

9/9/12

**SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD, WEEK 30**

**TITLE: ACTIONS OF LOVE**

**TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 7:2-4**

**INTRODUCTION: OUTSIDE OF JESUS CHRIST, NO ONE ENDURED MORE VICIOUS, RELENTLESS AND UNJUST ATTACKS THAN THE GREAT CHURCH PLANTER, THE APOSTLE PAUL.**

**\* THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS CONSTANTLY ASSAULTED HIM IN AN ATTEMPT TO STOP HIM FROM PROCLAIMING THE EXALTED CHRIST – THE GOSPEL, FROM PLANTING CHURCHES AND ESTABLISHING BELIEVERS.**

**\*\* AND AT CORINTH, IN REVIEW OF OUR STUDY OF II CORINTHIANS UP TO THIS POINT, THE ASSAULT, THE ATTACKS CAME FROM FALSE APOSTLES, FALSE TEACHERS WHO ATTACKED PAUL'S CHARACTER AND SPREAD LIES ABOUT HIM.**

**\*\*\* THEY SOUGHT POWER, PROMINENCE MONEY AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPLANT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL WITH THEIR FALSE DOCTRINES.**

**\*\*\*\* NOW TO ACCOMPLISH THAT PURPOSE, THEY FIRST HAD TO DESTROY TRUST IN PAUL'S CHARACTER AND TEACHINGS BY FALSELY ACCUSING HIM OF BEING A LYING, SELF SERVING HYPOCRITE, A FRAUD.**

**(2) THE RESULT OF THAT ASSAULT WAS SOME OF THE CORINTHIANS WERE AFFECTED BY DOUBTING PAUL'S INTEGRITY AND WHAT HE HAD TO SAY.**

**\* THIS CAUSED GREAT HEARTACHE AND BURDEN FOR THIS MAN OF TRUTH AND PROFOUNDLY CONCERNED AS A RESULT OF THAT, PAUL VIGOROUSLY AND AGGRESSIVELY DEFENDED HIS INTEGRITY.**

**\*\* BUT HIS MOTIVE FOR DOING THIS WAS NOT FOR HIS SAKE, BUT FOR THE CORINTHIANS, OUT OF LOVE FOR THEM, NOT HIMSELF.**

**\*\*\* WHY? PAUL STARTED THE CHURCH AT CORINTH, SPENT 18 MONTHS THERE ON ONE OF HIS VISITS, AND HE WAS THE ONE THAT COMMUNICATED THE GOSPEL TRUTH TO THEM AND THEN SANCTIFYING TRUTH TO THEM AND THEREFORE WAS THE SOURCE OF DIVINE TRUTH TO THEM, WITH THE N.T. NOT BEING COMPLETED AT THAT TIME. (THEY COULDN'T PICK UP A COMPLETED N.T. TO CHECK EVERYTHING OUT THAT PEOPLE SAID.)**

**\*\*\*\* THEREFORE TO ALLOW THE FALSE APOSTLES LIES TO GO UNCHALLENGED WOULD ALLOW THAT FLOW OF TRUTH TO BE BLOCKED, PAUL HAD TO PROTECT THAT FLOCK FROM ERROR.**

**(3) AND TO NOT PROTECT THAT CHURCH FROM ERROR WOULD ALLOW THE TRUTH TO BE REPLACED WITH FALSE DOCTRINE.**

**\* SO PAUL DEFENDED HIS INTEGRITY AND HIS LOVE FOR THEM TO PROTECT THEM, NOT FOR HIS OWN EGO. HE HAD TO DEAL WITH FALSE ACCUSATIONS NOT FOR SELF, BUT FOR CHRIST.**

**\*\* AND HEADING THE LIST OF FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PAUL WAS THE CHARGE HE HAD NO REAL LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS, THAT HE WAS USING THEM FOR HIS OWN SELFISH PURPOSES AND AGENDA.**

**\*\*\* AND BY PUTTING TOGETHER WHAT PAUL HAS SAID UP TO THIS POINT IN HIS EPISTLES TO THEM AND WHAT HE WILL SAY IN THE REST OF THE II CORINTHIANS, THE FALSE TEACHERS WERE ACCUSING HIM OF BEING ABUSIVE, DICTATORIAL AND MANIPULATIVE.**

