

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A  
MAN OF GOD, WEEK 6

TITLE: PAUL'S DEFENSE

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 1:21 – 2:4

INTRODUCTION: (1) CHRISTIAN CULTURE IN OUR NATION  
OFTEN JUDGES PEOPLE BY RESULTS, NUMBERS, RICHES  
AND OTHER EXTERNAL CRITERIA THAT COMMUNICATE  
SUCCESS.

\* SADLY, PERFORMANCE, NOT CHARACTER IS THE BASIS  
FOR SUCCESS. IN FACT THE EXTERNAL SUCCESS GAUGE  
IS USED TO QUANTIFY GOD'S BLESSING, NOT  
FAITHFULNESS TO GOD'S WORD, OBEDIENCE, INTEGRITY  
AND HONESTY.

\*\* HOWEVER, UNLIKE PEOPLE WHO LOOK AT THE  
EXTERNALS, THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, THE LORD  
GOD ALMIGHTY LOOKS AT THE HEART ACCORDING TO I  
SAMUEL 16:7.

\*\*\* AND IN REALITY WHAT WE ARE IN SECRET, WHAT WE  
ARE AT HOME, WHAT WE ARE WHEN NO ONE IS

WATCHING, REALLY SAYS MORE ABOUT US THAN WHAT WE ARE WHEN EVERYONE IS WATCHING.

\*\*\*\* AND MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, HOW WE LIVE IN PUBLIC IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR WE ARE LIGHTS AND WE NEED TO EXTERNALLY ACT LIKE CHRIST IN FRONT OF OTHERS. (QUOTE MATTHEW 5:14-16, PHILIPPIANS 2:15, I PETER 3:15, I TIMOTHY 3:7).

(2) SO WHAT WE DO IS IMPORTANT EXTERNALLY, BUT WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE ARE IS MOST IMPORTANT.

\* AND THE APOSTLE PAUL UNDERSTOOD THIS REALITY, FOR THOUGH HE HAD EXTERNAL MARKS OF SUCCESS, HE KNEW THAT THE TRUE MEASURE OF A MAN OR WOMAN OF GOD WAS GOD'S EVALUATION OF THEIR HEARTS.

\*\* AND THAT'S WHY HE WROTE THIS IN I CORINTHIANS 4:4&5: "FOR I AM CONSCIOUS OF NOTHING AGAINST MYSELF, YET I AM NOT BY THIS ACQUITTED; BUT THE ONE WHO EXAMINES ME IS THE LORD.

V. 5 – THEREFORE DO NOT GO ON PASSING JUDGMENT BEFORE THE TIME, BUT WAIT UNTIL THE LORD COMES WHO WILL BOTH BRING TO LIGHT THE THINGS HIDDEN IN

THE DARKNESS AND DISCLOSE THE MOTIVES OF MEN'S HEARTS; AND THEN EACH MAN'S PRAISE WILL COME TO HIM FROM GOD."

\*\*\* NOW WITH THAT TRUTH BEFORE US, THE QUESTION CAN BE ASKED, THEN WHY WAS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE APOSTLE PAUL TO DEFEND HIS INTEGRITY AND HONESTY TO THE CORINTHIANS?

\*\*\*\* BUT I MEAN GOD IS THE ULTIMATE JUDGE AND KNOWS THE HEART, WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST FALSE ACCUSATIONS?

3. WHY DID PAUL DEFEND HIMSELF FROM FALSE ACCUSATIONS, FROM ENEMIES, FALSE TEACHERS AT CORINTH THAT SAID HE WAS NOT A MAN OF HIS WORD, THAT HE WAS FICKLE, VACILLATING, NOT A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND HONESTY, THAT HE WAS A LIAR?

\* WELL THE ANSWER IS, IT AFFECTED HIS ABILITY TO SPIRITUALLY SHEPHERD THE CORINTHIANS. IT AFFECTED HIS MINISTRY TO THE CORINTHIANS WHOM HE DEARLY LOVED AND ULTIMATELY IT AFFECTED GOD'S GLORY AND WORK.

\*\* AND I DON'T THINK PAUL REALLY GAVE A RIP ABOUT WHAT OTHERS THOUGHT OF HIM, ABOUT HIS OWN REPUTATION, QUOTE GALATIANS 1:10, GALATIANS 6:17, I CORINTHIANS 10:31.

