

# SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

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I. WRITER: Paul the apostle

II. AUDIENCE: Church at Corinth and all saints in Achaia (2 Corinthians 1:1)      Map

III. DATE: 57 A.D.

IV. NOTES:

After they received 1 Corinthians, the Christians at Corinth probably corrected most of the problems Paul wrote to them about. For example, he says nothing further in 2 Corinthians about abuse of the Lord's Supper or about Christians suing each other in court.

Timothy and Titus returned from Corinth and reported that the Judaizers arrived from Judea and were opposing Paul's authority. Conditions in the church in Corinth deteriorated. Later on, he heard of fresh problems at Corinth and Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to address those problems.

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## Outline of 2 Corinthians

Introduction (1:1-2)

I. Paul and His Commission (1:3 – 5:21)

II. Paul and His Converts (6:1 – 9:15)

III. Paul and His Critics (10:1 – 13:10)

Conclusion (13:11-14)

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Introduction (1:1-2)

**1:1-2 - <sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: <sup>2</sup>Grace *be* to you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Standard introduction by Paul. It was intended to be read by more than just the church, but also all the saved in the province.

## I. Paul and His Commission (1:3 – 5:21)

### A. Paul's Thanks and Troubles (1:3-11)

#### 1. Paul's Thanksgiving to God (1:3-7)

**1:3-4 - <sup>3</sup>Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; <sup>4</sup>Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**

Paul had recently been through a lot of trials and persecution. Yet, he is rejoicing as he says, God is the "God of all comfort". As a child of God, we are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ and to that end, "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14). Becoming more like Christ requires that we go through tribulations. God does not remove tribulations and afflictions that are conforming us to the image of Christ, but He "comforts" us as we go through them.

**1:5 - <sup>5</sup>For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.**

God's comfort and consolation (encouragement) is proportional to the difficulty of the trial. His grace is always sufficient for us. The "sufferings of Christ" seems to mean the persecution which is promised to all who will live Godly in Christ, but also carries with it the promise of blessing:

**2 Timothy 3:12 - <sup>12</sup>Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.**

**Matthew 5:10,12 - <sup>10</sup>Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup>Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

**1:6-7 - <sup>6</sup>And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. <sup>7</sup>And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.**

In verse 6, Paul seems to be saying, "If we are afflicted, it is for your encouragement; and if we are comforted, it is also for your encouragement."

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#### 2. Paul's Trouble in Asia (1:8-11)

(Read vv. 8-10)

**1:8-10 - <sup>8</sup>For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: <sup>9</sup>But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: <sup>10</sup>Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;**

To what part of his personal history Paul is referring to is hard to be sure: some think it is the insurrection raised against him by Demetrius the silversmith (Acts 19); others, to his fighting with beasts at Ephesus, (1 Corinthians 15); and others think that there is a reference here to some persecution which is not recorded in any other part of Paul's history. Whatever the event, it was intense persecution that they could only trust in God for deliverance.

**1:11 - <sup>11</sup>Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.**

Paul states that their prayers helped. How little we pray for distant missionaries, and yet how much help our prayers could bring them.

## **B. Paul's Change of Plans (1:12-2:13)**

### **1. Paul's Original Plan (1:12-22)**

**1:12-14 - <sup>12</sup>For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. <sup>13</sup>For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; <sup>14</sup>As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also *are* ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

Paul's rejoicing was that all he did, he did it not in the flesh, but by the grace and power of God, simply trusting God through it. In verse 14, Paul seems to be saying, "We are excited about your response to the gospel and you seem to now be excited about us as the servants of Christ by whom you believed."

**1:15-16 - <sup>15</sup>And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; <sup>16</sup>And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.**

Paul had intended to come to Corinth again on his way to Macedonia (which includes Berea, Thessalonica, Philippi), then pass through Corinth again as he left Macedonia. However, things apparently did not work out the way he planned.

**1:17-20 - <sup>17</sup>When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? <sup>18</sup>But *as* God *is* true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. <sup>19</sup>For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. <sup>20</sup>For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.**

Some may have criticized his change of plans, inferring that he was unreliable, and made decisions based on the whims of his flesh. Even though his "promise" to come to them as he had planned did not come to pass, the preaching of the word of God, specifically of Christ will always be true.

**1:21-22 - <sup>21</sup>Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; <sup>22</sup>Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**

He mentions that his anointing as an apostle is from God. Also it is God that "seals" our salvation, essentially stating that our salvation is eternally secure. At salvation we are "sealed" by the Holy Spirit; nothing can break that seal:

**Ephesians 1:13 - <sup>13</sup>In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**

**Ephesians 4:30 - <sup>30</sup>And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

The Holy Ghost not only seals us, but is also given to us as an "earnest" or a non-refundable down payment on our salvation which is another proof for eternal security.

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## 2. Paul's Change of Plans (1:23-2:4)

**1:23-24 - <sup>23</sup>Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. <sup>24</sup>Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.**

To avoid being a burden to them, he did not come through Corinth as he had planned. Verse 24 answers those who feel their pastor is trying to dictate over them and control them: Paul's desire was to help them to walk with Christ and in a manner that would most **benefit them** and bring **them** the most joy now and in eternity.

