

## 2 Corinthians Series 2024 Introduction

**Introduction:** It has been nearly 20 years (2004) since I taught through this book. I am not sure how long it will take to work through this book this time. There are 13 chapters, 257 verses, and @ 4,477 words in the Greek version.

### 1) **Background of the book** (3 visits, 4 letters in @ 6 ½ years)

- a) Paul ***first visited*** Corinth on his 2<sup>nd</sup> church planting journey in 51-52 AD. Here he met Aquila and Priscilla. He spent 18 months in this city, as described in Acts 18:1-18. It was in this cosmopolitan city that God revealed Himself to Paul (Acts 18:9-10). Paul wrote his description of humanity recorded in Romans 1:21-32 from this city.
- b) Apollos was then sent to Corinth by Aquila and Priscilla to minister in Paul's absence (Acts 18:18-28; 1 Cor. 3:1-7). This took place in 53 AD.
- c) Paul then wrote his **first letter** (*uninspired*) to the Corinthians from Ephesus to address the issue of sexual immorality. That letter is now lost (1 Cor. 5:9-11).
- d) Paul had also written an earlier *inspired* letter to the Corinthians in the spring of 56 AD dealing with a variety of questions posed by the Corinthians, through their delegation listed in 1 Cor. 16:17. This **second letter** we know as 1 Cor.
- e) Paul had sent Timothy to Corinth to find out what was happening there (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10-11). Timothy apparently returned with disturbing news concerning the assembly. Paul then made a ***second visit***, which he described as painful (2 Cor. 2:1).
- f) Paul wrote a **third letter** (the second *uninspired* letter) and sent it by Titus (2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:5-16). This letter caused genuine repentance among the Corinthians.
- g) Paul now writes his **fourth letter** (the second *inspired* letter) which we know as 2 Cor. It was probably written in Sept.-Oct. 56 AD, possibly from Philippi in Macedonia (northern Greece), as Paul is coming to the end of his third church planting journey.
- h) Paul made a ***third visit*** to Corinth for 2 months in the winter of 56-57 AD (Acts 20:2-3).

### 2) **An overview of the book**

- a) Overall outline
  - i) Paul addresses a resolved crisis—1:1-7:16
  - ii) Paul addresses the collection for Jerusalem Christians—8:1-9:15
  - iii) Paul addresses a new crisis—10:1-13:10

- b) Openness (2 Cor. 6:11)
  - i) Paul knows that his relationship with the assembly has been strained.
  - ii) Paul bares his soul, not as a pastor, but as a church-planter/discipler who hears of the struggles of his newborn flock.
  - iii) Paul reveals details about his personal life in this letter that we learn nowhere else.

### 3) Salutation of the book—1:1-2

- a) The writers
  - i) *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,*
    - (1) This was not something for which Paul had volunteered. He was an apostle by God's own choice, not his own abilities, powers, or self-assertion.
    - (2) Paul was selected by God as His authorized representative to accomplish His business.
      - (a) This becomes the issue in chapters 10-13.
    - (3) There were technical (here), semitechnical (Acts 14:14; Gal. 1:19), nontechnical (Phil. 2:25), and false (2 Cor. 11:13) apostles.
  - ii) *And Timothy our brother*
    - (1) He met Paul in 48-49 AD, @ 8 years earlier. (Acts 16:1-3)
    - (2) Timothy had already ministered in Corinth various times (1:19). They were quite familiar with him.
- b) The recipients
  - i) To a specific city—*To the church of God which is at Corinth*
    - (1) These were those who God had already chosen—Acts 18:10
    - (2) Men and women steeped in idolatry and sensuality had trusted Christ by His grace.
    - (3) This assembly belongs to God, not the members!
  - ii) To a larger province—*with all the saints* (holy ones) *who are throughout Achaia:*
    - (1) Notice that they are called “saints” and not the “church of Achaia.” Churches are local bodies of genuine believers.
    - (2) The other assemblies that we are aware of in Achaia include Athens (Acts 17:34) and Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1).
    - (3) Geographically and politically, Achaia was the southern part of Greece, while Macedonia was the northern part of Greece.
    - (4) Corinth was the capital city of Achaia.
- c) The desire of his heart
  - i) His desire
    - (1) Typical Greek greeting: *Grace to you*

- (a) The active demonstration of God's love.
  - (2) Typical Jewish greeting: *And peace*
    - (a) The result of God's grace.
    - (b) Peace externally and internally.
  - ii) From One source
    - (1) *From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
      - (a) Note the equality of the Father and the Son
- 4) Things we need to remember:**
- a) The local church is central to God's program for this age.
  - b) Every one of us needs God's grace.
  - c) Every one of us needs God's peace.

## 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Explaining the God who comforts

### Introduction:

According to his account in verses 8–11, Paul has recently been deeply challenged emotionally and threatened physically, having come through a terrifying time of intense persecution. The apostle describes this experience as overwhelming, bringing him to the brink of despair and a certain inability to cope with the situation. Death seemed imminent. (George Guthrie)

One other thing to observe, in the original Greek text, is the alliteration of the letter P. In verses 3-4, there are 10 words that begin with P.

### 1) Paul praises God for who He is—1:3 <sup>3</sup> **Blessed [eulogetos] be ...**

- a) No verb in the Greek, so one must be understood.
- b) Thanksgiving: optative: it is something we do. Blessed be ...
- c) Benediction: indicative: it is something God is. Blessed is ...
  - i) A synonym for “worthy of praise”
  - ii) This is similar to the 18-19 benedictions used in the synagogues.
    - (1) Numbers 1-3 state the basic beliefs of the Jews.
      - (a) For examples, # 1 reads: “Blessed be You, O Lord, our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, the great, the mighty, and the fearful God—God Most High—who bestows goodly kindnesses, and are the Creator of all, and remembers the love of the Fathers and brings a redeemer for their children’s children for the sake of Your name in love. King, Helper, Savior, and Shield; blessed be You, Shield of Abraham.”
    - (2) Numbers 4-9 are personal prayers.
    - (3) Numbers 10-15 are national prayers.
    - (4) Numbers 16-18 are about serving God.
    - (5) Number 19 is a prayer for peace.

### 2) Paul identifies this God—1:3

- a) **God & Father:** *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*,
  - i) In the OT He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- b) **Father & God:** *the Father of mercies [oiktirmos] and God of all comfort [paraklesis],*
  - i) He uses the plural form of mercy.
    - (1) Cf. Neh. 9:19; Ps. 51:1; 103:13; Isa. 63:7; Dan. 9:9
  - ii) He uses the noun paraklesis and the verb parakaleo 10x in 1:3-7.
    - (1) Cf. Isa. 40:1; 51:3; 61:2; 66:13; Luke 2:25
    - (2) He gives every possible encouragement at every possible time.

- c) Compassion and mercy were seen by the Romans as a weakness.

**3) Paul states the extent of what God the Father does—1:4a**

- a) It is all encompassing—<sup>4</sup> *who comforts* [pres. act. ptc. parakaleo] *us in all our affliction* [thlipsis]
- i) Affliction can be internal or external pressure, or both. Adversity includes the harsh difficulties that may be physical, mental, social, financial, or spiritual. Think of squeezing or squishing. See 2 Cor. 1:8-10; 4:7-12; 6:4-10; 11:23-28; 12:10 for some examples.
  - ii) Every time a painful affliction rises up in our lives, God's comfort rises to meet it and calm it. We will see throughout this letter that God often does not take away the affliction itself, but he does what is needed so that we can endure and even flourish in spite of the affliction. (Dane Ortlund)

**4) Paul states the result and sphere of what God the Father does—1:4b**

- a) *so that we will be able to comfort* [pres. act. inf. parakaleo] *those who are in any affliction* [thlipsis] *with the comfort* [paraklesis] *with which we ourselves are comforted* [pres. pass. ind. parakaleo] *by God*.

**5) Things to remember:**

- a) Who is God the Father? (Moody BC)
- i) He is both God and Father to Jesus.
  - ii) He is a compassionate Father in hardship.
  - iii) He is my exclusive and adequate source of all genuine comfort.
  - iv) He is my actual comforter in time of need.
  - v) He has a purpose in comforting me, namely, that I would pass on His comfort to others.
    - (1) In other words, we are not comforted to be comfortable but to be comforters. (Wm. MacDonald)
- b) James Rosscup reminds us in the harsh difficulties of life, that we can say: "I want to come through this, fitted to be a comfort to others when they face their own afflictions, oh God. Since You have let me be in the kind of situation others are in, let me learn how to offer a balm of comfort to them."

## 2 Corinthians 1:5-7 Explaining the comfort God gives

**Introduction:** Having described the God who gives comfort, Paul (by the Spirit) describes the comfort of which God gives. Again, note the alliteration of the letter P (11x).

- Note the pattern of suffering first, comfort second

### 1) **God's comfort is ABUNDANT**—1:5

- a) **Suffering:**<sup>5</sup> *For just as the sufferings [pathema] of Christ abound [pres. act. ind. perisseuo] to us,*
  - i) Pathema refers to our personal experiences, often originating outside of us, but sometimes from within. These experiences are often neutral, but usually perceived by us as unpleasant.
  - ii) "Sufferings of Christ" are the distresses in a hostile environment incurred by Paul because of his relationship to Christ. See 2 Cor. 1:8-10; 4:7-12; 6:4-10; 11:23-28; 12:10 for some examples.
  - iii) Sometimes we suffer: (Warren Wiersbe)
    - (1) Because of our own sin and rebellion. Jonah comes to mind.
    - (2) To keep us from sinning. (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7)
    - (3) To perfect our character (cf. Rom. 5:1-5)
    - (4) To help us share the character of God. (cf. Heb. 12:1-11)
    - (5) To help us minister to others. (cf. Cor. 1:5-7)
- b) **Comfort:** *so also our comfort [paraklesis] abounds [pres. act. ind. perisseuo] through Christ.*
  - i) Christ is the intermediary through who God comforts us.
- c) Whenever Christ's sufferings were multiplied in Paul's life, God's comfort was correspondingly multiplied through the ministry of Christ. (Murray Harris)
- d) \*\*There is more than enough comfort for us.

### 2) **God's comfort is PURPOSEFUL**—1:6

- a) **Suffering:**<sup>6</sup> *But whether [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] we are afflicted [pres. ass. ind. thlibo], it is for [huper] your comfort [paraklesis] and salvation [soteria];*
- b) **Comfort:** *or whether [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] we are comforted [pres. pass. ind. parakaleo], it is for [huper] your comfort [paraklesis],*
  - i) *which is working [pres. mid. ptc. energeo] in your perseverance [hupomone] in the same sufferings [pathema] which we also suffer [pres. act. ind. pascho].*
- c) This is far more than merely setting a good example of enduring pain.

- d) Comfort that is mediated through believers is just as real as that mediated directly by God: because believers are in Christ, to be comforted by other believers *is* to be comforted by Christ. (Dane Ortlund)
  - e) \*\*There is more than enough comfort for us to share with others. Paul suffers, we benefit. We suffer, others benefit.
- 3) **God's comfort is SHARED**—1:7 <sup>7</sup> *And our hope [elpis] for [huper] you is firmly grounded, knowing [perf. act. ptc.] (two things) that ...*
- The English word “hope” implies a certain degree of uncertainty. The Greek word instead communicates confident assurance.
  - Despite all the tension in Paul's relationship with the church at Corinth, he is still confident of God's work in them. (Cf. 7:6-7, 13-16)
- a) **Suffering:** *as you are sharers [koinonos] of our sufferings [pathema],*
- b) **Comfort:** *so also (you are sharers of our) the comfort [paraklesis].*
- 4) **Things to remember:**
- a) Murray Harris writes: Whenever Christ's sufferings were multiplied in Paul's life, God's comfort was correspondingly multiplied through the ministry of Christ.
  - b) Harris states it a different way: Paul is affirming that a Corinthian partnership in his sufferings guarantees partnership in the comfort he enjoys; if they suffer as he does, they will also receive comfort just as he does.
  - c) Let me encourage you to consider the unsettling pressures of life to be like a workbench vise. Yes, we ARE being squeezed, but by being squeezed because of the wisdom of the Craftsman, we are being held tightly so He can accomplish what He intends for us.

## 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 Explaining the Affliction he Experienced

**Introduction:** Paul, by the Spirit, first described the God who gives comfort, and then the comfort which God gives. Now he moves on to explain the affliction he has been experiencing in which he received God's comfort. Note, he does not write theoretically from a college or university office, but realistically from the trenches of life itself.

### 1) Paul's burden of affliction introduced—1:8

- a) **His willing explanation:** <sup>8</sup> *For we do not want you to be unaware* (lit. "we do not want you not to know"), *brothers, of our affliction* [*thlipsis*] *which came to us in Asia*,
  - i) Paul had intended to stay near Ephesus in Asia (cf. 1 Cor. 16:8-9; Acts 19)
- b) **His transparent explanation:** *that ...* (the affliction was ...)
  - i) **Oppressively heavy:** *we were burdened* [*bareo*]
    - (1) Weighed down
  - ii) **Extraordinarily difficult:** *excessively* [*kata uperbole*],
  - iii) **Overwhelmingly disabling:** *beyond* [*hyper*] *our strength* [*dunamis*],
  - iv) **Emotionally embarrassing:** *so that we despaired* [*exaporeo*]
    - (1) Utterly at a loss, utterly perplexed
  - v) **Life threatening:** *even to live*.
    - (1) He could see no chance of surviving the danger he faced.

### 2) Paul's burden of affliction expanded—1:9

- a) **The severe perception of his burden:** <sup>9</sup> *Indeed, we* (emphatic) *had* [perf. act. ind. *echo*] *the sentence* [*apokrima*] *of death within ourselves*
  - i) Some view this as a literal judicial sentence.
- b) **The theological explanation of his burden:**
  - i) **Negatively:** *so that* [*hina*] *we would not have confidence* [perf. act. ptc. *peitho*] *in* [*epi*] *ourselves*,
    - (1) He renounces self-reliance.
  - ii) **Positively:** *but* (have confidence) *in* [*epi*] *God who raises* [pres. act. ptc. *egeiro*] *the dead*;
    - (1)

### 3) Paul's settled hope in God's work explained—1:10-11

- a) **God's work explained—1:10**
  - i) **Past rescue:** <sup>10</sup> *who rescued* [aor. mid. ind. *ruomai*] *us from so great a peril of death*,



- ii) **Future rescue:** *and will rescue* [fut. mid. in. ruomai] *us*,
- iii) **Settled hope:** *He on whom we have set our hope* [perf. act. ind. elpizo].
- iv) **Future rescue:** *And He will yet* [eti] *rescue us* [fut. mid. in. ruomai],
- b) **The Corinthian participation—1:11**
  - i) **Joined in prayer:** <sup>11</sup> *you also joining in helping us through your prayers on our behalf,*
  - ii) **Joined in gratitude:** *so that thanks may be given (to God) on our behalf by many persons* (lit. “faces”) *for the gracious gift* [charisma] *bestowed on us through the prayers of many.*

**4) Things to remember:**

- a) We should never assume we know the full depth of someone’s suffering.
- b) We should never forget the teaching purposes of suffering: renouncing self-reliance and depending on God.
- c) We should never forget the importance of prayer on behalf of others.

## 2 Corinthians 1:12-14 Defending Your Integrity

**Introduction:** Paul meets questions concerning his motives head-on. (David Lowery) He will reveal the accusations against him in 1:15-2:11. So, Paul gets defensive. Is this ever okay for us as Christians today?

Paul had originally planned to spend time at Corinth “if the Lord permits” (1 Cor. 16:2-8). Apparently, he did not visit them, and now some are upset because of this change of plans and are falsely accusing Paul of lacking integrity. This paragraph launches one of the main themes of this letter.

