

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A
MAN OF GOD, WEEK 1

TITLE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF II
CORINTHIANS

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 1:1&2

INTRODUCTION: (1) THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF THE
APOSTLE PAUL IS CLEARLY SEEN IN THE 13 CHAPTERS
OF THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS.

* HIS HEART IS AN OPEN BOOK BECAUSE IN IT WE SEE
PERSONAL THINGS ABOUT PAUL THAT WE DO NOT SEE IN
HIS OTHER INSPIRED WRITINGS.

** IN FACT, II CORINTHIANS IS THE MOST PERSONALLY
REVEALING OF ALL OF PAUL'S LETTERS.

*** THERE IS DEEP EMOTION AND GREAT PASSION IN THIS
BOOK FOR THE CORINTHIANS THAT COMES FROM PAUL'S
PASTORAL HEART.

**** WE SEE THEOLOGICALLY DRIVEN PASSION,
COMPASSION AND WARMTH FOR THE PURITY OF
CHRIST'S SHEEP.

(2) WE FEEL SOMETHING OF THE TREMENDOUS ENTHUSIASM PAUL HAD FOR THE WORK OF THE KINGDOM.

* WE CATCH A SENSE OF THE DIGNITY OF LIFE'S GREATEST CALLING TO SERVE AND MINISTER.

** WE READ WITH GREAT AMAZEMENT OF HIS CATALOG OF SUFFERING WHICH HE ENDURED FOR HIS LORD IN II CORINTHIANS 11.

*** WE EXPERIENCE THE HOT FLUSH OF HIS RESPONSE WITH WHICH HE ANSWERED HIS UNSCRUPULOUS CRITICS.

**** IN SHORT, PAUL SEEMS TO LET US INTO EVERYTHING GOING ON IN HIS HEART AT THIS STAGE OF HIS LIFE.

(3) WE SEEM TO GET CLOSER TO THE HEART OF PAUL HERE THAN IN ANY OF HIS OTHER WRITINGS.

* BUT NOT ONLY DO WE SEE PAUL'S HEART IN II CORINTHIANS, WE SEE THE HUMILITY OF A MAN WHO IS TRULY GODLY AND LIVES OUT THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE.

** HIS HUMILITY SHINES THROUGH AS HE DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS A LOWLY CLAY POT IN II CORINTHIANS 4:7

WHERE HE SAID: “BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS, SO THAT THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE POWER WILL BE OF GOD AND NOT FROM OURSELVES.”

***** NOW BEYOND THIS, WE SEE PAUL’S HUMILITY AS HE STRESSED HIS HUMAN WEAKNESS AND INADEQUACY.**

****** FOR EXAMPLE IN II CORINTHIANS 3:4&5 PAUL SAID:
V. 4 - SUCH CONFIDENCE WE HAVE THROUGH CHRIST TOWARD GOD.**

V. 5 - NOT THAT WE ARE ADEQUATE IN OURSELVES TO CONSIDER ANYTHING AS COMING FROM OURSELVES, BUT OUR ADEQUACY IS FROM GOD.

(4) NOW BEYOND THAT IN II CORINTHIANS 11:30 PAUL SAID: “IF I HAVE TO BOAST, I WILL BOAST OF WHAT PERTAINS TO MY WEAKNESS.”

*** AND THEN IN II CORINTHIANS 12:5 PAUL SAID: “ON BEHALF OF SUCH A MAN I WILL BOAST; BUT ON MY OWN BEHALF I WILL NOT BOAST, EXCEPT IN REGARD TO MY WEAKNESSES.”**

**** THEN QUOTE II CORINTHIANS 12:7-10.**

***** NOW BEYOND THOSE VERSES IN II CORINTHIANS THAT COMMUNICATE PAUL’S HUMILITY, THERE IS ONE THAT**

ENCAPSULATES HIS PROPER PERSPECTIVE WHICH DEFINES HUMILITY AND IT IS FOUND IN II CORINTHIANS 4:5 WHERE PAUL SAID: (QUOTE IT).

****** AND LET ME PAUSE HERE IN APPLICATION AND SAY THAT TRUE HUMILITY, PROPER PERSPECTIVE, IS ONE OF THE LEADING SPIRITUAL INDICATORS OF GENUINE TRUE GODLINESS.**

(5) AND MOST OF US LACK IT. AND MANY OF US ARE ABSOLUTELY UNAWARE HOW PRIDE HAS AFFECTED AND INFECTED OUR ATTITUDES, SPEECH AND ACTIONS. IT IS A BESETTING SIN FOR MOST OF US AND WE ARE NOT EVEN AWARE OF IT, A BLIND SPOT, A SELF BLINDING SIN.