\*\*\*\* AND THOSE AT CORINTH THAT WERE PAUL'S ENEMIES WHO SAID HE WAS A LIAR BECAUSE HE CHANGED HIS TRAVEL PLANS TO CORINTH IN COMING THERE, WERE PAUL'S CONCERN BECAUSE IT AFFECTED HIS MINISTRY TO TRUE BELIEVERS AND THEREFORE THE GLORY OF GOD.

4. SO WE'VE SEEN PAUL DEFEND HIS HONESTY, HIS INTEGRITY, THAT HE HAS A CLEAR CONSCIENCE, THAT WHAT HE PREACHED WAS PURE GOSPEL TRUTH AND THAT HIS YES MEANT YES AND HIS NO MEANT NO FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND ADVANCEMENT OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

\* YET PAUL'S ULTIMATE CLAIM TO INTEGRITY, HONESTY AND CLEAR CONSCIENCE AS GOD'S MESSENGER AND CHRIST'S APOSTLE WAS NOT HIS PERSONAL CHARACTER WHICH WAS GREAT, IT WAS WHAT GOD HAD DONE IN HIS LIFE.

\*\* PAUL WAS LEGITIMATE, HE WAS AN APOSTLE BY GOD'S CHOICE AND HE WAS A CHRISTIAN BY GOD'S CHOICE.

\*\*\* THEN PAUL'S ULTIMATE DEFENSE WAS GOD HAD ESTABLISHED HIM IN CHRIST, GOD HAD ANOINTED HIM FOR SERVICE, GOD SEALED HIM, AND THE LORD GAVE HIM THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DOWN-PAYMENT FOR FUTURE REDEMPTION.

\*\*\*\* AND BEYOND THAT PAUL'S DEFENSE WAS HE CALLS GOD AS A WITNESS OF WHY HE DID NOT COME TO CORINTH WHEN HE INITIALLY TOLD THE CORINTHIANS HE WOULD AND IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH PAUL'S CONVENIENCE OR THAT HE LIED, BUT TO SPARE THE CORINTHIANS MORE SORROW.

5. AND LASTLY PAUL'S DEFENSE IS HIS GREAT LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS IN HIS CHANGE OF TRAVEL PLANS IN NOT COMING TO THEM WHEN THEY EXPECTED.

\* IN LIGHT OF ALL THOSE THINGS, I'VE TITLED OUR SERMON FOR TODAY, "PAUL'S DEFENSE."

\*\* AND UNDER THAT THEME AND TITLE WE'LL LOOK AT 4 POINTS AS WE WORK OUR WAY THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT TEXT TO INTERPRET II CORINTHIANS 1:21 – 2:4.

\*\*\*AND NO. 1 WE'LL LOOK AT THE MARKS OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN, VV. 21&22; NO. 2 THE MERCY OF PAUL, VV. 23&24; NO. 3 THE MIND OF PAUL, VV. 1&2; AND NO. 4 THE MOTIVE OF PAUL, VV. 3&4.

\*\*\*\* SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE MARKS, THE MERCY, THE MIND AND THE MOTIVE UNDER PAUL'S DEFENSE.

6. AND WITH THOSE 4 MAIN POINTS TO HANG YOUR THOUGHTS ON, LOOK AT II CORINTHIANS 1:21 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT, THE MARKS OF A TRUE BELIEVER.

I. THE MARKS, (READ V. 21)

A. NOW KEEP THIS IMPORTANT THOUGHT BEFORE YOU AS WE WORK THROUGH VV. 21&22.

\* PAUL'S DEFENSE TO THOSE WHO COMMUNICATE THAT PAUL IS NOT HONEST AND A MAN OF INTEGRITY BECAUSE OF THE CHANGES IN HIS TRAVEL PLANS IS THAT GOD'S WORK IN HIS LIFE, AND IN THEIRS THROUGH HIS PREACHING, GUARANTEES THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF WHAT HE SAYS.

\*\* GOD ESTABLISHED US (TIMOTHY AND SILAS AND PAUL) IN CHRIST.

\*\*\* GOD ANOINTED US (TIMOTHY, SILAS AND PAUL).

\*\*\*\* GOD SEALED US.

1. AND GOD GAVE US HIS SPIRIT.

\* SO HOW CAN WE NOT BE LEGITIMATE?

