

A  
STUDY  
OF  
PAUL'S  
SECOND  
EPISTLE  
TO  
THE  
CORINTHIAN  
CHURCH

## How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

## How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

# Table of Contents

Inside Cover-----	1
How to Study-----	2
Table of Contents-----	3
Introduction-----	4
Chapter One-----	5
Chapter Two-----	12
Chapter Three-----	17
Chapter Four-----	22
Chapter Five-----	27
Chapter Six-----	35
Chapter Seven-----	45
Chapter Eight-----	49
Chapter Nine-----	55
Chapter Ten-----	59
Chapter Eleven-----	65
Chapter Twelve-----	74
Chapter Thirteen-----	81
List of Studies-----	85

## 2 CORINTHIANS

### INTRODUCTION

This is Paul's second letter to the church located in the city of Corinth. There is some evidence that between first and second Corinthians Paul sent a very strongly worded message to them however that has been lost and was not inspired of God. There is also mention in 1 Corinthians 5:9 that Paul had sent a communication prior to that letter also it has been lost. The time of this writing is about the year 56 ad.

To properly understand the two letters that are here to the Corinthian church one will need to know something of the city and the make up of its population.

Corinth was a very wealthy commercial center it had two harbors one facing Italy and one facing Asia. The original city was founded in 1500 b.c. and destroyed in 146 b.c. by Lucius Mummius the Roman. About 100 years later a new city was built on top of the old one by Julius Caesar. The city was rich with luxury and temples and a very cosmopolitan citizenry. On the hill called the Acrocorinth stood the temple to Aphrodite who had 1,000 slave girls/ temple prostitutes serving in it.

Paul made his first visit in 51 a.d. and Corinth by this time had regained all of her thriving wealth and glory. She had become a metropolis of Romans, Greeks, Asians, Jews, and a Hodge podgy of other peoples each bringing their culture and religions to the city.

The city was noted for its pluralistic religious scene having and allowing every kind of religion equal access. The city was also famous for its games and the stadiums they were held in. the moral climate of the city was so bad that a catch phrase of the day to describe moral evil was "to act the Corinthian".

These people lived in swaggering pride of Greek wisdom and reduced religion to a quagmire of sin. This is where Paul arrived to present the gospel of Jesus Christ and found the church there this is why he makes his statement found in chapter 6: 9-11.

Luke records the founding of the church in Acts 18:1-17 after little success in Athens as always he started in the Synagogue and once rejected there by the non believing Jews he turned to the Gentiles.

## Chapter One

1 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:

Paul starts as usual by establishing his authority and commission as he did in Ephesus, Galatia, Colosse, and to Timothy in both letters to him. Paul was not commissioned by a board or an association or even the other Apostles but by Jesus Himself. Paul is not usurping authority just the opposite he is living and working under the greatest authority of all. He is being obedient to his call from God on the Damascus road.

Timothy has rejoined Paul after going to Corinth to see how the church was doing and if the problems were being resolved. Now he has returned with his report of the situation especially of the one dealing with fornication and other immorality.

Paul addresses this letter first and foremost to the church at Corinth and then he expects it to be sent to the outlying churches in Achaia. It is well to note that this letter is written to the “saints” not to the aints. Saints are those who have been set apart by God as seen in the following passages Romans 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:17.

2 Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is Paul’s typical greeting as he always has “grace” before “peace”. Until one has received the grace of God they cannot know the peace of God! Grace is what God is free to give me even though I do not deserve it and what keeps Him from giving me what I do deserve! This Grace comes from the Father and Son as seen in the following passages Eph. 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Phil. 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus; Col. 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven

and 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

3-4 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 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.

From here through verse 11 Paul will give thanks to God. He starts by saying “blessed” this is to say “well spoken of” is God the Father why? Well because of His grace and peace and the thought of or looking forward to His mercy and comfort. What are some of these Mercies Paul was blessing the Lord for. Here are a few such as deliverance from the world, sin and Satan’s control and caused us to participate in Sonship, light, and life. the Father is also ones comforter this is not a word of sympathy but of encouragement of one who comes along side of someone else to help them. Now since Christians have the Holy Spirit the comforter on the inside this phrase then has a twofold idea. The first one is of inner strength and second of outer encouragement. The Father is able to comfort in every area of life. Because we are comforted we can comfort others also.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

WE see as ones problems increase so does the Fathers consolation towards them, it is measured by Christ’s experience as in these two passages Col. 1:24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church and Phil. 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

6-7 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. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

Whether Paul was afflicted or comforted it was for other peoples benefit. He does not glory in suffering he only acknowledges that suffering identifies him with Christ as in Rom. 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together

He admonishes his readers that when we suffer together for Christ then we are comforted together in His joy and consolation. This is a very personal statement as opposed to the very divisive nature of the church at Corinth!

8-10 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: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

Paul informs them of his troubles he had faced in Asia as his reason for not coming to them. Paul says he had been faced with so much stress that the only way out he could see was death as in Acts 14:19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. With all other hope gone as far as Paul could see the Lord was working out His purpose so Paul would come to the end of himself and fully trust the Lord “which raiseth the dead.”

Paul has initiated a process of faith in three ways first in the past “who delivered us”; then the present “doth deliver”; and yet future “he will deliver.” You see faith liberated Paul and it can liberate all who will exercise it as in Hebrews 2: 14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

11 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 credits their continuing prayers for him along with other churches as being effective in bringing him along.

12 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.

Paul rejoiced in his testimony of conscience that his ministry was simple and with sincerity toward God. He had not lived in the wisdom of the world or its values.

13-14 For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; 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 reminds them that his letters bear the same honesty as his life and he hopes they will continue to regard it so. Most did a few did not this is just as typical today as then the Corinthian’s rejoiced in Paul’s ministry to them and he rejoiced in the fruit he had seen there and they could continue even to the time of the revealing of all secrets there they would know that he had been honest with them.



15-16 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; 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 still stands in his confidence of coming to them as planned and passing on into Macedonia and to come back to them and then on to Judea and he is trusting they will aid him in this trip.

17-18 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? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

Paul says he has not been insincere with them and when he says yes he means yes and no means no. Whether it is in his writings or in person Paul's yes and no are just that. As true as the word of God is so true is Paul's word read also here in Gal. 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed and 1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

19 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.

Those who knew Christ as Saviour had received him because of Paul's and Silus and Timothy's preaching and they knew he was right. There was no waffling in their messages just straight up gospel preaching.

20-22 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

As many promises as the Lord makes in the Bible they are all yes and fulfilled in Christ. Paul adds that the One who established him with them through Christ was God the Father. This same Lord sealed them; now this seal has a threefold importance in the New Testament.

First-is to indicate ownership. Second it is to indicate genuineness and Third- to preserve and keep safe. The following are some verses to help us see this Eph. 1:3 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; 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption and 2 Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Paul amplifies this by adding “the earnest of the holy Spirit” now an earnest is a down payment or a pledge so the Holy Spirit is the down payment on this future inheritance as seen here in Eph. 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession and Rom. 8:9-11 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

23-24 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto

Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Paul calls God as his record that part of his delay was to keep from causing them more sorrow. When he does arrive he wants there to be joy. Paul says I am not trying to speak in a dictatorial way no rather I want to be a helper to all of you this is the attitude of a good Sheppard. He could exercise authority but he restrains so he can be a help to them. This church stood on their own faith before God and the world not on his

## Chapter Two

1. But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

At some point after writing the first letter to the Corinthians Paul visited Corinth and the visit had went badly as he left in a somewhat defeated attitude. His enemies had attacked him and his character assailing his reason for preaching the gospel as false and for personal gain. Notice he says he would not return to them with a “heavy heart,” one that has been hurt in some fashion.

He purposed to not return in such fashion again. When you love people you do not want to cause them more pain.

2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

Paul fears his very presence would cause pain and not joy. He would cause a heaviness to fall on the people because of the lies and rumors cast about him. Compare this with John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world; and Pro. 15:13 A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

3 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.

Paul had already sent disciplinary instructions to them in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapters 5&6. He sees no point in returning just to be hurt by the same ones who had injured him before. He wants them to deal with these issues and bring these people to repentance.

4 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.

Paul connects back here to verse 3 and now shows why he is writing. Paul had deep sorrow and distress, pain, hurt, grief, and shed many tears over this situation. He wrote because of his great love for the people and he wants them to quit sinful practices started in 1 Corinthians and reach out to people.

5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

Paul now refers to the incident in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:1-13 he has received information on. So Paul says if this man caused any grief it had little affect on Paul but could cause great harm to the assembly. Therefore they needed to and deal with it.

