

Growing in the Grace of God #16 - Contrasts Between the Old & New Covenant Part 2

by Bob Hoekstra

The new covenant offers us liberty from the bondage of the old covenant, allowing us to live in freedom and to proclaim the glories of God with boldness and clarity.

Duration: 42:56

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 3:12-18

Topics: "New Covenant", "Christian Freedom"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the boldness of speech that comes with the New Covenant. He highlights the contrast between living under the law and living by grace. Using an allegory from Galatians 4, the preacher explains the difference between trying to please God through our own efforts (the flesh) and relying on God's promises and provision (the spirit). The sermon emphasizes the freedom and insight that come from turning to the Lord and renouncing self-sufficiency.

Transcript

Number 8, contrast between the old and new covenants. We've seen a lot of major contrasts, and we'll look at one more that covers a more extensive section of Scripture. Chapter 3, verses 12 through 18.

And what is highlighted there, in some various obvious ways, and a few subtle ways, a strong contrast that has to do with bondage versus liberty. Now think of that. Bondage versus liberty.

Being held and contained and unable to function and serve and grow and, and on the other hand, liberty. Set free to know the Lord, grow in the Lord. Bondage versus liberty.

God's will is Christ-likeness for His people. Our hunger, once we're born again, grows that we want to be like Christ. That new creature yearns for more Christ-likeness.

So God's will and our hunger is Christ-likeness as Christians. But in many ways, believers are often not at liberty to grow in the image of Christ. Why? Their problem is they're under the bondage of old covenant living.

Habits and mindset of the old covenant kind of dictate and determine how they think and function. The solution is to enter more into the liberty of new covenant living, which includes the liberty to be transformed

more and more into the image of Christ. This passage shows that old covenant living, which depends on self-sufficiency, results in bondage.

Whereas new covenant living, which depends on God's sufficiency, results in liberty. Even the liberty to be remade more and more like Christ Jesus. That's a general perspective on verses 12 through 18.

Bondage versus liberty. Again, the old covenant, new covenant in view, we've seen that already. Verse 6, the new covenant, verse 14, the old.

Bondage and liberty issues, they appear in a number of ways and places. The most forthright statement of the liberty, verse 17, now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Bondage issues, verse 13, unlike Moses, or could be translated, we are not as Moses.

There's a certain respect in which Moses, in some arenas, is a tremendous example for us in godly relationship. But sometimes it's easy to forget that some of these great godly men, the scriptures show some of their strategic weaknesses. And there is an aspect of Moses' life and relationship ministry here, that new covenant servants aren't like him.

Moses, the old covenant, law on stones. There's a bondage that even Moses got trapped in. If you want to hold these pages, the bondage and liberty of old and new covenant comes out very clearly in Strong in Galatians 4, which is kind of, in many ways, a parallel passage to the section we're studying.

Just look at it for just a minute, just to be reminded in very clear terms, that when you're looking at old covenant versus new covenant, one major contrast is we're looking at the difference between a life of bondage and a life of spiritual liberty. Galatians 4, 21 through 24. Tell me you who desire to be under the law.

Do you not hear the law? Well, that's a powerful statement. You want to live by regulations and rules and external standards to try and live up to, relating to God and serving him? Do you not hear the message of those external standards? Then it goes on to explain by sort of an allegory built into history between the two wives of Abraham and the two sons. For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondswoman and the other by a free woman.

But he who was of the bondswoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the free woman through promise. See, the flesh is what I'm going to promise to do for God. Through promise, that kind of covenants, what God's going to do for us.

Notice verse 24, which things are symbolic or allegorical, could be translated either way. Not that they weren't real history, but they also contained in them a symbolic message. For these, these two women and their sons born are the two covenants.

That is a living demonstration of what the two covenants are about. The one from Mount Sinai, what's that? The old covenant of law. And look, which gives birth to bondage.

Restrictive, restraining, inhibiting, closing in on us. It doesn't set us free to live. It bears down on us with failure, pointing out our inadequacy, our sin and our insufficiency, which is Hagar.

She's a type of the law, ingenuity, self-effort, flesh resource. That's how Ishmael was born. He wasn't born by Abraham allowing God to do something for him that Abraham couldn't do.

Hagar and Ishmael, that was Abraham and Sarah doing something for God. That's the old covenant. That's human performance.

That's the flesh. How many of us have birthed our own Ishmaels? I left a trail of them, I'll tell you. Early days as a Christian, early days as a pastor, you know.

