

Would You Like Your Life To Be Positively Transformed?

In my previous article of this series on John 1:14, we began looking at the phrase, “we beheld his glory...” We’ve seen that those who “beheld his glory” in the first century were those who truly saw the historic Jesus of Nazareth (e.g., 1 John 1:1). Later in this gospel, John speaks of the “signs” (miracles) of Christ that also point to his glory. Regarding the wedding of Cana when Jesus turned the water into wine, John writes, “This is the first of the *signs* Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his *glory*. And his disciples believed in him.” John 2:11 His *glory* is also on display in John 11:4 and 40 at the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The *glory* that John is speaking of is also found in the *sacrifice* of Christ on the cross. (Jn. 12:23-24; 13:31; 17:1). So then, we could say that those who saw Jesus in the 1st century, as well as those who read and believe the Scriptures today, have “beheld his glory.” (see John 20:30-31). But there are those who are unable to see this glorious truth with the eyes of faith. At times, even Christians fail to glorify Jesus Christ in certain areas of our lives when we take our eyes off of him and become preoccupied with ourselves and our immediate problems.

I once read that there’s a certain therapy that’s used by those who treat autistic children. Certain types of autism apparently manifest themselves as a child becomes completely focused on some dimension of his experience. He may be so focused on a habitual activity or a familiar object that interacting with that single aspect of life becomes that child’s entire world. To try to help the child, they’re given glasses that are clouded on the bottom but clear in the upper part of the lenses. This forces the child to look up—to take his eyes off of his little world and to consider a wider, greater world. It’s the same for us. When we’re in a fragile state, when we, like an autistic child, find ourselves focusing on just one aspect of our experience to the exclusion of everything else, we need to refocus on God in the Scriptures. We need to look up and, by God’s grace, be pointed back to the *glory of Jesus Christ in the gospel*. Now it’s important to note that, just as John and others “beheld the glory of Jesus Christ,” we’re also called to meditate deeply on everything that the Scriptures teach about Christ and the gospel. Why? Because it’s in this way that our lives are being transformed.

The apostle Paul writes of the transforming power of beholding the glory of the Lord: “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.” 2 Corinthians 3:18 When we’re seeking, by grace, to constantly behold the glory of Jesus Christ in the gospel it will *transform our lives*. I want to give us a few examples of how properly beholding the glory of the Lord will *positively* affect our lives. Keep in mind that for us to glorify God we’re seeking, by grace, to obey him in everything we say and do.

—Peace and contentment in life: “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is *stayed on you* because he trusts in you.” Isaiah 26:3 This type of peace comes to all those that truly believe that *everything* that comes into our lives ultimately must come through God’s loving hand. Paul writes, “...I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.” Phil. 4:11 Peace in life

includes striving to be a peacemaker. Jesus taught, “Blessed (or happy) are the peacemakers.”
Matt. 5:9

—Fullness of joy: “In your *presence* is fullness of joy.” Psalm 16:11 Neither true peace nor true joy is dependent on our circumstances but rather, is found as we seek to trust and obey God in every situation that he brings into our lives.

—Genuine love for God and neighbor: (see Luke 10:27). God has made us for genuine, God-honoring relationships with him and others. God-honoring relationships will include seeking reconciliation in broken relationships, i.e., forgiveness where needed as well as extending grace and mercy to others.

—Hungering and thirsting for righteousness and holiness in life: (see Matt. 5:6). This includes a longing for coming to know God more and more in Scripture so that we can live out of that knowledge (see 1 Peter 2:2).

—A healthy prayer life: (see Matt. 6:9-13).

As we, by grace, are gazing on the beauty and the glory of the Lord, we’re “being transformed.” This is a promise from God!

Rev. Dr. Steve Jones is the pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church PCA in Paxton, Illinois.