**2:1-4 - <sup>1</sup>But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. <sup>2</sup>For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? <sup>3</sup>And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy* of you all. <sup>4</sup>For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.**

The burden a soul-winner and a discipler has for those he disciples can be immense. John wrote that he had no greater joy than to hear that his "children" walked in truth (3 John 4); we can then imagine the great burden Paul had for the Corinthians who were being turned aside by the Judaizers within their church and the great turmoil that their heresy and their mutiny against Paul caused him.

## 3. Paul's Appeal to Forgive (2:5-13)

(Read vv. 5-11)

2:5-11 - <sup>5</sup>But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. <sup>6</sup>Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment, which *was inflicted* of many. <sup>7</sup>So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. <sup>8</sup>Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward him. <sup>9</sup>For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. <sup>10</sup>To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ; <sup>11</sup>Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Whether the person that Paul asks them to forgive is the man who had the incestuous relationship with his stepmother from 1 Corinthians or, as some think, a false teacher who had attacked Paul's credibility is hard to say. Apparently, they as a church had gotten right with God and Paul and properly exercised church discipline against this one.

Paul's greatest concern was for their spiritual well-being and for the soul of this one who had sinned. He urged them to forgive this man lest bitterness enter their hearts (and satan get an advantage of them). But also that they forgive and comfort this man, lest he "be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow".

2:12-13 - <sup>12</sup>Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, <sup>13</sup>I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

Paul was in such turmoil over the situation at Corinth, that while at Troas he had an "open door" to preach the gospel, but he had no rest. It may have interfered with his being able to preach. He was hoping to find Titus and get news of how they had responded. Paul then went into Macedonia, expecting to find Titus there, and he did. Titus gave him a joyous account of their spiritual condition and their loyalty towards Paul mentioned later in chapter 7.

### C. Paul's Philosophy of Ministry (2:14-6:10)

#### 1. Christ Causes Us to Triumph (2:14-17)

2:14-15 - <sup>14</sup>Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. <sup>15</sup>For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

Titus' coming to Paul with the good news dispelled all of Paul's fears, and filled his heart with gratitude towards God, who as he puts it in verse 14, "always causes us to triumph in Christ". What does he mean by that? A "triumph", among the Romans, was a public honor conferred by them on a victorious general, by giving him a magnificent procession (parade) through the city. This was not granted by the senate unless the general had gained a very significant and decisive victory. During this time of the procession all the temples were opened, and every altar smoked with offerings and incense (notice Paul's reference to "the savour of his knowledge" in verse 14).

Paul had now a triumph but of a very different kind; his triumph was in Christ, and to Christ he gives all the glory; his sacrifice was that of thanksgiving to his Lord; and the incense offered on the occasion caused the savour (odor or fragrance) of the knowledge of Christ to be manifested in every place.

**2:16 - <sup>16</sup>To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?**

Paul says "And who is sufficient for these things?" as if to ask, who is worthy of being caused to triumph in Christ?

**2:17 - <sup>17</sup>For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.**

Paul presented the word of God in sincerity while the false apostle corrupted the word of God. The man of God can only be successful and triumph by presenting the pure word of God, untainted by his opinion, unembellished by his own ideas, and uncorrupted by his prejudices. It is only by the grace of God that he can faithfully do this, which is why Paul gives all thanks and glory to Him.

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## 2. Changed Lives Prove Paul's Ministry (3:1-5)

**3:1-5 - <sup>1</sup>Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you? <sup>2</sup>Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: <sup>3</sup>Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. <sup>4</sup>And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: <sup>5</sup>Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God;**

He asks if he needs to give them letters of recommendation. But then tells them that they themselves are his letter of recommendation: their very existence as children of God, as a local church proved his ministry. For them to deny his apostleship was to belittle the work of God done amongst them. God had done a work in their hearts, saving them out of the darkest of sins and deepest of idolatry.

Again, the mindset of the successful man of God is seen: Paul had no confidence in his own ability or talent. He was fully conscious of his complete and utter dependence upon God for all that he did. He did not think he was sufficient (fit or worthy) in himself.

## 3. New Covenant Is the Basis of Ministry (3:6-18)

He is now going to address the Judiazers.

**3:6 - <sup>6</sup>Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter (or law) killeth (brings condemnation) , but the spirit giveth life.**

It was God who gave Paul the ability to be a minister of the New Testament (new covenant: the gospel). "The letter" is the OT law of Moses. It brought knowledge of sin and with it death. That's what Paul is saying when he states, "the letter killeth" in verse 6.

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**Romans 7:6-11 - <sup>6</sup>But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. <sup>7</sup>What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law:... <sup>8</sup>But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead. <sup>9</sup>For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. <sup>10</sup>And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death. <sup>11</sup>For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.**

**3:7-11 - <sup>7</sup>But if the ministration of death (the law), written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away: <sup>8</sup>How shall not the ministration of the spirit (salvation through the gospel) be rather glorious? <sup>9</sup>For if the ministration of condemnation (the law) *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. <sup>10</sup>For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. <sup>11</sup>For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.**

Even though the law ("letter") resulted in death and not life, it was still a glorious thing in being given to Moses from God. The law reveals our sinfulness and our need for Christ. But it does more than that. It gives us a glimpse of God's holiness. It's also a protection for mankind to avoid the snares and heartaches that sin brings. It's a light shining in the dark world in which we live showing us the safe path, the right path to take. **But it can save no one.**

Paul calls it in v. 7, the ministration of death and in v. 9, the ministration of condemnation. In giving the law to Moses, it was such a glorious event, that his face shined with the glory. So, if the giving of the law was glorious, how much more is the revelation of the gospel, which does bring salvation?