\*\* AND TO BUILD HIS CASE FURTHER, PAUL ADDS THE PHRASE “WITH YOU” IN DESCRIBING GOD’S 4 GLORIOUS WORKS IN THEIR LIVES ALSO, WHICH INDICATES PAUL’S CONFIDENCE THAT THE CORINTHIANS ON THE WHOLE ALSO EXPERIENCED THOSE DIVINE SUPERNATURAL WORKS OF GOD, AS DO ALL BELIEVERS.

\*\*\* NOW WHO PREACHED THE GOSPEL TRUTH TO THE CORINTHIANS, THAT GOD USED AS THE MEANS TO SAVE THEM WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT THESE 4 GLORIOUS WORKS BY GOD.

\*\*\*\* WELL, V. 19A, “FOR THE SON OF GOD, CHRIST JESUS, WHO WAS PREACHED AMONG YOU BY US – BY ME AND SILVANUS AND TIMOTHY.”

2. AND THE APPLICATION IN PAUL’S DEFENSE IS: HOW UTTERLY ABSURD TO RECEIVE AND EXPERIENCE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE AS RELIABLE, BUT CONSIDER THOSE WHO PROCLAIM IT (PAUL, SILAS AND TIMOTHY) TO BE UNRELIABLE.

\* 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, THAT BROUGHT ABOUT GOD'S ESTABLISHING, ANOINTING, SEALING AND GIVING THEM THE HOLY SPIRIT?

\*\* HOW RIDICULOUS TO TRUST PAUL'S WORDS ABOUT THE GOSPEL, ETERNAL LIFE AND GOD'S GLORIOUS WORKS, BUT NOT BELIEVE PAUL ABOUT THINGS LIKE HIS TRAVEL PLANS.

\*\*\* GOD DID NOT CHOOSE AN UNSTABLE LIAR WHO HAD NO INTEGRITY TO PROCLAIM HIS TRUTH, BUT A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS.

\*\*\*\* AND HERE IN V. 21 AND V. 22, PAUL'S ADDITIONAL CLAIM OF INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY AS GOD'S MESSENGER AND CHRIST'S APOSTLE IS WHAT GOD HAD DONE IN HIS LIFE AND WHAT GOD HAD DONE IN THE CORINTHIAN'S LIVES.

\*\*\*\* THE TRUTH AND INTEGRITY IS IN GOD'S WORK AND BLESSING, IN WHAT GOD DID. GOD'S WORK IN HIS LIFE GUARANTEES THE TRUSTWORTHINESS IN WHAT HE SAYS.

3. NOW WITH THAT SAID, GOD IS THE SUBJECT OF VV. 21&22. AND FOUR OF HIS ACTIONS TOWARD BELIEVERS ARE COMMUNICATED IN VERSES 21&22.



\* AND THESE 4 WORKS OF GOD COMMUNICATE GREAT THEOLOGY IN GOD'S WORK. AND HIS FOURFOLD WORK IS DESCRIBED BY 4 VERBS, ESTABLISHES, ANOINTED, SEALED, AND GAVE.

\*\* AND FIRST GOD ESTABLISHES BELIEVERS IN CHRIST. AND THE GREEK WORD TRANSLATED ESTABLISHES LIT. MEANS TO CONTINUE, TO MAKE SURE, AND HERE HAS TO DO WITH A GUARANTEE GIVEN BY GOD THAT CERTAIN COMMITMENTS WILL BE CARRIED OUT.

\*\*\* MEANING GOD HAS MADE A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH HIS PEOPLE AND HE GUARANTEES THE PROMISE HE HAS MADE WITH THEM IN CHRIST.

\*\*\*\* THEREFORE THE PROMISES OF GOD ARE IN THE FORM OF A LEGALLY CERTIFIED SECURITY IN CHRIST, GOD ESTABLISHES BELIEVERS IN CHRIST AT SALVATION, WHICH IS THE WORK OF SOVEREIGN SAVING GRACE THAT PUTS BELIEVERS INTO UNION WITH JESUS CHRIST.

4. AND PAUL'S DEFENSE IS, HIS HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY IS TIGHTLY LINKED WITH THAT OF THE CORINTHIANS, AND TO DENY THAT WAS TO DENY THE REALITY OF THEIR OWN SPIRITUAL UNION WITH EACH OTHER.

