

Restored to the Image of God

Christ Our Righteousness

BOOK 28



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Question

This book starts with a self-reflection question:

When you stand before the mirror of Christ and His Word, what do you see?



1. Your Christlikeness?

2. Your brokenness?

3. Self exaltation?

Introduction

Humanity has always searched for identity, purpose, righteousness, and truth. Yet one of the greatest tragedies of human existence is that man often believes he knows himself while remaining deeply blind to his true spiritual condition. A physical mirror may reveal the outward face, but it cannot reveal the condition of the heart, the motives of the soul, or the hidden corruption within human nature. This book begins with a simple but profound thought experiment: *What if the world had no mirrors?* From that question emerges a deeper spiritual reality — without a divine mirror, humanity can never truly know itself.

Christ and the Word of God are the true spiritual mirror through which man can see both his fallen condition and his original purpose. Scripture reveals that man was created in the image and likeness of God, designed to reflect His character, holiness, love, and righteousness. However, through sin, that image became distorted. The result was separation from God, corruption of human nature, spiritual blindness, and the rise of self-centeredness and self-righteousness.

The book carefully examines one of the greatest spiritual deceptions affecting humanity: the belief that outward morality, human goodness, religious performance, or law-keeping can produce true righteousness before God. Scripture reveals that true righteousness cannot originate from fallen humanity. Human effort may improve outward behavior, but it cannot restore the divine image, impart eternal life, or reconcile man to God.

At the center of this discussion stands Jesus Christ — the perfect image of God and the only true source of righteousness, life, and restoration. The gospel presented throughout this book is about union with Christ. Through faith, the believer receives both the righteousness of Christ credited freely by grace and the transforming power of Christ living within. Salvation therefore becomes not self-improvement independent of God, but the restoration of the image of God through complete dependence upon Christ.

Ultimately, true wholeness is not found in self-exaltation, religious formalism, intellectual knowledge, or outward morality. True wholeness is found in Christ alone. Just as a physical mirror reveals the outward face, Christ and His Word reveal the true condition of the heart while also restoring humanity to the image for which it was originally created.

In the end, the greatest question is not merely whether humanity can see itself, but whether humanity is willing to behold itself in the divine mirror of Christ.

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Chapter 1

No mirror



Blind searching.

*Without mirrors,
man would not
know his
outward
appearance.*

What if the World had No Mirrors?

- 1.1 — The Thought Experiment
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1.1 The Thought Experiment

The Physical Mirror

Imagine if the world had no mirrors. Would people truly know how they look?

Without mirrors, people would never directly and clearly see their own faces the way a mirror allows today. A person might know the appearance of others, but not their own. Such a world would profoundly change the human mindset.

- People might care less about physical appearance.
- Vanity and self-consciousness could be greatly reduced.
- Standards of beauty might develop very differently.
- Identity might be shaped more by voice, character, and the opinions of others rather than by self-image.

This thought experiment shows how much human beings depend on reflection. We often think we know ourselves because we see ourselves. But do we really?

Philosophically, this raises a deeper question:

Do we know ourselves because we see ourselves, or because others reflect us back to us?

A mirror gives us an image, but it does not give us full identity. It can reveal the face, but not the heart. It can show the body, but not the soul. It can reveal whether the outward appearance is beautiful, but it cannot tell whether a person is truthful, humble, loving, selfish, fearful, or spiritually blind.

In reality, human beings come to know themselves through both inner awareness and the reflections they receive from others. Yet people influence our self-understanding far more than we usually realize.

Yet this creates a danger. Human reflections are not always true. Like broken mirrors, human opinions can distort the image. Therefore, the physical mirror introduces a greater spiritual question: if man depends on mirrors to see his outward face,

What mirror does he need to see his inward condition?

1.2 Why Humanity Cannot Truly Know Itself

A physical mirror only reveals the outward appearance, but the heart remains hidden. It can show the shape of your face, but it cannot reveal:

- your kindness,
- your pride,
- your hidden motives,
- your secret sins,
- your spiritual condition,
- or the effect your life has upon others.

This is why outward appearance is never enough to define a person. Much of what we call “self-knowledge” is actually learned through human interaction.

- A child learns they are loved because someone treats them lovingly.
- A person discovers their strengths because others trust or admire them.
- Often, people only discover their flaws when their actions hurt others.

In this sense, human beings become living mirrors to one another.

Yet there is another dimension.

Even if the whole world misunderstood you, there still exists an inner self that thinks, questions, feels, and observes. A person can sit alone and become aware of conscience, desires, guilt, hopes, and thoughts. That inner awareness is also real.

So perhaps:

- mirrors reveal appearance,
- society reveals personality,
- suffering reveals character,
- but only God reveals the heart.

This is where human self-knowledge reaches its limit. Man can know many things about himself, but he cannot fully and accurately judge his own heart. A person may defend what God condemns. He may excuse what should be confessed. He may call pride confidence, selfishness ambition, rebellion freedom, and outward morality righteousness.

Thus, a deeper question remains:

Who are you before God?

1.3 The Spiritual Mirror

Who are you before God?

This is the question no physical mirror can answer. It is also the question no human being can fully answer by himself. To see the true condition of the heart, man needs a higher mirror, a spiritual mirror, a divine mirror. He needs the Word of God. He needs Christ.

Without God's Word, man cannot truly know his own heart.

The Bible as a Divine Mirror

How does a human being truly know the condition of the heart?

According to Scripture, the Word of God functions as a spiritual mirror that reveals the true inner character of man. It does not merely show what man appears to be before others; it reveals what man is before God.

From a biblical perspective, this is a profound truth. The Bible presents the Word of God as something far greater than information, history, or religious tradition. It reveals the true condition of the human heart beyond outward appearance and public reputation. It is the living Word of God that searches the heart, exposes the soul, corrects deception, and reveals the difference between human appearance and divine reality.

The book of James uses this exact mirror imagery:

- ❑ “For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass [mirror]: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.” — James 1:23–24

The Word of God is a mirror that reveals the inward condition, but man must not walk away from its revelation. He must allow the truth to convict, correct, cleanse, and transform his heart. Therefore, the spiritual mirror is not given merely to inform the mind. It is given to awaken the conscience and lead the soul to transformation.

1.4 Physical Mirror vs Spiritual Mirror

A physical mirror can show the outward face, but it cannot reveal the inward person. It can show whether the face is clean, whether the clothes are presentable, or whether the body appears healthy. But it cannot reveal the secret motives, hidden pride, buried guilt, selfish desires, spiritual blindness, or true condition of the soul.

This means that man needs more than a physical mirror. He needs a spiritual mirror.

According to Scripture, the Word of God functions as that spiritual mirror. It reveals the true inner character of man. It does not merely show what man appears to be before others; it reveals what man is before God.

The Bible is the living Word of God that searches the heart, exposes the soul, corrects deception, and reveals the difference between human appearance and divine reality.

The book of Jeremiah says:

❑ "[I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.](#)"— 1 Jeremiah 17:10

A physical mirror reveals the outward condition, but it cannot cleanse the face. In the same way, the Word reveals the inward condition. This raises a serious question: what kind of person looks into a mirror, sees dirt on his face, and then walks away without washing?

