

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

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Date: 19 May 2024

[0 : 00] Some that are sick and out of pocket, but what a joy it is to be with brothers and sisters in Christ. Take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of 2 Corinthians chapter 3.

2 Corinthians chapter 3. Our text this morning will be a little bit longer than it has been in the last several weeks. We'll be in verses 7 through 18, so we'll finish up the third chapter, 2 Corinthians chapter 3.

We'll pick up where we left off in the 7th verse and we'll read down to verse 18, which will finish the third chapter. Let's open up with a word of prayer before we get into the word of God together. Lord, we thank you for this day and we are so thankful for the opportunity we have of gathering with one another. Lord, as we sing praise to your name and we turn our attention and our focus and all of our desires towards you.

Lord, we're mindful of those who are serving on the Mishfield. Lord, we're mindful of Brother Jamie as he is serving right now. We're praying that you continue to watch over him.

[1 : 02] We're mindful of those who may be sick and those who are serving in other capacities of our number. And we ask, Lord, that you would minister through them. But God, how good it is to be gathered together with the people of God in the house of God to read the word of God.

So, Lord, now as we come to this point in service where we long to hear a word from you. Lord, we can say that we have heard from one another. We've been encouraged with one another.

Lord, we've come this morning to hear from you. So, God, we pray that you would speak to us through your word. That it would not be the thoughts or the opinions of man, but it would be the very word of God that penetrates to the heart of our being.

That it gets to the depth of our soul. Lord, that it molds us and shapes and conforms us to be more like you for your glory and your honor. Not for ours, O Lord, but for yours. So, we ask that you would move during this time and that you'd be most glorified through what takes place now.

We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. If you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking if you would join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God found in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, picking up in verse 7.

[2 : 15] To put it in context, Paul is in the middle of an aside. He is not defending his concern for the believers at Corinth. Rather, he is discoursing about the wondrous of the ministry that God had called him and us into.

That is, the ministry of the new covenant. He has for some time here spoken of the weight of it, the responsibilities from it. And now he's going to speak of the glory of it.

He says, 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.

How will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of the condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory.

For indeed, what had glory in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

[3 : 21] Therefore, having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech. And 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.

But 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. But to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart.

But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 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.

You may be seated. 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verses 7 through 18. I want you to see this morning the surpassing glory of the new covenant.

We have seen how Paul has accurately told us. He was speaking of his concern for the believers at Corinth. He is writing here encouraging the believers to live authentically throughout the whole letter.

[4 : 36] He is not reproofing or correcting or rebuking. He is not disciplining. He is encouraging. He wants them to live an authentic life among the people that they live every day among.

He wants them to live accurately according to their profession. Paul has taken some time in chapters 1 and 2 and spoken of his concern for the believers there.

And then he interrupts himself while speaking of that concern. And we'll go all the way into the 7th chapter, you remember, speaking of the ministry which God had entrusted to him. He is speaking of the reality of this ministry, how this ministry comes with weight and concern.

Because who is able, who is fit to bear such things as proclaiming the gospel of Christ? And we have seen that this is not just a ministry that is confined to Paul and his traveling companions and those with him.

Though God may not call us to be church planners or pastors or vocational in the ministry, we do know that God has called us all to be proclaimers of the gospel message.

[5 : 37] To be a proclaimer of the gospel, by the way, is not a suggestion. It's a command. It is the great commission. We understand that as you are going, by the way, that is a repetition of what we find is referred to as the Shema in the Jewish thought.

In Deuteronomy chapter 6 and was starting there in verses 4, 5, 6, and 7, where the Jewish individuals are encouraged that as they go there to teach their children the things of the Lord, right? Jesus says that as believers, as we go, we ought to teach people the things of the Lord. We ought to make disciples, which not more than just telling them about Jesus. We ought to teach them the things of Christ, and we ought to be in the disciple-making business.

