

*Bible Study Series on.....*

*The Letter  
of*

# **II CORINTHIANS**

## **(#1)**

**13 Lessons**

**Produced by:  
PAUL E. CANTRELL**

**2005**



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**2005**

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(#1)

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*Lesson One***“THE REASONS FOR AFFLICTIONS”**  
**(II Cor. 1:1-11)****INTRODUCTION**

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is different from other writings of Paul.
  - a) It is very intimate....gives insight about Paul's thoughts and his life.
  - b) It reveals his concern over God's people and their need to be faithful.
2. Brief Background to the Letter:
  - a) Paul was on his third missionary journey (AD 53-58).
    - 1) He had stayed at Ephesus for around 3 years!
    - 2) He wrote his 1<sup>st</sup> letter from Ephesus (AD 56).
    - 3) He sent it by the hand of Titus.
    - 4) Paul encouraged him to return by Pentecost (I Cor. 16:8).
  - b) Something caused Paul to leave before Titus returned.
    - 1) He traveled as far as Troas.
    - 2) His preaching was successful & encouraging.
    - 3) But Paul was very concerned about the Corinthian Church.
    - 4) Titus had not returned...What could have happened???
  - c) Paul went into Macedonia to see if he had gotten that far.
    - 1) Not finding him, he resolved to wait there till he came.
    - 2) He did not feel it wise to visit the church till he had heard the outcome of his letter.
  - d) Paul's condition:
    - 1) Very concerned over church.
    - 2) Had close call with death at Ephesus.
    - 3) Titus' delay magnified his stress.
    - 4) Finally, Titus arrived with mostly good news.
    - 5) It was a comfort to him.
  - e) Paul now writes the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter (AD 57) from Macedonia.
    - 1) He expressed relief for their attachment to him in the main.
    - 2) He dealt with the trouble makers.  
A---Some still held out against Paul & God's Truth.  
B---He used very strong words to rebuke them.
  - f) In this letter:
    - 1) He artfully introduces the arguments against false doctrines.
    - 2) He refutes the error by solid reasoning.
    - 3) He shows up the False Teachers.
    - 4) He mainly commends the church as a whole.  
A---They had held to God's truth.  
B---They had properly dealt with the incestuous person.  
C---Paul was greatly relieved over their response to his 1<sup>st</sup> letter.

**DISCUSSION****I. SALUTATION. (Vs. 1-2)****A. From:**

- 1) Paul:
  - a) Who was an apostle (A real one)!
  - b) Made such by Jesus Christ.
  - c) According to the Will of God.
  - d) Not self-appointed, nor by men, but by God.
- 2) Timothy:
  - a) Our brother---closed ties in Lord's church.
  - b) Denotes family!

**B. To:**

- 1) Church of God which is at Corinth.
  - a) Established by Paul on 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey.
  - b) Large church...made up of quite a mixture.
  - c) I Cor. 6:9-11
  - d) They made up the "Called-Out" people of God there.
- 2) With all the saints in all Achaia.
  - a) Achaia was the province.
  - b) Corinth was a large metropolitan city in Achaia.
  - c) Evidently other congregations in Province.
  - d) "Saints"---Christians, Disciples of Jesus, Saved people. (Sanctified, cleansed, made acceptable).
  - e) All were to have copy of letter sent to Corinth.

**C. The salutation:**

- 1) "Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
  - a) God is giver of Grace & Peace.
- 2) An affectionate, concerned greeting at that time!

**II. HE GLADLY TELLS THEM OF HIS RELIEF. (Vs. 3-7)****A. God is the basic source of Comfort.**

- 1) He is the God of mercies (His character).
- 2) Ps. 86:15---"*But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*"
- 3) The term, Father, shows the concern of God for His children.
- 4) He is the God of all comfort.
  - a) By what he says and does.
  - b) Working through individuals & things.
- 5) He gives comfort to those who are afflicted, which have tribulations.
- 6) May God be blessed for His great love to us!

**B. Reasons why God allows tribulations.**

- 1) That we in turn may be able to comfort them who are in trouble.
  - a) Paul's own tribulations helped him to offer comfort to them.
  - b) Afflictions are a school to teach us sympathy for others.
- 2) We learn how to help others by observing how God helps us.
  - a) What we learn, we can pass on to others.

**C. Paul identifies with the sufferings of Christ.**

- 1) His sufferings because of Christ abounded.
  - a) Everywhere he went, hounded, persecuted, rejected.
  - b) This did not stop him!
- 2) Reason---The comfort that came from Christ also abounded.
  - a) The Love of Christ was a continual consolation.
  - b) The success of the gospel was greatly encouraging.
  - c) His assurance that all things would work out for his good.
  - d) His hope of Heaven someday.
- 3) His sufferings abounded, but so did Christ's consolation.
- 4) Reason---For their good!
  - a) Paul suffered so that he could help others to look to Christ for comfort.
  - b) Which would then lead to their enduring faithfully to the end....and not lose their salvation.