Yet spiritually, this is what many do. They hear the Word of God. They see their pride, sin, unbelief, selfishness, hypocrisy, or spiritual weakness. But instead of surrendering to God, they forget what they saw. They return to ordinary life unchanged.

Therefore, the spiritual mirror is not given merely to inform the mind. It is given to awaken the conscience and lead the soul to transformation.

A physical mirror says, "This is how you look."

The spiritual mirror says, "This is what you are."

But Christ says, "This is what I can restore you to become."

1.5 The Hidden Human Heart

According to Scripture:

- human beings can deceive themselves,
- society can misjudge us,
- outward religion can hide inward corruption,
- but the Word of God “discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

In this biblical view, the Bible functions as a divine mirror:

- revealing sin,
- exposing motives,
- correcting deception,
- and showing the contrast between human character and God’s standard.

Man often thinks he understands himself, but the Bible teaches that the human heart is not easily known, even by the person who possesses it.

Jeremiah declares:

- ❑ “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”—Jeremiah 17:9

This is the danger of trusting the heart as the final judge of truth. Many people say, “Follow your heart.” But Scripture says the heart itself needs examination, cleansing, and renewal. If the heart is deceitful, then man cannot safely use his own feelings as the final mirror of his spiritual condition.

This is why many biblical passages emphasize examination by the Word of God rather than by human opinion.

- ❑ “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17)
- ❑ “Examine yourselves” (2 Corinthians 13:5)
- ❑ “The heart is deceitful above all things” (Jeremiah 17:9)

The implication is powerful. Without God’s Word, a person may know their outward appearance, intellect, reputation, or social standing, yet still remain completely blind to their true spiritual condition.

Therefore, the heart must be brought before the divine mirror. Only God can reveal man fully to himself.

1.6 Christ and the Word as the True Mirror

We are called to reflect the character of Christ. Our lives are to be patterned after Him. For humanity to become whole, the human character must once again reflect the image of God, because man was originally created in His likeness.

This is one of the deepest themes running throughout Scripture.

According to the Bible, humanity was originally created to reflect God's character and likeness. Man was made to be a living mirror of divine character upon the earth. He was created to reveal God's love, holiness, wisdom, purity, mercy, truth, and obedience.

The foundation begins in Genesis:

□ “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” —
Genesis 1:26

This means that man was not created merely to exist biologically. He was created with divine purpose. His life was meant to reflect the One who made him. Just as a mirror does not exist to display itself but to reflect another image, humanity was not created to glorify self, but to reflect God.

But sin distorted that image. The mirror became cracked. The reflection became unclear. Instead of reflecting God perfectly, humanity began to reflect pride, selfishness, fear, rebellion, lust, hatred, and spiritual darkness. Salvation, therefore, is not merely forgiveness of sins. It is the restoration of the divine image in humanity through Jesus Christ.

The Word reveals what man has become through sin. Christ reveals what man was created to be. In the light of Christ, man sees both his fall and his hope. A person who looks only at himself may either despair or become proud. If he sees his failures, he may lose hope. If he sees his strengths, he may become self-righteous. But when he looks at Christ, he sees the perfect image of God and the possibility of restoration.

Christ does not merely expose the broken image; He restores it.

- He does not merely show man his sin; He gives righteousness.
- He does not merely reveal darkness; He gives light.
- He does not merely condemn corruption; He transforms the heart.

Therefore, the true mirror is not self-reflection alone. It is Christ revealed through the Word of God.

1.7 The Word of God

As the final Judge of the Heart

Outward religion can hide inward uncleanness.

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because they appeared righteous outwardly but were corrupt within:

□ “Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” — Matthew 23:28

This shows that man may appear religious and still be spiritually sick.

- He may have the language of holiness without the heart of holiness.
- He may know doctrine without knowing surrender.
- He may defend truth while lacking the spirit of Christ.

This is why the Word of God is necessary. It reaches where human judgment cannot reach.

The Bible says:

□ “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” — Hebrews 4:12

The Word does not only judge actions:

- It discerns thoughts and intentions.
- It reveals not only what was done, but why it was done.
- It exposes the motive beneath the action, the spirit behind the word,
- and the hidden condition beneath the outward appearance.

Thus, humanity will be judged, not by their goodness, but by the Word of God, whether they obeyed it or not;

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
— John 12:48

Chapter 2

Brokenness



*I look deeper
And see the truth.
Pride. Sin. Failure.
I am not who
I thought I was
I need mercy.*

Created in God's Image, Fallen Through Sin

2.1 — Humanity Created in the Image of God

2.2 — The Original Purpose of Man

2.3 — Sin and Separation from God

2.4 — The Corruption of Human Nature

2.5 — The Loss of the Divine Image

2.6 — Why Man Cannot Save Himself

2.1 Humanity was Created as a living mirror of God's image

Humanity was originally created in the image and likeness of God. This was indeed the original purpose of man.

□ “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” — Genesis 1:26

This statement is one of the most profound declarations about human identity in the whole Bible. It means that man was not created as an accident, nor merely as a biological creature existing among other living things. Humanity was created with a sacred purpose: to reflect something of the character, order, holiness, wisdom, love, and moral likeness of the Creator.

To be made in the image of God does not mean that man became God. Rather, it means that man was created to bear God's likeness in character and relationship. Man was designed to think, choose, love, worship, obey, rule responsibly, and live in fellowship with God.

Unlike the rest of creation, humanity was given moral consciousness, spiritual capacity, and the ability to respond to God's voice.

This makes human life deeply meaningful. Man was not created empty, directionless, or self-defined. His identity was rooted in God. His worth came from God. His purpose was found in God. Therefore, to understand man correctly, one must begin not with man himself, but with the God whose image man was created to reflect.

Genesis 1:27 continues this truth:

□ “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” — Genesis 1:27

This verse shows that the image of God belongs to humanity by creation. Before sin entered, before pride, fear, selfishness, death, or corruption touched the human race, man stood as God's representative on earth. His life was meant to be a living mirror of divine character.

This raises a searching question: if man was created to reflect God's image, then what is man reflecting now?

A mirror is judged by what it reflects.

2.2 The Original Purpose of Man

The original purpose of humanity was to reflect the character of God. Man was not created merely to occupy the earth, consume its resources, pursue personal desires, and then die. He was created with a divine purpose: to live in fellowship with his Creator and to make visible, in human life, the beauty of God's character.

When God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26), He was revealing that humanity was designed to be a living reflection of Himself. Man was to stand upon the earth as God's representative, not in pride or independence, but in humble dependence upon the One who gave him life.

The original purpose of man was therefore relational before it was functional. Before man was given work, dominion, or responsibility, he first received life from God. Genesis says:

□ "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
— Genesis 2:7

This means that man's life came directly from God. His existence was dependent, received, and sustained. He did not possess life independently of the Creator. Therefore, from the very beginning, man was designed to live by communion with God, not by separation from Him.

Human beings were created to live in harmony with their Creator and to reveal:

- love,
- humility,
- mercy,
- obedience,
- patience,
- and self-sacrifice.