**3:12 - <sup>12</sup>Seeing then that we have such hope (or confidence), we use great plainness (boldness or frankness) of speech:**

With the confidence that they were preaching something that could bring eternal life and righteousness, they were bold with their speech ("used great plainness of speech").

**3:13-15 - <sup>13</sup>And not as Moses, *which* put a veil (or cover) over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: <sup>14</sup>But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil (or cover) untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. <sup>15</sup>But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.**

vv. 13 - 15 are a bit difficult to understand, but Paul seems to be saying: by trusting in the law for salvation, the Jews were shutting their eyes against the light that was given to them. It gave them a hardness of heart or blindness of mind. And the veil that was on the face of Moses, is symbolic of the veil of darkness on their hearts, and which hinders the gospel from shining in.

**3:16-17 - <sup>16</sup>Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. <sup>17</sup>Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**

"When it shall turn to the Lord" may refer to when the nation of Israel will turn to Christ and be saved or to when an individual turns to Christ. At salvation, the veil shall be taken away; the true light shall shine; and they shall see all things clearly.

**3:18 - <sup>18</sup>But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**

Christians are changed into the image of Christ. We become more like Christ as we study His word.

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#### 4. Christ Is the Theme of Ministry (4:1-7)

**4:1 - <sup>1</sup>Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint (or quit) not;**

Paul took courage in the mercy he received of God. To "faint" means to quit. If we quit, it is because our strength is small. We have lost our focus. Or we are listening to the lies in our heart, telling us that it's hard to serve God, or that it's not worth it, or "I can't do it."

**4:2 - <sup>2</sup>But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.**

Paul's preaching was without guile or craftiness. It was sincere, depending upon the grace of God for results, not compromising in order to get results.

**4:3-4 - <sup>3</sup>But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: <sup>4</sup>In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.**

As the gospel is preached, there are always those who refuse it. Those to whom it is hidden. Those who can't see that their works will not save them, those who can't see that they really do deserve hell. And behind much of that deception is Satan, the great deceiver, the blinder of mankind. That's Satan's primary method of operation: deception. Revelation 12:9 - ... Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:

**4:5-7 - <sup>5</sup>For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.**



Paul, in verse 6, refers to Genesis 1:3 where God said, "Let there be light: and there was light.", causing light to shine out of darkness. In the same manner, God has sent the light of the gospel into the hearts of men to give us the understanding of salvation through Christ. We have this treasure in us in "earthen" vessels. The good therefore that is accomplished by any man is from the power of God, that no one can pretend it came from themselves.

#### 5. Trials Abound in the Ministry (4:8-14)

**4:8 - <sup>8</sup>We are troubled (pressed upon) on every side, yet not distressed (crushed); we are perplexed (puzzled), but not in despair;**

Believers may be forsaken of their friends, as well as persecuted by enemies; but God will never leave them nor forsake them. "Troubled" on every side simply means outward affliction or trials. We will all face trials in this life but notice we need not be "in despair", which is an inner fear.

**4:9 - <sup>9</sup>Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;**

Paul wrote, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12), but He will never leave us nor forsake us. "Cast down, but not destroyed": we will have times of stumbling and tripping up, but these will never lead to our permanent demise or destruction.

**4:10-14 - <sup>10</sup>Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. <sup>11</sup>For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup>So then death worketh in us, but life in you. <sup>13</sup>We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; <sup>14</sup>Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.**

Paul speaks of his sufferings as a complement to the sufferings of Christ, so that people might see the power of Christ's resurrection.

#### 6. Motivation in the Ministry (4:15-5:21)

**4:15-18 - <sup>15</sup>For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. <sup>16</sup>For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; <sup>18</sup>While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.**

Paul's focus in suffering was on the eternal, always remembering the future reward. One of the keys to successfully living the Christian life is to keep our focus on eternity, not on the circumstances of today.

**5:1-2 - <sup>1</sup>For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved (what is that? Our earthly body dying), we have a building of God (our glorified body), an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup>For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:**

Speaking of the glorified body as the "house not made with hands": the soul and spirit is the real person found in the body. The idea in verse 1 is that God is building a new house for the saint's soul and spirit which will leave the physical body at the time of "death".

**5:3 - <sup>3</sup>If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.**

Paul seems to be saying we need to be prepared for the next life by having fulfilled God's will in this life, thus not be found naked. Some of us will be found "naked", for example the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:17 Christ calls them "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:" I wonder if this implies that our faithfulness to Christ in this life after salvation will determine to some degree or another what our glorified body will wear in heaven?

**5:4 - <sup>4</sup>For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.**

This life is full of sufferings and trials, causing us to desire heaven and our glorified body. Not necessarily desiring death ("not for that we would be unclothed"), but that the whole will of God be accomplished with our lives, to have the fullest preparation for eternal glory ("but clothed upon").