**D. Paul now expresses his assurance of their faithfulness!**

- 1) His hope for them was steadfast.
- 2) He realized that if they, as he, were partakers of suffering....
- 3) That they would also be partakers of the consolation.
- 4) Those afflictions have purposes in our lives.
- 5) Matt. 5:4---“*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*”

**III. HE INFORMS THEM OF HIS AFFLICTION IN ASIA. (Vs. 8-11)****A. He felt they needed to know about it... a value to them!**

- 1) He said he was pressed out of measure, above strength.
  - a) Weighed down exceedingly beyond his power to endure.
  - b) Or, greater than he thought he could bear.
- 2) He even despaired of life.
  - a) The sentence of death he had resigned himself to.
  - b) In his own mind, he felt there was no escape.
- 3) But God delivered him!!
- 4) Why?
  - a) To humble me.
  - b) That I should not trust in myself.
  - c) But rather, commit myself into God's hands.
  - d) To fully trust in God. (Build His Faith)
- 5) God delivered him from inevitable death.
  - a) He is presently doing the same.
  - b) And am assured that he will in the future.
  - c) (Understood---if it is God's will).
  - d) As long as God needs my services!
- 6) Paul expressed gratitude for their prayers on his behalf.
  - a) They helped to give comfort in midst of great trial.
  - b) Value in praying for one another!
  - c) The joy of deliverance is incomplete without others to share it with you.

**CONCLUSION**

1. All of us need:
  - a) Human sympathy
  - b) Assurances of human friendship & love to face trials of life.
  - c) Words and deeds of comfort from others.
  - d) And...more at some times than others.
2. This is the beauty of Christianity, in particular!
  - a) The fellowship & blessings from God in such times.
  - b) The fellowship & blessings from God's people. (He uses us).
3. God intends for:
  - a) The dejected to be lifted up;
  - b) The discouraged brought back to activity;
  - c) The afflicted taught to hope in God.
  - d) And done through Christians....who can be physicians for troubled souls.
4. Purpose of afflictions:
  - a) To teach us of our weaknesses.
  - b) To bend our will to God's will.
  - c) To awaken us from indifference.
  - d) To lead us to trust in God.
5. Most of all to lead us to God for Salvation...consolation in it!!

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

1. The Second Letter to Corinth was written from Troas.
2. This letter gives insight to the personal life and thoughts and feelings of Paul.
3. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and to the saints in Achaia.
4. God's comfort can come through His saints who have experienced God's comfort.
5. Afflictions can help us to sympathize with others.
6. Paul almost lost his life at Ephesus.
7. It was God who delivered Paul from sure death.
8. Paul said that he was appreciative of their prayers during his trials.
9. Tribulations have several values to the Christian.
10. Christians can be physicians to troubled souls.

*Lesson Two*

## ***“THE HONESTY OF A CHRISTIAN”***

**(II Corinthians 1:12-24)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. In our last lesson (1:1-11):
  - a) Paul expressed gratitude to God for His comforting him in every affliction.
  - b) So, that he might be able to comfort others by the same consolation.
  - c) Insinuated....that one of the purposes for this letter was to comfort the sincere part of the church at Corinth.
  - d) To relieve them from the sorrow brought about by his strong rebukes in the 1<sup>st</sup> letter.
  - e) And to tell them of the great affliction in Asia from which he was delivered.
2. Now, he explains his conduct & decisions in regards to his change of plans.
  - a) His honesty & integrity is at stake.
  - b) He deserves a hearing.
  - c) And he is confident that his explanation would justify his actions.
  - d) And that he would have their understanding & sympathy.

**DISCUSSION**

### **I. HE UPHOLDS HIS HONESTY BY EXPLAINING HIS CONDUCT & WRITING.**

**(1:12-14)**

**A. His conduct. (v. 12)**

- 1) His conscience was clear before God.
  - a) His rejoicing was because of a clear conscience.
  - b) There is no inner joy when conscience is not approving.
  - c) What may appear sincere to others may be hypocrisy to conscience.
  - d) What may appear hypocrisy to others may be sincere to conscience.
- 2) He lived as a Christian should before the world & church.
  - a) His conduct was one of holiness & honesty & godly sincerity.
  - b) His decisions & actions:
    - 1---Were not conducted according to fleshly wisdom;
    - 2---But according to the Grace of God.
    - 3---Titus 2:11-12

**B. His writing. (v. 13-14)**

- 1) He was writing exactly what he meant.
  - a) His words were not ambiguous, but plain words.
  - b) He was attempting to cover up nothing.
  - c) And he had written no other words, but these!
- 2) In fact, they had acknowledged his writings.
  - a) He trusted that they would continue to do so.
  - b) Because he was sincere in his writings.
- 3) He was also proud of his work among them.
  - a) Titus' report indicated:
    - 1---That a part of the church acknowledged Paul.
    - 2---Not all were willing to accept his apostleship.