*** FOR WHEN WE ARE PROUD, WE LOSE OUR ABILITY TO DISCERN IF WE ARE PROUD, AND OUR CONCERN TO AVOID BEING PROUD, AND THAT'S WHY WE HAVE WARNING AFTER WARNING ABOUT IT IN SCRIPTURE.**

**** AND PRIDE IS SIMPLY TAKING CREDIT FOR WHAT GOD AND OTHERS HAVE DONE FOR US, IT IS THINKING MORE HIGHLY OF OURSELVES AND LOOKING DOWN ON OTHERS, QUOTE ROMANS 12:3.**

***** AND LET ME ADD, PRIDE ALSO MANIFESTS ITSELF BY EASILY BEING OFFENDED, NEVER ACCEPTING**

CONSTRUCTIVE REPROOF DONE IN LOVE, IT IS THINKING YOU HAVE A HANDLE ON EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY ELSE IS AN IDIOT.

****** AND BASICALLY PAUL'S BOAST WAS IN CHRIST AND HIS GRACE, HE UNDERSTOOD HE WAS THE CREATURE AND GOD THE CREATOR AND MAGNIFIED THE HEINOUSNESS OF HIS OWN SIN. PAUL DID NOT BASICALLY TAKE CREDIT FOR HIS OWN GOOD WORKS BUT SAW THEM AS GOD WORKING THROUGH HIM, QUOTE I TIMOTHY 1:12 AND I TIMOTHY 1:15. ALSO QUOTE I CORINTHIANS 15:10 AND EPHESIANS 2:8-10.**

(6) NOW WITH ALL OF THAT SAID ABOUT HUMILITY, IT IS NO WONDER GOD USED PAUL IN A PROFOUND AND UNIQUE WAY. AND WE SEE PAUL'S HUMILITY AND HIS HEART CLEARLY IN II CORINTHIANS WHICH WILL BE AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL OF US IN THIS STUDY.

*** HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH II CORINTHIANS IS AN INTENSELY PERSONAL LOOK AT PAUL, NONETHELESS II CORINTHIANS CONTAINS RICH THEOLOGICAL TRUTH.**

**** FOR EXAMPLE, SOME BELIEVE OUTSIDE OF THE EXPOSITION OF HEBREWS 3:6-18, II CORINTHIANS GIVES THE GREATEST EXPOSITION ON THE NEW COVENANT.**

***** THEN IN II CORINTHIANS 5:1-11 PAUL GIVES US GREAT TRUTH ON WHAT HAPPENS TO BELIEVERS WHEN THEY DIE. (AND THAT IS EXCITING.)**

****** AND THEN IN II CORINTHIANS 5:14-21 PAUL DISCUSSED THE GREAT DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION CLOSING WITH THE GREAT TRUTH OF II CORINTHIANS 5:21, WHICH JOHN MACARTHUR CALLS THIS VERSE, 15 WORDS OF HOPE.**

(7) IN FACT, JOHN SAID AND I QUOTE: “WITH A CONCISENESS AND BREVITY REFLECTIVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THIS ONE BRIEF SENTENCE, ONLY 15 WORDS IN THE GREEK TEXT, RESOLVES THE DILEMMA OF RECONCILIATION. THIS SENTENCE REVEALS THE ESSENCE OF THE ATONEMENT, EXPRESSES THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE, AND ARTICULATES THE MOST GLORIOUS TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE – HOW FALLEN MAN’S SIN-SUNDERED RELATIONSHIP TO GOD CAN BE RESTORED. VERSE 21 IS LIKE A CACHE OF RARE JEWELS, EACH DESERVING OF A CAREFUL,

REVERENTIAL EXAMINATION UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS OF SCRIPTURE.” (END QUOTE)

*** THEREFORE 15 WORDS OF HOPE, FILLED WITH DOCTRINAL TRUTH.**

**** AND THEN BEYOND II CORINTHIANS 5:21, II CORINTHIANS 8:9 IS A BRIEF CHRISTOLOGICAL DIAMOND OF GREAT VALUE, AND TO ME SUMMARIZES WHY GOD BECAME MAN. (QUOTE IT)**

***** BUT NOT ONLY DOES II CORINTHIANS CONTAIN RICH THEOLOGICAL TRUTH, THAT TRUTH LEADS TO TEACHING REGARDING THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.**

****** TO ILLUSTRATE THAT POINT: PAUL DISCUSSES THE TRUTH AND PRINCIPLE OF SEPARATING FROM UNBELIEVERS WHEN IT COMES TO YOKING UP WITH THEM, WHICH IS CALLED AN UNEQUAL YOKE, TO NOT BE BOUND TOGETHER WITH NON-CHRISTIANS, II CORINTHIANS 6:14-17. (NOT ASSOCIATING WITH UNBELIEVERS, WE MUST DO THAT TO REACH OUT.)**

(8) BUT CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TO BE YOKED OR BOUND TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS IN ANY SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP OR ENTERPRISE THAT WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHRISTIAN'S TESTIMONY AND

WALK, BEING BROUGHT DOWN IN PARTNERING WITH THEM.