I was getting people to create things for God out of their own ingenuity. You know, kind of help him with his program, help fulfill his promises. Sarah's not looking good.

I think Hagar can do it for us, you know. It's the flesh. Living by performance, human sufficiency.

Verse 25, for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to Jerusalem, which now is earthly and is in bondage with her children. Verse 26, but the Jerusalem above, New Jerusalem, which is our home, is free, which is the mother of us all. See, we're talking the difference between bondage and liberty.

Bondage and freedom, spiritually speaking. Verse 31, so then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Chapter 5, verse 1, stand fast, therefore, in the liberty by which Christ has made us free.

And do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, the rules, the regulations, the do's and don'ts, as a hope of relating to God and even developing and changing our lives. This is kind of a parallel passage to 2 Corinthians 3, and I thought we'd read it because it just so blatantly, so obviously screams out bondage versus liberty. Our passage back in 2 Corinthians 3, 12 through 18, does the same thing, but some of it's a little more subtle, but it's the same, it's the same contrast.

For example, verse 13, the bondage of secrecy, wherein we are unlike Moses. Unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. Verse 7, the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away.

You put these verses together and couple them with Exodus 34, an amazing thing is revealed. That Moses put the veil on for the right reason, and then kept it on for the wrong reason. Why did he put it on? Verse 7 tells us, the children of Israel couldn't look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance.

He'd been up in the presence of God, getting the law of God, which had a glory. A holy reality to it. He came down, his face was shining, and he starts to tell them all about it.

It's like, Moses, whoa, we can't even look at you. So for their sakes, what did he do? He put the veil on. Later on, the glory began to fade.

Why? Because the glory of the old covenant was intended to fade away and be replaced by the glory of the new. And when the glory started to fade, did he take the veil off? Ain't no problem now, I'm kind of down to earth with you folks. I'm not shining with the holiness of God.

No, he kept the veil on. Why? So that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. This is the bondage of secrecy.

Hiding the fading glory. The old covenant glory of knowing the standards of God, and the old covenant glory of having the problem of sin and human inadequacy revealed, was to be replaced by this new

covenant glory of God's solution, the righteousness of Christ in place of our sin, and God's adequacy in place of our inadequacy. Moses was hiding that process.

I mean, how would your flesh rather like people to know you? Well, he's going to come down shining again. I tell you, that man, he just talks face to face with God. Then it starts to fade, and it's like, trust me, this will blow you away.

God and I are really close. If I let it all shine out, it'll just blow you away. It's a bondage of secrecy.

Fear of being known, really, for what we are. Today, living by old covenant standards, by law, by performance, we're tempted to cover up our inadequacy. We put on veils of pretending, veils of defending, veils of self-justification.

Now, you may have thought I goofed up in that, but let me explain it to you. Once you see what was really going on, you'll realize I was totally righteous. I was totally righteous.

That veil of Moses, self-justification, hiding our inadequacy, it's a bondage. The new covenant sets us free from that. We're unlike Moses.

Moses put a veil over to show that this glorious thing that looked like was happening to him was fading. But we're not like Moses. We just say, hey, you don't see any glory shine, do you? You know why? Because I'm not adequate in myself to consider anything as coming from myself.

I don't need a glory shine. Yes. I think that's a good way to put it.

It's a form of spiritual pride on his part. It's kind of humbling to see the glory fading. Well, we'll just keep the veil on.

Put it on for a good reason, for the sake of the people. Kept it on for a bad reason, to save face. To save face.

Trust me, the glory is just pounding behind this veil. It'd blow you away if I revealed my relationship with God before you, you know, that kind of thing. But it comes out in all kinds of ways, that bondage of secrecy.

We don't... The flesh doesn't want its inadequacy and failure to be known. God made sure that the fleshy inadequacies of man, even his great men of God, are revealed in the Scriptures. Whether it's Moses, Abraham, David, Paul.

When they're functioning on their own, it'd be like a fading glory. And at times, their inadequacy, their shortcomings showed. Oh, praise God so often, you can see their faith in God coming through.

His faithfulness making them mighty, fruitful, changing them, making new creatures out of them. So we're unlike Moses. We don't have to hide behind veils.

We have a whole new covenant. We don't have to even intimate that we've got it all together. Really, we've got the glory shine, trust me.

We don't even have to hint at it. Why? Because none of it comes from us anyway. It's not depending on our sufficiency, our righteousness.