6-8 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

The Corinthian church's discipline of the person had been enough to bring repentance. Now they should forgive and comfort him so that the person not be destroyed but edified and restored. So when one sees true repentance in someone then love is to be shown to them.

Four things in restoration

1. Forgiveness of the church- bringing back into the fellowship of the church lets compare Mk. 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses; Luke 11:4; and Eph. 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you

2. Comfort and encouragement of the church- 1 Thess. 5:11-14 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren,

to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men

3. Repentance of the offender. Acts 20: 35 I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive; Romans 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations; 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves

4. Demonstration of love- by the church- believers were to go out of their way to show love toward the repentant. John 13: 34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another; Eph. 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you; 1 John 4: 10-11 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

Paul wanted to know if the believer at Corinth had matured enough to do what he had just said.

10 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;

Paul is showing that the final decision rests with the local congregation and if they forgive he forgives. Paul forgives because of Christ.

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us:  
for we are not ignorant of his devices.

The advantage would come in one of two ways first by a despondent Christian or a divided church. Paul was fully aware of how Satan would use this incident to diminish the work of the church. Satan wants to stop the propagation of the gospel if he can cause disunity and disheartening in a church he will have succeeded.

12-13 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, 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.

This is tied back to verse 4 Paul says he headed for Troas to preach and teach and there was opportunity there but he had no rest he had not seen or heard from Titus his report so he left off that mission and headed to Macedonia to see them. Now for Paul to leave off soul winning says something. As important as that is there is something more and that is love of the brethren.

14-17 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. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: 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? 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.

Notice first the word “triumph” Paul is alluding to the triumph of a Roman general marching into Rome after a great victory with two groups of people the first to slaves of the empire and the second to die in the arena’s.

Paul says he is able to speak about this because he speaks by Christ for God and is not as those who corrupt the word! Corrupt here means to peddle, contaminate, and mix into with personal ideas, speculations religious fads, or novel ideas.



## Chapter Three

Paul opens this chapter discussing his credentials to minister to them and moves into the quality of his ministry toward them this will continue through the first part of chapter 4.

1. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

Paul wants to know why he would need to prove himself again or to send letters ahead detailing his ministry and accomplishments. This was a common practice to send letters of introduction ahead of one's arrival. Paul is saying to them do I need them for at Corinth after all the time I have spent with you.

2-3 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 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 fleshly tables of the heart.

Paul reminds them that the best credentials of all are those that through his preaching of the gospel have come to Christ as Saviour. He loved them so much they were engraved on his heart. You see when it comes to proof of ministry people are more important than letters from friends and family. 1Cor 9:1-2 Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord and Heb. 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation Paul makes sure they understood the power is from God through Christ. The lives of people are not written with ink, but by the Holy Spirit of God! 1 Peter 1:23 Being born again,

not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

4 -5 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

Paul says he has confidence in their conversion experience's and not that the confidence is in Paul but in God. Paul is saying that he is weak and not competent on his own to have accomplished anything of himself but of his sufficiency is God. All that Paul accomplished in Corinth was God working through him.

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

The opening words "who also" takes us back to the previous verse and Paul's ability coming from God. The Father made him able to minister this is the first quality of his ministry, it was energized by God.

The second quality was a distinct ministry of the new covenant. It was new because it did not take effect until after Christ's death as we see in the following verses Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:7-23; 1 Cor. 11:25; Heb. 8:8, 9:15. This testament is not of ink and paper (external) but of the Spirit on the inside of man Col. 3:10; 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19-20. This last phrase is more fully explained in Romans 7:6-11 this is a response to Judaizers who were in Corinth and were saying that Paul had left the Law of Moses. So Paul replies to them that the best that the law could do was condemn one to death but the Spirit of God brought life Romans 10:5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them and Gal. 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Now before you say the law is evil just the opposite is

true it is holy just and true Romans 7:21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. The law brings men to the end of themselves, and to Christ Gal. 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

7-8 But if the ministration of death, 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: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

The old Covenant was a ministry of death. We know this is what Paul is referring to as he says written in stone. Now the law was “glorious” it was good, Holy and pure. You see the law is not the problem it is man that is the problem. The law shows that I am a sinner and it condemns my sin. The glory of the law made Moses face to shine for a while as recorded in Exodus 34: 29-35. Now if the Old Testament or Covenant was glorious how much more is the New Covenant which is a ministry unto life by the Holy Spirit and the power to live life.

9 -10 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

The ministry of righteousness is of Jesus Christ. The Spirit imparts the nature of God into us as we see here in 2 Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The New Covenant so exceeds the Old in glory that the Old has no glory at all in comparison.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

The Old Covenant faded away and the New remains and is permanent. The great Bible teacher Matthew Henry said “When the sun rises, the light of a lamp fades and diminishes.” The Sun supersedes the moon the lesser light. The New will never be superseded. There will never be another new relationship between God and Man. The New Testament was the final most glorious of all as it is built on Jesus Christ and His righteousness. Romans 8:9, 11, 13

The point of verses 6-11 is to discuss the new Covenant which the minister serves Matt. 26:28; Ro. 11:27

12-16 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

The confidence of the New Covenant hope is such that the minister can proclaim it clear and bold as in 1 Cor. 2: 12-13 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The Old Covenant was set up with veiled meanings; Paul uses Moses as the example the people feared the glory of God so he had to veil it and then he had to keep it veiled once it was gone away for the people's sake.

Even today the reading of the Old has but one purpose for the reader and that is to point men and women to their need of a Saviour. Christ removes the veil off of our hearts. When one turns to Christ he or she is shown how Jesus Christ is the glory of God the end, purpose, and total fulfillment of the law

read here Gal. 3: 24-25 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

17 -18 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 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.

The New Covenant brings liberty through Christ. I would have you notice the phrase “the Lord is that Spirit” this shows that they are one in the God head and deity John 16:14-15 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. The Lord secured liberty for men and women. In Christ there is liberty and freedom the following is some examples of that liberty.

- a. Christ frees from the Law Ro. 7:4,6; Gal. 5:18
- b. Christ frees from the dominion of sin Ro. 6:14
- c. Christ frees the believer from bondage Ro. 8:15
- d. Christ frees from the power of Satan Heb. 2:14-15
- e. Christ frees from the bondage of corruption Ro. 8: 21-23

In beholding Christ we are transformed into His image. We stand face to face with the glory of the Lord

## Chapter Four

The demands of a ministry are clear and to be headed by all who would enter in upon one. It demands constancy, honesty, and integrity. A revealing of the gospel, servitude of those that preach Christ we are to serve him and not self.

1. Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

Paul says as a minister (under rower) of the gospel of Jesus he is going to vigorously go about proclaiming the message as given to him. Paul ends this verse by saying he would not “faint” but be diligent in his responsibilities.

2 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.

The word but stands in strong contrast to the last part of verse one. What Paul denies of himself he affirms of the false teachers of Corinth. The “hidden things” could either be bad conduct or secret motives. Paul’s ministry to them was always open and honest.

Paul continues that he was not an opportunist and he was not seeking his own aims. Paul also was not one to “peddle” or adulterate the gospel with false teaching 1 Cor. 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: Paul preached what God gave him exactly in contrast to the Corinthians who were more interested in human credentials. Paul’s message was commended to them their conscience bearing witness.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

Paul goes back to the veil in the temple and tabernacle of chapter three for this analogy. If his gospel is hid it was because of the veil they had put over it with Judaism.

4 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.

Satan is the God of this world, he is in control of the world's systems Matt. 4:8-9; John 12: 31, 14:30; 1 Cor. 10:20; 2 Tim. 2:26; Eph. 2:2; 6:12. He shields the heart of men from the light of the gospel. His ways and nature are evidenced by the following selfishness, pride, lust, greed, anger, murder, lies, and deception. Now before you get the wrong conception not every leader is controlled by Satan but the systems of the world are. He blinds men so they will not accept Jesus when the gospel is preached.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

The word "For" ties us back to verse 4 Paul preached Jesus and Him alone and was a willing slave for Christ. Paul wanted no direct attention for himself but to lift up Jesus in the gospel.

6 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.

Paul again uses "for" to tie his thought together. It was God Himself who commanded that light first at creation and now to shine from the heart of the newly created person at salvation. Our spiritual transformation creates a radiant inner glow that Paul likens to his experience on the Damascus road he expresses it in the phrase "glory of God" compare it to Acts 9:36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this

woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,  
that the excellency of the power may be of God,  
and not of us.

