

# Studies In Second Corinthians

## (II Corinthians 3:1-18)

1. If the Corinthians felt they needed letters of commendation from Paul and Timothy, whom did Paul tell them to look to for his examination?

To themselves as evidence of his work: *“(1) Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? (2) Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: (3) Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” (II Corinthians 3:1-3).*

- Paul had already been commended (**Acts 9:26-31**).
- A letter commending a brother is right (**Acts 18:24-28, I Corinthians 16:3, II Corinthians 8:16-23, Philippians 2:25-30, and Philemon 15-17**).
- Paul and Timothy cannot commend themselves (**II Corinthians 10:12; 17-18**).
- The church in Corinth is evidence of Paul’s work (**I Corinthians 9:1-2**).
- The work done in churches is known by others (**Romans 1:8 and I Thessalonians 1:7-8**).
- The word that Paul and Timothy taught was just written on outward items, but planted in the hearts of the Corinthians (**Psalms 40:8, Romans 10:8, and Hebrews 10:16**).

2. Did Paul trust in his own abilities to do the Lord’s work or the abilities that God gave him?

He trusted that God made him sufficient: *“(4) And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: (5) Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; (6) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament...” (II Corinthians 3:4-6).*

- The Lord’s work is not done through human will and ability alone (**John 15:5, II Corinthians 4:5-7, Ephesians 2:8-10, Philippians 4:13, and I Peter 4:11**).
- In regard to teaching, Paul was moved by the Spirit, not his own will or wisdom (**I Corinthians 2:1-13**).

3. Was the Old Testament as beneficial to man as the New Testament is?

No: *“(6) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (7) But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: (8) How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? (9) For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10) For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11) For if that*

*which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious” (II Corinthians 3:6-11)?*

- The Old Law did not save or justify anyone (**Acts 13:38-39, Romans 3:20, Galatians 3:10-12, and Galatians 3:21**).
- The New Testament, a spiritual law rather than a carnal law, offers true salvation (**John 6:63, Romans 8:2, and James 1:21**).
- Here it is: *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17)*.
- If the Law of Moses could save, the death of Christ was in vain (**Galatians 2:21**).
- Real glory is in eternal life that comes through Christ (**I Peter 5:10**) by His word (**II Thessalonians 2:14**).

4. Why did Paul and Timothy use great plainness of speech?

Because of the hope in the New Law: *“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (II Corinthians 3:12)*.

- Plain speech (**Nehemiah 8:8, II Corinthians 4:1-2, Ephesians 6:19-20, and Colossians 4:3-4**).
- That hope is told of through the Gospel (**Colossians 1:5-6 and Colossians 1:23**).
- If the Gospel is not preached plainly, it will not be understood and therefore people cannot be saved (**Matthew 13:19 and Ephesians 5:17**).

5. Did Moses clearly reveal all things to come to the children of Israel?

No: *“(13) And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (14) But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ” (II Corinthians 3:13-14)*.

- Moses literally veiled his face (**Exodus 34:33-35**).
- The end of the Law of Moses was Christ (**Romans 10:4 and Galatians 3:23-24**).
- It was the Law of Moses that was abolished (**Ephesians 2:11-15**).
- Their minds were blinded in that salvation was kept as a mystery under the Old Law which is now revealed through our Lord (**Romans 16:25, Ephesians 3:1-11, and I Peter 1:9-12**).

6. What kept Israel, in the first century, from seeing the truth in Christ?

They covered their hearts: *“But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart” (II Corinthians 3:15)*.

- Israel, though the truth was being revealed, chose to keep their hearts covered (**Matthew 22:29, John 12:37-43, Luke 24:25-27, and Acts 13:27-29**).

7. What would happen had Israel turned to the Lord?

The veil upon their hearts would be taken away: *“Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away” (II Corinthians 3:16).*

- **John 6:45.**

8. Did the coming of the Spirit of the Lord have anything to do with spiritual liberty?

Yes: *“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Corinthians 3:17).*

- **Romans 8:15-16** and **Galatians 4:1-6.**
- Remember, the Spirit was [temporary; no longer today] given as a down payment on the promise (**Ephesians 1:13**)...
  - The Spirit came through baptism of the Holy Spirit twice (**Acts 2:1-13** and **Acts 10:44-48**), but ended (**Ephesians 4:5**).
  - The Spirit came through the laying on of Apostle’s hands (**Acts 8:12-24** and **Acts 19:1-7**). There are no more Apostles.
  - The giving of the Spirit was a miracle and always tied to spiritual gifts (**I Corinthians 12:1-11**), but the more excellent way we now have was the promise to look forward to (**I Corinthians 12:31** and **I Corinthians 13:8-13**).

9. Is the glory of the Lord, which was once hidden, now clearly able to be understood?

Yes: *“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” (II Corinthians 3:18).*

- **Ephesians 1:15-19.**