Along with the bondage of secrecy comes a bondage of blindness. Verses 14 and 15. But their minds were blinded, the Israelites, under the old covenant.

For until this day, the same veil remains, unlifted in the reading of the old covenant. Because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their hearts.

I was reading a discussion of the law. Oh, yeah. I was looking on PBS, looking at this Bill Moyer.

Is that his name, Bill Moyer? Moyers, thanks. He's doing this long series on Genesis. And I was just intrigued.

I was riveted to this discussion of Genesis by six people. And the most spiritually, biblically conservative of the six, I think it was six sat in that circle, was a lady professor from Fuller Seminary. She was the radical conservative.

That's scary. And this group is telling us what Genesis is all about. I mean, I was... If you had a tape recording, you'd just heard about a series of 150 gasps.

Like, ah! No! That's what the Genesis 3 temptation and fall is all about? It was astounding. The ingenuity of these people. And a number of them were Jewish.

They're just a veil that lies across their hard hearts. They explained it in every possible imaginative way you could, except what it means. And almost nobody even got close to what it meant.

Except that gal from Fuller almost inched up on it a couple of times. Then she kind of backed off when they went, you know, bizarre liberal, you know. She didn't want to be a fightin' fundie, I guess.

Fundamentalist. It was astounding. I mean, the blindness.

And these are exceedingly liberal Jews. But you can see the same blindness in the Orthodox Jews. Admit we can't make heaven? We need forgiveness? We're unrighteous? We're filthy rags? Come on! Look at my hairdo.

Look at my garb. Are you kidding? I'm serious with God. God's impressed.

I'm getting better. We're getting closer. This is going to work.

Veil. Doesn't matter whether they're liberal. Doubting everything.

This one lady, astounding. You know what that Genesis 3 story was all about? That it's all God's fault. Whoa! She said, you know what that story's all about? It's God's fault the world's in a mess, not man's.

Wow. She must be reading a totally different Bible. You know.

One other guy said, the problem with that story is you can't tell that to your kids. It messes them up. My word.

I think his name was Rosenblatt, actually. Astounding. Bondage of blindness, a veil of hardness on the heart, self-sufficiency by these liberal Jews to re-explain the whole thing.

Hey, they can handle it. They can make a philosophy of life out of it. I've never seen such mental gymnastics.

It'd be like a gymnast doing five flips before she landed. They were astounding. Yeah, really.

Good point. That's where this stuff was headed. Self-sufficiency of a philosophical re-explanation of everything.

Believing in nothing but man, really. Then you've got this other hardness of self-sufficiency. We are sufficient of ourselves to believe that what matters will come from ourselves and eventually will impress God if He's even there, if He even deserves to be impressed.

That kind of hard hardness. I mean, that's the way they were talking. You wonder that a lightning didn't just strike the whole network.

Well, I guess they misinterpreted that passage. Yeah. I guess they were wrong.

Whether it's that or way the other way on the spectrum, self-sufficiency, hardness of heart, comes in many packages. When I was over in Israel, in Jerusalem, this Orthodox family had me over for dinner on the Sabbath eve. And then when I had to go back to the hotel, they said there's only one way to go there, and it's a very circuitous route, way out around.

You dare not go straight back to the hotel because you go through the enclave of orthodoxy. And just driving the car, they'll stone you, and the driver in the car, they'll tear everything up, thinking they're doing God a great favor, judging the heathens who would actually cause a vehicle to move on the Sabbath. It's a blindness of self-sufficiency.

We're doing it right. God's pleased with this. Just driving that car.

It's a blindness of hardness, a veil of hardness. John the Baptist and Jesus both heard from the people this message. Abraham is our father.

Basically, go tell the Gentiles about repentance. In Luke 3.8, they told John the Baptist that, Luke 3.8. In John 8.39, they told Jesus that. They're going out with a message of repentance.

And what is the blind, hard-hearted Israelite saying to them? Abraham is our father. Self-sufficiency by ancestry. No need to repent.

Then Luke 18.9. Thank you, God, that I'm not like this despicable publican, self-righteous Pharisee. A blind, hard-heartedness of self-sufficiency. It's so contrary to the New Covenant, which says we're not sufficient of ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves.

This blindness is the opposite. We think we've got what it takes to impress God, start a relationship, make it home. Blind, hard, self-sufficient.

Can't see as God sees. Won't reach out for God's help. That's a bondage.

A bondage. Of secrecy, of blindness, of self-sufficiency. What's the other choice? Well, the New Covenant of liberty.

