

Training Ideological Robots... or Men of God?

2 Cor 3:1-18

(JP Malan)

WB Yeats once declared that “Education is not the filling of a bucket but the lighting of a fire.”

A. Training Men of God to be Living Letters, not Ideological Robots (2 Cor 3:1-3).

a. Letters of commendation.

Romans 16:1-2, 1 Corinthians 16:3, 16:10-11, 2 Corinthians 8:16-24.

b. Students as our Living Letters.

c. Characteristics of Living Letters.

Paul gives **four** characteristics of the letter in this verse.

1. An epistle of Christ.
2. Ministered by us:
3. Written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God.
4. On tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

d. Training Men as Adequate Ministers of a New Covenant.

1. Only by Trusting Christ.
2. Not Sufficient of Ourselves.

Some people refuse to be used by God because they think of themselves as “not ready,” but in a sense, we are never ready or worthy. If we were, the sufficiency would be in ourselves and not from God.

“Brethren, if Paul is not sufficient of himself, what are you and I? Where are you... Do you indulge the dream of self-sufficiency? Be ashamed of your folly in the presence of a great man who knew what he said, and who spoke under the direction of the Spirit of God, and wrote deliberately, ‘Not that we are sufficient of ourselves.’” (Spurgeon)

“Our sufficiency is of God; let us practically enjoy this truth. We are poor, leaking vessels, and the only way for us to keep full is to put our pitcher under the perpetual flow of boundless grace. Then, despite its leakage, the cup will always be full to the brim.” (Spurgeon)

3. Ministers of the New Covenant. The idea of a new covenant was prophesied in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 31:31) and put into practice by Jesus (Luke 22:19-20).

B. Training Men of God in the Liberty of the New Covenant (2 Cor 3:17).

a. The Lord is the Spirit:

b. The Spirit of the Lord brings Liberty.

He is not giving license to any Pentecostal or Charismatic excess. We have great liberty in our relationship with God through what Jesus did and through what the Holy Spirit is doing, but we never have the **liberty** to disobey what the Spirit says in the word of God.

C. Training Men of God to be Transformed from Glory to Glory (2 Cor 3:18).

a. We all with Unveiled Faces:.

How do we get an **unveiled face**? 2 Corinthians 3:16.

b. We all are Transformed by the Holy Spirit.

By beholding

c. Transformed into the Same Image.

It is not our physical appearance that is being changed but our inner being!

The passive voice, "are being transformed," indicates that this transformation is something done by God, through the Spirit.

The individual is "not transformed into Christ himself.

d. Are being transformed: This work of transformation is a process.

e. From glory to glory: The work of transformation is a continual progression.

D. Training Men of God by Mentoring Them.

Mentoring Warm-hearted Men. Lead by example, demonstrating what a life of faith looks like through your own words and actions.

Prayer.

Biblical Foundation.

Relationship Building.

Encouragement.

Challenge.

Community.

Lifelong Learning.

Flexibility.