

2 Cor. 3:12-18 (WCF 20:1) "Most Free"

For the Children: When people don't feel their sins are forgiven, they often try to hide things. Perhaps at times you have tried to hide your sins from dad and mum. When you know God has forgiven you, it's usually easier to talk freely with others about sin and salvation. In the OT, God's people did not always realize that their sins would be completely forgiven when the Lord Jesus came. They thought they could earn forgiveness by obeying God's law. But that is an impossible task! Thankfully, God's children now know that we have been set free from trying to earn our own salvation. **Questions:** How has Jesus' coming freed God's children? How does the Holy Spirit help us to be free? Does it help us feel more free when we go back to our sins?

Introduction:

First Point: Old Covenant Glory

- 1) Information Not Available: V. 12 implies that God did not reveal as much in the OT as He did in the fullness of time. Types and shadows, like the ceremonial law, were partial, temporary and preparatory (Heb. 1:1-2)
- 2) The Veil of Moses: Moses' close contact with God's glory caused his face to shine in a way that sinners could not bear. Moses let Israel see his face when he delivered the Law, but veiled his face after. He took the veil off when he came before the Lord. Ex. 34:32-35 shows this was a repeated pattern. The shining face taught Israel about God's glory, the veil reminded them of their sin and need of the Messiah to deal with their sin once and for all – the veil pointed ahead to Christ
- 3) Unbelief and Belief: Some in Israel received the work of God's Spirit and looked ahead to the Messiah in faith – and were saved. But many did not. They wanted to stick only with the Law. They acted out of "slavish fear" of punishment (WCF 20:1). They did not really understand the Law or the Gospel or Moses' veil. It was as if they wanted the veil to remain, their sins not dealt with by Christ. This situation continued in Israel – the veil over the heart
- 4) The Need for Christ: Moses lifted the veil in God's Presence. He trusted that God would deal with his sins – he turned to God for mercy. Only when we turn to Christ in faith, can our sins be covered, Then the veil is lifted – as only He can – we do not need to act any more as if our sins are still held against us

Second Point: New Covenant Glory

- 1) Freedom of Speech; In the New Covenant, we can enjoy "great boldness in speech" – great openness, freedom that comes from receiving the fullness of revelation in Christ – rather than types and shadows
- 2) Free from the Veil: The believer is now more like Moses with the veil off in God's Presence. We have free access to God, for our sins have been covered. We are united to the Christ Who sits at God's right hand. We have His Spirit dwelling within us. Our guilt is removed, we have assurance of salvation. We can draw near in prayer. These blessings were present in the OT, but are "enlarged" in the NT
- 3) Freedom of the Spirit: The Lord Jesus and His Spirit are united in bringing us freedom and transformation. The OT promised that the Spirit would be poured out on all God's people in greater measure (Ezk. 36:26-27; Joel 2:28-29). The new heart He gives us enables us to obey willingly, out of love
- 4) The Freedom of Transformation: Christ and His Spirit transform the believer into the likeness of Christ. Hence, Rom. 12:2. When Moses entered God's Presence without a veil, the glory of God transformed him – and he reflected it. So do we when we turn to Christ. But our glory does not fade – it grows from glory to glory. This progressive sanctification also adds to our freedom
- 5) Focus on the Main Freedom: These areas of freedom are more important than our freedom of conscience before men. Without the fundamental freedom, we will have no freedom of conscience. Knowing this should help us to keep local "conscience issues" in perspective

Conclusion: