



# *Second Corinthians*

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## PREFACE

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After covering First Corinthians in recent years, this year seemed like the right time to cover Second Corinthians in our lectureship. Perhaps some do not study Second Corinthians quite as much as First Corinthians, but Second Corinthians is just as much a part of God's inspired Word, and there is much to be gleaned from this inspired epistle. We are thankful to God for this part of His Word, and there are actually many other worthy subjects which could have been selected from this epistle to address. We have tried to select topics that would be the most beneficial without overlapping any more than absolutely necessary. In past years, every book of the Bible has been introduced through this lectureship. Gary McDade introduced Second Corinthians in the second annual Standing in the Gap Lectureship (2001), and I would like to note what he wrote:

As in no other book of the New Testament, the apostle Paul opened his heart to his readers (II Cor. 6:11; 7:3). Perhaps partly resulting from this characteristic, within each chapter of the epistle Paul formed memorable phrases which could serve a studious teacher or preacher with outstanding titles that can introduce timely topics based on this book of the Bible.

We appreciate all those who have worked so diligently to prepare these outlines and present this material. We are thankful for brother Green and his work in recording these sermons for us and future generations. I would like to thank Trey Bledsoe for helping me brainstorm about different themes and topics for each lectureship. I thank sister Doris Dickenson and sister Allison Byrd for helping me format outlines this year. I am always thankful for the Nesbit congregation as a whole, and would be remiss not to mention all the hard work they put into this lectureship to make it a success.

**Jason Hilburn**

Editor and Lectureship Director

*This book is published in honor of  
Frank Chamberlain*



*August 26, 1930 - April 17, 2013*

The Apostle Paul wrote of James, Cephas, and John, “who seemed to be pillars” (Galatians 2:9). In calling these men pillars of the church, Paul was describing the profound influence wielded by these men. It is not an exaggeration to describe Frank Chamberlain as one who was a pillar of the Nesbit church of Christ. His passing left a hole in our hearts that every member of the church at Nesbit can still feel today. He had served as an elder of the congregation for years, and was appreciated for his wisdom, his diligent service, and his great example of Christian humility and faithfulness. We miss him greatly, but hope to see him again because of our hope in Christ. This book is published in honor of him, and may all we do ultimately glorify our loving Father in Heaven.

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# "THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT"

## 2 Corinthians 1:3

Robert D. Rawson

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Second Corinthians is the eighth book of the New Testament.
  - A. Revealed by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 2:4)
  - B. Recorded by Paul, an apostle of Christ (2 Cor. 1: 1-2 & 13:10)
  - C. Written to help Christians mature in Christ
2. God's expectation is noted and assurance is given (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT

- A. There is no one on earth who cannot be comforted by God.
  1. His Word brings us to be justified (John 17:17-20).
  2. His examples help us learn (Rom. 15:4).
- B. There is no theatre in which God can not bring comfort.
  1. Sin can be overcome by following God (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
  2. Situations can be changed by His presence (Phil. 4:8-9).

#### II. THE SINNER CAN BE COMFORTED (Mark 8:36-38 and Luke 19:10).

- A. Sin separates from God (Eph. 2:2-3).
- B. Christ's blood brings sinners back to God (Eph. 1:7).
  1. What brings better comfort?
  2. Did not Moses make the better choice? (Heb. 11:24-25)

#### III. HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE COMFORTED (Eph. 5:22-25).

- A. Growth in marriage is a part of God's plan (Prov. 31:10-31).
  1. The heart of her husband safely trusts in her (Prov. 31:11).
  2. Her husband is respected among the elders of the land (Prov. 31:23).
- B. Changes brought by love causes a bond stronger than death.
  1. Song of Solomon 8:6 salutes the strength of real love.
  2. Victory over challenges comfort relationships (Matthew 1:19-20).

#### IV. PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE COMFORTED (Eph. 6:1-4).

- A. Wonderful peace comes from discipline (Heb. 12:8-11).
  1. No punishment is joyous at the present.
  2. But punishment yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness.
- B. Children comfort the man facing troublemakers (Psa. 127:3-4).

**V. CHRISTIAN GROWTH IS COMFORTED BY PRUNING (John 15:1-8).**

- A. Bearing fruit for the Lord is necessary.
- B. Overcoming will bring the Lord into the door (Rev. 3:20-22).
  - 1. Beware of little foxes which spoil the vine (Song of Sol. 2:15)
  - 2. Beware of Satan's devices (2 Cor. 2:11 and 2 Cor. 11:14).
  - 3. Have the strength to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21).

**VI. CHRISTIANS CAN DEVELOP TO HELP GOD'S CAUSE (1 Pet. 3:15).**

- A. The peace of God can guard us (Phil. 4:17).
- B. The peace of God can umpire (rule) our words (Col. 3:15).
  - 1. Others will not be afraid to ask questions of a humble and respectful servant of God.
  - 2. Peace is the end product of living for God (Heb. 12:14)
- C. Defense of the faith is to be done (Jude 3)
  - 1. Aren't we comforted to know God's Word?
  - 2. Aren't we blessed by hope of the soul? (1 Thess. 4:16-18).

**VII. ELDERS CAN DEVELOP TO BLESS A CONGREGATION (1 Tim. 3:1-7).**

- A. Overseers are feeding the flock (Acts 20:28).
- B. Congregations can overcome sinful elders (1 Tim. 5:19-20)
  - 1. Two or three is the wisdom of God.
  - 2. All will fear the results.
  - 3. The church will not cease; the servants work together.

**VIII. LOVE COMFORTS BRETHERN (1 Cor. 13).**

- A. Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels... (1 Cor. 13:1)
- B. Love is required even if the body is burned (1 Cor. 13:3).
- C. Love is required even if all is sacrificed (1 Cor. 13:3).

**IX. THE SERVANT JOB EXEMPLIFIES MISERY AND COMFORT**

- A. Three friends came upon hearing of Job's evil (Job 2:11).
- B. Eliphaz accused Job by his words (Job 4:7).
  - 1. Job weighs why he was born (Job 6:9).
  - 2. Job listens and weighs their words (Job 9:1).
- C. Bildad and Zophar join in rapid order to accuse (Job 8:1; 11: 3; 15:5).
- D. Job says they are miserable comforters (Job 16:1).
- E. Job salutes God at times (Job 14:1, 14).
- F. Job challenges the friends who break him to pieces with words (19:2).
- G. God hears enough when the young man Elihu steps up (Job 32:2).
- H. God will explain the trouble (Job 3:26) and forgive friends if Job prays for them as they offer burnt offerings (Job 42:8-9).
- I. Job is comforted (Job 42: 11).

- X. EVEN THE HOUR OF DEATH IS COMFORT.**
- A. Comfort one another with these words (1 Thess. 4:16).
  - B. Overcoming sin will be worth it all (Matt. 7:24-27).
  - C. Christian friends will offer the same comfort (2 Cor. 1:4).

# "OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD"

## 2 Corinthians 3:1-5

Gary Colley

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Paul is the writer of many epistles, including 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians.
2. His first letter to the Corinthians was written to correct the divisions that existed in the church, and to answer their problem questions (I Cor. 7:1).
  - A. Jesus prayed for unity among His people (Jn. 17:20-21).
  - B. Paul commanded unity by apostolic authority (I Cor. 1:10-15).
3. In the first letter he severely condemned their declared factions and parties, and it seems they were unhappy with him and his letter.
4. Instead of the Corinthians correcting their problems, they decided to attack Paul, and thereby attempt to destroy his influence at Corinth! (II Cor. 11:4).
5. Instead of the brethren giving up their party spirit and becoming of one mind, one heart, and one judgment, they joined together it seems to accuse Paul of not being a true apostle in authority! (Eph. 4:3-6).
6. They impugned his motives, charged him falsely, and denied he acted from a pure character!
7. Paul referred to some of these things in II Corinthians chapters 10-13.
8. Though he had been the first to bring them the saving Gospel, and had established the church in Corinth, they now turn on him, as some did to the Lord when they could not answer His teaching (Matt. 7:28-29; Mk. 12:13; Lk. 11:53-54)
9. Does this sound familiar with people today?

### I. LET US GIVE GOD THE GLORY AND CREDIT IN ALL THINGS, AS DID PAUL:

A. Paul asked the Corinthians in essence:

1. Do we need to have a letter of recommendation in order for you to accept us?
2. That is, a letter of commendation to you, or from you? (Acts 18:27; Rom. 16:1-2; I Cor. 16:3).
3. He states that they were the apostle's letters since he had converted them!
4. Further, all men had that assurance that their faith was manifest to all; as he said that they were a letter "known and read of all men" (II Cor. 3:2).

B. It was also manifest to the Lord, that the apostle had by the preaching of the inspired Word (now written Word, the revelation of the Spirit of the living God), placed in their hearts, not in tables of stone (as the 10 commandments



- had been), that which would give all glory to God through the Gospel! (Matt. 26:28; Gal. 1:6-12; Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8-13; 10:16-17; I Cor. 2:9-11).
- C. The apostles did not claim credit, glory, or power of themselves!
1. But rather all of their work was done in the name (by the authority) of Christ! (Acts 3:1-6).
  2. They identified themselves as witnesses (those who give testimony), and as Paul wrote, “ambassadors for Christ (authorized representatives of the King), as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (II Cor. 5:20).
- D. In these facts Paul had confidence that he had been pleasing to God through the faithful preaching of the Gospel of Christ (II Tim. 4:1-6).

## II. LET US RECOGNIZE GOD AS THE SOURCE OF ALL BLESSINGS

- A. Paul stated to the Ephesian Christians, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3; Jas. 1:16-17).
- B. Paul always acknowledged God as the source of all of his blessings!
- C. He did not at any time seek to boast of his accomplishments as being of his own power, but rather said, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God; Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant...” (II Cor. 3:5-6).
- D. The Lord’s people today, by following the same rule of giving all glory to God, can make lasting impressions upon their families, their brethren, and the world about them.
- E. We are to follow the apostle’s teaching, be the Lord’s humble servants, and carry the Gospel to the world while we are here upon the earth (Mk. 16:15-16; Matt. 5:13-16; I Pet. 2:11-12; Gal. 1:8-9; Matt. 28:18-20).
1. In other words, you do not have to tell anyone how humble you are, or how great you are!!
- F. We are not “apostles,” “witnesses,” or “ambassadors,” in the sense the apostle Paul and other apostles were, but we must be humble enough to teach just what they taught (II Tim. 2:2).

## III. LET US ACKNOWLEDGE ALL WE HAVE IS GIVEN BY THE GRACE OF GOD:

- A. (I Cor. 15:10; II Cor. 1:12; Tit. 2:11-12; Eph. 2:8-10).
- B. Let us beware lest we “receive the grace of God in vain,” which we may do by not keeping His commandments (II Cor. 6:1-2; Jn. 1:17; I Jn. 3:2-6, 22; 5:2-3).
- C. If the professed followers of Christ today could be made to realize the full significance of the truth, that the message of Christ is indeed to be written in our hearts and lives, and that we are to act accordingly, it would not be long until mankind could truthfully say, “The world has been turned back to the

- right-side up!" (Acts 17:6; Rom. 12:1-2).
- D. Paul was not guilty of claiming to be the source of all blessings! He always gave to God that place (II Cor. 2:17; 4:2; 10:12, 18).
  - E. Paul always used correctly his apostolic authority or liberty (I Cor. 9:15-23).
  - F. The Corinthians should have commended him (II Cor. 12:11).
  - G. We urge all to remember what Paul proclaims, "not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:5).
  - H. He states that all glory is to be given to God, "who made us sufficient (able GC) ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter (Old Law of Moses), but of the spirit (The Gospel GC): for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6; Jn. 6:63; Acts 4:12).

### CONCLUSION:

1. One of the main thrusts in the Sermon on the Mount is to show our dependence on God for all we do or teach (Matt. 5:1-12; 28:18-20).
2. We must always guard against even the appearance of boasting, or of self-confidence (Gal. 1:8-12).
3. Paul had indeed spoken of his triumph, and of his success, but only as proof of the evidence that he had been sent to do the work by God, not for his own glory (Matt. 6:33).
4. He claimed none of his works were because of his own strength or sufficiency!
5. Let us note several lessons from these writings of the great apostle Paul:
  - A. To our God is due all the praise for all the good works we may perform. We are not "sufficient of ourselves," but dependent on Him for all of our direction (Prov. 3:5-6; Psa. 119:10-11).
  - B. We successfully perform good works just in proportion as we deem our dependence to be on God, and look to Christ (Jn. 15:1-7; II Tim. 3:16-17).
  - C. The reason why some fail to be holy is because they are unwilling to give proper praise to God, and seek grace and strength from him!
  - D. Hence we should be convinced that we are not sufficient of ourselves, but,

OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD!

# "NOT...HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD DECEITFULLY"

## 2 Corinthians 4:2

Garland Elkins

### INTRODUCTION:

The word of God is living and active, and if the one using the Bible misuses it, the Bible (the word of truth) will condemn it (Heb. 4:12).

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. MANY HANDLE 1 JOHN 3:9 DECEITFULLY.

- A. The following comments from brother Guy N. Woods are superb,  
"Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (I John 3:9, ASV).  
"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9, KJV).
- B. From *A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude* by Guy N. Woods, Woods wrote as follows:

**Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God.** – The familiar rendering, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," of the King James' Version, has given place to the American Standard rendering, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin," and here, as often elsewhere, the Standard rendering is the preferable one, though it, too, as we shall later see, does not fully and adequately convey the meaning of the text. (1) The phrase "begotten of God" is a decided improvement over "born of God" (*gegennemenos ek tou theou*), for *gegennemenos*, from *gennaō*, means to beget. (2) Correctly translated, the scriptures never refer to a "birth of God." (3) It is absurd to predicate the act of birth of a masculine personality exclusively. We are not, however, from this to infer that the reference here, or in the numerous other instances where the phrase occurs, signifies an embryonic or prenatal state. Obviously, here and in 2:29 and 5:18, the reference is to children of God. While the context establishes the fact that children of God are contemplated, accuracy of translation necessitates the rendering "begotten of God" rather than "born of God."

Whosoever is begotten of God "doeth no sin." ("Doeth no sin" is translated from the phrase, *hamartian ou poiei*, present active indicative of *poio*, does not keep on doing sin (as a life of habit.) The reference here is to persistent, continuous, willful sin, such as that contemplated in 3:6, and remarks there (which see) apply with equal force here.

But why does the one begotten of God refrain from habitual and persistent indulgence in sin? Because his seed remains in him and he cannot sin. Whose seed? God's. What is God's seed? The word of God: "The seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). In whom does this seed abide or remain? In the child of God. What does the word "abide" signify? That the word of God has made its home, as it were, in the heart of the one begotten. Is this a scriptural concept? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16, which we translate more vividly, "May the word which Christ speaks to you have in your hearts in all its fullness its home." What is the result of such? The child of God cannot sin.

Does this mean that it is impossible for a child of God, under any circumstances, to commit a single act of sin? No. The phrase "Doeth no sin" does not adequately convey the meaning of the original text. Here, as in 3:6, in order to discover the full significance of the verb *doeth*, it is essential to take into consideration the tense thereof, a better rendering of which would be "worketh no sin." (See comments on 1 John 3:6). What reasons have we for concluding that it was not the intention of the apostle to teach that it is impossible for a child of God to commit a single act of sin? (1) Such a conclusion is in conflict with I John 1:7-9; 2:1, and many other passages in the scriptures. (2) The words "he cannot sin" cannot be correctly construed to mean that one cannot commit a single act of sin after being a begotten of God. Why is it alleged that such a conclusion is in conflict with what the apostle taught elsewhere? Because he affirmed, in the references cited, that children *do* sin, and he moreover revealed the conditions on which they may be forgiven.

Why is it thought that the phrase "he cannot sin" may not be correctly interpreted to mean that it is impossible for a child of God to commit a single act of sin? "And he cannot sin" is translated from the phrase "*kai ou dunatai hamartanein*. *Hamartanein* is a present active infinitive, the force of which is, "he cannot continue to live a life of sin" (as before). But why cannot he continue to live such a life? The seed, which is the word of God, and which is in him, forbids it. How did David recognize and apply the principle taught here? "Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee?" (Psalm 119:11). How did Jesus resist the seductions of Satan? By relying on the same power. Suppose one is tempted to steal. Such a one remembers that the Word says, "Thou shalt not steal." So long as this injunction remains in the heart and governs the life, one *cannot* steal. "It is written" is as effective in resisting the blandishments of Satan today as it was when the Lord utilized it on the mount of temptation. Why, then, cannot one thus begotten persist in sin? (1) The seed (the word of God), which forbids it, is in him, controls his life, and directs his energies. (2) A life of sin is inconsistent with the spiritual parentage of the one thus begotten.

But does this mean that it is never possible for one possessed of this nature to sin? No. All, through weakness, error, ignorance, and inadvertence, occasionally sin; but children of God do not work sin as a life principle, for its author – Satan – they have repudiated and his nature abandoned. When, in such instances, sin occurs, it is a momentary lapse; it is recognized as contrary to the higher impulses of the person thus sinning, and it is confessed and put aside with shame.

Paul and John are in strict harmony in their teaching on the difference between such occasional lapses into sin and a life wholly devoted to it. The former wrote, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin" (Rom. 6:1-6). We are thus no longer to continue in sin, for (a) we have died (separated ourselves) from the practice thereof; (b) we have risen from the baptismal grave to walk a new life; (c) the body of sin has been done away; (d) we have been delivered from the bondage of sin. The careful distinction which the inspired writers make between a life of continuous and habitual sin and the infrequent deviations of children of God who, while they ever reach upward toward a nobler life, now and then falter through weakness or error, may be seen by a comparison between Rom. 6:1 "Shall we continue in sin" (*epimenomen tei hamartia*, present active subjunctive) and 6:15, "Shall we sin" (*hamartesomen*, first aorist active subjunctive), "Shall we commit a single act of sin?" (because we are not under law, but under grace). Carefully and pointedly the apostle to the Gentiles make [sic] it clear that even isolated acts of sin were not to be indulged in on the assumption that the grace under which we live, instead of the law, would make provision for such.

Properly interpreted, neither 1 John 3:9 nor any other scripture, countenances the view that it is impossible for a child of God to live above sin in this life; and theories to this end, whether drawn from this passage or some other, are clearly erroneous (270-273).

## II. MANY HANDLE MARK 9:38-40 DECEITFULLY.

- A. The passage reads as follows: "John said unto him, Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But

Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me" (ASV).

- B. Denominationalists handle this passage of scripture deceitfully by contending that this is an endorsement of denomination division. But note the following:
  - 1. John met a man who was a faithful disciple of Christ but John did not know it.
  - 2. The man was truly "casting out demons" by the name of Christ.
  - 3. However, since John did not know him and he was not of the company of the apostles he forbid the man to do the work of the Lord, "casting out devils."
  - 4. However, Jesus told John not to forbid the man since he was a true follower of Christ.
  - 5. Jesus pointed out that since the man truly cast out devils in His (Christ's) name he was one of His true followers.
  - 6. Not only does Mark 9:38-40 not endorse denominational doctrine, there is no passage anywhere in the Bible that endorses such division.

### **III. MANY HANDLE JOHN 15:1-6 DECEITFULLY.**

- A. We discuss a third section of scripture which is handled deceitfully.
- B. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:1-6, ASV).
- C. Let us observe the following:
  - 1. Christ is the true vine, and his father is the husbandmen.
  - 2. The branches are his individual disciples, not denominations.
  - 3. Each branch (person) must abide in him and be faithful or else he will be cut off.
  - 4. John proves that each branch is a man – not a denomination.

### **IV. CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH, NOT CHURCHES (Mt. 16:18).**

- A. He said to Peter, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18).
- B. Anytime we read in the New Testament of "churches" (Rom. 16:16), we are reading of a plurality of congregations of the one church.
- C. "And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16, ASV).

### **CONCLUSION:**

Let us live and die in the one church of Christ (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4; I Cor. 12:20; Eph. 5:23-33).

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# “WE LABOR THAT..WE MAY BE ACCEPTED OF HIM”

## 2 Corinthians 5:9

Wade L. Webster

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Why do you do what you do? What motivates you?
  - A. *Some people are motivated by FINANCIAL PROFIT.*
    - 1) Balaam was. He “loved the wages of unrighteousness” (2 Pet. 2:15). As you recall, he told Balak that he would not curse God’s people even if he was given the king’s house full of gold and silver (Num. 22:18). However, he was soon on his way to do Balak’s bidding. Not even an angel with a drawn sword would deter him for long (Num. 22:22-35).
    - 2) Judas was. He asked, “What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?” (Mt. 26:15). For thirty pieces of silver, the price of a common slave, Judas sold our Lord. John, more than any other biographer, reveals that money had been a driving motive for Judas for a long time.
  - B. *Some people are motivated by FLESHLY PLEASURE.*
    - 1) Solomon was. In Ecclesiastes, he wrote, “I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity” (2:1; cf. 8:15).
    - 2) Some in James’ day were. He wrote, “Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter” (Jam. 5:5; cf. 2 Tim. 3:4).
2. Who are you trying to please?
  - A. *Some people please THEMSELVES.* Paul spoke of some who served “their own belly” (Rom. 16:18; cf. 15:1; Phil. 2:21) and of others who were “lovers of their own selves” (2 Tim. 3:2).
  - B. *Some people please MEN.* John spoke of some of the chief rulers of the Jews who believed on Jesus but wouldn’t confess Him because they loved “the praise of men, more than the praise of God” (John 12:42-43; cf. 2 Tim. 4:3).
3. As Christians, our motivation is very different than that mentioned up to this point.



- A. Our motivation is not financial prosperity. Our treasure is in heaven and not on the earth (Mt. 6:19-21).
  - B. Our motivation is not fleshly pleasure. We abstain from fleshly lusts, understanding that they war against the soul (1 Pet. 2:11; cf. 1 Cor. 6:18).
  - C. We are not trying to please ourselves. We deny ourselves and esteem others better than ourselves (Mt. 16:24; Phil. 2:3-4).
  - D. We are not trying to please other men (Gal. 1:10).
4. As Christians, we do what we do because we want to please Christ. To the saints at Corinth, Paul wrote, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him" (2 Cor. 5:9). Five words that begin with "W" develop the thought of this verse.
- A. *Wherefore (dio)* - "wherefore, on account of" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), Strong's number: 1352). *Dio* is used fifty-three times in the King James Version. Forty-one times it is translated as "wherefore," as it is here. Ten times it is translated as "therefore." Two times it is translated as "for which cause." The earlier verses in this chapter help us to understand this key word. Because our present bodies are going to be dissolved, and we are soon going to be with the Lord, it behooves us prepare for that day.
  - B. *We (hemeis)* - "us, we" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2249). In the context, "we" refers to "the church of God" (2 Cor. 1:1). The church stands in stark contrast to the world. The world labors for financial prosperity and fleshly pleasure. In contrast, the church puts the kingdom of God and His righteousness first (Mt. 6:33).
  - C. *Work/Labor (philotimeomai)* - "to be fond of honour... to strive to bring something to pass, to be ambitious, to strive earnestly, make it one's aim" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 5389). The word is used three times in the King James Version. It is translated once as "strive," once as "labour," and once as "study." Christians are ambitious. However, we are not seeking financial gain or worldly acclaim. We are seeking to please the Lord.
  - D. *Whether (eite)* - "if, whether, or" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 1535). *Eite* is used sixty-five times in the King James Version. It is translated as "or" thirty-three times, as "whether" twenty-eight times, as "or whether" three times, and as "if" one time. Our ambition as Christians is to please Christ whether here or in heaven.

- E. *Worthy/Accepted (euarestos)* – “well pleasing, acceptable” ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2101). *Euarestos* is used 9 times in the King James Version. It is translated as “acceptably” four times, as “well pleasing” three times, as “please well” one time, and as “accepted” one time. As Christians we want to be well pleasing to Christ. We want Him to find us “worthy” (Rev. 3:4).
5. In this lesson, we want to consider three key roles where we as Christians labor or strive to please Christ.
- We labor that we may be accepted as a SERVANT.
  - We labor that we may be accepted as a STUDENT.
  - We labor that we may be accepted as a SOLDIER.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. WE LABOR THAT WE MAY BE ACCEPTED AS A SERVANT

- A. In the first century world of masters and servants, it was important for servants to please their masters. In Ephesians, Paul wrote, “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph. 6:5-6).
- Obedient (*hupakouo*) – “to listen...to harken to a command, to obey...submit to” ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 5219; cf. Col. 3:22; Tit. 2:9).
  - Reverent (with fear and trembling) – Fear is from the Greek word *phobos*. *Phobos* means “fear, dread, terror...reverence for one's husband” ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 5401; cf. Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:18). Trembling is from *tromos*. *Tromos* means “quaking with fear...used to describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements, but religiously does his utmost to fulfil his duty” ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 5156).
  - Sincere (singleness of heart) – Singleness is from *haplotes*. *Haplotes* means “simplicity, sincerity, mental honesty, the virtue of one who is free from pretence and hypocrisy, not self seeking, openness of heart manifesting itself by generosity” ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 572; cf. Col. 3:22).
- B. Just as a servant in the first century was to work to please his master, we are to work to please our Master (2 Cor. 5:9). On the Day of Judgment, we want to hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (Mt. 25:21; cf. Rom. 14:18). Our master deserves obedience

(Heb. 5:8-9), reverence (Heb. 12:28), and sincerity (Josh. 24:14; Eph. 6:24).

## II. WE LABOR THAT WE MAY BE ACCEPTED AS A STUDENT

- A. The first century world was not only filled with servants and masters, it was filled with students and teachers. Students sought to please their teachers.
- B. Just as students in the first century sought to please their teachers, we are to work to please our Teacher. Paul wrote, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).
  1. "Approved" is from *dokimos*. *Dokimos* means "accepted, pleasing, acceptable" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 1384). It was used "particularly of coins and money." "In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into molds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens, to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money changers were men of integrity, who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honor who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called "dokimos" or "approved."
  2. "Ashamed" is from *anepaischuntos*. *Anepaischuntos* means "having no cause to be ashamed" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 422). It is used only once in the King James Version.
- C. As a student, certain things are expected of us before we will be approved by God.
  1. We must read the Scriptures. Paul told Timothy to "give attendance to reading" (1 Tim. 4:13).
    - a. *Attendance (prosecho)* - "to bring to, bring near, to bring a ship to land...to turn the mind to, attend to be attentive, to a person or a thing: of caring for, providing for...take heed, to apply one's self to, attach one's self to, hold or cleave to a person or a thing, to be given or addicted to, to devote thought and effort to" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 4337).

