scripture for this teaching is 2 Cor 3:18

We want this!! We want to be transformed to be like the Lord Jesus. We try to be like him in things we do and to intentionally do the things he said to do, but that's not what this is talking about. This is talking about what the spirit of God does when we focus on his face. We're going to have to really seek it from the Word, study it, meditate on it, apply it.

Let's back up a couple verses to get some immediate context:

3:3 says we're living epistles written not with ink but with the spirit. Do we do that or does the spirit do that?

What kind of an epistle are we? Are we the best kind? Some of that is determined by us, but the most important part is done by the Lord Jesus. Another good reason we need to focus on his face.

3:6 ministers of new covenant. Only time Paul mentions New Covenant (NC). Jesus did at last supper. Remember that. It's pretty important because NT means NC. Every time we have communion we are celebrating the NC.

3:17. The Lord is that spirit. What does that mean? Who or what is the spirit? The Lord Jesus! Cool!

Old Covenant (commandments at Mt. Sinai) was pretty incredible. Israel were slaves come out of Egypt. Have a written language. Have a law. Have a structure for a nation of free people. Blessed in every way if they kept the covenant. Cursed if they did not. All OT is "I brought you out of the house of bondage into the promised land, we have a covenant, worship only me and keep it and you'll be blessed, turn away and you'll be punished."

Let's talk about the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, this new covenant and then, of course, we'll come back to Romans 12 about being transformed.

We'll read about the transfiguration in a minute, but let's set a little context for what happened there.

Mt 16:13 Caesarea-Philippi. Show map. Mt. Hermon. HQ of Baal. Met with the other gods there and was the boss. (Mt. Zion will be exalted against Mt. Hermon)

'O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan; O many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan! Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain, at the mount that God desired for his abode, yes, where the Lord will dwell forever?' Psalm 68:15-16. Recommend reading the whole Psalm.

16:16-18. "Upon this rock" could mean here on Mt. Hermon. In other words, kicking out the devilish spiritual forces and taking it back for God. Show picture of the gates of hell.

Mt 17:1-6. His face shown like the sun. Heard God speaking from heaven. Doesn't happen often.

Heb 8:7-13. From Jer 31. Who is the NC for? Israel. Yet Jesus inaugurated it and we are in it and they aren't. We are living epistles for it. We are able ministers of it.

Why? Rom 11:25-27. All the surviving remnant of Israel will come into it when he comes back. First He will punish Israel according to the curse of the law and then restore them and bless those who trusted in Him through the NC in Israel. Deut. 29 & 30, Ezek 34, Jer 30 and a lot of other places.

OK. There's a brief bit about the NC for Israel and for the Church. Now, back to the face of the Lord Jesus.

Here's a well-known and well-loved scripture. 1 Cor 13:12. We are being transformed now as we look at his face. It is obscured now, but as we focus, we grow gradually more like him.

1 John 3:1-2.

At the gathering together, we totally see him and see his face unobscured. That's when this mortal becomes immortal, we have a new body like his glorious body, no more sin nature. Is it caused by seeing his face? There is certainly a strong connection between literally seeing his face and being fully and instantly transformed.

Getting back to the original point of our main scripture, 2 Cor 3:18... focus on his face. How do we do that? By seeking to understand the Christ in us through the scriptures. When we say "Christ in me", which is bigger, Christ or me. Paul wrote things like 'for me to live is Christ, to die is gain'. And 'I was crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

Romans 12:1-2.

Living sacrifice . logikos latruo. Two main Greek words for worship, proskuno and latruo. Latruo is serving God with sacrifice. What's our logical sacrifice? It's already done. The old man died. We were bought by him—he owns us. It's still up to us to offer acceptable sacrifices. Remember from OT, some sacrifices were acceptable, others were not. Like Aaron's two sons and Saul's sacrifice. What did God think when someone sacrificed something unclean? Offended. Angered. That must mean we are holy. We get to, by the freedom of our will, offer acceptable sacrifices when we give up what our human self might want to do, to do what God needs done.

Isa 58:5-10

Conclusion

- Rom 12:2. Transfigured. Metamorphosized as we renew the mind, which is putting the Word in. It is related to looking at the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's something to seek in the Word.
- When we fully see the glory of his face, shining like the sun, the full transformation of our flesh and mind are immediate.

- Meanwhile the spirit has written a letter in and on each of us that can be read by people around.
- We have been brought into this new covenant that God had promised to Israel. Surprisingly, we came in without even knowing about it, before most of them, to whom it had been promised. This involves forgiveness of sins and having the spirit. This new covenant is as important to us as the Sinai Covenant was to Israel and we should know the prophecies about it.
- Blindness has in part happened to Israel until the fullness of the gentiles come it. In God's plan, the remnant of Israel will see him and recognize him and come in too.

There is transforming power in the face of Jesus Christ! If we seek to see his face, meaning seek to look at who and what Jesus Christ really was and is, it will be pleasing to God. He will grant understanding and transformation.

As we are being transfigured by looking at his face, we can get in the devil's grills too.
Eph 3:10.

Face – prosopon

Matt 17:2 the transfiguration ...and his **face** did shine as the sun

1 Cor 13:12 ... then face to **face**

2 Thess 1:9 ... everlasting destruction from the **face** of the Lord

Heb 9:24 ... to appear in the **face** of God for us

Rev 6:16 ... hide us from **the face** of him that sitteth on the throne

Rev 22:4 ...And they shall see his **face**; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.