*** THEN IN CHAPTERS 8&9, PAUL PROVIDES THE MOST DETAILED TEACHING ON GIVING IN THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT.**

***** BEYOND THAT IN CHAPTER 11, PAUL GIVES INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO DISTINGUISH TRUE SERVANTS OF GOD FROM FALSE TEACHERS WHO DISGUISE THEMSELVES AS THE SERVANTS, AS TEACHERS FOR CHRIST, QUOTE II CORINTHIANS 11:13-15.**

***** IN CHAPTER 12, IT IS REVEALED HOW GOD USES SUFFERING IN THE LIVES OF HIS FOLLOWERS, HIS CHILDREN.**

****** AND THEN II CORINTHIANS CLOSES WITH A LOOK AT SEVERAL IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE SANCTIFICATION PROCESS, A CALL TO EXAMINE OURSELVES TO SEE IF WE ARE IN THE FAITH IN II CORINTHIANS 13:5 AND THEN THE LAST VERSE, II CORINTHIANS 13:14 GIVES A TRINITARIAN BLESSING AND COMMUNICATES THE TRUTH THAT OUR GOD IS THE GREAT 3 IN ONE, THAT HE IS THEY (QUOTE IT).**

(9) NOW ALL IN ALL THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS COMMUNICATES THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD WHICH IS THE TITLE I AM USING FOR THIS SERIES.

*** IT COMMUNICATES RICH THEOLOGICAL TRUTH AND IT IS VERY PRACTICAL.**

**** NOW WITH THAT SAID: SOME BACKGROUND ABOUT THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.**

***** AND FIRST OF ALL THE CHURCH WAS STARTED ON PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY, HE TRAVELED INTO WHAT IS KNOWN TODAY AS GREECE.**

****** AND A COLD RECEPTION BY THE PHILOSOPHERS AND THINKERS WHO GATHERED IN ATHENS, PAUL WENT ON TO CORINTH IN ACTS 18, APPROXIMATELY DURING THE SPRING OF A.D. 50 AND STAYED FOR 18 MONTHS.**

(10) NOW OUR LORD USED PAUL'S MINISTRY TO ESTABLISH A CHURCH IN CORINTH.

*** AND AT THIS POINT IT WILL BE PROFITABLE FOR US TO LOOK OVER ACTS 18 WHERE WE SEE THE START OF THIS CHURCH, SO PLEASE TURN TO ACTS 18 OR FOLLOW ALONG ON THE SCREEN AS WE READ ACTS 18:1-11.**

**** ACTS 18:1-11 –**

V. 1 - AFTER THESE THINGS HE LEFT ATHENS AND WENT TO CORINTH.

V. 2 - AND HE FOUND A JEW NAMED AQUILA, A NATIVE OF PONTUS, HAVING RECENTLY COME FROM ITALY WITH HIS WIFE PRISCILLA, BECAUSE CLAUDIUS HAD COMMANDED ALL THE JEWS TO LEAVE ROME. HE CAME TO THEM,

V. 3 - AND BECAUSE HE WAS OF THE SAME TRADE, HE STAYED WITH THEM AND THEY WERE WORKING, FOR BY TRADE THEY WERE TENT-MAKERS.

V. 4 - AND HE WAS REASONING IN THE SYNAGOGUE EVERY SABBATH AND TRYING TO PERSUADE JEWS AND GREEKS.

V. 5 - BUT WHEN SILAS AND TIMOTHY CAME DOWN FROM MACEDONIA, PAUL *BEGAN* DEVOTING HIMSELF COMPLETELY TO THE WORD, SOLEMNLY TESTIFYING TO THE JEWS THAT JESUS WAS THE CHRIST.

V. 6 - BUT WHEN THEY RESISTED AND BLASPHEMED, HE SHOOK OUT HIS GARMENTS AND SAID TO THEM, “YOUR BLOOD *BE* ON YOUR OWN HEADS! I AM CLEAN. FROM NOW ON I WILL GO TO THE GENTILES.”

V. 7 - THEN HE LEFT THERE AND WENT TO THE HOUSE OF A MAN NAMED TITIUS JUSTUS, A WORSHIPER OF GOD, WHOSE HOUSE WAS NEXT TO THE SYNAGOGUE.

V. 8 - CRISPUS, THE LEADER OF THE SYNAGOGUE, BELIEVED IN THE LORD WITH ALL HIS HOUSEHOLD, AND

MANY OF THE CORINTHIANS WHEN THEY HEARD WERE BELIEVING AND BEING BAPTIZED.

V. 9 - AND THE LORD SAID TO PAUL IN THE NIGHT BY A VISION, “DO NOT BE AFRAID ANY LONGER, BUT GO ON SPEAKING AND DO NOT BE SILENT;

V. 10 - FOR I AM WITH YOU, AND NO MAN WILL ATTACK YOU IN ORDER TO HARM YOU, FOR I HAVE MANY PEOPLE IN THIS CITY.”

V. 11 - AND HE SETTLED *THERE* A YEAR AND SIX MONTHS, TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD AMONG THEM.

***** NOW IN ACTS 18, WE SEE THE BEGINNING OF THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH, AND AS ACTS 18:11 SAYS: PAUL SPENT 18 MONTHS THERE, MAKING A HUGE INVESTMENT IN THE CHURCH.**

****** WHICH LEADS US TO THE PURPOSE AND OCCASION AND WRITING OF II CORINTHIANS.**

(11) FOR AFTER LEAVING CORINTH IN ACTS 18:18, TROUBLING AND DISTURBING NEWS REACHED PAUL ABOUT PROBLEMS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH.