### 1) Integrity—1:12

#### a) Two supports of his claim:

##### i) The claim of consistent behavior:

(1) *we have conducted ourselves* [aor. pass. ind. anastrepho]

(a) Paul looks back over the entirety of Paul’s life as a Christian in a single, comprehensive glance. (Murray Harris)

(2) Some Corinthians believed that Paul’s change in travel plans proved that he lacked integrity. But just as they trusted his word about Jesus Christ, they could trust his word about travel plans. (David Woodall)

(3) John MacArthur writes: they had accused him of being proud, self-serving, untrustworthy and inconsistent, mentally unbalanced, incompetent, unsophisticated, and an incompetent preacher)

##### ii) The supports of this claim:

(1) **Emotional confidence:** <sup>12</sup> *For our boasting* [kauchesis] (but not arrogant self-confidence) *is this:*

(2) **Legal evidence:** *the testimony* [marturion] *of our conscience* [suneidesis] (the moral capacity of (mostly) objective self-evaluation before God in light of the highest standard we value),

(a) Cf. Acts 24:16

#### b) Two spheres of ministry:

i) **Generally:** *in* [en] *the world,*

ii) **Specifically:** *and especially toward* [pros] *you.*

(1) Perhaps the Corinthians were more critical than most of the behavior of itinerants (whose methods were not always exemplary) and Paul wanted it to be abundantly clear that as a messenger of the gospel, he renounced all such questionable methods. (Colin Kruse)

#### c) Two characteristics of ministry:

##### i) Positive sphere:

(1) **Integrity:** *that in* [en] *holiness* [hagiotēs] *and godly sincerity* [eilikrineia],

- (a) Most MSS read haplotes simplicity/singleness of purpose. This is more likely than hagiotēs, which Paul never uses.
- (b) The difference in Greek looks like: ΑΓΙΟΤΗΤΙ and ΑΠΛΟΤΗΤΙ.
- (2) **Dependence:** *in [en] the grace [charis] of God,*
- ii) **Negative sphere:**
  - (1) *not in [en] fleshly [sarkikos] (i.e. human) wisdom but ...*
    - (a) This is a “wisdom” that seeks to hide our motives in our pursuit of personal advantage, using others for our own gain.
- iii) Some people think that if they can discredit the messenger, they can discredit the message itself.

## 2) Transparency—1:13-14

- a) **Three stages of understanding:**
  - i) **Present:** <sup>13</sup> *For we write nothing else to you than what you read [anaginosko] and understand [epiginosko],*
  - ii) **Future:** *and I hope you will understand [epiginosko] until the end,*
  - iii) **Past:** <sup>14</sup> *just as you also partially did understand [epiginosko] us,*
- b) **Mutual disclosure:**
  - i) *that we are your reason for boasting [kauchema] as you also are ours,*
- c) **Mutual accountability:**
  - i) *in the day of our Lord Jesus.*
- d) There is no hidden agenda with Paul. He says what he means, and he means what he says. Don't try to read between the lines.

## 3) Things to remember:

- a) It is **NOT** wrong/sinful to defend yourself.
  - i) There are occasions when Christians, confronted by groundless accusations of impropriety of conduct, are justified in appealing to their motives for acting in a particular way. An unjustifiable stigma that may have become attached to a certain course of action may sometimes be removed by a frank appeal to one's clear conscience over the behavior in question. (Murray Harris)
- b) It is wrong/sinful to assume ulterior motives in others.
  - i) Warren Wiersbe wrote: Misunderstandings among God's people are often very difficult to untangle, because one misunderstanding often leads to another. Once we start to question the integrity of others or distrust their words, the door is opened to all kinds of problems.

## 2 Corinthians 1:15-20 When Your Good Intentions are Unfairly Criticized

**Introduction:** Stating your good intentions is far different than making an iron-clad promise. No one should confuse the two.

Paul's relationship with the Corinthians church was obviously strained. **First**, Paul didn't follow his original plan. Instead, he wrote a strong letter to them. (1:15-2:4; 10:10; 12:13-15) **Second**, his face-to-face visit appears to have only worsened the already strained feelings. **Third**, Paul refused to accept payment for ministering (11:8-9; 12:16-18). [Apologetics Study Bible]

- 1) **Good intentions—1:15-16** <sup>15</sup> *And in this confidence I intended [impf. ind. boulomai] at first ... [four infinitives]*
  - a) *to come to you, so that you might receive grace twice;*
    - i) His intention was to benefit them, not himself.
  - b) <sup>16</sup> *that is, to pass your way into Macedonia,*
  - c) *and again from Macedonia to come to you,*
  - d) *and by you to be helped on my journey to Judea.*
  - e) Paul was providentially hindered (twice!) from fulfilling his original plans. Cf. 1 Cor. 16:2-9; Acts 20:1-3
    - i) His intentions and his reality:
      - (1) Plan A: Ephesus, Macedonia, Corinth, maybe Jerusalem
      - (2) Plan B: Ephesus, Corinth, Macedonia, Corinth, Judea
      - (3) Reality: Ephesus, Corinth, Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia
    - ii) Therefore, the false teachers who had infiltrated the Corinthian church began to falsely accuse him of lacking integrity and being arbitrarily self-oriented.
    - iii) Have some in the church been pouting over Paul's change of plans, making them susceptible to the accusations of the false teachers?
- 2) **Rhetorical questions—1:17** (assumes a negative answer to both)
  - Some see these as echoing some of the suspicious accusations against him of being impulsive, unstable, and unreliable.
  - a) **Not fickle:** <sup>17</sup> *Therefore, was I vacillating when I intended to do this?*
  - b) **Not fleshly:** *Or what I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, so that with me there will be yes, yes and no, no at the same time?*
  - c) Ironically, it is the Corinthian church that is being fickle and fleshly. Titus' visit has helped calm things between them. (cf. 7:7-12)
- 3) **Consistency of communication is rooted in God's character—1:18** <sup>18</sup> *But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no.*

- This verse moves from particular accusations (v. 17) to general theological truths that are relevant to the issues at hand (vv. 18-22). (Murray Harris)
- a) **No inconsistent CHARACTER:** *But as God is faithful ...* (an oath)
  - OT: Cf. Num. 23:19; Deut. 7:9
  - NT: Cf. 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3; Heb. 10:23; 1 John 1:9
  - i) This concept is repeated in 1:23.
  - ii) Unlike the gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Romans.
- b) **No inconsistent CONTENT:** *our word (all communication, spoken & written) to you is not yes and no.*
  - i) He changed his plans, and for good reasons; but he did not lie when he was present with them in Corinth. (Paul Barnett)
- c) Dane Ortlund wrote: Paul is tying the integrity of his apostolic communication of the gospel to the integrity of God himself, and probably even identifying God's faithfulness as the sustaining power of his own sincerity and integrity.

#### 4) Consistency of Christ—1:19-20

- a) **Three acceptable witnesses:** <sup>19</sup> *For the Son of (the faithful) God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy (cf. Acts 18:5; 5-1/2 years earlier)—was not yes and no, but has become yes in Him.*
  - i) Paul was consistent individually and with his ministry team.
- b) **Comprehensive:** <sup>20</sup> *For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes.*
  - i) **Negative:** This does not mean that promises to Israel are redirected in Christ to only Christians.
  - ii) **Positive:** It does mean that Christ guarantees the fulfillment of those promises to Israel.
    - (1) As David Stern writes: He is the instrument through whom God the Father has fulfilled, is fulfilling and will fulfill every promise he has ever made to the Jewish people—including the promise that they will return from Exile to possess and live in the Land of Israel and the promise that the Kingdom will be restored, with the Son of David on the throne.
- c) **Affirmative response:** *Therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.*
  - i) The Amen of affirmation of Paul, his ministry team, and the Corinthians to all of God's promises.

#### 5) Things we need to remember:

- a) God is glorified in consistency, but duplicity is a denial of the gospel. ((David Woodall))
- b) How can we use this situation in our lives?
  - i) Do make appropriate plans in dependence on God's providence.

- (1) Don't make promises you don't intend to keep.
- ii) Remember that changes can and will take place.
  - (1) It is not wrong to change your plans. But try to explain to others the best you can. However, you can't stop them from assuming you have sinful motives.
  - iii) There is a time to stand firm, and there is a time to back off.
- c) Paul was a man of true character because he was a man with a clear conscience. (Warren Wiersbe)
  - i) He is under God's authority and so must do what God leads him to do. (Ben Witherington)
- d) Remember James 4:13-17.

## 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 The Four-fold Work of God the Father

**Introduction:** There are many word pictures that Paul, by the Spirit, uses to illustrate what God has done for us.

Note well the three persons of the Triunity of God. The order of Christ, Father, and Spirit is reflected in 13:14.

- 1) **BUSINESS SALE: present aspect, guaranteeing one's validity & stability**—1:21a <sup>21</sup> *Now He who establishes* [pres. act. ptc. bebaioo] *us with you in* (eis, toward) *Christ* (i.e. Christward)
  - a) An ongoing work of God's strengthening us. We cannot establish ourselves.
  - b) God is doing this establishing work for both those who bring the Word of God and those who receive the Word of God.
  - c) Cf. Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Pet. 5:10
- 2) **Past aspects # 1 & 2**—1:21b-22a
  - a) **MINISTRY: assignment to service, setting apart and enablement:** *and anointed* [aor. act. ptc. chrio] *us is God* (the Father),
    - i) At salvation
    - ii) God has graciously and wisely chosen to use us to reach other treasonous rebels.
  - b) **MERCHANDISE: ownership, security, authenticity, and assurance of destination:** <sup>22</sup> *who also sealed* [aor. mid. ptc. sphragizo] *us*
    - i) At salvation
    - ii) We are His, and we will securely reach our final destination.
- 3) **BUYING A HOUSE/ENGAGEMENT: past aspect # 3 with a future focus**—1:22b *and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.*
  - a) **Past aspect:** *and gave* [aor. act. ptc. didomi] ....
    - i) At salvation
  - b) **Future focus:** *the pledge* [arrabon] *of the Spirit in our hearts.*
    - i) The guaranteed obligation of more to come.
- 4) **Things we need to remember:**
  - a) John MacArthur has stated: For the critics to attack Paul's authenticity was equal to tearing down God's work, as well as the church's unity.
  - b) George Guthrie wrote: To deny the validity and integrity of Paul's ministry would be to deny their own spiritual existence.

2 Corinthians 1:23-2:4  
Paul's Joy and Love Expressed

**Introduction:**

**1) Paul's personal non-visit—1:23-2:2**

**a) His solemn desire to spare them—1:23**

- i) **His oath:** <sup>23</sup> *But I call God as witness to my soul,*
  - (1) Paul often uses God as his witness. (cf. Rom. 1:9; Phil. 1:8; 1 Thess. 2:5, 10)
  - (2) He is willing to stake his life on this statement.
- ii) **His desire:** *that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth.*
  - (1) His non-visit was intended to be beneficial (not harmful) to them.
  - (2) Perhaps he simply wanted to give them to spiritually digest his first letter and prove their obedience.

**b) His humble evaluation of them as faithful coworkers—1:24**

- i) **Correcting their wrong assumptions:** <sup>24</sup> *Not that we lord it over your faith,*
  - (1) He is not a dictator or spiritual bully just because his actions do not satisfy their preconceived ideas. He is not committing spiritual abuse or trying to intimidate them.
  - (2) Cf. Mk. 10:42; 1 Pet. 5:3
- ii) **Encouraging their faith:** *but are workers with you [sunergos] for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm.*
  - (1) Workers may refer to Silas and Timothy, not the Corinthians.
  - (2) Even if they are listening to those actively criticizing Paul.

**c) His thoughtful desire to not cause sorrow—2:1** <sup>1</sup> *But I determined this for my own sake, that I would not come to you again in sorrow [lupe].*

- i) Paul, as the leader of the ministry team, makes the final decision of their travel plans.
- ii) However, this does not mean that spiritual leaders never make ministry decisions based on avoiding discomfort.

**d) His sober recognition of them as a conduit of joy—2:2** <sup>2</sup> *For if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] I cause you sorrow [lupeo], who then makes me glad [euphraino] but the one whom I made sorrowful [lupeo]?*

- i) Does this refer to a specific person who has been convicted of his sin and has repented?

**2) Paul's personal letter—2:3-4**

**a) His confident purpose in receiving joy—2:3** <sup>3</sup> *And this is the very thing I wrote you, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow [lupe] from those who ought*



*to make me rejoice [chairō]; having confidence in you all that my joy [chara] would be the joy [chara] of you all.*

i) Even though he did not personally visit, he did not avoid contact with them altogether. He wrote to them.

(1) This probably refers to a now-lost letter after 1 Corinthians.

ii) Cf. 2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1 about a third visit

b) **His reason for expressing his love for them—2:4** <sup>4</sup> *For out of much affliction [thlipsis] and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears;*

i) **Negative:** *not so that you would be made sorrowful [lupeō],*

ii) **Positive:** *but that you might know the love [agape] which I have abundantly for you.*

(1) Cf. 2 Cor. 12:15

### 3) Things we need to remember:

a)

## 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

### The Significance and Dangers Associated With Forgiveness

**Introduction:** C. S. Lewis wrote: “We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it. (*Reflections on the Psalms*) British author John Stott reported that one British humanist stated: “What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness. I have nobody to forgive me.”

#### 1) The significance of corporate forgiveness—2:5-7

##### a) How sin injures individuals and the congregation—2:5

- i) **Individually:** <sup>5</sup> *But if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] any has caused sorrow [pf. act. ind. lupeo], he (anonymous) has caused sorrow [pf. act. ind. lupeo] not to me,*

(1) The one causing pain was a member of the congregation who had apparently sinned in a personal relationship with others (cf. adikeo in 2 Cor. 7:12) in the congregation and was disciplined by a congregational vote. Previous generations cf. this with 1 Cor. 5.

(a) Perhaps an assault against Paul’s character & authority?

(2) Paul minimizes the pain of being directly sinned against. But there is still a sin to be forgiven. (cf. 2:10)

- ii) **Congregationally:** *but in some degree—in order not to say too much—to all of you.*

(1) Unrepentant sin impacts the whole congregation. But the pain is still felt by the congregation.

(2) It was not true that the unnamed offender grieved all the Corinthians equally, but it was true that all of them in some measure were pained by his action. (Murray Harris)

##### b) How church discipline may impact the one sinning—2:6

- i) <sup>6</sup> *Sufficient for such a one is this punishment [epitimia] which was inflicted by the majority [polus] (the greater number, not just the pastors),*

(1) The disciplined, repentant individual can never effectively pay for his or her own sins. Jesus paid for them on the cross.

(2) The censure (sanctions, legal penalties, formal act of criticism and rebuke) is limited in scope and time. There comes a time when the individual repents, and the authoritative, group discipline is complete. It is enough.

(a) Perhaps some thought the congregation had not been tough enough?

(b) Perhaps some thought the congregation had been too tough?

(3) But remember, time alone never removes the sinfulness of sin.

##### c) How the lack of restoration may impact the one who genuinely repents—2:7

- i) **What does the congregation need to do?** <sup>7</sup> *so that on the contrary you should rather graciously forgive [charizomai] and comfort [parakaleo] him,*

- (1) Repentance is assumed to have taken place.
- ii) **Why should the congregation do this?** *lest such a one be swallowed up [katapino] by excessive sorrow [lupe].*
  - (1) How horrible if the repentant one gave up completely because the congregation refused to forgive and comfort him.
- iii) Someone said: Forgiveness not only gives, it also takes away,

## 2) The bigger danger of not forgiving—2:8-11

### a) The importance of reaffirmation—2:8

- i) <sup>8</sup> *Therefore I encourage [parakaleo] you to reaffirm [kuroo] your love [agape] for him.*
  - (1) This might not look precisely the same in every situation. The point is that the congregation should do what they can to cause the repentant individual to recognize the reality of their loving forgiveness and the restoration of their recognition of him as a brother in Christ.
  - (2) The reaffirmation of love for which Paul calls, then, appears to be a formal act by the congregation, in the same way that the imposition of punishment in the first place appears to have been formal and judicial.  
(Colin Kruse)

### b) The response to his letter—2:9

- i) <sup>9</sup> *For to this end also I wrote, so that I might know your proven character [dokime], whether you are obedient [hupekoos] in all things.*
  - (1) The Corinthians congregation swings like a pendulum from one end of the spectrum to the other. (cf. 1 Cor. 5:2; 2 Cor. 2:6)

### c) He supports their forgiveness—2:10-11

- i) **Forgiveness is rooted in grace:** <sup>10</sup> *But one whom you graciously forgive [charizomai] anything, I graciously forgive [charizomai] also.*
- ii) **Forgiveness is granted in the presence of Christ for the benefit of the congregation:** *For indeed what I have graciously forgiven [charizomai], if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] I have graciously forgiven [charizomai] anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ,*
- iii) **Forgiveness is granted as a means of protecting the congregation:** <sup>11</sup> *so that no advantage [pleonekteo] would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant [agnoeo] of his schemes [noema].*
  - (1) Christians need to understand the different plans and purposes that Satan wants to implement against individuals and the congregation. One of his primary intentions is to cause division and animosity with a congregation, encouraging some to be too lenient and others to be too harsh.
    - (a) The minority who continues to support the sinning brother against the majority of the congregation is a problem.

- (2) We all live our entire lives “in the present of Christ,” i.e. we are accountable to Him.
- iv) C. S. Lewis wrote in *The Weight of Glory*: Real forgiveness means looking steadily at the sin, the sin that is left over without any excuse, after all allowances have been made, and seeing it in all its horror, dirt, meanness, and malice, and nevertheless being wholly reconciled to the man who has done it. That, and only that, is forgiveness.

**3) Things we need to remember:**

- a) Five stages of God-honoring church discipline in these verses. (Harris)
- i) Wrongdoing (7:12)
  - ii) Punishment (2:6)
  - iii) Pain (2:5, 7)
  - iv) Repentance (2:6; 7:9-10)
  - v) Forgiveness and encouragement (2:7, 10)
  - vi) Affirmation and restoration (2:8)
- b) Satan is the enemy of peace. He is defeated by reconciliation. Christian love and charity neutralize all of Satan’s powers over us and serves as an invisible, protective shield. (David Garland)

## 2 Corinthians 2:12-17 Ministering the Word in the Sight of God

**Introduction:** 2:12-13 are a transitional section which form an introduction to 2:14-7:4.

### 1) Paul explains his travel history—2:12-13

- a) **FIRST ASPECT, a negative state of mind:** <sup>12</sup> *Now ...* <sup>13</sup> *I had* [pf. act. ind.] *no rest* (release of tension) *for my spirit*, (cf. 2 Cor. 7:5-6; 8:13; 11:28)
  - Cf. Paul's intense emotional state in 2 Cor. 4:7-12.
  - Paul wrestled with continual uneasiness of mind. (Murray Harris)
- i) **The immediate cause:** *not finding Titus my* (Gentile) *brother*.
  - (1) Perhaps Titus was carrying some of the Corinthian financial gift for the people in Jerusalem? (cf. 2 Cor. 8:6)
  - (2) Paul's sequence is: no Titus, no peace, no preaching (Murray Harris)
- ii) **The general timeframe:**
  - (1) **Purpose:** *when I came to Troas for [eis] the gospel of (the) Christ*
    - (a) Troas is a strategic city, an important seaport and commercial center. The roads to Europe and Asia Minor passes here.
    - (b) He possibly left Ephesus due to the riot of Acts 19.
    - (c) He had a vision in Troas (@ 260 miles north of Ephesus) that directed him to Macedonia (cf. Acts 16:8-10).
  - (2) **Providential opportunity:** *and when a door was opened for me in the Lord*, (cf. 1 Cor. 16:9; Col. 4:3; Rev. 3:8)
- b) **SECOND ASPECT, adjusted plans:** *But saying farewell to them, I went on* [aor. act. ind.] *to Macedonia*.
  - i) Paul does not leave Troas because the opportunities for evangelism had dried up. He returns to follow the original itinerary of 1 Cor. 16:5.
  - ii) He will return to Troas many months later and spend seven days with them. (cf. Acts 20:7-12)
- c) Paul pauses his travel narrative here but will pick it up in 7:5-16.

### 2) Sincere ministry of the Word—2:14-17

- This abrupt new section (2:14-7:4) is about apostolic ministry
- a) **Gratitude—2:14-16a** <sup>14</sup> *But thanks be to God*,
  - i) **God displays us as defeated enemies in His victory parade:** *who always leads us in triumphal procession* [pres. act. ptc. *thriambeuo*] *in (the) Christ*, (cf. Col. 2:15)

- (1) As conquered enemies of the victorious General. Some of the defeated enemy became submissive slaves of the General, while others were punished and/or executed.
  - (a) Is it a celebration? Yes.
  - (b) Is it a humiliation? Yes.
- (2) Like sports teams that have parades in their cities when they have won championships.
- ii) **God displays His fragrance in His victory message:** *and manifests* [pres. act. ptc. phaneroo] *through us the aroma* [osme] *of the knowledge of Him in every place.*
- iii) **Explaining the interpretation of the fragrance:** <sup>15</sup> *For we are* [pres. act. ind.] *a fragrance* [euodia] *of Christ to God ...*
  - (1) **Only two destinations for only two groups of people**
    - (a) **Positive:** *among those who are being saved*
    - (b) **Negative:** *and among those who are perishing;*
  - (2) **Only two results for only two groups of people**
    - (a) **Disagreeable stench:** <sup>16</sup> *to the one an* (unpleasant) *aroma* [osme] *from death to death,*
    - (b) **Agreeable fragrance:** *to the other an* (pleasant) *aroma* [osme] *from life to life.*
  - (3) Like the celebration confetti that falls of fans of both the winning and losing teams.
- b) **Humility—2:16b** *And who is sufficient/adequate, qualified for these things* (of ministry with eternal consequences)?
  - i) This is answered **positively** in 2 Cor. 3:1. We are, by God's grace!
    - (1) Genuine apostles are adequate because God chose them.
  - ii) This is answered **negatively** in 2 Cor. 3:4-6. No one, on their own!
    - (1) Rule of thumb, only the immature, the insincere, or the deceivers think they are sufficient.
    - (2) Self-reliance is a disqualification for Biblical ministry. (Murray Harris)
- c) **Contrasts—2:17**
  - i) **Negative:** <sup>17</sup> *For we are not like many, peddling/marketing* [pres. act. ptc. kapeleuo] *the word of God,*
    - (1) The dangers of advertising and marketing, manipulating the message for results and personal gain.
    - (2) This addresses their motivation and their techniques.
    - (3) The Biblical cross does not sell well, in Corinth or Sleepy Eye.
  - ii) **Positive:** *we speak* [pres. act. ind.] *in* [en] *Christ in the sight of* [katenanti] *God*
    - (1) Transparent motives: *but as from* [ek] *sincerity* [eilikrineia],

- (2) Source and accountability: *but as from [ek] God*,  
(a) Apostles were authorized representatives of God who were accountable to communicate God's message without alteration or substitution. They did not need to be creative but faithful.  
iii) Paul received no money from the Corinthians for his teaching. (Cf. 2 Cor. 11:7-9)

**3) Things to remember:**

- a) Becoming a Christian is a matter of being lovingly and graciously conquered by the Sovereign of the universe. You have been a traitorous rebel, and He has defeated you. This is great news!
- b) There is a Christ-like scent that permeates the lives of all genuine Christians. Whether one finds it attractive or not is directly related to one's final destiny. The aroma remains the same, but it is interpreted differently. Do you smell like Christ?
- c) George Guthrie writes: *Those who proclaim the gospel participate in cosmic-sized matters, spiritual life and death, liberation and destruction. Who can be considered adequate for such a role?*

## 2 Corinthians 3:1-6 Godward Ministers of the New Covenant

**Introduction:** David Garland reminds us: When others criticize your ministry, one needs a clear measuring rod by which to appraise oneself before God. The critics will try to impose their own measuring rods to gauge the minister (this other pastor, this school, this website). If the minister is to remain faithful to God's calling, then only God's standards matter.

### 1) Godward APPROVAL—3:1-3

- The root issue is legitimate authenticity and genuine authority
- a) **Two rhetorical questions regarding credentials that assume a negative answer:**
  - i) <sup>1</sup> *Are we beginning to commend ourselves again?*  
(1) cf. 4:2; 5:12; 6:4; 10:18
  - ii) *Or do we need, as some, letters [epistole] of commendation to you or from you?*
- b) **Three-fold literary process regarding credentials:** <sup>2</sup> *You* [emphatic] *are our letter* [epistole],
  - i) **Initial writing:** *having been written* [pf. pass. ptc. engrapho] *in our hearts,*
  - ii) **Ongoing reading:** *known* [pres. pass ptc. ginosko] *and read* [pres. pass ptc. anaginosko] *by all men,*  
(1) Everyone was aware of Paul's love for the Corinthian church.
  - iii) **Clear understanding of what was written:** <sup>3</sup> *being manifested* [pres. pass ptc. phaneroo] *that you are a letter* [epistole] *of Christ,*  
(1) *ministered to* [aor. pass. ptc. diakoneo] *by us,*  
(2) *having been written* [pf. pass. ptc. engrapho]  
(a) Neg./Pos.: *not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God,*  
(b) Neg./Pos.: *not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh.*
- c) **\*\*Man-centered credentials are normally external; God-centered credentials are primarily internal.** (1 Tim. 3 & Titus 1)

### 2) Godward QUALIFICATIONS—3:4-6

- This takes us back to 2:16
- a) **Godward reliance:** <sup>4</sup> *And such* (kind of) *confidence* [pepoithesis] *we have through Christ toward God* (the Father).
  - i) **NEGATIVELY:** <sup>5</sup> *Not that we are sufficient* [hikanos] *in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves,*



- (1) His denial of self-sufficiency does not reflect an exaggerated humility, but rather a sober recognition of the facts of the matter. (Colin Kruse)
- ii) **POSITIVELY:** *but our sufficiency [hikanotes] is from God,*
  - (1) <sup>6</sup> *who also made us sufficient [aor. act. ind. hikanoo] as ministers of a new covenant,*
    - (a) Neg./Pos.: *not of the letter [gramma] (the external Law) but of the Spirit;*
      - (i) This does not say that literal interpretation of the Bible is harmful.
      - (b) Neg./Pos.: *for the letter [gramma] (the external Law) kills, but the Spirit gives life.*
        - (i) Cf. Rom. 8:3
        - (ii) Death now (living death) and death later (eternal death)
    - b) This New Covenant is referred to in Jer. 31:31-34; 32:40 and Ezek. 36:26-27.
      - i) It was inaugurated on the cross. Cf. Luke 22:20
      - ii) Certain aspects are partially fulfilled today.
      - iii) It will be completely fulfilled during the Millennium.

### 3) Things to remember:

- a) Sometimes external credentials are necessary **on behalf of others**. (cf. Acts 18:27; Rom. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:22-24)
- b) Sometimes external credentials are necessary **on our own behalf**. (cf. 2 Cor. 4:2; 6:4)

## 2 Corinthians 3:7-11 Two Ministries, One Glory

**Introduction:** One criticism that I have experienced over the years is that I have taught that the NT church is not under OT Law. This paragraph establishes my position. Paul's teaching here is based on Exod. 34:29-35.

This paragraph reveals three "if ... then ..." conditional sentences. In grammar these are three protasis (propositions, conditions) and apodosis (give backs, consequences) combinations. This is an illustration of the logical argument from the lesser good to the greater good. The Jews called this *qal wachomer*. In the Latin from the 1560's it was called *a fortiori*.

What the Spirit teaches through Paul in this paragraph contradicts Paul's contemporary Jewish teachers.

### 1) The ministry of DEATH compared with the ministry of the SPIRIT— 3:7-8

- a) **IF the Old Covenant ministry began in glory**—3:7 <sup>7</sup> *But if* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *the ministry [diakonia] of death* (named for its effect), *in letters having been engraved* [pf. pass. ptc.] *on stones, came* (into being) [aor. pass. ind. *ginomai*] *with [en] glory*,
- i) How does the Old Covenant bring death? (several authors)
- (1) It prescribes death as the penalty for sin. (Rom. 5:12-21; 7:10)
  - (2) In defining transgression it increases sin (Gal. 3:21-31), which leads to death.
  - (3) It provides an opportunity for sinful people to pervert God's holy Torah into legalism, that is, a dead system of rules intended to earn God's favor even when followed without trusting God. (Rom. 3:19-31)
  - (4) It does not have in itself the life-giving power of the Spirit which alone can make people righteous. (Rom. 8:1-11)
- ii) *so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which was being brought to an end* (theological passive, by God),
- (1) It is of interest that in Exodus 34 the MT says that the skin of Moses' face "emitted horn-like rays" (*qāran*, vv. 29–30, 35). Given the relation of *qāran* to *qeren* ("horn"), the Vulgate rendered these three uses of the verb by the adjective *cornuta* [*facies sua*], "his face was horned." This explains the artistic representations of Moses with horns on his head such as Michelangelo's famous statue. (Murray Harris)

- b) **THEN the New Covenant ministry will have more glory—3:8** <sup>8</sup>  
(then) *how will the ministry [diakonia] of the Spirit not be even more in [en] glory?*

**2) The ministry of RIGHTEOUSNESS (the New Covenant) has more glory—3:9-11**

a) **Degrees of glory—3:9-10**

- i) **IF the Old Covenant ministry had glory ...** <sup>9</sup> For [gar] if [assumed 1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *the ministry [diakonia] of condemnation [katakrisis] (named for its effect) has glory (and it does),*  
(1) Not just the Law, but the tabernacle/temple, priesthood, etc.
- ii) **THEN the New Covenant ministry has more glory ...** (then) *much more [polus mallon] does the ministry [diakonia] of righteousness [dikaiosune] (named for its effect) abound [pres. act. ind. perisseuo] in glory.*
- iii) **Comparison/explanation—3:10**  
(1) **The old was glorified but not glorified:** <sup>10</sup> For [gar] *indeed what had been glorious [pf. pass. ptc. doxazo], in this case has no glory [pf. pass. ind. doxazo]*  
(2) **The new has surpassing glory:** *because of the glory that surpasses [pres. act. ptc. hyperballo] it.*  
(3) Someone said: it has been de-glorified by being out-glorified.

b) **Permanence of glory—3:11**

- i) **IF the temporary Old Covenant ministry was with glory ...** <sup>11</sup> For [gar] if [assumed 1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *that which was being brought to an end [pres. pass. ptc. katargeo] (theological passive, by God) was with [dia] glory,*  
(1) Though the temple was still functioning when this was written, it would not last much longer (@ 14 years).
- ii) **THEN the permanent New Covenant ministry is in glory ...** (then) *much more [polus mallon] that which remains [pres. act. ptc. meno] is in [en] glory.*

**3) Things to remember:**

- a) This is perhaps best illustrated by the glory of the full moon that loses its glory as the blazing sun appears.  
i) Even a dim lightbulb in a dark room appears bright until you open the shades to let the sunlight in.  
ii)
- b) Review the following chart: (based on Murray Harris)

<b><u>Old Covenant</u></b>	<b><u>New Covenant</u></b>
Engrave on stone tablets (3:3, 7)	Written on hearts-of-flesh tablets (3:3)
A death-dealing written code (3:6)	A life-giving Spirit (3:6)
Ministry of death (3:7)	Ministry of the Spirit (3:8)
Ministry of condemnation (3:9)	Ministry of righteousness (3:9)
Glorious (3:7, 9-11)	More glorious (3:9-11)
Fading (3:7, 11)	Permanent (3:11)

- c) The glory of New Covenant ministry is not seen with the eyes but is perceived with the hearts of attentive listeners. (paraphrase of Mark Seifrid)
- d) Thus no one could deny that the Spirit of God in one's heart was better than a law scroll before one's eyes, (Craig Keener)

2 Corinthians 3:12-18  
Three Results of New Covenant Ministry

**Introduction:**

**1) The eternal New Covenant ministry results in HOPE—3:12-16 <sup>12</sup>**

*Therefore* (cf. 3:7-11) *having such a hope* [*elpis*] (cf. 3:11),

a) **Positive:** *we use great boldness* [*parresia*],

i) Forthright openness, honesty and straightforwardness, nothing to hide, non-evasive; this is not arrogant audacity.

b) **Negative:** <sup>13</sup> *and are not like Moses* (who concealed),

i) **Moses' veil covered a fading glory:** *who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the consequence of what* (the fading glory) *was being brought to an end* [pres. pass. ptc. *katargeo*]. (theological passive, by God) (cf. Exod. 34:33b, 35)

ii) **Contemporary veils—3:14-16**

(1) **GRIEF because of the hindering veil of old covenant ministry—3:14-15**

- These two things explain some of the difficulties in witnessing to Jews.
- This is not criticism of Jews ethnically, racially, biologically, culturally, nationally, or religiously. (David Stern, JNTC)

(a) **Old generation, unresponsiveness due to the unlifted veil:** <sup>14</sup> *But their minds* [*noema*] *were hardened* [aor. pass. ind. *poroo*]; (by God? by themselves?)

(i) **Unlifted:** *for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant* (the Law) *the same veil remains unlifted,*

1. The only reference to the Law as the Old Covenant.

(ii) **Possibility of removal:** *because it* (the veil) *is brought to an end* [pres. pass. ind. *katargeo*] (theological passive, by God) *in Christ.*

(b) **Current generation restatement, inability due to the heart-covering veil:** <sup>15</sup> *But* (despite what God has done in Christ) *to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart,*

(2) **HOPE because of the God-removed veil—3:16**

(a) <sup>16</sup> *but WHENEVER a person TURNS TO THE LORD, THE VEIL* (over their heart) *IS TAKEN AWAY* [pres. pass. ind. *periaireo*]. (theological passive, by God the Spirit) (cf. Exod. 34:34a)

- 2) **The eternal New Covenant ministry of the Spirit results in FREEDOM—3:17** <sup>17</sup> *Now ...*
- a) **His personhood:** *the Lord* (of 3:16, Yahweh) *is the Spirit*,
    - i)
  - b) **His presence:** *and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom* [*eleutheria*].
    - i) **Freedom from:** bondage to the Law and its penalties, misunderstanding when reading the Bible, the consequences of the veil
    - ii) **Freedom to:** obey Christ, understand the Bible, etc.
- 3) **The eternal New Covenant ministry results in ongoing TRANSFORMATION—3:18** <sup>18</sup> *But we all, ...* (unlike Moses' unique privilege)
- a) **Inside-out process:** *are being transformed* [pres. pass. ind. *metamorphoo*] ...
  - b) **Indirectly through the gospel as revealed in the Word of God:** *with unveiled* [pf. pass. ptc.] *face, beholding* [pres. mid. ptc.] *as in a mirror the glory of the Lord*,
  - c) **According to the standard of Christ:** *into the same image* (that we see mirrored)
  - d) **To what end?** *from* [*apo*] *glory to* [*eis*] *glory*,
    - i) Normally: not instantly but progressively
    - ii) Possibly: from the old glory to the new glory
  - e) **With what enablement?** *just as from* [*apo*] *the Lord, the Spirit*.
- 4) **Things to remember:**
- a) Any so-called gospel that does not result in hope, freedom, and transformation must be avoided and condemned.
  - b) The New Covenant Gospel produces hope for the spiritually hopeless, freedom for the spiritually enslaved, and transformation for the spiritually deformed.
  - c) This hope, freedom, and transformation is available to all who, by God's grace, have repented and trusted in Jesus Christ alone.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6  
Godward Ministry in the Son-light.

**Introduction:** How does one persist in gospel ministry to the glory of God?

**1) The two-fold DISPLAY of Godward ministry—4:1-2** <sup>1</sup> *Therefore,*

- In light of 3:18
- a) **Positive: we are DETERMINED:** *we do not lose heart* [*enkakeo*],
  - i) **God-ordained:** *since we have this ministry* [*diakonia*], (cf. 3:8-9)
  - ii) **Mercy-based:** *as we received mercy,*
- b) **Negative: we have DISTANCED OURSELVES:** <sup>2</sup> *but we have renounced* [*apeipon*] *the hidden things of shame,*
  - i) **Negative: no deceit or distortion:**
    - (1) **No deceit:** *not walking in craftiness* [*panourgia*]
      - (a) Like Satanic false teachers (cf. 11:3)
    - (2) **No distortion:** *or adulterating* [*doloo*] *the word of God,*
  - ii) **Positive: full disclosure in every detail:** *but by the manifestation* [*phanerosis*] *of (the) truth commending* [*sunistemi*] *ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

**2) The GOSPEL of Godward ministry—4:3-4**

- a) **A veiled Gospel:**
  - i) **The accurate assumption:** <sup>3</sup> *And even if* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *our gospel is veiled* [pf. pass. ptc. *kalupto*],
  - ii) **The sobering reality:** *it is veiled* [pf. pass. ptc. *kalupto*] *to those who are perishing* (pres. ptc.; “being ruined” [passive] or probably better “ruining themselves” [middle]),
- b) **The blinded audience:**
  - i) **Satan has blinded them:** <sup>4</sup> *in whose case* (the perishing ones) *the god of this age* [*aion*]
  - ii) **The unbelieving are blinded:** *has blinded the minds of the unbelieving* [*apistos*]
    - (1) Blindness is the inability to perceive and understand.
    - (2) They can understand the gospel, but they evaluate it as foolishness. (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18)
  - iii) **They are blinded so they cannot see Jesus accurately:** *so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* (cf. Col. 1:15)
    - (1) Seeing is the ability to discern the clear evidence distinctly.
- c) The temptation is to make the gospel more palatable or understandable.

**3) The PREACHING of Godward ministry—4:5** <sup>5</sup> *For ...*

- a) **NEGATIVE aspect of the public announcement:** *we do not preach* [*kerusso*] *ourselves* (i.e. no self-promotion)

b) **POSITIVE aspect of the public announcement:**

- i) *but* (we do preach) *Jesus Christ as Lord*,
- ii) *and* (we do preach) *ourselves as your slaves for the sake of Jesus*.

**4) The REASON for Godward ministry—4:6**

a) **Who is this God?**

- i) **Past action:** *6 For (the) God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” [Gen. 1:3]*
- ii) **Present action:** *is the One who has shone in our hearts*

b) **Why did this God shine in our hearts?** *to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

- i) In contrast to those who are ruining themselves who cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. (4:4)

**5) Things to remember:**

- a) Those who have a clear vision of the mercy of God in their lives and the glory of God manifested in Christ can persist in the gospel ministry during times of hardship. (David Woodall)



2 Corinthians 4:7-12  
Clay Pots for God's Glory

**Introduction:** Warren Wiersbe related the following: A pastor friend and I once heard a young man preach an eloquent sermon, but it lacked something. "There was something missing," I said to my friend; and he replied, "Yes, and it won't be there until his heart is broken. After he has suffered awhile, he will have a message worth listening to."

**1) Describing clay pots—4:7-10**

- a) **What is the treasure?** (4:7a) <sup>7</sup> *But we have this treasure [thesauros] in earthen [ostrakinos] vessels,*
- i) The treasure is the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus. (4:6)
  - ii) Clay pots were commonplace, inexpensive, unattractive, vulnerable and disposable (easily broken and easily discarded), and replaceable. They were of little intrinsic value, though they are essential for a functioning household. The container is relatively worthless, the contents are priceless.
  - iii) This refers not simply to Paul's physical body, but the whole of his existence. Remember 2 Tim. 2:20-21.
- b) **Why put something so valuable in clay pots?** (4:7b) *so that the surpassing greatness [hyperbole] of the power [dunamis]*
- "The power" that enables him to possess and proclaim the gospel
  - i) **Positively:** *will be of God*
  - ii) **Negatively:** *and not from [ek] ourselves;*
  - Because the gospel treasure has been entrusted to frail mortals who lack inherent power, the power displayed through preaching and in suffering is demonstrably divine and not human. (Murray Harris)
  - The container is relatively worthless, the contents are priceless.
- c) **Vulnerability of clay pots:** (4:8-9) [contrasts are all present ptc.]
- Contrasting human weakness with God's power. Cf. 11:23-33.
- i) **Internal**
- (1) (Rhyming) **PRESSURED:** <sup>8</sup> *in every way afflicted [thlibo], but not crushed [stenochoreo]; cf. 1:6*
  - (2) (Word play) **PERPLEXED:** *Perplexed [aporeo], but not despairing/totally desperate [exaporeo]; cf. 1:8-9; Gal. 4:20*
- ii) **External**
- (1) **PERSECUTED:** <sup>9</sup> *persecuted/hunted [dioko], but not forsaken/abandoned [egkataleipo] (by God); (cf. Heb. 13:5-6)*
  - (2) **PHYSICALLY ABUSED:** *struck down [kataballo], but not destroyed [apollumi]; (knocked down but not knocked out)*
    - (a) Illustrated in both athletics and military settings.
- d) **What do clay pots contain?** (4:10) (contrasts death and life)

- i) **What?** <sup>10</sup> *always carrying about [periphero] in the body the dying/deadness [nekrosis] of (experienced by) Jesus,*
  - (1) In addition to containing glory, it contains the danger of dying violently as Jesus died. Cf. 4:8-9, 11; Gal. 2:20.
- ii) **Why?** *so that the life [zoe] of Jesus also may be manifested [phaneroo] in our body.*

**2) Describing what manifesting the life of Christ look like—4:11-12**

- a) **Life-threatening situations in ministry:** <sup>11</sup> *For we who live are constantly being delivered over (ultimately by God) to death for Jesus' sake, (cf. 4:10)*
- b) **Why are we constantly in these life-threatening situations?** *so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested [phaneroo] in our mortal flesh. (cf. 4:10)*
  - i) Through our weaknesses, Christ is put on display.
- c) **What is one summary paradox of Christian ministry?** <sup>12</sup> *So ...*
  - i) Paul's suffering: *death works [energeo] in us,*
  - ii) Corinthians' spiritual benefit: *but life in you.*
    - (1) Cf. Col. 1:24

**3) Things to remember:**

- a) Why not work through impressive, flashy vessels? Why not call the world's most qualified people to steward the gospel, if it is so precious? Because the world's most qualified tend to be the most unqualified in the eyes of God. They are prone to work out of their own resources. But to communicate the gospel out of one's own power or cleverness or impressiveness is inherently contradictory to what the gospel is—good news for the unimpressive; qualifying news for the disqualified. (Dane Ortlund)
- b) For the Christian minister, suffering constitutes a normal characteristic of authentic ministry. (George Guthrie)
- c) How can Paul respond to the adversities as he did? By daily trusting in God's faithful, gracious power.

2 Corinthians 4:13-18  
Willingness of Ministers to Suffer for God's Glory

**Introduction:**

**1) Three-fold root—4:13-15**

**a) Rooted in SCRIPTURE:**

- i) **The past:** <sup>13</sup> *But [de] having the same spirit* (or Spirit that enables us to trust) *of faith, according to what is written* [pf. pass. ptc.], *"I BELIEVED* [aor. act. ind.], *THEREFORE [dio] I SPOKE* [aor. act. ind.]," [Ps. 116:10, LXX]  
(1) Psalm 116 addresses difficulties, even to the point of death.  
(2) Despite death working in Paul (4:12) he speaks in faith.
- ii) **The present:** *we also believe* [pres. act. ind.], *therefore we also speak* [pres. act. ind.],

**b) Rooted in KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE FATHER:** <sup>14</sup> *knowing* [pf. act. ptc.] *that* [hoti] *He who raised the Lord Jesus ...* (will do two things)

- This addresses the content of what Paul believed.
- i) **Resurrect us for life:** *will raise* [egeiro] *us also with Jesus*
- ii) **Present us for judgment:** *and will present us* [paristemi] (to Himself (cf. Eph. 5:27) or to Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10; 11:2)) *with you*.  
(1) Paul does not view himself as being on a higher level than the Corinthians.

**c) Rooted in THE GLORY OF GOD:** <sup>15</sup> *For* [gar] ...

- i) **IMMEDIATE purpose:** *all things* (Paul's ministry of the Word and suffering) *are for your sakes*,
- ii) **ULTIMATE purpose:** *so that* [hina] *the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God*.  
(1) The reception of God's grace should lead to gratitude and to God's glory.

**2) Balanced perspective related to discouragement—4:16-18**

**a) Clear statement of Biblical courage—4:16a** <sup>16</sup> *Therefore* [dio] (cf. 4:14-15) *we do not lose heart* [enkakeo],

- i) This brings this chapter full circle back to 4:1.

**b) Two interwoven spheres of existence—4:16b**

- i) **External, what people see:** *but* [alla] *though* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *our outer* [exo] *man is decaying* [pres. pass. ind. diaphtheiro],  
(1) The physical suffering had taken their toll. Check out his scars. (cf. 2 Cor. 4:8-10; 11:23-27)
- ii) **Internal, what only God sees:** *yet* [alla] *our inner* [eso] *man is being renewed* [pres. pass. ind. anakainoo] *day by day*. (cf. Col. 3:10)

iii) David Garland writes: As his outward life conforms ever more closely to the crucified Christ, his inward life conforms ever more closely to the glorified Christ.

c) **Comparing perspectives—4:17-18**

- The next five sentences in Greek each begin with the word *gar*. (cf. 4:17, 18b; 5:1, 2, 4)
- Perspective shapes response.
- David Garland writes: Rather than openly berating them for their spiritual myopia, he tries to unfold the paradox for them. Their culture had conditioned them to see and appreciate only a counterfeit glory and honor. Those with honor in this culture were the elite who ruthlessly beat down all others around them to preserve their pride of place. If the Corinthians allow themselves to continue to be seduced by such a twisted value system, they will miss the authentic glory and honor that reside less conspicuously in the hearts of those who have been beaten down by a malevolent world but who will be raised up by God. Suffering is so visible and inner transformation so invisible, except to the eyes of faith.

i) **Time and heaviness:**

(1) **Temporary/transient, lightweight:** <sup>17</sup> *For [gar] our momentary [parautika], light [elaphros] affliction [thlipsis] is working out [pres. dep. ind. katergazomai] for us*

(a) He doesn't deny that it really is pressure. (Cf. 4:8-11)

(2) **Eternal, heavyweight:** *an eternal [aionios] weight [baros] of glory far beyond all comparison [kata hyperbole eis hyperbole],*

(a) The Hebrew word for glory [*kavod*] has the idea of heaviness.

ii) **Focus and expectation:** <sup>18</sup> *while we look [pres. act. ptc. skopeo]*

(1) **Negative:** *not at the things which are seen [blepo],*

(2) **Positive:** *but at the things which are not seen [blepo];*

iii) **Focus and time:** *for [gar] ...*

(1) *the things which are seen [blepo] are temporal [proskairos],*

(2) *but the things which are not seen [blepo] are eternal [aionios].*

3) **Things to remember:**

- a) Christians should be characterized by a fixation on invisible, eternal realities. Paradoxically, their eyes are riveted on what cannot be seen. The world of sense does not determine their outlook and action. (Murray Harris)
- b) The daughter of missionaries to the Congo Republic recounted how as a little girl she had participate in the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of missionaries coming to the Congo Republic (in the early 1900's). Speeches were given, music was played, and at the end of the day a very old man stood before the crowd to speak. He said that when the missionaries first came, the people thought them odd and their message suspicious. The tribal leaders, seeking to test the missionaries, slowly poisoned them to death over a period of months, even years. Children of the missionaries died one by one, but the

missionaries stayed and proclaimed the gospel, even as they died. The old man commented, “It was as we watched how they died that we decided we wanted to live as Christians.” (George Guthrie, BECNT)

2 Corinthians 5:1-5  
The Christian Life in a Human Body

**Introduction:** There have 2 extremes within Christianity throughout the centuries concerning the body. On the one hand, the body has been viewed as evil and thus abused. On the other hand, the body has been viewed as the focal point of highest pleasure and thus abused.

Another question within Christianity is, what happens when a believer dies? Three primary views: (1) a bodiless state; (2) a resurrection body; or (3) an intermediate body.

This section continues the thoughts begun in 4:16-18 and will extend to 5:10.

**1) Confidence regarding the present body—5:1-4** (cf. Rom. 8:18-24)

- a) **The contrast**—5:1 <sup>1</sup> *For [gar]* (cf. 4:16-18) *we know* (common knowledge among Christians) *that ...*
  - i) **Present, temporary** residence on earth until death—5:1a *if* [3<sup>rd</sup> class condition] ...
    - (1) **Its location:** *the earthly tent which is our house*
    - (2) **Its destruction:** *is torn down* (dismantled like a tent),
      - (a) We are all vulnerable to the instabilities of life, including death and decay. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:16; 2 Pet. 1:13-14)
      - (b) See the scars on Paul's body (cf. Gal. 6:17; 2 Cor. 11:23-27)
      - (c) The human mortality rate remains steady at 100%.
  - ii) **Future, eternal** residence in heaven—5:1b (then) *we have a building ...*
    - (1) Its **identity**?:
      - (a) The resurrected, glorified body?—parallel to body in 1a
      - (b) Heaven? Or a specific place in heaven?
    - (2) Its **source:** *from God*,
    - (3) Its **construction:** *a house not made with hands [acheiropoietos]*,
    - (4) Its **duration:** *eternal*
    - (5) Its **location:** *in the heavens*.
    - (6) This seems to be referring to the glorified body given to all believers. There is no homelessness for the Christian at death.
- b) **The groaning**—5:2-3
  - i) <sup>2</sup> *For [gar]* *indeed in this we groan* [pres. act. ind.], (cf. Rom. 8:23)
    - (1) Life in this tent is difficult, uncomfortable, and unpleasant at times. Experiencing frustrating limitations and disabilities.
    - (2) The certainty of hope does not bring Paul rest, but unrest. (Mark Seifrid)
    - (3) The groaning is rooted, not in hopeless dejection, but joyful anticipation.
  - ii) *longing [epipotheo] to be clothed with [ependuomai] our dwelling from heaven*,
    - (1) Cf. Phil. 1:21-23

- iii) **If** ...: <sup>3</sup> *inasmuch* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *as we, having put it on* [**enduo**],
  - iv) **Then** ...: (we) *will not be found naked*.
  - v) The believer will never be found in a bodiless state.
  - c) **The burden**—5:4
    - i) <sup>4</sup> *For* [**gar**] *indeed while we are in this tent, we groan* [pres. act. ind.],
      - (1) Life in this tent is difficult at times.
    - ii) *being burdened* [pres. pass. ptc.],
      - (1) **Negative**: *because we do not want* [**thelo**] *to be unclothed* [**ekduo**] (i.e. die)
        - (a) Paul's longing here is not for death (as in Greek views of the body as a tomb, which made even suicide acceptable if life became too difficult) but for the resurrection, when he will receive a new body. (Craig Keener)
      - (2) **Positive**: *but to be clothed* [**ependuomai**] (i.e. eternal spiritual body), *so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by* (immortal) *life*.
        - (a) An echo of Is. 25:8 and 1 Cor. 15:54.
- 2) Confidence regarding the future**—5:5
- a) The **purpose**: <sup>5</sup> *Now He who prepared* [**katergazomai**] *us for this very purpose* (receiving an immortal body) *is God*,
  - b) The **pledge**: *who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge* [**arrabon**]
  - c) Paul's hope rests not only upon the objective knowledge that it is God who is preparing him for a glorious future but also upon the subjective experience of the Spirit which he enjoys. (Colin Kruse)
- 3) Things we need to remember:**
- a) An intermediate body is suggested in 1 Sam. 28:14 (Samuel); Luke 16:19-31 (rich man and Lazarus); Matt. 17:3 (Moses and Elijah); and Rev. 6:9-11 (Tribulation martyrs).
  - b) No matter our earthly body is dismantled (by time, illness, or violence), our guaranteed hope is that we will stand in the presence of the Son.
    - i) The groanings in this life are real, and to be expected. They are, however, not the end. Don't deny their reality, but don't focus on them exclusively.
    - ii) The dwelling from heaven for which he groans is not some immaterial existence of the soul but the immortal life of the resurrection. ... The hope of the resurrection is no narcotic that leaves its possessors passive, listless, and dormant. On the contrary, it makes them restless pilgrims. (Mark Seifrid)
  - iii)

2 Corinthians 5:6-10  
Pleasing to the Lord

**Introduction:**

**1) Internal struggle of living in a human body—5:6-8**

**a) How can Paul respond this way?—5:6-7**

i) <sup>6</sup> **Therefore** [*oun*] ...