Paul says this glory dwells in us likening us to earthen or pottery vessels. This is the basis for our holy living as seen in 1 Cor. 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Now an earthen jar also shows us humanities weakness, the gospel resides in our frail bodies so the power of God may be revealed.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not  
distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;  
Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but  
not destroyed;

Paul said he had faced problems but he was neither forsaken nor destroyed. Ministers today face opposition sometimes severe maybe from behind the back or maybe face to face. Here are some forms such as ridicule, mockery, threats, criticism, slander, etc. now to be “cast down” is to be knocked down, and “destroyed” is to die or perish.

William Barclay said “the supreme characteristics of the Christian is not that he does not fall, but that every time he falls he rises again. It is not that he is never beaten, but he is never ultimately defeated. He may lose a battle, but he knows that in the end he never loses the campaign.”

10-12 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. 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. So then  
death worketh in us, but life in you.



Paul says that what happens to him makes him part of the fellowship of the suffering of Jesus Phil 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. Paul wants us to realize that taking part in Christ suffering will allow us to share in His glory. Paul says those who are alive are subject to die for Christ at anytime. A good illustration is that diamonds are best shown against a black backdrop. Paul's weakness and sufferings have given birth to a great ministry at Corinth.

13 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;

Paul says he has the same spirit as in 3:17 that is the Holy Spirit who is often designated by the effect He produces such as Adoption, of wisdom, of Grace, of glory. Here it is the Spirit of faith or the Spirit that produces faith. Paul much like David in Psalm 116:5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful extols God's goodness. It is Paul's confidence in his faith that gave him his ability to preach the gospel!

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord  
Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall  
present us with you.

"Knowing" this word is not talking about head knowledge but experiential knowledge. The one who rose up Jesus will raise Paul and the Corinthians. With this confidence suffering and death serving the Lord becomes of little consequence when compared to resurrection. Jesus said in John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live, and 28-29 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of

damnation; Ro. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:19-22; and 1 Thess. 4:16-18.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

All that Paul suffered to bring them the gospel was for their sake and God's glory. We bear suffering so people can experience the grace of God. The results of this effort is joy and rejoicing in God. The minister will not allow defeat to enter their lives because the people need the grace of God and God needs to be glorified.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

The inner man is renewed daily. There are 3 things of importance to see in this verse.

1<sup>st</sup> the minister does not faint, quit or give up because of people, circumstances, events, fatigue, exhaustion, persecution, or opposition.

2<sup>nd</sup> The outward man is dying daily. "Earthen" in verse 7 is a reference to our human bodies as in verse 10 now in verse 11 it is mortal flesh. Now "perish" means to age or wear out

3<sup>rd</sup> The inner man is renewed by drawing near to God daily.

17-18 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 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 is modest in his consideration of what he had been through as we will see in chapter 11:16-33. What he is saying is that all of these are "light" when compared to Christ suffering and for only for a "moment" compared to eternity with Him and there are things far greater to experience.

## Chapter Five

Introduction: Because of Paul's expressed confidence in the last part of chapter 4 in verses 17 and 18. Paul will now show it's justification for it, in the first 10 verses of this chapter. Paul never had his eyes on things earthly but heavenly. This passage is to bring comfort to those in the ministry.

1. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Notice first that Paul says "we know"; what Paul is about to say is not based on hope or expectation traditional belief but upon the facts of God's word. This earthly body Paul compares to a tent in which the real person lives, if this tent is folded away Paul knows he has a house in heaven with God a heavenly body that will never fade away.

2 -3 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

Paul groans or longs for that heavenly home. He equates his heavenly body with "clothes" like being fitted with a new suit. Paul wants both releases from this body and for the immortality of the heavenly. This is not about escaping trials and burdens but a longing for what is so much better! Here are a few references John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; Romans 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; 1 Cor.15: 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality and 2 Tim. 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

4 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.

Paul is groaning here under the weights of life read here in Ro. 8: 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Paul fully expected to not just exit this life but to fully participate in the promised abundant life. His spirit was not going to be left floating around in some limbo. Rather he was waiting to receive his new body.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

The guarantee of this is the Holy Spirit. One thing to know is Paul's emphasis on the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit is the one producing those longings.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

Notice Paul says that he does not have a temporary feeling but a permanent state of mind. Paul reminds us that while we are alive here we cannot realize all that heaven has for us.

7-8 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

The parenthesis is Paul's inner thought set to paper as to how he believed and walked in what we have just looked at it is by faith in God and His word. Paul is honest if it was just up to him he would rather leave here and be in heaven in his new glorified body in Christ's presence forever!

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

Paul lived each day with eternity in his sight and the values to please the Lord as the only thing of importance.

10 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.

This is the “Bema” seat; it is the seat of judgment there is still one in Corinth today. This seat was elevated in the town square where roman magistrates administered judgment and athlete’s received their reward. This then is the image Paul is using that is he is taking something common to make a strong spiritual point.

He says “we must all appear” the “all” here is a reference to Christians. One must remember this and every Church epistle was written to Christians not to the lost so this appearing is not about sin and it’s judgment but about those “deeds” I e works, ministry or how we lived here as Christians. Peter said “Be ye holy for I am Holy” and we should bear that in mind every day. This judgment is about reward or a lack there of Phil. 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. This is how Paul faced this issue. Here is the reward list as found in 1 Cor. 3: 11-15 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The precious metals all gain value by fire and the others are all destroyed by fire. The analogy is this, what is done for Jesus is those precious metals and gems and those things that are done in the flesh are those made of wood to be done away with but the person will not be!

11 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.

Paul knowing what he just said we and he himself need to have the “terror” or fear of the Lord in our lives. This holy reverence we have in knowing that one day we will stand to give an account of how we used our lives should motivate us to live Holy for the Lord.

Paul said he tried to persuade men about the gospel and his personal integrity. He knew God knew his heart but he wanted those around him to know it also!

12 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.

Paul did not want to receive any glory in himself or his credentials but that those who truly knew him would have the ability to answer his critics and detractors as Jesus did in Mt. 23: 27-28 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity; John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment; Paul sends these words to Titus in Titus 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate

13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

Paul says to them if I appear to act like a crazy man it is toward God. if ministers seem to act outside of logic it is in obeying the Lord as He does not stay confined to our perceptions of normalcy! Mt. 5:16 Let your light so shine

before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven; 1 Peter 4: 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Paul does add that he tries to “refrain” or hold back his enthusiasm so as not to offend them.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

It was for Paul the very love of Christ that held such a grip on him that he acted a fool or held himself back. This great sacrificial love so moved him in every part of his life, this was his life force.

Paul says I have come to this conclusion since Jesus Christ died for all then all must have been dead. Someone said once “the very moment that gives you life begins to take it away from you.”

15 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 now gives the purpose for redemption. The father does not release one from the bondage of sin so that they can live as they want or to continue in their sinful practice. No He saves you to live for Him Ro. 5:5, 12-21; 6:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2: 5-6. Christ resurrection is an important part of salvation Ro. 4: 24-25 it is to be an incentive for our holy living.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

In these last few verses Paul deals with his message. He starts with “wherefore” or because of what he just said Paul does not

see men as he once did as world sees men. That is by station in life or by money or education. What he says here of Christ is that at one time all he knew of Christ was a fleshly knowledge but not any longer?

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

This is one of the most important verses of scripture for Christians. Paul says “if” any man (person) is “in” Christ this is the reason they can no longer see people as they used to. Why you ask? Paul answers this because the “old life” is dead and gone it has been broken away from and all that used to be is over and gone also. Everything about the person has taken on a new life John 5:24

Man was dead to God-----Now he is alive in Christ

Man had no relationship with God- now he has a new relationship in Chris

Man never fellowshiped with God- Now he fellowships in Christ

Man living in sin without God—now living in righteousness in Christ

Man had to face death apart from God- Now he never has to die.

18-19 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 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.

All of these and many more new things are all from God for the one “in” Christ. Paul’s message is one of reconciliation. To reconcile is to bring into alignment or to bring together such as labor and management or to restore.

What Paul is saying is that two who should have been together but now are estranged were brought back together by Christ. Man and God were separated by sin and we became



enemies of God but through Christ we can be reconciled to God.

We in ourselves cannot bring this about; God has to do it through Christ for us Heb. 10: 5-12. Now Paul says Christ in His reconciling work did not impute or count against us our sin. You see to not impute is to forgive read these references Ro. 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness; read also Col. 2:13; 2 Tim. 4:16. This work is a continuous action as stated in 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness

20 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.

Paul declares that every minister is given the highest of titles “ambassador.” To be an ambassador is to be an envoy sent by the President to represent him and the country on foreign soil.