*** WELL, PAUL HAD TO RESPOND, SO HE WROTE HIS FIRST OF FOUR LETTERS TO THE CHURCH, TWO OF THOSE LETTERS BEING INSPIRED, PRESERVED FOR US IN**

THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE, FIRST AND SECOND CORINTHIANS, AND TWO OF THE LETTERS NOT BEING A PART OF SCRIPTURE CALLED NON-CANONICAL LETTERS, NOT EXTANT, MEANING NOT STILL EXISTING.

**** NOW PAUL'S FIRST NON-INSPIRED LETTER WAS WRITTEN BEFORE THE INSPIRED LETTER OF I CORINTHIANS, FOR WE SEE THIS WRITTEN IN I CORINTHIANS 5:9 WHERE IT SAYS: "I WROTE YOU IN MY LETTER NOT TO ASSOCIATE WITH IMMORAL PEOPLE."**

***** NOW AMONG OTHER SINS, THERE WAS IMMORALITY IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH, THERE WAS DIVISION, THERE WAS ABUSE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY, ABUSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, ABUSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE RESURRECTION OF BELIEVERS.**

****** ALL TOLD, THERE WERE A LOT OF FLESHLY THINGS GOING ON IN THE CHURCH, TO THE EXTENT WHEN I PREACHED THROUGH THE BOOK, EARLY ON IN THE LIFE OF THIS CHURCH, I TITLED IT, "THE CORINTHIANS CATASTROPHE" AS PAUL DEALT WITH ONE PROBLEM AFTER ANOTHER.**

(12) BEYOND THIS, THE CORINTHIANS WROTE PAUL A LETTER SEEKING CLARIFICATION ON SOME ISSUES ACCORDING TO I CORINTHIANS 7:1 WHICH SAYS: "NOW

CONCERNING THE THINGS ABOUT WHICH YOU WROTE, IT IS GOOD FOR A MAN NOT TO TOUCH A WOMAN.”

* WELL, AT THIS POINT, PAUL IS ON HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY IN EPHESUS AND PAUL'S RESPONSE WAS TO WRITE THEM THE LETTER KNOWN AS I CORINTHIANS.

** NOW THAT LETTER RESOLVED SOME OF THE PROBLEMS AT THIS CHURCH, BUT ANOTHER AND POTENTIALLY A MORE DANGEROUS THREAT AROSE.

*** FOR FALSE TEACHERS CLAIMING TO BE APOSTLES SENT BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH ARRIVED IN CORINTH AND DREW AWAY SOME OF THE CONGREGATION FROM THEIR LOYALTY TO PAUL AND TO THE TRUTH.

(13) WELL, WHEN PAUL HEARD ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, HE LEFT EPHESUS AND WENT TO CORINTH.

* NOW THIS VISIT, CALLED THE SORROWFUL OR PAINFUL VISIT ACCORDING TO II CORINTHIANS 2:1, DID NOT GO WELL.

** FOR SOMEONE (POSSIBLY ONE OF THE FALSE APOSTLES FROM JERUSALEM) DEFIED AND OPENLY INSULTED PAUL ACCORDING TO II CORINTHIANS 2:5-8, V. 10 AND 7:12.

*** AND THE THING THAT MADE THIS EXTRA PAINFUL TO PAUL WAS THAT THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT TAKE ACTION AGAINST THIS MAN.

**** WELL, PAUL RETURNED TO EPHESUS, WROTE A STRONGLY WORDED LETTER (WHICH WAS NOT INSPIRED, NOT PRESERVED, KNOWN AS THE SEVERE LETTER ACCORDING TO II CORINTHIANS 2:4 WHICH SAYS: “FOR OUT OF MUCH AFFLICTION AND ANGUISH OF HEART I WROTE TO YOU WITH MANY TEARS; NOT SO THAT YOU WOULD BE MADE SORROWFUL, BUT THAT YOU MIGHT KNOW THE LOVE WHICH I HAVE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.”

(14) NOW PAUL SENT THIS THIRD LETTER CALLED THE SEVERE LETTER TO CORINTH WITH TITUS ACCORDING TO II CORINTHIANS 7:5-16.

* WELL, AS OUR BACKGROUND CONTINUES, PAUL LEAVES EPHESUS AGAIN AND GOES TO TROAS WHERE HE HOPES TO MEET UP WITH TITUS AND EVENTUALLY THAT HAPPENS.

** AND TITUS GIVES PAUL SOME GOOD NEWS THAT HAD TO REFRESH HIM AS HE WAS VERY BURDENED ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON AT CORINTH, WHAT PAUL CALLED IN II CORINTHIANS 11:28, “THE DAILY PRESSURE ON ME OF CONCERN FOR ALL THE CHURCHES.”

*** AND AS PROVERBS 25:25 SAYS: “LIKE COLD WATER TO A WEARY SOUL, SO IS GOOD NEWS FROM A DISTANT LAND.”

*** WELL, THIS NEWS FROM TITUS WAS GOOD NEWS AND REFRESHED AND PROBABLY RE0ENERGIZED HIM.

**** FOR ACCORDING TO II CORINTHIANS 7:7, THE CORINTHIANS REPENTED AND REAFFIRMED THEIR LOYALTY AND LOVE FOR PAUL. WHAT JOY AND RELIEF FOR PAUL.