**\*\*\*\* THAT PAUL WAS MERELY USING THE CORINTHIANS TO FURTHER HIS OWN PERSONAL AGENDA.**

**(4) THEREFORE PAUL REPEATEDLY AFFIRMED HIS LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH.**

**\* FOR EXAMPLE, IN II CORINTHIANS 2:4 HE WROTE: “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.”**

**\*\* IN II CORINTHIANS 11:11 HE ADDED: “WHY? BECAUSE I DO NOT LOVE YOU? GOD KNOWS I DO!”**

**\*\*\* THEN IN II CORINTHIANS 12:15 PAUL SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR THEM IN HIS SACRIFICIAL HEART AND THEN ASKS THEM A QUESTION.**

**II CORINTHIANS 12:15 – “I WILL MOST GLADLY SPEND AND BE EXPENDED FOR YOUR SOULS. IF I LOVE YOU MORE, AM I TO BE LOVED LESS?”**

**\*\*\*\* NOW BEYOND THOSE VERSES, PAUL CALLS THE CORINTHIANS HIS BELOVED IN OUR TEXT LAST WEEK AND AGAIN IN CHAPTER 12 VERSE 15.**

**\*\*\*\* AND MY POINT IS, PAUL LOVED THE CORINTHIANS WITH A MAGNANIMOUS LOVE. PAUL LOVED THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH WITH A FORGIVING, PATIENT, SACRIFICIAL LOVE.**

**(5) PAUL HAD GREAT AFFECTION FOR THESE BELIEVERS WHO CAUSED HIM GREAT HEARTACHE AND GRIEF, THAT HURT HIM. FOR HE AS THEIR SPIRITUAL FATHER LOVED THEM AS HIS CHILDREN.**

**\* AND PAUL DEFINED THE CHARACTER OF HIS LOVE FOR HIS SPIRITUAL CHILDREN IN CONNECTION WITH HIS ACTIONS.**

**\*\* AND IN SO DOING, HE PROVIDED A CLEAR CUT DESCRIPTION OF LOVE IN ACTION.**

**\*\*\* AND TODAY IN OUR STUDY, WE WILL SEE PAUL PICKS UP THE SUBJECT OF HIS LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS THAT HE STARTED BACK IN CHAPTER 6:11-13, IN TALKING ABOUT HIS ENLARGED HEART FOR THEM.**

**\*\*\*\* IT IS TO SAY, OUR TEXT TODAY RESUMES AND BRINGS TO COMPLETION THE APPEAL HE MADE IN II CORINTHIANS 6:11-3 WHERE HE SAID:**

**V. 11 – OUR MOUTH HAS SPOKEN FREELY TO YOU, O CORINTHIANS, OUR HEART IS OPENED WIDE.**

**V. 12 – YOU ARE NOT RESTRAINED BY US, BUT YOU ARE RESTRAINED IN YOUR OWN AFFECTIONS,**

**V. 13 – NOW IN A LIKE EXCHANGE – I SPEAK AS TO CHILDREN – OPEN WIDE TO US ALSO.**

**(6) NOW FOLLOWING THIS TEXT, AFTER PAUL'S CALL FOR SCRIPTURAL SEPARATION FOUND IN**

**II CORINTHIANS 6:14 – 7:1, WHICH WE TOOK 3 SUNDAYS TO COVER, PAUL RESUMES HIS APPEAL FOR MUTUAL LOVE, COMMUNICATED IN 6:11-13.**

**\* AND AFTER AN APPEAL FOR THE CORINTHIANS TO RECIPROCATE PAUL'S LOVE, HIS ACTIONS OF LOVE, HE WILL REMIND THEM OF HIS GREAT LOVE TOWARD THEM EXPRESSED IN ACTION.**

**\*\* THEREFORE I'VE SIMPLY TITLED OUR SERMON FOR TODAY, "ACTIONS OF LOVE." AND YOU AS PARENTS WHO HAVE DEDICATED YOURSELF TO RAISE YOUR CHILDREN IN THE LORD TODAY AND YOU THAT HAVE, IN THE PAST, PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY, YOU KNOW IN RAISING CHILDREN ACTIONS OF LOVE ARE WHAT MATTERS.**

**\*\*\* WELL, PAUL IS A GREAT SPIRITUAL FATHER AND HIS LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS IS GREAT.**

**\*\*\*\* AND WITH THAT SAID, WE'LL LOOK AT 3 POINTS TODAY UNDER THE THEME OF ACTIONS**



OF LOVE. NO. 1 THE APPEAL FOR LOVE, V. 2; NO. 2 THE AFFECTION OF PAUL, V. 3; AND NO. 3 THE ATTITUDE OF LOVE, V. 4.