These qualities were not meant to be artificial behaviours forced from outside. They were to flow naturally from a heart united with God. As long as man remained in harmony with God, his life would reflect God's character, just as a clean mirror reflects light.

This is a deeply important thought: man was not created first to reflect himself. He was created to reflect God. The moment man makes himself the centre of life, he loses the purpose for which he was made.

This raises a searching question: if man was created to reflect God's character, what happens when man separates from God?

2.3 Sin Separated man from God

Sin radically changed humanity.

According to Scripture:

- sin distorted the image of God in man,
- separated humanity from divine life,
- darkened the mind and heart,
- and brought spiritual death into the world.

Sin did not merely introduce bad behavior; it separated mankind from the Source of life itself.

The seriousness of sin cannot be understood only by looking at outward actions. Many people think of sin merely as wrong behaviour — lying, stealing, hatred, immorality, pride, disobedience, or injustice. These are indeed fruits of sin, but they are not the root.

The root of sin is separation from God. Sin is the turning of the soul away from the Creator, the very One in whom life, light, truth, and righteousness dwell.

The book of Genesis shows this clearly. When Adam and Eve sinned, the first visible effect was not merely that they had broken a command; it was that their relationship with God was broken. They hid themselves from His presence.

□ “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God...” — Genesis 3:8

This is one of the most tragic pictures in Scripture. The man who was created to walk with God now hides from God. The creature who was made to live in divine fellowship now fears the presence of the Creator. Something deep had changed within humanity. Sin had entered, and with sin came guilt, fear, shame, and separation.

- Sin changed humanity by separating man from God.
- But Christ came to restore humanity by bringing man back to God.

This raises a solemn question: if sin separated man from the Source of life, can man restore himself while still separated from that Source?

2.4 Sin corrupted the image of God in man

Before sin, man was transparent before God. There was no hiding, no fear, no self-deception, no inward darkness. But after sin, man began to cover himself, defend himself, blame others, and run from the light. This shows that sin corrupts not only conduct, but also the inner condition of the heart.

Isaiah expresses this separation plainly:

[“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you...”](#) — Isaiah 59:2

This verse reveals the spiritual consequence of sin. Sin creates distance between man and God. It interrupts fellowship. It blinds the soul. It makes man unable to enjoy the presence of the One for whom he was created.

This is why sin is so destructive. If man was created to reflect God, then separation from God means the reflection becomes distorted. A mirror cannot reflect light when it is turned away from the source of light. In the same way, humanity cannot reflect the character of God while living apart from God.

Sin also darkened the human mind and heart. Paul describes the fallen condition of humanity as having the “understanding darkened” and being “alienated from the life of God.”

[“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God...”](#) — Ephesians 4:18

This is a powerful statement. Sin does not merely make man guilty; it makes him spiritually blind. It affects how man thinks, desires, judges, values, and understands himself. A sinful heart may still be intelligent, educated, religious, or morally respectable, yet remain blind to its true condition before God.

This is why man cannot accurately diagnose himself. A fallen heart cannot be its own perfect mirror. It may excuse what God condemns. It may admire what heaven rejects. It may call pride confidence, selfishness ambition, rebellion freedom, and human goodness righteousness. Without God’s Word, man may look at himself and still not see himself.

Sin also brought death. God had warned Adam:

[“...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”](#)— Genesis 2:17

This death was more than physical death. It included spiritual separation from God, the loss of divine fellowship, and the entrance of corruption into human nature. Sin is separation from God, distortion of the divine image, darkness in the heart, and death working within humanity.

This raises a solemn question: if sin separated man from the Source of life, can man restore himself while still separated from that Source?

2.5 The Corruption of Human Nature

The Bible presents the fallen human heart as deeply corrupted and incapable of truly understanding itself apart from God.

❑ [“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”](#) — Jeremiah 17:9

This verse is one of the most searching statements in Scripture about the condition of man. It does not merely say that the heart sometimes makes mistakes. It says the heart is **deceitful above all things**. This means that the greatest danger of the human heart is not only that it can do wrong, but that it can deceive itself while doing wrong. Man can be blind and yet think he sees clearly. He can be spiritually poor and yet think he is rich. He can be guilty before God and yet justify himself in his own eyes.

This is why human beings often misunderstand their true condition. The fallen heart is able to excuse sin, defend pride, hide selfishness, and call evil by acceptable names. Pride may be called confidence. Rebellion may be called freedom. Selfish ambition may be called success. Outward religion may be mistaken for inward holiness. In this way, the heart becomes like a broken mirror: it reflects an image, but the image is distorted.

Human beings are also capable of hiding inward corruption behind outward morality. A person may appear disciplined, kind, respectable, educated, generous, or religious before others, yet still remain inwardly separated from God. This does not mean that outward goodness has no value in society. It means that outward behaviour alone cannot reveal the full condition of the soul.

Jesus exposed this danger when He rebuked outward religion without inward purity:

❑ [“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.”](#) — Matthew 23:27

This is a powerful image. A tomb may look beautiful outside, but inside it contains death. In the same way, religion can appear beautiful outwardly while the heart remains unchanged. This is why man needs more than reputation. He needs more than morality. He needs more than religious form. He needs a new heart. The corruption of human nature means that humanity cannot fully heal or save itself through human effort alone.

The question is therefore serious: if the heart is deceitful, how can man trust himself as the final judge of his own condition?

2.6 The Loss of the Divine Image

In biblical thought:

- sin deformed the image of God in humanity,
- Christ reveals the perfect image,
- and the Word and Spirit restore that image within the believer.

The divine image in humanity was not completely erased through sin, but it became deeply distorted. Man still retains dignity because he was created by God. He still has conscience, reason, moral awareness, relational capacity, and the ability to respond to truth. Yet these faculties are no longer pure as they were in the beginning. Sin has bent them away from God. The result was spiritual darkness, alienation from God, and corruption of human nature.

Paul describes this fallen condition as coming short of God's glory:

☐ [“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”](#) — Romans 3:23

To “come short” means humanity has fallen below the purpose for which it was created. Man was made for glory, but sin brought shame. Man was made for fellowship, but sin brought separation. Man was made to reflect God, but sin produced a distorted reflection.

This loss of the divine image explains why human beings often feel incomplete even when they possess worldly success. A person may have education, wealth, influence, beauty, religious knowledge, or human approval, yet still feel inwardly empty. Why? Because man was not created merely for achievement; he was created for God. When God's image is distorted, man loses the centre of his true identity.

The restoration of this image is one of the great purposes of salvation. Christ did not come only to forgive sin legally; He came to restore man spiritually. He came to recover what sin damaged. He came to bring humanity back to the image and purpose intended from the beginning.

The New Testament presents Christ as the perfect image:

☐ [“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person...”](#)
— Hebrews 1:3

This means that when humanity looks at Christ, humanity sees what the image of God looks like without distortion. In Christ, there is perfect love without selfishness, purity without corruption, humility without weakness, obedience without legalism, truth without deception, and righteousness without pride.

- Thus, the loss of the divine image is the tragedy of sin.
- The restoration of that image is the glory of salvation.

