

SPIRIT CHANGED LIVES

In 2 Cor. 3, Paul emphasizes the ministry of the New Covenant. The New Covenant emphasizes the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In salvation, the Holy Spirit gives us new life (regeneration – cf. Jn. 3:3-8); and He comes to dwell within the believer (cf. Rom. 8:9, 1 Cor. 3:16, 12:13). This is a life-changing reality. The Spirit is at work from within to make us like Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 3:6).

Sanctification is the Work of the Spirit (cf. 2 Thess. 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:2).

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

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 **by the Spirit of the Lord**.

Only the Spirit can do this (cf. 2 Thess. 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:2), and He does it in conjunction with our staying focused on Christ. The key to practical sanctification is keeping your eyes on Jesus.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, the first president of Dallas Seminary, would often sing with his students. A favorite was “**TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY**”. But as they would go to sing, Chafer would say, I want you to change the line from “take time to be holy” to “take time to BEHOLD HIM!” That is the key to becoming more like Jesus. That’s the key to progressive sanctification (cf. Heb. 12:1-2).

The ultimate goal of believers is to be like Jesus (cf. Eph. 4:23-24, Col. 3:10). And as a result of the Spirit’s work, we are in fact being conformed little by little into the image of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:29). As the Spirit works in us more and more, the fruit of the Spirit comes to the fore. In this way, we reflect the glory of Christ. We move from glory to glory until we get to glory when the process is completed.

Romans 6: Three Key Words Related to Sanctification – 1) Know, 2) Reckon, 3) Yield

In the book of Romans, Paul thematically first spells out our problem with sin, which is then followed up by justification by faith (Rom. 4-5). Building on this, he deals with SANCTIFICATION in Romans 6-8.

Three KEY words in Romans 6:

Know – the facts of our union with Christ (cf. vv. 6, 9)

Reckon – count it to be so (cf. v. 11)

Present – yield by an act of the will (cf. v. 13)

When we accept Christ by faith alone as Lord and Savior, a CHANGE takes place inside us. God makes us a new person. We are given a new nature that always wants to do what is right (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16, Eph. 4:24, 2 Pet. 1:4). We are born of God, and God's Spirit comes to live inside us. And that reality changes everything!

There are those who have the Spirit (believers in Christ) and those who do not (unbelievers). This is the great line of contrast: The great evidence of having the Spirit is a changed life reflected in the FRUIT of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

Matthew 12:33 (NKJV)

33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.