(7) AND WITH THAT OUTLINE TO DIRECT US, LOOK AT V. 2 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR FIRST POINT, THE APPEAL FOR LOVE.

I. THE APPEAL, (READ V. 2)

A. NOW PAUL'S APPEAL TO MAKE ROOM FOR US IN YOUR HEARTS, (US BEING PAUL AND HIS ASSOCIATES, HIS CO-LABORERS,) COMES DIRECTLY AFTER HIS CALL TO NOT BE UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS AND TO COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, AND BE SEPARATE FROM UNBELIEVERS, CONTEXTUALLY, FALSE TEACHERS.

\* AND PAUL KNEW THAT AS LONG AS SOME OF THE CORINTHIAN BELIEVERS CLUNG TO THEIR SINFUL ASSOCIATIONS WITH PAUL'S ENEMIES, UNBELIEVERS, FALSE APOSTLES, THEIR LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM COULD NOT BE RESTORED.

**\*\* AND THAT MADE IT ALL THE MORE NECESSARY AND URGENT FOR THE CORINTHIANS TO FOLLOW PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS FROM CHAPTER 6 VERSE 14 THROUGH CHAPTER 7 VERSE 1, TO SEPARATE FROM THESE FALSE TEACHERS.**

**\*\*\* BUT NOT ONLY DOES THIS APPEAL FOLLOW THE COMMANDS FOR SEPARATION IN II CORINTHIANS 6:14 THROUGH 7:1, THIS APPEAL RESUMES PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS OF AN ENLARGED HEART IN II CORINTHIANS 6:11-13.**

**\*\*\*\* AND IN THAT TEXT PAUL TELLS THE CORINTHIANS, THAT HIS HEART WAS OPEN TO THEM AND THEY NEEDED TO RECIPROCATE THAT.**

**1. AND BEGINNING HERE IN V. 2 OF II CORINTHIANS 7, HE MAKES THAT APPEAL AGAIN, "MAKE ROOM FOR US IN YOUR HEARTS."**

**\* AND BECAUSE PAUL HAD HIS HEART OPEN WIDE TO THEM IN HIS ACTIONS OF LOVE, THE CORINTHIANS NEEDED TO OPEN THEIR HEARTS**

**TO PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS INSTEAD OF UNBELIEVERS AND FALSE TEACHERS.**

**\*\* THEIR HEARTS COULD NOT BE OPEN WIDE TO FALSE TEACHERS AND TRUE TEACHERS AT THE SAME TIME.**

**\*\*\* AND THE NEXT 3 STATEMENTS IN V. 2 GIVE REASON WHY THIS APPEAL IS REASONABLE AND ACTUALLY SHOWS PAUL'S ACTIONS OF LOVE, HIS ACTIONS OF INTEGRITY TO THEM.**

**\*\*\*\* AND WHAT ARE THEY?**

**2. WE WRONGED NO ONE  
WE CORRUPTED NO ONE  
WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF NO ONE.**

**\* AND THESE THREE STATEMENTS MOST LIKELY WERE ACCUSATIONS FROM THE FALSE TEACHERS ABOUT PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS.**

**\*\* IT IS TO SAY, THEY PROBABLY SAID, PAUL HAS WRONGED PEOPLE, HE HAS CORRUPTED**

**PEOPLE, HE HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE.**

**\*\*\* WHEREBY, MOST LIKELY, THEY, THE FALSE TEACHERS WERE GUILTY OF THESE ACCUSATIONS SHIFTING BLAME TO PAUL TO COVER THEMSELVES, TO PROTECT THEMSELVES, TO DEFLECT THEIR OWN SIN.**