- b. We are to be addicted to Bible reading. Have you ever heard someone say concerning a book that they just could not put it down? Well, that should be the way that we are about God's Word. We are to devote great thought and effort to it.
  - c. *Reading (anagnosis)* - "knowing , a knowing again, owning, reading" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 320). We need to know the Book. Of course, this is only possible if we read it over and over again.
2. We must study the Scriptures. Again, Paul told Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).
- a. *Study (spoudazo)* - "to exert one's self, endeavour, give diligence" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 4704). Real Bible study requires effort.
  - b. *Workman - (ergates)* - "a workman, a labourer, usually one who works for hire esp. an agricultural worker, one who does, a worker" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2040). The word is used sixteen times in the King James Version. It is translated as "labourer" ten times, as "workman" three times, and as "worker" three times. Like a harvester, we must harvest the precious fruit from the word of God.
  - c. *Rightly Dividing (rthotomeo)* - "to cut straight...to handle aright" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 3718). Handling the scriptures correctly requires diligent study.
3. We must search the Scriptures. In the book of Acts, Luke wrote, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11; cf. John 5:39).
- a. *Search (anakrino)* - "examine or judge, to investigate...enquire into, scutinise, sift, question, specifically in a forensic sense of a judge to hold an investigation, to interrogate, examine the accused or witnesses...estimate" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 350).

This definition reminds me of the Parable of the Lost Coin. As you recall, a woman lost a coin and searched her house until she found it. Her search was very diligent. She used a lamp and swept the whole house. She didn't give a casual glance and then give up. She gave a diligent search until she found it.

- b. Please note that they searched the Scriptures daily. Sadly, for many Christians, Bible study has been relegated to a couple of hours a week in a church building. However, it needs to be daily in the home.
4. We must meditate on the Scriptures. To Timothy, Paul wrote, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:15-16).
  - a. *Meditate (meletao)* – "to care for, attend to carefully, practice, to meditate...used of the Greeks of the meditative pondering and the practice of orators and rhetoricians" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 3191). Proper Bible study requires a great deal of thought.
  - b. Joshua was told to "meditate day and night" on God's book (Josh. 1:8; cf. Psa. 1:2; 119:23).
5. If we work at our study, we will be accepted by Christ. However, if we do not, we will be rejected. Hosea wrote, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6).

### III. WE LABOR THAT WE MAY BE ACCEPTED AS A SOLDIER

- A. The first century world was filled with soldiers and their commanding officers. Soldiers sought to please those who commanded them.
- B. Just as soldiers in the first century sought to please their commanding officers, we should seek to please our commanding officer. To Timothy, Paul wrote, "Thou therefore *endure* hardness, as a *good* soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with

the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:3-4).

1. *Good (kalos)* - "excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing...useful, suitable, commendable, admirable...good, excellent in nature and characteristics...genuine, approved...competent, able, such as one ought to be, praiseworthy, noble...morally good...honorable" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2573).
2. *Please (aresko)* - "to please, to strive to please; to accommodate one's self to the opinions desires and interests of others" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 700).

C. As a soldier there are some things that we must do to please our commanding officer.

1. *We must suit up.* To the saints at Ephesus, Paul wrote, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil... Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" (Eph. 6:11, 13-17).

1. *Put on (enduo)* - "to sink into (clothing), put on, clothe one's self" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 1746).

2. The good soldier makes sure that he is properly equipped for battle.

2. *We must suffer.* Paul wrote, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3).

1. *Endure (kakopatheo)* - "to suffer (endure) evils (hardships, troubles, to be afflicted" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2553).

2. The good soldier does not murmur or complain about hardships. He bears up under them.

3. *We must separate.* Paul wrote, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may

please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:4; cf. 1 Tim. 6:11; Rom. 12:1-2).

1. *Entangleth (empleko)* - "to inweave...involve in" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 1707).
2. The good soldier knows that he may have to report for duty or be deployed at any time.
4. We must struggle. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (Eph. 6:12; 1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 4:7-8).
  1. *Fight (agonizomai)* - "to contend with adversaries, fight, metaph. To contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers, to endeavor with strenuous zeal, strive" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 75).
  2. The good soldier gets involved in the conflict and brings his sword to bear against the enemy.
5. We must stand. Paul wrote, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness" (Eph. 6:13-14).
  1. *Withstand (anthistemi)* - "to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 436).
  2. *Stand (histemi)* - "to cause or make to stand, to place, put, set...to make firm, fix, establish, to cause a person or a thing to keep his or its place...to stand immovable, stand firm...to stand ready or prepared, to be of a steadfast mind" ([www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com), 2476).
  3. The good soldier will stand his ground.

#### CONCLUSION:

1. In this lesson, we have seen three roles where we as Christians should be striving to please our Lord. We should be striving to please Him as a servant, as a student, and as a soldier.
2. The day is coming when all of us will have to stand before the Lord and answer for how we have served in these three roles.
  - A. As a servant, will we receive punishment or praise?
  - B. As a student, will we pass or fail?

C. As a soldier, will we receive condemnation or commendation?

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# “KNOWING...THE TERROR OF THE LORD, WE PERSUADE MEN”

## 2 Corinthians 5:11

B. J. Clarke

### INTRODUCTION:

1. There is so much uncertainty in our modern world. Millions upon millions are wondering and wandering aimlessly through life, with no solid foundation upon which to build their lives.
2. Christianity offers something so much better. It offers knowledge and certitude about where we came from, what we are doing here, and where we are going.
3. Some misinterpret Paul’s statement, “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7), to mean that Christianity is based on a blind leap in the dark rather than something that can be proven to be true. On the contrary, a reading of the surrounding context proves this charge to be false. Repeatedly, the apostle Paul writes about “knowing” certain things to be so.
  - A. “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; **Knowing** that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you” (2 Corinthians 4:13-14).
  - B. “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” (2 Corinthians 5:1).
  - C. “Therefore we are **always confident, knowing** that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (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” (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).
  - D. “Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 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. **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” (2 Corinthians 5:9-11).
4. Our assigned text is the last one mentioned in the above list: “knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...” (2 Cor. 5:11).
  - A. There is considerable debate as to the meaning of the phrase “terror of the Lord” in this passage.
  - B. The Greek word, translated “terror” in the KJV, is from *phobos*. Our English word “phobia” is related to this word. What complicates our study a bit is that this word is used 47 times in 44 verses, and is translated in more than one way in the KJV. The verb form “*phobeo*” is also represented in some of the passages below:
    - 1) When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea they were troubled

and “they cried out for **fear**. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; **be not afraid** (Matt. 14:26-27).

- 2) When Jesus was raised from the dead, “for **fear** of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men” (Matt. 28:4).
  - 3) When the women left the empty tomb they departed quickly “with **fear** and great joy” (Matt. 28:8).
  - 4) “Men’s **hearts failing them for fear**, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken (Luke 21:26).
  - 5) “For rulers are **not a terror** to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same” (Rom. 13:3).
  - 6) “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**” (2 Cor. 7:5).
  - 7) “And deliver them who through **fear of death** were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. 2:15).
  - 8) “But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye: and **be not afraid** of their **terror**, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and **fear**” (1 Pet. 3:14–15).
  - 9) “Standing afar off for the **fear of her torment**, Saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come” (Rev. 18:10).
- C. This small sampling of texts is sufficient to show that sometimes the word is used to describe, or command, great reverence and respect, while at other times the word is employed to paint a picture of being frightful or afraid.
- D. This diversity of translation has produced two different approaches toward 2 Corinthians 5:11.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 5:10 declares that “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.” Thus, because it follows the context of standing before Christ to give an account of what we have done, whether good or bad, the word “*phobon*” in the next phrase, is translated “terror,” to convey the frightful thought of standing before God unprepared. Because we know the terrifying consequences of being lost, we persuade men to be saved.
  - 2) The alternate view points out that, in the context following 2 Corinthians 5:11, Paul is trying to persuade men of his genuineness as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and that one of the proofs of his authenticity is seen in how he fears the Lord.
  - 3) The following comment, although lengthy, presents a plausible case for synthesizing these two views into one: “Summarizing his previous remarks about judgment before Christ, Paul said he and his company knew what it was to fear the Lord. He drew upon the

Old Testament expression, “the fear of the Lord.” Paul apprehended what the judgment of Christ could mean for him if he were unfaithful to his calling. If he hoped to receive the reward of eternal salvation, he had to demonstrate his faith in Christ through faithfulness to Christ. Consequently, Paul sought to persuade men. It is possible that he had in mind persuading people to accept his integrity, as he did throughout this letter. Yet, these words may also include his broader purpose. The apostle’s responsibility was to reach the lost on behalf of Christ. He was called to take the gospel to all people. At times this task involved proclamation, but at other times it involved persuasion. No matter what Paul’s opponents in Corinth had been saying about him, the apostle was convinced that it was plain to God what he was. God knew his heart and understood his motivations. He hoped his ministry was plain to the Corinthians as well” (Pratt, Richard L., Jr. I & II Corinthians. Vol. 7. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000. Print. Holman New Testament Commentary).

- E. The bottom line is that if we have “the fear of the Lord” we will know that “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31). Some of the Christians to whom the Book of Hebrews was written were deliberately forsaking Christianity in order to return to the bosom of Judaism. This willful sin on their part would leave them without any sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10:26). Consequently, all that remained for them was “a certain **fearful** looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Heb. 10:27).
- F. A study of the surrounding context of 2 Corinthians 4-5 teaches three comforting thoughts.

**I. BECAUSE I FEAR THE LORD, I DO NOT FEAR WHAT IS HAPPENING TO MY EARTHLY BODY**

- A. As we grow older, it is apparent that our outward man is perishing. However, this does not incite fear in the one who fears the Lord and reveres His Word, because he knows that “though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16).
- B. When the ravages of age and affliction rack my body with pain, I am not afraid, because I know that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17).
- C. As I look in the mirror and see the things that are happening to my body, I do not live in fear and despair of the future. “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” (2 Cor. 4:18).

**II. BECAUSE I FEAR THE LORD, I DO NOT FEAR WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME WHEN I LEAVE THIS EARTHLY BODY**

- A. I do not fear the death of my earthly body. This is because, “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" (2 Cor. 5:1).
- B. When I groan in this physical tabernacle of flesh, I long for a new house for my spirit (2 Cor. 5:2-3).
  - C. Although I have never experienced life beyond the vale, I am not afraid to go there. I do not fear that God will fail to keep His promise to grant me life beyond this life. What God has already given, leaves me with no doubts about what He will do in the future. "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (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" (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

### III. BECAUSE I FEAR THE LORD, I DO NOT FEAR THE JUDGMENT DAY

- A. Although I am not worthy to stand before God on the Day of Judgment, I am not terrified of that Day. It will be the best day of my life! It will be the day for which I have lived all of these other days!
- B. Paul's whole mission in life was to live in such a way as to be "accepted of him" (2 Cor. 5:9).
- C. How may we be accepted of Him? My acceptance is not based in anything that I have done. Rather, it is rooted in words of promise, spoken by Peter at the household of Cornelius: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation **he that feareth him**, and worketh righteousness **is accepted** with him" (Acts 10:34-35).
- D. Acceptance is found in Christ! (2 Cor. 5:17-21).
- E. Eternal life from God is in His Son (1 John 5:11).

### CONCLUSION:

1. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).
2. Because I fear the Lord, I do not fear what is happening to my earthly body. I do not fear what will happen after I leave my earthly body. I do not fear the Judgment Day.
3. If I "fear God and keep His commandments" (Eccl. 12:13), then I know that I will be accepted of Him (Acts 10:35; 2 Cor. 5:9) and receive the crown of life (2 Tim. 4:8). In so doing, I will avoid everlasting punishment in hell (Matt. 25:46).
4. Knowing this, I must persuade others to do the same! (2 Cor. 5:11).

**“HE HATH MADE HIM TO BE SIN FOR US,  
WHO KNEW NO SIN”**

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**Robert R. Taylor, Jr.**

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. The book context of this verse is 2 Corinthians, one of Paul’s fourteen epistles, (Hebrews surely included in this number), was written in A.D. 57.
2. The chapter context is filled with a Pauline discussion of Heaven, final judgment, reverential fear, persuasive words, defensive words, the love of Christ, His death, what we gained by it, what it means to be IN Christ, reconciliation, apostolic ambassadors and the passage assigned for this study.
3. The passage in 2 Corinthians 5:21 needs a correct analysis, not serious abuses and not to read error into it as far too many have done.

**DISCUSSION:**

**I. ABUSES OF THIS TEXT**

- A. Egregious errors read into it such as, “Christ was made the greatest and vilest sinner in all of human history.”
  1. In the first of his two scholarly volumes on Questions and Answers, Brother Guy N. Woods dealt with this on pages 338-340.
    - a. He reviewed an article that claimed the Lord Jesus Christ was “the vilest sinner of all time.”
    - b. The one in error claimed Jesus was the greatest thief, the greatest adulterer, the greatest murderer, etc., who ever lived.
    - c. Brother Woods called such blasphemy, which indeed it is.
    - d. Brother Woods showed the origin of this error as coming from Martin Luther (the 1500’s) who said that Christ became “the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel and blasphemer that ever was or could be in the world.”
    - e. Brother Woods refuted this with piercing, scriptural logic--logic that could not be assailed by anyone in error.
  2. In the 1989 Annual Denton Lectureship volume, Brother Garland Elkins took five pages in refuting this error, using some of Brother Woods’ material, in his own refutation of this damnable error (Elkins, pp. 365-369).
  3. In his very fine 1993 commentary on 2 Corinthians, Brother Bill Jackson refuted this error with withering, scriptural logic,

referencing this error of making Christ “the vilest sinner of all time” as Christ-slaming doctrine (Jackson, p. 42).

- B. Another egregious error read into this passage is the righteousness of Christ imputed to man.
  - 1. Brother Elkins refuted this in his own thorough fashion.
  - 2. Righteousness is right-doing, and we are not righteous because Christ is or another is.
  - 3. This breathes the same infamous brand of error as imputed (original, Adamic) sin to all of us.
  - 4. John tells us in 1 John 2:29 that righteousness is a work WE do – not what another has done; and in 1 John 3:7 that it is the person who does righteousness/is the one righteous.
- C. Another egregious error read into this context (v. 20) is the contention that modern preachers are ambassadors--an error brother David Lipscomb refuted thoroughly in his Gospel Advocate Commentary on 2 Corinthians and Galatians (pp. 82 – 84).
- D. The Holy Spirit did not have Paul write this precious passage for irreverent, error – filled men to come along and mishandle, misuse and abuse it.
  - 1. Shame on any man who is guilty of such.
  - 2. Will men never learn to handle or rightly divide? (2 Timothy 2:15).

## II. A CORRECT ANALYSIS OF THIS VERSE.

- A. There needs to be a correct handling of pronoun usage in this verse.
  - 1. The first “he” in this passage refers to God the Father.
  - 2. The “him” in this passage clearly and convincingly refers to God’s only begotten Son.
  - 3. The “us” and “we” in this passage refer to lost humanity who are lost and need the riches of redemption.
  - 4. The last “him” again refers to Jesus, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 2:24-25).
- B. The sin in this passage refers to Jesus as a sacrifice, a sin offering or sin-bearer – not that He was made the greatest transgressor or vilest sinner of all time.
  - 1. This very passage in 2 Corinthians 5:21 says He “knew no sin.”
  - 2. Pilate’s wife called Him that “just man” in Matthew 27:19.
  - 3. Judas Iscariot, the very one who betrayed Him, called Him innocent (Matthew 27:4).
  - 4. John, the apostle, said, “in Him is no sin” (1 John 3:5).
  - 5. Peter said He had no sin (1 Peter 2:22).
  - 6. Paul said that He had no sin and affirmed the same in a strikingly beautiful passage in Hebrews 7:26.

7. In John 8:46, Jesus challenged His peers to produce any sin in His life – a challenge no one has ever proved.
- C. God the Father made Him, His son, to be a sin offering, a sin bearer or a sacrificial Lamb for man's redemption.
  1. Sinful man could not save himself.
  2. If Christ were the greatest transgressor and vilest sinner of all humanity, He could not have been the sinless Lamb taking away the sin of the world.

### **III. THERE IS SACRIFICIAL POWER IN HIS BLOOD SHED FOR OUR SINS.**

- A. There is reconciling power (2 Cor. 5:19-20; Col. 1:20).
- B. There is redeeming power (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14, 20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).
- C. There is washing, cleansing and saving power (Acts 22:16; 1 John 1:7, 9).
- D. There is drawing power in that blood (John 6:44-45; 12:32-33).
- E. There is justifying power (Rom. 3:24).
- F. There is atoning power (Rom. 5:11).
- G. There is sanctifying power (Eph. 5:25-27).
- H. There is overcoming power (Rev. 12:11).
- I. There is remembering power as we partake of the Lord's Supper weekly (1 Cor. 11:23ff).
- J. There is strengthening power (1 Cor. 11:30).
- K. There is heavenly-redeeming power (Rev. 7:13-14).

### **CONCLUSION:**

This is a great and precious passage and should be believed strongly and defended vigorously--never mishandled, misused or abused.

# "RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN"

## 2 Corinthians 6:1

*Chris Butler*

### INTRODUCTION:

1. "We then, *as workers together with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1).
2. The word "grace" is found in the New Testament a total of 131 times.
  - A. It appears most in the book of Romans--20 times.
  - B. According to Strong's it is also translated as the following:  
"acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-ious), joy, liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy)."
3. The definition of grace:
  - A. "Good-will, loving-kindness, favor: in a broad sense; kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved" (Thayer).
  - B. Thayer states, "good will, loving-kindness, favour. 2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues."
4. When we speak of the subject of grace we are speaking about the character of the God whom we serve.
  - A. "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (Psa. 86:15).
  - B. "The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy" (Psa. 145:8).
5. When we speak of grace we are speaking about the many ways that God has made know this wonderful trait (Titus 2:11-14; John 1:17).

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

- A. The Prophecy of God's Grace (1 Pet. 1:10).
  1. In 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 Paul quotes from Isaiah regarding salvation.
    - (a). Following the admonition not to receive the grace of God in vain, Paul recites the words of Isaiah.
    - (b). In Isa. 49:8, Isaiah speaks about the day of salvation under the new covenant.
    - (c). Notice also the connection of Paul's statement about grace to Isaiah's statement about salvation.



- (d). It is no accident. To speak about grace is to speak about all that God has done to secure the salvation of sinners.
2. This is the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31.
    - (a). It is a law written in the hearts of men (Jer. 31:33).
    - (b). It is a covenant under which there will be forgiveness of sins and iniquities that will be remembered no more (Jer. 31:34).
    - (c). It is a covenant under which we shall be called children of God (1 Jn. 3:1-2; Phil. 2:15).
  3. The writer of Hebrews quoted Jeremiah in chapter 8:8-12 and speaks of Christ in this regard.
    - (a). Christ is the Mediator of this new covenant, which is a better covenant.
    - (b). It is better because of His sacrificial offering, Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:26-28; 10:10-14).
    - (c). It is better because of the forgiveness He provides (Heb. 8:12; 10:16-18).
    - (d). It is better because of its tabernacle that is not made with hands (Heb. 8:2; 9:11).
      - i. It is the everlasting Kingdom of Daniel 2:44.
      - ii. It is the Lord's house of Isaiah 2:1-4; Eph. 2:19-22.
      - iii. It is the church that Jesus promised to build (Mat. 16:18-19; Mark 9:1; Col. 1:13).
      - iv. The purchase price, of course, was the blood of Jesus (Acts 20:28).
- B. The Purpose of Grace was to provide for man what he could not.
1. Grace and Sacrifice of Christ. The Sacrifice of Christ paid the price and provided salvation (Titus 2:11; Mat. 26:28).
    - (a). Grace was given in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3).
    - (b). The grace of God provided the sacrificial offering of atonement for sin (Heb. 2:9; Jn. 1:17; Phil. 2:7-8; Rom. 5:8-9).
    - (c). His blood paid the price of redemption.
      - i. There is redemption through His blood (Eph. 1:7).
      - ii. His blood was shed for the remission of sins (Mat. 26:28).
      - iii. Jesus came to give his life a ransom for many (Mat. 20:28).

- iv His blood washes and cleanses our sins (Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16).
- 2. Grace and Salvation. Salvation is obtained in obedience to the Gospel (Heb. 5:8-9).
- C. The Preaching of Grace provides the knowledge of salvation through Christ (Eph. 3:7-8).
  - 1. Paul preached Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2-5).
  - 2. Philip preached Christ (Acts 8).
    - (a). Thus to preach Christ is to preach the Kingdom of God.
    - (b). To preach Christ is also to preach baptism for the remission of sins.
  - 3. Consider the example of the church at Ephesus.
    - (a). As Paul wrote, Christians are:
      - i Chosen. Eph. 1:4
      - ii Predestinated. Eph. 1:5
      - iii Adopted. Eph. 1:5
      - iv Redeemed. Eph. 1:7
      - v Heirs of an inheritance. Eph. 1:11
      - vi Quickened or made alive. Eph. 2:1
      - vii Saved by grace. Eph. 2:8
      - viii Created in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:10
  - 4. Paul wrote to the church, those who, as many translations suggest, "have been saved" by grace (Eph. 2:8).
    - (a). Grace is obtained by being called (Gal. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Thess. 2:14).
    - (b). The Gospel is the message of Grace (Acts 20:24, 32).
    - (c). Thus the Gospel provides knowledge of the grace that God has provided (Col. 1:6).
    - (d). The word of God brings faith (Rom. 10:17).
    - (e). Grace must be accessed by faith (Rom. 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8-9).
  - 5. Consider the example of the establishment of the church at Ephesus (Acts 19).
    - (a). Paul carried the Gospel message there.
    - (b). He found disciples of John.
    - (c). He preached that they should be baptized into Christ.
      - i We are all baptized into one body or the one church (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).

- ii We are the children of God by faith, if we are baptized into Christ and put on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27).
  - iii In Christ we are new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17).
  - iv As such we should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-6).
6. Grace and Saints. The Christian should continue in grace.
- (a). Paul said, "Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21).
    - i God is to be praised because of his glorious grace (Eph. 1:6; 12).
    - ii My life is for the purpose of glorifying Him (Mat. 5:13-16)
  - (b). Christians should then, continue in the grace of God.
    - i "Wherein ye stand" (Rom. 5:1-2).
    - ii "Continue in the grace of God" (Acts 13:43).
  - (c). It is my responsibility to grow in grace and knowledge (2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:2-3).

## II. THE DESCRIPTION OF GRACE

- A. Manifold. "As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).
1. Peter said grace is "manifold" (1 Pet. 4:10), meaning:
    - (a). "motley, that is, various in character: - divers" (Strong).
    - (b). Thayer said of this word, "a various colours, variegated. 2) of various sorts."
  2. Grace is of God. "...To testify of the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24; Tit. 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:10).
  3. Grace is used of Jesus' work of redemption (2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-11; Jn. 1:13, 17).
  4. Grace is used with reference to salvation (Titus 2:11; Eph. 2:8-10).
  5. Grace is used in connection with the Gospel or word of God (Acts 20:32; 14:3; 20:24).
  6. Grace is used with reference to the ministry of Paul, or preaching the Gospel (Eph. 3:1-8).
  7. Grace is also used in connection with the different offices of the church given for its perfecting (Eph. 4:7).

8. Grace is used of the miraculous gifts bestowed upon the early church (Rom. 12:6).
  9. Grace is used of one's speech which is "good to the use of edifying" (Eph. 4:29).
  10. Grace is also seen a reigning over the life of a Christian, in opposition to the reign of sin unto death (Rom. 5-6).
- B. Abundant. "For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 4:15).
  - C. Exceeding. "And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you" (2 Cor. 9:14).
  - D. Free. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).
  - E. Sufficient. "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" (2 Cor. 12:9).
  - F. Located. "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1).
  - G. Motivating. "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. 15:10).
  - H. Reigning. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 5:21).
  - I. Costly. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7).
  - J. Justifying. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit. 3:7).
  - K. Helpful. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).
  - L. Accessible. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2).
  - M. True. "By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand" (1 Pet. 5:12).

### III. THE CHRISTIAN'S DEVOTION TO GRACE

- A. Christians should not continue in Sin because of Grace (Rom. 6).
  - 1. The Grace of God demands death.
    - (a). It was a necessity for the Christ to die (1 Jn. 3:16).
    - (b). It is also a necessity for all who will obey the Gospel of Christ to die (Luk. 9:23; Mat. 16:24; Rom. 6:1-6).
      - i I am then dead to sin and the old man is crucified (Rom. 6:2, 6, 11, 12).
      - ii I should walk in newness of life because the body of sin has been destroyed that henceforth I should not serve sin (Rom. 6:4).
      - iii Sin shall not have dominion over you...ye are under grace (cf. Rom. 6:14).
  - 2. Obeying the Gospel does not mean that I become sinless, but that I sin less (1 Jn. 1:7-10).
  - 3. When I do sin, I repent and confess it knowing I am assured of being forgiven.
  - 4. Sin should not reign over me any longer. I have been freed (Rom. 6:7-18).
- B. Christians are Stewards of Grace (1 Pet. 4:10).
  - 1. The Christian is created for the purpose of good works (Eph. 2:8-10).
    - (a). My good works shine as a light to the world that is lost (Phil. 2:15).
    - (b). My good works also glorify my Father (Mat. 5:16).
    - (c). I am, because of the grace of God, to be zealous of good works (Tit. 2:11-14).
  - 2. To be a steward of the grace of God, I must use all that God has given me in His service.
    - (a). Like Paul, as a minister of the Gospel (2 Cor. 5:18-6:1; Eph. 3:7-8).
    - (b). As an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or teacher (Eph. 4:12).
    - (c). Our gifts or abilities are to be used so that the body can function properly (Romans 12:5ff).
    - (d). In addition to that, the gifts provided by grace are to help us live as Christians should live (Rom. 12:9-21).
- C. Christians are willing to Suffer because of Grace.
  - 1. Jesus suffered and so will His followers (Jn. 15:20; Mat. 5:10-12).
  - 2. Paul suffered greatly for preaching the Gospel (2 Cor. 4:8-10; 2 Cor. 11:23ff; Gal. 6:17).

- (a). Yet, he never allowed His suffering to outweigh the grace of God in which he lived.
  - (b). Suffering for the cause of Christ was a badge of honor for the apostle (2 Cor. 11:30).
  - (c). Peter said the same thing (1 Pet. 4:16).
  - (d). In the context of our passage Paul mentions suffering (2 Cor. 6:3-10).
- D. Christians are willing Servants because of Grace.
- 1. Listen to the words of Paul, "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. 15:10).
  - 2. Paul attributes his life and work as a Christian to the grace of God, and then attributes his abundant labor to the grace of God.
  - 3. Why not serve God with our all, because of His grace that was extended to us in obedience to the Gospel, but also, because of His grace that will be with us as we work and labor with Him? (1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Cor. 3:5-11).
- E. Christians continue in the State of Grace.
- 1. We touched on this point above, but it certainly is worth our attention once more.
  - 2. Paul said that grace is something that we both access and in which we continue to stand (Rom. 5:1-2).
  - 3. Paul was troubled by false teaching in the churches of Galatia. Listen to the wording of the passage. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Gal. 1:6).
  - 4. What is left if we fail to continue in the grace of God?