(15) HOWEVER, PAUL WAS WISE ENOUGH HAVING WORKED WITH CHURCHES AND PEOPLE FOR AWHILE, PAUL KNEW THAT ALTHOUGH THINGS WERE GOING MUCH BETTER AT CORINTH, THE CHURCH WAS NOT OUT OF DANGER YET.

* THE FALSE APOSTLES WERE STILL THERE AND A SMALL NUMBER OF THE CORINTHIANS WERE CONFUSED AND REMAINED LOYAL TO THE FALSE TEACHERS.

** SO PAUL PREPARED FOR HIS THIRD VISIT TO CORINTH.
(QUOTE II CORINTHIANS 13:1)

*** WELL AS HE PREPARED FOR THIS THIRD VISIT PAUL WROTE II CORINTHIANS FROM MACEDONIA, POSSIBLY

FROM PHILIPPI, WHICH WAS HIS 4TH LETTER TO THEM, AND NOW YOU KNOW THE OCCASION FOR THE WRITING OF THE BOOK AND WHY PAUL WROTE 4 LETTERS AND MADE 3 VISITS TO THIS STRATEGIC GEOGRAPHIC CITY FOR THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

II. NOW SOME MORE QUICK BACKGROUND UNDER ROMAN NUMERAL II AND THAT IS THE DATE OF THE WRITING OF II CORINTHIANS.

* AND THAT IS SHORTLY AFTER I CORINTHIANS ABOUT A.D. 56, SOME SAY A.D. 55-57, BUT RIGHT AROUND THIS TIME PERIOD.

** FOR PAUL WROTE I CORINTHIANS TOWARD THE END OF A STAY IN EPHESUS ACCORDING TO I CORINTHIANS 16:8, SOME SUGGEST LATE IN A.D. 55.

*** THEN PAUL PLANNED TO LEAVE EPHESUS AFTER THE FEAST OF PENTECOST, AGAIN ACCORDING TO I CORINTHIANS 16:8, MOST LIKELY IN THE SPRING OF A.D. 56 AND FROM MACEDONIA HE WROTE II CORINTHIANS SOMEWHERE AROUND A.D. 56.

III. NEXT IN BACKGROUND, THE KEY VERSES, AND I WILL GIVE YOU THREE OF THEM. FIRST II CORINTHIANS 4:1 WHICH SAYS: (QUOTE). AND THIS VERSE COMMUNICATES THE HUMILITY OF PAUL.

* NO. 2, THE SECOND KEY VERSE IS II CORINTHIANS 4:5, AND THIS VERSE SHOWS THE HEART OF PAUL AND HIS HUMILITY (QUOTE IT).

** AND THEN NO. 3, THE THIRD KEY VERSE IS II CORINTHIANS 5:20 WHICH SHOWS THE HEART OF PAUL (QUOTE IT).

*** NOW THESE 3 VERSES SHOW THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD LIKE PAUL WHICH IS MY THEME AND TITLE OF OUR STUDY IN II CORINTHIANS.

IV. NEXT IN BACKGROUND IS KEY WORDS. AND THE FIRST KEY WORD IS MINISTRY USED 11 TIMES AND IS ONCE TRANSLATED SERVE FOR A 12TH USE.

* BUT THIS KEY WORD ALSO COMMUNICATES THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF PAUL FOR LIFE WAS MINISTRY FOR HIM AND HE VIEWED HIMSELF AS A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, THE GREEK WORD IS DIAKONIA.

** NOW THE SECOND KEY WORD IN II CORINTHIANS IS GLORY USED 21 TIMES IN THIS BOOK.

*** AND PAUL WAS ALL ABOUT THE GLORY OF CHRIST AND THE GLORY OF GOD IN CONTRAST TO FALSE APOSTLES WHO ARE ALL ABOUT THEIR OWN GLORY.

V. AND THEN LAST OF ALL UNDER BACKGROUND TODAY, A SIMPLE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK FROM WILLIAM MCDONALD'S ONE VOLUME COMMENTARY OF THE BIBLE AND SPECIFICALLY OF THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS WITH ONLY 3 MAIN POINTS. NO. 1 PAUL'S EXPOSITION OF THE MINISTRY, CHAPTERS 1-7; NO. 2 PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO COMPLETE THE COLLECTION FOR THE JERUSALEM SAINTS, CHAPTERS 8&9; AND NO. 3 PAUL'S VINDICATION OF HIS APOSTLESHIP, CHAPTERS 10-13.

* SO PAUL'S EXPOSITION, PAUL'S ENCOURAGEMENT AND PAUL'S VINDICATION.

** NOW WITH THAT OUTLINE BEFORE US ALONG WITH ALL THE INTRODUCTORY AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL, WE HAVE A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON AS WE, LORD WILLING, WORK THROUGH THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS VERSE BY VERSE.

