



# — SECOND — CORINTHIANS



*The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People*

Part 23—“Compelled by the Love of Christ”— 21 April 2024

## Introduction: Paul’s Opponents in Corinth

“[At some point] the church had been invaded by some self-designated Christian leaders. Probably they called themselves apostles (2 Cor. 11:13-15) and carried letters of recommendation with them (2 Cor. 3:1-3). They were not apostles in the way that Paul was...[but] were probably apostles in the general sense that they were agents of others who had commissioned them...” —Carson & Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*

“Although his opponents’ identity is uncertain, they preached another Jesus (11:4). They were “super-apostles” (11:5), evidently presenting themselves with rather forceful and impressive expression as being much superior to Paul. Paul defended himself, being forced to boast of his own commitment, sacrifice, and service.”  
—Joe Blair, *Introducing the New Testament*

Though they face hardship and affliction, Paul and his companions know that God is at work in these trials to renew them in the inner man and to prepare for them an eternal reward. Even if they succumb to death, this is ultimately better for them as they will receive new bodies and will stand before their Lord and Savior. They therefore continue to press on with their ministry.

**Main Point:** Even in the face of \_\_\_\_\_, we can have confidence in Christ and can continue faithfully in the ministries entrusted to us, \_\_\_\_\_ by His love.

## 2 Corinthians 5:11-15

- In light of their hope for the future, Paul and his co-laborers carry out their ministry with integrity before God and others. (5:11-12)

### Observations:

1. Their \_\_\_\_\_ for God, knowing they will stand before Him, characterizes how they carry out their ministry.  
*“the fear of the Lord”*

“...this fear focuses on none other than the one true God who has revealed Himself as “Yahweh.” It is not fear of God in general...[it] must include the acknowledgement that he is the Judge and that he will execute his just judgments both in this life and in the world to come... [This] fear should never be set against trust in Yahweh, his goodness, and his grace...[it] means loving him with all that you are and trusting him with all that you possess.”  
—O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of Wisdom*

*“persuade”*—πειθω (peithō)—pos. to persuade or appeal to; neg. to cajole, mislead

“...Paul practices persuasion while asserting that his is not a persuasion which sacrifices the truth in order to please his hearers. His persuasion is quite straight forward, carried out with a proper fear of the Lord.”—Colin Kruse

2. Their true \_\_\_\_\_ are known by God and should be apparent to all.  
*“known”*—φανερῶω (phanerōō)—to cause to become known, disclose, show, make known.  
**To God** **To the Corinthians’ Conscience**

“Paul’s hope in writing this letter is that they will finally recognize that he serves them, not himself, that he wishes to exalt them before God, not himself, that his bold admonishments are all part of his ministry to get them to accept God’s reconciliation so that they may stand with him acquitted before God.”  
—David Garland.

3. Paul’s description and defense of his ministry serves a particular purpose.  
(−) *“not commending ourselves”* (+) *“giving you cause to boast”*

⇒ The Corinthians should take \_\_\_\_\_ in the ministry of Paul and his companions and so be able to respond rightly to their opponents in Corinth.

⇒ The opponents of Paul take pride in that which is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
2 Cor. 4:18—as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

“From hints provided in both chapters 1-7 and...10-13, we can see the sort of outward matters upon which these men prided themselves. These included the letters of recommendation they carried (3:1), their rhetorical prowess (11:5-6), Jewish ancestry (11:22), ecstatic visionary experiences (12:1) and the apostolic signs they performed (12:11-13). Paul implies that for them such outward matters were more important than the condition of a person’s heart, which is what God sees.” —Colin Kruse

**Key Point:** The fear of the Lord should lead us to regularly \_\_\_\_\_ our hearts before the Lord so that we can be confident in the face of opposition.

- **The Corinthians can boast in Paul's ministry because it is compelled by the love of Christ, their Savior and Lord. (5:13-15)**

Observations:

1. He responds to implied \_\_\_\_\_ of how they carry out their ministry.  
*"beside ourselves"* *"in our right mind"*
  
2. How they \_\_\_\_\_ their ministry is compelled by Messiah's love for them.  
*"control"*—συνέχω (synechō)—to provide impulse for some activity, urge on, impel; to hold within bounds, to guide, direct, control.  
  
 ⇒ The love of Christ for them is \_\_\_\_\_, compelling them to serve Him and others in a self-sacrificial manner.
  
3. They are aware of His love because they are continually reminded of the \_\_\_\_\_.  
*"one has died for all"*  
 ⇒ Christ died in the \_\_\_\_\_ of all. His work on the cross is vicarious and substitutionary. It is sufficient for God to reconcile to Himself all things (Col. 1:20), yet it is only believers who receive the benefits of Christ's death.

*"he died for all"*

- ⇒ All who \_\_\_\_\_ have joined themselves to Christ and have died with Him (Gal. 2:20). Just as the benefits of Christ's death must be received by faith for justification, so to must they be for sanctification.

"All who join themselves to Christ must die with him...It is death to Sin, the Flesh, and the Old. We appropriate the benefits of Christ's death for all when we accept by faith the message of reconciliation that his death proclaims and when we are baptized into his death."  
 —David Garland

**Key Point:** The truth of the Gospel should stand as a continual \_\_\_\_\_ that Messiah loves us and that we are now His \_\_\_\_\_, set apart to steward all He entrusts to us.

### Concluding Thoughts

- Both the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and \_\_\_\_\_ of Messiah are central to our identity as believers.

1 Pet. 1:17-19—<sup>17</sup> And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, <sup>18</sup> knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Rom. 8:35-39—<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."  
<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.