

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A
MAN OF GOD, WEEK 5

TITLE: INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 1:15-20

INTRODUCTION: (1) WE LIVE IN A DAY WHEN INTEGRITY
AND TRUTHFULNESS ARE MISSING IN MANY OF THE
CIRCUMSTANCES, TRANSACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS
OF DAILY LIFE.

* AS A RESULT OF THAT, MANY INDIVIDUALS ARE VERY
CYNICAL AND DISTRUSTFUL WHEN IT COMES TO PEOPLE
THEY HAVE TO WORK WITH, LIVE WITH AND HEAR.

** AND WE ALMOST EXPECT SOME PEOPLE IN CERTAIN
VOCATIONS TO LIE TO US, ALTHOUGH NOT EVERYONE
LIES IN THESE VOCATIONS, BUT STEREOTYPES FOLLOW
THESE FOLKS WHEREVER THEY GO.

*** FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT ABOUT POLITICIANS? DO WE
BELIEVE THAT ALL POLITICIANS TELL THE TRUTH? DO
WE?

**** WHAT ABOUT LAWYERS? AND NO REFLECTION ON
THE LAWYERS WHO ARE A PART OF FAITH BIBLE CHURCH
AND OTHER CHRISTIAN LAWYERS. BUT CHRISTIAN

LAWYERS APPEAR TO BE A RARE BREED AND ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST.

(2) THEN WHAT ABOUT USED CAR SALES PEOPLE? DOES THE AVERAGE PERSON TRUST THEIR INTEGRITY?

*AND WHAT ABOUT MECHANICS? AND THERE ARE HONEST MECHANICS, I KNOW SOME, BUT DOES IT NOT CROSS YOUR MIND WHEN YOU GO TO A MECHANIC YOU DO NOT KNOW THAT THEY MIGHT WANT TO FIX SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T NEED FIXED?

** AND I'LL GIVE YOU ONE MORE ILLUSTRATION. WHAT ABOUT TAXPAYERS? IS ALL INCOME REPORTED? ARE ALL DEDUCTIONS ACCURATE? DOES ANYONE EVER LIE ON THEIR EXPENSES AND TAX RETURNS? DO ALL BUSINESSES HAVE PROPER HONEST ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES?

*** WELL WE HAVE A GOVT. AGENCY THAT MONITORS THOSE THINGS CALLED THE IRS.

**** NOW MY POINT IS, INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS, AMONG SOME, ARE THE EXCEPTION AND NOT THE RULE.

(3) AND THAT IS SAD FOR IT AFFECTS AND COSTS ALL OF SOCIETY AND THE RESULT IS MUCH OF SOCIETY IS JADED, CYNICAL, DISTRUSTING AND EVEN PARANOID ABOUT ANYONE EVER TELLING THE TRUTH.

* THEREFORE THE PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS GET LOST IN BUSINESS DEALINGS, IN GOVT., IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND EVEN IN THE CHURCH, BECAUSE OF SCANDAL IN CHURCHES.

** THE RESULT IS A LACK OF TRUST AMONG CHURCHES AND THEIR LEADERS, AND SOME BELIEVERS WONDER, WHAT ARE THE LEADERS COVERING UP, WHAT IS THEIR ANGLE, WHAT IS THEIR MOTIVATION AND GIVING THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT IS NOT NORMAL PROCEDURE.

*** HOWEVER, LEADERS ARE HELD TO A HIGHER STANDARD BY GOD'S WORD, QUALIFICATIONS LAID OUT IN I TIMOTHY 3 AND TITUS 1. AND LEADERS MUST BE ABOVE REPROACH, MEN OF INTEGRITY AND HONESTY.

**** AND IF THERE EVER WAS A LEADER IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH THAT EXEMPLIFIES INTEGRITY, TRUTHFULNESS AND A CLEAR CONSCIENCE, IT WAS THE APOSTLE PAUL.

