

2 Corinthians 13.1-14

He is Coming! Are you Ready?

DEADLINES – Projects, Exams, Taxes, for Preachers Sunday comes Weekly
SOBERING Deadlines – TAXES, Surgeries, Event on ALL our Calendars Death
Haunting Question in our Minds: Are you Ready?

Today we CONCLUDE our Study of 2 Corinthians > Heart of a Leader
Paul writing to DIVIDED church, Many HOSTILE to him as Apostle / Authority
THEME of Letter is SOBERING Deadline - He is Coming! Are you Ready?
Paul – Authorized Representative of Soon Coming Jesus is Coming in His Name

| 2 Corinthians | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Paul's Plan for 3 rd Visit to a Troubled Church | | |
| Confirm the Friendly – Convince the Foes | | |
| Chs 1-7 | Chs 8-9 | Chs 10-13 |
| Change of Plans Defended | Collection for the Poor Detailed | Coming of Paul Determined |
| Past History | Present Responsibility | Future Opportunity |
| Christ's Presence | Christ's Poverty | Christ's Power |

Since MARCH the LEADERS of this church been Preaching thru 13 Chapters
We CONCLUDE our Study of 2 Corinthians TODAY > Sept: ECCLESIASTES
Like the 2nd Coming of our Master > Some look FORWARD others are FEAR
DIAGRAM > 3 Main Sections of Letter > Explain/Anticipate Paul's 3rd Visit

As STEP into FINAL Ch Paul's Last Letter have to Corinth – 10 yr Relationship
Paul's 1st Visit Corinth – at least 10 yrs before - Acts 18: at least Year and Half
By GOD'S Grace Christian Church PLANTED in SEX Capital of Ancient World

PREACHED Christ and Cross > POWERFUL Outpouring of HOLY SPIRIT
GIFTED & VIBRANT but also DIVIDED & PROUD church was BORN
40 yrs Working churches/World – Blend of PAIN/PRAISE in church NORMAL
– Any Church is WORK in Progress > Sinners growing into SAINTS

Paul WELL Aware of CHARGES Made Agnst him & Honest about Weakness
 3rd & Final Section of Letter: Chs 10-13 Confirm the Friendly – Convince the Foes
 WRITES with SARCASM and IRONY > CONFESSION & Confrontation

1. Coming for Reckoning

a. Fair

v. 1,2 This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

Paul a.k.a. SAUL was Born/Raised under Perfect Justice of Hebrew Law
 Apostle of Jesus ECHOES Great Prophet of ISRAEL – Moses wrote...

“A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime...”
 Deuteronomy 19.15



After Corinth Paul Served 3 yrs EPHESUS – New Teachers came to Corinth
 CALLED themselves APOSTLES > OUTWARDLY Very IMPRESSIVE
 Introduced by IMPRESSIVE Letters of RECOMMENDATION

BOASTED of Far DISTANCE & Great DIFFICULTY of TRAVEL to Corinth
 ORATORY was ARTICULATE and IMPRESSIVE – Wide POPULAR Appeal
 Boasted of Dynamic, ECSTATIC VISIONS, and SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

If BLESSING of God was ON Paul – WHY was he POOR Tent-Maker?

WHY was SUFFERING with THORN in FLESH & Anxieties of ALL Churches

Now Paul sending what might be 4th Letter to Make PEACE in Corinth...

b. Firm

v. 2 I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them

BEFORE his 2nd Visit Paul asked Corinthians 2 Challenging Questions...

What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?
1 Corinthians 4.21

Don't know MANY DETAILS > Paul made 2nd Visit TINKER w TROUBLES

Apparently Paul's SECOND VISIT did NOT END WELL...

For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you. 2 Corinthians 2.1

Then PERHAPS sent Follow-Up Letter - ALSO was MISUNDERSTOOD...