#### IV. DESPISING GRACE

- A. Receive in vain (2 Cor. 6:1).
- 1. The grace of God and all of its blessings are hinged upon one thing. My actions.
  - 2. The Greek word translated as "vain" is defined as, "empty, vain, devoid of truth" (Thayer).
  - 3. In keeping with the context, if I fail to work as a servant of Christ in whatever capacity the Lord bestows upon me, then I make vain, empty and void the grace of God.
  - 4. My salvation and yours depends on what we do.
- B. Despise the spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).
- 1. Three things in this passage.
    - (a). "hath trodden under foot the Son of God"

- i This is the same idea as in Matthew 5:13 (Robertson's Word Pictures).
    - ii To turn away from Christ for willful sin treats the Son of God as if He were worthless salt.
  - (b). "counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing"
    - i Certainly, if I choose sin over salvation, then the blood of the New Covenant is meaningless.
    - ii The writer says, "unholy" or as Gill stated, "'common thing'; putting it upon a level with the blood of a bullock, or at most counting it... 'as that of another man.'"
  - (c). "Hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace."
    - i The word despite is a word that carries the idea of insulting.
    - ii To deny the Son of God and to count the blood of His New Covenant as common or unholy is to insult the Divine revealer of this wonderful Truth.
- C. Fail of the grace (Heb. 12:15).
  - 1. The book of Hebrews is filled with admonitions to be faithful.
    - (a). "Let us fear" (Heb. 4:1).
    - (b). "Let us labour therefore to enter" (Heb. 4:11).
    - (c). "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).
    - (d). "Let us go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1).
    - (e). "Let us draw near" (Heb. 10:22).
    - (f). "Let us hold fast" (Heb. 10:23).
    - (g). "Let us consider one another" (Heb. 10:24).
    - (h). "Let us lay aside every weight" (Heb. 12:1).
  - 2. The Christian should be focused on his eternal goal.
    - (a). We are to lay aside the weight of sin that will hinder us in running the race (Heb. 12:1).
    - (b). We are to focus completely on Jesus at the finish line (Heb. 12:2).
    - (c). Failing to look diligently will cause me to fail (Heb. 12:15)
- D. Fall from grace (Gal. 5:4), and Frustrate the grace of God (Gal. 2:21).
  - 1. Adherence to the old law would frustrate the grace of God.

2. Thayer defines the word, "1) To do away with, to set aside, disregard. 2) To thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate. 3) To reject, to refuse, to slight."
  3. A departure to the old law would nullify or make void God's grace.
  4. A mixture of the old law and the law of Christ would nullify or make void God's grace.
  5. Today any departure from truth, any mixture of truth with man-made doctrines would void the grace of God.
  6. To seek to be justified by anything other than the grace of the New Covenant would mean that I fall from God's grace.
- E. Turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4).
1. "The apostasy is of such a nature that the good, acceptable, and complete will of God (Rom. 12:2) is changed into something vile and repulsive to the general public. This is the most repugnant of all apostasy in that wholesomeness is changed to corruption" (Fream).
  2. "Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness"; that is, not necessarily into any particular form of deadly sin, but that they turned "the grace of God," the free mercy of God vouchsafed to us in Jesus Christ, into a pretext for any and all forms of self-indulgence and self-pleasing which might minister to the gratification of the carnal mind (Biblical Illustrator).
  3. A great crime. Why should men want to change the Truth of the living God? Look into the text and you have the answer.
    - (a). Because the fear of God is not in their soul-- "ungodly men." When the helm is broken the vessel will drift in every direction. Reverence for God is the first essential of faith in revelation.
    - (b). Because to human appearance sin appears less hideous when committed in the name of religion-- "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness."
    - (c). Because the authority of "our only Master and Lord" is against the license they would afford the flesh. Take Christ out of the gospel and any use might be made of it; but give Him His place in the sphere of Divine truth, and the force against sin is irresistible (Biblical Illustrator).

## CONCLUSION:

1. The grace of our God was manifested in the life of Jesus the Christ.



2. This message of grace was recorded by the work of the Holy Spirit of God.
3. The purpose of God's manifold grace is to secure the salvation of sinners.
4. Let us continue in the grace of our Lord Jesus, Let us stand firmly in the true grace of God, lest we receive it in vain and trample under foot the Son of God.

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# "THAT THE MINISTRY BE NOT BLAMED"

## 2 Corinthians 6:3

Clifton Angel

### INTRODUCTION:

1. "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him" (Prov. 26:4, KJV).
  - A. There are occasions where it is wiser for us to keep our mouths closed, even when we are being persecuted or demeaned.
  - B. Perhaps you have heard the phrase, "Don't stoop to their level."
2. "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (Prov. 26:5).
  - A. Then, there are occasions where it is needful for us to open our mouths in order to defend a greater cause and attempt to help a fool out of his folly.
  - B. The Apostle Paul had such an occasion with the church at Corinth.
  - C. The authority of the apostles (and Paul, personally) was in question and had to be defended; for, it was given by Jesus, and Christianity then and now is dependent upon the authority granted to the apostles by Jesus.
3. "We [Paul and the other apostles, CA] then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (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.) Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor. 6:1-3).
  - A. The will of Paul and the other apostles was the will of Christ.
    - 1) The ministry was their work and service in Christ's kingdom, the church.
    - 2) Their desire was to never allow the church, nor their work in the church, to be found at fault.
  - B. With the central idea, "**THAT THE MINISTRY BE NOT BLAMED,**" note:
    - 1) **PAUL MAKES A PROPOSAL** – he sets forth the way that the apostles endeavor and how the Corinthians ought to endeavor to live so "that the ministry be not blamed."
    - 2) **PAUL MANIFESTS AN APPROVAL** – he reveals the things they have undergone selflessly to prove that they desire "that the ministry be not blamed."
    - 3) **PAUL MENTIONS AN ARRIVAL** – he shows the outcome of their endeavor and their endurance so "that the ministry be not blamed."

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. PAUL MAKES A PROPOSAL (6:3).

- A. "Giving no offence in any thing" (6:3)
1. In other words, "Not even one occasion of sin is made by us in not even one thing, in order that our service as apostles is not blamed" [a double negative is found in the original; therefore, it is used for the purpose of emphasis here].
    - a. It is needful for the Bible student to understand that the use of the word "offense" as it is used by Paul here does not mean hurting someone's feelings.
      - i. "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:5) does not mean avoid hurting someone's feelings at all costs.
      - ii. The truth sometimes hurts, and it must; Peter preached on Pentecost day and many who were listening "were pricked in their heart" (Acts 2:37). They got their feelings hurt, and if we are living in sin, we need to get our feelings hurt in the same way.
    - b. To offend someone in the Biblical sense of the word is to cause them to sin.
  2. Paul is not asserting that he and the other apostles are sinlessly perfect.
    - a. For, such would be in contradiction to the Apostle John's writings: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).
    - b. Furthermore, such would be proven wrong by the Apostle Peter's sin according to Galatians 2:11, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."
  3. Rather, he is proposing that he and the other apostles have it as their sole purpose and endeavor to never sin, nor cause another to sin.
  4. This is their endeavor so "that the ministry be not blamed."
- B. Furthermore, Paul's proposal could be extended to the Corinthians.
1. He pleaded, "Do not receive the grace of God in vain."
    - a. They were recipients of God's grace in their ability to live.
    - b. They were recipients of God's grace in their attainment of salvation.
    - c. They were recipients of God's grace in their access to revelation.
  2. How are the Corinthians to make certain that their receptions of God's grace are not vanity?
  3. They will have to endeavor to "give no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."
- C. Finally, Paul's proposal could be applied to you and me.
1. Is it our endeavor to avoid sinning? (cf. 1 John 2:1-2).

2. Is it our endeavor to avoid all actions which may bring reproach upon Christ's church?
  - a. In his recorded class on 1 Corinthians 6, brother Franklin Camp uses words that are applicable here.
  - b. "My father made this statement, and I've tried to remember it... 'When something comes up and you feel that you've been wronged, if the defense of that on your part is going to hurt the church, just remember, the church will be here when you're gone. You take the wrong, suffer the wrong, and do not bring reproach upon the church'" (Camp, 1 Corinthians 1-12).

## II. PAUL MANIFESTS AN APPROVAL (6:4-8b).

- A. "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God" (6:4).
- B. IN (*en*) -- Paul, what does "in all things" typically involve?
  1. "Much patience" (*hupomone polle*):
    - a. Ralph Martin sees "endurance" as a heading for the following nine elements of suffering (161).
    - b. Brother Franklin Camp notes that the word does not mean just "endurance," but includes the illustrative definition of "bearing up under a load" (Camp, I & II Corinthians).
    - c. According to Kittel, in some literary sources, *hupomone* means "to stay" (IV:581).
    - d. With these in mind, we can know that Paul is about to give a list of situations through which he and the other apostles have had to bear up under loads, all the while staying with God.
  2. "Afflictions" (*thlipsesin*):
    - a. Ralph Martin sees afflictions, necessities, and distresses as a group of three general types of suffering, with six more specific ones following (161).
    - b. Affliction seems to be suffering intentionally administered by another or caused by another thing.
    - c. Jesus told His disciples they would endure afflictions in this world, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).
    - d. Earlier in the Corinthian epistle at hand, Paul wrote, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (4:17).
  3. "Necessities" (*anagkai*):
    - a. The NASB and ESV render this word as "hardships."

- b. It is interesting that the KJV and ASV translate this word as “necessities;” for, perhaps, Paul is noting here the necessary hardships in life which come to each of us.
  - c. But his point is this: He and the other apostles endeavor to never cause another to sin even in the midst of the necessary hardships of life.
- 4. “Distresses” (*stenochoraias*):
  - a. The ESV renders “calamities,” while the KJV, ASV, and NASB are in agreement with “distresses.”
  - b. Perhaps, Paul is referencing the tragedies that come our way that we cannot control.
  - c. Whether Paul was specifying different types of suffering may not be certain; however, we can be certain that suffering came to the apostles and comes to us in the forms of afflictions by others, necessary hardships, and uncontrollable tragedies.
- 5. “Stripes” (*plegais*):
  - a. Paul begins his more specific elements of suffering with “our plague” (Robertson, 234).
  - b. “And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and **wounded** him, and departed, leaving him half dead” (Luke 10:30; *emph. added, CA*).
  - c. “But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of **stripes**, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more” (Luke 12:48, *emph. added, CA*).
  - d. “And when they had laid many **stripes** upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely” (Acts 16:23, *emph. added, CA*).
- 6. “Imprisonments” (*phulakais*):
  - a. “Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison” (Acts 5:17-18).
  - b. “And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.
- 7. “Tumults” (*akatastasiais*):
  - a. A.T. Robertson notes they are “instabilities, often from politics” (234).

- b. The ESV renders the word “riots.”
  - c. Ralph Martin calls them “social disorders” (160).
  - d. Paul has been the center of attention in some riotous social uproars (cf. Acts 19:23–41).
8. “Labours” (*kopois*):
    - a. In 11:27, it is translated “weariness.”
    - b. It is weariness endured because of one’s godly love (cf. 1 Thess. 1:3).
    - c. It is weariness from which we will rest if we “die in the Lord” (Rev. 14:13).
  9. “Watchings” (*agrupniais*):
    - a. Robertson comments, “In sleeplessness, instances of insomnia” (234–235).
    - b. This was something that Paul experienced “often” (cf. 2 Cor. 11:27).
  10. “Fastings” (*nesteias*):
    - a. The NASB and ESV render this “hunger.”
    - b. It is apparent that fasting is not a voluntary action in every occasion.
    - c. Paul and 275 others were forced to fast because of a shipwreck: “And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing” (Acts 27:33).
  11. The genuine reputation and the positive influence of the apostles depended upon their responses to situations such as these.
- C. BY (*dia*) -- Paul, how can you resist sin in such stressful occasions?
1. “Pureness” (*hagnoteti*)
  2. “Knowledge” (*gnosei*)
  3. “Longsuffering” (*makrothumia*)
  4. “Kindness” (*chrestoteti*)
  5. “The Holy Ghost” (*pneumati hagio*)
  6. “Love unfeigned” (*agape anupokrito*)
  7. “The word of truth” (*logo aletheias*)
  8. “The power of God” (*dunamai Theou*)
  9. “The armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left” (*hoplon dikaiosunes*)
  10. “Honour and dishonour” (*doxes kai atimias*)
  11. “Evil report and good report” (*dusphemias kai euphemias*)

### III. PAUL MENTIONS AN ARRIVAL (6:8c–10).

- A. AS (*hos*) -- What is the outcome of being faithful in times of trial?
  1. “Deceivers, and yet true” (*planoi kai aletheis*)

2. "Unknown, and yet well known" (*agnooumenoi kai epiginoskomenoi*)
3. "Dying, and behold, we live" (*apothneskontes kai idou zomen*)
4. "Chastened, and not killed" (*paideuomenoi kai me thanatoumenoi*)
5. "Sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing" (*lupoumenoi aei de chairontes*)
6. "Poor, yet making many rich" (*ptochoi pollous de ploutizontes*)
7. "Having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (*meden echontes kai panta katechontes*)

B. We become a living paradox like our Lord Jesus.

1. Which of the elements of suffering above did Jesus not endure?
2. Which of the outcomes did not characterize Jesus' life on earth?
  - a. He was called a deceiver (Matt 27:63), and yet He is the Truth (John 14:6).
  - b. Until age 30, He was virtually unknown. He did not enter the earth on a white horse riding on lightning, and His appearance was not of a handsome prince (Isa. 53:2), but He has become the most well-known Person, perhaps, in the history of mankind.
  - c. It was needful that He die (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 9:15-17), yet He lives (Matt. 28:6).
  - d. He was spat upon, mocked, scourged, beaten, and crucified, but He did not die until He gave up His spirit.
  - e. He rejoiced in the midst of sorrow: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).
  - f. He has made many rich through his poverty: "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" (2 Cor. 8:9).
  - g. He gave up everything to embrace nothing, only to be exalted back to everything, so that we could have everything we need: "Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:5-9).
3. [For your further consideration and deeper study of Jesus being a living paradox, I have attached an excerpt in an appendix] (Angel, 63-64).