**\*\*\*\* AND LET ME QUICKLY ATTEMPT TO BREAK THESE 3 STATEMENTS DOWN IN WHAT THEY MEAN AND SHOW YOU THAT IN REALITY, BECAUSE PAUL LOVED THE CORINTHIANS SO MUCH, HE WOULD NEVER DO ANY OF THESE THINGS.**

**3. AND NO. 1 PAUL SAYS: WE WRONGED NO ONE. NOW I WISH I COULD MAKE THAT STATEMENT, BUT I CANNOT.**

**\* FOR THE WORD WRONGED LIT. MEANS TO ACT UNJUSTLY, TO INJURE, TO TREAT SOMEONE UNJUSTLY, TO HARM SOMEONE.**

**\*\*\* AND THERE ARE TIMES CLEARLY I HAVE DONE THAT OVER THE YEARS, BUT WHEN I HAVE OR IT'S MADE KNOWN TO ME, MY NORMAL RESPONSE IS I SEEK FORGIVENESS, I TRY TO CLEAR MY CONSCIENCE, AND SO SHOULD ALL OF US AND NOT TRY TO JUSTIFY OUR WRONG BEHAVIOR, BUT WHAT SOMEONE HAS DONE TO US, OR THAT WE WERE HURT AND RATIONALIZE OUR WRONG AND REACTION.**

**\*\*\* WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TO THE LORD FOR OUR ACTIONS REGARDLESS. WE ARE TO OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.**

**\*\*\*\* BUT IN ALL OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND TIME THAT PAUL SPENT WITH THE CORINTHIANS, HE COULD SAY WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE AND UNDER THE INSPIRATION OF THE SPIRIT, I HAVE WRONGED NO ONE.**

**4. AND WHY AND HOW? WELL, PAUL LOVES THE CORINTHIANS MORE THAN HE LOVED HIMSELF AND HE BASICALLY WALKED IN THE SPIRIT AS THE NORM OF HIS LIFE SO THERE**

**WERE NO OUTBURSTS OF FLESHLY ANGER AND PRIDE WHICH CAUSES CONTENTION.**

**\* AND THAT NEEDS TO BE OUR GOAL, OUR DESIRE, OUR PURSUIT, I WRONGED NO ONE.**

**\*\* BUT NO. 2 PAUL SAYS, “WE CORRUPTED NO ONE.” AND THE WORD CORRUPTED REFERS TO “MORAL CORRUPTION.”**

**\*\*\* PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS DID NOT DO ANYTHING TO MORALLY CORRUPT THE CORINTHIANS, NO ONE WAS MORALLY WORSE FOR AN ENCOUNTER WITH HIM, NO IMMORAL BEHAVIOR WAS EVER ENCOURAGED.**

**\*\*\*\* IN FACT, QUITE THE CONTRARY, FOR IN I CORINTHIANS 6:18 PAUL SAID: (QUOTE IT).**

**5. AND BELOVED MY POINT IS, PAUL CALLED THE CORINTHIANS TO PURITY AND IN**

**I CORINTHIANS 5, HE DEALT WITH THE IMMORAL MAN IN THE CHURCH AND CALLED FOR 4<sup>TH</sup> STAGE CHURCH DISCIPLINE TO PUT HIM OUT OF THE CHURCH AND REBUKED THE CORINTHIANS FOR NOT DEALING WITH HIS IMMORALITY.**

**\* AND IN PAUL'S LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS, PAUL WAS PURE MORALLY TOWARD THEM AND IN HIS CONCERN FOR THEIRS.**

**\*\* AND THEN NO. 3, PAUL SAID, "WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF NO ONE."**

**\*\*\* AND THE WORDS "TOOK ADVANTAGE" IS TRANSLATED CHEATED NO ONE IN THE NKJV, EXPLOITED NO ONE IN THE NIV, AND DEFRAUDED NO ONE IN THE KJV.**

**\*\*\*\* AND THIS GREEK WORD LIT REFERS TO DEFRAUDING OTHERS BY SELFISHLY USING THEM FOR GAIN, FOR YOUR OWN ENDS. IT CONVEYS THE THOUGHT OF MANIPULATING PEOPLE FOR FINANCIAL GAIN.**