Paul was doing it vocationally. I have the privilege of being vocational in that, but we are all those who are called to do that. So when we look at this aside, in which Paul spends a great majority of this letter, we realize that he is not just speaking of his own ministry.

He is speaking of our ministry. And one thing that we understand is that it does come with great weight, because we are speaking of eternal matters. Therefore, we ought to be encouraged because God enables us and equips us to be those who are proclaimers of the gospel.

[6 : 47] But we also ought to take into account the simple and the sheer glory of the reality of what it is we have to share, that is, the good news. And it is the glory of the new covenant that so surpasses the old covenant, in which Paul now takes a few moments to look into.

I'll go ahead and tell you that even though we are looking at an extended number of verses, we only have two points. But there are sub-points within those points, so stay with me, okay? I can go ahead and give you the two points, and it is very easy.

Most of you know that when I preach, the fewer the points, the longer the message. I know. I don't know why it happens that way. It just happens. So we only have two this morning. I want you to see, and I'll go ahead and give them to you now, the restrictions of the law and the restoration of the gospel.

The restrictions of the law and the restoration of the gospel. Those are the things we have to focus on. Those are the things we need to see, because unless we fully comprehend, and I don't believe we will ever fully comprehend, but unless we comprehend it to the best of our abilities, how much more glorious the new covenant is than the old covenant, then we will not be proclaimers of that. We may think we have something good to tell someone, but we will not realize what great news we have in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will not realize that the thing which we have to share, the thing that we have been called to be proclaimers of, the very things that we have been called and to be service of our lives for, is so much more glorious than anything that has ever been told.

[8 : 14] We have this surpassing glory of the new covenant. We are not those who are bearers of the law. We are those who are bearers of the gospel. Now, we cannot accurately understand the gospel apart from a comprehension of the law.

This is why you have the Old Testament before you have the New Testament, right? You need to be slain by the law before you can be redeemed by the Savior. You need to have that. Some of you

read in Isaiah chapter 19, or you're going to read in Isaiah 19, your daily reading, depending on the daily reading plan you follow.

I've told you before, it's one of my favorite sections in all of the prophetic word. Isaiah speaking of the redemption of the people of Egypt there and how God was using Egypt. This is amazing, by the way.

I'm completely aside here. This is amazing because God is speaking of redeeming the people that used to enslave his people, right? And he's going to redeem the Egyptians. And it was the Egyptians that the people during Isaiah's time, they were trying to go back to Egypt and look for help where Isaiah says, yeah, you really should be going to the Lord God and looking for help, right?

And he's talking about how God is going to discipline Egypt and how Egypt is going to be brought to be weak and they're going to cry out. Even their strongest men will cry out like weak women and they'll cry out for fear and trembling.

[9 : 28] But then Isaiah says something astounding. He says that God will send them a Redeemer and a Savior who will save them and restore them. But then he makes this statement in there. He says striking yet healing.

That God will strike them in order that he may heal them. Friend, listen, that's the gospel message, right? The law strikes us so that God can heal us. Because until we know how bad we are, we don't know how much we need a Savior.

So we need to see these two things, right? We can speak of the glory of the new covenant, but we cannot comprehend it until we understand the restrictions of the law. This is why Paul says this. The first thing I want you to notice are the restrictions of the law. Within that point, there are a number of sub points I want you to see. I don't always tell you that, but I want you to catch them. We see that the law is restricted in purpose.

The law has but one purpose. Look at what he says. But if the ministry of death, do you see how Paul defines the law? He defines it as a ministry of death.

[10 : 36] Now we know he was referring to the law because he says, but if the ministry of death in letters engraved on stones, clearly an illustration, not an illustration, an application of the Ten Commandments written on the two tablets that are brought down from Moses off Mount Sinai.

Clearly this is a reference. Now the Ten Commandments or the Ten Great Sayings, or the Decalogue, if you will, are not the entirety of the law, but they are kind of the cliff note versions of the law, right?

All the law is comprehended within those Ten Great Sayings. Everything is there in the Decalogue. So the law in the Old Testament refers to the first five books of Moses. It refers to partially the first five books.

