

What We Teach

SALVATION

Regeneration

This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ ([2 Corinthians 3:18](#)).

[2 Corinthians 3:18 \(NASB\)](#)

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 from the Lord, the Spirit.

[2 Corinthians 3:18 \(KJV\)](#)

¹⁸ “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.”

In beholding Christ, believers are transformed into His image. The phrase “**we all**” means believers, those who have turned to Christ...

- who have had the veil removed from their face.
- who stand face to face with the glory of the Lord.

When the veil is removed in Christ, believers receive “**the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ**” ([2 Corinthians 4:6](#)) and are transformed into the same image from glory to glory.

[2 Corinthians 4:6 \(NASB\)](#)

⁶ “For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

The phrase **are being transformed** translates a present passive participle of the verb *metamorphoō* and refers to believers’ progressive sanctification. The Christian life is a continual process of growing into the **image** of the Lord Jesus Christ, ascending **from** one level of **glory** to another.

When a believer receives Jesus Christ as his Savior, he is given the privilege to stand face to face with Christ. This simply means that he is given the privilege to know and understand Christ.

Note several points.

- a. The phrase “**unveiled face**” or “**open face**”(KJV) means that the believer is given the privilege of standing face to face with Christ, the privilege of knowing Christ personally and learning all about Him. There is no veil over the face or eyes of the believer, nothing to keep him from knowing the Lord.

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- b. The object of the believer is to behold the glory of the Lord. This means to behold the Godhead and deity of the Lord, the splendor, brilliance, and excellence of His person and Being. Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became Man. His “glory” refers to the glorious fact that He as the Son of God did become Man. When a person grasps this fact, he understands the “glory of the Lord,” the incomprehensible fact that the Lord paid the supreme and ultimate price, the unbelievable price, for the salvation of man.

John 1:14 (NASB)

¹⁴“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

- c. The believer, however, never grasps the full glory of the Lord. No man, who is only finite and flesh, could ever understand the Lord, who is infinite Spirit. The believer only sees and understands the glory of the Lord as in a glass or a mirror. That is, he only sees a reflection of the Lord, not the full image. Presently, the believer is able to see the Lord only through the Word and the Holy Spirit; in the future, he shall stand face to face with the Lord throughout all eternity. Then he will know the Lord even as the Lord now knows him.

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NASB)

¹²“For now we see in a **mirror dimly**, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.”

1 Corinthians 13:12 (KJV)

¹²“For now we see through a **glass, darkly**; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV)

¹²“Now we see but a **poor reflection as in a mirror**; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

- d. The believer is changed or transformed into the image of Christ from glory to glory. **This probably means two things.**
- ⇒ When the believer beholds (grasps, understands, studies, and lays hold of) the glory of the Lord, the same glory is created in him.
 - ⇒ When the believer beholds the glory of the Lord, the believer progresses and grows from one stage of glory to a higher stage.

The believers’ transformation into the likeness of Christ was a frequent theme in Paul’s writings. In [Romans 12:2](#) he admonished:

Romans 12:2 (NASB)

²“And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

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He reminded the Colossians that they had:

[Colossians 3:10 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁰“And have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”

While in **[Galatians 4:19](#)** he wrote:

[Galatians 4:19 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁹“My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you.”

Most personally, he wrote that:

[Philippians 3:13-14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹³“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,

¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

The prize to which believers are called is to be like Christ (**[1 John 3:2](#)**).

[1 John 3:2 \(NASB\)](#)

²“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.”

That is also the goal in this life—to be like the Lord. The process of being transformed into the **image** of Jesus Christ will culminate in believers’ glorification, when Christ (**[Phil. 3:21](#)**; cf. **[1 Cor. 15:49, 51-53](#)**).

[Philippians 3:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹“Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.”

[1 Corinthians 15:49-53 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴⁹“Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

⁵⁰Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

⁵¹Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,

⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

⁵³For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.”