



SECOND CORINTHIANS



The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People

Part 4I—“Discipline & the Building Up of the Church (2 of 2)” — 22 September 2024

Introduction:

1 Tim. 5:20-21—²⁰ As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. ²¹ In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

Main Point: The exercise of public discipline in the church should be done in accordance with the _____ and in the _____ of Christ, for His glory and the good of all.

2 Corinthians 13:1-4

Context

Having concluded his “foolishness” discourse which highlighted his own weaknesses in order to display Christ’s strength, Paul now addresses the Corinthians more directly about their harboring of the false teachers. He is willing to spend and be spent on behalf of the Corinthians, why are they therefore unwilling to defend him? As he prepares to come to Corinth for a third time, he emphasizes that he will be coming in the power of Christ to enact the necessary discipline to preserve the health of the church.

Exposition

I. The reality of public sin within the church of Corinth was known to Paul and would have to be addressed. (13:1)

2 Cor. 13:1— *This is the third time I am coming to you. EVERY CHARGE MUST BE ESTABLISHED BY THE EVIDENCE OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.*

⇒ Paul had been amongst the Corinthians on two occasions before this intended visit:

(1) His initial time in Corinth (c. AD 50-52) — Acts 18:1-18 (2) His “painful visit” (c. AD 55) — 2 Cor. 2:1

Deut. 19:15 (LXX)—*By the mouth of two or three witnesses shall any word be sustained.*

* Paul could be describing how he intended to _____ which individuals in the church needed to be disciplined.

* It is likely, however, that Paul’s own visits among them will serve as _____ against them if he is forced to take the necessary disciplinary action among them.

“...Paul has used biblical phraseology to say, in effect, ‘I have given you due warning: on my next trip, if there is no improvement I will take decisive action.’”
—D.A. Carson

Key Point: If sin is to be addressed publicly in a church, it must not be a matter of _____, but must be substantiated according to biblical standards.

2. Paul has warned and continues to warn them of the seriousness of the situation in Corinth. (13:2-3a)

2 Cor. 13:2-3a—² *I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them—³ since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me.*

“warn”—*προλέγω* (prolegō)—to say something in advance of an event; tell beforehand

“Paul’s reference to *those who sinned earlier* may be understood as a reference to the unrepentant sexual offenders of 12:21 (1 Cor. 6:12-20), while *any of the others* is possibly a reference to those who condoned the sexual offense (1 Cor. 5:2,6) or simply to other members of the church.”
—Colin Kruse

⇒ Paul had warned them about the potential consequences of their sin when present among them during his ‘painful visit.’

“Public sin is a _____ matter!” “There will be unpleasant _____ if it is not repented of!”

⇒ He warns them again that he will be _____ to take drastic action if they do not address things before he arrives.

“I will not spare them”—*φείδομαι* (pheidomai)—to save from loss or discomfort; to treat leniently

⇒ This drastic action will be the _____ for them that Christ has been speaking through Paul.

Key Point: Christ’s willingness to _____ our sin does not mean that it is not a serious matter or that we will be spared from its _____ consequences.

3. Paul explains that he will make sure that the necessary discipline will be carried out in the power of Christ. (13:3b-4)

2 Cor. 13:3b-4— *He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. ⁴For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.*

The Corinthians, Christ, & Paul

1. Although Christ was crucified in _____, He is not weak in His present dealings with the Corinthians.

2. He is, rather, powerfully at _____ among them because He is alive and caring for His Church!

1 Cor. 11:28-31—²⁸ *Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.*

Rev. 3:19— *Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.*

“Christ was crucified out of weakness; yet, Paul goes on to insist, ‘he lived by God’s power’. In other words, the cross does not exhaust Christ’s relation to sin; He passed from the cross to the throne, and when He comes again, it is as Judge...”—D.A. Carson

3. Paul may appear weak to them, but he has been ministering after the _____ of Christ, sustained by His grace (2 Cor. 12:9).

4. In dealing with the issues of sin in Corinth, however, it will be the power and _____ of Christ which will be unmistakable as they are displayed in and through him.

* It is possible that he is warning them of _____ power that will be exercised.

Acts 13:9-11a—⁹ *But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ¹¹And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.*

* It is possible that he is warning them of the authority that will be exercised in _____ the offenders from the church.

1 Cor. 5:4-5—⁴ *When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.*

Key Point: The exercise of public discipline should display both Christ’s _____ and His _____ regarding sin.

Concluding Thoughts

• Church discipline is compassionate because its ultimate goals are _____ and _____.

Heb. 12:5-6—⁵ *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”*

• Church discipline must be carried out through a deliberate and biblically informed _____.

Matt. 18:15-18—¹⁵ *“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*



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- Church discipline is compassionate because its ultimate goals are _____ and _____.

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