(1) Despite all the opposition, accusations, and physical suffering, Paul knows he has the presence of the Spirit as God's pledge to him of a physical resurrection. (cf. 5:5)

ii) **Certainty:** *being always of good courage* [pres. act. ptc. *tharreo*],

(1) This is the flip side of not losing heart (cf. 4:1, 16).

(2) "Confidence" for the apostle is not *being* confident but *having* confidence. Confidence is given to him from without, not mustered from within. (Mark Seifrid)

iii) **Awareness:** *and knowing* [pf. act. ptc. *oida*] *that* ...

(1) *while we are at home* [pres. act. ptc. *endemeo*] (take up residence) *in the body*

(a) In an earthly tent gradually wasting away.

(2) *we are absent* [pres. act. ind. *ekdemeo*] *from the Lord—*

(a) We are in exile, away from home.

iv) <sup>7</sup> **for** [*gar*] *we walk* [pres. act. ind. *peripateo*]

(1) **Positively:** *by* (in the realm of) *faith*,

(a) This is not command or a goal, but a statement of fact.

(b) We live in the realm of faith, not how things appear.

(2) **Negatively:** *not by* (in the realm of) *sight/appearance—*

(a) Appearances can be, and often are, deceiving.

(b) We don't need, as Israel had, a pillar of cloud or fire to guide us. It didn't keep them from spiritual adultery; neither would it help us.

**b) What is Paul's response?—5:8**

i) **Courageous certainty:** <sup>8</sup> *we are of good courage* [pres. act. ind. *tharreo*]

ii) **Pleasurable approval:** *and prefer* [pres. act. ind. *eudokeo*] *rather*

(1) *to be absent* [aor. act. inf. *ekdemeo*] *from the body*

(2) *and to be at home* [aor. act. inf. *endemeo*] (take up residence) *with the Lord.*

(a) Cf. Ps. 72:25; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 4:13-18

**2) Godward ambition and the Judgment Seat of Christ—5:9-10**

**a) The ambition:** <sup>9</sup> *Therefore* [*dio*] *we also have as our ambition* [*philotimeomai*], ... *to be pleasing/satisfying* [*euarestos*] *to Him.*

i) *whether at home* [pres. act. ptc. *endemeo*]

ii) *or absent* [pres. act. ptc. *ekdemeo*],



- b) **The reason for this ambition:** <sup>10</sup> For [*gar*] ...
  - i) **The necessity:** *we must* [pres. act. ind. *dei*] *all*
    - (1) No Christians are exempt from this.
  - ii) **The presentation:** *appear* [aor. pass. inf. *phaneroo*] *before the judgment seat* [*bema*] *of Christ*, (cf. Rom. 14:10)
    - (1) Jesus had been to Pilate's Bema Seat in Matt. 27:19 and John 19:13.  
Paul had been to the Corinthian Bema in Acts 18:12-17 and again at the Caesarean Bema in Acts 25:1-22.
    - (2) This is not voluntary or a mere suggestion.
  - iii) **The purpose:** *so that* [*hina*] *each one may be recompensed for his deeds* [aor. mid. sub. *komizo*] *in the body, according to what he has done/accomplished* [*prasso*], *whether good/beneficial* [*agathos*] *or bad/worthless, unhelpful* [*phaulos*].
    - (1) The evaluation will be accurate because the Judge has perfect knowledge and wisdom.

### 3) Things we need to remember:

- a) **To walk by sight** would be to grasp for all the health and wealth we possibly can here and now, believing this life to be our best shot at happiness. It is a life of worry. (Dane Ortlund)
- b) **To walk by faith** is to live in light of ultimate rather than immediate realities, to be obedient to God's commands despite the hardships that obedience produces. (David Lowry)
- c) **To please Christ:** But, though subject to numerous ills, the body is important. We cannot blame our failures and sins on it because of its infirmities. We are to please Christ by *using these bodies* in His service. ... While there is conscious life, no matter how the body is injured and worn, there are ways of using it that please Christ. (Jay Adams)

2 Cor. 5:11-15  
No Longer Live for Ourselves

**Introduction:** Selflessness is a foreign concept for our culture, including churches.

**1) Attempts at persuasion—5:11**

- a) **Persuasion:** <sup>11</sup> *So then [oun], ... we persuade [pres. act. ind. peitho] men,*
  - i) How? *knowing the fear of the Lord,*
    - (1) To fear/be in awe of Christ is to express loyalty to Him and faithfulness to His Word. Those who fear Christ trust in Him and obey His commands. They desire to have their works evaluated positively by Christ at the Bema Seat.
  - ii) Persuading people:
    - (1) Some see this as attempts at evangelism.
    - (2) Some see this as attempts to convince others of Paul's own integrity.
- b) **Godward disclosure:** *but [de] we have been made manifest [pf. pass. ind. phaneroo] to God;*
  - i) Paul's character and motives were permanently exposed to and perfectly known by God. (Murray Harris)
- c) **Manward disclosure:** *and [de] I hope that we have been made manifest [pf. pass. inf. phaneroo] also in your consciences.*
  - i) Paul was eagerly desirous that the Corinthians would all come to share the divine assessment of his person and ministry and motives. (Murray Harris)
  - ii) Rather than appealing to the Corinthians for approval, however, he appeals to them to recognize the spiritual realities of his ministry, that he has been called by God and that they are called to the true God and the true gospel through Paul's ministry. (George Guthrie)

**2) Explanation of ministry—5:12**

- a) **Don't misunderstand:** <sup>12</sup> *We are not again commending [sunistemi] ourselves to you*
  - i) Self-commendation is often sinful but not always
    - (1) Cf. Prov. 25:27; 27:2
  - ii) Paul's 9 uses of sunistemi in 2 Corinthians
    - (1) Viewed negatively: 5:12; 10:12, 18a
    - (2) Viewed neutral: 3:1
    - (3) Viewed positively: 4:2; 6:4; 7:11; 10:18b; 12:11
- b) **Righteous boasting:** *but [alla] are giving you an opportunity [aphorme] to boast [kauchema] of us,*
  - i) Aphorme refers to a strategic base of military operations.
- c) **Sinful boasting:** *so that [hina] you will have an answer for those who boast [kauchaomai] (have an inflated view of themselves) ...*
  - i) **Positive, externals:** *in appearance* (externals)

- (1) Cf. 10:1, 7
  - (2) Cf. Jesus' words in John 7:24
  - ii) **Negative, internals:** *and not in heart* (internals).
    - (1) Cf. 1 Sam. 16:7
    - (2) Paul was content to take his stand on what was “in the heart”—transparency before God and people and the testimony of his own conscience. (Murray Harris)
  - iii) Remember that Paul will later boast about his own weaknesses. (cf. 12:9-10)
  - iv) Paul has given the Corinthians ample ammunition to defend Paul. “What was this basis for pride in him that Paul was supplying to his converts at Corinth? It was their firsthand knowledge of his life and ministry, embedded in their consciousness and consciences (v. 11b)—knowledge of his missionary and pastoral endeavor and accomplishments, and memory of his apostolic suffering for the cause of Christ.” (Murray Harris)
- 3) Competing assumptions regarding Paul—5:13**
- a) **Paul is irrational, insane:** <sup>13</sup> *For [gar] if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] we are out of our mind [existemi], it is for God,* (cf. Mark 3:21; Acts 26:24-29)
    - i) Paul's ultimate focus was vertical.
  - b) **Paul is very rational, sane:** *or if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] we are of right mind [sophroneo], it is for you.*
    - i) Paul's secondary focus was horizontal
  - c) Either way, Paul is selfless.
- 4) Substitution—5:14-15**
- a) **Motivation:** <sup>14</sup> *For [gar] the love of (the) Christ controls [sunecho] us,*
    - i) Love
      - (1) Objective genitive?: Love from Paul for Christ
      - (2) Subjective genitive?: Love from Christ for Paul
        - (a) The immediate context speaks of Christ's selfless death.
        - (b) Wherever the word “love” is found in the NT in this grammatical construction, it is always focused on the person doing the loving, not the recipient of that love. (George Guthrie)
    - ii) Christ's self-sacrificing love restrains Paul from being self-oriented. Before salvation, Paul was controlled by zeal. (cf. Phil. 3:6)
    - iii) Christ's love for his people is not one competing motivation among others but is the master motivation, the transcendent, dominating, all-determining engine for Christian life and ministry. (Dane Ortlund)
  - b) **Conclusion:** *having concluded [krino] this,*
    - i) This is a rational, not an irrational or emotional, decision to turn from the self-oriented mindset inherited from Adam.
  - c) **Substitution:**
    - i) *that one died for/in place of [huper] all, therefore (the) all died.*

- (1) In addition to dying in Adam in the garden, our spiritual deadness is also undeniably recognized at the cross. In a sense, we are doubly dead.
- ii) <sup>15</sup> *And He died for/in place of [huper] all,*
  - (1) **Universal** application of Christ's death: 1 Tim. 2:6; 4:10; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2
  - (2) **Particular** application of Christ's death:
- d) **Intention:** *so that [hina] ...*
  - i) **Negative:** *they who live* (a sub-group of the all who died) *would no longer live for themselves,*
    - (1) While all persons died, in one sense, when the Man who represented them died, not all were raised to new life when he rose. (Murray Harris)
    - (2) We have lived a self-oriented life long enough. We live in a society given to self-promotion, self-direction, self-fulfillment, self-advantageous, self-indulgence, and self-protection.
      - (a) The false teachers of Corinth practice a worldly form of self-aggrandizement and one-upmanship politics in the church, seeking to win advantage over Paul in terms of church leadership. In no uncertain terms Paul wishes to show that such a posture runs counter to the very essence of what it means to belong to Christ. (George Guthrie)
    - (3) Christ's work not only accomplishes something for the individual but in the individual.
    - (4) David Garland writes: What seemed to the casual observer to have been an ignominious and powerless death on a cross actually exerts enormous power for good on those who submit to it.
  - ii) **Positive:** *but [alla] for Him who died and rose/was raised again on their behalf/in place of them [huper].*
    - (1) Remember, this is not about paying Jesus back for what He did for us. As has been said, gifts are given to be received, not to be repaid.
  - iii) Replacing the slavery to self that is the hallmark of the unregenerate state should be an exclusive devotion to the crucified and resurrected Messiah. The intended result of the death of Christ was the Christian's renunciation of self-seeking and self-pleasing and the pursuit of a Christ-centered life filled with action for the benefit of others, as was Christ's life. (Murray Harris)

## 5) Things to remember:

- a) When humans make judgments on the basis of appearances and normal expectations, they are likely to make false judgments. The visible realm is incomplete, illusive, and subject to the ravages of decay. (David Garland)
- b) The death of Christ is more than a fact to be believed; it demands a lifestyle that needs to be lived. (David Woodall)

- c) The outcome of Christian self-denial is a Christ-centered life filled with concern for others. (Murray Harris)

2 Corinthians 5:16-19  
The Effective Work of the Son and the Father

**Introduction:**

**1) Knowledge/perspective—5:16** <sup>16</sup> *Therefore [hoste] ...*

- “Therefore” is in light of 5:14-15
- Genuine salvation gives us a new perspective of Christ and others. New criteria by which to evaluation Jesus and others.
- a) The repudiation of his previous negative, superficial, inaccurate, misguided human perspective based on appearances. (cf. 5:12)
  - i) **Negative:** *from now on we recognize/acknowledge [oída] no one according to the flesh;*
  - ii) **Positive:** *even though/if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] we have known [ginosko] Christ according to the flesh,*
    - (1) Jesus died and rose again in April of AD 33. Paul was converted in the summer of AD 35.
    - (2) Today people view Jesus as an immigrant, a social justice warrior, a revolutionary to help the oppressed, a misguided teacher, a charismatic healer, a recycled prophet, a false messiah, etc.
  - iii) Paul, before his conversion, like many of his fellow Jews, evaluated Christ “from a worldly perspective” and dismissed claims that he was the Messiah because he regarded it as unthinkable that God’s Messiah could be crucified as a criminal. (Colin Kruse)
  - iv) Knowledge about Jesus is not the same as believing in Jesus. Mere information about Jesus cannot transform a person from self-centeredness to selflessness. (David Lowery)
- b) The adoption of his current Godward perspective: *yet [alla] now we know [ginosko] Him in this way no longer.*
  - i) Cf. Rom. 14:8-12

**2) What GOD has done—5:17**

- a) <sup>17</sup> *Therefore ...—5:17*
  - i) “Therefore” is the second consequence of 5:14-15.
- b) **All believers are part of a new creation:** *if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] anyone is in Christ, (he is) a new creation; (lit. if anyone in Christ, a new creation)*
  - i) Cf. Gal. 6:15
- c) **What does the new creation looks like, both individually and corporately?**
  - i) **Negative:** *the old things [archaios/archaic] passed away;*
  - ii) **Positive:** *behold, new things have come [pf. act. ind.] (and remain).*
- d) We see this objectively (in the Word) and subjectively (in our own lives).

