

Sermon series: Church Vision 2022  
Sermon title: **Beholding God**  
Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:17-18  
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church  
January 2, 2022  
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Welcome to 2022!

We are starting out this year preaching through our church vision, which I mentioned last week.

Our church vision is quite simple:

**Behold. Belong. Be Sent.**

We want to be people who truly **Behold God, Belong** to one another deeply and are **Being Sent** to those around us and to the uttermost parts of the earth with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Last week I attempted to encourage all of you to be 'Beavers for the Bible in 2022'; to chew on the Bible more in 2022 than you did in 2021 by following a Bible reading plan of some kind.

You can read through the New Testament or the whole Bible which is what I would encourage.

Well, when we read the Bible what are we reading for?  
What is our aim?  
What are we hoping to see?

## **Let's pray.**

I want to ask 3 questions today, as it pertains to the first point of our Church Vision- BEHOLD.

**I. What are we seeking to Behold?**

**II. How do we Behold?**

**III. What does Beholding do for us?**

Let's take a look at the Scripture. Let's back up a bit though.

## **2 Corinthians 3:14-18**

**14** But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. **15** Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. **16** But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. **17** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed

into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

## I. **WHAT** are we seeking to Behold?

Notice a few things here in these passages:

1. Very clearly Paul says here that we are Beholding 'the glory of the Lord'. (**Verse 18**)

Now, the Lord here means Jesus Christ. We want to see Jesus and his glory.

2. It is clear in this passage that someone cannot see the glory of the Lord (Jesus) unless there is a veil that is removed and it is removed by the Spirit.

Now we know that in **2 Corinthians 4:4** that 'the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from SEEING'.

3. Once the veil is removed, people are free to BEHOLD. **17** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Free to behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ who is the image of God. **2 Corinthians. 4:4-6** again.

## **What are we seeking to BEHOLD?**

The Holy Spirit frees us to Behold Christ's glory.

## II. HOW do we BEHOLD Christ's glory?

**18** And we all, with unveiled face, **beholding** the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

What does it mean in this passage when it says, 'Beholding the glory of the Lord' ?

This word '*Beholding*' is used only here.

It means, '*to see in a mirror or glass*'.

But we don't want to stare at ourselves in the mirror. We want to stare at Christ in the mirror.

What is the mirror?

It is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 4:4** says, "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from SEEING the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

In fact the mirror is more than the gospel. It's the whole scriptures because as Jesus said in **John 5:39**..."It is they (the Scriptures) that bear witness about me."

## **How do we BEHOLD Christ's glory?**

We BEHOLD Christ's glory by staring at his glory in the Bible.

### **III. WHAT does Beholding do for us?**

**18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Transformation happens.

Transformed here means 'transfigured'; metamorphosis.

"Transformed by the renewing of your mind"

**Romans 12:2**

"Into the same image" means....to look like Christ himself.

**Romans 8:29**

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the 'image of his son'.

'From one degree of glory to another'.

We continue to BEHOLD. The Spirit continues to transform.

## **WHAT does Beholding do for us?**

We become like what we behold.

When we Behold Christ, we become more like Christ.

Let me **SUMMARIZE** what we've seen thus far.

- The Holy Spirit has caused us to be born again. We have been regenerated. The veil has been removed from our minds and hearts....so that we can BEHOLD Christ's glory.
- We continually BEHOLD Christ's glory by staring at Christ in the mirror of the gospel in the word of God.
- When we BEHOLD Christ' glory in his word, the Spirit of God transforms us to look more and more like Jesus.

## **APPLICATION**

Why is BEHOLDING Christ in his glory the most important thing for us to do in all of life?

Because only here in Christ will we find true glory and true joy and happiness.

## **Psalm 16:11**

You make known to me the path of life. In your presence is fullness of joy, at your right hand are pleasures forever more.

## **Psalm 17:15**

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness, when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

To BEHOLD Christ is to know him.

Do you desire Christ?

I am not asking you if you are a Christian.

I am asking you if you want to BEHOLD Christ and see his glory?

The Holy Spirit set you and I FREE so that we could BEHOLD Christ and be transformed. Not just so we can attend church and be religious and read the Bible and sing.

All of those things are a means to an end.

That end is SEEING Christ!

**Oh. Be a Beaver for the Bible....but be a 'BEHOLDING BEAVER'.**

Now, most of us know this is how we should live.

Most, if not all, would say, *"Yes, I know that I will be changed and sanctified as I behold God in the word."*

So, why don't we BEHOLD daily, regularly on our own or with others.

## **Obstacles:**

1. **A Veil-** Maybe Christ isn't glorious to you and you have no desire for Christ; you don't want to BEHOLD him because you have never 'turned to the Lord' for the veil to be removed. You should call out to Jesus Christ to save you. Ask for mercy. Turn to him. Believe in him. Ask God to remove the veil and let you see Christ.
2. **Thorns- Mark 4:18-19** says that 'the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things...CHOKE the word out of your life. You can't BEHOLD because you are choking....or we could say you are BEHOLD something else and enjoying it's glory and so Christ looks not so glorious to you.

If you're here today and you're not a Christian, our prayer for you is that the Holy Spirit would be gracious to you to remove the veil on your heart so that you can see Jesus as glorious.



Are you battling to Behold God?

**We become like what we behold.**

So, choose in 2022....to BEHOLD Christ.

What help do you need?

My final exhortation to you is this....we will BEHOLD the glory of the Lord with unveiled face....until the day we die. Until then, keep BEHOLDING Jesus. But there will come a day when the BEHOLDING will be different.

It won't be in a mirror.

**1 Corinthians 13:12** says, **12** For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

**Keep BEHOLDING in a mirror until you BEHOLD him face to face.**