We are Christ’s ambassadors and we are sent by him to proclaim His name and represent Him before all the lost in the world. Let me give you 4 things of an ambassador

1. They belong to the one who sent them
2. They exist and are commissioned only for the purpose for which they are sent
3. They possess the authority and power of the one who sent them
4. They are sent with a message from the sender. Our message is for the lost to be “reconciled” to God and we do it “for Christ’s sake.”

21 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.

This is the second great verse in this chapter. It is the message of all messages. The one who was sinless was sent to take the place of the sinful. Jesus was “made” sin for us who knew no sin. Here is the other side of the picture Christ

became sin so that we might be declared righteous before God  
in Him.

## Chapter Six

The first 10 verses cover Paul's method of ministry. His was a ministry of consistency and endurance

1. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Paul is working with Jesus in getting the message out and is pleading with the Corinthians to not have the grace of God uselessly this is a reference back to verse 21. He is pleading for a consistent Christian life.

2 (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.)

This is Isaiah 49:8 and Paul says the Lord hears and takes care of the one in the ministry. He then adds that God gives grace and salvation in a day and time that suits Him.

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

Paul is saying that he had a great concern to live consistently before everyone so as not to bring an offense or souring of someone towards the Lord Jesus.

Paul knowing that some people love to gossip and look for something in someone's life to do so with. He knew his call was from the Father and the Son and it is a high call and he like everyone struggled to keep from doing anything to bring offense Phil. 2: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 1 Thess. 2:12- 13 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

The “patience” Paul is talking about here is “steadfast endurance.” Now endurance here is to “stand fast, conquer, continue on” under trials, fatigue, temptation, or opposition. Now this is not about folding your hands and accepting whatever comes. It is the opposite it is confronting the obstacle and conquering it.

Paul adds the word “much” as sometimes this is what is necessary to overcome the problem. He lists some of what he has added the “much” to where his life and ministry are concerned.

“afflictions” pressure from within and without  
“necessities” hardship, difficulties of life. W. Barclay said this is “necessities of life.” A minister has to eat, drink, clothe, house, both himself and his family. He will also face the death of family and more also. The only thing that can carry him is “endurance.”

“distresses” calamities, tight spots, it is that idea of being cornered unable to escape whether by temptation or trial, the only recourse is endurance.

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

“stripes” scourging, beatings lashings, etc. this is savage punishment. Paul faced this 8 times 5 by his fellow Jews and 3 times by Gentiles.

“imprisonments” Paul was done this way on a number of occasions such as Philippi, Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome. Clement of Rome said Paul was put in prison 7 times.

“tumults” mob uprising such as in Antioch, Lystra, Philippi, Ephesus, and Jerusalem Matt. 5:11, 10: 22,39, 19: 29; James 5:10

“labors” working to the point of exhaustion. Paul over his life never stopped preaching and teaching until he could not go further with out rest.

“watchings” this is sleepless nights Paul was up early and lay down late all for the concern of People.

“fastings” not just called fasts, but working so that you forget to eat.

6 -7 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

Paul gives here 9 areas of consistent, enduring spiritual growth.

1. “purity” this is free from the pollution of the world, immorality and unjust behavior. It involves heart action Matt.

5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God

2. “knowledge” induring in the study and the understanding of the whole counsel of God’s word. Paul learned all he could about how God wanted men to live, and applied it to living and teaching it

3. “longsuffering” this is patience, bearing and with people, especially when they were wrong, abusive unjust. A minister of the gospel and all Christians must do this.

4. “kindness” benevolence of the heart, being kind sweet even when others are unthankful and unappreciative Col. 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Eph. 4: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

5. “Holy Spirit” that is in the presence, power and gifts the proof of Paul’s ministry was the Spirit working through him. He could live for Christ because he walked in the presence and power of the Spirit.

6. “unfeigned love” not counterfeit or faked, love that is real, sincere, genuine, unlimited, selfless, and sacrificial. No matter what a person does, real love forgets self and sacrifices ones own desires. Matt. 22: 39; Romans 12:9; 1 Thess 3:12

7. “word of truth” this is preaching and teaching the truth of God’s word. The minister must always preach the truth not

the thinking, philosophies, and ideas of men. He is to do it line upon line precept upon precept.

8. “power of God” only God has the power to deliver men from sin, death and judgment Acts 1:8,4:33

9. “the armor of righteousness” the righteousness of Christ, the power to live life. No matter what the attacks Paul and all ministers endure in the armor of righteousness.

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

Paul consistently disregarded the world’s reaction, notice 3 sharp contrasts

1. Paul was honored by some and not by others; he endured the entire dishonor.

2. Paul was talked about, some spread evil reports about him while others spoke well about him. He was criticized, censored, and rumored about far and wide by those who opposed him. Whatever the situation he was in we find that Paul consistently endured in it and continued to minister.

3. Paul was treated as a deceiver, yet he was as true as anyone could be.

The word “deceiver” means an imposter, or a quack. Read Matt 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved and 1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you

9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

Paul was consistent even amid social abuse and persecution.

1. Some treated Paul as “unknown” this means to dismiss or to ignore. Some wanted nothing to do with him while others loved him. No matter Paul endured for the sake of the gospel.

2. Paul was treated as a dying man, yet he lived. Some saw him as a “fool” who was doomed. Yet others knew well that Paul died daily for Christ sake as we read in Romans 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter and Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me

3. Paul was chastened but not killed. He suffered but not to the point of dying 1Peter 1:6-7 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Paul endured in being content always.

1. Most looked at Paul in a sorrowing fashion whereas he rejoiced daily. The worldly thought he never had fun, but Paul knew what true joy and fun was.

2. Most thought Paul was a poor traveling evangelist and church planter who appeared to own nothing. However it was nothing that was judged by the world’s standard. Yet Paul knew what true wealth was that of God’s presence, love, and care in his life Matt. 6:20 and Phil. 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ

3. Paul was looked upon as owning nothing, having no worldly goods. Yet he possessed all things as an heir of God Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified

together and 1 Peter 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

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

From here through chapter 7 verse 1 Paul will deal with ministry and its call to separation and consecration. Most people when they hear the word separation their minds race to the thoughts of giving up all things fun and living a sad hermit life this is not true. The greatest call for a believer is that of separation and consecration.

The first call Paul gives here is for an open heart Paul's heart was open and full toward the Corinthian church as he speaks to them here as face to face. He spoke open and honest of how his affection has grown toward them as he has shared the truth with them.

He tells them that his heart has been open where theirs has been restricted with little room for Paul. Paul requests of them that they return to him the same heart he has shown them

Paul has revealed two things a church needs to hear from God.

1. A minister with an open loving heart for god and people.
2. A congregation with an open loving heart toward god and His chosen minister. Lets read here Jesus words in John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another, Romans 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good

14-16: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what



communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 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.

These verses represent the second call for Christians. This one is for a separation from unbelievers. We are very different from them, how different well “unequally yoked” goes back to the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy 22: 10 Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Also Leviticus 19:19 Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee The Lord forbids the union of two different kinds of animals.

Here is the point an unbeliever and believer together is as difficult as two different animals. Also trying to plow through life connected like this would be like the aforementioned ox and ass.

Paul lists here 5 definite areas that clearly prove this point each is introduced with a question just as valid today.

1. There is a difference in fellowship or righteous living as opposed to unrighteous (lawless) living. Unbelievers live for self, they reject God, and they rebel against His commands.
  - a. they have not accepted Christ as Saviour 1 John 3:23 That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ
  - b. they do not seek the kingdom of God- Matt. 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;
  - c. they do not hunger after righteousness Matt. 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness

The key to the first question is “fellowship” here it is sharing and participating.

2. The second question is about communion here it is to be bound closely together. There is no way that light can commune with the darkness. Light is a symbol of believers whereas darkness is always of unbelievers. Believers live, and

are blessed in the light of god. Unbelievers live and are blessed with this world's darkness which is temporary.

3. The third question is about covenant. Belial is one of the names of Satan. Belial means wicked, worthless, or impure. Satan is the head of all unbelievers and Christ is the head of all believers. Every person on earth is following one of these two and there cannot be any real harmony or attachment to those who follow Belial 1 Cor. 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

4. This fourth question is about faith. The word "infidel" means one who chooses to disbelieve in Christ and "part" is a portion or lot in life. A believer's whole life changes their sphere of life changes. A believer lives and works among unbelievers but they are in a different realm. The purpose of life changes from self to Christ.

5. The fifth question is about worship. The word "agreement" means a union of mind and spirit. There can be no agreement between the temple of God (believers) and that of idols. An idol is anything set before God where a person invests time, energy, money as this is where his or her heart is.