*** AND LET US NOW EMBARK ON THIS GRAND ADVENTURE BY LOOKING AT VERSES 1 AND 2, THE INTRODUCTORY VERSES OF II CORINTHIANS. AND WE'LL LOOK AT ONE MORE ROMAN NUMERAL IN CONTINUATION FROM OUR OUTLINE TODAY.

**** ROMAN NUMERAL 6, PAUL'S GREETING. AND TO BEGIN WITH LOOK AT II CORINTHIANS 1:1 PLEASE.

VI. PAUL'S GREETING, (READ V. 1)

A. NOW PAUL BEGINS HIS GREETING TO THE CORINTHIANS WITH THE REMINDER AND REALITY THAT HE WAS AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

* AND RIGHTLY SO, FOR THEIR WERE SOME FALSE TEACHERS THAT WERE QUESTIONING HIS APOSTLESHIP AT CORINTH.

** AND PAUL REMINDED THE TRUE BELIEVERS THAT HE WAS NOT AN APOSTLE BY SELF-APPOINTMENT, BUT “BY THE WILL OF GOD.”

*** BELOVED, PAUL’S POSITION AND AUTHORITY AS AN APOSTLE DID NOT COME BY SELF-SELECTION, BUT OF GOD’S CHOICE. IT WAS THROUGH THE ETERNAL GOOD PLEASURE OF GOD THAT HE WAS SUCH AN APOSTLE.

**** PAUL DID NOT CHOOSE HIS CAREER AS AN APOSTLE, GOD CHOSE HIM, AND OBVIOUSLY GOD USED HIM IN A PROFOUND WAY AS THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES, ACCORDING TO ROMANS 11:13.

1. AND THOUGH PAUL WAS NOT ONE OF THE ORIGINAL 12, HE WAS PERSONALLY CHOSEN BY JESUS CHRIST IN ACTS 26:15-18 AND HUMBLY CALLS HIMSELF THE LEAST OF THE APOSTLES IN I CORINTHIANS 15:9 AS HE WAS THE LAST APOSTLE CHOSEN.

* AND TWO QUICK THOUGHTS. NO. 1 THE WORD APOSTLE LIT. MEANS A MESSENGER, ONE SENT FORTH WITH ORDERS. AND PAUL MET THE REQUIREMENTS OF AN APOSTLE IN THE NARROW SENSE OF THE WORD AS ONE CALLED BY CHRIST, ONE SENT BY CHRIST AND ONE WHO SAW CHRIST IN ACTS 9 WHEN HE WAS SAVED AND COMMISSIONED.

** AND THE 12 APOSTLES MINUS JUDAS, MATTHIAS TAKING HIS PLACE AND PAUL WERE USED SOVEREIGNLY BY JESUS CHRIST ALONG WITH SOME NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS TO BE THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH, (QUOTE EPHESIANS 2:20).

*** SO PAUL WAS A CAPITAL A APOSTLE, AN UPPER CASE A APOSTLE AND NO. 2 BECAUSE OF THAT, THE TRUTHS HE WROTE TO THE CORINTHIANS AS AN APOSTLE ARE THE INSPIRED WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD.

**** THUS, THE FALSE TEACHER'S, THE FALSE APOSTLE'S ATTACK ON HIS AUTHORITY AND CREDIBILITY WAS AN ATTACK ON GOD'S DIVINELY REVEALED TRUTH. A SERIOUS OFFENSE AND WE WILL SEE THIS UNFOLD THROUGHOUT THE BOOK.

2. NOW MOVING ON, INCLUDED WITH PAUL IN THIS OPENING GREETING IS TIMOTHY, WHOM PAUL CALLS "OUR BROTHER."

* AND TIMOTHY IS NOT CALLED AN APOSTLE FOR HE WAS NOT ONE, BUT WAS A BROTHER IN CHRIST TO PAUL AND TO THE FAMILY OF FAMILIES, TO THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.

** NOW TIMOTHY WAS NO STRANGER TO THE CORINTHIANS, NOR IS HE A STRANGER TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, FOR HE IS REFERRED TO BY NAME 24 TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN 12 DIFFERENT NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS.

*** TIMOTHY WAS FROM LYSTRA, A CITY IN ASIA MINOR, MODERN TURKEY. AND HIS MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER WERE JEWISH BELIEVERS TALKED ABOUT IN II TIMOTHY 1:5 AND HIS FATHER WAS A GENTILE – A GREEK AND UNSAVED IN ACTS 16:1.

**** NOW TIMOTHY WAS TAUGHT THE SCRIPTURES BY HIS MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER AND CAME TO SAVING FAITH WHEN PAUL VISITED LYSTRA ON HIS FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

3. FURTHERMORE, HE JOINED PAUL ON HIS SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY AND BECAME HIS PROTÉGÉ AND RIGHT HAND MAN.

* TIMOTHY WAS A FAITHFUL, COMMITTED AND TRUSTED MAN AND REALLY BECAME LIKE THE MAN WHO DISCIPLED

HIM, THE APOSTLE PAUL, FOR PAUL PAID HIM THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT IN I TIMOTHY 6:11 (QUOTE IT).