Sometimes it refers to all of the Old Testaments. You have the law, the writings, and the prophets. That's how the Jewish mind would have broke down the Old Testament. So the law would be the first five books. Kind of the highlight of the law are the Ten Commandments, referring to what Moses brought down.

So here we see that Paul is very clearly referring to the law, and he refers to it as a ministry of death. Here we see the restricted purpose of the law.

[11 : 43] Do you know why the law exists? The law exists when you read it, and I know this is why we're not very comfortable with it. This is why when we get to it, we say, well, it doesn't make me feel good. The law was never intended to make us feel good.

The law was intended to demonstrate to us why we deserve to die. That's the restricted purpose of the law. For the wages of sin is death.

And you say, well, I don't know if I deserve to die. Well, then I'll say, my friend, and open up the Old Testament and read the law, and you will find that the wages of sin is death, and you and I have both broken the law.

We have sinned, and we deserve to die. Within the law, we find this one purpose, and that purpose is to define and declare to us why we are deserving of the punishment that is heading our way. When we open up the law, we are restricted to one thing. We don't find hope. We don't find help. We find, rather, the sentence that has been passed upon us. We read the book of Leviticus, and the theme of the book of Leviticus is, Be holy as I am holy, says the Lord.

[12 : 47] And we don't make it very much through the book of Leviticus until we realize that we are not holy. And we understand that we cannot be holy because, as Jesus says, if a person breaks

one point of the law, he is guilty of all of the law.

He has broken all of the law. And what we find through all the statutes and all the judgments and everything that is there is there's no sacrifice, there's no offering, there's nothing that we can do that keeps us from breaking the law.

The reality is the restricted purpose of the law is to show us that we deserve to die. And we don't like it because we would think that we deserve better than that.

Paul tells us in the book of Romans that the heart of all men is desperately wicked. Every one of us. And we don't know the wickedness of our own heart unless we go to the law of God because the natural tendency of man is to compare himself with those around him.

And we look around and we say, well, I'm better than that one or I'm better than that one. I'm not quite as good as that one, but I'm somewhere in between. And I don't know if you've noticed it, but I've noticed it about myself. The people that I pick to compare myself about are those that I'm always most assured that I will be better than.

[13:57] I don't pick people that are walking a little bit more faithful than me. And we have a tendency to raise ourselves up a little higher than we should. But what does the word of God says? Be holy as I am holy.

That's not an Old Testament passage, by the way, because that spills over into the New Testament. It's in the book of Hebrews as well. The standard of God is holiness. The restricted purpose of the law is that it shows us we deserve to die.

You say, well, I don't understand that. Well, when we read the law, we see that we are guilty. The wages of sin have been committed by each and every one of us. Each and every one of us have seen this.

And we see it clearly. We do not, it doesn't make us feel good. It was never intended to make us feel good because there is restricted purpose of the law. Secondly, within this restrictions of the law, we see that there is restricted power.

That is, the law is restricted in what it can do. He refers to it in verse 9, for if the ministry of condemnation has glory. So now he has referred to the law as the ministry of death.

[15:05] And then he refers to it as the ministry of condemnation. The law's purpose is to show us why we deserve to die. The only power that the law has is the power of condemnation.

It condemns us. It finds us guilty. You say, well, when I read the Old Testament, it tells me all these sacrifices that I can offer so that I may be forgiven, right? It tells you a sacrifice that you can offer until you break the law again.

And it tells you a sacrifice that you can offer until you do this. And don't forget the reality that what God declares is that for the sin of high-handedness, that is, the intentional sin, there is no sacrifice. So when we read the law, the only thing we find is that it has the power to condemn us. You say, pastor, this doesn't make us feel good. I told you the sermon had two points. Stay with me through the first one so we can understand the glory of the second one, right?

Because the power of the law is to bring about death or to bring about condemnation. The purpose is it shows us we deserve to die.

