

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

July 25, 2018

From Glory to GLORY!

I was in a revival Campmeeting recently and heard a minister quote some statistics on pornography use among churchgoers. She said the most recent studies were saying that 80% of men in evangelical churches regularly viewed pornography. This number was up from 68% two years ago and 40% a decade earlier. These studies also show that over 50% of pastors also regularly view pornography.

You would think statistics such as these would awaken people to the realization that something is horribly wrong in the modern church, but actually the effect is just the opposite. These horrible statistical numbers only feed the lie that God's people are all still sinners. Somehow people feel better about their bondage when they hear that so many others are bound in the same darkness. Instead of being awakened, pastors across the land go deeper into their slumber, finding strange comfort in the knowledge that churches and ministers everywhere are caught up in the same epidemic of uncleanness that fills their own members. The words spoken by the prophet seem to fit so well: *"From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."* Isaiah 1:6.

If these statistics are even half true, those involved in this uncleanness must number in the millions. Some of these millions are just pretenders. Others are just socially religious. Still others are devout, but see nothing wrong with pornography. Yet also in these great numbers are those who are ashamed of their darkness. Many want things do be different, but the bondage seems too great. Some pray and fast perhaps more than you or I, hoping their prayers and fastings will break off the uncleanness that grips their soul. Certainly there are those who desperately want to be real with God, but they do not know how they could ever be free. There is, however, one “statistic” from the word of God concerning these millions of churchgoing individuals: **Not a single one of these sees “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

The gospel of Christ does not work through determination. Hebrews 10:32. It works through illumination! The apostle Paul said *“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.”* 11 Corinthians 3:18. When Christ is “seen” through the preaching of the gospel, the glorious light of Christ shines into the heart of the believer. It is through this “illumination” that the believer is changed into the image of Jesus Christ. This is true salvation that is not of works.

When Paul spoke of being changed *“from glory to glory,”* he is not speaking of “increasing stages of glory,” rather he is speaking of two different sources of glory. He uses most of the preceding verses to identify these two “glories.” The first glory is that which was seen in *“the face of*

Moses." II Corinthians 3:7. Paul identifies this "glory" as "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." This glory is the glory of the Law. It is the glory revealed in the words "thou shalt not..." The "glory" of the Law separated Israel from other nations by controlling their actions, but it did not change what they were at heart. The commandment gives a sinner instruction on how he should order his life. If he will obey "thou shalt..." and "thou shalt not..." he may keep himself from the present wrath of God. Yet this "glory" is made to be "no glory" in comparison to the glory of Christ.

The glory of Christ is not revealed in "thou shalt not..." It is revealed in the words "you ARE not!" The Law commanded you not to steal, kill, or commit adultery. The New covenant takes such things out of your heart so you will not even desire such things. The Law only changes the actions of a person. The grace of God changes their heart and nature. This is the reason Paul says the glory of the Law "had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." II Corinthians 3:10.

Those who see the glory of Christ are changed from the "glory" of "thou shalt not..." to the "glory" of possessing "a new heart and a righteous spirit." Psalms 51:10. John said, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1:17. What Moses offered in the Law is nothing compared to what Christ offers those who come to God through him.

The immorality and pornography problems seem to be as prevalent in the "holiness" churches as it is in those churches that believe we must sin every day. There is no eternal difference

between just saying *"thou shalt not..."* or telling them God accepts them in their sin. Neither has the power to cleanse a sinful heart. As long as pastors refuse to declare that "God's people are not sinners BECAUSE CHRIST SAVES US FROM SIN," the sin problems in the church are only going to increase. Churchgoers around this world are condemned to remain in the darkness of sin without hope because they cannot believe a gospel that they never hear. This is such a needless shame because *"...God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* II Corinthians 4:6. If the ministers of Christ will declare it, those who sit in darkness will see Christ. And if they see HIM, they shall be *"changed into the same image!"*