

"If Our Gospel Is Veiled"

by Heath Rogers

"But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

The apostle Paul presents a tragic reality in the above passage. Despite his efforts to preach the gospel, there are some who will still perish because, to them, the gospel is veiled. The Greek word that is translated "veiled" means "to cover or conceal, so that no trace of it can be seen." Paul had used the veil worn by Moses as an analogy (3:7-13). When Moses descended from the mountain, his face reflected the glory of God. The children of Israel insisted that Moses wear a veil so that they would not see the glory of his face. Borrowing from this figure, Paul says that a similar veil (covering) lies upon the minds and hearts of men, preventing them from seeing the truth of the gospel and being saved.

Why was the gospel veiled to these individuals? Some will claim that the gospel is veiled to all of mankind, and it is only unveiled to those whom God chooses to save. Despite its popularity, this false idea lacks any support from the scriptures. Please note that Paul said that the veiling of the gospel is actually the blinding of the mind. This tells us that the problem does not lie with the gospel, but with man's mind; that is, with his desire to see, rationalize and understand the gospel. Also, please note that this veil is put in place by the devil (the god of this age), not by God and not by man's supposed inherited inability to respond to the gospel. The devil is more than pleased to assist those who choose to be blinded to the truth.

Paul states that this veil is removed when one turns to the Lord. "Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Cor. 3:16). Notice, Paul did not say when one is turned by the Lord, but when one chooses to turn to the Lord and listen to what the Lord has to say. It is then that this veil will be taken away allowing one to understand the gospel and be saved. Jesus taught, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled... Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Matt. 5:6, 7:7-8).

Those about whom Paul was writing were blinded to the truth of the gospel because of their preference for the Law of Moses. They refused to see that Christ had fulfilled the old covenant and had taken it away (3:14-15). However, there are many other things that Satan can and will use as a means of veiling the truth of the gospel to our eyes. It may be a false religious tradition with which we are familiar and comfortable. It may be loyalty to family or friends. It may be that we are prejudiced against the truth, or skeptical of those who uphold and defend the truth. It may be that we love sin more than we love the truth. It may be that we are indifferent, and could not care less what the gospel says. Whatever avenue we give the god of this age, he will make full use of it to the destruction of our souls.

We ask you a very challenging question: Could *your* heart be veiled to the truth of the gospel? Is it possible that you don't have the proper understanding of the Bible? The honest reader knows that such a thing *is* possible. We challenge you to study your bible anew. Do not look at it through the filters of your traditions, opinions or preconceived notions. Instead, look at it without a veil. Let the Bible mean what it actually says. The promise of scripture is that when we read we can understand (Eph. 3:4), or, as Paul put it in our text, "when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Cor. 3:16).

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