## CONCLUSION:

1. **PAUL MAKES A PROPOSAL** – he sets forth the way that the apostles endeavor and how the Corinthians ought to endeavor to live so “that the ministry be not blamed.”
2. **PAUL MANIFESTS AN APPROVAL** – he reveals the things they have undergone selflessly to prove that they desire “that the ministry be not blamed.”
3. **PAUL MENTIONS AN ARRIVAL** – he shows the outcome of their endeavor and their endurance so “that the ministry be not blamed.”
4. Is it the endeavor of each one of us, that no matter the situation, no matter the day, no matter the stress, no matter the suffering, and no matter the wrong that we have suffered, we will give no occasion for sin, in order “that the ministry be not blamed”?

## APPENDIX

[The following is one of three points in a manuscript prepared for the 5th Annual Four Seas College of Bible & Missions Lectureship of 2012 on the subject of God, “He is the Redeemer.”]

### THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID

It was foretold that Satan would “bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). If one is not careful, it can be overlooked at how costly this was. Jesus Christ “gave himself”. “Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8). It is an unimaginable price for one to be “in the form of God” yet take “upon him the form of a servant”! A paradox is something that is not contradictory yet it seems very contradictory. When one considers the price that was paid, there are many paradoxes to be considered.

The price that was paid included the paradox of poverty. “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” (2 Corinthians 8:9). The word translated “poor” and “poverty” has a root than can be found in Luke 16:20 concerning the beggar Lazarus. One cannot adequately wrap one’s mind around it! The Beginner of all things (John 1:1-3) became like a beggar with no things. He experienced poverty in that he was homeless. “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). The Carpenter (Mark 6:3) of the world (Hebrews 1:1-3), who made all things by the word of His power, was homeless! He experienced poverty in that he was hungry. “And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry” (Mark 11:12). “Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered” (Luke 4:1-2). The Bread of Life (John 6:35), who sent manna from above (John 6:31), was hungry! He experience



poverty in that was dehydrated. As he was suspended between Heaven and earth, he cried, "I thirst" (John 19:28). The giver of living water (John 4:10-14) was dehydrated! O how great was the price that included the paradox of poverty!

The price that was paid included the paradox of pain. O how paradoxical it is that he who dwells where there is no pain (Revelation 21:4) experienced pain! He experienced pain in that he hurt. Only he truly knows how much he hurt as the very souls that he came to save (Luke 19:10) spat upon him and slapped him (Matthew 26:67), released the criminal Barabbas ("son of his father") instead of him and scourged him (Matthew 27:26), mocked him and drove a crown of thorns into his head (Matthew 27:29-30), stripped him of his clothing and crucified him (Matthew 27:35). And yet, the text seems to emphasize that his greatest moment of hurt may have been in the garden where he prayed (Luke 22:44). The Great Physician, who can heal all ailments, was in agony! He experienced pain so much that he howled. One definition of "howl" is to "weep and cry out loudly" (Dictionary). Such was exactly the nature of Jesus' offering "up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death" (Hebrews 5:7). The Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6), who provides the peace "that passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7), was for a time without peace! He experienced pain in that he was heavy-hearted. "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy" (Matthew 26:36-37). He whose "yoke is easy" and "burden is light" (Matthew 11:30) had a heavy heart! Such should never have to be experienced by the God of Heaven! Yet, the paradoxes have only begun.

The price that was paid included a plethora of other paradoxes. He gave up equality with God (Philippians 2:5-8) because of man's desire to have equality with God (Genesis 3:5-6)! He gave up the unpronounceable "YHWH" (Psalm 33:6, 9; John 1:1-3,14) for the lowly man-pronounced "Jesus" (Matthew 1:18-25)! He who created the angels (Colossians 1:16) "was made a little lower than the angels" (Hebrews 2:9)! He who is not bound by time (Isaiah 57:15) became bound by time (Matthew 26:18)! The God who "cannot be tempted with evil" (James 1:13) was tempted with evil (Matthew 4:1-11)! In fact, he "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). The giver of all "riches and wealth" (Ecclesiastes 5:19) was sold for a mere thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15)! He who said "I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28) experienced being restless (Luke 6:12)! The judge of all (2 Timothy 4:1), who pronounces acceptance and rejection (Matthew 25:31-46), was rejected (Mark 8:31; 12:10; John 1:11)! He who is "the life" (John 14:26), the giver of eternal life (Romans 6:23), who dwells in a place where there is no death (Revelation 21:4), tasted death (Hebrews 2:9)! (Angel, 63-64).

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# “NOT ‘UNEQUALLY’ YOKED WITH UNBELIEVERS”

## 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The passage under consideration, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 (KJV), is questioned by modern scholarship as to whether it at all belongs in the text.
  - A. Some think the passage is too incongruous for the context, if placed in its present location, and thus some other author, not Paul, interpolated this passage.
  - B. For, according to such modernists, 2 Corinthians 7:2 seems to be an apt continuation of the warm appeal of 2 Corinthians 6:11-13.
2. The word *and* in 2 Corinthians 7:1 is usually used by Paul to connect two antagonistic ideas, but in counter to such speculation, it must be observed that Paul was academically equipped to have so rich a vocabulary and Paul here is harmonizing the isolationism required in Christianity with the freedom also found.
3. The Corinthians had contradicted their own relationship with Paul, so why not the admonition here about besmirching a pure relationship with God by joining in pagan activities (cf. 1 Cor. 1:1-10)?
  - A. The apostle was warning about the terrible dangers of compromise, and had cushioned the teaching with warm, loving passages to his brethren.
  - B. Were this passage an interpolation from somewhere else, it is incredible that there should be no trace of any such tradition in the church, however faint, to that effect.

### DISCUSSION:

- I. **“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14).**
  - A. Some seem to feel that the metaphor here is of two animals joined side by side.
    1. The term *yoke* was also used of one’s relationship with a teacher.
    2. Any relationship with an unbeliever requires a repudiation of a compatible association or *yoke*.
    3. Unbelievers are non-Christians and are to be given special consideration even if one were to eat in their houses (1 Cor. 10:27-28).

- B. Many brethren feel that this verse applies to marriage to an unbeliever and that such a union is sinful, but Paul regulated such marital relationships in another letter to this congregation.
1. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy" (1 Cor. 7:14).
    - a) Note very carefully that the admonition is not simply to be yoked, but not to be *unequally* yoked.
    - b) If such a marriage were *sinful*, note the command in 2 Corinthians 6:17 to "separate" from such a union.
    - c) Note that Peter also instructed a faithful wife on how to treat her pagan husband (1 Pet. 3:1-6).
- C. The key to a proper, beginning exegesis of the passage is to examine the term, *unequally*, that is *heterozugos*, in the original and Bauer's definition of the Greek term is: "a description of draft animals that need different kinds of yokes because they are of different species" (314).
1. To be *unequally yoked*, then, with an unbeliever is to allow the other one to have an advantage or control so that one's relation to God is impeded.
  2. The obvious illustration of the incongruity of *unequal yoking* is "righteousness and unrighteousness" and "light and darkness."
    - a) "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Cor. 6:14).
    - b) "Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44).
    - c) No Christian can worship God in a denominational setting, for God does not approve of their practices (Mat. 12:30).

II. **"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 there God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor. 6:16).**

- A. The ancient temple in Jerusalem was free of graven images and idols.

1. Paul also warned: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (1 Cor. 10:7).
2. Paul's quote from Exodus 29:45 that God would walk and dwell in His people implies that Christians are to be free from all compromise.

**III. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17).**

A. God is the Father of His people.

1. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth" (Isa. 43:6).
2. "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hos. 1:10).
3. "I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men" (2 Sam. 7:4).
4. God's grace and His "Fathership" are wonderful to contemplate for any of His children, but one must never forget that there are conditions of acceptance by Him for His people.
  - a) One **must** remain separate from doctrinal error, evil practices, and even from those who teach and do such things.
  - b) One **must not** even touch "unclean" things.
  - c) James wrote: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and **to keep oneself unspotted from the world**" (Jam. 1:27).

**IV. The final verse under consideration here is 2 Corinthians 7:1 which properly belongs to the discussion that begins at 2 Corinthians 6:14: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."**

- A. Paul insisted that the admonitions to be separate from evil were from one who loved them and he proved that the warnings (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) were not out of character with the context.

1. A Christian can, tomorrow, be a little more like Christ by **“perfecting holiness”** and **cleansing oneself of filthiness.**
2. The tense of the Greek terms indicates that the perfecting of oneself is a continuous process for the Christian.

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Nothing in this world that is evil is to be honored in any way by a Christian.
2. “Furthermore then we beseech you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more” (1 The. 4:1).

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**“GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE  
TO SALVATION”  
2 Corinthians 7:10**

*Tim Burroughs*

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. The background of the Text under consideration begins in Acts 18.
  - A. Paul is traveling on his second missionary journey.
    - 1) After departing the city of Athens, Paul comes to the city of Corinth (Acts 18:1).
    - 2) The city of Corinth was well known for her flagrant immorality.
    - 3) At her center was the temple worship of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, which housed 1,000 women slaves devoted to harlotry.
  - B. Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla.
    - 1) Aquila and Priscilla were at Corinth because Claudius had commanded all Jews depart from Rome (Acts 18:2).
    - 2) Being of the same trade, Paul would dwell with this faithful couple while preaching and teaching the Gospel (Acts 18:3).
  - C. Paul establishes the church at Corinth.
    - 1) “And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ” (Acts 18:4-5).
    - 2) When many of the Jews opposed Paul’s teaching that Jesus is the Christ, he shook his raiment and entered the house of Justice (Acts 18:6-7).
    - 3) Afterward Paul converts Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and his household, the opposition of the Jews to Paul’s preaching only grew worse (Acts 18:8).
    - 4) Paul, then receives a vision from the Lord encouraging him to be strong (Acts 18:9-10).
    - 5) Paul labors in Corinth for the Lord’s cause for one and a half years (Acts 18:11).
2. Later, Paul writes to the brethren at Corinth.
  - A. The apostle hears that the immorality surrounding Corinth has influenced the Christians there.
    - 1) “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” (1 Cor. 1:11).

- 2) Paul desired to use his influence to bring about correctness to the circumstances the church at Corinth was facing.
- B. His writing would be tough, but the sins of the congregation required such in hopes to bring about repentance.
  - 1) “What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness” (1 Cor. 4:21)?
  - 2) “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. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you” (1 Cor. 5:1-2).
3. Then, Paul waits to hear of the effects of his inspired letter addressed to his brethren.
  - A. Paul feared his first letter would not be accepted in the manner it was meant to be.
    - 1) The stern force of that first letter could have easily brought about opposition to what Paul desired from his brethren at Corinth.
    - 2) There is no wonder Paul waited anxiously to hear what would become of his brethren (2 Cor. 7:5).
  - B. Titus comes to inform Paul of the good return on his spiritual investment.
    - 1) “Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; 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” (2 Cor. 7:6-7).
    - 2) “Before Titus went to Corinth, it was Paul who had been anxious to see them, who had mourned over their moral laxity, who had been passionately interested in cleansing the church he had founded; now it is they (Corinthians, TB), who are full of longing to see him, of grief, and moral earnestness; and it is this which explains his joy (Lipscomb, 101).
4. The teaching of Paul here in the first century A.D. is vital to the church in the twenty first century.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION**

#### **A. What is godly sorrow?**

1. Godly sorrow is a sorrow that seeks to please God.
2. This type of sorrow allows one to see sin as God sees sin.
3. “God sees sin not only in it consequences, but in itself – a thing infinitely evil, even if the consequences were happiness to the



guilty instead of misery. It is when we let the light of God's Truth shine into our hearts and consciences that we may have wholesome sorrow that worketh repentance and salvation and life" (Lipscomb, 102).

B. Notice some examples of godly sorrow.

1. "But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:8-9).
2. "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went" (Matt. 21:28-29).
3. "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway" (Acts 16:32-33).

C. Notice the contrast of godly sorrow with worldly sorrow.

1. "Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:4-5).
2. "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb. 12:16-17).
3. "When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Gen. 4:12-13).

## II. GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION

A. The Greek word translated "worketh" is *katergazomai* (transliterated).

1. Thayer defines *katergazomai* as to "work out, to effect, to bring as a result" (339).
2. Godly sorrow produces an end result.

B. Paul tells his readers that godly sorrow "works."

1. When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he knew they needed to change the way they were approaching their relationship with God.
2. Repentance was the only answer.

3. True repentance could only be produced by godly sorrow.
4. Godly sorrow could only be produced by the Word of God (2 Cor. 7:8-9).

### **III. GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION**

- A. Repentance may be the hardest step of obedience man may every take.
  1. For some, it is the hardest step to understand.
  2. The word repentance literally means “a change of mind.”
  3. As it has already been stated, repentance is a change of mind caused by godly sorrow.
  4. “When man is so thoroughly filled with sorrow and mourning and self-reproach on account of his sins that his will is subdued to the will of God , and he says, I will sin no more, I will hereafter submit to the will of my God, this results in a change of his life, and it is repentance – a change of will in regard to sin” (McGarvey, 100).
- B. Repentance is commanded by God.
  1. “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30).
  2. “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).

### **IV. GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION**

- A. The salvation of which Paul writes in the text is the end result of repentance, produced by godly sorrow.
  1. This is in direct contrast to what a mind set upon the pillars of the world produces.
  2. “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2 Cor. 7:10).
  3. The sorrow of the world produces (works out) death for the one who will not conform to the will of God.
  4. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).
- B. Paul’s hope for the Corinthians was for them to accept the assurance of eternal life by the opportunity God was offering without any regret.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. When one slips into the depth of sin, there is only one thing that can remove him from that hopelessness.
2. God’s Word has the power to save (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12).
3. If one will hear it and conform to it, the blessing of salvation is his (Rom. 12:1-2).
4. Paul wrote with a heavy heart to those whom he loved dearly.
5. Although he did not know how his letter would be accepted, he knew if they followed it salvation would be the result.

6. Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation (2 Cor. 7:10).

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**“PROVE THE SINCERITY OF YOUR LOVE”**  
**(An Examination Of *The Importance Of Giving*)**  
**2 Corinthians 8-9**

**Robert Jefferies**

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. I suppose that out of all of the subjects that could be preached, one of the subjects that seems to irritate and anger brethren more than any other is the subject of giving.
2. Did you know that God’s Word has a lot to say about giving?
  - A. In fact, in the New Testament there are over 300 references to giving.
  - B. That number should be an indication to us that the subject of giving is very important to God.
3. In this study, we want to focus most of our attention around 2 Corinthians 8-9.
4. Points Of Discussion:
  - A. An **ILLUSTRATION** of Giving.
  - B. A **DISPOSITION** of Giving.
  - C. An **AFFIRMATION** of Giving.

**DISCUSSION:**

**I. AN ILLUSTRATION OF GIVING**

- A. The Macedonian Brethren.
  1. “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia” (2 Corinthians 8:1).
  2. Macedonia would serve as one of the prime examples when it came to giving.
    - a. Examples are extremely important.
    - b. Jesus left us the greatest example of all.
    - c. “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21).
  3. Who are the Macedonians?
    - a. These are brethren living in the cities of Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi.
    - b. These are all cities that the Apostle Paul took the Gospel saving message.
  4. How do we know Paul is writing about giving, when giving is not specifically mentioned?

- a. “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia” (2 Corinthians 8:1).
- b. This is the only context where grace is used to describe giving.
- c. “Grace is the channel through which all blessings flow” (Winkler, 16).
- d. In essence, giving would be the channel through which the blessings of the Gospel would flow.

B. Jesus.

- 1. “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” (2 Corinthians 8:9).
- 2. Jesus was rich.
  - a. Jesus left the glory that He had with the Father.
  - b. Jesus left the lofty heights of Heaven.
- 3. Jesus became poor.
  - a. “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).
  - b. “And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).
  - c. “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8).

## II. A DISPOSITION OF GIVING

A. Generously.

- 1. “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” (2 Corinthians 8:2-3).
- 2. These brethren gave above and beyond even when times were extremely tough.

B. Joyfully.

1. "How that in a great trial of affliction the **abundance of their joy** and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (2 Corinthians 8:2).
  2. Despite their hardship, they did not allow that to effect their mindset and deprive them of joy.
  3. Perhaps they took to heart the following words from our Lord. "I have shewed 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" (Acts 20:35).
- C. Freely and Willingly.
1. "For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were **freely willing**...For if there is first a **willing mind**, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have" (2 Corinthians 8:3, 12 NKJV).
  2. Giving must come from a willing mind.
- D. Themselves.
1. "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" (2 Corinthians 8:5).
  2. Once they gave themselves, it was only natural that they would give to others.
  3. Other passages to consider...
    - a. "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).
    - b. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).
- E. Purposefully.
1. "Every man according as he **purposeth** in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).
  2. What does it mean to purpose?
    - a. To give serious thought.
    - b. To intend considerably (Winkler, 34).
    - c. To determine beforehand (Winkler, 34).
  3. "Our giving is to be according to intent, design, aim, resolution, plan, forethought, and consideration" (Winkler, 34).
  4. Upon what is our giving based?

- a. "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" (1 Corinthians 16:2).
  - b. Not everyone has been prospered the same. So, it will be different for each individual.
- F. In turn, it will cause us to give cheerfully.
- 1. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a **cheerful** giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).
  - 2. The opposite would be grudgingly.

### III. AN AFFIRMATION OF GIVING

- A. "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and **to prove the sincerity of your love**...Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, **the proof of your love**, and of our boasting on your behalf" (2 Corinthians 8:8, 24).
- B. Love and giving go hand in hand.
- 1. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).
  - 2. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25, cf. Romans 5:8; John 15:13; Galatians 2:20).
- C. What does your love prove?
- 1. Love for God.
  - 2. Love for brethren.
  - 3. Love for the lost.

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# "BRINGING INTO CAPTIVITY EVERY THOUGHT"

## 2 Corinthians 10:5

Mike Hixson

### INTRODUCTION:

1. There is a raging battle that is ongoing for the minds of people.
  - A. The conflict involves right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error.
  - B. On the one hand, Satan is vigilant in his relentless pursuit of our souls. He seeks our allegiance and will never stop harassing and tempting those of us who belong to the human family (Lk. 4:13; 1 Pet. 5:8).
  - C. On the other hand, the Savior of the world, Jesus, wants to be the Lord of our lives.
    - 1) His desire is that we rise above the world and enthrone Him as "the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).
  - D. Only those who resolve to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5) will win the battle.
2. The heart or mind is a receptacle for good or evil, right or wrong, truth or error.
  - A. It is a reflection of who we are in life.
  - B. Solomon said, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7a).
  - C. He also made this profound observation, "As in water face reveals face, so a man's heart reveals the man" (Prov. 27:19, NKJV).
  - D. Thus, it is imperative that we guard and protect our hearts or minds.
  - E. Again, the wise man said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).
3. In this lesson we want to accentuate the importance of "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

### I. CHALLENGES TO THE MIND OF CHRIST.

- A. Satan, the great adversary of mankind, is seeking to garner a foothold in our lives. He wants our minds! Make no mistake; he will take control if we allow it.
  1. The apostle Peter warned, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Pet. 5:8-9).
  2. In his letter to the saints in Ephesus, Paul wrote, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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” (Eph. 6:10-12).

3. Sadly, the devil has captured the allegiance of many in the world, despite repeated warnings from the Scriptures.
- B. The old adage “Garbage in, garbage out” is so true.
  1. What we feed on shapes and forms our minds.
  2. Consider the words of Jesus, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies: These are things which defile a man” (Matt. 15:18-20a).
- C. There are numerous tactics the devil has employed to garner the minds of men. Just as he did in the Garden of Eden, he utilizes “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16) to bait and capture people (Jas. 1:13-16).
- D. The devil has gained control of many people through money and materialism (I Tim. 6:9-10).
  1. The fatal attraction of money and materialism can lead to covetousness, which Paul equates to idolatry (Eph. 5:5).
  2. The words of Jesus ought to resonate in the hearts and lives of people when He said, “For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Matt. 16:26).
- E. The 21<sup>st</sup> century mind is constantly bombarded with programming degrading the sanctity of human life.
  1. Think of how many young and impressionable minds have been left to believe we are the products of evolution.
  2. The idea of God creating the world and life is mocked and ridiculed.
  3. Creation is testimony of a Divine Creator (Ps. 19:1-6; 33:3-6; Heb. 3:4).
- F. Television and modern movies have also devalued the sexual relationship that is restricted to marriage (Heb. 13:4).
  1. Immodesty and explicit sexual relationships engender lust and promote unhealthy appetites that can cost us our eternal souls (Matt. 5:28; 1 Tim. 2:9-10).
- G. Profanity and vulgarity are commonly used on television programs, movies, and in the music industry (Matt. 12:34-37).
- H. It is not politically correct to condemn the homosexual lifestyle.
  1. Many young people have been led to think it is normal and acceptable in the eyes of God.
  2. Some have attempted to justify homosexuality Biblically. However, the Bible says homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

## II. CULTIVATING THE MIND OF CHRIST.

- A. In order to cultivate the mind of Christ, we are going to have to build barricades around our minds.
- B. The apostle Paul instructed us to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).
  - 1. The word “captivity” means metaphorically “to capture one’s mind.”
  - 2. Therefore, our mind is to be captured or imprisoned by our submission to His will (Rom. 6:16).
- C. We must build a wall with the precepts of God.
  - 1. Jesus defended Himself from the devil with Scripture, and we should too (Matt. 4:1-11).
  - 2. Our goal ought to be to read, study, and meditate on the Scriptures “day and night” (Ps. 1:2; 119:97; Isa. 34:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; Col. 3:16).
- D. We must build a wall with prayer to God.
  - 1. Jesus said, “men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Lu. 18:1).
  - 2. Jesus believed in the privilege and power of prayer (Mk. 1:35; Lk. 5:16; 6:12-16; 22:39-46; Jn. 17:1-26).
  - 3. Prayer affords us the opportunity to come before the throne of the Father and ask for strength and help as we live the Christian life (Heb. 4:15-16; 1 Pet. 3:12).
- E. We must build a wall with praise to God.
  - 1. Worship affords us the opportunity to pause in the midst of our busy lives and think on spiritual things.
  - 2. We can recharge our spiritual battery and focus on “things above” (Col. 3:2).
  - 3. Too many people miss the services of the church (Heb. 10:25), and are thereby robbed of spiritual strength for daily living
- F. We must build a wall of purity to God.
  - 1. The world is engulfed in darkness (1 Jn. 5:19), and to avoid getting caught up in its defilements, we must keep ourselves pure (1 Tim. 5:22).
  - 2. This means accentuating those things that will engender a life of purity.
  - 3. Paul said, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

### CONCLUSION:

- 1. One day we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an

- account of how we have lived (Rom. 14:10b-12).
2. Our thoughts and actions will follow us to the judgment (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Tim. 5:24-25; Jas. 2:12; Rev. 20:11-15).

# "SATAN...IS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT"

## 2 Corinthians 11: 13-15

Dan Cates

**TEXT:** II Cor. 11:13-15, "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 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."

**THESIS/AIM:** To show the threat of Satan still extant in his deceptive influence and the means of overcoming his power through Christ.

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The name and concept of Satan have certain presuppositions attached to them.
  - a. Some, influenced by Scripture, hear the name of Satan and wince at the cruel and deceptive enemy of God and accuser of the righteous.
  - b. Some, influenced by Milton, see images of Satan surrounded by sinners in fiery, concentric realms of hell.
  - c. Some, influenced by classical art and popular imagery, see Satan as a red creature with bat-like wings and a forked tail stabbing the righteous with a pitchfork.
  - d. Many have seen Satan merely as metaphor.
  - e. Some see Satan as being somewhat benign, just another angel, but one who has been misrepresented by Jews and Christians.
  - f. Some see Satan in somewhat of a positive light, following the type of thought presented by the English writer and critic Samuel Butler who felt that both sides in the Satan-story had not been heard, offering, "An apology for the Devil--it must be remembered that we have only heard one side of the case. God has written all of the books."
  - g. Then there are some who idolize Satan, giving him a position above God; these are Satanists who manifest various forms.
  - h. Satan is known popularly by many names, some negatively descriptive of his antagonism toward God and the righteous (especially as found in Scripture), some fanciful (as in Gounod's *Faust*, Irving's "The Devil and Tom Walker," Binet's "The Devil and Daniel Webster," or even the Rolling Stone's "Sympathy for the Devil"), and others linking him to various gods of world mythology (viewed either positively or negatively, depending upon the theology of the one naming him).
2. The Bible speaks of but one Satan and his having but one nature--far from the inspirational, wisdom-granting, child-loving and child-loved, liberator which some try to pass him off as today.
3. What the Bible does concede, though, is this: Satan can come across as he is at times depicted, in at least a benign and at most a beloved light; accordingly, Paul spoke of

Satan's being "transformed into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14); though he dwells in darkness and is the embodiment of darkness, Satan can appear as light.

5. In this study we shall see the threat, Satan, and those whom he has threatened, understanding, though, that Satan is fighting not a losing, but a lost battle; accordingly, we shall see Satan: The defeated enemy; mankind: The deceived masses; false teachers: The descended children; and Christians: The delivered souls.

## I. SATAN: THE DEFEATED ENEMY.

A. Satan stands defeated; his hands are tied; he has exhausted all his power in trying to defeat God, and has failed!

1. He was defeated when Jesus Christ rose from the grave.
  - a. This had been prophesied of old, "And I [God-all bracketed comments DFC] will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman [Eve], and between thy seed [the wicked] and her seed [Christ]; it [Christ, the seed of woman] shall bruise thy head [delivering the death blow upon being resurrected from the dead], and thou [Satan] shalt bruise his heel [causing the God to die upon the cross]" (Gen. 3:15).
  - b. "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" (Heb. 2:14,15).
  - c. "*And* having spoiled [defeated as a vanquished foe] principalities and powers [cf 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*."], he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15).
  - d. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8b).
  - e. The insured victory gives saints the wherewithal to face all trials (Rom. 16:20, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.").
2. His defeat has rendered him impotent in directly causing one to do wrong!
  - a. Satan can violate the free will of none!
    - (1). This has actually always been the case, otherwise Satan would have more power than God, for God has never violated man's will forcing that man to obey Him.
  - b. None may say, "The devil made me do it."

