

Looking on the glory of the Lord

Based on the meeting held in Den Helder on 12 July 2026

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« We all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit.» (2 Corinthians 3 v.18)

This verse contains a fundamental principle that is important to understand.

There is a huge difference in the meaning given to the word ‘life’ for God’s people under the Old Covenant (the Old Testament) and for God’s people today (the New Testament). Now that the cross has taken place!

To His people Israel in the Old Testament, God had given the Law, which served as a ‘standard’ and set out God’s requirements. God’s Law to Israel said: ‘Do this and you will live.’ The promise was to lead a good and happy life on earth, not eternal life!

This people were an earthly people, a natural people. Anyone born to Israelite parents was part of this people. It was not at all

a choice of the person's heart; there was no inner work of the soul involved. It was purely a matter of biological descent. In fact, they were by nature unbelievers, a natural and earthly people. They were all unregenerate (*) people, all dead in their trespasses and sins. It was to this people that God gave the Law, saying: 'Do this, which is permitted, and do not do that, which is not. If you obey it, I will give you a good and happy life on earth'.

(*) That is to say, people who have not been born again, and who therefore do not possess divine and eternal life!

The whole life of a member of God's people in those days therefore revolved around keeping the commandments. **But what a difference there is for us, who live after the cross!** Today, *God's people* consist of *all those who have believed in the Gospel!*

God has made people from Israel, Spain, China and every country in the world His children! Together, they form the Assembly (or Church) and now constitute God's people today. This includes all true believers, and it has nothing to do with biological birth.

Whether you are Chinese or Spanish, this gives you neither an advantage nor a disadvantage in becoming a child of God.

There is no distinction: only those who believe become children of God. It is therefore not a matter of natural (biological) birth, but of ***being born again!*** We must be ***born of God***, and thus be children of God, who by that very fact possess His nature.

We all have our parents' genes; in the same way, whoever is born of God has received God's nature, and this nature can only be perfect and holy, for God is perfect and holy!

Thus, as John says in his 1st Epistle (*), anyone born of God does not sin! Indeed, if you have received God's nature, how could you sin? It is impossible, for God cannot sin and we are His children. That is why God has not given the law to his people today so that they might observe a multitude of commandments or prohibitions! Not at all; since we have the nature of God, we all have a sincere and genuine desire to do God's will. In reality, God has no need whatsoever to forbid us from doing evil things, for our new life is directed precisely towards what is good. That is why God's people today are not subject to a 'criminal code' or a set of rules to follow. On the contrary, we read in the New Testament what God's will is. It is set out there for us, and we long to fulfil it.

(*) “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3 v.9).

Someone might then say: ‘Yes, what John says in 1 John 3 sounds very fine. Whoever is born of God does not sin, but I know the Lord Jesus. I am a child of God, and yet today I still commit sins.’

How is this possible? It is simply because we do not have only God’s **new nature** within us; unfortunately, we still have within us that **old nature** which we inherited from Adam: sin and the flesh.

It ought not to be so, yet this is the case for many believers: it is an almost daily struggle between these two natures within the believer!

Regarding this **old nature**, God passes the following judgement: ‘*Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*’ (Genesis 6:5). Day after day, man can do nothing but pour out evil from his heart. Yet, on the other hand, there is this **new nature** which longs to fulfil God’s will. These are the **two natures** which all true believers possess without exception.

However, when we go to meet the Lord in the air (*), we shall then be freed from our flesh for ever. This is, so to speak, one of the greatest benefits of the rapture of the saints, when the Lord Jesus comes to fetch us: we shall leave the flesh, the old nature, behind us! Today, the presence of this old nature can torment us, for, like a magnet, it draws us towards sin! But then, as soon as the Lord Jesus comes, it will disappear forever, along with all its effects!

(*) *‘The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord’*
(1 Thessalonians 4 v.16-17).

‘Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality’ (1 Corinthians 15 v.51-53).

What, then, in practical terms, is the solution for a child of God to best manage these two natures within them? A hymn expresses it in this way: ‘O Lord, may your presence fill our

hearts and minds. Lord, may your glorious image thus be before our eyes'. In other words, may this verse be fulfilled: '***We all, looking on the glory of the Lord, with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image***'.