**5:5-8 - <sup>5</sup>Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: <sup>7</sup>(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) <sup>8</sup>We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.**

Once again is mentioned that God has given us the "earnest" of the Spirit (v. 5). This "nonrefundable" down payment of the Holy Ghost within us gives us confidence while in this fleshly body. Eternal security gives peace and confidence. Our confidence is also, according to verse 8, that once we do die in the flesh, we will be present with Christ in heaven.

**5:9 - <sup>9</sup>Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.**

This is what Paul labored for: to be accepted of God at the judgment seat of Christ. To have fully accomplished the will of God for his life, to have been made conformable to the image of Christ; and to hear "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".

**5:10-15 - <sup>10</sup>For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. <sup>11</sup>Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. <sup>12</sup>For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. <sup>13</sup>For whether we be beside ourselves (to be amazed), *it is* to God: or whether we be sober (to be self controlled; of a modest-humble mind), *it is* for your cause. <sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: <sup>15</sup>And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.**

Paul then brings out the fact that standing before Christ even at the judgment seat of the saved can be terrifying; and for that reason he spends his life persuading men; not just the lost to be saved, but the saved to be faithful.

**5:16-17 - <sup>16</sup>Wherefore henceforth know (or judge) we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. <sup>17</sup>Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

The saved person is a totally new creature: Its been said, "he acts upon new principles, by new rules, with new ends, and in new company." He is the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. There must be a change in our life.

The change could be summed up by this: The deepest desire of a saved person's heart is to please God. "All things are become new: And all things are of God." If pleasing God isn't the deepest desire in a person's heart, have they really been saved? They may be backslidden and living in obvious sin, but if they are saved, they are miserable, because deep down in their heart they don't want to be living that way, they want to do God's will.

**5:18-21 - <sup>18</sup>And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For he hath made *him* *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

"Reconcile" means to establish a relationship of peace between two who were previously enemies. Here it is used of the act of redemption in which God Himself, by taking upon Himself our sin and becoming an atonement establishes that relationship of peace with mankind.

Once reconciled to God, we enter into the "ministry of reconciliation" as "ambassadors for Christ", beseeching the lost to be reconciled to God also. That's our purpose after salvation: to be in the ministry of reconciliation, or in the business of bringing souls into a right relationship with God through Christ.

Slide 11

## II. Paul and His Converts (6:1 – 9:15)

### A. Giving No Offense in the Ministry (6:1-10)

**6:1 - <sup>1</sup>We then, as workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.**

Paul is beseeching this church that they "receive not the grace of God in vain": and that they would get involved in the ministry of reconciliation as well.

**6:2 - <sup>2</sup>(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)**

It is possible to know about the grace of God, yet not be saved. Once a person becomes aware of their need to receive Christ and be reconciled to God, it is "now the accepted time; the day of salvation".

In verses 3-10 is described the ideal attitudes and actions of the minister of the gospel:

**6:3 - <sup>3</sup>Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:**

A Pastor must have a good testimony. It is vital to the effectiveness of his ministry.

**6:4-5 -<sup>4</sup>But in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, <sup>5</sup>In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;**

Afflictions (pressure or burden upon the spirit that is crushing). Necessities (not a lack of material needs, but a spiritual need). Distresses (to be pressed from the sides). Stripes (literally wounds). Imprisonments (this was frequent in Paul's time). Tumults (This is a mob reaction.). Labours (the weariness which he experiences from that exertion). Watchings (sleeplessness). Fastings

**6:6 - <sup>6</sup>By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,**

A pastor manifests these evidences of Holy Ghost control over his heart and life

**6:7 - <sup>7</sup>By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,**

A pastor employs these "weapons" of warfare instead of the carnal weapons.

**6:8 - <sup>8</sup>By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and *yet* true;**

A pastor endures dishonour, evil reports, but receives honour, good report.

**6:9-10 - <sup>9</sup>As unknown, and *yet* well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; <sup>10</sup>As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.**

A pastor endures circumstances that would make one sorrowful, yet always rejoicing in what they have in Christ through them. By enduring circumstances of poverty yet realizing their riches in Christ and making many "rich" by reaching them with Christ.

## B. Paul's Exhortations to the Corinthians (6:11-7:16)

### 1. Paul's Appeal for Reconciliation (6:11-13)

(Read vv. 11-13)

6:11-13 - <sup>11</sup>O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. <sup>12</sup>Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. <sup>13</sup>Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto *my* children,) be ye also enlarged.

In verse 12, Paul seems to be saying he loves them much, but they love him little. His "heart was enlarged" towards them, he was reaching out to them. He asks them to love him as he loves them.

## 2. Paul's Appeal for Separation from Unbelievers (6:14-7:1)

6:14 - 7:1 - <sup>14</sup>Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? <sup>16</sup>And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>17</sup>Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, <sup>18</sup>And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. <sup>1</sup>Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

"Unequally yoked together" is all one Greek word that means to be mismatched. A yoke is what would bind two cows/horses together so they could work as one in plowing a field. An unequal yoke would be like two different kinds of animals or sizes of animals bound together into a yoke – big cow vs. small donkey. It is mismatched or unbalanced.