\* AND BY ATTACKING PAUL'S INTEGRITY, THE CORINTHIANS RIPPED THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH'S SPIRITUAL UNITY, FOR THEY WERE FELLOW MEMBERS OF THE SAME BODY OF CHRIST.

\*\* AND IF PAUL'S NOT LEGITIMATE, NEITHER ARE THEY.

\*\*\* SO FIRST GOD ESTABLISHES BELIEVERS IN CHRIST.

\*\*\*\* NO. 2 GOD HAS ANOINTED BELIEVERS AND WE WILL SEE GOD HAS ANOINTED PAUL AND ALL BELIEVERS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- I JOHN 2:20 & 27 SAYS –

V. 20 – “BUT YOU HAVE AN ANOINTING FROM THE HOLY ONE, AND YOU ALL KNOW.

V. 27 – “AS FOR YOU, THE ANOINTING WHICH YOU RECEIVED FROM HIM ABIDES IN YOU, AND YOU HAVE NO NEED FOR ANYONE TO TEACH YOU; BUT AS HIS ANOINTING TEACHES YOU ABOUT ALL THINGS, AND IS TRUE AND IS NOT A LIE, AND JUST AS IT HAS TAUGHT YOU, YOU ABIDE IN HIM.”

5. NOW WHEN SOMEONE WAS ANOINTED IN THE O.T., A PROPHET, A PRIEST OR A KING, THEY WERE COMMISSIONED FOR SERVICE AND PAUL WAS SET APART

FOR THE SERVICE OF GOD, AS WELL AS THE CORINTHIANS.

\* AND IT IS THE ANOINTING OF GOD'S PEOPLE, NOT WITH OIL AS IN THE O.T., BUT WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT CONSECRATES THEM TO GOD'S SERVICE.

\*\* WHICH REMINDS US IN APPLICATION, WE ARE ESTABLISHED IN CHRIST AND ANOINTED BY THE SPIRIT TO SERVE. SO ARE YOU SERVING IN ALL OF LIFE? AT HOME, AT WORK, THROUGH THE CHURCH? ARE YOU USING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN THE BODY OF CHRIST, THROUGH THE CHURCH? IF YOU ARE NOT, YOU ARE BEING DISOBEDIENT.

\*\*\* BELOVED WE WERE SAVED TO SERVE IN WORSHIP AND IN MINISTRY TO THE GLORY OF OUR KING.

\*\*\*\* SO GOD HAS ANOINTED EVERY BELIEVER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR SERVICE.

6. NOW THE THIRD AND FOURTH THING THAT GOD HAS DONE IS FOUND IN V. 22. LOOK AT V. 22 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 22. NOW GOD ALSO SEALS BELIEVERS AND LIKE THE OTHER THINGS THAT GOD HAS DONE, ALL THESE TAKE PLACE AT SALVATION – “WHO ALSO SEALED US” PAST TENSE.

\* AND IN ANCIENT TIMES, A SEAL WAS AN IMPRESS ON WAX THAT SHOWED OWNERSHIP BY STAMPING AN IDENTIFYING MARK, THE OWNER'S IDENTITY THAT WAS ENGRAVED ON A SEAL.

\*\* SO YOU WOULD TAKE THAT ENGRAVED IDENTIFYING MARK, PUT IT IN WAX AND AFFIX IT OR STAMP IT TO A DOCUMENT OR A LETTER. SO STAMPING AN IDENTIFYING MARK ON SOMETHING WAS A SEAL.

\*\*\* AND A SEAL SHOWED AUTHENTICITY AND OWNERSHIP. A SEAL WAS A MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION AND THAT MARK OR SEAL DENOTED OWNERSHIP AND PROTECTION BY THE OWNER.

\*\*\*\* AND THE DOMINANT IDEA OF THE SEAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS OWNERSHIP AND SECURITY THAT RESULTS FROM THE OWNERSHIP. WE ARE BRANDED AS GOD'S PROPERTY.

1. AND BELIEVERS ARE STAMPED AS GOD'S, WE ARE OWNED BY HIM, FOR HE BOUGHT US WITH THE PRICE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. WE ARE SECURE IN CHRIST, WE HAVE ETERNAL SECURITY IN CHRIST, QUOTE EPHESIANS 4:30. ALSO EPHESIANS 1:13&14, II TIMOTHY 2:19, JOHN 10:27-30.