**3) What GOD THE FATHER has done—5:18-19**

- a) **God initiates and accomplishes:** <sup>18</sup> *Now all these things* (dramatic changes) *are from God,—5:18*
- i) **COMPLETE reconciliation** (transformation of relationship): *who reconciled [katallasso] us to Himself through Christ*
- (1) Paul is not speaking here of the overcoming of God's enmity against humanity, but that of the fallen humanity against God.
- (2) The shift to the reconciliation metaphor takes what God has done through Christ a step further. The judge enters into a personal relationship with the accused. This is necessary because the judge is the one who has been sinned against and is the focus of the personal hostility. God does not simply make a bookkeeping alteration by dropping the charges against us. God gives himself to us in friendship. Because of our extreme hostility toward God, this investment is accomplished at unspeakable cost. (David Garland)
- (3) Whereas for justification the sphere is the courtroom, for sanctification the temple, for redemption the slave market, and for adoption the family, the sphere of reconciliation is that of *friendship*. (Dane Ortlund)
- ii) **INCOMPLETE reconciliation:** *and gave [didomi] us the ministry of (the) reconciliation [katallage],*
- b) **God forgives through Christ and communicates through people—5:19**
- i) **Forgiveness through Christ:** <sup>19</sup> *namely, that God was in Christ* (His entire earthly life) *reconciling [katallasso] the world* (all who believe, Jew or Gentile) *to Himself,*
- (1) *not counting [logizomai] their transgressions [paraptoma]* (overstepping the boundary) *against them,*
- ii) **Proclamation through Paul and his ministry team:** *and He has committed [tithemi] to us the word of (the) reconciliation [katallage].*

#### 4) **Things to remember:**

- a) Adam's sin broke humanity's perfect relationship with God and made humanity enemies with God (Rm 5:10). For Paul, humanity was so sinful that human beings could not reconcile themselves to God. But God himself took the initiative in history to reconcile humanity through the death of Christ on the cross. This does not mean, however, that every human is automatically reconciled. The message must be proclaimed and received (Rm 5:11) by faith in Christ (Rm 5:1–2). (David Woodall, MBC)
- b) God did not deputize Paul to make people feel good about themselves and their relationship to God but to effect a real peace. This task means that he must always point to something beyond himself, not to himself, to what God has done in Christ, not what he is doing for Christ. (David Garland)

2 Corinthians 5:20-21  
Ambassadors for Christ

**Introduction:**

**1) What we are—5:20** (16 Greek words, 24 English)

- a) **Faithful REPRESENTATIVES of God's authority:** <sup>20</sup> *So then [oun], we are ambassadors [presbeuo] for [hyper] Christ,*
  - i) The status of ambassador (similar to an apostle) is not dependent on the audience to whom Paul is sent but on Christ who had sent Paul. (Murray Harris)
  - ii) To reject the representative was to reject the one who sent him. To ignore Paul would be to ignore the Christ on whose behalf he spoke. (Paul Barnett)
- b) **Faithful COMMUNICATORS of God's message:** *as God is pleading [pres. act. ptc. parakaleo] through [dia] us.*
  - i) God communicates His work to the world through the work of His ambassador. (Mark Seifrid)
  - ii) Paul is authorized by the offended God to announce to the hostile world God's terms for peace.
  - iii) Cf. 1 Thess. 2:13

**2) What we do at times with Christians—5:20b**

- a) **Urgent need:** *We beg you [you is not in the Greek text] [deomai] (Corinthian believers?) on behalf of [hyper] Christ,*
  - i) His hands are not on his hips, exasperated (like a frustrated mother); his hands are wide open, beseeching. (Dane Ortlund)
- b) **Command:** *be reconciled* [aor. pass. impv. *katallasso*] *to (the) God (the Father by God the Father).*
  - i) This assumes a state of hostility exists between humanity and God.
  - ii) Four elements of reconciliation: (David Garland)
    - (1) Reconciliation obliges us to come to terms with the alienation and our responsibility for it. We must recognize our culpability for the ruptured relationship.
    - (2) The key phrase in the call to be reconciled is "to God." Humans may attempt to reconcile with one another, but if they are not also reconciled to God there will be no real reconciliation. Reconciliation obliges us to reorder our lives around God. Our changed orientation, when we no longer live to ourselves, will spill over into all our relationships with others. Continuing to harbor enmity toward others belies any claim to be reconciled to God.
    - (3) Reconciliation requires that we jettison all worldly criteria for evaluating others. We must look at others from God's vantage point.
    - (4) Those who are reconciled to God are a reconciling force.



**3) What did God do?—5:21 (15 Greek words, 24 English)**

- Paul echoes the truths of Is. 53:9-11.
- a) **What?** <sup>21</sup> *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,*
  - i) **The sovereignty of the Father:** <sup>21</sup> *He (the Father) made [aor. act. ind. poieo] Him (Christ)*
    - (1) Christ is not an unwilling or surprised participant. He willingly came to do the Father's will. (cf. John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29)
  - ii) **The historic sinless life of Christ:** *who knew no [aor. act. ptc. ginosko] sin [hamartia]*
    - (1) Cf. Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 3:18; 1 John 3:5
  - iii) **The representative, sin-laden death of Christ:** *to be [no verb in Greek] sin [hamartia] on our behalf [huper]*
    - (1) God treated Christ as "sin," aligning him so totally with sin and its dire consequences that from God's viewpoint he became indistinguishable from sin itself. (Murray Harris)
    - (2) Jesus, as sin personified, suffered the consequences our sin deserved, alienation from God and the object of God's wrath.
- b) **Why?** *so that [hina] we might become [aor. mid. subj. ginomai] the righteousness [dikaiosune] of God (the Father) in [en] Him (Christ).*
  - i) Only those who come to the Father through the Son can have a righteous standing before the Father.

**4) Things to remember:**

- a) Many others have stated: As Christ was not a sinner, but was treated as if He were, so believers who have not yet been made righteous (until glorification) are treated as if they were righteous.
- b) Murray Harris wrote: We should never overlook the wonder and mystery of the fact that it was the all-holy God himself who caused Christ, his spotless Son, to become sin and therefore the object of his wrath.
- c) God took it upon himself to reconcile us to him. He did this not by pulling in a neutral third party to pay our debt but by sending his own beloved Son. He exhausted his righteous divine wrath on that Son in his death on the cross. (Dane Ortlund)

2 Cor. 6:1-10  
*Balanced Ministries for God's Glory (part 1)*

**Introduction:**

**1) Paul's urgent appeal—6:1-2**

- a) What?
  - i) <sup>1</sup> *And working together [sunergeo] with Him (God? his ministry team? the Corinthians?), we also plead with [parakaleo] you not to receive the grace of God in vain—*
  - ii) This is different from rejecting it or neglecting it. Rather, it is receiving it without the intended effect being achieved. (Murray Harris)
  - iii) Perhaps they will fail to understand and practice what they know to be true.
- b) Why? <sup>2</sup> *for [gar] He says, (cf. Isa. 49:8, LXX)*
  - i) *“AT THE ACCEPTABLE [dektos] TIME I LISTENED TO [epakouo] YOU,*
  - ii) *AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED [boetheo] YOU.”*
- c) Urgent application of OT principles
  - i) *Behold, now is “THE ACCEPTABLE [euprosdektos] TIME,”*
  - ii) *behold, now is “THE DAY OF SALVATION”—*
- d) This time WILL come to an end. Respond rightly now!

**2) What does the integrity of a good co-worker look like?—6:3-4a**

- This must be read with 1 Cor. 4:3-4 in mind.
- a) **Negative aspect:** <sup>3</sup> *giving no [medeis] cause for offense [proskope] in anything [medeis], (use of the double negative medeis)*
  - i) **Why?** *so that the ministry [diakonia] will not be discredited [momaomai], (cf. 2 Cor. 8:20)*
  - ii) However, the message may offend and be considered foolish (1 Cor. 1:18, 23), and the messenger may be considered a fool (2 Cor. 11:16). While accusations against him are inevitable, none of them stick.
  - iii) Murray Harris: a lifestyle that is inconsistent with the message proclaimed undermines or at least jeopardizes the credibility of the gospel.
  - iv) David Garland: a ministry directed by what others might think is so neutralized that it is ultimately worthless to God.
- b) **Positive aspect:** <sup>4</sup> *but [alla] in everything commending/introducing, presenting [sunistemi] ourselves as ministers [diakonia] of God,*
  - i) Some have referred to this as Paul's ID card.

### 3) How does Paul demonstrate himself as a genuine minister of God?—6:4b-10

- Repeats [*en*] 18x, [*dia*] 3x, and [*hos*] 7x.

#### a) Ten types of adversities in his ministry—6:4b-5 (all plurals)

##### i) General heading—6:4b *in* [*en*] *much perseverance* [*hupomone*],

- Some argue that this should go with 6:4a.
- Some argue that this is a heading for what follows.

(1) Walter Elwell: It includes the capacity to bear pain or trials without complaint, the ability to forbear under severe provocation, and the self-control which keeps one from acting rashly even though suffering opposition or adversity.

(2) Cf. Rom. 15:4, 5; James 1:3, 4

##### ii) Generic: difficult situations—6:4b

(1) Pressures: *in afflictions* [*thlipsis*],

(a) Cf. 2 Cor. 1:8-11

(2) Calamities: *in distresses* [*anagke*],

(3) Restrictions: *in hardships* [*stenochoria*],

(a) Cf. 2 Cor. 4:8

##### iii) Specific: involuntary, hostile afflictions from others—6:5a

- Five of the following six terms are found in 11:23, 27

(1) Physical wounds: *in beatings* [*plege*],

(a) Cf. Acts 16:37; 21:32; 2 Cor. 11:24-25

(2) Incarceration: *in imprisonments* [*phulake*],

(a) Cf. Acts 16:23; 20:23; 24:27

(3) Defiant social disorders, riots: *in disturbances* [*akatastasia*],

(a) Cf. Acts 13:50; 14:5, 19; 16:22; 17:5-7, 13; 18:12-17; 19:23-20:1

##### iv) Self-inflicted demands of ministry—6:5b

(1) Exhausting work: *in labors* [*kopos*],

(a) Cf. Acts 18:3-4; 1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Cor. 11:9-10

(2) Time constraints: *in sleeplessness* [*agrupnia*],

(a) Cf. Acts 20:31; 2 Cor. 11:27; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8

(3) Deprivation: *in hunger* [*nesteia*],

(a) Cf. 1 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 11:27

- Remember that these are not to be perceived as inherent virtues of Paul, but rather demonstrations of God's work in and through Paul.
- No one would endure such things if he had not been sent by God and if his motives were insincere. (Jay Adams)

2 Cor. 6:1-10  
*Balanced Ministries for God's Glory (part 2)*

**Introduction:** review of last time

- Paul's appeal—6:1-2
- Paul's integrity—6:3-4
- Paul's ministry—6:4-5

b) **Eight God-given characteristics of his ministry**—6:6-7a

- Despite the 10 types of adversities in 6:4b-5
- All introduced with [*en*]
- A shift from hardships to the ethical manner and means in which he ministers

i) **Manner** of his ministry—6:6a

- (1) Purity of intentions and actions: *in purity* [*agnotes*],  
(a) Before God and people
- (2) Understanding: *in knowledge* [*gnosis*],  
(a) Moral integrity without knowledge can create almost as much havoc as a lack of integrity. (David Garland)  
(b) You are shaped by what and who you know, including God.
- (3) Reactive, non-retaliation: *in patience* [*makrothumia*],  
(a) Characteristic of God (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:15)  
(b) Characteristic of love (1 Cor. 13:4)
- (4) Proactive, beneficial kindness: *in kindness* [*chrestotes*],  
(a) Characteristic of God (Rom. 2:4; 11:22; Titus 3:4)  
(b) Characteristic of love (1 Cor. 13:4)

ii) **Means** by which he ministers—6:6b-7a

- (1) *in the Holy Spirit*,  
(a) Three of these eight (patience, love, and kindness) are listed as fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22.
- (2) Genuine love: *in unhypocritical* [*anupokritos*] love [*agape*],  
(a) Not the pretend love of the false teachers.
- (3) Grounded in reality: *in the word of truth* [*aletheia*],  
(a) The **content** of what he communicates  
(b) Cf. this same phrase in Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:15; James 1:18
- (4) Inherent power to minister: *in the power* [*dunamis*] of God;  
(a) What enables him to minister  
(b) Cf. 2 Cor. 12:9; 13:4

c) **Ten paradoxical interpretations of his ministry**—6:7b-10

i) By [*dia*]<sup>7</sup>—6:7b-8b

(1) **Spiritual battle:** *by the weapons [*hoplon*] of righteousness for the right hand (offensive?) and the left (defensive?),*

(a) Cf. Rom. 6:13

(2) **Reputation**

(a) **Non-verbal:** <sup>8</sup> *by glory/honor [*doxa*] and dishonor [*atimia*],*

(b) **Verbal:** *by evil report [*disphemia*] (damaging slander) and good report [*euphemia*] (praise) [Eng. euphemism; an inoffensive way to avoid saying something offensive];*

ii) As [*hos*]<sup>9</sup>—6:8b-10

- The following list appears to pair the negative, evil report (blame) rooted in **perception** and the positive, good report (praise) rooted in **reality**.

(1) **Reputation:**

(a) *regarded as deceivers [*planos*] and yet true [*aletheis*];*

(i) Jesus was also accused of being a deceiver (Matt. 27:63)

(b) <sup>9</sup> *as unknown [*agnoeo*] and yet well-known [*epiginosko*],*

(2) **View of life:** (echoes Psalm 118:17-18)

(a) *as dying [*apothnesko*] and yet behold, we live [*zao*];*

(b) *as punished [*paideuo*] and yet not put to death [*thanatoo*],*

(3) **Affections:** <sup>10</sup> *as sorrowful [*lupeo*] but always rejoicing [*chairō*],*

(4) **Values:**

(a) *as poor [*ptochos*] but making many rich [*ploutizo*],*

(b) *as having nothing [*echo medeis*] and yet possessing all things [*katecho pas*].*

#### 4) Things to remember:

- a) Remember that these are not to be perceived as inherent virtues of Paul, but rather demonstrations of God's work in and through Paul.
- b) No one would endure such things if he had not been sent by God and if his motives were insincere. (Jay Adams)
- c) Jay Adams: Is there anything that you do that reflects negatively on the message of Christ (and ultimately, therefore, on Christ Himself)? If so, you should take care to eliminate the practice, even if it is not necessarily wrong in itself. A stumbling-block is an unnecessary, man-made occasion for others to stumble over (i.e., to sin).

2 Cor. 6:11-7:1  
*Call to Holiness*

**Introduction:**

**1) Realities and response—6:11-13**

- By rejecting Paul's ministry, they are rejecting Paul's person; the two are inseparable. (Paul Barnett)
- a) **Realistic evaluation of the relationship with his spiritual offspring—6:11-12**
  - i) The reality of **Paul's transparent communication**:
    - (1) **Candid communication**: <sup>11</sup> *Our mouth has spoken freely [agoigo] to you, O Corinthians,*
    - (2) **Expansive affection**: *our heart is opened wide [platuno].*
  - ii) The reality of the **Corinthian withholding their affections**:
    - It is a reality that people will withhold affection from you.
    - (1) **Negative, not in Paul's heart**: <sup>12</sup> *You are not restrained [stenochoreo] by (better "in") us,*
    - (2) **Positive, in the Corinthian heart**: *but you are restrained [stenochoreo] in your own affections [splanchnon].*
  - iii) Murray Harris: In medical terms, an enlarged heart is a dangerous liability; in spiritual terms, an enlarged heart is a productive asset.
- b) **Desired response from his spiritual offspring—6:13**
  - i) **Reciprocity**: <sup>13</sup> *Now in a like exchange [antimisthia]—I speak as to children [teknon] (cf. 1 Cor. 4:14)—open wide [platuno] to us also.*
  - ii) This is not an insult but an appeal.

**2) The principles of separation—6:14-18**

- Six words occur nowhere else in the NT: heterozugeo (6:14), metoche (6:14), sumphonesis (6:15), beliar (6:15), sugkatathesis (6:16), and molusmos (7:1).
- a) **The NEGATIVE principle**: <sup>14</sup> *Do not be/become unequally yoked [heterozugeo] (mismatched) with unbelievers/non-Christians [apistos];*
  - While this has historically been applied to marriage, the principle applies to all of life, primarily religious associations.
  - Illustration from both Lev. 19:19 and Deut. 22:10; two different animals should not be cross-bred and are incapable of plowing a straight furrow together.
- b) Reason # 1: *for [gar] ... (No blending of the mutually exclusive allowed!)*
  - Series of five rhetorical questions: (This illustrates Ps. 1:1-6)
  - i) **Affiliation/shared values and goals—6:14**

- (1) *what partnership [metoche] have righteousness [dikaiosune] and lawlessness [anomia],*  
(2) *or what fellowship [koinonia] has light [phos] with darkness [skotos]?*
- ii) **Alliance/shared commitment—6:15**  
(1) <sup>15</sup> *Or what harmony [sumphonesis] has Christ with Belial/Beliar (“the worthless one”, i.e. Satan),*  
(2) *: or what has a believer [pistos] in common [meris] with an unbeliever [apistos]?*
- iii) **Arrangement/common ground—6:16** <sup>16</sup> *Or what agreement [sugkatathesis] has a sanctuary [naos] of God with idols [eidolon]?*
- b) **The positive principle: we** (emphatic) *are a sanctuary [naos] of the living God;*
- Both an **individual** (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and **collective** (1 Cor. 3:16-17; here) sense of being a sanctuary (holy of holies)
- c) Reason # 2: *For [gar] ...*
- i) **The four-fold promises of a COVENANT:** *just as God said, (cf. Lev. 26:11-12)*
- (1) **His presence:**  
(a) *“I will dwell [enoikeo] in them*  
(b) *and walk among them [emperipateo];*
- (2) **His covenant:**  
(a) *And I will be their God,*  
(b) *and they shall be My people.*
- ii) **The three-fold commands:** <sup>17</sup> *“Therefore [dio], ... (cf. Is. 52:11)*  
• Participating in God’s covenant presence requires personal and corporate holiness.  
(1) *come out [exerchomai] from their midst*  
(2) *and be separate [aphorizo],” says the Lord.*  
(3) *“And do not touch [hapto] what is unclean,*
- iii) **The three-fold promises of ADOPTION:** *says the Lord Almighty /All-Sovereign [pantokrator].”*  
• Cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Is. 43:6  
(1) *And I will welcome [eisdechomai] you.*  
(2) <sup>18</sup> *“And I will be a father to you,*  
(3) *And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,”*
- 3) **Summary command—7:1**  
a) <sup>1</sup> *Therefore [oun], having these promises, beloved,*  
b) **Negative:** *let us cleanse [katharizo] ourselves from all defilement /pollution, contamination [molusmos] of flesh and spirit,*

- c) **Positive:** (while) *perfecting* [*epiteleo*] *holiness* (by living) *in the fear* (awe) *of God*.