This is a significant difference between the believers who is the temple of God. Paul quotes Lev. 26: 11-12 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you; Ez. 37:27 My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The believer worships God the unbeliever worships everything else! Here are some of Paul's warnings about this we start in Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, also 1 Cor. 3:16, and 1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ

17-18 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Here is the third call on believers that is to come out from unbelievers this is from Is. 52:11-12 Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your reward. Here are several things to note

1. We are to come out from unbelievers; this is not about becoming monks or hermits or living in compounds. No we just saw one way in 14-16. A second is we are not live as sinners as described here in Ro. 1:29-32 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them, 1 Cor. 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God

We are in this world but we are not of this world.

2. We need to note that this is not a request to do if we feel like it; no it is a command. This is not to be debated, twisted, rationalized, or ignored.
3. If we obey in separating our lives to God He “receives” that is He “approves and accepts” as opposed to the unbeliever who is not accepted 1 John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of

the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. As a Father He will love, protect, reward, instruct Romans 8:15-17 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father .

## Chapter Seven

The thrust of this chapter is Paul's response to them upon hearing of the revival that had happened in the Corinthian Church.

1. 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.

This is the fourth call to believers and it is to be cleansed and to become mature in Holiness as we become more separated to Him and He approves. We are expected to do two things. First we are to rid ourselves of sin and some pollution more as seen above in Romans 1: 29-32. Second He expects us to practice (perfect) being Holy. Our motive for doing this becoming Holy that is, is our fear of God.

2-6. Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you. 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. 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. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

Now Paul takes up the revival at Corinth it had a solid foundation a faithful minister. Faithfulness is an essential for real revival in a church. Corinth had the most problems and the most sins of all the churches Paul started. Sins such as being filled with divisions in 1 Cor. 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men; pride in 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, Immorality in 5:1 It is

reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife, fraud in 6:8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren, abuse of the Lord's supper in 11:17, abuse of the spiritual gifts in chapters 12-14 and denying the resurrection in 15:12.

Revival came by the Holy Spirit thru the faithfulness of Paul. Here are 6 reasons in these 4 verses.

1. There was Paul's great desire to be received and reconciled with those who opposed him. He appealed to them and declared his innocence.
2. There was his great love for the church "I do not speak to condemn, you are in our hearts" the point is Paul had a great love for the people as Jesus did in John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends
3. There was his boldness in proclaiming the truth. The faithful minister must always confront error and corruption with the Word of God. This is vital to repentance as seen in 2 Tim. 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth and 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
4. There was Paul's confidence that the Corinthians would respond "glorying" is a term for boasting. Paul was joying and rejoicing in their repentance. Paul always had hope and this hope kept Paul going after them to repent. No one is hopeless until God determines they are and removes them from life.
5. There was Paul's faithfulness despite his trouble from within and without please read 1 Tim. 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry and 2 Tim. 3: 10-12 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea,

and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

6. There was Paul's sufficiency in God who was also his comfort.

7 -12. 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. 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, though it were but for a season. 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. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 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. 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.

This revival came about by Godly sorrow and true repentance. The church had a desire to correct its evil they mourned over their sins. Paul had told them to forsake sin and remove the false teachers and return to serving Christ. Paul did not relish having to use such stern language but he rejoiced in the result of conviction and sin.

Paul's rejoicing was not over the Church feeling guilty but over their repentance. This church was experiencing true Godly sorrow as opposed to worldly sorrow.'

Verse eleven has 8 results of this type sorrow

1. Carefulness to correct sin
2. Cleansing self-church repented
3. Developed indignities with sin
4. Fear of the wrath of God
5. Vehement desire to correct all wrong
6. Zeal to lead all sinners to repentance
7. Revenge, avenging of wrongs, punishing wrong doers
8. Innocence the church by repentance had cleared itself.

The minister's purpose was not for the wrong doer but for the church as a whole.

13-15. 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. 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. 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.

This church's revival also stirred the spirit of young Titus. It is proven that when real revival happens young believers are stirred also.

16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

The church had seen the entire problem they had in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians resolved in this chapter. They had a revival of unity, humility, morality, honesty, love, exercise of the gifts and a revival of doctrinal truth.



## Chapter Eight

This chapter and chapter nine will deal with ministry and its finances. The Judean churches were poverty stricken and were in desperate need of help. The first half of this chapter is on the challenge to give the second on those who collect the offering.

1-5. Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 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.

The first challenge was to know the Macedoneans this area took in all of what we know now as Northern Greece and was a Roman province. The 3 most well known churches were those at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Once wealthy and rich in natural resources they were at the time of this writing rather less as Rome had stripped them of all natural wealth. Yet they had a wealth of the grace of God that could not be taken from them. There are four important facts in these verses.

First they were willing to give to help others and very liberally at that considering their own seeming poverty. 1Thess. 1:7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, 2:14 for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews; 2Thess. 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure. They also gave with joy not grudgingly.

Second they needed no special appeal to give no pressure. They gave above measure from the heart.

Third they begged for the opportunity to share. They knew of a need and wanted to help.

Fourth they gave themselves to the Lord first in dedication as in all of their lives, then all of their possessions and then to Paul the minister.

6-7. Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. 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.

These two verses present the second challenge. This is to excel in the spirit of giving like the Macedonians. The Corinthians had started to take a collection at some point and then stopped. Here Paul gives out two things every church even today should know.

First the grace of giving is to be completed in each person and church. Paul wanted the Corinthians to financially support the Lord's work and the ministry of meeting people's needs as well. Giving is a privilege not given to angels only to the church.

Secondly since the Corinthians were exercising the other gifts they needed to exercise the gift of giving as well compare Romans 12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality ; Gal. 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith; 1 Tim. 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Heb. 13:16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased

8. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

The third challenge is here in this verse and it is to be sincere in one's love. There is a very important note here to see Paul is not forcing the Corinthians to give to do so does not please

God. Our Father is pleased when we give liberally and cheerfully for His work.

9. 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.

Here is the fourth challenge to know the example set by the Lord. He was rich and become poor that is He left His place in Heaven and took on humanity. Since He was willing to do so much for us we ought to be willing to help others also (Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 2:14-15; and Acts 20:35 I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

10. 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.

The fifth challenge is to remember your past. The Corinthians had started out with a mission project for the Judean churches and then stopped. Now this church had experienced revival and Paul encourages them to pick back up their missions. Recommitting to missions will stir God to bless any church.

11-12. 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. 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.

Sixth challenge is to give readily and willingly. Paul gives four things here that are not advice but charges to a church.

1. Give yourselves to missions- a permanent ministry
2. Finish the mission- the church is to reach out as Jesus commanded in Acts 1:8
3. Lay hold of a willing mind this is a Christian's first requirement that is give willingly

4. God is going to judge us for what we give and how we give it. The Father is going to examine what we gave and what we held back. Read Luke 12:33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth; Acts 11:29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: ; 1 Cor. 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

13-15. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 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: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

The seventh and last challenge is to meet people's needs equally. These verses are about needs and there are three things to point out.'

1. One person's needs are not to be met and another's let go.
2. Each is to be met equally this runs against society's idea but the Bible generally does that.
3. Every believer is to give what he needs to the Lord and then give to meet the needs of others read Acts 20:35 and 1 Tim. 6:17-19

16-17. But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

Paul was giving thanks that Titus had the same love for the poor at the Jerusalem church and the Corinthians to come to them for an offering. Men who take up offerings are to have a great heart for the Lord and His church.

18 And we have sent with him the brother,  
whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the  
churches;

This man who had no name had something better that is he had a great testimony among the churches and was well known to live in the gospel Heb. 11:2 For by it the elders obtained a good report and Pro. 22:1 A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

19-21. 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: Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

The churches Paul had established as a group chose this man to serve with Paul in this mission project. This is the very first mission board. Notice also Paul calls this offering “this grace.” Charles Hodge said “any free gift is a grace.” Therefore the offering of a church is a grace, it is the heart of the church being poured out in a free gift to reach and help a desperate world.

Notice also that Paul says giving like this is for the glory of the 1 Cor. 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful and Phil. 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

One last thing to pay attention to and that is Paul sent 2 men so that there would be an honest report as Jesus said in the mouth of 2 witnesses.

22 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.

Paul is going to go so far as to add another brother who also was strong in mission work, diligent (earnest, zealous) in ministry and was alert to the testimony of the churches upon hearing of the Corinthian revival he desired to go also 2 Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall and 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless

23-24. 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.

Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

Paul made sure these men were well credentialed in case they were asked of who they were. They were to be shown the proper love and care as they were sent by the rest of the churches.

## Chapter Nine

This continues the thought of chapter 8 where it was the grace of giving. Here in chapter nine it is Christian giving. Giving pleases God as it is part of the nature of God. He gave the supreme offering that of His son Jesus. Giving is pleasing to God but not every giver pleases God.

1-2. For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: 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.

Paul tells them he believes it unnecessary to write as he knows their mind to give and that the Achaia offering was ready to be picked up. The Corinthians now had a great zeal and Paul knew of it and told everyone of their generosity.

3-4. 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: 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.

Paul says he is sending the trio ahead to make sure all is ready so that when he and the members from Macedonia come to them neither Corinth nor Paul would be ashamed.

5. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up before hand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

Paul writes here to reassure them that Titus and his two companions are only going to make sure everything stays on schedule for the pick up on the way to Jerusalem.

6. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Now Paul turns to positive instruction regarding giving. This is the clearest teaching on the subject of giving for the church Pro. 11: 24-25 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself; Luke 6:38 and Gal. 6:7 God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap

If you give little you can expect little compare Pro. 3:9-10 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine and Mal. 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. These are Old Testament principles that still work today. Jesus spoke on this in Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

7 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 believer who wants to please the Lord gives deliberately and joyfully. God expects a person to have purposed to give. That is they need to consider the need, what to give sacrificially, it is a deliberate decision.

The giver must not give grudgingly or sorrowfully or reluctantly or out of regret. If one is regretful then God will not accept the offering. The giver is not to be forced or out of fear or to please others or for personal recognition. The one who



gives cheerfully, happily unto the Lord this is the type of hilarious giver God loves.

8 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:

Paul uses the logic of the Lord here in Matt. 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. When we put the earthly things first God is often left out. When God is placed first he then makes sure all of our earthly needs are met. You see giving is a grace with reciprocal benefits.

9. (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

Paul now quotes from Ps. 112:9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, he nor the Psalmist never intended this verse to be used to make people believe that everyone is to wealthy. What he is saying is that the Lord's abundance is available to those who are rightly related to Him. The righteous person who gives finds that giving has eternal value as well.

10. 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;)

This is both a prayer and an affirmation of the surety of God and His supply.

11. Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

God will enrich those who give to Him so that they may continue to give liberally and bountifully.

12-13. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is

abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;  
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;

Giving has a two fold purpose it supplies needs and is abundant because of the prayers of thanksgiving. The act of giving is evidence of obedience.

14. And by their prayer for you, which long after  
you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

This goes with the phrase “abundant” in verse 12 this is another positive result of faithful giving. This is how the receiver compensates the giver.

15. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

This is a reference to the Lord Jesus God’s indescribable gift to man. This is Paul’s extreme and super example of the grace of giving.

## Chapter Ten

This chapter marks an abrupt change and the last division in this letter. Paul changes from the use of “we” which included Timothy to “I” as he now takes up his critics in a bold powerful way. Paul is neither rude nor hateful but he writes out of love and defense of his apostleship.

1-2. 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: 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.

There were some who thought him a coward speaking boldly from a distance and then being quite when present. Paul let's them know he speaks by the gentleness and humility of Christ. This was the reason he was humble in their presence.

Jesus was not striking in appearance nor did he have a halo he was meek and lowly and that is the badge of his followers. Ministers should not need black suits, white collars or robes to show that they are ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today is no different there are still “some” who want to degrade the man of God who teaches the Word of God by attacking the reputation of the man of God.

There were some who thought Paul lived a carnal life because he made tents (Telits) or prayer shawls and sweated and got dirty like regular workers. Paul begged them not to think such thoughts as he simply did not want to be “charged” (responsible) to them for his support.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

Paul says here that in the “flesh” he is at war with no one it is in his spirit that he is at war (Eph. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places). For the

believer our war is not fought with the physical. It is the evil spiritual forces that are behind men's behavior as they inject selfish devilish ideas against God into the minds of mankind.

Paul says I walk in a body but I battle in the spiritual Paul did not come on a Madison Ave. campaign or a personality trip he came to fight a battle for the souls of men.

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

This verse is a parenthesis and Paul does not list his weapons except to say they are mighty. Let me give you the three most powerful weapons of spiritual war. First is the Word of God as seen in Eph. 6:17 and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; Ro.1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Second is the Holy Spirit, Paul knew that in himself he was weak but in the Holy Spirit he was strong. Third is prayer this is a word that is scarce in both of the Corinthian letters but Paul believed it and used it Eph. 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

5 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;

Here is what Paul says we are fighting with our weapons. Imaginations- wild, uncontrolled immoral, evil, unjust thoughts Ro. 1:20-21, 28-32. We fight to bring these under the control of the Spirit.

Every high thing- this includes false ideas of God, false doctrine, reasoning's, human pride, and arrogance, self righteous, sufficiency against God.

Captivate every thought- and bring it into obedience to Christ. This is the objective of the true Christian Ro. 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but

they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit, 12:2  
And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed  
by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is  
that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God; 1 Cor.  
2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he  
may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

6-7. And having in a readiness to revenge all  
disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.  
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.

Paul speaking to his critics tells them that he belongs to  
Christ as much as anyone 1 Cor. 1:11-13 For it hath been  
declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are  
of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among  
you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of  
Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is  
Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye  
baptized in the name of Paul; Jh. 7:24 Judge not according  
to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Paul was  
ready to deal with the critics when the true believers at  
Corinth stepped up and fulfilled their duties toward the critics.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of  
our authority, which the Lord hath given us for  
edification, and not for your destruction, I  
should not be ashamed:

Paul reassures them that his authority is from Christ and he  
has the right to edify and is trying to do so and not to destroy  
them. He could boast in his rights and ability and it would not  
be shameful but he is not doing that he is trying to help them.  
Just like a surgeon when they operate they at times must  
destroy to build up that is all Paul is doing.

9-10. That I may not seem as if I would terrify  
you by letters. For his letters, say they, are

weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

Paul makes a description statement here of himself first he says that some say his letters are weighty or heavy with hard sayings. This was true and should be as he wrote for the whole church to know the mind of Christ for the church the church as a whole.

The second thing is he says his bodily appearance was one of weakness (frailty) and he did not speak with eloquence but with a common ordinary language that many would find unacceptable. There are those today that want to hear speakers with eloquence and perfect diction.

The good thing is this is further proof that God takes the weaker beggarly things and uses them for his glory to display His strength and power.

11-12. 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. 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 throws a note of humor in here with a razors edge for all time. First what he has written in boldness he will say it the same way in their presence. Second his critics were comparing themselves and agreed they were all superior to other in their spiritual walk. This attitude still infests churches today you see one can sit in a cold dead church and not even notice when they just compare themselves to the other cold Christians sitting around them.

Today there are two many who are part of a group or clique or church that are satisfied with themselves when they need to be putting themselves against Christ

13 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.

The Corinthian's were complaining that Paul spent more time with other churches and Christians and not with them.

Today it is no different many is the person who wants more and more of the pastor's time. The problem is this, the more a pastor pampers and pets a person the less time he has for those in real need such as the lost and necessary time in the word (Acts 6) and prayer. The sad truth is people will not accept this as they like what they want and believe to be their right (Rev. 3 Laodiceans). Peter told the Hellenist Jews who were complaining of the same thing to seek out 7 men to serve as deacons (ministers) to serve the needs of the people of the church.

14-16 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: 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, 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.

Paul reminds them that he brought the gospel to them and traveled far to do it. He also wants them to recall that he was a church planting missionary and not a pastor. He did not care to stay but only to start a church train a pastor and then move to a new frontier.

This is another reason for no division or competitiveness or tearing down of the minister as he has his concern such as—preaching the gospel—building the faith through teaching—leading people to send the gospel out to others 2 Cor. 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. .

No one should hamper or stop this work Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over

the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood; Heb. 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

17-18. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

The minister stands before the Lord. This is a warning to all that the minister belongs to the Lord not the people or a denomination. The true minister finds his glory in the Lord Jesus and should not be criticized for not meeting a person's standard. For example some ministers are great pulpiteers but not great in visiting do not criticize them for it but help them. Some are strong in visiting but not so strong at preaching help them. Some are strong organizers others not so strong help them do not criticize them. Take up the areas of weakness with the gifts and callings of the Lord for your lives.



## Chapter Eleven

This chapter is another personal chapter this one Paul writes to vindicate his Apostleship and authority. Paul is going to spend time warning them against false teaching and seduction, deception that will come creeping in if the church is not careful.