(4) AND BECAUSE OUR LORD SO MIGHTILY USED HIM, HE WAS A PRIME TARGET OF SATAN'S ATTACKS. AND AS HE WROTE II CORINTHIANS, AS SO OFTEN IN HIS MINISTRY, HE WAS BEING MERCILESSLY ATTACKED.

* AND THE ATTACK FROM THE CORINTHIANS WAS LED BY SOME SELF APPOINTED FALSE TEACHERS, FALSE APOSTLES.

** AND THESE FALSE APOSTLES CLAIMED THAT PAUL DID NOT ALWAYS SPEAK THE TRUTH, BUT WAS UNRELIABLE, FICKLE, VACILLATING AND DID NOT KEEP HIS WORD.

*** AND PAUL'S ENEMIES BASED THEIR TRUMPED-UP CHARGES WITH THE FLIMSIEST, MOST TRIVIAL EVIDENCE: A CHANGE IN PAUL'S TRAVEL PLANS IN COMING TO CORINTH.

**** AND PAUL'S CHANGE IN HIS ITINERARY BECAUSE OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE IN COMING TO CORINTH, THAT HE WAS NOT ABLE TO DO WHAT HE WANTED TO DO IN COMING TO THEM, BROUGHT ALL KINDS OF ATTACKS BY HIS ENEMIES THAT PAUL WAS NOT A MAN OF HIS WORD, THAT PAUL WAS FICKLE, THAT PAUL WAS A MAN THAT VACILLATED, NOT A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND HONESTY.

(5) AND THE ONLY WAY WE CAN ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES IN THIS PORTION OF II CORINTHIANS IS TO UNDERSTAND THIS. (BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT ARE ESSENTIAL.)

* FOR IN II CORINTHIANS 1:12-14 WHICH WE LOOKED AT LAST SUNDAY PAUL GAVE A DEFENSE OF HIS PERSONAL

RIGHTEOUSNESS, APPEALING TO HIS OWN CLEAR CONSCIENCE.

** IN OTHER WORDS, PAUL'S CLEAR CONSCIENCE EXONERATED HIM OF ALL THE FALSE CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST HIM, FOR HIS PERSONAL LIFE, RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS AND MINISTRY WERE ALL ABOVE REPROACH.

*** NOW AFTER THAT GENERAL RESPONSE, PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS IS MUCH MORE SPECIFIC BEGINNING IN II CORINTHIANS 1:15 THROUGH CHAPTER 2 VERSE 4.

**** AND INSTEAD OF JUST EXPLAINING WHY HE MADE CHANGES IN HIS TRAVEL PLANS TO CORINTH, PAUL WILL DEAL WITH THE DEEPER ISSUE OF HIS INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS.

(6) WHICH IS THE TITLE OF OUR SERMON FOR TODAY, "INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS." AND UNDER THAT TITLE WE'LL LOOK AT 3 MAJOR POINTS AS WE WORK THROUGH II CORINTHIANS 1:15-20.

* NO. 1 THE RETURN OF PAUL TO CORINTH, VV. 15&16; NO. 2 THE RESPONSE OF PAUL TO HIS CRITICS, VV. 17&18; AND NO. 3 THE RELIABILITY OF PAUL'S PREACHING, VV. 19&20.

** AND WITH THOSE 3 POINTS AS OUR GUIDE AND ROADMAP, LOOK AT V. 15 PLEASE OF II CORINTHIANS 1, WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE RETURN.

I. THE RETURN, (READ V. 15)

A. NOW AS WE GO BACK TO V. 14, WHICH WE LOOKED AT LAST WEEK, PAUL'S CONCERN WAS THAT HE WANTED THE CORINTHIANS TO UNDERSTAND HIM COMPLETELY AND TRUST HIM MORE.

* AND PAUL WAS CONFIDENT THAT THAT WOULD HAPPEN, THAT THEY WOULD COME TO A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE HE WAS COMING FROM AND THAT THEY IN A GODLY WAY WOULD BE PROUD OF HIM, AND HE OF THEM IN THE DAY THEY STAND BEFORE THE LORD.