Paul is saying that Christians are not to be bound or connected to lost people. One familiar application of this principle is marriage. In marriage, two become one flesh. There is a binding that takes place. So, we should never even consider marrying a lost person if we are saved.

As a saved person, we cannot have a truly deep and meaningful relationship with a lost person, because the things that we care the most about are so vastly different. The deepest desire within a saved person's heart is to please God, to live for Christ. But that can never be the deepest desire within a lost person's heart. There will be a constant struggle in that marriage.

But in this passage, it includes joining with the lost in other close relationships such as business partnerships and developing close friendships with them such that they gain an influence over us. But we don't completely separate from the world to the point of no interaction because they need to be won to Christ. The point is that we are to be in the world but not of the world.

Failing to separate from the world will bring the saint into an idolatrous relationship with some influence of the world, going after money, fame, sexual sins, gambling, careers, etc. It will cost him or her their fellowship with Christ, often cost them their children, cost them their testimony, and result in their being in bondage to that sin.

## 3. Paul's Meeting with Titus (7:2-7)

(Read vv. 2-4)

**7:2-4 - <sup>2</sup>Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. <sup>3</sup>I speak not *this* to condemn *you*: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with *you*. <sup>4</sup>Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.**

Paul again asks them to open their hearts to him and "receive" him. Imagine leading people to Christ, discipling them, and then later having to beg them to allow you back into their hearts and lives! He had acted openly and honestly in all things regarding his interactions with them, yet they mistrusted him. If we are in ministry, we need to be prepared to have those we have poured our life into reject us and be prepared to react to it in a Christ-like manner like Paul does, instead of getting angry and indignant.

**7:5-7 - <sup>5</sup>For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. <sup>6</sup>Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; <sup>7</sup>And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.**

Titus' report that the Corinthians repented encouraged him greatly.

#### 4. Corinthians' Response to Paul's Letter (7:8-16)

**7:8-9 - <sup>8</sup>For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry (or sad), though *it were* but for a season. <sup>9</sup>Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.**

Paul says he had nothing to repent of regarding the letter that he wrote. Though he felt bad about making them sorrowful, he accomplished what was needful: which is their repentance.

**7:10 - <sup>10</sup>For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.**

The difference between the sorrow of the world and godly sorrow: the sorrow of the world is sorry for getting caught, sorry for the consequences of their sin. And that is sorrow that works or leads to death. It lacks any inward realization of guilt. That person remains blinded to their sin and there will be no salvation: only a hardening of heart. Godly sorrow, on the other hand, contains an understanding of one's responsibility, guilt, and need of salvation. It leads to repentance and salvation.

**7:11-15 - <sup>11</sup>For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. <sup>12</sup>Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. <sup>13</sup>Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all...**

<sup>14</sup>For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth. <sup>15</sup>And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. <sup>16</sup>I rejoyce therefore that I have confidence in you in all *things*.

Apparently, some of the Corinthians experienced this godly sorrow, came to their senses and saw their guilt and responsibility in the matter; and they repented and got things right. It included making restitution (v. 11), which is usually a part of true repentance (when it is possible).

### C. Example of the Macedonians (8:1-6)

**8:1 - <sup>1</sup>Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;**

The churches of Macedonia included the Philippians and the Thessalonians.

**8:2-3 - <sup>2</sup>How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. <sup>3</sup>For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves;**

Reading 1 and 2 Thessalonians, we see a church in Macedonia that suffered great persecution, as did the church at Philippi. Yet, even in their suffering persecution and deep poverty, they wanted to give financially to God's work and God's people. They not only supported Paul but gave to the monetary fund that was to go to the suffering saints in Jerusalem.

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> principle of giving: We are to give by faith. They were able to give despite their poverty. They believed that you cannot out give God, that He will meet our needs as we seek to meet the needs of others and seek to give to His work.

**8:4 - <sup>4</sup>Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.**

"the fellowship of the ministering to the saints" involves giving to God by serving and giving to His people. Some refer to this as "holding the ropes" for the missionary who goes down into the well to rescue the lost souls.

**8:5-6 - <sup>5</sup>And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. <sup>6</sup>Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.**

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> principle of giving: We are to give out of a heart that is first surrendered to Christ.

### D. Exhortation to the Corinthians (8:7-9:15)

#### 1. Example of Christ (8:7-9)

**8:7 - <sup>7</sup>Therefore, as ye abound in every *thing*, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and *in* your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also.**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> principle is that monetary giving is an expected part of Christian growth (vs 7). As we grow in the grace of God and walk with Him, our giving in monetary terms should mature also.

**8:8 - <sup>8</sup>I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.**

And the 4<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is verse 8: our giving is evidence of our love to Christ and his people.

**8:9 - <sup>9</sup>For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

The 5<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is that Christ is our example of giving. No one gave more: no one gave up so much for so many who were so needful.

## 2. Purpose of Giving (8:10-15)

**8:10-11 - <sup>10</sup>And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. <sup>11</sup>Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have.**

The 6<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is that giving is not just a willingness or a desire to give, but that action is required; the actual doing of it. After all, the servants of God need to eat, to be clothed and have shelter just like anyone else.