**4) Things to remember:**

- a) Recognize the strong, ungodly influence of unbelievers upon your values and affections.
- b) In Paul's thought the Christian life is in essence an advance in holiness. (Murray Harris)
- c) Both the Hebrew and the Greek words indicate someone who "has it all together." He is not sinless in any area of his life, but he is working on *every* area in order to bring it more and more into conformity to the Word of God. He is growing *across the board*. (Jay Adams)



2 Cor. 7:2-4  
*Bringing Joy to Other Believers*

**Introduction:** Paul picks up his flow of thought from 6:13. Everything in 6:14-7:1 has been a sort of rabbit trail.

**1) Paul commands them to fully embrace him—7:2a**

- a) <sup>2</sup> *Make room* [*choreo*] *for us in your hearts* (last phrase not in original).
  - i) Basically a repetition of 6:13.
  - ii) This is only possible if Christians follow the truths of 7:1
- b) IOW, someone is coming to spend a few days with you, so get a room ready for them.
- c) This also includes the curbing of their affections toward the demonized false teachers that have seduced them.

**2) Paul defends himself against unfounded accusations—7:2b**

- a) Three positively negative repetitive statements
  - i) **No injustice:** *We wronged* [*adikeo*] *no one* [*oudeis*],
  - ii) **No ruination:** *we corrupted* [*phtheiro*] *no one* [*oudeis*],
  - iii) **No exploitation:** *we took advantage* [*pleonekteo*] *of no one* [*oudeis*].
- b) There are no legitimate witnesses who can honestly testify about Paul's mistreatment of them.

**3) Paul does not blame them for their wavering—7:3**

- a) **His statement:** <sup>3</sup> *I do not speak to condemn* [*katakrisis*] *you*,
  - i) They had been deceived by demonized people. (cf. 2 Cor. 11:1-15)
  - ii) There is some guilt in being seduced, but the primary guilt is on the predator doing the seduction.
- b) **He reason:** *for* [*gar*] *I have said before that you are in our hearts*
  - i) **In the “bad” times?:** *to die together*
  - ii) **In the “good” times:** *and to live together*.

**4) Paul's ministry has been characterized by four qualities—7:4**

- a) **Frankness toward the Corinthians:** <sup>4</sup> *Great* [*polus*] *is my boldness* [*parresia*] *toward* [*pros*] *you*;
  - i) Note the P-alliteration.
- b) **Satisfied contentment about the Corinthians:** *great* [*polus*] *is my boasting* [*kauchesis*] *on your behalf* [*hyper*].
- c) **Spirit-wrought COMFORT from God:** *I have been filled* (by God the Spirit, the Comforter; cf. 7:6-7) [pf. pass. ind. *pleroo*] *with comfort* [*paraklesis*];

- d) **Excessive JOY from God:** *I am overflowing [huerperisseuo] with joy [chara] (a fruit of the Spirit) in [epi] all our affliction [thlipsis].*  
i) Joy is a theme (6x) of 7:4-16. Cf. 7:4, 7, 9, 13 (2x), 16

**5) Things to remember:**

- a) It is a difficult thing as a pastor to not allow the antagonism of some sheep or goats to rob him of ministering the Word with joy to the rest of the flock.
- b) It is a difficult thing for a congregation to not shrink away from their pastor when he has to deal firmly with rebellious sheep or ornery goats.
- c) The life of a normal Bible-teaching congregation is a mixture of good times and bad, enjoyable and unpleasant. This mixture demands that both the pastor and the flock stay on their toes to be vigilant in maintaining their relationship.

2 Cor. 7:5-7

*The Need for Comfort: Joy Replaces Anxiety*

**Introduction:**

To the shock of his congregation in 1866, C. H. Spurgeon confessed, “I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever gets to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to.”

This paragraph returns to the narrative of 2:13 that has been interrupted by the “rabbit trail” (or digression) of 2:14-7:4.

According to *The Quick-Reference Guide to Biblical Counseling*:

- *Anxiety is a constant fearful state*, accompanied by a feeling of unrest, dread, or worry. The person may not be aware of what is creating the fear.

- Anxiety is aroused by *a number of factors*:

- external situations (viewing the nightly news, a fast-paced lifestyle)

- physical well-being (lack of sleep, blood sugar imbalance)

- modeling (parents who were highly anxious)

- trauma (in situations that may be similar to experiences of the past that caused great pain)

- Anxiety’s *symptoms* can include inability to relax, tense feelings, rapid heartbeat, dry mouth, increased blood pressure, jumpiness or feeling faint, excessive perspiring, feeling clammy, constant anticipation of trouble, and constant feeling of uneasiness.

**1) The need EXISTS—7:5**

- The plural pronouns are probably editorial “we, our, us”

- a) **Ongoing restlessness:** <sup>5</sup> *For [gar] even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had [pf. act. ind.] no rest [anesis]* (root of English anesthesia),

- i) One sense of the word “flesh” refers to everything human and frail about him, body and mind and spirit, in his entire person, and likely with an allusive connotation of the perishability of the human condition under the old age. (Dane Ortlund)

- ii) Cf. 2:13 was “no rest for my spirit”

- iii) Remember 4:8-9

- iv) This unrest (haunting uncertainty, persistent apprehension) could have lasted @ 3-4 months.

- v) Intense, unresolved anxiety can affect us physically and spiritually.

- b) **Ongoing pressure:** *but [alla] we were afflicted [pres. pass. ptc. thlibo] on every side* (of his being)—

- Note the plural of both

- i) **Persecution; intense external opposition:** *conflicts* [mache] *without* [exochen],  
(1) Can be verbal or physical
- ii) **Intense internal concern:** *fears* [phobos] *within* [esochen].  
(1) The nonarrival of Titus tended to confirm Paul's worst fears.  
(Murray Harris)  
(2) Paul's fear had previously stopped him from teaching the word of God. (Acs 18:9-10)
- c) The pressures of ministry deeply affect a compassionate minister.  
(David Woodall, MBC)

## 2) The need is MET—7:6-7

- a) **Directly by God:** <sup>6</sup> *But* [alla] *God, who comforts* [pres. act. ptc. parakaleo] *the humbled* [tapeinos] (cf. Isa. 49:13; referring to one's relative inability to cope with one's financial, social, or emotional condition; this is not self-evaluation), *comforted* [parakaleo] *us*
  - i) How?
    - (1) Positive: *by the coming* [parousia] *of Titus*;
    - (2) Negative echo: <sup>7</sup> *and not only by* [en] *his coming* [parousia],
  - ii) Relief and joy came only when Titus arrived safely and brought the reassuring news that the Corinthians had repented and acted resolutely in the matter of the wrongdoer. (Murray Harris)
- b) **Indirectly by God's work through others:** *but* [alla] *also by* [en] *the comfort* [paraclesis] *with which he was comforted* [parakaleo] *in* [epi] *you*, (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3-4)
  - i) The report: *as he reported/informed* [anangello] *to us* (three things Titus observed)
    - (1) Recognition of what is lacking: *your longing* [epipothesis],
    - (2) Recognition of what has been lost: *your mourning* [odurmos],
    - (3) Recognition of what causes deep concern: *your zeal* [zelos] *for me*,
  - ii) The result: *so that I rejoiced* [chairō] *even more*.

**3) Things to remember:**

- a) Murray Harris: Paul openly admits to being in emotional turmoil and having persistent fears. ... Far from being a model of inner tranquility, Paul was deeply affected by his circumstances, although he was not emotionally fragile.
- b) Mark Seifrid: The apostle is no (super-)hero of faith, but a mere weakling carried by the grace of God. He is just like the Corinthians—and the rest of us.
  - i) Image of superhero with letter P
- c) George Guthrie: We again are reminded that sincere, committed, Spirit-enabled ministry does not provide immunity from fear and discouragement.

2 Cor. 7:8-10

*The Need for Sorrow That Leads to Genuine Christian Repentance*

**Introduction:** Years ago, I had the experience of being taken into a strange room and being drugged. While I was unconscious, some stranger then sliced me open with a knife. There was nothing I could do to defend myself. Looking back on that event, I am grateful for what they did to me. Surgery can cause short-term pain but have long-term positive results.

**1) Past, temporary REGRET—7:8 <sup>8</sup> For [*hoti*] ...**

- a) *though* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition; assumed true for the sake of argument] *I caused you sorrow* [*lupeo*] *by* [*en*] *my letter* (cf. 2:3-4), *I do not regret it* [*metamelomai*],
- The root word *lupe* occurs 8x in 7:8-11 and 8x in 2:1-7.
- i) Paul is neither insensitive nor intimidating
- ii) David Garland highlights four things:
- (1) Paul is not fawning over them with a feigned apology.
  - (2) Paul knew that his letter might cause a severe reaction.
  - (3) Paul would do it again if necessary. He disciplined them for their good.
  - (4) Paul is an apostle responsible for preaching the gospel and effecting moral reform in others. That may sometimes cause pain, but he is not in the business of making everyone feel good.
- b) *though* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *I did regret it* [*metamelomai*]—
- c) *for* [*gar*] *I (still) see* [pres. act. ind. *blepo*] *that* [*hoti*] *that letter caused you sorrow* [*lupeo*], *though* [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] *only for a while*—
- i) The pain from the letter will not last.

**2) Present JOY—7:9 <sup>9</sup> I now rejoice** [pres. act. ind. *chairo*],

- a) **Negative:** *not that* [*hoti*] *you were made sorrowful* [*lupeo*],
- i)
- b) **Positive:** *but that* [*hoti*] *you were made sorrowful* [*lupeo*] *to* [*eis*] *repentance* [*metanoia*].
- This is something the Corinthian church struggled with (Cf. 12:21)
  - Why?
- i) *For* [*gar*] *you were made to have godly sorrow* [*lupeo*] (lit. “sorrow according to God’s standard”),
- (1) Why? *so that* [*hina*] *you might not suffer loss* [*zemioo*] *in anything through* [*ek*] *us*.
  - (2) You will not be damaged by genuine repentance.

- c) What Paul regretted is not regrettable because godly grief was its positive result. (David Garland)

### 3) Two types of sorrow for the Christian—7:10

- Two differences between these two types: what causes the grief, and what are the results of the grief. (David Garland)
- a) **Godly, concerned with God:** <sup>10</sup> For [*gar*] godly sorrow [*lupe*] (lit. “sorrow according to God’s standard”) *produces* [*ergazomai*] *a repentance* [*metanoia*] *without regret* [*ametameletos*], *leading to* [*eis*] *salvation* [*soteria*],
  - i) Example of the repentance of David and Peter.
  - ii) Dane Ortlund: This godly grief is an emotional experience ignited by concern not at what people see but at what God sees. It is not sorrow at being *caught* in sin; it is sorrow at *being* in sin. Godly grief terminates not in hardness of heart but in penitence. Grief “according to God” pushes one up toward heaven and restored fellowship with God and thus with others, not down into the loneliness or despair of self-justification. Godly grief does not end in grief; it flows beyond the sorrow into repentance and regained joy.
- b) **Worldly, concerned with self:** *but the sorrow [*lupe*] of the world (i.e. unrepentance) brings about* [*katargazomai*] *death*.
  - i) Example of the regret of Cain, Esau, and Judas.
  - ii) The world’s remorse leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, self-pity, and hopelessness. (John MacArthur)

### 4) Things to remember:

- a) Murray Harris: Paul openly admits to being in emotional turmoil and having persistent fears. ... Far from being a model of inner tranquility, Paul was deeply affected by his circumstances, although he was not emotionally fragile.
- b) David Woodall: Ministers should point out sin with the hope that the resulting grief will lead to change; those receiving rebuke from godly leaders should repent.
- c) Murray Harris: What makes affliction beneficial is not the actual experience of suffering but the reaction to it; a “godly” or positive reaction brings spiritual benefit, both now and in the hereafter, whereas a “worldly” or negative reaction causes irreparable harm.

## 2 Corinthians 7:11

### *The Characteristics of Genuine Christian Repentance*

**Introduction:** This verse describes the important results of the “sorrow according to God” in 7:9-10.

#### 1) **The general EARNESTNESS of genuine repentance**

- a) Contemplate the benefits! <sup>11</sup> *For [gar] behold [aor. act. impv. idou] what (how much) earnestness [spoude] (to follow God’s commands through Paul) this very thing—this godly sorrow (lit. “sorrow according to God’s standard”)—has brought about [aor. mid. ind. katergazomai] in you:*
  - i) The seriousness of purpose and the aggressive effort to set things right.
  - ii) They had become indifferent and complacent about sin.
- b) They demonstrate that they are participants in salvation and not death (cf. 7:10)

#### 2) **The itemized CHARACTERISTICS of genuine repentance**

- a) **Eagerness:** *what [alla] vindication [apologia] of yourselves,*
  - i) Eagerly clear themselves regarding the charges of wrongdoing brought against them by Paul.
  - ii) John Gill (1697-1771): not by denying the fact, or lessening, or defending it; but by acknowledging their neglect, praying it might be overlooked, declaring that they were not partakers of the sin; nor did they approve of it, but disliked and abhorred it, and were highly pleased with the method the apostle advised to.
  - iii) This restores the trust and confidence of others by making genuine repentance known to others. (John MacArthur)
- b) **Passion:** *what [alla] indignation [aganaktesis],*
  - i) At the false teachers who maligned Paul
  - ii) At the wrongdoer and his sin
  - iii) At themselves
    - (1) For causing shame to Christ, to the church, to Paul, to themselves.
- c) **Respect for authority:** *what [alla] fear [phobos],*
  - i) Awe of God and His discipline
  - ii) Respect for Paul
  - iii) The uncertainty of the effects of their disloyalty to Paul
  - iv) Alarm at their own passivity and the injuries it caused.
- d) **Affection:** *what [alla] longing [epipothesis], (cf. 6:12)*
  - i) For Paul’s return to Corinth



- ii) To set things right with Paul before God, to restore Paul's trust
- e) **Focused enthusiasm:** *what [alla] zeal [zelos],*
  - i) For God and His glory
  - ii) To be reconciled to Paul
  - iii) To obey Paul's teaching
  - iv) To defend Paul and his ministry
- f) **Readiness:** *what [alla] avenging of wrong [ekdikesis]!*
  - i) To discipline the offender in 2:6
  - ii) No longer are they attempting to protect themselves and their sin.

### 3) The DEMONSTRATION of genuine repentance

- a) *In everything [pas] (limited to this issue) you demonstrated [aor. act. ind. sunistemi] yourselves to be innocent [hagnos] (blameless, people of integrity) in the (specific) matter [pragma].*
  - i) David Lowery: They had sinned not so much by doing wrong but by failing to do right (cf. James 4:17) and of this they had repented.

### 4) Things to remember:

- a) The Corinthians (and us) are always under the apostle's searching eye and also God's. (David Garland)
- b) Genuine repentance always leads to a change in attitude and behavior.
- c) Paul can now say they have the proven character [dokime] he was looking for in 2:9.

2 Corinthians 7:12-16  
*Biblical Reasons for Comfort*

**Introduction:** The focus now shifts from Paul's response to the response of Titus regarding the Corinthians' response.

**1) God puts the Corinthians' eagerness to obey on display—7:12** <sup>12</sup> *So although I wrote to you,*

- Note the “not this, nor this, but **that**” pattern

a) **Negative:**

- i) Not the guilty one who maliciously opposed Paul: *it was not for the sake of* [*heneka*] j *the offender* [aor. act. ptc. *adikeo*]
- ii) Not the victim, possibly Paul himself: *nor for the sake of* [*heneka*] k *the one offended* [aor. pass. ptc. *adikeo*],  
(1) Other have argued this refers to other anonymous victims

b) **Positive:**

- i) *but* [*alla*] *that* [*heneka*] l *your earnestness/eagerness* [*spoude*] *on our behalf* [*huper*] *might be manifested* [*phaneroo*]  
(1) To encourage the Corinthians themselves: *to* [*pros*] *you*  
(a) They were shaken out of the fog of self-deception brought on by the competing loyalty being sought by false teachers, who were present while Paul was absent. (Dane Ortlund)  
(2) Accountability to God: *in the sight of* [*enopion*] *God*.  
(a) God knows and will judge all things exhaustively and objectively, including their actions and attitudes in this whole affair.

c) **Mission accomplished:** <sup>13</sup> *For this reason we have been comforted* [*parakaleo*]. (cf. 1:3)

- i) Paul can now breathe a sigh of relief.