\* BELOVED WE ARE SECURE IN CHRIST BY GOD'S SEAL, HE OWNS US, HE KEEPS US, NO ONE CAN PLUCK US OUT OF HIS HAND.

\*\* AND THAT'S THE THIRD THING GOD DOES. AND THEN NO. 4, GOD GAVE US THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A PLEDGE. AND THAT MEANS THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO IS GIVEN TO EVERY BELIEVER AT SALVATION IS THE DOWN PAYMENT, THE GUARANTEE, THE PLEDGE, THE DEPOSIT, THE FIRST INSTALLMENT THAT SECURES US, THAT THE AGREEMENT OR CONTRACT WILL BE CARRIED OUT.

\*\*\* AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO AGAIN INDWELLS EVERY BELIEVER IS THE GUARANTEE THAT GOD WILL TAKE FULL POSSESSION OF US WITH HIM IN HEAVEN ONE DAY.

\*\*\*\* THAT ULTIMATE REDEMPTION AND GLORIFICATION WILL TAKE PLACE, THAT GOD WILL FOLLOW THRU AND COMPLETE THE DEAL.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE DOWNPAYMENT ON OUR HEAVENLY INHERITANCE, THE GUARANTEE OF FULL AND COMPLETE REDEMPTION, THE FORETASTE OF FUTURE GLORY, OF WHAT IS TO COME.

\* AND PAUL IN VV. 21&22 HAS INVOLVED THE TRIUNE GOD IN POINTING HIS READERS TO GRANDEUR AND GREATNESS OF SALVATION.

\*\* AND HOW FOOLISH IT WAS, IN LIGHT OF PAUL'S PREACHING THOSE GLORIOUS, EVERLASTING DIVINE TRUTHS AND REALITIES, TO QUESTION HIS LEGITIMACY AS AN APOSTLE BECAUSE OF A MINOR CHANGE IN HIS TRAVEL PLANS.

\*\*\* AND SO THE THRUST HERE IS PAUL, TIMOTHY AND SILAS ARE TRUSTWORTHY FAITHFUL MESSENGERS OF THE GOSPEL AND THE TRUTHS WE'VE JUST LOOKED AT, SO WHY WOULD PAUL LIE. IT'S RIDICULOUS. GOD HAD DONE THESE THINGS FOR PAUL AND THROUGH HIS PREACHING. HE IS TRUSTWORTHY, A MAN OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS.

\*\*\* WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, AND I'M REALLY GOING TO GET IN GEAR HERE, THE MERCY OF PAUL, THE REASON PAUL CHANGED HIS PLANS. LOOK AT V. 23 PLEASE.

## II. THE MERCY, (READ V. 23)

A. NOW PAUL GIVES THE REASON WHY HE DID NOT COME AGAIN TO CORINTH WHEN HE WANTED TO.

\* BUT BEFORE HE DOES THAT HE PREFACES HIS EXPLANATION WITH THE SOLEMN WORDS, "I CALL GOD AS WITNESS TO MY SOUL," TO COMMUNICATE THE TRUTHFULNESS OF WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO SAY.

\*\* IN OTHER WORDS, GOD IS PAUL'S WITNESS THAT HE IS TELLING THE TRUTH. PAUL APPEALED TO GOD TO VERIFY THE TRUTH OF WHAT HE WAS ABOUT TO WRITE AND TO JUDGE HIM IF HE WERE LYING.

\*\*\* WITH THAT WHY DID PAUL CHANGE HIS TRAVEL PLANS?

\*\*\*\* THE ANSWER IS TO SPARE THEM. TO SPARE THEM FROM WHAT? WELL PAUL DOESN'T SAY IN THIS VERSE, BUT WE WILL SEE IN VERSES 1&2 OF CHAPTER 2, TO SPARE THEM FURTHER SORROW.

1. AND THE AGAIN OF V. 23, "I DID NOT COME AGAIN TO YOU," POSSIBLY REFERS TO A VISIT THAT PAUL MADE AFTER HIS INITIAL VISIT AND STAY WITH THE CORINTHIANS FOR 18 MONTHS, SOMETIME AFTER WRITING I CORINTHIANS AND BEFORE WRITING II CORINTHIANS.

