

The Christian.

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EDITORIAL.

CHANGED INTO THE SAME IMAGE.

But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass THE GLORY OF THE LORD, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. II Cor. III, 18.

Change and growth are the order of creation. All creatures change, while the Creator remains eternally the same. We should not grieve at this, nor strive to avoid change in ourselves, nor prevent it in others, both of which are impossible, but rather strive to gain such change as shall benefit all and injure none.

In this chapter the apostle shows that even in divine arrangements such changes have occurred as benefit man and glorify God; that one of His laws was the ministration of death to the sinner and another is the ministration of life to him. One law condemns, the other justifies. In another place the apostle declares that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death (Rom. viii., 2.) Here was one law of God making him free from another because the one had the spirit of life and Christ in it and the other had not, and one had passed away and the other remained.

But our present enquiry is, How God changes a sinful man into the image of His dear Son? How who commanded light to shine out of darkness had shined into the apostles' hearts to give out the light to others, and as the light of the sun so shines upon opaque bodies as to illumine others, so the Lord makes them that were sometimes darkness the very children of light and lights to the world.

We will notice—

I. What in the New Testament is called "*The glory of the Lord?*"

II. That persons by beholding it are changed into His image.

III. The change from glory to glory is the work of the Lord—the Spirit.

I. In the Old Testament the ark of the covenant was called the glory of the Lord because it was the sign of His presence. Hence the plagues which fell on those who unlawfully kept it, the fall of Dagon before it and the death of Uzza, who presumptuously touched the ark. The cloud also which betokened the divine presence was called the glory of the Lord. Both of these were but dim signs of the Lord's presence.

The New Testament points us to God manifest in the flesh as *the glory of the Lord*. Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the express image of His person, so that everyone who saw Him saw the Father, and everyone who honored the Son honored the Father who sent Him. God had prepared a body for Him, and in that body He declared Him to be His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased. The glory of the Father shone as it never did before in the face of Jesus His anointed. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory—the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John i:14) The union of the human with the divine nature is the first item in the great mystery of godliness (Tim. iii:16.) It was what God himself was pleased to proclaim at the Jordan. It is the rock on which Jesus builds His church, and the rock that has prevailed against the gates of hades. The "*glory of the Lord*" Stephen saw when he saw the Son of man at God's right hand.

II. Persons by beholding the glory of God are changed into the same image. The Israelites were not permitted to see the light that shone on Moses' face after he had had an "audience with

Deity," for he put a veil on when he spoke to them. But the Lord permits us all with unveiled face to behold His glory as it shines in the face of Jesus. We are told that when Jesus came unto His own (nation) His own received Him not. But to as many as did receive Him He gave power to become the sons of God. (John i:127.) By receiving Christ or believing with all the heart that Jesus is the Son of God they had power to become the sons of God, or, in other words, they are changed into the same image. In taking our nature Jesus united it with the divine, and gives all who receive Him power to take the divine in union with the human. When Jesus prayed to His Father for His disciples he said: "The glory which thou gavest Me I have given them that they may be one even as We are one." (John xvii:22.) This glory was evidently a union of the two natures, as He had received it from the Father and had given it to the disciples. It was a derived and a communicative glory.

Without looking to Jesus we cannot partake of a divine nature, and it is by looking to Him we become like him. The gospel is the glass in which we see Him, and He sent it to all men that all may see in it the glory of the Lord. It tells who Jesus is, what He has done for us, and what he is anxious to do for and in us. It reveals for us a great salvation on which a merciful Father has lavished the wisdom and the love of eternity. In it we see the Divine Man dying for our sins rising a victor over all His and our enemies, and opening the way for us to His Father's heart and home. He ascends to heaven, and He and His Father send down the Holy Spirit to dwell with men, to go with the gospel and to shed the love of God abroad in every heart that believes and obeys Him, who is Lord of all. Men looking into the gospel and beholding the glory of the Lord as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ are changed into His image.

III. This great change from glory to glory is the work of the Lord the Spirit. Jesus accomplishes it by His Spirit. Some understand the expression from glory to glory to mean man's change from one degree of glory to another; that the two glories are two steps in Christian progress. This view, however, does not seem to agree with the scope of the passage. It shows that the looking to a person changes the beholder into the image of the one he beholds; that he takes a glorious character from beholding a glorious person. The one glory is represented as producing another glory, and the wonderful change is made by the Lord the Spirit.

How apt we are to undervalue that glorious change which cost the Saviour so much and does so much for us. Angels are holy and happy; they were made by Christ and for His glory; they take a rejoicing interest in everything connected with the glory of the Lord, but they can never be changed into the same image from glory to glory. Jesus has a glory peculiar to Himself. When He comes again to earth He will come in His own glory and in the glory of the Father and in the glory of the holy angels. Can we describe or imagine the blessedness of having our life hid with Christ in God so that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear we shall appear WITH HIM in glory. John, who leaned on Jesus' breast, whom Jesus loved, when near one hundred years old, after having seen so much of the glory of the Lord, and having suffered so much for the testimony of Jesus, seems startled as if he had made a new discovery and exclaimed, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore the world knows us not because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we

shall be like Him, for WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS. It is this hope that purifies even as He is pure.

Jesus prayed to His Father that His disciples might be with Him where He is THAT THEY MIGHT BEHOLD HIS GLORY. This, then, is the prospect of the faithful in Christ Jesus. They will be with Christ, will behold His glory, see Him as He is and be like Him.

Original Contributions.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.—Isaiah xxxv., 8.

God has given to the world a plan of salvation. He has marked out the way by which sinful men may leave the paths of sin and enter into the kingdom of God and know they are forgiven. The teaching of the religious world has mystified the way by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, till sincere souls, seeking for salvation, are led to believe there is something very mysterious about the matter, and sometimes weeks, months and even years are spent in trying to get an assurance of acceptance. It is my purpose, at this writing, to show from the Book that the way is plain and simple; that the wayfaring man, though a fool, may not err therein.

Mark says that Jesus said to them (His apostles): Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. Paul declares, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And Paul says again, Gal. i, 8, 9: But, though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again: If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Here we see that God threatens to damn the man who does not believe the gospel. He declares vengeance upon them that do not obey the gospel, and He says they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. The curse of God is called down upon any man or an angel from heaven that should preach any other gospel than that which Paul preached and they had received. God, could not consistently damn, punish and curse men for not believing, obeying or preaching the gospel, if the gospel was not plain, simple, easy to be understood and made known to others. What God cannot do consistently He cannot do at all. Therefore, I conclude, and I think every honest man must also conclude, that the gospel is plain and simple.

Again, I argue that the gospel is plain and simple because it is the means appointed by the dear and loving Jesus, who laid His royal robes aside and came down among men to become a Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, who gave Himself for us on the cross of Calvary. It was appointed by Him to save men. Rom. i., 16: It (the gospel) is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes it. I Cor. i., 21: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believed. Certainly He was capable of making a gospel that would be adapted to the end in view, that was, to save men, and in order to accomplish this work it must be so simple and plain that men of ordinary minds could comprehend it so as to believe it, obey it and teach it to others. Therefore, we conclude that it was thus plain and sim-