2.7 Why Man Cannot Save Himself

Without Christ, humanity remains spiritually empty, darkened, and separated from divine life. Christ is not merely an addition to human life; He is life itself. His righteousness is given freely by faith to those who believe in Him. This is the very essence of salvation: the restoration of the image of God lost through sin.

According to Scripture, humanity apart from Jesus Christ is spiritually separated from the Source of life. This is why man cannot save himself. The problem is not merely that man lacks information. The problem is that man lacks life. A dead branch cannot produce fruit by trying harder. A dark room cannot produce light from itself. A cracked mirror cannot restore its own reflection. In the same way, fallen humanity cannot create divine righteousness from within itself.

John expresses the life-giving nature of Christ clearly:

□ [“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”](#)— John 1:4

This verse does not say merely that Christ teaches life. It says **in Him was life**. Life is not only something Christ gives; life is what He is. Therefore, to be separated from Christ is to be separated from the true source of spiritual life.

Christ Himself said:

□ [“Without me ye can do nothing.”](#)— John 15:5

This statement cuts deeply against human pride. Man naturally wants to believe that he can repair himself, purify himself, justify himself, and make himself acceptable before God. But Christ says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” Not little. Not less. Nothing.

In relation to salvation, righteousness, holiness, and eternal life, man can produce nothing apart from Christ. Human effort cannot remove sin. Human goodness cannot create divine righteousness. Human religion cannot give spiritual life. Human discipline cannot restore the lost image of God.

That is why salvation must be a gift. Paul writes:

□ [“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”](#)— Ephesians 2:8

This is why the Christian message is not simply, “Try harder.” It is not merely, “Become more religious.” The message is: come to Christ, receive His righteousness, live by His life, and be restored by His Spirit.

Chapter 3

Self exaltation



*I look in the mirror
And see myself.
Confident. Capable.
Successful.
I am my own standard.
I have arrived.*

The Great Deception: Self-Righteousness

- 3.1 The Illusion of Human Goodness**
- 3.2 Why Human Goodness Cannot Earn Eternal Life**
- 3.3 Legalism and the Attempt to Earn Righteousness**
- 3.4 The Purpose of God's Law**
- 3.5 Human-Righteousness vs Christ's Righteousness**
- 3.6 "Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing"**

3.1 The Illusion of Human Goodness

Many people believe that a naturally kind, disciplined, generous, or morally upright person must automatically be acceptable before God. Society often speaks this way:

- “He is naturally good.”
- “She has a kind heart.”
- “They were raised well.”
- “Surely God cannot condemn such a person.”

Yet Scripture presents a deeper issue.

A person may appear morally upright outwardly while still remaining spiritually separated from Christ. This is difficult for many people to understand because humanity naturally measures goodness horizontally — man compared with man. But God measures righteousness vertically — man standing before the holiness of God.

Jesus revealed this deeper standard when He said:

□ “There is none good but one, that is, God.” — Mark 10:18

This statement does not mean that no human being can ever perform a kind act. Rather, it shows that true goodness, in its pure and divine sense, belongs to God alone. Human goodness may be real at the social level, but it is not the same as divine righteousness. It may make a person respectable before men, but it cannot make the soul righteous before God.

This is where the mirror idea becomes powerful. Human society is like a dim mirror. It may reflect outward conduct, reputation, and visible morality. But Christ and His Word are the true mirror. They reveal not only what man does, but what man is within. They expose the condition of the heart, the motives behind the actions, and the spiritual separation that outward goodness cannot cure.

Therefore, the illusion of human goodness is not that kindness, honesty, and generosity have no value. The illusion is believing that these qualities, apart from Christ, can save the soul, remove sin, impart eternal life, or restore the lost image of God.

The gospel teaches that salvation is not based merely upon outward goodness, but upon union with Jesus Christ.

3.2 Why Human goodness Cannot Earn Eternal Life

Human goodness alone cannot earn eternal life.

According to the New Testament, eternal life is not a reward given for relative human goodness. It is received through union with Christ, who alone is the source of divine life and righteousness.

That is why Scripture says:

□ “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” —
Romans 6:23

A “gift” is not wages. Wages are earned; a gift is received. If eternal life were earned by human morality, then salvation would become payment for performance. But Scripture presents eternal life as a gift because fallen man cannot produce the life of God from within himself.

Human goodness may benefit society. It may reduce suffering, promote peace, strengthen families, build trust, and make human relationships better. These things are valuable. But human goodness cannot do what only Christ can do.

Human goodness cannot:

- remove sin,
- cleanse the heart,
- reconcile man to God,
- impart divine life,
- overcome spiritual death,
- or restore the image of God.

This statement places Christ at the centre of salvation. He is not merely one moral teacher among many. He is the way back to the Father. He is not merely a guide to life; He is life itself.

Therefore, the great deception is believing that being “a good person” is the same as being saved. The gospel does not call man merely to become morally improved. It calls man to come to Christ, receive His righteousness, and be restored to fellowship with God.

Do you think yourself good? Do not deceive yourself, your goodness will not earn your salvation. Only Christ can.

3.3 Self-Righteousness vs Christ's Righteousness

Self-righteousness is one of the deepest forms of spiritual deception because it places confidence in self rather than in God. It allows man to stand before the mirror of his own works and admire himself, while remaining blind to his need of Christ.

The Bible contrasts two kinds of righteousness:

- **Human righteousness** — external, self-produced, imperfect, and often mixed with pride.
- **Christ's righteousness** — pure, humble, divine, and received through union with Him.

Isaiah describes the inadequacy of human righteousness powerfully:

□ [“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...”](#)— Isaiah 64:6

Notice carefully: the verse says “our righteousnesses” are as filthy rags. This is a searching thought. It means that even man's best works, when separated from God and mixed with pride, self-confidence, or unbelief, cannot stand as true righteousness before Him.

Self-righteousness is dangerous because it can wear religious clothing. It may pray, fast, obey rules, attend worship, give offerings, speak truth, and defend morality — yet still trust in self rather than in Christ. It may do outwardly correct things while the heart secretly says, “I am better than others.”

Jesus exposed this spirit in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican:

□ [“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are...”](#) — Luke 18:11

The Pharisee was religious, but his religion had become a mirror of self-admiration. He did not see his need. He did not plead for mercy. He compared himself with others and concluded that he was righteous. But the publican prayed differently:

□ [“God be merciful to me a sinner.”](#)— Luke 18:13

Christ said this man went down justified rather than the other. Why? Because true righteousness begins when man stops trusting in himself and casts himself completely upon the mercy of God.

True righteousness, therefore, is the life and character of Christ received by faith and reflected in the believer. The righteous person is not the one who boasts in his goodness, but the one who confesses his need and receives Christ as righteousness.

3.4 Law-keeping cannot produce Righteousness

If righteousness is credited freely through faith in Christ, then legalism — the attempt to earn righteousness through law-keeping — can never save humanity. This is the heart of the apostolic teaching on justification by faith.

The New Testament repeatedly teaches that righteousness cannot be earned through human effort because fallen humanity cannot produce true righteousness independently of Christ.