[16:05] The power that it has, it condemns us. We understand that over and over and over again. We see condemnation, condemnation, condemnation. Do you know that there is no power in the law to make you right?

Paul would say it this way, for by the works of the law, no man is made righteous. You cannot be made right according to the efforts and the works of the law. This should separate us from legalism. This should separate us from anything other than total reliance upon Christ because the power of the law is that it condemns us. That's the only thing that it can do.

No man may be able to be declared perfect or right by the law. Rather, we find condemnation. Within this restriction of the law, we see not only is the law restricted in purpose, not only is it restricted in power, the law is restricted in position.

Look at what it says. But if the ministry of death in letters engraved on stones came with glory. Now, I'm not sitting here telling you that the law is bad.

[17:13] It is glorious. It is so glorious that Mount Sinai shook and the ground quaked and the clouds rolled up over it, right? The men of Israel could not go near it.

God says if anyone comes near it, they must be slain. The holy God of all of creation ascended upon the mounts and he communed with Moses and he declared to him this word which we declare

to be the law.

And the law came with glory, so much glory that the face of Moses is shown because he was in the presence of God and whatever holy God declares is glorious. And yet what we see is that it came with glory, but the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses.

They could not look intently because of the glory of his face, fading as it was. You remember Moses would come down from Mount Sinai. They couldn't look upon him. They couldn't rest their eyes upon him.

He didn't know his face was shining, but his face was shining. And he had to put a veil over his face because he knew that that was passing away. By the way, just a kind of an aside telling us that the law would be passing away, not that it's going to be abolished, but rather it's going to be fulfilled, right?

[18:23] Jesus fulfills the law to the other most. But what we understand here is it says that the sons of Israel could not look at his face. There is a restricted position of the law.

Do you know that when you open up the Old Testament and you read the law, there is no provision for you or I to be close to holy God.

We cannot look at the face of his glory because we do not deserve to be in his presence. We are condemned and we are deserving of death.

When we read the Old Testament, it restricts the position of man. Man cannot be in the presence of God. It was Moses and Joshua who went up on Mount Sinai alone.

Everyone else had to stay down. There was a tent of meeting out there. Moses would go out into the tent in a meeting. Joshua would hang out. The son of Nun at the tent of meeting. Everybody couldn't go into the presence of God.

[19:22] They built the tabernacle, which later became the temple. And then there were these chambers, right? There was in the temple, by the time Jesus came, there's a court of the Gentiles where everybody can be. And then there's a court of the women where the Jewish women could be.

And then there was a court of the Jews where the Jewish men could be. And then there was the holy place where the priests could be. And then there was the holy of holies where one man one day out of the year could go into with a rope tied around his ankle and bells around the end of his garment.

The provisions of the law, the position that it allowed us to have is it does not let you be in the presence of holy God because all it does is show you why you do not deserve to be there.

So we cannot, according to the keeping of the law, be into the presence of God. Because over and over and over again with every reading of the law, we are reminded, we do not deserve to be here.

The first part doesn't make us feel good, but this is the part we need to see. When you read the book of Isaiah, Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 6, you know it, right? All of a sudden he finds himself in the presence of God and what does he do?

[20:31] Falls on his face. You go to the book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel finds himself in the presence of God. What does he do? Fall on his face. Over and over and over again. You read all these people having these encounters.

You see Joshua, the son of Nun, this great battle who has hung out in the tent of meeting. He's been up on Mount Sinai. He's seen a little bit of the glory of God, but then he meets the angel of the Lord, the captain of the host of the Lord's armies and all of a sudden, what does he do?

He falls on his face, right? We meet all these people that when they get into the presence of holy God, there is one thing that they are clear of. Woe is me for I do not deserve to be here.

They are afraid they're going to die because they know that by the declarations of the law, they don't deserve to be their friend. Listen to me. The law restricts our position because it keeps us separate from holy God.