Like liberty of speech. Verse 12. Therefore, since we have such hope, New Covenant hope, hope in the sufficiency of God, we use great boldness of speech.

You know, I think through a class like this. We're just, what, eight weeks into the 12 weeks? Oh, we've had some bold things to think about together. I have used great boldness of speech.

In fact, I've mentioned before, sometimes I go home after class and, Lord, was I just coming unglued? I mean, was I off the planet? I said this, I said that. You know, that was bold. And I think about it, and by the time I get home, I'm thinking, praise the Lord, I think it was right.

Yeah, is that right? They're clipped and edited. They're two-hour tapes down to 40 minutes. But see, that's part of the New Covenant.

Since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech. We say things that would just absolutely decimate and explode the religious mind. How can you say that? The law dispenses death.

Oh, go wash your mouth out. No, we're just reading what the Bible says and boasting in it, rejoicing in it, reveling in it, praising God for it. Great boldness of speech.

I noticed way back when I was an Old Covenant preacher, I was always intimidated, you know. Is this impressing anyone? Are they accepting it? Will they like it? Will they come back? Will they die? Very good, Hillary. Yes, I should have started with that, I'm sure.

You're too bold, I know. You know, it's amazing what happens to you in the New Covenant. You do just get increasingly fanatical radical.

You just use great boldness of speech. You just let God say it like it is, and it's like, man, if you can't buy this, there's nothing else to buy. And if you don't like this, I have nothing else to say.

So, just shake the dust and go to another town. What else is there? I love that, the liberty of speech. I love the liberty the New Covenant gives us in just proclaiming the glories of God.

The realities of the grace of God found in Jesus Christ. Not only the liberty of speech is there, but the liberty of insight. Liberty of insight, verse 16.

Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. When we turn to the Lord, renounce self-sufficiency. Lean not on our own understanding.

Trust God. The veil of blindness just is torn away. We begin to see things.

One of the amazing things to me is how the grace of God in Christ and the New Covenant, which is a redundant statement, is just woven throughout the Scriptures and the Kingdom of Heaven. It just sorts out passage after passage after passage of Scripture. In rightly dividing the Word, it is right there beside Jesus Christ as the issue that rightly divides.

The Scriptures aren't about rules and regulations and programs and procedures. They're about a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the big things about that person, He's God in the flesh who came full of grace.

And of His grace, we've all received of His fullness, grace upon grace. Such a critical issue in rightly dividing the Word of God. You just go through passage after passage, book after book, and sort out the Word of God.

This is about law. This is about grace. This shows shortcoming and judgment and need and humbles man and makes him accountable.

This provides forgiveness, remedy, new life, resource, transformation. You can just plow through the whole Bible doing that, from Genesis to Revelation. When we turn to the Lord, there's a liberty of insight.

It's not we're trying to put all the Bible together. God is just sorting it out in the most simple of terms. Law, grace, flesh, spirit, self-righteousness, God's righteousness.

Man's inadequacy, God's adequacy. I mean, it's astounding how the Lord can just divide it, sort it out for us. And in turning to the Lord for everything, forgiveness, salvation, new life, strength, peace, fruit, works, as we'll see along the way, it just takes away the blindness.

The veil is taken away. It just gets increasingly clear, increasingly simple. The liberty of speech is in the New Covenant, the liberty of insight, and, of course, the liberty of life, just life in general.

Now, the Lord is the Spirit. The Lord, the Lord God, the life-giving One of the New Covenant is the Spirit. The Lord we're seeing at work in and through this New Covenant that we see so often here, the Spirit, the Holy Spirit at work.

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Where the Spirit of the Lord is given room to work in lives, it produces liberty, just the liberty of life, just a whole new attitude of liberty, not libertarianism, not antinomianism, not lawlessness, but freedom. It's so liberating.

We're set free from carrying the yoke ourselves. We're set free from producing the righteousness ourselves. We're set free from impressing people because we're accepted in the Beloved by God.

There's just the liberty of life. We treat others in a new free way, not this measured, you know, you've got to be good enough for me to love you. It's kind of like, hey, there's one redeemed to another.

One who laid aside their filthy rags of righteousness, you know, just freely relate to each other. Just the liberty of life. Free to follow God.

Free not to get all caught up in self. Just the liberty of life. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

I think back to my early heritage as a Christian, which was Dallas Seminary and Dallas Seminary Churches. This is not universally true, but it was too characteristically true. That in so many of the Dallas Seminary Churches, there was not this liberty of life.