** WELL, PAUL BELIEVED THE CORINTHIANS WOULD COME AROUND TO FULLY UNDERSTAND HIM AND HIS INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS. AND IN HIS CONFIDENCE AND LOYALTY TO THEM, HE WANTED TO COME TO THEM AGAIN IN HIS TRAVELS TO ESTABLISH THEIR RELATIONSHIP IN A GREATER WAY AND HELP ESTABLISH THEM SPIRITUALLY.

***** SO PAUL WANTED TO VISIT THEM AGAIN.**

1. NOW PAUL'S ORIGINAL PLAN IN VISITING THE CORINTHIANS IS COMMUNICATED IN I CORINTHIANS 16:5-9 WHERE PAUL SAID:

*** v. 5 - BUT I WILL COME TO YOU AFTER I GO THROUGH MACEDONIA, FOR I AM GOING THROUGH MACEDONIA;**

v. 6 - AND PERHAPS I WILL STAY WITH YOU, OR EVEN SPEND THE WINTER, SO THAT YOU MAY SEND ME ON MY WAY WHEREVER I MAY GO.

v. 7 - FOR I DO NOT WISH TO SEE YOU NOW JUST IN PASSING; FOR I HOPE TO REMAIN WITH YOU FOR SOME TIME, IF THE LORD PERMITS.

v. 8 - BUT I WILL REMAIN IN EPHESUS UNTIL PENTECOST;

v. 9 - FOR A WIDE DOOR FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE HAS OPENED TO ME, AND THERE ARE MANY ADVERSARIES.

**** NOW SOMETIME AFTER WRITING I CORINTHIANS AND NOW WRITING II CORINTHIANS, PAUL DECIDED TO CHANGE HIS PLAN AND ALSO MAKE A VISIT TO CORINTH BEFORE GOING TO MACEDONIA "SO THAT, SO THAT YOU MIGHT TWICE RECEIVE A BLESSING."**

***** SO PAUL'S CHANGED PLAN WAS TO VISIT THE CORINTHIANS NOT JUST ONCE, BUT TWICE.**

****** AND THE QUOTE "DOUBLE BLESSING" OR "DOUBLE BENEFIT" THAT PAUL IS TALKING ABOUT HERE IS SIMPLY A DOUBLE VISIT THAT THE CORINTHIANS WOULD RECEIVE, THE BLESSING OF TWO VISITS RATHER THAN ONE.**

2. AND CERTAINLY HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE AROUND A MAN OF GOD TWICE RATHER THAN ONCE WOULD BE A SPECIAL BLESSING. AND PAUL'S LOVE AND LOYALTY FOR THE CORINTHIANS IS SEEN HERE, BUT ALSO PAUL WOULD BE BLESSED AND HELPED BY THE CORINTHIANS SENDING HIM OFF TO JUDEA. LOOK AT V. 16 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 16. NOW IN V. 16, WE HAVE THE DETAILS OF PAUL'S REVISED TRAVEL PLANS.

*** AND THEY ARE, PAUL WOULD PASS THROUGH CORINTH ON HIS WAY TO MACEDONIA, AND AGAIN ON HIS WAY BACK FROM MACEDONIA.**

**** AND THEN AFTER PAUL'S SECOND VISIT, HIS HOPE WAS THAT THE CORINTHIANS WOULD HELP HIM ON HIS**

WAY TO JUDEA, WHICH MEANS, PAUL WAS HOPEFUL THAT THEY WOULD GIVE HIM NECESSARY SUPPLIES TO GO TO JERUSALEM IN JUDEA IN MOST LIKELY CARRYING THE COLLECTION FOR THE POOR SAINTS IN JERUSALEM TO THEM.

