

**The Deep Liberty of God**  
**Sermon Outline**  
*2 Corinthians 3:1-18*

**Introduction:** The freedom that Americans celebrate in their great “experiment” in self governance is a good thing. But seen in the light of 2 Corinthians 3, it is not the best thing.

**I) What is gospel freedom?**

**A) It is internal**

*2 Corinthians 3.3, 17: You show that you are a letter from Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

- Something real—because from God and inside
- Compare to political freedom, which is largely external and does not guarantee a good person or a good nation

**B) It is transformational**

*2 Corinthians 3.18: ...being transformed into the same image [of Christ] from one degree of glory to another....*

- Beginning to live according to design

How does the gospel free us to flourish?

1) Frees us from the debilitation power of guilt

- v. 9: *...ministry of condemnation versus ministry of righteousness*

2) Plants the Spirit within us

- v.17: *Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom*

**C) It is permanent**

*v. 11: It what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory*

- The one who shines upon us will not forget us.

**II) How do we cultivate gospel freedom?**

**A) Look for and recognize it**

*v. 2: You yourselves are our letter...*

**B) Look away habitually from self to Christ**

*v. 18: And we all...beholding (reflecting) the glory of the Lord, are being transformed*

- The best way to become a better person...

### Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Respond to the following: “Political freedom is a good thing, but it is not the best thing. For it is only external, it is largely negative (freedom from certain things), and never guaranteed permanent. To be set free from tyranny does not automatically make us good people.”
- 2) Read 2 Corinthians 3:1-3, 17. What sort of ministry does the Holy Spirit work on our hearts (see Jeremiah 31:31)? Why is this important for freedom? What sort of freedom does the Spirit produce in us?
- 3) According to 2 Corinthians 3:9, we have been delivered from “the ministry of condemnation.” Why does the Law of God condemn us? Is there something wrong with the Law? What effect does feeling condemned have upon our efforts to be better people? Why?
- 4) Reflect on the following: “The gospel sets us free to live according to design. We are not free until we are free to be ourselves—and we are ourselves only when we love.”
- 5) In 2 Corinthians 3:7-10, Paul contrasts a fading glory to a permanent glory. What are the two different “glories” and what makes them different?
- 6) Have you ever been struck by the thought that you—all that you have said and done—will eventually fade away, will be remembered by no one? When did this happen and how did you react to it? What comfort does 2 Corinthians 3 give in the face of such thoughts?
- 7) Where do you see the glory of the new, transforming and permanent life of the Spirit reflected in the fellowship of the church? Thank God for what you see?
- 8) 2 Corinthians 3:8 tells us that we change from glory to glory as we behold and reflect the glory of Christ. What steps do you need to take to behold the glory of Christ more habitually in your day to day experience?