

BY BEHOLDING WE BECOME CHANGED - PUTTING ON THE MIND OF CHRIST JESUS

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By beholding JESUS
we become changed into
the same image
2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Oh! Wonderful promise of God! If we would just learn to exercise and focus our minds on the things of heaven. This study will be a blessing to all who heed the instructions contained therein.

Philippians 2:5-9 ...'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.'

So we are counselled in Philippians 2:5 to let the mind of Christ be in us. First, did you notice in the scripture above that Christ humbled Himself and then God exalted Him? Jesus taught us in Matthew 23:12 that "*he that shall humble himself shall be exalted,*" just as Christ humbled Himself and was exalted by God the Father. Let me give you an example of how God loves a humble heart. In Daniel 10 we are told the following:

*Daniel 10:11-12 ...'And he said unto me, **O Daniel, a man greatly beloved**, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that **thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to CHASTEN THYSELF before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.**'*

Why was Daniel '*greatly beloved*'? Because He was a humble man who sought only to walk in the ways of God. Look at what it says above. God moved on behalf of Daniel, sending angel Gabriel to Daniel to help and guide him. Do you want to know how to move God into action for your benefit? Look at the reason Gabriel gives to Daniel above ... "*from the first day that **thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to CHASTEN thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.***" In other words, BECAUSE Daniel set his heart to understand the truth of God's Word and HUMBLLED himself before God, THEN God moved on Daniel's behalf and sent Gabriel to help him. What a lesson to learn!

So now that we have this foundation of humbling ourselves before God and seeking for understanding, let us look into the putting on of the mind of Christ. Look at the following two statements from Jesus:

John 4:34 ... 'My meat [food] is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.'

*John 8:29 ... 'The Father hath not left me alone, for **I do always those things that please Him.**'*

What was the whole desire of Christ? His whole desire was to do the will of the Father and ONLY do those things which are pleasing in the sight of God, which are the works of righteousness. Many times we think of the mind of Christ simply as perfect and sinless, which is correct, but we forget about the practical elements of His mind. What was His focus? What was His daily desire and thoughts? In Psalm 40 it says the following of Christ:

*Psalm 40:7-8 ... 'Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me. **I delight to do thy will, o my God, yea, thy law is within my heart.**'*

Jesus delighted to do the will of God, which means this was His daily focus and thought - to fulfil the righteousness of the law and do the works of righteousness. Oh that we would have the mind of Christ and that our desire too would be to do the Father's will and only do those things which are pleasing in His sight. And do you know what the amazing thing is regarding this? If this truly is our one desire, to overcome all sin, to do the Father's will and always do those things which please the Father, look at what God has promised:

*Psalm 37:4 ... '**Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall GIVE YOU the DESIRES of thine heart.**'*

Jesus delighted Himself in the LORD God, His Father, and what was the desire of Jesus? To do the will of the Father and keep His commandments. So if we delight ourselves in God, then our desire too will be to do the Father's will and keep His commandments. And what has God promised if this is our desire? That He will **GIVE US** that desire. Do you see the promise? If our one delight and desire is to please our heavenly Father, overcoming all sin and being reunited with Him through Jesus Christ His Son, **He will GIVE US this desire!** He will **CHANGE** our hearts and **CAUSE** us to walk in His ways and keep His commands (Ezekiel 36:26-27, Hebrews 10:16-17). HALLELUJAH!

Psalm 42:1-2 ... 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.'

Matthew 5:6 ... 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.'

So what do we need to do? We need to put on the mind of Christ by ... "**beholding, we become CHANGED into the SAME IMAGE, from glory to glory**" (2 Corinthians 3:18). By beholding Christ day by day, hour by hour, we become changed into His likeness. We put on His mind. Our will is united with His will. Our desires are united with His desires, and through faith, the Father will GIVE us those desires and we will be overcomers! Yea, "**MORE than conquerors through Him that loved us**" (Romans 8:37) HALLELUJAH!!

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 ...'Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 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.'

Now our beholding is not a mere cursory look, a quick glance. It needs to be a careful survey, a close examination, until we become **absorbed** in the contemplation of Christ and His righteousness, with our will, affections and desires all enlisted. The final result will be conformity to the image beheld. This is why Satan wants us to behold self and the world instead, as this keeps us from beholding Christ and being changed into His image.

*Hebrews 12:1-2 ...'Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, **LOOKING UNTO JESUS** the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.'*

LOOKING TO JESUS. Beholding Jesus. That is the key. He whose mind is constantly being filled with certain thoughts, images and words, will give expression to them in word and action. And we certainly see this being fulfilled by the world in general. The reason the world is becoming more wicked and sin abounds more and more is because this is what the world in general is beholding and focusing on day by day through television, music and such like. But when we learn to submit "*into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*" (2 Cor.10:5), fixing our minds upon "*whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report*" (Phil.4:8), our minds will come into harmony with the divine and we then become "*partakers of the divine nature*" (2 Peter 1:4).

2 Peter 1:3-4 ...'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'

Oh if we would learn to trust in the promises of God! Such precious promises! But some of us have great trouble with our own hearts because it is always leading us astray, and we struggle to control our thoughts. Here is a remedy. As the physical food we eat goes towards making up our bodily health, so the mental food which is given to the mind makes up the character; and the character is what God weighs in the judgment. Therefore let us feed on the Word of God daily, taking the word of God into our hearts and minds, that every thought may, by God's grace, be brought into obedience to Christ and we be changed into His likeness and image from glory to glory!

John 5:39 ...'Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.'

2 Timothy 3:15-17 ...'And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

2 Timothy 2:15 ...'Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.'

The glory and character of God and His Son are revealed in the scriptures and in creation (Psalm 19:1-3), and if these things be our daily contemplation, study **AND DESIRE**, praying without ceasing, then God has promised to GIVE US that desire and through His Spirit working in us, we **WILL** become changed into His image. We will be clothed with His righteousness, being fit and ready for that heavenly kingdom which is soon to come and reign over the earth made new. May this be the desire of us all.