***** NOW, WE WILL SEE LATER ON IN II CORINTHIANS 1:23 THROUGH CHAPTER 2 VERSE 1, PAUL WILL CANCEL HIS FIRST VISIT TO CORINTH AND GO BACK TO HIS ORIGINAL PLAN COMMUNICATED IN I CORINTHIANS 15:5&6, OF ONLY COMING TO THEM AFTER HIS MINISTERING IN MACEDONIA. PAUL WOULD ONLY MAKE ONE VISIT, NOT TWO. PAUL CHANGED HIS PLANS IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.**

****** AND ALL OF US KNOW THAT ACCORDING TO PROVERBS 16:9 (QUOTE IT).**

1. AND SOMETIMES THE LORD CHANGES OUR PLANS. THINGS DO NOT WORK OUT THE WAY WE WANT THEM TO, GOD INTERRUPTS OUR PLANS FOR HIS GLORY AND PAUL'S MOTIVE WAS TO MINISTER TO THE CORINTHIANS MORE, BUT THAT WILL NOT BE THE CASE, IT'S NOT GOD'S WILL, HE PUTS THE STOP LIGHT TO OUR PLANS.

*** WELL, PAUL'S ENEMIES JUMP ALL OVER HIS CHANGE OF PLANS AND ACCUSE HIM OF UNTRUSTWORTHINESS, THAT HE IS FICKLE AND VACILLATES. HE DOES NOT KEEP HIS WORD, HE IS NOT A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS. PAUL MADE COMMITMENTS AND DID NOT FOLLOW THROUGH.**

**** AND PAUL WILL START TO RESPOND TO THESE ACCUSATIONS IN VV. 17&18, WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE RESPONSE. LOOK AT V. 17 PLEASE.**

II. THE RESPONSE, (READ V. 17)

A. NOW BEGINNING IN VERSE 17, PAUL APPEARS TO DEAL WITH ONE OF HIS ENEMY'S ACCUSATIONS.

*** THAT HE WAS VACILLATING WHICH MEANS AS SOME OTHER TRANSLATIONS STATE, HE WAS TAKING THIS WHOLE MATTER LIGHTLY, THAT HE WAS FICKLE, THAT HE DIDN'T TAKE THE WHOLE MATTER SERIOUSLY, HIS INTENTIONS WERE NOT HONEST.**

**** SO PAUL ASKS THE QUESTION, A RHETORICAL QUESTION: "THEREFORE, I WAS NOT VACILLATING WHEN I INTENDED TO DO THIS, WAS I?"**

***** AND THE ANSWER IS NO. THE CORINTHIANS SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER, HE SPENT 18 MONTHS WITH THEM, WHY WOULD THEY EVEN ENTERTAIN THESE**

ACCUSATIONS FROM THE FALSE APOSTLES AT CORINTH?

****** AND THEN FOR EFFECT, PAUL ASKS ANOTHER RHETORICAL QUESTION WITH THE OBVIOUS ANSWER BEING NO. "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?" AND THE ANSWER IS NO WAY.**

1. AND THIS QUESTION RELATES TO PAUL'S PERSONAL INTEGRITY.

*** IT MEANS, TO ACT LIKE A MAN ACCORDING TO THE FLESH IS ACTING LIKE A WORLDLY PERSON WHO IS DIRECTED BY THE FLESH AND NOT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**** AND WOULD IMPLY A READINESS BY PAUL TO RENEGE ON COMMITMENTS IF THEY NO LONGER SUITED PAUL AND THAT WITH LITTLE CONCERN FOR OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED.**

***** IT IS TO SAY PAUL MADE DECISIONS TO SUIT HIS OWN PERSONAL INTERESTS, TO PLEASE HIMSELF, THAT HE WAS SELFISH.**

****** AND THAT PAUL WOULD CHANGE HIS YES TO A NO WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS IF IT SO SUITED HIM.**

2. THE ACCUSATION WOULD BE, PAUL SPEAKS OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF HIS MOUTH.

*** HE MAKES HIS PLANS ON MERE IMPULSE LIKE A WORLDLY MAN, ACCORDING TO THE MOOD OF THE MOMENT, SO THAT HE COULD SAY: YES, YES ONE DAY, AND NO, NO THE NEXT DAY.**

**** OR YES AT ONE MOMENT AND NO IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS, WITH THE RESULT THAT HE SEEMED TO BE SAYING YES AND NO IN THE SAME BREATH.**