**8:12-15 - <sup>12</sup>For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not. <sup>13</sup>For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: <sup>14</sup>But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want: that there may be equality: <sup>15</sup>As it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.**

The 7<sup>th</sup> principle is that giving meets needs and is proportionate. God blesses some that they will have the means to help others. It's not God's design to make us poor as others get rich from our giving. But by giving out of our abundance, God's servant's needs will be met.

## 3. Explanation of the Delegation (8:16-9:5)

**8:16-24 - <sup>16</sup>But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. <sup>17</sup>For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. <sup>18</sup>And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches; <sup>19</sup>And not *that* only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration* of your ready mind: <sup>20</sup>Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: <sup>21</sup>Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. <sup>22</sup>And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which *I have* in you. <sup>23</sup>Whether *any do inquire* of Titus, *he is* my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren *be inquired of*, *they are* the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ. <sup>24</sup>Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.**



Paul here gives a recommendation of Titus and an unnamed brother (v. 18, 23). I think it was Luke based on the subscription, but others think Mark. Paul is telling the Corinthians that these men could be trusted, they were diligent (vs. 22) and would provide for things honest in the sight of God and men. He wanted the church at Corinth to show to these men the proof of their love for Christ by their giving (vs. 24), but also the proof of Paul's boasting about them.

**9:1-5 - <sup>1</sup>For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: <sup>2</sup>For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. <sup>3</sup>Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: <sup>4</sup>Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. <sup>5</sup>Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.**

Apparently, those at Corinth (Achaia) were ready to give a year ago and Paul boasted of their readiness to the churches in Macedonia. That boasting encouraged other churches to give also ("your zeal hath provoked very many"). Paul is asking them not to let him down.

#### 4. Exhortation to Giving (9:6-15)

**9:6 - <sup>6</sup>But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.**

The 8<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is: God will bless us according to our faith in giving. If we sacrifice to give, He will bless all the more.

**9:7 - <sup>7</sup>Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.**

The 9<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is that our heart's attitude must be right: cheerful. Not holding a grudge against God (for asking for it) or against the recipients of the gift (for taking it).

**9:8-9 - <sup>8</sup>And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: <sup>9</sup>(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.**

The 10<sup>th</sup> principle is that we can't out give God.

**9:10 - <sup>10</sup>Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)**

The 11<sup>th</sup> principle: God gives us seed (\$\$) and multiplies that seed (\$\$) as we give it by faith. God especially blesses sacrificial giving done without the thought of getting monetary blessings back from Him for giving it.

**9:11-15 - <sup>11</sup>Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. <sup>12</sup>For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; <sup>13</sup>Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*; <sup>14</sup>And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. <sup>15</sup>Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.**

The 12<sup>th</sup> principle of giving is that God is glorified by the faithfulness of the giver. When this cycle of giving is working, God is glorified by all participants. The giver gives sacrificially and the receiver thanks God for it. The end result is God is glorified.

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### III. Paul and His Critics (10:1 – 13:10)

#### A. Paul Answers His Accusers (10:1-18)

##### 1. The Charge of Cowardice Is Answered (10:1,2)

**10:1,2 - <sup>1</sup>Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you: <sup>2</sup>But I beseech *you*, that I may not be bold when I *am* present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.**

Meekness and cowardice can often be confused, especially by someone who is judging with a carnal mind. As Paul was manifesting the fruit of the Spirit of gentleness and meekness in Corinth, it seems his enemies possibly judged him to be a coward. They also accused him of walking in the flesh. There apparently was someone at Corinth who was attacking Paul.

##### 2. The Charge of Walking in the Flesh is Answered (10:3-9)

**10:3-6 - <sup>3</sup>For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: <sup>4</sup>(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds); <sup>5</sup>Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; <sup>6</sup>And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.**

Paul did not fight spiritual battles in the flesh. The work of the ministry is a spiritual warfare with spiritual enemies, and for spiritual purposes. The battle ground is in our heart, our thought-life, what we think. And the tools or weapons of the battle are powerful through God: Those instruments are (1) the word of God, replacing all of our wrong thoughts or lies with the truth of God's word, and (2) prayer that surely is also capable of pulling down strongholds: (advance to next slide)

**Matthew 18:18,19 - <sup>18</sup>Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.**

**James 5:16b - <sup>16</sup>The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**

**10:7-9 - <sup>7</sup>Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's. <sup>8</sup>For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority (apostolic authority), which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: <sup>9</sup>That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.**

This church had the problem of judging and assessing men and situations by their outward appearance.

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### 3. The Charge of Personal Weakness Is Answered (10:10-18)

**10:10-11 - <sup>10</sup>For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. <sup>11</sup>Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present.**

The attackers in Corinth sneered behind Paul's back after he left that he was "weak" (feeble) in bodily presence and that his speech was "contemptible" (despicable). Paul lets it be known, however, that it is time for the shepherd to chase away the wolves when he returns.

**10:12 - <sup>12</sup>For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.**

Paul is saying, I dare neither associate with, nor compare myself to, those who are full of self. Those who are concerned with what other people think of them and comparing themselves with other people are only fooling themselves ("are not wise"). They lack the understanding that God is the judge and He sees our hearts, not what other people see.

