

## II. Seeing Glory Face to Face: What the Text Says

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Start with prayer (to remove yourself from distraction and ask the Lord to speak), then, compare and contrast the covenants/ministries talked about in the passage. It may be helpful to print out a copy of this passage so that you can mark it with different colors and symbols.

### **2 Corinthians 3:7-18 (New International Version)**

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7) Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8) will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9) If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10) For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11) And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts! 12) Therefore, we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13) We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. 14) But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15) Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16) But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17) Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18) And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Make a list of the characteristics and phrases used to illustrate the differences in the

Old Covenant

"engraved in letters on stone" (v. 7)

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New Ministry

"ministry of Spirit" (v. 8)

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Cross-references & Connections, Read these passages and then write down what they mean or how they apply to what is being discussed in 2 Corinthians 3:7-18:  
Romans 9:30-32, \*10:1,4\*

The Faculty of Dallas Seminary put it into an interesting perspective, noting the Old Covenant or Old Ministry is compared to a candle burning away, where as the New is compared to a sun shining eternally (Walvoord & Zuck, NT 561). A tea candle could burn for about a half hour before it is completely deteriorated to the point of non-existence. However, the sun keeps shining.

This Scripture is contrasting two transforming relationships with God. The first is a human initiative, which is incomplete and needs continuous efforts to renew. Sin stands in the way of this relationship. The participants in this are literally slaves to written law, reliant on atonement for a chance at community with God. On the other hand, the second relationship discussed is a divine initiative through Christ' love and sacrifice on the cross which empowers believers to be transformed. It is an eternal invitation to overcome the roadblocks and experience full community with God. In closing, please read Romans 8:1-2.