1-2. Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. 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.

Paul asks them to bear with what he has to say as it is not something he wants to say but must say for their benefit. Paul has a jealousy towards them born out of Christian love. Paul had founded this church and it was espoused or engaged to the Lord Jesus Christ and Paul was going to protect it from all sources of attack 1 Cor. 4:15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. When anyone leads another to Christ they become that person's spiritual father or mother and are somewhat obligated to see that the new believer gets a good solid foundation and start in their walk in the Christian life. I can personally attest to the benefit of having such a father as I had until his home going he was one of the best. He taught me the word and helped me learn how to know what to study and from whom to learn.

He wants to present them to Christ pure, holy and without error. In Paul's day the groom always had a friend who would look after the bride especially her chastity. So Paul is claiming the place of the friend of the groom Jesus Eph. 5: 25-27 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish also Romans 7:4

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

3 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.

Paul issues a warning here for them that he feared for them for their minds and spiritual conditions. They were not yet corrupt but the danger was there and must have been very close. He feared they would be entrapped just like Eve had been by the sly speaking of Satan through the serpent. First Eve was in a perfect relationship with God and had every blessing possible so she had nothing to gain from this conversation. Second Satan led her to disbelieve God by twisting God's words just enough to deceive and confuse her. By listening (her first mistake) she lost her devotion to God her Father (second mistake) and commitment (third mistake) to God this in turn cost her blessings (fourth mistake) and fellowship (fifth mistake) with and from God Matt. 22: 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. When false teachers are in the church they must be dealt with or some will be misled and corrupted.

4 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.

The church any church must fear the preaching of another Jesus. These Corinthians were mixed up about Jesus thee false teachers produced these ideas. First that he was only a good man who lived as a man should. Second He was a great teacher. Third that He was a wonderful martyr, these all stress the fact of Jesus being a human like us.

Likewise there are other “spirits” please notice the small “s” and other gospels and Christians need to be on guard to protect against being entrapped by them as they sound good and play on human emotions. However there is only one gospel, one spirit and one Jesus the Christ as the following verses will show Gal. 1:6-9 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Matt. 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men 2 Tim. 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables and lastly Titus 1:10-11 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

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

Churches should fear comparing ministers. The false ones at Corinth accused Paul of not being called of God because of looks or speech. For example Dr. Harry Ironside was brilliant but one who preached in simplicity, one of his favorite sayings was “put the cookies on the bottom shelf.” However the calling of God is not about the above but knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

This verse is a reference to 1 Cor. 9:1-18 and it is pure irony as Paul asks if their only real criticism of him was his self-effacing manner. He spent 18 months with them and asks nothing from them for support and received none either.

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

He received support from other churches that had little so he could stay and labor among the wealthy who gave nothing.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, 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.

He had not received anything from them up until now and was not going to start. This would keep him from being obligated to them in any fashion.

10-12 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. 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 boasts of aid from Macedonia but refuses it from Corinth. Why you ask? The answer is in verses 11-12 and it is because he loved them and was jealous over them and he would not give opportunity for his critics to have any thing to use against him. Paul adds at the end of 12 that if his critics are going to bring an accusation their lives had better equal his or better it and they would need to stop merchandising the gospel.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

Paul now takes off the gloves and bare knuckles his enemies just as Jesus did. They claimed to be apostles when they could not meet the requirements. They were deceitful workers, A. T. Robertson said “they pose as “gentlemen of the cloth,” but they are nothing but cloth.” They lead people into false beliefs; new ideas, ritual and ceremony, organizations and progress and focusing on a person instead of Christ.

14-15 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 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.

They are disguised like Satan. He hides like an angel of light; his position is one of truth, intelligence, and enlightenment. His way always looks- good, tastes and feels good, it satisfies the flesh, and he never presents sin as sin. False ministers do the same they appear to be righteous, and preach man is saved by righteousness but it is of morality, education, goodness, justice, giving and etc.

The strategy of Satan is to turn men from the truth away from Christ. He draws them away from the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, hell, the blood, sin, and etc. and replaces it with a new gospel of nothing. These false preachers are to be judged by their works Matt. 7: 22-23 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. This is Jesus words to all who make merchandise of the gospel also Gal. 1: 8-9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. and 2 Peter 2:1, 9 But there

were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

16-17 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. That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

Paul knows that it is only foolishness and he has resisted but for their sakes Paul is willing to do it that is be a fool.

Paul in verse 17 is not denying the inspiration of the scriptures but is telling them he is going to step out of his mission and character. The Lord never boasted at anytime and Paul is only going to too try and help and protect this congregation from its own downfall.

18-19 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

Paul draws a strong point of difference between his critics and himself. His critics spent their time talking about themselves and what they have done where Paul acknowledges that the church allowed them to be a part of them and so it ought to receive Paul also

20 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.

This church was accepting people who enslaved believers; devoured and took money from believers, preyed on them; exalted themselves over the other believers; even to the point of physical abuse and they accepted these men as from God yet they had problems with Paul who did none of this and only

sought to set them free from their sin. This verse describes some church leaders all too well today and that is sad to say.

21-22 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

Paul indicates that he regrets giving the appearance of being weak in the past. That was then and he will not be weak appearing to them now. First by making clear that his genealogy, and his nationality was 100% Jewish. This is a good indication his enemies were also Jews who made much of their Jewish heritage. They kept up the Hebrew language so they could read the scrolls Paul could also. They were citizens of Israel (Jacob) so was Paul. They claimed all the promises of Abraham and Paul could also.

23 -24 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. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

Paul says that if they claim to be workers for the Lord then as a fool he is more of one. Even having been beaten by the Jews 5 times with 39 lashes, seeing as the law in Deut. 25:3 Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee as we see this verse only allowed for 40 stripes so they held back so as not to break the law. The used a cat of nine tails giving 13 lashes on the left side, 13 on the right and then 13 on the back so as not to kill the one being whipped.

25-27 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; 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; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

As one read over these verses I wonder if many today could say that they have ever even faced the smallest fraction of anything like this for the Lord.

3 times Paul was beaten with rods –Acts 16:22

Stoned outside the gates of Lystra in Acts 16:19

He was shipwrecked these 3 times which are not recorded plus the one in Acts chapter 27 which occurred after this for a total of four times.

Journeying's- this is fatiguing, dangerous, uncomfortable travel

Perils of water- this is rivers, streams, flash floods as there were few bridges in that day so one had to wade the streams.

Perils of robbers- these were everywhere just as they are today

Perils of countrymen Paul's own countrymen tried on 7 occasions to kill him as follows Acts 9: 23, 29; 13:50; 14:5; 17:5, 13; 18:12; 23:12; 24:27. This because he preached Jesus as Messiah; crucified and risen for the forgiveness of their sins.

Perils of heathens Paul faced this in Philippi in Acts 16: 20 and in Ephesians in Acts 19:23.

Perils in Cities such as Damascus in Acts 9:23

Perils in the Wilderness such as exposure to heat and cold

Perils in the sea such as pirates and storms

Perils of false brethren they were the professors of Christ and not true possessors

Weariness and painfulness such as in labor and fatigue

Watching's that is going without sleep for others sake

Hunger and thirst doing without for others sake

Fasting to seek God

Cold and nakedness this is exposure to the elements, or maybe the giving away of his clothes to help others.



28-30 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

Which comes upon me daily- this is to press on with a heavy load. Paul held an anxiety for the churches a burden for their moral and doctrinal purity. When others suffered Paul also suffered, when they were weak he counted himself the same so as to drive himself to teach them more on how to be strong. When others faced offense that is they were caused to stumble into sin Paul became indignant, or mad against those who would do such a thing to his children.

31-33 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

Paul begins but does not finish this discussion of the events of Acts 9: 24-25. it is well to suppose he inserted it as a proof of his previous declarations. First as there were either people in the Corinth church who had been in Damascus or second some who traded with people in Damascus were in the church. Either way Paul is bold in declaring he lies not about his experiences.

## Chapter Twelve

Paul continues his defense against his critics. This chapter starts with a defense of their question of his spiritual experiences. Paul had rarely said anything about those things before or felt a need to but now he will prove he has been through plenty enough to quiet their questions. They assumed his silence was proof he really had no experience to work from.

1. It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

Paul starts by letting them know that what he is going to say will not benefit him. For their sakes he will glory in the Lord and His works that have been done through Paul.

2-3 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. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

Paul gives one of the greatest experiences recorded in the Bible. This is a trip to the 3rd heaven and back to Earth again. Paul says “I Knew” this passage uses pronouns and is set in the context that precludes any other person besides Paul being the one spoken about.

