

Article 2: Glory to Glory

*You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.*

- Psalm 30.11, 12

Spiritual disciplines are those arenas of intense interaction with and focus on the risen Lord Jesus Christ, where we meet with Him in secret, in quiet, and allow His Word and Spirit to wash over and engulf us. In spiritual disciplines we seek the Lord with singular focus, longing to encounter Him in His glory and to revel in the awesome, fearful, joyful manifestation of His presence with us. Such encounters with the living God can be transforming; indeed, the Spirit works through our engagement with the glory of God to transform us into the image of Jesus Christ, so that the glory we have *known* becomes glory that is *shown* in and through us to others. Thus we are transformed through spiritual disciplines *from* glory *to* glory, and this by the work of God's Word and Spirit (2 Cor. 3.12-18).

How can we know when spiritual disciplines are having this effect? Being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ is not merely a subjective experience. We don't just *think* or *hope* or *believe* that we're being transformed. Transformation comes with evidence, as the psalmist indicates at the end of this glorious testimony psalm. Whereas our lives were burdened with worries, concerns, fears, and frettings of all sorts, when we are being transformed by the glory of God, sadness gives way to gladness, and mourning is replaced by joyful singing and dancing (v. 11). Something happens within our soul when we meet God in His glory. Our minds see things from a completely different perspective. The affections that emerge from our hearts are those of delighting in the Lord and fearing Him with thanksgiving, all at the same time, such that negative affections are shunted aside or sent packing. Our values are likewise impacted, so that, in our consciences, we embrace the utter importance of these times with the Lord and renew our resolve to be more faithful in meeting with Him. Everything in our lives is affected and transformed by these new perspectives, affections, and convictions which emerge in the presence of God and His glory. As a result, the things we say and do, the ways we fulfill our callings, all our relationships, roles, and responsibilities, all begin to reflect an aura of gladness, hope, purpose, excellence, service, and love that comes from having been in the very presence of God.

And this should lead to worship: "that my glory may sing Your praise and not be silent." One of the surest ways to know that real transformation is occurring within us, that we are being changed from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ, is that we find worship a more congenial and constant environment. We love singing to the Lord, contemplating His majesty, talking with Him about everything, leading others to consider Him in all His greatness and glory. Worship takes on a mood of celebration and we find ourselves wafting in and out of conscious moments of worship throughout the day. Such an environment of worship promotes and sustains a life of witness and service. When we are being transformed – when God's glory is becoming "my glory" – we will not be able to keep from praising and thanking God. And this will be the portent of a life of transformation and faithful obedience that flows, by God's Spirit, into the new wineskins of our lives, out of the context of spiritual disciplines.