There was just a kind of a reserve measured, I don't even know how to define it even, but you could taste it, smell it, see it, feel it, you know, just like it was, just wanted to creep all over you and kind of smother you. Not universally so, you know, but too characteristically so. And I was in a lot of Dallas Seminary Bible Churches, pastored one myself for years before the Lord surprised us and poured out His Spirit upon us.

The strange thing called liberty began to sweep among us. We stopped checking people's theological card at the door to see if we'd let them in or not, you know, like you love and seek the Lord and want to know

the Lord, come on in. Oh boy, that's scary stuff too.

I can remember we started even singing praise songs, Maranatha praise songs. One of the scariest moments in that new day of liberty was, and some people, you know, we had failed to check their card to see if they were card-carrying ultra-dispensationalists and cessationists and spirit-quenchers and all that. You know, we weren't checking cards anymore and these people just kind of showed up one Sunday, about six or eight of them, and they went right up to the front row.

That was very free. We couldn't coerce people to go up from the front row and they just, you know, marched in. It was a church starting, six or eight of them, just went right up front, you know.

And we were singing these praise songs and that one, is it Psalm 63? Thy loving kindness is better than life, so I lift up my hands unto thy name. You can't believe what they did. They lifted their hands up.

It sent a shockwave through our church, you know. But you know, it was kind of nice. They tasted a little liberty there and stretched our liberty.

My wife and I started having celebration meetings in our home, in the church that I was pastoring. Those who wanted liberty, it was just kind of a praise night. I can remember one of our elders, you know, just Dallas Seminary to the core, one night just sitting there and singing psalms and praise.

It was a celebration worship night. And he's just sitting there in his chair, just hands straight up to heaven. One of the other elders looked over at him when the song stopped, there were tears rolling down his face.

This one brother who had been more set free earlier turned over to him and said, it's great, isn't it Jack? Just free, you know. I mean, if every theological authoritarian figure tells you, you don't do that crazy stuff. I can remember one of our elders, you know, just Dallas Seminary to the core, one night just sitting there and singing psalms and praise.

It was a celebration worship night. And he's just sitting there in his chair, just hands straight up to heaven. One of the other elders looked over at him when the song stopped, there were tears rolling down his face.

This one brother who had been more set free earlier turned over to him and said, it's great, isn't it Jack? Just free, you know. I mean, if every theological authoritarian figure tells you, you don't do that crazy stuff, only God can get you to do it. I want you to do something as simple as just lift your hands to glorify God and express your honor and joy toward Him.

There's a liberty in it. Isn't that a silly thing? There's a difference of if we're singing the song like this or singing the song like this, it would divide us into different buildings, different denominations, different groups. Bondage is a deadly thing, you know.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Our church fell out of favor with the seminary. But I tell you, we felt like we fell into favor with God.

We just felt like God was pleased. I still love those brothers. I still correspond with professors there and all that.

I don't think I'm better than them or anything. But I sure thank God for the liberty that some of them haven't found yet, that God is just lavish. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there's liberty.

We found people started flocking to our church in Dallas when they found out that a Dallas seminary church was being set free. Now, I brought some scary stuff too because people came that had been disciplined by Copeland and Hagen and all the rest. And I'll tell you, I didn't know how to handle that.

Those were hard lessons. Still worth it though. Just to be set free.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Free to love, free to be open, free to share, free to say, you know, come unto me as the Lord says. Let's gather together in the name of the Lord.

It's fantastic. Liberty of speech, liberty of insight, just liberty of life. Finding room to live and giving people room to live.

You know, I was always trying to manipulate people before in the church to make them what I thought they should be. My goodness, I couldn't even make me what I thought I should be. I was a good pastor working hard on everybody else.

It doesn't mean we don't care about ungodliness. It doesn't mean we never rebuke and exhort. It doesn't mean we don't admonish.

It doesn't mean that we forget church discipline. We just do it in a whole new and living way by the Spirit of God. As He leads, as He gives love and wisdom and insight and empowering and protection.

I love this verse. Now the Lord is the Spirit. The Lord is the life-giving Spirit of the new covenant, the Holy Spirit.

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, here's one of the characteristics. There's liberty. Free from that bondage.

In our last verse of the night, Oh, this is the liberty of amazing, in many ways for man, above liberties. Oh, we don't want the enemy to rob us of this one. The liberty of transformation.

