

Message: Backside Glory or Full Glory

Scripture: Exodus 33:18-23; Exodus 34:29-35; 2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6 (ESV)

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Exodus 33:18-23 (ESV)

¹⁸ Moses said, "Please show me your glory."

¹⁹ And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."

²¹ And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock,

²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.

²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."

Exodus 34:29-35

²⁹ When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.

³⁰ Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

³¹ But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them.

³² Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.

³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.

³⁴ Whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded,

³⁵ the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6

⁷ Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end,

⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?

⁹ For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.

¹⁰ Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it.

¹¹ For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

¹² Since we have such a hope, we are very bold,

¹³ not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.

¹⁴ But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.

¹⁵ Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.

¹⁶ But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

^{4:1} Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.

² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

1. A glory surpassed. (3:7-11)

2. A glory veiled. (3:12-15)

3. A glory unveiled. (3:16-18)

4. A glory seen. (4:4-6)

Reflection questions for the week:

How have you seen "the glory of God in the face of Jesus" in your life?

What lesser glories are you settling for in your life?