We don't deserve to be there. When we read the law, we see that there is a distance. There's a great gulf fixed between us. We cannot bridge that distance and we cry out like Job, oh, that there was an umpire who would lay his hand upon God and lay his hand upon man.

[21:38] Here are the restrictions of the law. It only has the power to slay us. It only has the purpose to declare to us that we are guilty and it only keeps us in the position of being separate.

But now, let's look at the restoration of the gospel because we see here the surpassing glory of the new covenant. Jesus has not commissioned or commanded us to go and declare to people the law of God.

We use the law so that we may proclaim the gospel. People need to hear that according to the law, they deserve to die. People need to hear that according to the law, they have been condemned unto death.

People need to hear that according to the law, there's no way they can get into the presence of holy God. But you can't leave them there because they need to hear these things so that they can hear what Christ has done.

Because Paul declares the glory of one so that he can show you the surpassing glory of the other. Look at the restoration of the gospel.

[22 : 49] He says, 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, look at this, how will the ministry of the Spirit stop right there?

The first thing I want you to notice is we are restored by the person of Jesus Christ. This is a personal ministry.

He has referred to the law as the ministry of death. Naturally, we would think that he would refer to the new covenant as the ministry of life, but he does not. He refers to it as the ministry of the Spirit. We read further in the passage and we see that the Spirit is the Lord.

We're not here to try to get into the Trinitarian nature of God because it would make our brains smoke, right? We would never leave here understanding it nor comprehending it, but we will accept it by faith that God exists in three and the three are one and the three are individually separate, right?

You have Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We understand that and we don't want to really get into it too much so, but we see here the Word of God declares to us that the Spirit is the Lord. This is a ministry of the Spirit.

[23 : 58] So the restoration is not a result of our efforts or our works because that's the law. We are changing course here. We're speaking of something so much more glorious.

The law shows us what we should do. The law shows us what we cannot do. The law reminds us of what is impossible for us to do. When we get to the gospel, we are told what he has done.

When you speak of the gospel, don't tell anybody what you did because it's not a ministry of you. It's a ministry of the Spirit, right? If you want to talk about what you've done, then you need to go to the law. When you need to talk about your works and your efforts and your abilities, then go to the Old Testament.

Friend, you've got to stop at the book of Malachi when you talk about the things you have done.

You've got Genesis to Malachi. That's all you've got. And then you turn the page over to the gospel of Matthew. You need to quit talking about what you've done.

You need to start talking about what Jesus has done because this is the ministry of the Spirit. The ministry of man is in the Old Testament. In the ministry of man, we know we deserve to die. In the ministry of man, we know that we have been condemned already.

[24 : 56] In the ministry of man, we know that we cannot enter into the presence of holy God. But the ministry of the Spirit restores us. This is His work, His ministry, His power, His position.

It is all His work, and we need to make sure that we keep it that way. Well, you say, well, what did I do? I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ. I gave Him all of my life and all of my being. I've accepted Him as Jesus, as my Lord and Savior.

Yes, you're right. You've done these things because He has drawn you to the Father. By the power and presence of the Spirit, you were drawn to one that you rebelled against. You were called and you were compelled. Conviction came upon your heart because God saw you.

Wow, you were yet a sinner. Christ died for you and me, right? He called us unto Himself. He beckoned us. This is His ministry, which makes it so much more glorious. And we begin to see this. This is the ministry of the person of Jesus Christ. It is about Him. It is not about us. Moses carried the Ten Commandments down the hill. Jesus spread His arms in submission on the hill.

[25 : 57] This is the ministry of Jesus. He has fulfilled it. It's no longer about us. All of a sudden, Paul reminds us that when we get to the New Covenant, we're not talking about ourselves anymore.

We're not talking about what we've done. We're not talking about our efforts. We're not talking about our abilities. We get to quit talking about us and we get to talk about Him. I mean, there's no better subject, right?

There's no better subject. When we get to see and understand that this is the ministry of the Spirit, we are restored by the person of Jesus Christ.