Paul argues this strongly:

- “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” — Romans 3:20
- “A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.” — Galatians 2:16

Legalism is not the same as obedience. This distinction is very important. Obedience is the fruit of love and faith. Legalism is the attempt to use obedience as a ladder to climb into acceptance with God. Obedience flows from salvation; legalism tries to purchase salvation.

Legalism says, “I obey the law so that God may accept me.”
Faith says, “God has accepted me in Christ; therefore, I love to obey Him.”

Legalism is attractive to fallen human nature because it allows self to remain alive. It gives man something to measure, count, compare, and boast about. Rules can be displayed. Performance can be admired. Religious discipline can become a mirror in which man praises his own reflection.

But the gospel removes boasting completely. Paul says:

- “Where is boasting then? It is excluded...” — Romans 3:27

Why is boasting excluded? Because salvation is not built upon man’s achievement, but upon Christ’s righteousness. The believer is justified not because he has produced perfect obedience, but because he has trusted in the perfect righteousness of Christ.

This does not make obedience unnecessary. Rather, it places obedience in its proper position. Obedience of the law is not the root of salvation; it is the fruit of salvation. It is not the price paid to earn righteousness; it is the evidence that Christ is working within the heart.

3.5 The Purpose of God's Law

According to Scripture:

- the law reveals sin,
- but cannot cure sin,
- it reveals God's standard,
- but cannot transform the human heart.

Paul writes:

□ “...for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” — Romans 3:20

This means the law functions like a mirror. A mirror can show dirt on the face, but it cannot wash the face. In the same way, the law can reveal sin, but it cannot cleanse the heart from sin. The law can show man that he is guilty, but it cannot give him righteousness. It can expose the disease, but it cannot provide the cure. This does not mean the law is evil. Paul says:

□ “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”— Romans 7:12

The problem is not with the law. The problem is with fallen man. God's law is holy, but man is sinful. God's law is spiritual, but man is weak in the flesh. Therefore, the law reveals the standard of righteousness, while Christ provides the righteousness that man lacks.

The old covenant struggle was man attempting to obey outwardly while the heart remained unchanged. But the new covenant promise is different:

□ “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts...”— Hebrews 8:10

This is the true place of obedience in the Christian life. God does not merely command from outside; He transforms from within. He writes His law in the heart. Therefore, obedience becomes the expression of a renewed life, not the performance of an unchanged heart.

This preserves two truths:

- The law cannot save man.
- The saved man does not despise God's law.

The law reveals the will and character of God. But only Christ can bring the believer into harmony with that will and character.

3.6 “Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing”

Why do so many people struggle to produce righteousness through self-effort?

Because fallen human nature naturally gravitates toward self-dependence instead of total dependence upon Christ. People often understand rules more easily than grace because:

- rules can be measured,
- performance can be compared,
- and self can still retain some glory.

Grace is harder for human pride because grace gives all glory to God. It tells man that he is not the author of his own salvation. It declares that righteousness is not manufactured by self, but received from Christ.

This is why Christ’s words are so decisive:

☐ **“Without me ye can do nothing.”**— John 15:5

This statement brings the whole chapter to its spiritual conclusion. Without Christ, human goodness cannot save. Without Christ, morality cannot impart eternal life. Without Christ, law-keeping cannot produce righteousness. Without Christ, religion becomes outward form without inward life.

The issue is not merely effort. The issue is source. A branch does not bear fruit by struggling independently. It bears fruit by abiding in the vine. Christ said:

☐ **“I am the vine, ye are the branches...”**— John 15:5

The branch lives because it is connected to the vine. The believer lives because he is united to Christ. Fruit does not come from self-dependence, but from abiding. Righteousness does not come from human pride, but from divine life flowing through the believer.

Therefore, the great deception of self-righteousness is that man believes he can produce what only Christ can give. He looks into the mirror of his own morality and sees something admirable. But when he stands before Christ, the true mirror, he discovers his need.

And that discovery is not meant to destroy him. It is meant to lead him to life.

For when man stops trusting in his own reflection, he becomes ready to receive the righteousness of Christ.

Chapter 4

Christ in us the hope of glory



*Christ in us —
His life,
His mind,
His Spirit,
His character,
His righteousness*

Christ Our Righteousness and Life

4.1 — Christ the Perfect Image of God

4.2 — Righteousness by Faith

4.3 — Imputed and Imparted Righteousness

4.4 — Christ Living Within the Believer

4.5 — Living a Borrowed Life

4.6 — Salvation as Union With Christ

4.1 Christ the Perfect Image of God

The Bible presents Jesus Christ as the perfect revelation of the image of God.

- “the express image of his person” — Hebrews 1:3
- “the image of the invisible God” — Colossians 1:15

These verses are deeply important because they show that Christ is not merely a messenger from God; He is the perfect revelation of God’s character. In Him, the invisible God is made visible. In Him, the holiness, love, mercy, truth, righteousness, humility, and glory of God are perfectly revealed.

Hebrews says:

- “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person...” — Hebrews 1:3

The phrase “express image” means that Christ perfectly reveals the Father’s character and person. There is no distortion in Him. There is no corruption, selfishness, pride, darkness, or sin. He is the perfect reflection of divine glory.

Colossians also says:

- “Who is the image of the invisible God...” — Colossians 1:15

This means that when humanity looks at Christ, humanity sees the true and undamaged image of God. Christ is what man was created to reflect. He reveals what humanity lost through sin and what humanity is called to become through redemption.

This is where the mirror idea becomes powerful again. Fallen man looks at himself and sees confusion, pride, weakness, fear, guilt, and self-deception. But when man looks at Christ, he sees the perfect image — the image without cracks, without stain, without distortion.

Christ therefore reveals two things at once. He reveals God perfectly, and He reveals what man was created to become. In Christ, humanity sees its original purpose restored. He is not only the Saviour of man; He is the pattern of restored humanity.

This raises a searching question: if Christ is the perfect image of God, then can man be restored while still reflecting self?

The answer is no. Man must stop admiring the distorted mirror of self and begin beholding Christ. The more clearly Christ is seen, the more clearly man understands both his own brokenness and God’s purpose for his restoration.

4.2 Christ is what man was created to reflect

Christ is the perfect, undistorted image of God's character. In Him, humanity sees what divine character looks like in living form. In Christ there is no pride, no selfishness, no impurity, no deceit, no rebellion, and no darkness.

Thus, the Christian calling is not merely to admire Christ intellectually, but to be transformed into His character.

The believer is called to reflect:

- His love,
- His humility,
- His purity,
- His mercy,
- His obedience,
- truth,
- His patience,
- and His self-sacrifice.

This is not a superficial change. It is not merely adopting outward behaviour. It is the restoration of character. It is the inward life being brought back into harmony with God.

The Bible repeatedly presents this transformation as the goal of the believer's life.

- ❑ “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” — Philippians 2:5
- ❑ “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” — 1 Peter 2:21
- ❑ “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children” — Ephesians 5:1

And perhaps most profoundly:

- ❑ “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image...” — 2 Corinthians 3:18

As the believer beholds the glory of the Lord “as in a glass,” or mirror, he is changed into the same image. The mirror does not merely show; through Christ, it transforms. The mind of Christ is to be in the believer. The character of God is to be reflected by His children.