** SO TIMOTHY WAS A MAN OF GOD, THUS PAUL SENT HIM AS HIS REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CHURCHES IN MACEDONIA IN ACTS 19:22, TO PHILIPPI IN PHILIPPIANS 2:19-24, TO THESSALONICA IN I THESSALONIANS 3:2 AND EPHESUS IN I TIMOTHY 1:3.

*** AND LEADING US BACK TO OUR TEXT, THE CORINTHIANS ALSO KNEW HIM, FOR HE WAS WITH PAUL WHEN THE CHURCH WAS FOUNDED IN ACTS 18:5 AND LATER SERVED AS PAUL'S REPRESENTATIVE AS HE WAS DISPATCHED TO CORINTH IN I CORINTHIANS 4:17 AND I CORINTHIANS 16:10.

**** SO TIMOTHY WAS VERY FAMILIAR WITH THE CORINTHIANS AS HE WORKED WITH THEM AND WAS THEIR DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST.

4. AND OBVIOUSLY TIMOTHY WAS WITH PAUL WHEN HE WAS WRITING II CORINTHIANS AND PAUL RECOGNIZES HIS LEGITIMACY IN MINISTRY, A BROTHER IN CHRIST, WHOM THE CORINTHIANS KNEW, BUT NOT A CO-WRITER OF THE EPISTLE, BUT A CO-LABORER.

* NEXT AS WE CONTINUE TO MOVE ON IN VERSE 1, PAUL IDENTIFIES TO WHOM THE LETTER IS ADDRESSED, THE

LOCAL CHURCH AT CORINTH WITH ALL THE SAINTS WHO ARE THROUGHOUT ACHAIA.

** NOW IN THAT DAY, THE ROMANS DIVIDED GREECE INTO TWO PROVINCES, ACHAIA IN THE SOUTH AND MACEDONIA IN THE NORTH. AND THE CAPITAL OF ACHAIA WAS CORINTH.

*** AND THE PHRASE “THROUGHOUT ACHAIA” WOULD MOST LIKELY INCLUDE THE CHURCHES THROUGH THE PROVINCE.

**** SCOTT HAFEMANN IN HIS COMMENTARY ON II CORINTHIANS SAID AT THIS POINT, TO TIE CORINTH AND ACHAIA TOGETHER (AND I QUOTE):

5. “PAUL’S SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO CORINTH IN RELATIONSHIP TO THIS WIDER NETWORK OF CHURCHES REFLECTS THE PRIMACY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CORINTH AS THE CENTER OF THE PAULINE MISSION IN THE REGION, FROM WHICH THE GOSPEL SPREAD LIKE SPOKES ON A WHEEL. IN WRITING TO CORINTH, PAUL IS THEREFORE WRITING TO ALL OF THE CHURCHES IN ACHAIA, NOT ONLY BECAUSE HE VIEWED THEM AS BELONGING TO ONE ANOTHER, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT AS THINGS GO IN CORINTH, SO TOO IN ACHAIA. THE PROBLEMS IN CORINTH, PAST AND PRESENT WERE BOUND TO IMPACT THE SURROUNDING CHURCHES.” (END QUOTE)

* SO II CORINTHIANS IS DIRECTLY ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCH, IN THE CAPITAL OF ACHAIA, CORINTH AND THEREFORE IS INDIRECTLY ADDRESSED TO ALL THE CHURCHES IN ACHAIA, THE SOUTHERN PART OF GREECE, TO ALL THE “SAINTS” IN THAT AREA.

** AND I AM GOING TO TALK ABOUT THAT WORD—SAINTS IN MY WRAP-UP TODAY.

*** BUT BEFORE I DO, LOOK AT V. 2 PLEASE AS PAUL’S GREETING CONTINUES.

B. READ V. 2. NOW THIS GREETING WAS A COMMON GREETING BY PAUL AND OTHER NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS.

* IN FACT, “GRACE TO YOU AND PEACE” IS A PHRASE PAUL USED IN 10 OF HIS NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS AS AN OPENING GREETING.

** AND GRACE IS THE GREEK WORD CHARIS WHICH YOU CAN SEE ON THE SCREEN.

*** AND BASICALLY WHEN WE TALK ABOUT SAVING GRACE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT UNEARNED AND UNMERITED FAVOR BESTOWED BY GOD UPON SINNERS, UPON GOD’S ELECT.

**** AND WITH THE DEFINITION ON THE SCREEN UNDER 2A, IT IS THE MERCIFUL KINDNESS BY WHICH GOD, EXERTING HIS HOLY INFLUENCE UPON SOULS, TURNS THEM TO CHRIST, KEEPS, STRENGTHENS, INCREASES THEM IN CHRISTIAN FAITH, KNOWLEDGE, AFFECTION AND KINDLES THEM TO THE EXERCISE OF THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUES.