Look at this, verse 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 by the Spirit of the Lord. Where the Spirit of the Lord has given room to work, there is liberty even to be transformed.

Even to be transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ more and more. Now we're talking really set free. Free from sin and guilt.

But here more and more free from self and flesh. More free to be made like Him. This is for all of us, but we all.

It's for every new covenant servant. Everyone is willing to come with unveiled face. Not hiding our insufficiency.

Not coming in self-righteous secrecy. Hey, trust me, God and I meet on the mountain every morning for an hour and a half. I can't tell you all about it now.

It'd blow you away. We don't relate like that. We don't behave like that.

We just come with unveiled face. Open to see and learn of God and openly seeing that we're not some great thing in ourselves. We're just unveiled.

No secrecy, no hiding. Just open to God and openly, here we are, people who need God. Not self-sufficient, but seeking God.

And then beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. Biblically, you could probably say there are at least three mirrors. Maybe just three mirrors that reflect the glory of God.

Creation, the heavens declare the glory of God. Of course, that's a bit marred now, right? Flood, pollution, sin is struck. You look at the beautiful coastline.

What's all that garbage doing there? What's that sewage doing there? It's not a real good clear mirror. But it's there. Shows the glory of the Lord.

The body of Christ, another mirror. Christ lives in His people. Though at times the flesh makes that mirror look like a carnival mirror.

Really distorted. But that is a mirror. You can see Christ and His people.

What's the perfect mirror? The Word of God. Every word inspired of God. If we come humbly, open-faced, unveiled, not pretending, not hiding, wanting to see God, we can behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord.

Oh, in the Scriptures, how the glory of the Lord shines forth. How glorious He is. The glorious things He has done.

The glorious promises He has made. And as we are beholding in this mirror the glory of the Lord, we are being transformed. Ongoing process.

Are being transformed. Into what? Into the same image. Here, you know what makes us like Christ? Beholding Christ.

That happens in people relationships and even idols. You know, the Scripture says, you know, it shows in the Psalms, you kind of become like your God. What you give attention to, adulation, interest, you know, you become kind of like that.

People relationships are like that. You know, people run around every Madonna concert, you know. Kind of walk and talk and dress like, you know, it's like that's your God.

You'll become like that. We behold the glory of the Lord in the Scriptures, in a worshipful, humble, open hearted manner. It changes us.

Just like someday, 1 John 3, 2, we'll see Him as He is and it will make us like Him. In fact, it turns it around. It says, and we'll be like Him for we'll see Him as He is.

The power of the reality of the Lord transforming who we are. And we come, the New Covenant servants are at liberty to have their lives transformed. How? Just by coming humbly, openly to the Word saying, Lord, show me Jesus.

Show me how great He is. We're transformed into the same image from glory to glory. From one degree of His glory to another.

That's Christ-like growth. From one arena of our lives to another. Also, maybe it could refer to from Old Covenant glory to New Covenant glory.

Laying aside the Old Covenant glory of performance and all that and standard and the New Covenant glory of it's all in Christ. And how is this happening? Just as by the Spirit of the Lord. This isn't self-reformation.

This is the Holy Spirit going to work on us by the power of the revelation of Jesus Christ, showing us how glorious He is. That actually changes us. What's our hope of not being the people tomorrow we were yesterday, but rather grow and mature and be changed to be like Christ? The New Covenant.

It has this liberty built into it. If we come humbly, openly, no pretense, no self-sufficiency, just seeking God in His Word, the Spirit of the Lord will show us the glory of the Lord and will change us into that same image. That's the liberty of transformation.

That's part of the liberty of the New Covenant. Why is it more Christians aren't growing in Christ-likeness? Because too often they're under the bondage of the Old Covenant. They're trying to improve themselves and their relationship to God by performance measured by external standards.

Even godly ones, even perfect ones. And it does not change their lives. Praise God for the New Covenant.

The contrast between the old and the new is the difference between life and death, growth or no growth, fruit or no fruit, Christ-likeness or just religious procedure. Let's pray together. Lord, we thank You for laying it out so bluntly in the Scriptures.

And we want to come with unveiled face and just behold in the perfect, flawless mirror of Your Word the glory of the Lord and enter into that wonderful liberty of having the Spirit of God Himself change us. Lord, mark our lives that way and mark our ministry to others the same way we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11351.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/bob-hoekstra/growing-in-the-grace-of-god-16-contrasts-between-the-old-new-covenant-part-2/>

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