For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.
2 Corinthians 2.4

“The pastor ought to have two voices: one, for gathering the sheep; and another, for warding off and driving away wolves and thieves. The Scripture supplies him with the means of doing both.”
John Calvin

BOTH Ambassador of RECONCILIATION AND Warrior Agnst REBELLION

Paul thinks MOST Church Stands w/ HIM in Christ

Paul LOVING Spiritual Father / Faithful Apostle / Zealous for Corinthian church

1. Coming for Reckoning > it will be FAIR and FIRM

2. Calling them to Reason

a. Comparisons

Corinthian church CAPTIVATED by Work of SPIRIT of God

Sometimes Excess, Extremes > Paul taught Necessary BOUNDARIES

Want to be FILLED with Spirit > KNOW WORD of God

Want to KNOW the WORD of God > Need to be FILLED with Holy SPIRIT

CHRISTIAN Life NOT Just HAPPINESS also demands HOLINESS

SALVATION Not Just FORGIVNESS of Sin also FILLING of the SPIRIT

Paul NEVER Establishes his AUTHORITY without Engaging their MINDS

Answer MORE than “Because I said so!...or I am Apostle and you’re not!”

INSTEAD Paul REASONS, ARGUES, CHALLENGES them to THINK...

Call to Follow Jesus NOT to be OSTRICH who STICKS Head in the SAND...

Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 1 Corinthians 3.18

Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10.12

Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. 1 Corinthians 14.20

If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. 1 Corinthians 14.37

Ch 13 of 2 Corinthians > EXAMINE Themselves and CLAIMS of Paul / Apostle

vs. 3 since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

Seems ONE Way we as GOSPEL Messengers FAITHFULLY Communicate
Should be by COMPARISON – What are OPTIONS? Possibilities? Extremes?

v.3 Christ...not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

v. 4 crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God.

v. 4 For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him
by the power of God.

v. 10 authority the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down

v. 11 rejoice...restoration - comfort...agree - love and peace

v. 12,13 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

v. 14 Lord Jesus Christ...God... Holy Spirit - grace...love...fellowship

In Revelation Apostle John sees CREATURE Covered with EYES >

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full
of eyes in front and behind Revelation 4.6

Sees Every Direction All the Time

OMNISCIENT God – Never SLUMBERS – ALWAYS Sees All

FACIAL Recognition Cameras on STEROIDS

For with you is the fountain of life; *in your light do we see light.* Psalm 36.9

When JUDGE of All Earth COMES – He will have all DATA at his Disposal...

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the
eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4.13

b. Choice – after DELIBERATION we need to make a DECISION

CLAIMS of Christ demand a CHOICE – God/Sovereign – We/RESPONSIBLE

v. 5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or
do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless
indeed you fail to meet the test!

The accusations and innuendoes against Paul and his colleagues prompted them to examine themselves...genuineness of their spiritual experience. Derek Prime

As LIFE was coming to END – Paul saw GREAT Turning Away FROM Jesus

You are aware that *all who are in Asia turned away from me*, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 2 Timothy 1.15

Words especially SAD Compared w/LUKE'S Instragram Moment 20 yrs before

...all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. Acts 19.10

Not CERTAIN what is REST of Story – Response to 3rd Visit of Paul to Corinth

Just as the crucified weak Jesus gave way to the powerful, resurrected Christ who will come again in judgment, so also will Paul come in Christ's power to judge the Corinthians if they do not repent Warren Wiersbe

This Letter remains in God's Word for God's Church thru all Time in All Places

Beijing to Boston – China to Congo – 1st to FINAL Century

13 Chapters Seasoned WISDOM of Paul – Spirit's WITNESS in PRINT

Words for Every Language – Culture > Advance Church in Every LAND

3. Confident of Restoration

v. 11 Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

a. Calling

God did NOT call Paul to FAIL – He & Homies were FOUNDATION of Church

RISEN Jesus HIMSELF Recruited Paul to WINNING Side

For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works. 2 Corinthians 12.11,12

Paul ACCUSED that Could NOT be REAL Apostle > he was SUFFERING!

False Apostles in CORINTH bragged of SIGNS and WONDERS they Did!

Corinthians' understanding of Christ's power was outright wrong...they viewed Christ's power through their triumphalist lens as displayed in health and wealth and showy displays of power...Their views of power were Corinthian not Christian
Kent Hughes

GREATEST Sign and Wonder is DEATH and RESURRECTION of Jesus X!

Paul is CALLED to Walk in those POWERLESS and POWERFUL FootSTEPS!