\* AND THIS VISIT IS CALLED THE PAINFUL VISIT, AND I WILL ELABORATE ON THIS MORE IN A LITTLE BIT AND ALSO WHAT IS CALLED THE SEVERE LETTER.

\*\* AND BOTTOM LINE, PAUL DID NOT COME TO THE CORINTHIANS WHEN HE THOUGHT HE WOULD OUT OF MERCY FOR THEM, HE DID NOT WANT TO COME TO THEM IN SORROW, FOR THEIR SAKE AND WE WILL SEE FOR HIS OWN SAKE, IN CHAPTER 2 VERSE 1.

\*\*\* BUT BEFORE WE DO, LOOK AT V. 24 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 24. NOW PAUL'S SEVERE VISIT AND PAUL'S SEVERE LETTER MOST LIKELY HAD TO DO WITH CHURCH DISCIPLINE ISSUES.

\* AND WHEN CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS PRACTICED, IT IS GREATLY MISUNDERSTOOD, IT IS VIEWED AS SEVERE, JUDGMENTAL AND UNLOVING.

\*\* BUT PAUL'S PURPOSE WAS THE JOY THAT REPENTANCE AND HOLINESS WOULD BRING THEM. JOY COMES AS WE CONFESS AND FORSAKE SIN. PAUL'S GOAL WAS TO RESTORE THEM TO JOY FOR WHATEVER SIN WAS BEING DEALT WITH.

\*\*\* AND THE MOTIVE FOR DISCIPLINE BY PAUL WAS LOVE AS WE'LL SEE IN CHAPTER 2 VERSE 4 – “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.”

\*\*\*\* SO PAUL'S MOTIVE WAS LOVE, AND NOT TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD, HE POINTS OUT, NOT THAT WE ARE LORDING OVER YOUR FAITH AT THE BEGINNING OF V. 24.



1. AND HERE PAUL WAS REMINDING THEM WE ARE NOT TRYING TO BE MASTERS AND HAVE DOMINION OVER YOU, THAT WE ARE NOT LORDS OVER YOU BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE, BUT FOR YOU TO HAVE JOY IN YOUR FAITH.

\* AND PAUL'S AUTHORITY WAS NOT BEING ABUSED BY CHURCH DISCIPLINE, BUT IN LOVE, HE WANTED THEM TO REPENT TO HAVE JOY, FOR PAUL TRULY THOUGHT THEY WERE TRUE BELIEVERS, "FOR IN YOUR FAITH YOU ARE STANDING FIRM."

\*\* SO PAUL IS NOT QUESTIONING THEIR FAITH, AND HE IS NOT LORDING OVER THEM, HE WANTS THEM TO REPENT SO THAT THEIR OBEDIENCE WILL BRING GREAT JOY. PAUL WAS BEING MERCIFUL, NOT LORDING OVER THEIR FAITH, FOR HE CLAIMED NO AUTHORITY OVER THEIR FAITH, THAT WAS GOD'S SOVEREIGN WORK, FOR NO ONE BUT THE LORD HAS AUTHORITY OVER THAT RELATIONSHIP.

\*\*\* AND PAUL'S MERCY LEADS US TO WHAT WAS ON HIS MIND, WHICH WE'LL SEE IN CHAPTER 2, VERSES 1 AND 2.

SO LOOK AT V. 1 TO BEGIN WITH PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE PAUL'S MIND.

III. THE MIND, (READ V. 1)

A. NOW PAUL DETERMINED THAT HE WOULD NOT COME TO THE CORINTHIANS WHEN HE SAID HE WOULD, NOT ONLY FOR THEIR OWN SAKE, TO SPARE THEM SORROW, BUT ALSO FOR HIS OWN SAKE.

\* AND THE WORD AGAIN, NOT TO COME IN SORROW AGAIN MAKES REFERENCE TO A PAINFUL VISIT HE HAD MADE EARLIER TO CORINTH.

\*\* AND IT WAS THIS PAINFUL VISIT THAT HAD PROMPTED PAUL TO WRITE THE "SEVERE LETTER" HE REFERS TO IN 2:4, A LETTER HE WROTE WITH MANY TEARS BETWEEN 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> CORINTHIANS THAT WAS NOT AN INSPIRED WRITING OF SCRIPTURE, WHICH THEREFORE IS NOT IN EXISTENCE TODAY.