**6. AND DEFRAUDING PEOPLE FOR YOUR OWN GAIN IS THE ANTITHESIS OF LOVE. FOR LOVE SACRIFICES FOR OTHERS, IT DOES NOT USE PEOPLE FOR SELFISH PURPOSES.**

**\* AND LOVE INVOLVED HUMILITY AND ONLY HUMBLE PEOPLE CAN LOVE OTHERS UNSELFISHLY.**

**\*\* PROUD PEOPLE LOVE THEMSELVES, THEY DON'T DENY THEMSELVES, THEY MANIPULATE FOR GAIN RATHER THAN TO GIVE. IT'S ALL ABOUT THEM AND THEIR SMALL LITTLE WORLDS.**

**\*\*\* BUT PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF NO ONE AT CORINTH. HE EVEN PROVIDED FINANCIALLY FOR HIMSELF RATHER THAN TAKING MONEY FROM THEM PERSONALLY FOR SELF.**

**\*\*\*\* AND WHAT PAUL WAS TELLING THE CORINTHIANS IN THE 3 STATEMENTS OF V. 2**



**WAS IN SUMMARY, I LOVE YOU! ACTIONS OF LOVE.**

**7. BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, BECAUSE WE LOVE YOU, WE HAVE WRONGED NO ONE, WE HAVE CORRUPTED NO ONE, WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF NO ONE.**

**\* PAUL'S LOVE WAS SEEN, NOT JUST HEARD, AND REALLY CAN BE FOUND IN JOHN'S WORDS IN I JOHN 3:18 (QUOTE IT).**

**\*\* NOW PAUL LOVED THE CORINTHIANS IN ACTION, IN DEED AND IN TRUTH. AND WE WILL SEE THIS ALSO IN V. 3 WHERE WORDS AND ACTIONS ARE ALLUDED TO.**

**\*\*\* SO LOOK AT V. 3 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE AFFECTION OF PAUL.**

**II. THE AFFECTION, (READ V. 3)**

**A. NOW PAUL IN HIS LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT WANT THEM TO MISUNDERSTAND AND MISINTERPRET HIS WORDS IN HIS STRONG DEFENSE OF HIS INTEGRITY IN V. 2 AND ELSEWHERE IN II CORINTHIANS AS AN ATTACK ON THEM.**

**\* PAUL DOES NOT WANT TO ALIENATE THEM, HE TRULY IS SENSITIVE IN HIS LOVE FOR THEM AND DOES NOT WANT TO BE ABRASIVE, OBVIOUSLY HONEST YES, TO SPEAK THE TRUTH, BUT TO SPEAK IT IN LOVE, EPHESIANS 4:15.**

**\*\* SO PAUL IS IMPELLED BY LOVE AND NOT BITTERNESS, HE IS NOT WRITING TO CONDEMN BUT TO HELP.**

**\*\*\* AND HE AMPLIFIES HIS GREAT LOVE FOR THEM BY MAKING THE STATEMENT IN THE REST OF V. 3, "FOR I HAVE SAID BEFORE, YOU ARE IN OUR HEARTS."**

**\*\*\*\* AND PAUL SAID THAT IN CHAPTER 6:11, BUT THEN HE ADDS MORE WORDS OF LOVE THAT IN PRACTICE ARE ACTIONS OF LOVE, “YOU ARE IN OUR HEARTS TO DIE TOGETHER AND TO LIVE TOGETHER.”**

**1. AND THIS PHRASE MEANS THAT THE CORINTHIANS WERE SO MUCH IN HIS HEART THAT IF HE SHOULD DIE, IT WOULD BE WITH THEIR CONCERNS IN MIND, IN FRONT OF HIM, AND IF HE SHOULD GO ON LIVING, IT WOULD BE TO SERVE THEM.**

**\* AND THIS IS LOVE IN ACTION. PAUL WOULD LIVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS AND WOULD EVEN DIE FOR THEM.**

**\*\* IT IS TO SAY, PAUL’S UNDYING LOVE FOR THEM IS EXPRESSED IN THESE WORDS, FOR PAUL’S LOVE WOULD BE LOYAL TO THE DEATH. PAUL IS EXPRESSING HIS LOYAL DEVOTION TO THE CORINTHIANS WHATEVER THE SACRIFICE. THAT’S HOW MUCH HE LOVED THEM!!**