***** AND PHILIPS PARAPHRASE HERE CATCHES THE SPIRIT OF THE MEANING OF V. 17 WHERE HE SAYS: “BECAUSE WE HAD TO CHANGE THIS PLAN, DOES IT MEAN WE ARE FICKLE? DO YOU THINK I PLAN WITH MY TONGUE IN MY CHEEK, SAYING “YES” AND MEANING “NO”?**

****** AND THE ANSWER IS, NO, I WOULD NOT DO THAT. AND PAUL’S LIFE DURING HIS 18 MONTHS AT CORINTH SHOWED THAT HE WAS NOT A DISHONEST VACILLATING SELFISH PERSON. HIS LIFE WAS SELFLESS AND ABOVE REPROACH.**

3. AND PAUL'S RESPONSE TO THE CORINTHIANS CONTINUES IN V. 18. LOOK AT V. 18 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 18. NOW IN VERSE 18, PAUL FLATLY DENIES THE CHARGE THAT HE SPOKE OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF HIS MOUTH AND THAT HE WAS A PERSON WHO VACILLATED.

*** AND FIRST OF ALL, HE COULD NOT ACT THAT WAY BECAUSE GOD IS NOT LIKE THAT, "GOD IS FAITHFUL."**

**** AND OUR GREAT LORD IS RELIABLE, A GOD OF TRUTH WHO NEVER SPEAKS WITH A DOUBLE TONGUE, HIS YES IS YES AND GOD'S NO IS NO. GOD DOES NOT VACILLATE, HE IS DEPENDABLE, HE IS RELIABLE, HE IS IMMUTABLE, HE DOES NOT CHANGE.**

***** AND PAUL'S POINT IS, AS GOD IS FAITHFUL, HIS WORD IS TRUE, HIS YES IS YES, HIS NO IS NO, SO OUR WORD TO YOU IS NOT YES AND NO. PAUL DID NOT VACILLATE. PAUL DID NOT LIE, HIS YES MEANT YES AND HIS NO MEANT NO.**

****** PAUL WAS SAYING, GOD IS FAITHFUL AND THOSE WHO SPEAK FOR HIM MUST COMMUNICATE THE TRUTH IN A RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY AND FAITHFUL MANNER.**

1. AND PAUL WILL GO TO THE RELIABILITY OF HIS PREACHING AS AN EVIDENCE OF HIS INTEGRITY AND

TRUTHFULNESS, WHICH LEADS US TO OUR THIRD POINT TODAY, THE RELIABILITY. LOOK AT V. 19 PLEASE.

III. THE RELIABILITY, (READ V. 19)

A. NOW THE CONJUNCTION “FOR” AT THE BEGINNING OF V. 19 IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN V. 18 AND V. 19, FOR V. 19 INTRODUCES AN EXPLANATION OF V. 18.

*** AND HERE IN V. 19 PAUL WILL EMPHASIZE CHRIST’S NATURE AS THE GOD MAN BY USING THE FULL RICH TITLE, “THE SON OF GOD, CHRIST JESUS.”**

**** AND PAUL IS STATING THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL IN V. 18 AND THAT GOD THE SON IS FAITHFUL ALSO IN V. 19, AND HE IS THE PERSON OF THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL THAT HE, SILAS AND TIMOTHY ALL PREACHED.**

***** AND BOTH SILAS AND TIMOTHY HAD MINISTERED WITH PAUL AT CORINTH ACCORDING TO ACTS 18:5. AND THEIR PREACHING WAS NOT UNTRUSTWORTHY, IT WAS NOT YES AND NO, BUT WAS A FIRM, UNWAVERING, RESOUNDING YES TO GOD’S TRUTH IN JESUS CHRIST.**

****** AND NOTE IN V.19 THAT THE PHRASE “AMONG YOU” UNITES JESUS CHRIST WITH THE CORINTHIANS, WHO IS THEIR MODEL OF TRUTH.**