Many Christians, especially new believers after their conversion, realise that there is a struggle within them between these two natures. To overcome this, they want to fight with all their might against this old nature. They say to themselves: 'Such and such a thing is a temptation for me; it is indeed one of my weaknesses, so I shall focus my efforts on becoming stronger and resisting it.' In fact, this is fighting against the sinful nature within them. On this subject, it is important to mention two things:

- 1- Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that we should fight against our sinful nature, the old nature. God therefore does not expect this of us. It is therefore pointless to try.
- 2- In this struggle against the old nature, you will always be defeated! For it is stronger than you! It is therefore pointless to engage in this struggle!

So here are two reasons to stop these efforts and listen to what Scripture says: turn your eyes to the Lord Jesus! This is the only solution, so as not to engage in a battle that is lost before

it begins, for what happens then? We are transformed into His image! This means that we begin to resemble Him.

Someone who is struggling against their old, sinful nature has their eyes constantly fixed on evil. Take greed, for example. Weaknesses vary from person to person. But let us suppose that someone is truly in the grip of greed. If he is constantly battling this passion, he is constantly preoccupied with his insatiable desire for riches – that is to say, with something evil. Now, when one is preoccupied with something evil, one is dragged down. But what does Scripture say? Fix your eyes on the Lord Jesus. Look up. Seek the things that are above, and this will transform you so that you take on the characteristics of a heavenly being rather than an earthly one!

If you fix your gaze on the Lord Jesus, at the right hand of God, you will be filled by His Person. And then, as it were, as an ‘automatic’ consequence, you will begin to resemble that image.

Let’s be practical. When you read the Gospels — which are four narratives of the life of the Lord Jesus — you discover stories of how the Lord Jesus walked and lived. How He reacted towards people. How He behaved, even towards His opponents. And the aim is not to read these narratives without

having reflection about them and then move on to something else. But to reflect on them, to meditate on the perfection of the Lord Jesus. How much love, how much patience He had towards His opponents. And also towards His disciples. Even Peter and John must, from time to time, have been a source of concern for Jesus. Yet they were His most faithful and fervent disciples. But one day, John and James came to see the Lord and wanted to destroy a Samaritan village with thunder and lightning. Just imagine having disciples like that. What must it have been like for the Lord? But what did the Lord Jesus do, in His perfect love, since these Samaritans did not want to welcome Him? He quietly went on to the next village. Of course, it hurt Him. But He reacted in a divine way.

When we reflect on this, we become gentle, humble and kind, just like Him. And when we ourselves are faced with a similar situation, we say to ourselves: ‘Ah yes, that is how the Lord Jesus reacted.’ He did not revile them. He did not complain. He accepted this from the hand of God and continued on His way with gentleness.

And that is the crux of the matter. When we read the Gospel, we see the Lord Jesus. We gaze upon Him and are transformed into His image, as verse 18 of 2 Corinthians 3 tells us. We then

begin to resemble Him. ***This has nothing to do with that struggle against the old nature.*** Really, forget about that. The solution God gives us is ***to fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus.*** It is to focus on what is good, and that is how we will become like Him!

This is a process: we will then be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory. This means, therefore, that it is not a one-off event. It's not as though we say to ourselves: 'From today, I've understood this, so from now on, that's how it is for me!' No, not at all! It is a constant process in the daily life of a Christian: step by step, '*from glory to glory*'!

It may be that today, whilst reading a passage from the Gospel, you perceive something of the gentleness of the Lord Jesus. And that you make this glory of the Lord your own. And that the next day, whilst reading a passage from the Epistles, you learn something about the patient perseverance of the Lord Jesus. This makes an impression on you and thus constitutes a new stage in this process. A new stage in the glory of the Lord Jesus. And the day after that, you will read passages in the Old Testament that illustrate the Lord Jesus, thereby discovering another aspect of his greatness. This is how we progress day by

day as we contemplate him. That is why it is so important to read the Bible in order to discover the Lord Jesus within it.

When we see Him with our hearts, the automatic result is that we are gradually transformed, so that we become more and more like Him. And that is what God the Father desires. That is what the Lord Jesus desires!