B. While Satan is powerless, his influence remains!

1. What did Satan do while he still had power?

- a. Satan deceived the first couple into thinking that they could be as God (Gen. 3; II Cor. 11:3).
  - b. Satan fought God on the battleground which was God's beloved servant Job (Job 1,2).
  - c. Satan desired to sift Peter as wheat (Luke 22:31).
  - d. Satan even had the audacity to try the Son of God (Mat. 4:1-11); although, with destruction assured, going directly after his Enemy was his only chance at victory.
    - (1). His attack was inestimably more fool-hardy than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor which awoke a formidable sleeping dragon.
  - e. It is no wonder that he has been and is considered "the Adversary"! (Job 1:6, ASV).
2. What would Satan do today if he had the chance?
- a. If Satan could fight another battle with God, he would--but he cannot!
  - b. If Satan were allowed to again have the power he exhibited in the trying of Job, he would do the very same thing to every child of God, with no remorse--but he cannot!
  - c. Were it in Satan's power, he would appear before every one of God's children today--but that is not now in his power!
3. What could Satan never do?
- a. Though he had more power than he has, Satan was never omnipresent; in fact, he walked "up and down in" the earth (Job 1:7; 2:2).
  - b. Though he had more power than he has, Satan was never omniscient; in fact, he had to be asked if he had considered Job (Job 1:8)--he had (Job 1:9,10), but only because he recognized that Job would be a suitable mortal to attack.
  - c. Though he had more power than he has, Satan was never omnipotent; in fact, he had to be allowed to "touch" Job's goods, family, and body (Job 1:11,12).
  - d. Though he had more power than he has, Satan was never able to act without having to give account to God (Job 1:6; 2:1).
4. What can Satan do today?
- a. He can still be a threat through his influence (I Pet. 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:")--through the forces of this world such as atheism, humanism, immorality, political correctness, and others.
  - b. He can tempt (I The. 3:5, "For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.").
    - b. He can lead by example (I John 3:8a, "He that committeth sin is

- of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.").
- c. He can be the father-figure to his deceived children (John 8:44; I John 3:10).

## II. MANKIND: THE DECEIVED MASSES.

- A. Described as "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4), "the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2), Satan has certainly influenced humanity!
  - 1. His character.
    - a. He is the subtle seducer and corrupter (II Cor. 11:3).
    - b. He is the progenitor of the lie and the murderer of the soul (John 8:44).
    - d. He is the blinder of man (II Cor. 4:4).
    - c. He is the adversary of God and man (I Pet. 5:8).
  - 2. His knowledge.
    - a. He knows, generally, the desires and weakness of men (I John 2:16, "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.").
    - b. He knows that if he can make people doubt God, Truth, right, religion, each other, or even themselves then he can corrupt them.
  - 3. His effect.
    - a. He cannot defeat God--in fact, he was never in the fight as pertaining to winning the *war*; however, damning the soul of any individual which God desires to save (I Tim. 2:4) is a battle which he will not pass up winning.
    - b. He may win the victory on any given day over any given soul, and therefore, remains a threat to the deceived masses.

## III. FALSE TEACHERS: THE DESCENDED CHILDREN.

- A. Those who would not hear God and Christ and who actively rejected Jesus in spite of His miraculous testimony to Himself were described as being children of the devil (John 8:44); they were the early versions of the false teachers and receivers of falsehood who would be described by Paul, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).
  - 1. The woe of Isaiah 5:20 applied to all those who rejected the good in favor of the evil as if the evil were good and vice versa ("Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!").
- B. In the text of II Corinthians 11, false teachers are compared to their father, Satan; while they and their message were despicable, they were accepted by many with open arms as if they had some great value.
  - 1. Paul faced such false teachers often--generally Judaizers.

- a. Judaizers were ones who would follow the missionaries of the early church attempting to convince the converts to Christianity that Christians were subject to ordinances of the Mosaic law (this movement seems to have begun in Acts 11 with ones contending with Peter at the conversion of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10 and seems to have bloomed with the opponents of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15).
- b. Note for instance, the churches in Galatia who faced Jewish opposition to the Gospel; after his stop in the region as part of his the Third Missionary Journey, "Paul left them, but Judaizing teachers soon came in and, acting upon their [the Galatians-DFC] unstable nature, greatly corrupted the simplicity of their faith" (Frank Dunn, *Know Your Bible*, 501).
  - (1). Paul, accordingly, wrote, "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" (Gal. 1:6-7).
  - (2). The influence of the Judaizers provides light on Gal. 4:8-9, "Howbeit then, when ye [the Gentiles] knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods [the pantheon of Greco-Roman mythology]. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God [through obedience to the Gospel], how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [which the Judaizers had introduced], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage [as you were under the false gods whose service involved sacrifice and various other rites also associated with Judaism]?"
- 2. The false teachers, Judaizers or otherwise, often had very attractive arguments or abilities or they attacked legitimate teachers and authentic apostles like Paul--but such did not make them right, only dangerous!
  - a. The hearers rejected the Truth and its proclaimers in favor of those who could deliver a pleasing sounding message (II Tim. 4:3,4) or who promoted themselves (II Cor. 11:5; 12:11).
  - b. Those who presented such a message or attacked God's true messengers were described by Paul: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (II Cor. 11:13); it was not surprising, as Paul wrote, "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" (II Cor. 11:14,15).

- C. Today, as in Paul's day, there are billions deceived by those who merely appear as light!
  - 1. They follow the religions and doctrines of men in systems such as Islam, Buddhism, humanism, modern Judaism, et al.
  - 2. They follow the false teachings of those who claim to speak for Christ in such systems as Catholicism and denominationalism.

#### **IV. CHRISTIANS: THE DELIVERED SOULS.**

- A. Earlier in II Corinthians, Paul had written, "... we are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices" (2:11); two things are of note.
  - 1. Why did Paul write this?
    - a. Paul was writing this to say that he understood how Satan worked, and it would be Satan's desire to have one who had repented of a sin not be forgiven by his brethren.
      - (1). Satan wants three things: the lost to remain lost, those who have been saved to become lost again, and those who have repented not to be fellowshipped again.
    - b. The Corinthians had been admonished to disfellowship a disorderly brother who was having an affair with his father's wife (I Cor. 5); they had responded by disfellowshipping him and seeing his subsequent return and forgiveness (II Cor. 2:1-9); Paul's forgiveness of him likewise followed (II Cor. 2:10) so that Satan would not see a penitent brother turned away by the brother's avowed forgiving brethren!
  - 2. What does this mean to Christians today?
    - a. Christians can know how Satan operates; enlightened by the Word of God, they likewise "are not ignorant of his devices."
- B. What can Christians know?
  - 1. Christians can know the threat that is Satan and can know of his defeat.
  - 2. Christians can know the mode of Satan's operation, temptation, and its inadequacy to force one to be lost.
- C. How does that knowledge help Christians?
  - 1. By that knowledge, Christians are assured that the enemy is can be resisted and is defeat-able (II Pet. 5:8,9; Jam. 4:7).
    - a. "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world" (I John 4:1, 4:4).
    - b. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).
  - 2. By that knowledge, Christians are assured that God will not allow the temptation to be unbearable (I Cor. 10:13) but has given a means of escape: His Word, the Bible (Mat. 4:4,7,10).

**CONCLUSION:**

1. While Satan may look like an angel of light, he is really a defeated enemy who has corrupted the world which is his domain so deceiving mankind both through his influence and those who likewise come across as portraying light.
2. Christians know the true character of Satan, though, and so may recognize and overcome his damning influence being delivered by the victorious Christ!

*Ladies'  
Lectures*

# "YE OUGHT RATHER TO FORGIVE"

## 2 Corinthians 2:7

Irene C. Taylor

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Forgiveness is a vital part of the Christian life, yet few understand the import of this command.
2. In our study, we want to emphasize the need for forgiveness, its scope and the beauty of it.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. GIVE AN EXAMINATION OF OUR TEXT.

- A. Discuss the background leading up to the text (1 Corinthians 5:1-7).
  1. Toleration of sin in the congregation erodes the purity thereof (vs. 6).
  2. Toleration of evil is tantamount to acceptance of wrong, a sin in and of itself.
  3. Paul warns of the danger of such toleration.
- B. Note our duty toward one who repents of wrong.
  1. It is now time for forgiveness.
  2. Forgiveness means acceptance back as our Christian brother/sister.
    - a. What constitutes forgiveness?
    - b. It means restoring fellowship as if no wrong had occurred.
      - 1) When God forgives, He forgets.
      - 2) He marks it from our record (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17).
- C. Note God's standard for forgiveness.
  1. God forgives us as we forgive others (Matthew 6:14-15).
  2. When we refuse to forgive others we close the door to heaven for ourselves (Matthew 18:35).
- D. How often must I forgive?
  1. As often as one repents of sin (Matthew 18:21-22).
  2. "...forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Luke 6:37b).

#### II. WHEN IS FORGIVENESS TO BE GRANTED?

- A. "...If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him" (Luke 17:3).
  1. Repentance must precede forgiveness.
- B. List some examples of forgiveness.
  1. Stephen pleaded on behalf of his executioners, "lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60).
    - a. Was their sin immediately forgiven?

- 1) We know that Paul was forgiven (Acts 9).
- 2) We are not told about the others.
2. On the cross Jesus asked, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:24).
  - a. When were they actually forgiven? (Acts 2:36-41).
- C. Can one be forgiven without repentance? (Luke 13:2, 5).
- D. Are we to judge whether one's repentance is sincere or not?
  1. Man does not have that ability.
  2. God is the judge of man's sincerity in all things.
  3. Let us not try to step into God's realm.
    - a. "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged..." (Luke 6:37a; Matthew 7:1).
      - 1) What kind of judgment is forbidden?
      - 2) We are to consider self (Matthew 7:2ff).
    - b. Judge righteous judgment (John 7:24).
      - 1) Be a fruit inspector (Matthew 7:20).
      - 2) Good does not come from evil!

### III. FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- A. Someone has wisely said, "Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that crushed it" (*Apples of Gold*, p. 14).
- B. "It is only the forgiving who are qualified to receive forgiveness" (*Apples of Gold*, p. 13).
- C. "Some people give and forgive; others get and forget" (*Apples of Gold*, p. 18).
- D. "To be wronged is nothing unless you continue to remember it" (*Apples of Gold*, p. 31).
- E. Hate is a prolonged manner of suicide" (*Apples of Gold*, p. 18).

### CONCLUSION:

1. Remember, the Lord forgives us as we repent and forgive others, as they repent and request our forgiveness.
2. Holding a grudge will damn our soul.
3. The vessel in which it is stored is damaged far more than the vessel on which it is poured.
4. We must keep a mindset ready to forgive.
5. The following poem sums up the beauty of forgiveness.

"I've found a little remedy  
 To ease the life we live  
 And make each day a happier one.  
 It is the word 'forgive'.

So often little things come up  
That leave a pain and sting,

That covered up at once would not  
Amount to anything.

Tis when we hold them up to view,  
And brood and sulk and fret,  
They greater grow before our eyes;  
"T'were better to forget."

*(Apples of Gold, p. 16)*

**"THE INWARD MAN IS RENEWED DAY BY DAY"**  
**2 Corinthians 4:16**

*Maggie Colley*

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. Paul is, in our Text, giving his reason for not fainting in the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58).
2. We need to study his reasoning in order to understand our strengths and weaknesses, and to determine how we can improve in faithful service.
3. We do not want to "faint" or fall short in our responsibilities to the Lord.
4. Paul states that though their work had been exceedingly difficult and their tasks heavy; they were not ready to faint or ready to give up their work because they were disheartened or discouraged.

**DISCUSSION:**

**I. WHAT DOES PAUL MEAN BY THE "OUTWARD MAN?"**

- A. Paul is referring to the physical part of man's dual being.
- B. He was not a humanist or materialist in believing that man does not have a soul (Ecc. 12:7; Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7; Jas. 2:26).
- C. Our outward man is necessary on earth to serve God:
  1. With our tongues we teach and preach the Gospel (Mk. 16:15-16; Matt. 18: 18-20).
  2. With our hands we serve the Lord and others (Gal. 6:10).
  3. With our feet we carry the Gospel to others (Rom. 10:13-17).
  4. With our ears we hear God's Will (Rom. 19:17).

**II. WHAT DOES PAUL MEAN CONCERNING THE "INWARD MAN?"**

- A. This is referring to the part of man that is in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27).
- B. Though the soul is not seen, it is still the most important part of man (Matt. 16:24-26).
- C. Some claim they cannot believe in anything that they cannot see with the physical eye!
  1. Does man have a brain? A heart? Two lungs? Have we seen them? We have not, but we still believe they are parts of our bodies!

D. Since "God is a spirit" (Jn. 4:24), the soul which every individual possesses, and which is given us by God, is the "inward part of man" and is eternal (Psa. 22:26).

E. We are to care for this part of man with all diligence (Prov. 4:23).

F. This is the part of man that is "renewed day by day."

### **III. WHY DOES HE CALL OUR AFFLICTIONS "LIGHT?"**

A. When we are called upon in the providence of God to suffer, it does not generally seem to be "light."

B. Paul suffered more than most of us will ever suffer on earth, but he is speaking here of our brief time of suffering when it is compared to eternity!

C. To the Roman brethren Paul wrote: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward" (Rom.8:18).

### **IV. WHAT ARE THE "THINGS THAT ARE SEEN?"**

A. This is referring to the temporal things that surround us on a daily basis.

B. We live such a brief time on earth, but too many are striving only for the "things that are seen."

C. The inspired writer James states: (Jas. 4:13-15).

D. The things that are seen are things that are temporary and shall pass away in the last day (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

E. If our treasures are only in this world, we will lose all! (Matt. 6:19-21).

### **V. TO WHAT DOES PAUL REFER IN SPEAKING OF "THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT SEEN?"**

A. These are the eternal things.

B. We have not seen Heaven, with its wall of jewels, the gates of pearl, nor the street of gold.

C. We have not seen with the physical eye, God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit.

D. What a joy it will be to see these things for which we have hope (Tit. 1:2; 2 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5:1-2).

E. Paul had seen the "third heaven" where God dwells, but was not allowed to reveal what he saw (2 Cor. 12:2-4).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. What a joy to think about eternity in Heaven!



2. This lesson should be an energizer for us to live the Christian life!
3. This should be our ultimate impetus for living the Christian life!
4. Let us be sure that our "inward man" is renewed daily by study, prayer, and living the life of a Christian (2 Tim. 2:15; I Thess. 5:17; Rom. 12:1-2).