1. AND THEN THE NEXT PHRASE IN V. 19 “BY US” DEPICTS PAUL, SILAS AND TIMOTHY AS CHANNELS THROUGH WHOM THE TRUTH REACHES THE CORINTHIANS. THE CORINTHIANS RECEIVE TRUTH THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

*** AND JESUS CHRIST, THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE, THE SAVIOR WHO IS TRUTH WAS NEVER YES AND NO, BUT IS YES.**

**** AND THEIR PREACHING WAS A FIRM, UNWAVERING RESOUNDING YES TO GOD’S TRUTH.**

***** AND PAUL’S POINT IN V.19 IS HIS ACTIONS IN CHANGING HIS PLANS WERE NOT UNTRUSTWORTHY BECAUSE THE SAVIOR HE PREACHED WAS THE DIVINE UNCHANGEABLE ONE IN WHOM THERE WAS NO VACILLATION OR UNCHANGEABLENESS.**

****** AND THE CORINTHIANS BELIEVED PAUL’S MESSAGE OF TRUTH ABOUT THE UNCHANGEABLE ONE, AND IF THEY BELIEVED THAT, WHY WOULD PAUL, THE PREACHER OF THE TRUTH OF CHRIST, NOT BE TRUTHFUL AND BE A VACILLATING LIAR? HOW COULD GOD REVEAL TRUTH THROUGH LYING INSTRUMENTS?**

2. AND PAUL CLARIFIES WHAT HE MEANT A LITTLE MORE IN V. 20. LOOK AT V. 20 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 20. NOW THE NUMEROUS PROMISES OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE ALL CONVERGE IN JESUS CHRIST.

*** IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S AS IF GOD IS SAYING, JESUS CHRIST MY SON, IS MY YES TO EVERY PROMISE I HAVE EVER MADE. HE FULFILLS EVERYTHING I HAVE EVER SAID.**

**** GOD CANNOT BREAK A PROMISE. GOD CANNOT LIE, QUOTE TITUS 1:2.**

***** CHRIST FULFILLS ALL THE PROMISES OF THE O.T. FOR JESUS SAID IN MATTHEW 5:17 (QUOTE IT).**

****** THEREFORE SINCE CHRIST FULFILLS EVERY PROPHECY AND PROMISE IN SCRIPTURE WE CAN STAND ON THE PROMISES OF GOD! THE ENTIRE N.T. IS A TESTIMONY THAT GOD'S PROMISES HAVE BEEN AND ARE BEING FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST.**

1. THEN PAUL DRIVES HOME HIS POINT OF HIS ARGUMENT WITH THAT SAID, THAT GOD CANNOT LIE, THAT GOD'S PROMISES ARE YES IN CHRIST, BY SAYING, "THEREFORE ALSO THROUGH HIM IS OUR AMEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD."

*** NOW THE WORD AMEN IS AN AFFIRMATION OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF A STATEMENT, IT MEANS SO BE IT, IT MEANS TRUTH, IT IS A FIRM AGREEMENT TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, ANOTHER WAY TO SAY “YES!”**

**** AND WHEN THE CORINTHIANS SAY AMEN TO THE PROMISES OF GOD IN CHRIST, THEY GLORIFY GOD, FOR THEY ARE TAKING GOD AT HIS WORD, THEY ARE STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD.**

***** IT IS TO SAY, WHEN THE CORINTHIANS SAY “TRUTH” OR “AMEN” TO THE PROMISES OF GOD IN CHRIST, THEY ARE GLORIFYING GOD, THEY ARE AGREEING WITH GOD, THEY ARE STANDING FIRMLY ON GOD’S PROMISES.**

****** AND TAKING OUR FATHER AND OUR SAVIOR’S WORDS AND STANDING UPON THEM ALWAYS BRINGS GLORY TO THEM.**

2. AND THEN PAUL BRINGS HIS POINT FULL CIRCLE AT THE END OF V. 20 BY SAYING “THROUGH US.”

*** AND HERE IS THE APPLICATION OF THE TRUTH, THE APPLICATION OF PAUL’S ARGUMENT.**

**** FOR IT REMINDS THE CORINTHIANS THAT IT WAS THROUGH THE PREACHING OF MEN LIKE PAUL THAT THEY HAD COME TO CLAIM THE PROMISES OF GOD IN CHRIST.**