Actually SUFFERING is the MARK of his APOSTLESHIP

While the source of Paul's authority was Christ, his authority was not attested by marvels or mysteries but in the pattern of death and resurrection stamped upon his own life and work...they remain for us, indispensable evidence of genuineness as Christian believers.
Paul Barnett

vs. 6-8 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

CLEVER Argument of Paul – “I am your FATHER” – We are TIED at the HIP!

BY the Will of God – to REJECT him is to Reject God's Messenger

If I am NOT an Apostle of Jesus, then you do NOT KNOW Jesus!

Paul REPRESENTS Christ because he is LIKE Christ – Meek, Gentle, Humble
Jesus TAKES the YOKE of the Burdened because HE is Gentle and HUMBLE
AUTHORITY Veiled in HUMILITY – He became POOR to make us RICH

POWER balanced with SELF-CONTROL / Gentleness FORBEARANCE

NOT Personality Contest btwn Paul & Newly Arrived Self-Proclaimed Apostles

They BOAST of Gifts and Strengths – Paul boasts GOD empowers Weakness

Paul did not pretend to be more than an ordinary man...his 'power' was to be experienced only in the gospel he spoke, not in himself. Paul Barnett

Paul was CONQUERED by Christ – Now GOES to WAR for/with HIM

STRONG Words NOT to DEFEAT Opponents but See them DELIVERED
NOT a PERSONAL Attack but a PROCLAMATION of the GOSPEL

b. Christ

It is impossible to understand Paul's argument at this point in this epistle (and elsewhere) without grasping its Christological foundation. C.K. Barrett

Paul's PRINCIPAL Identity is to KNOW Christ – ALL Else is mere DUNG!

Paul: to LIVE is CHRIST! DIED to OLD Self and LIVES in Resurrection Power

10 yrs Earlier Paul SHOWED Up in Corinth for 1st Visit Saying...

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.
1 Corinthians 2.2

PRIORITIZED 16 Chapters of Teaching in 1 Corinthians...

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15.3,4

JESUS CHRIST – DIED – BURIED – RISEN > Message of FIRST Importance

How EASY it is for US and for Church to FOCUS on Things of Less Importance

TOO Often MAJOR on MINORS – DISTORT the Gospel – Hide Simple Beauty

v. 4 For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God.

v. 11 the God of love and peace

v. 14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The power of Christ rested upon the weak, not the impressive, and that Christ spoke through his servants when they proclaimed the gospel, not because of their high-sounding words. Colin Kruse

Sobering DEADLINE for Whole WORLD – All Humanity – 2nd Coming Jesus X
 God will PROCTOR FINAL FINAL EXAMINATION --- already Set Question
 What have you DONE with my SON?

Question Paul asked at 3rd Visit to Corinth – 1st and 2nd Visit TOO

v. 5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?

Mercy and Grace has a NAME – JESUS – HE is Only way to FIND IT
 They CANNOT Believe in God, Find Mercy & Grace if Don't Believe in PAUL
 ONLY PAUL Represents JESUS to Them: Speaks for Jesus, Shows them Jesus

Is Jesus Christ in YOU? – Other places Paul demands Confession or Belief

Here asks SUBJECTIVE Experience – Head, Heart, Mind, Soul – X in You?

Question ONLY You and God can be Certain of the TRUE Answer

FOOL Others – even Pastor! – FOOL Self Awhile – One Day you WILL Know!

the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints... the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory*

Colossians 1.26,27

God can ONLY Pardon US because He has first PUNISHED Him
 Jesus DIED and ROSE to give us FORGIVENESS and FREEDOM
 GOD must WIN the Battle – it is NOT Intellectual BUT SPIRITUAL
 POWER of the Spirit can ALONE transform LIVES

Paul has POWER that leads to REPENTANCE > SAVED from WRATH of God

He is Coming - LAST Day will be GREAT DIVIDE – Are you Ready?
DIFFERENCE Not – Citizenship, Culture, Color of SKIN >> CHRIST Himself
DO YOU KNOW HIM? DO YOU LOVE HIM? DO YOU SERVE HIM?

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2 Corinthians 13¹This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them— ³since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. ⁴For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God. ⁵Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! ⁶I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.⁷ But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. ⁸For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for. ¹⁰For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down. ¹¹Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³All the saints greet you. ¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.