\*\*\* AND PAUL DID NOT WANT TO GO THROUGH THAT GRIEF AGAIN, THE GRIEF THAT THAT KIND OF VISIT CAUSES.

\*\*\*\* SO PAUL WAS SPARING THEM AND HIMSELF. HE WANTED TO GIVE THEM TIME TO TAKE CARE OF THINGS.

1. AND BY GIVING THE CORINTHIANS TIME TO REPENT, PAUL HOPED TO AVOID ANOTHER PAINFUL ENCOUNTER WITH THEM.

\* THEREFORE, HIS CHANGE IN TRAVEL PLANS WAS NOT MOTIVATED BY A LACK OF INTEGRITY OR FICKLENESS OR UNRELIABILITY, AS THE FALSE APOSTLES AND TEACHERS CLAIMED, BUT BY PAUL'S HEART AND SENSITIVITY TOWARD THIS BELOVED CHURCH.

\*\* AND HE GIVES FURTHER EXPLANATION IN V. 2. LOOK AT V. 2 PLEASE AS PAUL'S MIND AND HEART ARE FURTHER REVEALED.

B. READ V. 2. NOW PAUL'S LOVE, HIS SENSITIVITY AND MERCY WITH THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT MEAN THAT HE WAS UNWILLING TO DEAL WITH SIN.

\* FOR HIS BURDEN FOR THE PURITY OF THE CHURCH MADE HIM WILLING TO CAUSE THEM SORROW IF NECESSARY.

\*\* BUT IF HE DID CAUSE THEM SORROW, THE ONLY THING THAT WOULD MAKE HIM GLAD WOULD BE THE REPENTANCE OF THOSE WHOM HE MADE SORROWFUL.

\*\*\* AND UNDERSTAND IT WAS PAUL'S BURDEN AND HIS CONCERN FOR PURITY IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH THAT PROMPTED THE LETTERS HE WROTE, WE WILL SEE THAT

IN CHAPTER 2 VERSE 9 AND CHAPTER 7 VERSES 8-10, AND WITH THAT SAID LOOK AT V. 3 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 3, NOW AGAIN, PAUL WROTE THE LETTERS HE WROTE, EVEN THE SEVERE LETTER, FOR PURITY AND REPENTANCE IN THE CHURCH.

\* PAUL'S HEART AND HOPE WAS THAT THEY WOULD REPENT, SO THAT, SO THAT, WHEN HE CAME TO CORINTH, HE WOULD NOT HAVE SORROW FROM THOSE WHO OUGHT TO MAKE HIM REJOICE.

\*\* IN OTHER WORDS, AS PAUL GOES ON IN V. 3, PAUL'S BURDEN AND HOPE WAS THAT THE SINFUL ISSUES HE CONFRONTED IN HIS LETTERS WOULD BE SETTLED BEFORE HE VISITED THE CHURCH AT CORINTH AGAIN.

\*\*\* THEN HIS JOY WOULD BE THE JOY OF THEM ALL, OF THE ENTIRE CHURCH, FOR THEY COULD NOT HAVE MUTUAL JOY AS LONG AS MEMBERS OF THE CORINTHIAN BODY CONTINUED IN SIN. THE LEAVEN OF SIN WOULD AFFECT THE ENTIRE BODY (QUOTE I CORINTHIANS 5:9 AND TALK ABOUT THE CONTEXT.)

\*\*\*\* NOW WITH THAT BEFORE US, PAUL WAS TRYING TO ENCOURAGE THE CORINTHIANS BY EXPRESSING SOME CONFIDENCE IN THEM IN V. 3, "HAVING CONFIDENCE IN YOU ALL THAT MY JOY WOULD BE THE JOY OF YOU ALL."

1. SO PAUL WAS CONFIDENT THAT WHEN THE ISSUES CAUSING ALL THE TROUBLE AT CORINTH WERE FINALLY RECTIFIED, THE RESULT WOULD BE JOY IN THE CHURCH AND FOR HIS AS WELL.

\* PAUL WAS CONFIDENT THAT THINGS WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF.

\*\* WHICH LEADS US TO OUR LAST VERSE TODAY, V. 4, WHERE WE'LL SEE THE MOTIVE BY PAUL IN ALL THAT HE DID IN CAREFRONTING THE CORINTHIANS. LOOK AT V. 4 PLEASE.

