

I. Transformational Obedience through Encountering Jesus

A. **The only form of true growth and love in the life of a believer is found in the transformative effects of beholding Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. Any other form of Christian disciplines or activities will result in vain legalism or idealistic fantasy if they are devoid of beholding Jesus.** We must set this understanding in place as absolutely imperative as we move forward in the SOTM. We will continue to establish and build upon this throughout the entirety of the rest these teachings.

1. In my opinion many Christians totally miss this in their study and application of the SOTM and end up in frustration, disillusionment, legalism, or hypocrisy. The reason being, they are attempting to live out something divine, devoid of the Way of divine growth.
2. Jesus did not say blessed are those who try to be poor in spirit or blessed are those who set their heart to be meek. He said blessed are the meek, in other words blessed are those who actually operate in true meekness. There is a vast difference between wanting to be a certain way and actually being a certain way.
3. When the SOTM is viewed from this perspective (acting a certain way vs being a certain way) it results in nothing less than crushing despair to the natural human heart and mind. The things that Jesus tells us are blessings in our natural state, we consider to be curses. The ways of life that he lays out are set in absolute contradiction to the ways of life that are considered wise in our culture. We need to be transformed.
4. Jesus was not exaggerating when He told Nicodemus that unless one was born again he would not be able to see (know/experience) the kingdom. He was not just talking about going to heaven when you die. He was talking about experiencing the life of the Kingdom in your heart and mind in this age as well 3:1-8)

Beware of placing our Lord as Teacher first instead of Savior. That tendency is prevalent today, and it is a dangerous tendency. We must know Him first as Savior before His teaching can have any meaning for us or before it can have any meaning other than that of an ideal that leads to despair. Fancy coming to men and women with defective lives and defiled hearts and wrong mainsprings and telling them to be pure in heart! What is the use of giving us an ideal that we cannot possibly attain? We are happier without it. If Jesus is a teacher only, then all He can do is to tantalize us by erecting a standard we cannot come anywhere near. But if by being born again from above we know Him first as Savior, we know that He did not come to teach us only: He came to make us what He teaches we should be. – Oswald Chambers SOTM

B. Jesus is not just the way to heaven, He is the way forward into the transformed heart and fullness of life now. Every single exhortation we are given to walk in holiness and love is given in the context of knowing or beholding Jesus in deeper or greater measure. (2 Cor. 3:1-4:6; Eph. 4:17-24; Col 2:6-3:11; 2 Pet. 1:3-4)

1. We are never exhorted to try harder or ask in prayer for more power to obey. Overwhelmingly we are exhorted to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the beauty and glory of Jesus to us so that our hearts would be transformed and love would grow in us. (Jhn.16:14, 17:3,26; Eph. 1:15-21, 3:14-19; Col. 1:9-12, 2:1-2; 2 Pet. 3:17-18)

II. Beholding the Beauty of the King

A. With the truth of how we are transformed firmly established it brings us to two important understandings concerning the our study of the SOTM.

1. Jesus is disclosing His Heart – If the only way to truly be transformed in our hearts is to behold Jesus and His Heart then our conclusion must be: Every time Jesus exhorts us to be or act a certain way He is revealing His heart or nature to us. (Mat. 5:48, 20:28; Jhn. 15:12-13)
2. Specific Beholding VS General Beholding – If we are struggling with, or exhorted to be transformed into a certain aspect of Gods character or righteousness then that is the specific aspect we must behold. (Rom. 15:7; 2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 5:2, 25; Col. 3:13; 1 Pet. 2:21-23)

B. Practical Application of Beholding Unto Transformation

1. Invite and Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the meekness of Jesus to you in an increased or new way. Ask Him to produce a greater love in your heart for Jesus.
2. Find a passage or multiple passages talking about the character or nature of Jesus. Read the passage in a conversational/dialoguing way. Ask questions and wait for the Spirit to give you answers (you don't always get them). Meditate on the truths your discovering through contemplation, declaration, song, art, journaling etc..
3. Transformation is a lifelong process, beholding the beauty of Jesus is not meant to be a self help box to check but rather an intimate friendship motivated through love. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in these times of meditation and do not expect to gain the full revelation of any of the aspects of His beauty. Remember He is person to be known not a subject to be studied.