**10:13 - <sup>13</sup>But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.**

He told them of the authority that God has invested in him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. The authority that God gave him included even them at Corinth.

**10:14-15 - <sup>14</sup>For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ: <sup>15</sup>Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,**

In verse 15, where he states "Not boasting of things without our measure": Paul speaks only of the work which God has done by him and his group. He never tried to take credit for what other men had done.

**10:16-18 - <sup>16</sup>To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. <sup>17</sup>But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. <sup>18</sup>For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.**

He also mentions his intentions to go beyond them with the gospel to reach regions even beyond them (maybe referring to Rome?). As always, however, he makes it clear that if that is to happen, it will only be by the grace of God and that all glory and boasting should be to God.

## B. Paul Defends His Apostleship (11:1-12:13)

### 1. Paul's Declaration of His Apostleship (11:1-15)

**11:1-4 - <sup>1</sup>Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me. <sup>2</sup>For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as a chaste virgin* to Christ. <sup>3</sup>But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. <sup>4</sup>For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.***

Paul wants to explain something that may seem at first to be foolish, yet he knows it is vital for them to learn it. He had spent 1 ½ years with them winning them to Christ and discipling them. He was fearful, however that after he left, they had been deceived by false teachers into believing false doctrine, specifically another Jesus, another spirit, and another gospel.

This is still happening in our day. Let me use as an example something that is close to true Biblical Christianity, yet just off enough to be deadly: The Charismatic Movement, such as Assembly of God or Pentecostal churches. They teach that a person must be "born again" by receiving Christ by faith. They believe Christ is the Son of God, hold to the doctrine of the Trinity, and believe in the Holy Spirit. So, how is it then that they preach another Jesus, another spirit, and another gospel?

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1. **Another gospel** because they teach that you can lose your salvation: that you must hold out faithful to the end. This means that you must do something then to keep from losing it. Their salvation then is not by faith 100% in Jesus Christ, but it now becomes partly of works and therefore is no longer all of grace. It is now "another gospel".

2. **Another Jesus**, because they teach that you can lose their salvation, the Jesus they preach is different from the Jesus of the Bible who keeps his sheep eternally secure.

1 Peter 1:4,5 - "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God."

John 10:28 - "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand"

John 6:37 - "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The Jesus of the Bible keeps His sheep, but they teach is not able to keep them. When a person "loses their salvation", Jesus has lost His sheep. They teach another Jesus.

3. **Another spirit**, because their "spirit" causes them to "speak in tongues", breaking all the rules of Scripture as they do so (no Jews present, no interpreter present, women to be silent, one at a time, no more than 3 total to speak, not to mention that they have "ceased"). They place their experiences with this 'holy spirit' above the word of God.

11:5-15 - <sup>5</sup>For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. <sup>6</sup>But though *I be rude in speech*, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

Paul seems to imply that his fruit is not inferior spiritually speaking to the other apostles (especially Peter, James, and John, "the very chiefest apostles"). Though the Corinthians accused him of being "rude" (ignorant, unlearned) in speech, he defends his grasp of the scriptures by appealing to them that he was thoroughly made manifest to them: they knew full well what he believed, and what he taught.

11:7-11 - <sup>7</sup>Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? <sup>8</sup>I robbed other churches, taking wages of *them*, to do you service. <sup>9</sup>And when I was present with you, and wanted (or lacked), I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all *things* I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*. <sup>10</sup>As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. <sup>11</sup>Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

He brings up the fact that he preached the gospel to them at his own expense, taking support from the churches of Macedonia (Philippi) while working with them in Corinth. He had every Biblical right to command them to support him, but he refrained and intended to continue to refrain from doing so.

11:12 - <sup>12</sup>But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

Paul intended to give his critics no occasion of slander by taking their support, that they couldn't accuse him of doing it for the money. This would also force his critics to also not take their money to be "as spiritual" as Paul. This would be tough for the false teachers as they were in it for the money.

11:13-15 - <sup>13</sup>For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup>And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. <sup>15</sup>Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

He describes the false apostles as deceitful workers, and that is satan's method. Satan works predominantly by deceiving. Their deceit was in that they portrayed themselves as ministers of Christ, ministers of righteousness. This description applies to all "men of the cloth" in Protestant, Catholic, and other "churches" whose doctrine is corrupted. These men (and now women pastors) may be sincere but totally unaware of their deceit and of their being satan's ministers. But the more sincere they are, the more convincing they are to their followers, and the more satan is pleased with them.

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## 2. Paul's Sufferings Support His Apostleship (11:16-33)

**11:16-21 - <sup>16</sup>I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. <sup>17</sup>That which I speak, I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. <sup>18</sup>Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. <sup>19</sup>For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye *yourselves* are wise. <sup>20</sup>For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. <sup>21</sup>I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.**

The Corinthians allowed false teachers to boast, take their money, and they loved him for it. Cult leaders seem to have an ability to get away with these things: boasting, robbing their people, bringing them into bondage, and yet their people love them for it. Paul tells them he will defend his apostleship by declaring some things about himself that he considers boasting.