- b) Those that did acknowledge him:
  - 1---Rejoiced in Paul's faithfulness.
  - 2---As Paul rejoiced in their faithfulness.

## **II. HE EXPLAINS HIS DELAY IN COMING TO CORINTH. (1:15-16)**

### **A. He states what his original intentions were.**

- 1) He wanted to go straight across the sea to Corinth as soon as possible.
  - a) He was anxious to see them.
  - b) He desired to give them additional spiritual supervision & Miraculous gifts.
- 2) Then, later, he would go into Macedonia for a while.
- 3) Then, return to Corinth again.
- 4) And then, let them send him on his way to Judea.

### **B. What caused his change of plans & the delay?**

- 1) Timothy & Erastus was sent ahead into Macedonia (Acts 19:21-22).
  - a) They probably went on to Corinth to inform them of Paul's plans to visit soon (I Cor. 16:10-12).
  - b) Somehow, word got to them that he was coming to Corinth first!
- 2) Two things changed his plans.
  - a) The success of the work at Ephesus. (I Cor. 16:5-9)
  - b) News of dissension at Corinth. (I Cor. 1:10-11)
- 3) He thus, changed his plans:
  - a) He would wait till Pentecost at Ephesus.
  - b) Then, go through Macedonia 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - c) Then, spend the winter at Corinth.
  - d) In the Spring, be helped on his journey elsewhere (I Cor. 16:5-7)
  - e) So, he sent the I Corinthian letter to inform them.
- 4) The opposition to Paul jumped on this change.
  - a) They made Paul out to be insincere, dishonest, and afraid to visit.
  - b) So, Paul is now dealing with their trumped up charges.

## **III. HE DEFENDS HIS CHANGE OF PLANS. (1:17-22)**

### **A. The question & Statement approach of his defense. (v. 17-18)**

- 1) Questions that required a negative answer.
  - a) "Did I use levity in my planning?"
    - 1---Was the change a sign that he did not think through his plans.
    - 2---Did it indicate he was fickle, false, and undependable?
    - 3---What they heard, he fully intended to do.
  - b) "Did I make plans as men do, according to the flesh?"
    - 1---Did I have carnal, worldly motives in planning?
    - 2---Did I say one thing & do another?
    - 3---Did I affirm (Yea) one thing, and deny it (Nay) later?
  - c) He answers his own questions.....
    - 1---As God is Faithful & true to his word....
    - 2---So, be assured that my word to you is also true (the sincere intent of my heart).

**B. His arguments proving his trustworthiness. (v. 19-21)**

- 1) He challenges them to look at his preaching!
  - a) Did I teach one thing to you and another to others?
  - b) Obviously not....It has always been the same everywhere.
  - c) Even Silas & Timothy taught the same!
  - d) We taught how God fulfilled his promises in Christ.
    - 1---Promise of a Redeemer.
    - 2---Promise that both Jew & Gentile would be saved in one body.
  - e) God has not affirmed & then denied his promises!
  - f) And neither have we!!
- 2) He calls for them to look at his work among them.
  - a) Paul's anointing as an apostle by God was obvious.
  - b) The church's very existence proves this.
  - c) The Miraculous gifts they had came from the laying on of his hands.
  - d) The miraculous gifts were just the down payment on the great gifts God has in store for His people.
- 3) It, then, is absurd to impute levity or falsehood to one who:
  - a) Has been approved by God, Himself....
  - b) As an apostle.....
  - c) Attested to by miraculous gifts!

**IV. REASON GIVEN HERE FOR HIS DELAY IN VISITING. (1:23-24)****A. He calls upon God to attest to his honesty & sincerity.**

- 1) "I call God for a record (witness) upon my soul"
- 2) No higher appeal could be made to asserting his honesty.
- 3) Why was Paul so concerned with upholding his honesty?
  - a) Not for himself....
  - b) But, for the influence he could have on others.

**B. Reason stated for delay:**

- 1) "To spare you"
- 2) To give objectors time to repent.
- 3) So the church will be spared:
  - a) The confrontation
  - b) And sad actions such may require.
- 4) Will deal with this more in detail later.