**2) God brings Paul joy in addition to comfort—7:13b-16**

- Titus' role in the interface between Paul and the church has been significant, the young fellow worker having deftly negotiated the rocky terrain of the strained relationship between the apostle and the congregation. (George Guthrie)

a) **Paul rejoices because Titus rejoices because Titus was refreshed—7:13b**

- i) *And besides our comfort* [*paraclesis*], *we rejoiced* [*chairō*] *even much more for the joy* [*chara*] *of Titus*,  
(1) Titus is the representative of Christ's representative Paul.

ii) *because [hoti] his spirit has been refreshed [pf. pass. ind. anapauo] by you all.*

(1) Apparently, Titus was uneasy/anxious, hesitant about the potential response of the Corinthians.

**b) Paul's statements to Titus about the Corinthians were proven true—7:14**

i) Paul was not embarrassed:<sup>14</sup> *For [hoti] if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] in anything I have boasted [kauchaomai] to him about you, I was not put to shame,*

(1) Paul had apparently told Titus the Corinthians would respond in the right way. They did!

ii) Paul's words consistently conform with reality: *but [alla] as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting [kauchesis] before Titus proved to be the truth.*

(1) Rather than potentially being embarrassed, Paul knew that what he had told Titus re: the Corinthians was accurate.

**c) Titus' compassion overflows because of his memories—7:15**

i) Abundant, deep compassion: <sup>15</sup> *And his affection [splanchnon] abounds all the more toward you,*

ii) Memory: *as he remembers the obedience [hupakoe] of you all,*

• What does Titus remember?

(1) A Godward embrace: *how you received [dechomai] him with fear [phobos] and trembling [tromos].*

• They heard: *meta phobou kai tromou*

• Cf. 1 Cor. 2:3; Phil. 2:12; Eph. 6:5

(a) An appropriately nervous anxiety and utter seriousness in the pursuit of obedience to the awesome authority of God. The OT concept of living in awe of the Lord.

(b) Cf. Jesus in John 13:20. To embrace Paul's representative was to embrace Paul.

**d) Paul's joy because of Paul's encouragement—7:16**

i) What? <sup>16</sup> *I rejoice [chairō]*

(1) The reconciliation is now complete!

ii) Why? *that [hoti] in everything I am encouraged/emboldened [tharreo] about [en] you.*

(1) This sets the tone to launch into the next section about giving.

**3) Things to remember:**

a) Dane Ortlund: Partial obedience is no obedience at all, since in partial obedience we are still selectively determining when to obey and when

not to. Self still reigns. True obedience is total by its very nature.  
Authentic obedience obeys “in all things.”

- b) Someone has said: Anything (other than repentance) is foolishness and self-delusion. Only repentance is both brute-honest enough, and joyous enough, to bring us all the way home.
- c) George Guthrie: We find joy from the depths of grief because we find God in a fresh way. And we give joy to others in the body of Christ, who see our spiritual agony, but also the repentance it produces, and bear witness that something other than worldly grief has taken place. We can rejoice in all things that have their source in heaven.

2 Corinthians 8:1-6 (part of 8:1-9:15)  
Godward Giving (part 1)

**Introduction:** Paul begins to address the need to raise money for the believers in Jerusalem. He is seeking to motivate the Corinthians believers to give generously. He is asking primarily Gentile believers to help primarily Jewish believers hundreds of miles away. The charitable gifts known as “alms” (from a Greek word for “mercy”) to show kindness and compassion to those in need/misery.

The word “grace” is used 10x in chapters 8-9. It begins this section (8:1) and completes the two chapters (9:14-15).

**1) Paul intends to inform the Corinthians of God’s grace—8:1**

- a) <sup>1</sup> *Now brothers, we make known to you the grace [charis] of God which has been given [didomi] (by God) in the churches of Macedonia,*
  - i) Macedonia is northern, poor section of Greece, Corinth is in the wealthier south. The Macedonian churches included Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.
  - ii) There is a difference between saving grace toward unbelievers and sanctifying grace toward believers. In today’s section, we see three aspects of grace.
    - (1) The enablement to give (8:1); the opportunity and desire to give (8:4); and the collection of the gifts (8:6).
  - iii) This teaching concerning giving is related only to “brothers.”

**2) Paul explains God’s grace as displayed in Macedonia—8:2**

- a) **The Macedonian believers lived in a difficult setting:** <sup>2</sup> *that in a great testing [dokime] (brought about) by affliction [thlipsis]*
- b) **The Macedonian believers displayed God’s grace:**
  - Note the P-alliteration
  - i) **Horizontal** illustration: *their abundance [perisseia] of joy*
  - ii) **Vertical** illustration: *and their deep poverty [ptocheia]*
    - (1) Their poverty had reached the deepest possible stage.
  - iii) **Horizontal** illustration: *abounded [perisseuo] unto the richness/lavishness [ploutos] of their generosity/faithful benevolence, open-handedness [haplotes].*
- c) Note the two paradoxes of grace: joy in the midst of testing and affliction, and generosity in spite of affliction and poverty. (Murray Harris)

**3) Paul witness to how the Macedonian believers gave—8:3-5**

- a) **Voluntary:** <sup>3</sup> *For I testify that according to [kata] their ability [dunamis], and beyond [para] their ability [dunamis], they gave of their own accord [authairetos],*
  - i) There is no set percentage or amount to give.

- b) **Urgent:** <sup>4</sup> *begging [deomai] us with much urging for the grace [charis] of sharing [koinonia] in the ministry [diakonia] to the saints (in Jerusalem),*
- c) **Surprising:** <sup>5</sup> *and this, not as we had expected/lit. “hoped for”,*
- d) **Prioritized:** *but ... by the will [thelema] of God.*
  - i) *they first gave [didomi] themselves to the Lord*
    - (1) If Jesus has your heart, He has your wallet/checkbook.
    - ii) *and to us*
- e) Three important principles: (Murray Harris)
  - i) Self-surrender to Christ takes precedence over availability and loyalty to any of His servants.
  - ii) Dedication to Christ involves dedication to His servants, so that dedication to them is in reality service to Christ.
  - iii) The giving of one's self should precede and accompany the giving of one's possessions.

**4) Paul encouraged Titus to help the Corinthians to also display God's grace—8:6**

- a) <sup>6</sup> *So we encouraged [parakaleo] Titus that as he had previously made a beginning [proenarchomai], so he would also complete [epiteleo] in you this gracious [charis] work as well.*
  - i) Giving should spring from internal grace, not external emotional or psychological pressure.
  - ii) The collection of this offering has been going on for approximately one year. It needs to be wrapped up.

**5) Things we need to remember:**

- a) I have observed at times that wealthier believers look down on poor believers and poor believers look down on wealthier believers, each expecting the other to give more.
- b) Every Christian, regardless of their financial status, can assist those in need. The Macedonian Christians were in deep poverty, but they gave.
- c) Ministering financial mercy is the visible sign of invisible grace.
- d) The amount of giving is not the issue; the merciful heart attitude is.

2 Corinthians 8:7-15 (part of 8:1-9:15)  
Godward Giving (part 2)

**Introduction:**

**1) The IMPORTANCE of giving graciously out of genuine love—8:7-8**

**a) An opportunity for commendation—8:7**

i) **The present:** <sup>7</sup> *But just as you abound/overflow, excel* [pres. act. ind. perissuo]

(1) **Generally:** *in everything*,

(2) **Specifically:**

(a) Godward trust: *in faith* [pistis]

(b) Godward communication: *and word* [logos]

(c) Godward understanding: *and knowledge* [gnosis]

(d) Godward diligence: *and in all earnestness* [spoude]

(e) Godward love: *and in the love* [agape] *we inspired in you*,

ii) **The future:** *see that you abound/overflow, excel* [pres. act. sub. perissuo] *in this gracious work* (of giving to the Jerusalem believers) *also*.

(1) Overflow like the Macedonian congregations (cf. 8:2)

**b) An opportunity for clarification—8:8**

i) **Negative:** <sup>8</sup> *I am not speaking this as a command* [epitage],

(1) Cf. 1:24; 9:5, 7

ii) **Positive:** *but as proving/verifying* [dokimazo] *through the earnestness* [spoude] *of others the sincerity/genuineness* [gnesios] *of your love* [agape] *also*.

(1) We like to take vehicles for a test drive. Gather information.

**2) The THEOLOGICAL EXAMPLE of grace giving: the Incarnation—8:9**

a) Assumed knowledge: <sup>9</sup> *For you know* [pres. act. ind. ginosko] *the grace/active benevolence of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ...*

b) What they know grace looks like in the life of Jesus

i) Self-sacrificial, from abundance to absence:

(1) His eternal preexistence: *though being rich* [pres. act. ptc.],

(2) His deliberate incarnation: *yet **for your sake*** (emphatic) *He* (voluntarily) *became poor* [aor. act. ind. ptocheuo],

(a) cf. Luke 2:24; 9:58

(3) Christ himself chose to exchange his royal status as an eternal inhabitant of heaven for a slave's status as a temporary resident on earth. (Murray Harris)

(4) The King takes the initiative to impoverish Himself for treasonous rebels. This impoverishment is not the result of bad fortune or bad judgment.

ii) Beneficial to others, from absence to abundance:

- (1) His incarnation: *so that you* (emphatic) *through His* (emphatic) *poverty* [*ptochēia*]
- (2) Present and future: *might become rich* [aor. act. sub.].
- iii) Unlike the extremely poor Macedonians, Christ gave when He was incalculably rich.
- iv) Like the Macedonians, Christ gave Himself.

### 3) The practical application of FAITHFULNESS in grace giving—8:10-12

#### a) You made a good start—8:10

- i) <sup>10</sup> *And I give my opinion* (not a command; cf. 1 Cor. 7:25, 40) *in this matter, for this* (following my opinion) *is profitable* (now and in eternity) *for you, who were the first to begin a year ago* (cf. 1 Cor. 16:1-4) *not only to do this, but also to desire to do it.*  
(1) But we haven't had enough time! Only 9-15 months.

#### b) But now you need to finish the task—8:11-12

- i) <sup>11</sup> *But now complete* [aor. act. impv. *epiteleo*] *doing it also, so that just as there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion* [*epiteleo*] *of it from what you have.*  
(1) The Macedonians are coming! What will they think? (Cf. 9:1-5)
- ii) Graduated giving: <sup>12</sup> *For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.*  
(1) Consider the Philippian financial gift (cf. Phil. 4:18)

#### c) Or, as we sometimes say, "Put your money where your mouth is."

### 4) The FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE of grace giving—8:13-15

#### a) The principle of equality—8:13-14

- i) <sup>13</sup> *For this is not for the relief of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality—<sup>14</sup> at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality.*

#### b) The authority of Scripture—8:15

- i) <sup>15</sup> *As it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."* [Exo. 16:18]  
(1) This is the 4<sup>th</sup> of 5 OT quotes in 2 Cor. (4:13; 6:2, 16-18; 9:9)

### 5) Things we need to remember:

- a) Paul uses two common approaches to encourage people: a positive example (Macedonians) and sincere praise (you are abounding).
- b) The Macedonians gave when they were desperately poor; Christ gave when he was incalculably rich. In their present economic circumstances, the Corinthians fitted somewhere between these two extremes. (Murray Harris)



2 Corinthians 8:16-24 (part of 8:1-9:15)  
Godward Giving (part 3)  
A Letter of Commendation

**Introduction:** Paul takes precautions with God's money given through God's people. This is to be the Godward administration of God's gift to the Jerusalem believers. Cf. 1 Cor. 16:1-4.

**1) Godward diligence observed in emissary Titus—8:16-17**

- a) **God's gracious gift of eagerness:** <sup>16</sup> *But thanks [charis] be to God who puts [didomi] the same earnestness [spoude] on your behalf* (not just the hurting Jerusalem believers) *in the heart of Titus.*
  - i) Paul had led Titus to Christ (Titus 1:4)
  - ii) God gives, and His image-bearers should give also. (cf. Acts 20:35)
- b) **Eager initiative:** <sup>17</sup> *For ...*
  - i) **Eager ministry:** [on the one hand] *he not only accepted/welcome[d] [dechomai] our plea [paraclesis],* (to travel from Ephesus to Corinth)
  - ii) **Voluntary ministry:** *but [on the other hand] being himself very earnest [spoudaios], he has gone out to you of his own accord [authairetos] (cf. 8:3).*
  - iii) Freedom under Paul's direction. Titus was not forced to visit them.
  - iv) Dane Ortlund: Titus is traveling to Corinth fueled by the same caring heart that Paul has for the Corinthians. (cf. 6:11)

**2) Godward diligence observed in anonymous emissaries—8:18-22**

- a) **Anonymous emissary # 1—8:18-21**
  - i) **Sent by Paul:** <sup>18</sup> *And we have sent along [sumpempo] with him the brother whose praise [epainos] in the things of the gospel is throughout all the churches* (of Macedonia and Achaia?).
    - (1) He is so well known in the ministry of gospelizing that Paul can leave him anonymous.
    - (2) He is sent by Paul's authority, not "encouraged to go" like Titus.
  - ii) **Appointed by the congregations:** <sup>19</sup> *And not only this, but he has also been appointed [cheirotoneo] (vertical or horizontal hand-raising) by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work that is being ministered [diakoneo] by us*
    - (1) He was selected/appointed by the congregations, not Paul. He was sent by Paul, not the congregations. Note the blend of leadership and congregational decision-making.
    - (2) Two reasons for this grace collection:
      - (a) *for the glory [doxa] of the Lord Himself,*
      - (b) *and to show our readiness,*
- iii) **The need for precautions:** <sup>20</sup> *taking precaution/trying to avoid ...*
  - (1) **Negative:** *lest anyone discredits us in our ministering [diakoneo] of this generous gift,*

- (a) This is an area of church life that lends itself to criticism and fault finding.
  - (2) **Positive:** <sup>21</sup> *for we respect what is good [kalos],* (echo of Prov. 3:4)
    - (a) **Vertically:** *not only in the sight of the Lord,*
    - (b) **Horizontally:** *but also in the sight of men.*
- b) **Anonymous emissary # 2—8:22**
  - i) **His present faith:** <sup>22</sup> *And we have sent with them [sumpempo] our brother,*
    - (1) An apostolic decision, not a congregational decision.
  - ii) **His past careful vetting:** *whom we have often/many times tested [dokimazo] and found earnest [spoudaios] in many things,*
    - (1) An apostolic vetting, not a congregational vetting.
    - (2) Dane Ortlund: this is not a matter of accelerated faithfulness but of proven faithfulness.
  - iii) **His present eager diligence:** *but now even more [polus] earnest [spoudaios] because of his great confidence in you.*
    - (1) This man assumes the Corinthian believers will do the right thing.
    - (2) He does not go along out of guilt or begrudgingly. He is eager.
- 3) **A command for an open display of love and obedience—8:23-24**
  - a) **A credentials of the emissaries—8:23**
    - i) <sup>23</sup> *As for [eite] (i.e. if a question arises about) Titus, he is ...*
      - Titus appears to be the leader of this group.
        - (1) *my partner [koinonos]*
        - (2) *and fellow worker [sunergos] among [eis] you;*
          - (a) Like Timothy, Priscilla & Aquila, Urbanus, Epaphroditus, Philemon, Mark, Luke, Aristarchus, and Demas.
    - ii) *as for [eite] (i.e. if a question arises about) our brothers, they are ...*
      - (1) *messengers [apostolos] of the churches,*
        - (a) Not apostles of Christ, but apostles of the congregations.
      - (2) *a glory [doxa] to Christ.* (cf. 8:19)
  - b) **The command concerning the emissaries—8:24**
    - i) Play on words: <sup>24</sup> *Therefore [oun] openly before the churches (of Macedonia and Achaia), show [endeiknumi] them (all three emissaries) the proof [endeixis] ...*
      - (1) *of your love [agape]*
        - (a) Perhaps hospitality and generosity in giving.
      - (2) *and of our reason for boasting about you.*
- 4) **Things we need to remember:**
  - a) What is important is the qualification of the anonymous brothers, not their names.

- b) This important task was not left up to enthusiastic volunteers but rather assigned to proven faithful Christian men.
- c) Stewardship of a congregation's financial resources is serious business. It demands appropriate attention from both the leadership and the congregation. This is one of the reasons we have members' meetings.