The restoration of the gospel also is restoration of the primary need of man. It meets our primary need. You say, well, what do I need most? What does mankind need?

Look at what it says. We go on. Verse 8 says, How would the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, that's what the law is, right? Much more does that.

[26 : 55] Look at this. Ministry of righteousness abound in glory. So now he's referred to the New Covenant as the ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of righteousness.

This righteousness is the primary need of man. You say, oh no, what I need, pastor, is I need to be forgiven for my sins. Oh, do you know that you can forgive someone?

You can forgive someone. The Bible tells you that you ought to forgive your enemies. You have the ability to choose to forgive. You ought to forgive those who persecute you, forgive those who hate you, forgive those who are against you.

It is our command. We ought to love those people who are against us and who oppose us, and we ought to forgive them. But forgiveness does not remove the consequences of the sin or the offense. It is quite possible for forgiveness to be extended, but for the condition to remain. That is, judgment to still be in place. You and I have both heard and read and seen people who have had great atrocities committed against them, great crimes of the flesh committed against them, and they have had the boldness and the ability to stand up in public and declare that they forgive the individual, yet the individual still pays the consequences for their sin, and rightfully so.

[28 : 10] We understand this. Forgiveness does not bring restoration. Forgiveness is for the one who offers the forgiveness. Man needs so much more than to be forgiven. Man needs righteousness.

Righteousness means to be in a right standing with a holy God. We don't need God just to forgive us. We need God to make us right in his presence. It would be one thing if God said, well, you're forgiven, but I can't have you in my presence because you're still condemned by your sins, and yes, I forgive you.

We're not here talking about that he doesn't. Sure he does, but we need to be made righteous because righteousness means we have a right to be in his presence, and the ministry of the gospel is a ministry of righteousness.

Friend, listen, God does so much more than forgive us in Jesus Christ. The Bible says we are forgiven and we are made righteous. We have the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ given to us.

It is not our righteousness, for we did not hear it, but it has been given to us. The righteousness of Christ has been placed upon us. We ought to strive for righteousness, but we have been declared righteous because of Jesus Christ.

[29 : 20] So to be declared righteous, we are now in a right standing with a holy God, and that is the primary need of man, and the reason I say that's a primary need of man is because all the way back in the book of Genesis, God declares the purpose of man, and the purpose of man is that he would obey God and walk and commune with him every day, and you're not going to do that unless you're in a right standing with him, and we are made righteous in the gospel, whereas the law makes us guilty and condemns us to death.

The gospel declares us to be in a right standing with the holy God. We have the primary need of man met. The gospel also restores us to a place of fellowship.

It restores us to a place of fellowship. The law says that we cannot go near holy God. The gospel says that we have a place in his presence. Look at what the word of God says.

Therefore, having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and 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, but 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.

But to this day, whenever Christ is read, a veil lies over their heart. That's all the law can do. It veils the heart. It veils the mind. It keeps us separate from a holy God. The veil should remind us of the veil in the temple, the one that was torn in two from top to bottom.

[30 : 49] That veil was in place to keep people out, right? That's what the law does. But look at what it says. But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the

Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

We're getting to that in just a minute. 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.

What does he say? The veil has been removed. The hindrance has been taken out of the way. Now, as the author of the book of Hebrews says, we can run boldly through the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

We can run boldly through the blood of Jesus into the presence of a holy God. We have a right to be in his presence because of the sacrifice that's been paid. We come through the blood of Jesus Christ.

The veil has been taken. The veil of his flesh has been torn. And what it has done is it has restored us to a place of fellowship. Now, we can be in the presence of holy God. Now, we can be in his midst and we can cry out before the throne of a holy God.

[31 : 47] Now, we can behold him face to face. The glory of the Lord. Moses had a place apart. He could commune with God as a man face to face and have sweet fellowship in Jesus Christ.