When you stand before the mirror of Christ and His Word, what do you see — and are you willing to be changed?

4.3 Righteousness a free gift, by Faith

The gospel teaches that righteousness is:

- a gift,
- received by faith,
- grounded entirely in Christ's merit,
- and not earned through human achievement.

Paul writes:

- [“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”](#)— Ephesians 2:8–9

This verse strike directly at the root of human pride. Salvation is “not of yourselves.” It is “the gift of God.” This means that righteousness does not begin in man's effort, religious performance, moral discipline, or obedience to the law. It begins in the grace of God and is received through faith in Christ.

Faith is not man purchasing salvation. Faith is the empty hand receiving what Christ freely gives. Faith does not make man worthy; faith receives the worthiness of Christ. Faith does not create righteousness; faith receives the righteousness that already exists in Christ.

This is why [righteousness by faith](#) is so central to the gospel. It removes self from the throne. It ends boasting. It humbles the sinner. It shows that man's salvation rests not upon what man has achieved for God, but upon what Christ has done for man.

Paul also writes:

- [“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...”](#)— Romans 3:21
- [“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...”](#)— Romans 3:22

This righteousness is not manufactured by man. It is the righteousness of God revealed in Christ and received by faith. Man does not stand before God clothed in his own goodness, but in the righteousness of Christ.

This is a thought that should humble every believer. If righteousness is received by faith, then no one can boast as though salvation came from personal superiority. The believer cannot say, “I am saved because I was better.” He can only say, [“I am saved because Christ is righteous, and by grace His righteousness has been given to me.”](#)

Therefore, salvation is rooted completely in the grace of God. Righteousness by faith means that man stops trusting in his own reflection and begins trusting wholly in Christ.

4.4 Imputed and Imparted Righteousness

Two important biblical truths emerge when we speak of Christ as our righteousness:

1. Imputed Righteousness

Imputed righteousness means that Christ's righteousness is credited to the believer by faith. This is justification before God.

The sinner stands guilty and unable to produce perfect righteousness. But through faith, Christ's righteousness is placed to the believer's account. The believer is accepted, not because of personal merit, but because of Christ's merit.

Paul writes:

□ [“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”](#) — Romans 5:1

Justification brings peace because the believer no longer stands before God depending on self. He stands in Christ. His confidence is not his own record, but Christ's righteousness.

2. Imparted Righteousness

Imparted righteousness means that Christ's character is progressively formed within the believer through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. This is sanctification.

God does not merely declare the believer forgiven while leaving him unchanged. The same Christ who covers the believer with righteousness also lives within the believer to transform the heart.

Paul writes:

□ [“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”](#) — Philippians 2:13

This means that even the desire to obey and the power to obey come from God working within. The believer does not produce holiness independently. Christ works in him, changing his desires, motives, affections, and character.

The goal is not merely legal acceptance while remaining unchanged. The goal is restoration into the likeness of God. Christ covers the sinner, but He also transforms the sinner. He forgives, but He also renews. He justifies, but He also sanctifies.

This balance is very important. If we speak only of imputed righteousness, we may reduce salvation to legal pardon without transformation. If we speak only of imparted righteousness, we may become focused on our own progress and lose sight of Christ's finished righteousness. But the gospel holds both together.

- Christ is our righteousness before God.
- Christ is also our life within the heart.

4.5 Christ Living Within the Believer

Paul describes the mystery of the Christian life beautifully:

□ [“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..”](#)— Galatians 2:20

This verse is one of the clearest descriptions of true Christianity. Paul does not merely say, “Christ helps me.” He says, “Christ liveth in me.” This is deeper than religious effort. It is deeper than moral improvement. It is the indwelling life of Christ.

The old self-centred life must die. The pride that trusts in self must die. The self-righteous spirit must die. The desire to live independently of God must die. But this death is not empty destruction; it makes room for the life of Christ.

Paul also writes:

□ [“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”](#)— Colossians 1:27

This is the hope of the believer. Not merely Christ above us, though He is. Not merely Christ for us, though He is. But Christ in us — His life, His mind, His Spirit, His character, His righteousness working within the surrendered heart.

Thus:

- self dies,
- Christ lives within,
- and righteousness becomes the reflection of His character.

This changes the whole meaning of the Christian life. The believer is not struggling alone to copy Christ from a distance. Christ Himself dwells within by His Spirit, reproducing His character in the believer.

This is why true righteousness is not self-exaltation. It is not man displaying his own spiritual greatness. It is Christ being seen through a surrendered life. The believer becomes like a mirror, not generating light from himself, but reflecting the light of Christ.

The question is therefore personal: who is living in me — self, or Christ?

4.6 Living a Borrowed Life

The true Christian life is a completely dependent life. The believer does not live independently of Christ, but lives through Him.

In this sense, the Christian life becomes a “borrowed life”:

- borrowed righteousness,
- borrowed strength,
- borrowed wisdom,
- borrowed holiness,
- and borrowed life itself.

This does not mean the believer becomes passive or lifeless. It means the source of the believer’s life is no longer self, but Christ. The believer acts, chooses, loves, obeys, serves, and grows — but the power and righteousness behind that life come from Christ.

Scripture says:

☐ [“For in him we live, and move, and have our being...”](#)— Acts 17:28

And again:

☐ [“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear...”](#)— Colossians 3:4

The phrase “Christ, who is our life” is profound. It does not say Christ is merely part of life. It says Christ is our life. He is the source, strength, meaning, and hope of the believer.

A borrowed life is a humble life. It knows that it possesses nothing of spiritual value apart from Christ. It does not boast in its own holiness, because its holiness is received. It does not boast in its own wisdom, because its wisdom comes from above. It does not boast in its own righteousness, because its righteousness is Christ.

This thought destroys pride and produces worship. If my righteousness is borrowed from Christ, then I cannot glorify myself. If my strength is borrowed from Christ, then I cannot trust myself. If my life is borrowed from Christ, then I cannot live for myself.

The believer is like the moon reflecting the light of the sun. The moon has no light in itself, yet it shines when it faces the sun. In the same way, the believer has no spiritual light in himself, yet he reflects Christ when his life is turned toward Him.

This is the beauty of the borrowed life. It is not weakness; it is true dependence. It is not emptiness; it is fullness received from Christ. It is not loss of identity; it is restoration of true identity in Him.

4.7 Salvation as Union With Christ

True salvation is not merely:

- church membership,
- intellectual belief,
- external morality,
- or fear of punishment.

Biblically, salvation is union with Christ.

This is one of the deepest truths of the gospel. Christ does not merely stand outside the believer giving instructions. He brings the believer into living union with Himself. The believer is in Christ, and Christ is in the believer.

Jesus said:

☐ “Abide in me, and I in you.”— John 15:4

This is the language of union. A branch does not live by admiring the vine from a distance. It lives by remaining connected to the vine. Its fruit comes from the life of the vine flowing through it.

Christ continued:

☐ “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” — John 15:4

This explains why salvation cannot be reduced to outward religion. A branch tied near a vine is not the same as a branch abiding in the vine. In the same way, being near religious things is not the same as being united with Christ. A person may be near Scripture, near church, near doctrine, near commandments, and near religious activity, yet still lack living union with Christ.