#### IV. THE MOTIVE, (READ V. 4)

A. NOW IT TOOK REAL LOVE, NOT MUSHY FEELINGS OR SENTIMENTALISM FOR PAUL TO CAREFRONT SIN AT THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.

\* THEREFORE WRITING THIS SEVERE LETTER CAUSED PAUL MUCH MUCH AFFLICTION AND ANGUISH OF HEART. IT WAS HARD, IT WAS NOT EASY.

\*\* BUT NOT ONLY DID IT CAUSE DISTRESS AND HEARTACHE, THIS SEVERE LETTER WAS A TEARFUL LETTER.

\*\*\* BELOVED PAUL TOOK NO PLEASURE IN WRITING THIS SEVERE LETTER, BUT DESIRED IT WOULD BRING THEM TO

REPENTANCE. HIS GOAL WAS NOT NECESSARILY SORROW, OR TO BE GRIEVED AND THAT'S IT, BUT WAS FOR CHANGE, THAT TRUE GODLY SORROW WOULD LEAD TO REPENTANCE AND JOY, QUOTE II CORINTHIANS 7:10.

AND IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION TODAY: (1) PAUL WAS WILLING TO SAY WHAT NEEDED TO BE SAID AS HARD AS IT WAS, TO HELP BROTHERS AND SISTERS CHANGE, TO HAVE TRUE JOY.

\* HIS GOAL WAS NOT TO HURT, BUT TO HELP, ALTHOUGH HURTING MAY BE THE INITIAL RESPONSE BEFORE WE ARE HELPED.

\*\* PAUL APPLIED PROVERBS 27:6 WHICH SAYS: (QUOTE IT). ALSO QUOTE GALATIANS 4:16.

\*\*\* AND BELOVED UNDERSTAND THIS, PAUL WOULD NEVER LIE TO HELP PEOPLE, FOR LYING AND NOT TELLING THE TRUTH DOES NOT HELP PEOPLE.

\*\*\*\* THEREFORE IT TAKES REAL LOVE TO CONFRONT A DIFFICULT SITUATION. IT'S ALWAYS THE HARDEST WAY, FOR THE EASY WAY IS TO DO NOTHING AND SAY NOTHING. PAUL WAS A MAN OF TRUTHFULNESS AND INTEGRITY.

(2) AND UNLIKE MANY IN THE PROFESSING CHURCH TODAY, PAUL DID NOT PLACE CHURCH UNITY ABOVE

TRUTH! AND ANY KIND OF UNITY AT THE EXPENSE OF TRUTH IS A FALSE UNITY, IT IS MERELY GOOD VIBES, GOOD FEELINGS, BUT NOT GOOD FOR THE CHURCH.

\*BUT PAUL WAS WILLING TO CAREFRONT UNREPENTANT SIN, FOR REPENTANCE IS WHAT BRINGS JOY AND NOT DISOBEDIENCE AND LYING.

\*\* AGAIN, IT TAKES REAL LOVE TO CONFRONT A DIFFICULT SITUATION RATHER THAN SIDE STEPPING IT.

\*\*\* BUT ALSO AND IN ADDITION, IT TAKES REAL LOVE TO TELL PEOPLE THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL THAT MANY TIMES THEY DON'T WANT TO HEAR.

\*\*\*\* LET ME ILLUSTRATE, IF YOUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE IS BURNING DOWN, AND THEY ARE INSIDE, IS IT LOVING TO DO NOTHING? OH I DON'T WANT TO WAKE THEM UP, THEY MAY BE SLEEPING OR THEY MAY BE BUSY, THAT'S RIDICULOUS.

(3) NO, YOU SCREAM AND DO ALL THAT YOU CAN TO GET THEM OUT OF THE FIRE SO THAT THEY DON'T PERISH.

\* HOW MUCH MORE SHOULD WE CRY OUT TO SINNERS THAT ONE DAY WILL BURN IN THE FIRE OF HELL IF THEY DON'T REPENT.

\*\* BELOVED, WITH OTHERS IN THE CHURCH AND THOSE IN THE WORLD MAY WE SPEAK THE TRUTH AND BE MEN AND WOMEN OF INTEGRITY AND TRUTHFULNESS. (LET US PRAY.)