We all have that, right? We are now restored to this place of fellowship. We now have the opportunity to go. The law kept us away. The gospel invites us in. What a glorious thing it is. It is the Father who says, come into my presence through Jesus Christ, right? Look at the Lamb. Behold the Lamb. Come through the blood of the Lamb and come into my presence. No longer must we fall on our face and say, woe is me for I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips.

Now, we go into his presence and say, wait, look at Jesus. He's allowed me to be here, right? Now, we have a place with the Father. Now, we can commune with him. And now, we have the opportunity to be where we were created to be.

In the cool of the day, walking in sweet fellowship with a holy God. Oh, what a thing. And the first Adam separated us. The second Adam brings us back.

[32 : 49] What a good thing to be back in the right place. Last. My last word. The restoration of the gospel is restored by the person of Jesus Christ.

is the restoration of the primary needs of man. It puts us in a place of fellowship and it restores the possibility of freedom. It restores the possibility of freedom.

The Bible declares to us there in verse 17, now the Lord is the spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Other translations say freedom. What you find in the law.

Paul declares in Romans chapter 7. He says, I would not have known what coveting was had the law told me not to covet. But when the law told me that I don't need to covet, all of a sudden I found out the only thing that I could do was covet.

What the law highlights for us are the things that is already embedded within our hearts. The law gives us no promise nor opportunity of being free from the very sin which enslaves us. When we read the law it declares to us the things that we are already guilty of even if we do not know it.

[34 : 03] Paul made this great declaration in Romans chapter 7. He says, this sinful man that I am, the thing that I don't want to do, I do do. The things that I do want to do, I can't do. Who will set me free from this wretched man that I am?

But he answers his own question. He says, praise be to God through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. See what we find in the law is we find no freedom from the sin which holds us captives. Rather we find the law continuing to highlight the sin which holds us captive. The law can never set us free. The law can never enable us to rid ourselves of the things we do not want to do.

All the law can do is continue to highlight the things we keep doing and keep doing and keep doing because friend, we've looked at it before, we are a slave of something. We are either a slave of Christ or a slave of Satan but we are a slave and if we are in bondage to Satan we cannot help but sin.

But the Bible declares to us that where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Paul would write to the church in Galatia in the book of Galatians that the freedom of Christ has come to set us free.

[35 : 14] It was for freedom that Christ set you free. What is he saying there? Christ set us free not just from the consequences of sin but from the bondage of sin.

That is, in Christ we don't have to do it anymore. In the law you cannot help it but in Christ now there is a greater power within you and now there is a liberty of choice.

This is the thing that the believers need to understand. there is a great glory in the gospel. It restores us. It redeems us. It declares us righteous but it also empowers us.

Jesus says that he would come and make his temple within us. That is, he lives within us. The fullness of God he says there in John 15 and following that there is the Spirit, the Son, and the Father all living within the life of the believer.

The fullness of God making their tabernacle within the life of the believer therefore empowering us. We are told in other passages that we have the mind of Christ. That in the gospel message we are so much more than set free we are also empowered.

[36 : 28] So now when sin takes place it is because we choose to sin not because we have to sin. we now have the ability and the freedom and the liberty not that we will not fall not that we will not stumble for on this side of glory we are imperfect but yet we should strive and we should push on and we should press forward unto that which Christ has called us to until the day of full redemption where we will be holy as he is holy.

But we need to be reminded that we don't have to do it anymore. Because now there is liberty that there is through Christ we can surrender it and say Lord you have the ability to take it away you have given it to me I am not according to the law who says this is what I am but I am according to the gospel that declares me righteous and empowers me and equips me and calls me to a higher standard.

All Satan can ever do is lead us into sin. All the Savior ever does is free us from that sin. We have the possibility of freedom to live free from that which holds us captive in Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Lord we thank you. We thank you for the surpassing glory of the gospel. And Lord I know that it is this that you have called us to be ambassadors for.

But God how can we be an ambassador for it if we do not fully live it out. So Lord I pray that you would help us live it to the best of our ability for your glory and yours alone.

[38 : 06] And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.