1. SIMON KISTEMAKER IN HIS COMMENTARY ON II CORINTHIANS SAYS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT GRACE “RELATES TO GOD’S INDISPENSABLE BLESSING EXTENDED TO THE RECIPIENT. GRACE FLOWS FROM GOD. AS OIL MAKES A MACHINE FUNCTION SMOOTHLY, SO THE GRACE THAT COMES FROM GOD FACILITATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE BELIEVER.” (END QUOTE)

* AND THEN DAVID GARLAND SAYS IN HIS COMMENTARY ON II CORINTHIANS ABOUT GRACE AND I QUOTE: “GRACE IS THE FOUNDATION OF THEIR CHRISTIAN EXISTENCE AND MOST CLEARLY EXPRESSES PAUL’S UNDERSTANDING OF CHRIST’S WORK OF SALVATION WHICH PRESENTS US WITH THE UNDESERVED FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS AND OUR UNEARNED ACCEPTANCE BY GOD (ROMANS 3:23&24).” (END QUOTE)

** AND WE COULD TALK ABOUT GRACE FOR A LONG TIME FOR WE ARE SAVED BY GOD'S SOVEREIGN GRACE, GOD'S BESTOWAL OF FAVOR UPON HIS ENEMIES.

*** BUT NOTE THAT PAUL ADDS "PEACE" TO THIS GREETING. AND PEACE IS THE EFFECT OF GOD THE FATHER'S ACTION IN CHRIST.

**** AND PEACE IS NOT JUST THE ABSENCE OF HOSTILITY AND WAR, BUT PEACE THAT GOD WON THROUGH CHRIST'S DEATH AND BRINGING ABOUT RECONCILIATION TO ONES WHO BEFORE GRACE WERE ENEMIES AND AT WAR WITH GOD.

2. PEACE IS A RESULT OF GRACE. NO MORE WAR. ALL IS RIGHT WITH GOD. PEACE IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE GRACE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER.

* AND THEN LASTLY, THE SOURCE OF GRACE AND PEACE IS FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

** GOD THE FATHER BESTOWED THE GRACE AS A FOUNTAIN OF HIS PURPOSE AND CHRIST WAS THE CHANNEL OF IT COMING TO PASS AND WHAT HE DID ON THE CROSS. WHAT A BLESSED GREETING AND BLESSING BY PAUL TO EVERY TRUE BELIEVER HE WAS WRITING TO.

IN WRAP UP: (1) PAUL'S GREETING IN II CORINTHIANS WAS DIRECTED TOWARD THE "SAINTS." AND THERE ARE ONLY TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WHEN IT COMES TO OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION, THE SAINTS AND THE AINTS.

* AND THE ONLY THING THAT SEPARATES THE SAINTS FROM THE AINTS IS GRACE.

** AND BY GOD'S SOVEREIGN GRACE AINTS ARE MADE INTO SAINTS. FOR THE WORD SAINTS LIT. MEANS HOLY ONES, SEPARATED ONES, PEOPLE MADE HOLY IN CHRIST BY JUSTIFICATION.

*** FOR YOU SEE EVERY TRUE BELIEVER HAS BEEN SET APART AND CALLED OUT FROM THE RANKS OF SINNERS.

**** FOR GOD IS THE HOLY ONE AND ONES HE CALLS BY GRACE ARE MADE HOLY IN CHRIST.

(2) SO EVERY SINNER THAT HAS BEEN SAVED BY GRACE IS A HOLY ONE, A SAINT. SAINTS ARE CHRISTIANS AND EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN IS A SAINT, NOT PEOPLE THAT ARE CANONIZED BY A COUNSEL THAT ARE VENERATED AND WORSHIPPED WHICH GOD FORBIDS.

* EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A SAINT, SO I'M SAINT RAY, AND WE HAVE SAINT SO AND SO, ETC.

** WE ARE HOLY IN OUR POSITION IN CHRIST, AND ARE GROWING IN HOLINESS IN OUR PRACTICE, CALLED PRACTICAL PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION.

*** AND THE WORD SANCTIFICATION COMES FROM THE GREEK WORD TRANSLATED SAINT.

**** AND WHAT ARE A COUPLE OF GOALS OF OUR STUDY OF II CORINTHIANS?

(3) SANCTIFICATION FOR THE SAINTS. AND SALVATION FOR SINNERS, FOR PEOPLE TO BE SAVED AND SANCTIFIED.

* SO THE QUESTION TODAY IS, ARE YOU A SAINT? IF NOT, TURN TO JESUS CHRIST IN REPENTANT FAITH AS THE ONLY SAVIOR WHO CAN SAVE YOU BY HIS GRACE AND MAKE YOU A SAINT.

** AND NO. 2 IS, IF YOU ARE A SAINT, MATCH UP YOUR PRACTICE WITH YOUR POSITION, ACCELERATE YOUR GROWTH IN GRACE, BY APPLYING II CORINTHIANS TO YOUR LIFE.

*** WHY? ULTIMATELY FOR GOD'S GLORY. BUT IN THIS PROCESS, TO BE THE MAN OR WOMAN OF GOD, THAT HE WANTS YOU TO BE, WHICH IS THE TITLE OF OUR STUDY OF II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD.

(4) MAY OUR HEARTS BE REVEALED BY THE HUMILITY OF REALIZING GOD'S WORK OF SOVEREIGN GRACE IN OUR LIVES, FOR GRACE UNDERSTOOD LEADS US TO LIVE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. (LET'S PRAY)