***** AND IF PAUL WAS A FRAUD, NOT AN APOSTLE, NOT A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS, THEN HOW COULD IT BE THAT GOD USED A LIAR LIKE PAUL TO GIVE THEM THE TRUTH?**

****** AND THE REALITY IS, THE CORINTHIANS AFFIRMED THAT PREACHERS LIKE PAUL, SILAS AND TIMOTHY SPOKE GOD'S TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST WHEN THEY BELIEVED THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.**

3. SO HOW UTTERLY ABSURD IS PAUL'S ARGUMENT TO RECEIVE AND EXPERIENCE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE AS RELIABLE, BUT CONSIDER THOSE WHO PROCLAIMED IT TO BE UNRELIABLE.

*** HOW RIDICULOUS TO TRUST PAUL'S WORDS ABOUT THE GOSPEL AND ETERNAL LIFE, BUT NOT BELIEVE PAUL ABOUT THINGS LIKE HIS TRAVEL PLANS. GOD DID NOT CHOOSE AN UNSTABLE, LIAR WHO HAD NO INTEGRITY, TO PREACH HIS TRUTH.**

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) INTEGRITY IS DEFINED IN WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY AS "UNCOMPROMISING ADHERENCE TO MORAL AND

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES, SOUNDNESS OF MORAL CHARACTER; HONESTY.”

*** WITH THAT DEFINITION BEFORE US, DOES THIS DEFINITION DEFINE YOUR LIFE?**

**** ARE YOU A MAN OR WOMAN OF INTEGRITY? DO YOU ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH NO MATTER THE COST OR EMBARRASSMENT YOU MAY RECEIVE AS A RESULT OF BEING HONEST?**

***** DO YOU STRETCH THE TRUTH TO WIN AN ARGUMENT?**

****** DO YOU EMBELLISH OR EXAGGERATE THE TRUTH FOR ATTENTION OR TO MAKE A SALE?**

(2) IS YOUR WORD YOUR BOND? DO YOU FOLLOW THROUGH WITH WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE GOING TO DO?

*** DOES YOUR YES MEAN NO OR YOUR NO YES?**

**** DO THE TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL LEAD YOU TO UNCOMPROMISING ADHERENCE TO PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH IN GOD’S WORD?**

***** AND BELOVED, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT OUR SOCIETY HAS HUGE INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS ISSUES.**

****** BUT IN CONTRAST, AS FOLLOWERS OF THE TRUTH WE MUST BE MEN AND WOMEN OF TRUTH. WE SHOULD SAY WHAT WE MEAN AND MEAN WHAT WE SAY.**

(3) AND LYING AND A LACK OF INTEGRITY AS THE NORM OF YOUR LIFE GIVES EVIDENCE THAT YOUR FATHER IS THE DEVIL AND NOT GOD. (QUOTE JOHN 8:44. ALSO QUOTE REVELATION 21:8)

*** BUT IN CONTRAST, FOR US THAT TRULY KNOW CHRIST, OUR WORD, OUR LIFE, OUR ACTIONS SHOULD COMMUNICATE TRUTH. “YOU HAVE MY WORD ON IT” SHOULD BRING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE.**

**** AND CERTAINLY IT WILL SEPARATE US FROM THE DARKNESS OF DECEIT IN OUR WORLD AND WILL GIVE US OPEN DOORS FOR THE GOSPEL.**

***** AND MAY THIS BE OUR PRAYER TODAY. (QUOTE PSALM 120:2)**

****** AND MAY WE REALIZE GOD HATES A LYING TONGUE. (QUOTE PROVERBS 6:16-19)**

(4) SO IN APPLICATION OF OUR MESSAGE TODAY, MAY WE AS FOLLOWERS OF THE TRUTH BE PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS. (LET’S PRAY)