



— SECOND — CORINTHIANS



The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People

Part 7 — “Glorifying the God Who Keeps His Promises” (2 Cor. 1:15-22) — 29 October 2023

Introduction: The Glory of God & the Storyline of Scripture

Against the claims of his critics, Paul argued from the consistency of his personal testimony among them that the Corinthians should understand his writings in the same straightforward manner. He then turned to defend the fact that he had not returned to stay among them for an extended period. Although his plans had changed, the message that had been proclaimed among the Corinthians was sure because all of God’s plans are fulfilled in Messiah.

Main Point: Believers have the opportunity to joyfully _____ God together because we have begun to experience the blessings of His _____ in Christ which will one day be made consummate.

The Background of Paul’s Interactions with the Corinthians

1. Paul had told them he intended to visit them (1 Cor. 16:5-9)
2. Paul had sent Timothy to them, perhaps to deliver 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:10-11).
3. Paul made an emergency visit to Corinth (2 Cor. 1:15-16), perhaps because Timothy told him about the nature of the situation there. This was cut short because of a painful confrontation (2 Cor. 2:1).
4. Paul then wrote a “severe” or “painful” letter to them (2:1-4) and sent Titus to deliver it. He then went on to Troas to wait for Titus but then went on to Macedonia where they would eventually meet up.
5. 2 Corinthians was written to address ongoing issues in Corinth in preparation for him to visit them once again.

Paul’s Defense of His Change of Plans - 1:15-22

- Paul explained the motive for his initial plan to visit the Corinthians (1:15-16)

Observations:

1. He had intended to come to them so that they might have a second experience of _____.
2. The “double” grace he has in view seems to be related to them assisting him in his _____ to Macedonia and Judea.
⇒ Paul uses the word “grace” in several places to refer to financial assistance (1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 8:4) and states in 2 Cor. 8:7 that they experience grace in serving others.
“send me on my way” — προπέμπω (propempō)—To assist in making a journey through provision of resources, money, or supplies.

Key Point: Paul had desired that they would _____ together in the spread of the Gospel and service to others.

- He then addressed implied criticism of his change of plans with an important theological declaration (1:17-20a)

Observations:

1. His critics seem to have accused him of indecision or duplicity.
“vacillating” *“plans according to the flesh”*
- “Paul denies saying one thing while intending another...‘In other words, while his words at the time were ‘Yes, yes’ (‘I am coming back soon’), he really meant ‘No, no’ (‘I am not coming back until much later’).” —Colin Kruse
2. Paul linked his own testimony to that of _____ who cannot be accused of unfaithfulness or duplicity.
“as God is faithful”
3. The _____ that Paul and his companions had proclaimed was in no way duplicitous or confused.
“the Son of God, Jesus Christ” *“our word to you”*

⇒ The reference to his companions established the truthfulness of the claim based on the Scriptural teaching concerning the required number of witnesses (Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1).

“in Him...is always Yes”

4. Paul grounded his prior statement with the truth that it is _____ Messiah that all the promises of God have already or will in the future be fulfilled.

“all the promises of God”—ἐπαγγελία (*epaggelia*)

Paul’s Usage of “Promise” in the NT

- (1) Paul uses this term specifically in reference to God’s _____ covenant promises.

Eph. 2:12a—*remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise...*

Abrahamic Covenant (Rom. 4:13; 15:8; Gal. 3:14,16) **Davidic Covenant** (Acts 13:23,32) **New Covenant** (Gal. 4:23-28)

- (2) Paul uses the term generally of God’s promises concerning _____ (Acts 13:32; 26:6; Rom. 15:8)

Rom. 9:4—*They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.*

- (3) Paul uses the term in reference to the _____ believers experience in Christ (Gal. 3:29; 2 Tim. 1:1)

Eph. 3:6—*This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*

Key Point: Paul’s answer to the critics in Corinth was to focus not on himself, but on _____ as the means by which God’s promises had been and would be fulfilled. If they trust in Christ, they should trust His servant, Paul.

- In light of this important truth, Paul spoke of the unity they have because of all they share together through Christ (1:20b-22)

Observations:

1. The proper response of God’s people to the fulfillment of His plans through Messiah is a worshipful “_____!”
“Amen”
2. The basis for this worship is the work that God is doing in them _____, has already _____ for them, and will bring to completion in the _____.

God _____ us together in Christ!

“establishes”—βεβαιῶ (bebaiō)—To make a person firm in commitment; to establish, strengthen, enable to stand firm.

⇒ This is possible because we have union with Christ. God establishes us “in/into Messiah” (*eis Christos*).

God has _____ us with His Holy Spirit!

⇒ This term is used in the OT of the setting apart or commissioning of one to a particular office (Exod. 28:37; 1 Sam. 16:12).

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“sealed”—σφραγίζω (*sphragizō*)—to mark with a seal as a means of identification, mark, seal; a mark of ownership (Rev. 7:3-8)

God has given His Holy Spirit in our hearts as a _____ of the future completion of all His promises.

“guarantee”—ἀρραβών (*arrabōn*)—a payment of part of a purchase price in advance, first installment, deposit, down payment, pledge.

⇒ This verse (v.22) includes an allusion to/partial quotation of Ezek. 36:26-27. Although this promise is made to Israel in Ezekiel, Paul throughout the NT implies or states that believers are the recipients of the blessings of particular OT promises (2 Cor. 6:16-18...these verses include at least one and possibly two other quotations from Ezekiel).

2 Cor. 7:1—**Since we have these promises**, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

* That the church experiences the blessings of certain OT promises does not mean that these promises will not be kept with Israel. Rather, it is to provoke Israel to jealousy (Rom. 10:19; 11:11-14).

* These initial fulfillments of God’s promises in Messiah, guarantees their future, consummate fulfillment through Him.

Key Point: Because they are together the recipients of God’s promised Holy Spirit, Paul calls on them to worship together in _____ rather than persisting in being divided from one another.

Concluding Thoughts

- Do we know the promises of God to us in Christ? (Start with Eph. 1:3-14!)

Eph. 1:13-14—¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- Do we know the storyline of Scripture and our place within it? (Read your Bible cover to cover!)

Eph. 2:11-13—¹¹Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.



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