**11:22-33 - <sup>22</sup>Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I. <sup>23</sup>Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. <sup>24</sup>Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. <sup>25</sup>Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; <sup>26</sup>In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by *mine own* countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; <sup>27</sup>In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. <sup>28</sup>Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. <sup>29</sup>Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? <sup>30</sup>If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. <sup>31</sup>The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. <sup>32</sup>In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: <sup>33</sup>And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.**

Paul gives an account of his labours and sufferings; not out of pride, but to the honor of God, who enabled him to suffer so much for the cause of Christ. It seems the false teachers must have been Judaizers because Paul emphasizes his Jewish background in his defense. Do you think any of the Judaizers suffered any significant persecution in the name of Christ? No, because they teach a works salvation AND they were the ones doing the persecuting.

## 3. Paul's Revelations Support His Apostleship (12:1-10)

(Read 12:1-6)

12:1-6 - <sup>1</sup>It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. <sup>2</sup>I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. <sup>3</sup>And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) <sup>4</sup>How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. <sup>5</sup>Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. <sup>6</sup>For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me.

As for the vision he had, there are many speculations about just when it occurred. Some believe it was when he was stoned at Lystra and was left for dead in Acts 14. Regardless of the situation, Paul was allowed to see and hear the goings on in third heaven. This privilege may have given him comfort during all of his tremendously difficult trials.

Why did Paul call this the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven? There are three heavens mentioned in scripture. The first heaven is our atmosphere where the birds fly (Genesis 1:20), the second heaven is outer space where the sun, moon, and stars are (Genesis 1:16,17), and the third heaven is what we think of as heaven, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

12:7-10 - <sup>7</sup>And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. <sup>8</sup>For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup>And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

God allowed satan to "buffet" Paul in order to keep him humble. Even though Paul prayed three times, God refused to remove it. Paul was told that Christ's grace was sufficient for him and that His strength was made more manifest when weak in the flesh, because we more dependent upon Him. We can know that when we are weak in the flesh, we can be stronger spiritually.

This infirmity is thought by many to be a disease of the eyes, perhaps from the blinding light he saw on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. What it was, it that made his vision bad. We get that from...

**Galatians 4:14,15 - <sup>14</sup>And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> ...for I bear you record, that, if *it had been possible*, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.**

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#### 4. Paul's Signs Support His Apostleship (12:11-13)

12:11-13 - <sup>11</sup>I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. <sup>12</sup>Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. <sup>13</sup>For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

Paul reminds them of the power of God manifested among them by the signs and miracles that God performed through Paul. The only thing lacking from Paul, in their view, was Paul had not taken money from them like the other apostles did.

### C. Paul Announces His Upcoming Visit (12:14-13:10)

#### 1. Paul's Concern Not to Be a Financial Burden (12:14-18)

**12:14-18 - <sup>14</sup>Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. <sup>15</sup>And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. <sup>16</sup>But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile. <sup>17</sup>Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? <sup>18</sup>I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we not in the same steps?***

Paul's working to support himself and using the support of other churches allowed him to not be a burden to the Corinthians. He also trained his disciples to behave the same way, to work and support themselves, like Titus for example.

#### 2. Paul's Concern Not to Find Them Carnal (12:19-21)

**12:19-21 - <sup>19</sup>Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but *we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.* <sup>20</sup>For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:* <sup>21</sup>*And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.***

Paul was constantly conscious and aware of the watchful eye of God on his thoughts and actions. His goal in all that he did towards this church was their edification. Just as it was John the Apostle's greatest joy was to hear that his children were walking in truth (2 John 4, 3 John 4), it was Paul's greatest fear to see them backslidden.

#### 3. Paul's Warning to Examine Yourselves (13:1-10)

**13:1-4 - <sup>1</sup>This is the third *time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. <sup>2</sup>I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: <sup>3</sup>Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. <sup>4</sup>For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.**



Paul felt it was time to set things straight on his third visit. It sounded as though he was going to actually "kick-out" those who refused to get right with God. Christ at His crucifixion appeared as a weak and helpless man as He took our sin upon Him, but His resurrection and life showed His Divine power. In a similar pattern the apostles, as weak and disgraceful as they appeared to the world, yet, as instruments of God they manifested the power of God.

**13:5-6 - <sup>5</sup>Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? <sup>6</sup>But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.**

He asked them, before he arrived, to examine and judge themselves: were they saved? and were they right with God if they were saved? I think it is important that we examine ourselves, whether we are saved or not. Did you ever make a false profession? \* My Testimony \*. If I had not examined myself and compared my profession with God's word... I would still be lost.

**13:7-10 - <sup>7</sup>Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates. <sup>8</sup>For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. <sup>9</sup>For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your perfection. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.**

Paul's desire for them to get right was not so that he could be "approved" or hear a "good job", but that they would simply do what is right for God's sake, for the truth's sake. When he arrived, if necessary, he would use sharpness on them.

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Conclusion (13:11-14)

**13:11-14 - <sup>11</sup>Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. <sup>12</sup>Greet one another with an holy kiss. <sup>13</sup>All the saints salute you. <sup>14</sup>The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be with you all. Amen.***

Verse 14 is another verse that mentions the Trinity.

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And here ends the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians.

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