**\*\*\* PAUL IS COMMUNICATING GREAT AFFECTION, MAGNANIMOUS LOVE WITH THESE WORDS.**

**\*\*\*\* AND SO FAR WE HAVE LOOKED AT THE APPEAL OF PAUL'S LOVE, THE AFFECTION OF PAUL'S LOVE, NOW THIRDLY LOOK AT V. 4 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL SEE THE ATTITUDE OF PAUL'S LOVE FOR THE CORINTHIANS.**

### **III. THE ATTITUDE OF PAUL'S LOVE, (READ V. 4)**

**A. NOW WE WILL SEE NEXT WEEK, LORD WILLING, THAT AFTER TITUS RETURNED FROM CORINTH, PAUL RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM HIM ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE CORINTHIANS TOWARD HIMSELF IN VV. 6&7 OF THIS CHAPTER.**

**\* FOR PAUL SAID IN VV. 6&7 THESE WORDS – “BUT GOD, WHO COMFORTS THE DEPRESSED, COMFORTED US BY THE COMING OF TITUS; AND NOT ONLY BY HIS COMING, BUT ALSO BY THE COMFORT WITH WHICH HE WAS COMFORTED IN YOU, AS HE REPORTED TO US YOUR LONGING,**

**YOUR MOURNING, YOUR ZEAL FOR ME; SO THAT I REJOICED EVEN MORE.”**

**\*\* AND PAUL WILL PRAISE THEM FOR THEIR CHANGE OF ATTITUDE. AND YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT OR VERSE 4 WILL NOT MAKE ANY SENSE.**

**\*\*\* PAUL WAS ENCOURAGED BY TITUS ABOUT THE CORINTHIAN’S CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD HIMSELF TO THE PLACE HE IS COMFORTED, SO PAUL’S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CORINTHIANS IS VERY POSITIVE.**

**\*\*\*\* PAUL NOW HAS GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THEM AS HE HEARS OF THEIR REPENTANCE, THEIR CHANGE OF ATTITUDE AS WE WILL SEE IN THE REST OF II CORINTHIANS 7.**

**1. AND PAUL NOW CAN EVEN BOAST IN THE CORINTHIAN’S CHANGE, TO BOAST IN THE LORD FOR GOD’S WORK OF REPENTANCE IN THEIR HEARTS.**

**\* AND WE START TO SEE GREAT CHANGE IN THE CORINTHIANS FROM V. 4 HERE AND ON IN THE REST OF THE CHAPTER, FROM TITUS IN HIS VISIT WITH THEM AS HE REPORTS TO PAUL.**

**\*\* PAUL IS REALLY BOASTING AND PRAISING THE LORD FOR HIS WORK IN THE CORINTHIAN'S HEARTS, AS PAUL WOULD SAY IN I CORINTHIANS 1:31 (QUOTE IT).**

**\*\*\* SO PAUL IS BOASTING IN THE LORD FOR WHAT HE DID IN THE CORINTHIAN'S HEARTS IN HIS RESPONSE TO WHAT IS CALLED HIS SEVERE LETTER TOWARDS THEM.**

**\*\*\*\* PAUL IS PRAISING THE LORD, WHICH CAUSES COMFORT FOR PAUL IN HIS CONCERN FOR THE CORINTHIANS, BUT ALSO BROUGHT OVERFLOWING JOY AT THE END OF V. 4 IN THE MIDST OF PAUL'S AFFLICTION, HIS SUFFERING, HIS TRIBULATION THAT HE WAS GOING THROUGH IN THE CORINTHIAN'S SINFUL BEHAVIOR.**

2. PAUL NOW HAD AN OVERFLOWING, ABOUNDING JOY BEYOND MEASURE, ABUNDANT JOY IN THE MIDST OF ALL OF HIS TRIALS WITH THE CORINTHIANS. PAUL TRULY WAS ENCOURAGED AND COMFORTED FROM THE WORDS OF TITUS ABOUT THE CORINTHIANS.

\* HIS LOVE FOR THEM WAS STARTED TO BE RECIPROCATED.

