



— SECOND — CORINTHIANS



The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People

Part 43—“The Grace & Peace of the Triune God”— 13 October 2024

Introduction: *Concluding a Letter*

Paul’s conclusion reflects the overall purpose of the letter as well as its structure:

- (1) Ch. 1-9 — Paul’s cautious _____ (2) Ch. 10-13 — Paul’s deep _____

Main Point: Hope in a fallen world for ourselves and our church stems ultimately from our _____ that God delights to work in and through a people who are _____ to His Word & Spirit.

2 Corinthians 13:11-14

Context

Having concluded with the exhortation to examine themselves, Paul reminds them that he is coming to them in the authority and power of Christ. The ultimate goal is that they will be built up, but he is willing to tear down that which needs to be destroyed if necessary. He now offers some final exhortations and a benediction in the name of the Triune God.

Exposition

I. Paul concludes the letter with a series of final exhortations as well as a blessing for the Corinthians. (13:11-12)

2 Cor. 13:11-12—¹¹ Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss.

“rejoice”—χαίρω (chairō)—to rejoice, be glad

⇒ This term is not used in a general sense, but in light of all of God’s _____ in Corinth. (1:24; 2:3)

“Aim for restoration”—καταρτίζω (katartrizō)—to cause to be in a condition to function well, put in order, restore.

⇒ To be brought to a place of restoration or _____ the Corinthians must heed the Word of the Lord given through Paul.

“He wanted the Corinthians to reject the different gospel brought by his opponents (11:1-6), to recognize his rightful claims to be their apostle (10:13-18); 11:21-23; 12:11-13), and to make sure no immoral practices were allowed in their midst (12:20-21). Paul has already appealed to the Corinthians to examine themselves and amend their ways so that when he comes he will not have to be harsh in the use of his authority...”
—Colin Kruse

“comfort one another”—παρακαλέω (parakaleō)—to instill someone with courage or cheer, comfort, encourage, cheer up

⇒ The original Greek can be read in either the middle (“comfort/exhort yourselves”) or the passive voice (“be exhorted/comforted”).

(1) Paul could be instructing the Corinthians to exhort/comfort one another with the truths of the letter.

(2) Paul could be calling on them to be themselves exhorted by the truths he has presented.

“...evidence suggests that the word means “be comforted” and repeats the theme with which Paul opened the letter. It makes this an astonishing appeal. They have recently mutinied against him, and he suspects they continue to engage in flagrant sin. He must trust that the living and merciful God who has comforted him so many times in the past will work in their midst to bring about the needed reformation and comfort them as well. Paul’s hope for the congregation is that as they share in his sufferings, so they will also share in his comfort.”
—David Garland

“agree with one another”—φρονέω (phroneō)—think, form/hold an opinion, judge

⇒ They should consider together all that Paul has said in the letter and come to the same _____ regarding its truth.

“live in peace”—εἰρηνεύω (eirēneuō)—to cause others to live in peace; to keep the peace

⇒ They should look to the Lord and pursue _____ together in Him in order to avoid conflict with one another in the church.

The Blessing: “and the God of love and peace will be with you”

(1) This is to be understood as a _____ and not as a _____ for faithfulness.

(2) It is a blessing that is to be upon God’s people as they know His _____ and live by His _____.

Reconciliation Pictured: “Greet one another with a holy kiss”

⇒ In Jewish culture, the kiss was used as a greeting and sign of respect (Luke 7:45). It was also used in displays of gratitude and love (Luke 7:38; 15:20).

“The fact that the kiss was described as *holy* indicates that erotic overtones were excluded; the kiss was a greeting, a sign of peace and Christian *agapē*.”
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Key Point: The evidence of God's work in our lives is that we _____ love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

John 13:35—“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

1 John 4:7—Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

2. **The final greeting and benediction ground all that he has said in this letter in the truth that the Corinthians are part of something much larger than themselves. (13:13-14)**

2 Cor. 13:13-14—¹³All the saints greet you. ¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

⇒ Paul's reference to the “_____” greeting them reminds them that they are a part of the _____ Church that the Lord Jesus is building in the world (Matt. 16:18).

- (1) They are not the only believers facing the _____ of false teaching.
- (2) They are not the only ones dealing with internal _____.
- (3) They are not the only ones who need to be _____ by the promises of God.

⇒ Paul's benediction concludes the letter by focusing them on the importance of their _____ to the Triune God.

They are beneficiaries of Christ's work and can therefore walk in His _____!

2 Cor. 8:9—For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

They are beneficiaries of God's (the Father) work and can therefore walk in His _____!

John 3:16—For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

They are beneficiaries of the Holy Spirit's work and can therefore walk in the _____ He makes possible!

Eph. 4:3—Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

“The grace shown by Christ condemns our self-centeredness and triumphalism, the love of God demonstrated by Christ's grace banishes our jealousy and factionalism, and the fellowship the Holy Spirit creates among us renders ridiculous the petty one-upmanship of minds mired in self.”
—D.A. Carson

Key Point: Our personal _____ and the _____ in our churches are placed into proper perspective when we look away from ourselves and unto Christ.

Concluding Thought

- In a therapeutic, self-help oriented world, we stand out as believers because of our confidence that Christ can bring about real _____ in our lives.

2 Cor. 3:4-6—⁴Such confidence we have through Christ before God. ⁵Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.



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