Biblically, salvation means:

- Christ living in the believer,
- the believer living in Christ,
- His righteousness covering,
- His Spirit transforming,
- and His character reproduced in the life.

This union is the source of true holiness. It is the life of Christ reflected through a surrendered believer. The believer does not become holy by staring at self, measuring self, praising self, or condemning self. He becomes holy by abiding in Christ and beholding Him.

Christ is not merely the one who gives righteousness; He Himself is our righteousness. Christ is not merely the one who gives life; He Himself is our life.

Chapter 5

“Abide in me, and I in you”



*I look, and see not me,
But Christ in me.
Not my righteousness,
But His.
Not my light,
But His glory.
I live His life.
I reflect His Image.*

Restored to the Image of God

5.1 — Obedience Through Love

5.2 — The Law Written in the Heart

5.3 — Reflecting the Character of Christ

5.4 — Transformation Through the Word

5.5 — The Restoration of the Divine Image

5.6 — The Final Reflection: Christ the Spiritual Mirror

5.1 Keeping of God's Commandments Through Love

The keeping of God's commandments must not be misunderstood or discarded. The gospel does not teach that because man is saved by grace, obedience has no place in the believer's life. At the same time, the gospel does not teach that man earns salvation by obedience. These two truths must be held together carefully.

The New Testament holds two truths side by side:

1. Man is not saved by law-keeping.
2. Yet the truly saved life will love and obey God's commandments.

Christ Himself said:

□ **"If ye love me, keep my commandments."** — John 14:15

This verse must be read carefully. Christ does not say, "Keep my commandments so that I may love you." He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." In other words, obedience is not the root of salvation; it is the fruit of love.

This is a major difference. Law-keeping obeys in order to be accepted. True faith obeys because it has already received the love, mercy, and righteousness of Christ. Legalism says, "I must obey so that God may save me." Love says, "Christ has saved me; therefore, I delight to follow Him."

This changes the whole spirit of obedience. The commandments are no longer seen as a ladder by which man climbs to heaven. They become the expression of a heart that has been touched by divine love. A child who loves his father does not obey merely because of fear, but because love has created trust, respect, and willingness.

John writes:

□ **"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."**— 1 John 5:3

To the unconverted heart, the commandments may appear burdensome. But to the heart renewed by Christ, obedience becomes the natural language of love. This does not mean the believer never struggles. It means that the direction of the heart has changed. The believer no longer sees God's law as an enemy, but as the reflection of God's holy character.

Therefore, obedience through love is not legalism. It is the evidence that the life of Christ is working within the believer. The same Christ who forgives the sinner also teaches the sinner to walk in harmony with God.

5.2 The Law Written in the Heart

The new covenant promise is transformation from within.

□ “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.”— Hebrew 8:10

This verse reveals the difference between outward religion and inward transformation. God does not merely command man from outside; He changes man from inside. The law written on tables of stone could reveal God’s standard, but the law written in the heart reveals God’s transforming power.

The old struggle of fallen humanity is that man may know what is right and still lack the power to do it. He may admire righteousness and still love sin. He may outwardly obey while inwardly resisting God. This is why external religion alone cannot save. A law outside the heart can command, expose, and condemn, but it cannot by itself create love within the soul.

The new covenant goes deeper. God promises not only to show His will, but to write it into the mind and heart. This means that obedience becomes internal, spiritual, and relational. The believer obeys not merely through fear, duty, or an attempt to earn righteousness, but because Christ’s character is being formed within.

Therefore:

- obedience without Christ becomes dead legalism,
- claiming Christ while rejecting obedience becomes deception,
- but Christ within produces loving obedience naturally.

This balance is very important. A person who tries to obey without Christ becomes proud, weary, fearful, or judgmental. But a person who claims Christ while rejecting obedience is also deceived, because true faith cannot remain hostile to God’s will.

James expresses this clearly:

□ “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”— James 2:17

Works do not replace faith, but they reveal whether faith is alive. A living tree produces fruit because life is inside it. In the same way, a living faith produces obedience because Christ is working in the heart.

The law written in the heart therefore means that God restores harmony between His will and the believer’s life. The commandment is no longer merely outside the person; it becomes part of the inward desire of the renewed heart.

5.3 Reflecting the Character of Christ

The restoration of the believer becomes visible in daily life. Salvation is not merely a hidden theory, an intellectual belief, or a legal statement in heaven. It becomes visible in the way a person lives, speaks, loves, forgives, serves, suffers, and relates to others.

The “true self” in biblical thought is not the fallen ego independent from God. The true self is humanity restored in Christ. Sin makes man less than what God created him to be. Christ restores man back toward the divine purpose.

The believer begins to reflect Christ:

- His mind,
- His spirit,
- His love,
- His obedience,
- His humility,
- His mercy,
- His patience,
- His purity,
- and His righteousness.

Paul writes:

☐ “Let this [mind be in you](#), which was also [in Christ Jesus](#).” — Philippians 2:5

This means that the restoration of God’s image is not merely outward behaviour. It reaches the mind, attitude, motive, and spirit. The believer is called to think differently, desire differently, respond differently, and live differently because Christ is shaping the inner life.

This reflection is not self-produced. A mirror does not create light; it reflects light. Likewise, the believer does not manufacture holiness from within himself. He reflects the holiness of Christ as he abides in Him.

Like the moon reflecting the light of the sun, the believer possesses no spiritual light of his own, but reflects the righteousness and life of Christ. When the moon turns toward the sun, it shines. When the believer turns toward Christ, the light of Christ becomes visible in the life.

Jesus said:

☐ “[Ye are the light of the world](#).” — Matthew 5:14

Yet this light is not independent from Christ, because He also said:

☐ “[I am the light of the world](#).” — John 8:12

The believer becomes light only by receiving and reflecting the light of Christ. Therefore, Christian character is not self-exaltation. It is Christ seen through a surrendered life.

5.4 Transformation Through the Word

The Word of God both reveals and transforms.

Just as a physical mirror reveals dirt upon the face, the Word of God reveals the true condition of the heart. The mirror does not create the dirt; it reveals it. Likewise, the law and Word of God do not create sin; they reveal the true state of humanity.

This is why Scripture is described as powerful and searching:

- “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” — Hebrews 4:12

The Word does not merely examine outward behaviour. It reaches the thoughts and intents of the heart. It reveals motives that even the person may not fully understand. It exposes pride hidden beneath religion, selfishness hidden beneath kindness, unbelief hidden beneath words of faith, and corruption hidden beneath outward respectability. But the Word does more than expose. It also cleanses and transforms.

Jesus prayed:

- “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” — John 17:17

Sanctification means that the believer is set apart and made holy through the truth of God’s Word. The same Word that reveals the stain also points to the cleansing. The same Word that shows the wound also points to the Physician. The same mirror that exposes the broken image also points to Christ, who restores it.

This is why the believer must not run away from the mirror of Scripture. Many people avoid the Word because it reveals too much. It confronts cherished sins, false confidence, and hidden motives. But to avoid the mirror is to remain unchanged. A person who refuses to see the dirt cannot seek cleansing.