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) IT IS TRAGIC THAT IN MANY CHURCHES, AS WAS IN CORINTH UP TO THIS POINT, THAT LOVE THAT IS BASIC TO CHRISTIANITY DOES NOT CHARACTERIZE CHURCH LIFE, THAT IT DOES NOT CHARACTERIZE OUR LIVES.

\* AND IT COMES FROM NOT LOVING THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH AS OUR FIRST LOVE.

**\*\* IT IS TO SAY, THROUGH CHURCH HISTORY IT APPEARS, THAT THE CHURCH AT DIFFERENT TIMES FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO BE LOVING, EVEN TO THE PLACE WHERE IT IS EASIER TO BE ORTHODOX IN OUR BELIEFS WHICH IS ESSENTIAL AND I'M NOT MINIMIZING THAT, BUT IT IS EASIER TO BE ORTHODOX THAN TO BE LOVING.**

**\*\*\* WHERE IT IS EASIER TO BE ACTIVE IN CHURCH WORK THAN TO BE LOVING.**

**\*\*\*\* YET ONE OF THE SUPREME CHARACTERISTICS THAT GOD DEMANDS OF HIS PEOPLE IS LOVE.**

**(2) TO LOVE GOD FIRST AND TO LOVE THE BRETHREN NEXT. QUOTE REVELATION 2:4, JOHN 13:34&35 AND JOHN 15:12.**



**\* NOW IT IS EASY TO TALK ABOUT LOVE BUT ONE THING WE SEE IN SCRIPTURE OVER AND OVER IS LOVE IS A VERB, LOVE IS NOT AN ADJECTIVE, IT IS AN ACT OF SACRIFICE, IT IS NOT JUST TALK BUT WALK.**

**\*\* AND FIRST OF ALL LOVE TO THE LORD CAN BE SEEN BY AN ACTION, BY OBEDIENCE, QUOTE JOHN 14:15, I JOHN 5:3.**

**\*\*\* AND AFTER LOVING GOD FIRST, LOVING CHRIST FIRST THROUGH YIELDING TO THE SPIRIT AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT, THE FIRST FRUIT IS LOVE.**

**\*\*\*\* AND THE ACTIVITIES OF LOVE ARE CLEARLY DEFINED IN WHAT LOVE IS AND DOES IN PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS, IN I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7.**

**(3) AND THE QUALITIES OF, THE ACTIONS OF LOVE ARE DEFINED BY KINDNESS, NOT**

**JEALOUSY, NOT BRAGGING, NOT ARROGANCE,  
NOT ACTING INAPPROPRIATELY, LOVE IS NOT  
SELFISH, IT IS NOT PROVOKED, DOES NOT KEEP  
A RUNNING ACCOUNT OF WRONGS.**

**(4) IT NEVER REJOICES IN SIN BUT ALWAYS  
REJOICES IN TRUTH.**

**\* LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, BELIEVES THE  
BEST, IS HOPEFUL AND HAS GREAT  
ENDURANCE.**

**\*\* NOW THE QUESTION CAN BE ASKED IN LIGHT  
OF OUR TEXT TODAY AND I CORINTHIANS 13:4-7,  
HOW ARE YOU DOING IN THE ACTIONS OF  
LOVE?**

**\*\*\*DO YOU NEED TO REPENT OF A LACK OF  
LOVE?**

**\*\*\*\* AND IF THERE IS NO LOVE TODAY FOR THE  
CHURCH AND THE BRETHERN IT REVEALS**

**THERE IS NO LOVE FOR CHRIST AND YOU ARE NOT HIS. FOR I JOHN 3:14 SAYS: (QUOTE IT).**

**(3) AND AS WE LEARNED IN OUR STUDY OF I JOHN A WHILE BACK, JOHN TALKS ABOUT HOW WE CAN KNOW THAT WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN, SOUND DOCTRINE AND OBEDIENCE.**

**\* DO YOU TRULY KNOW JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR, DO YOU PASS THESE 3 TESTS?**

**\*\* IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE GOD WHO LOVES AND SAVES SINNERS, TURN AND REPENT OF YOUR SIN AND TRUST CHRIST ALONE FOR YOUR SALVATION FROM SIN. (QUOTE I JOHN 4:9&10 AND PRAY).**