**From Glory to Greater Glory**

**Introduction:**

Wherever Paul went, he had enemies. In Corinth, his opponents were trying to lure the Christians into believing that the Law of Moses, at least in part, was still in effect. Paul assured the Christians it was not.

**Text:** II Corinthians 3:7-11

**Body:**

1. **Ministry of Death Vs. Ministry of the Spirit** II Corinthians 3:7-8 “But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?” NKJV

* Carved in stone – The Law of Moses was given on Mt. Sinai. It was written by God on tablets of stone. (Exodus 32)
* The law was holy and good. (Romans 7:12) “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.” (Romans 10:5) “For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, ‘The man who does those things shall live by them.’ ” NKJV It was not designed to bring death. (Deuteronomy 5:33) “You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.” NKJV It is like a baseball bat, which is not designed to kill, but it can bring death. About 3,000 Israelites were killed for doing evil on the day the Law of Moses was given. (Exodus 32) It is called the “law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:2) “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” NKJV
* The law of Christ – The New Covenant is called the “ministry of the Spirit.” The Spirit brought it.

(Acts 2:1-4) “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” NKJV It is meant to give life. (John 6:63) “It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.” NKJV

1. **Ministry of Condemnation Vs. Ministry of Righteousness** II Corinthians 3:9 “For it the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.” NKJV

* The Law of Moses identified sin and condemned man without hope. (Romans 7:7-11) “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.” NKJV It described what righteousness looked like. It was like a mirror which showed people their condition. But it was not like a bar of soap that could cleanse. The Law gave a diagnosis but couldn’t cure. There was no lasting remission of sins. (Hebrews 10:1-4) “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” NKJV
* The law of Christ is able to bring righteousness to the believer. It is able to declare someone innocent. (Romans 8:1) “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” NKJV The “ministry of righteousness” provides a complete satisfaction for the sins one commits. (Galatians 2:21) “I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” (Romans 3:21-22) “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;” NKJV

1. **No Glory Vs. Surpassing Glory** II Corinthians 3:10-11 “For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.” NKJV

* The Old Covenant had a glorious beginning with thunders, lightnings, and smoke. (Exodus 19:16-20) “Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thundering and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.” NKJV When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai, his face shone. (Exodus 34:29-33) “Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.” NKJV But this glory was fading or temporary. Verse 13 It was being brought to an end. The Law of Moses was never meant to be permanent. (Jeremiah 31:31-33) “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be My people.” NKJV When its purpose was fulfilled, it was done away with. (Galatians 3:19, 23-25) “What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” NKJV
* The glory of the new covenant surpasses that of the old in that the new is permanent. (Hebrews 7:22-25) “by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” NKJV The old covenant is like a lamp and the new like the sun. When the sun comes out, there is no need for the lamp.

**Conclusion:**

Paul’s opponents in Corinth were associating themselves with Moses and the Law. Paul was showing the Christians that the old covenant had been fulfilled and was no longer how Jehovah dealt with people. The new covenant of Jesus Christ had the power to make men righteous in the sight of God. This is possible through the shed blood of Christ which washes away sins when one is baptized. (Galatians 3:26-27) “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” NKJV

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