Now notice he even dates it as 14 years prior to this writing. This would be during his 1<sup>st</sup> mission trip. It was on this trip at a city named Lystra (Acts 14:19-20 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city) where Paul was dragged out of the city and stoned to death.

Notice also that Paul adds that he could not tell his exact condition only God knew for sure how Paul got from Earth to heaven and back. He would give God the glory. Paul knew he was at this point in the third heaven or God’s throne room.

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Paul does the opposite of what those who glory in the flesh do. Others would have written volumes on this one small experience and traveled the country giving speeches and receiving great accolades for it. However we are not dealing with the everyday person we are talking about Paul and he will give glory only to and for God. Now what Paul heard and saw he was not allowed to say anything about and he would not do it do it.

5-6 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. 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.

Paul now shifts the focus from himself to the Lord and to the infirmities listed in chapter 11. These are what Paul would rather boast in. Paul's words were not empty words but the truth however Paul desires to refrain from his experience and glory in the Lord.

Paul does not nor should we want our lives judged on spiritual experiences but rather what our lives show now each day!

7 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.

Paul keeps the thought of not glorying except in His infirmities adds this bit of personnel revelation. He had some aggravating situation in his life exercised against him by Satan. There has been a great deal of speculation and conjecture as to what this was enough to fill a multitude of books. Paul however says little about what it was exactly at

least here so let me give you the top 4 ideas as to what this was.

1<sup>st</sup> Temptation from the Devil

2<sup>nd</sup> opposition from his adversaries

3<sup>rd</sup> some intense bodily pain

4<sup>th</sup> a recurring medical problem such as Glaucoma.

We do know this it was of a surety painful as he describes it as a thorn and those hurt. We also see that it was humiliating. There is support in the Bible for the 4<sup>th</sup> and possibly it was Opthamalia. We can see this from the following verses Acts 23:5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. Notice here that Paul could not tell that the one in front of him was the high priest even in his priestly robes. Also here in Gal. 4:15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? 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. Here Paul indicates that the Christians were willing to give him their own eyes if that would have been possible. One more verse in chapter 6:11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand we see from this verse that Paul actually wrote this letter and that he wrote it in large letters so that he could see what he was writing. These verses give good evidence that Paul suffered some type of eye problem. We also know that Paul traveled with a personal physician none other than Luke who faithfully looked after him.

Whatever this condition was exactly Paul does not say but that it was given to him and he would glory in it.

8-9 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice,  
that it might depart from me. 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.

This problem so bothered Paul that on 3 occasions he prayed for relief. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> time God gives Paul an answer that some

would reject or deny as an answer. Paul is told that the thorn will not be removed but enough grace would be given for Paul to live with it and accomplish God's mission for Paul's life.

Paul's very weakness would allow God's strength to be shown in its power. So Paul chose to glory or brag on the Lord in this infirmity as it kept his focus on the Lord!

10 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.

Paul says he is not swayed by these things but he goes through them for Christ sake. Paul admits that when he is physically weak that's when he is at his strongest because of the Lord working through him.

11-12 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. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Paul in his own eyes saw himself as least of the Apostles and chief of sinners. Yet here in his defense against false teachers and critics he makes it clear he was equal to all the Apostles even the inner three. Notice also that Paul was crushed that these people that he loved and had cared for so much had not even tried to rise to his defense. Look at these verses Eph. 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Also 1 Tim. 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry and 2 Tim. 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Signs- are miracles; wonders- are the effect of miracles upon the observers of such things; mighty deeds- great works, powerful deeds.

13-14 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. 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.

There is in these 2 verses a charge against Paul by his critics that he had damaged the church by not accepting support. This they inferred made the church appear inferior to the churches that did. So Paul asks them to forgive him if this was the problem; he had not intended it to be so.

Paul is preparing a third trip and he does not plan on being a financial burden to them this time either. Paul is coming to them not for money but for Christ. He wants them to grow in Christ not their possessions if he did receive anything from them his critics would say he was just in it for the money.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

Paul was willing to spend all and be spent for them and yet the more he loved them the less it seemed they loved him.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

But be that as it may be (their lack of love) he would not burden them. He had however caught his critics in their own accusations.

17-18 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? 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?

Here is a second charge that Paul had received money through someone else probably Titus. This charge shows the depth of meanness of Paul's critics and how low some will sink to destroy someone else's ministry. Paul however had taken the right precautions of sending more than one person to receive the collections. The following are some related verses Matt. 10: 9-10 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat; 1 Cor. 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel; Gal. 6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things; Phil. 4:14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction; 1 Tim. 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward these verses show a minister is to be taken care of by the congregation.

19 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.

Paul is saying to them that is they think that he has said all of this just for them then they are wrong he speaks before God who alone he was accountable to! It was necessary that this congregation submit to his Apostolic authority and spiritual fatherhood.

20 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:

Paul had serious concerns that from what he has been saying that when he arrives in Corinth he will find the same problems from his first letter

21 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 would be humbled and humiliated if he arrived and found the same sins still persisting after all his efforts.

Some had repented and some obviously had only put on a false front before Paul in his previous visits but their lives had not changed evidence of no true repentance.

The same goes on today people cry and carry on at the altar but there is no change in their lives proof of no true repentance.



## Chapter Thirteen

In this last chapter Paul after doing all he can to bring the false teachers, critics, and sinners to repent and return to the Lord. His final words contain a warning a prayer a challenge and a blessing.

1. This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

Paul says again he is coming for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time and his critic's had best be prepared. He goes back to the Old Testament for the second part this is from Num. 35:30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die. Deut. 17:6 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. 19:15 at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established

2-3 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: Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

When Paul was there the second time he warned them and here is a fore warning in this letter that there should be some true repentance or he would not hold back his disciplinary authority on the 3 categories he lists in these verses.

1. Those who had already fallen into sinful practices such as contention, envy, jealousy, pride, indulgent living, lust, backbiting, slander, gossip, confusion, fornication.

2. The false teachers would also not be spared. They demanded proof of his apostleship and they would get it.

3. The believers needed to examine themselves to make sure they were in the faith. this does not necessarily have to do

with salvation especially today as one listens and reads of people they say of this faith or that faith friend there is only one faith and that is the faith in Jesus Christ. We all would do well to check occasionally to make sure we are in His faith and not some other faith.

He concludes that he might seem weak but the word of God is mighty in power.

4 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 says that the weakness of God was the cross but the power is the resurrection. Paul says he is weak in this flesh but he lives in the power of God or one might say Paul lived in the power of the resurrection.

5-6 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? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

So Paul tells the Corinthian church to take serious examination of each of their lives. Only the individual knows where their heart is in relationship to Jesus Christ Matt. 7:5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; Lam. 3:40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. Paul asks them if they did not know he was not a reprobate then he would make sure they knew when he came.

7-10 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. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong; and this also we wish, even your perfection. 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.

This is the start of the prayer of Paul for these saints. He starts by praying that they stop sinning and do what was right or noble (honest) not for his sake but for Christ sake and their own testimony. He prayed this even though they treated him like a reprobate Romans 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good 1 Thess. 5: 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil

His next request is that they stand for the truth. Paul was going to and he is encouraging them and each of us as well to stand for the truth. You need to stand for the truth because one cannot stand against it Eph. 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and Zech 8: 16 Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates Mal. 2:6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips

His next request is that they grow into spiritually mature believers (perfected).

Lastly Paul writes that all of this was so that he would not have to be confrontational towards those who had been sinning. He would much rather spend his time edifying or building them up Romans 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 1 Cor. 14:26 Let all things be done unto edifying;

Eph. 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearer.

11 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.

Here is the start of Paul's challenge to them. In his benediction he again encourages them to grow up to stop

being a bunch of babies and turn the church at Corinth from a nursery into a military out post for the gospel.

Let God be your help and comfort then and make them of one mind that mind of Christ. They should live in Christian peace one with another. This is all to be motivated and powered by God the Father.

12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

This was a common practice in the west until the 1200's and still is in the east even today. It was a sign of great affection and kinship either by blood or spiritually.

13 All the saints salute you.

Paul tries to encourage them by letting them know that all the rest of the saints sent their greetings and love to them.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen

Last is Paul's blessing this has three parts to it.

1<sup>st</sup> Paul wanted them to know all the blessings of being in Christ.

2<sup>nd</sup> To experience the riches and depths of the love of God

3<sup>rd</sup> To have Communion with the Holy Spirit the very presence and power of God the Father 1 Cor. 6: 19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. and

Romans 8: 15-16 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: