



## Behold Grace

Have you ever heard of ‘tug-a-war Christianity’? As long as you’re pulling and doing your part, you will be “safe.” They tell you, “The Christian life is about pulling and pulling the rope!” Of course, “pulling on the rope” simply means to change some negative aspect of your life.

The problem is, when your strength starts to die off, the force that you were once controlling is now pulling on you. In other words, many perceive change comes through will-power, self-discipline, and self-help. This is clearly another message contrary to the Gospel. How do I know this? Because it points back to you instead of pointing to Jesus.

While strong teaching on living right will motivate people for a short period of time, it will not bring a true change, and most importantly, it will not encourage faith. For centuries religious Christianity has preached strongly on right living only to see unsuccessful efforts. Let me just clarify that true Christianity is not primarily about changing behavior; it is about inward transformation which will lead to a change of behavior. Through time, they fall back to the same exact person they are at heart.

Don't get me wrong, most believers in Christ have the best intentions and truly love people and the Kingdom of God, but have a wrong mindset. I believe the religious part of Christianity has it ALL backwards and wrong. It is when you believe right that you will be living right.

We see in the Bible the traits in living right or the fruit of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:5-7).

- Morality (positive thoughts and emotions)
- Faith
- Right Knowledge
- Self-Control
- Perseverance
- Godliness (positive outward behavior)
- Compassion
- Love

The Bible also tells us why believers are lacking these qualities:

### **2 Peter 1:9**

“For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

Bold statement! The Bible tells us that a believer does not experience all of Christ's traits in their life not because they lack discipline or willingness but because they have forgotten that all their sins have been forgiven, **therefore being ignorant of the fact that they are righteous by faith in Christ**. This is why it's time to start teaching the truth of the finished work of Christ so the people may behold Him.

### **2 Corinthians 3:18**

18 “But we all with unveiled faces, **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.”

We are transformed by beholding the glory of the Lord and not by you pulling on the “Christian” rope like a tug-of-war trying to control your flesh. The more you behold Jesus and what He came to accomplish, the more you will be transformed radically. If you look to yourself for shortcomings (or anything else rather), the less you will be transformed and the less you will walk in the fruit of the Spirit.

John Edwards said it like this:

- “On Christ’s glory I would fix all my thoughts and desires, and the more I see of the glory of Christ, the more the painted beauties of this world will wither in my eyes and I will be more and more crucified to this world. It will become to me like something dead and putrid, impossible for me to enjoy.”

When you behold the glory of the Lord, you will go from point A to point B effortless and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life will become like something dead.

Notice in the verse above, that you are transformed by the **Spirit of the Lord** and not by doing, not by your self-effort, not by your will-power, not by trying. Just as corruption came natural for every man, all true change comes natural for the believer when your eyes are open to see Jesus to a greater degree.

*-What am I supposed to be looking at Joyner? What is the glory of the Lord?*

### **John 1:14**

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we **beheld His glory**, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, **full of grace and truth.**”

The glory of the Lord is His **Grace**. In other words, it is crucified Jesus with all your sin, all your disease, all your judgment, all your curse upon Him and seeing yourself. Notice, truth is on the side of grace. This is to look into the gift of righteousness, which is the truth of the Gospel. It is seeing yourself as the righteousness of God in Him. As you behold Him, the Spirit of the Lord transforms you into His image. So let's get our hands on grace-filled teachings that will help you to behold the person of Jesus Christ and His finished work, the person of Grace. Amen.

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