James warns about the danger of hearing the Word and walking away unchanged:

- “For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass.” — James 1:23

The problem is not seeing. The problem is seeing and forgetting. The Word must not only be heard; it must be received, believed, obeyed, and allowed to transform the life.

Yet Christ does more than reveal. He restores. A physical mirror can only show the image. Christ, the spiritual mirror, transforms the image.

5.5 The Restoration of the Divine Image

The final goal of salvation is the complete restoration of the divine image within humanity. The essence of salvation is therefore deeper than escaping condemnation. It is:

- restoration of communion with God,
- renewal of the human heart,
- transformation of character,
- recovery of the image of God lost through sin,
- and preparation to reflect Christ fully.

Paul writes:

- [“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...”](#)—Romans 8:29

This verse reveals the goal of redemption. God’s purpose is not merely that sinners be forgiven, but that they be conformed to the image of His Son. Salvation restores the direction of humanity back toward Christlikeness.

This means that Christ is not only the means of salvation; He is also the pattern of restoration. The believer is not restored into self-confidence, self-glory, or self-rule. He is restored into the image of Christ.

Thus:

- darkness is replaced by light,
- alienation is replaced by fellowship,
- corruption is replaced by holiness,
- pride is replaced by humility,
- rebellion is replaced by obedience,
- fear is replaced by love,
- and the lost image of God is restored within man.

This restoration begins now in the life of the believer, but it also points forward to completion. The Christian life is a process of beholding, surrendering, being changed, and reflecting more of Christ.

John writes:

- [“Beloved, now are we the sons of God... but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”](#)—1 John 3:2

Here is the final hope of restoration: “we shall be like him.” The image distorted by sin will be fully restored. The broken mirror will finally reflect clearly. The believer who has been changed by grace will one day stand complete in Christ.

5.6 The Final Reflection

Without physical mirrors, humanity would never clearly see the outward face. A person could live an entire life depending only on the opinions of others, never truly seeing his own appearance for himself.

Likewise, without the spiritual mirror — Christ and His Word — humanity would never truly see the condition of the human heart.

The Bible presents God’s Word as a divine mirror:

- exposing hidden motives,
- revealing sin,
- uncovering self-deception,
- and revealing the contrast between fallen humanity and the perfect character of Christ.

Human beings naturally compare themselves with one another and therefore may believe themselves righteous. A man may look at another sinner and feel clean. He may look at society and feel moral. He may look at religious performance and feel accepted. But when humanity stands before the holiness, purity, humility, and love of Christ, the true condition of the heart becomes visible.

That is why the Word of God both wounds and heals.

- It first reveals what humanity truly is apart from God.
- Then it reveals what humanity may become through Christ.

This is the mercy of the divine mirror. It does not flatter man. It does not lie to man. It does not hide his condition. But neither does it leave him in despair. It shows the wound so that man may seek healing. It reveals the stain so that man may receive cleansing. It exposes the broken image so that man may be restored in Christ.

Paul gives the great promise:

- [“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image...”](#) — 2 Corinthians 3:18

This verse brings the whole message of the book together. The believer beholds Christ as in a mirror and is changed into the same image. The mirror does not only reveal; in Christ, the mirror transforms. What man could not produce by self-effort, Christ produces by grace.

5.7 In Christ, the Image of God is Restored

So the discussion comes full circle: Without a mirror, man may not know his outward face. But without God's Word, man cannot truly know his own heart: and without Christ's righteousness and life, man could never be restored to the image of God for which he was originally created.

The final invitation is therefore personal. Every soul must stand before the mirror of Christ. Every person must ask:

- What do I see when I behold Him?
- Do I see my need?
- Do I see my brokenness?
- Do I see the poverty of my own righteousness?
- Do I see the beauty of His righteousness?
- Do I desire His image to be restored in me?

The inability of man to save himself is therefore not meant to produce despair, but surrender. It brings man to the end of self-confidence so that he may depend completely upon Christ. The sinner stops standing before the mirror of self-admiration and begins to stand before the mirror of Christ. There, he sees the truth:

without Christ, he is empty.
But in Christ, he receives life.
Without Christ, he is darkened.
But in Christ, he receives light.
Without Christ, he is unrighteous.
But in Christ, he receives righteousness.
Without Christ, the image is distorted.
But in Christ, the image is restored.

Thus man cannot save himself because man cannot give himself the life he lost through sin. Only Christ can restore that life. Only Christ can restore the image of God. Only Christ can make man whole again.

The purpose of this book is not merely to explain doctrine. It is to invite reflection, surrender, and restoration. For man was created to reflect God. Sin distorted that reflection. But Christ, the true spiritual mirror, reveals, cleanses, transforms, and restores.

The final reflection is Christ.
And the restored life is the life that reflects Him.

Christ's Personal Invitation to You

Christ is inviting us to Him, that He may freely restore us back to the image of God.

- ❑ “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” John 7:37
- ❑ “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life **freely**” Revelation 22:17
- ❑ “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life **freely**” Revelation 21:6
- ❑ “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” Revelation 3:20

If you want to know more about CHRIST,
Download and Read **BOOK 16: “DO YOU TRULY
LOVE GOD. DO YOU LOVE JESUS”**
At bibletruthhub.com

Conclusion

This book began with a question: *“Whose image do you reflect when you stand before the mirror of Christ and His Word?”* It now ends with an invitation—to restore the image of God that sin distorted and to be renewed in the likeness of Christ.



Have you been restored to the image of God for which you were originally created? Come to Christ, and He will restore you for free. Absolutely free of charge!!


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BOOK 26



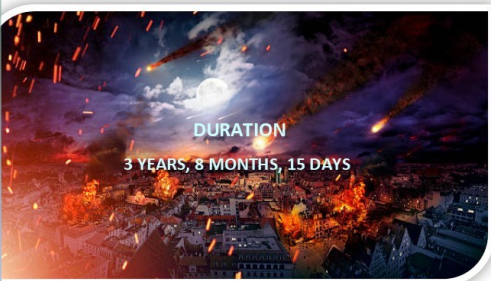
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3 YEARS, 8 MONTHS, 15 DAYS


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Ending point: Second Coming of Christ

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THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

"Truth shall spring out of the earth"
(Psalm 85:11)

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70 FALSE DOCTRINES

EXPOSING FALSE DOCTRINES AND THEIR SOURCES

BOOK 4

**EXPOSING FALSE DOCTRINES
AND THEIR SOURCES**

If you knowingly believe or practice any of these false doctrines and heresies, **you shall not inherit the kingdom of God**, unless you repent.

"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord God."
(Ezekiel 18:30)

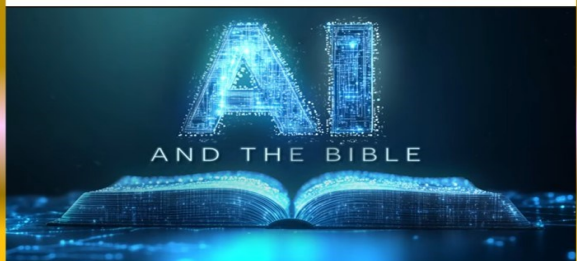
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"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever?" (Romans 1:25)

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