**C. An important clarification in this regard!!**

- 1) Apostles do not have the Lordship over those who believe.
  - a) Yes, they are deliverers of the Word of God.
  - b) Yes, they are to be sure God's Word is given, affirmed, and preserved!
  - c) But they are not Lords over believers.
- 2) They are helpers.
  - a) Their work is to bring joy, not sadness to mankind.
  - b) To persuade by argument, reasoning, & chastisement according to God's instructions.....
  - c) So people will live according to God's will.

- 3) Their stability is not found in men, but in their faith in God.
  - a) The Lord is Lord of their faith.
  - b) Your stability depends upon your faith in Christ.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Truthfulness, honesty, dependability are marks of a true Christian.
2. These things come because of our Faith in Christ.
3. These things are worth defending!!

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

- 1. Paul stated that he had a clear conscience in this matter about coming to them.**
- 2. Circumstances can cause changes to plans that we may make.**
- 3. A part of the church at Corinth did not seem to accept Paul's apostleship.**
- 4. Paul stated that he planned to go through Macedonia and then to Corinth.**
- 5. Paul's preaching did not differ from Silas and Timothy's teaching.**
- 6. The church's existence and their miraculous gifts proved Paul's Apostleship.**
- 7. Paul pointed out that they should not doubt one who had been approved by God.**
- 8. Paul stated that he called God as a witness upon his soul.**
- 9. One reason for Paul's delay in coming to them was to "spare them!"**
- 10. The Apostles had no Lordship over the churches.**

*Lesson Three*

## ***“THE VALUE OF FORGIVENESS”***

**(II Cor. 2:1-11)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. After writing the 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthian letter:
  - a) Paul was almost in misery---He called it affliction!
  - b) He was concerned with finding out how the church reacted to such a strong letter.
  - c) His wait seemed like forever...Titus just would not return with news.
2. Finally, Titus did return:
  - a) Evidently, the letter caused quite an alarm among them.
  - b) It brought sorrow to the major part of the church.
  - c) So, Paul sat down and wrote this 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to try to console them.
  - d) But, to also let them know his joy over their response & actions.

**DISCUSSION****I. HE FURTHER DISCUSSES HIS DELAYED VISIT (2:1-4)**

- A. He stated up front, “I did not want to visit you in “heaviness”.**
  - 1) “Pain”, “Grief”, or “Sorrow”.
  - 2) This is the reason he sent the 1<sup>st</sup> letter by Titus.
    - a) Titus was very reliable....capable....dependable.
    - b) Since there were those who were against Paul, Titus would not have the same problem Paul did.
  - 3) Besides, Paul did not want his visit to be a sad one.
- B. He states his reasons for this decision:**
  - 1) “For if I cause you grief, who is there to cause me joy, but those whom I have grieved.” (Con)
  - 2) “For what point is there in my depressing the very people who can give me such joy” (Philips)
  - 3) If Paul had gone himself:
    - a) He would have had to deal with the problems himself.
    - b) This would have brought grief to the church....would have been painful for them both.
    - c) Thus, the very ones that he hoped would give him joy would be so depressed.....no joy from them!
    - d) So, the letter by Titus seemed to be the best thing!
- C. He reminds them why he had written the 1<sup>st</sup> letter!**
  - 1) So, the letter would deal with the problems before he came.
  - 2) Even though the letter might bring pain....
  - 3) Better the letter than him in person.
  - 4) He had no desire to make them sorrowful.
    - a) His intent was not to cause pain & heaviness.
    - b) But, it was obvious it would have an affect upon them.
  - 5) He wanted his visit to be an enjoyable one.
    - a) He had confidence that they wanted what he wanted.

- b) Even his opponents did not want Paul's unhappiness.

**D. Paul now reveals the depth of his heart for them.**

- 1) He wrote this letter out of affliction, anguish of heart, and many tears.
  - a) "In great trouble and distress of mind" (Gspd)
  - b) "That letter I sent you came out of great distress and anxiety; how many tears I shed as I wrote it." (Phi)
- 2) It is the distress one feels who is under pressure and finds no relief.
- 3) I am sure Paul shed tears in prayer to God on their behalf.
- 4) The letter was INSPIRED BY GOD, but Paul's emotions and concerns felt by him were included by the Holy Spirit.
- 5) He wrote the letter out of love for them.
  - a) It was not to cause them pain, but to get them right with God.
  - b) He wanted them to know how much he really cared for them.
  - c) He had no desire to grieve them, but some things are necessary for the saving of souls.
  - d) His desire was not to inflict pain, but to bring about repentance.

**II. HE NOW TURNS AND DEALS WITH THE PERSON GUILTY OF INCEST  
MENTIONED IN I COR. 5 (2:5-11)**

**A. What his actions have caused: (vs. 5-8)\*\*\***

- 1) He has grieved me (at least in part)
- 2) But more important, he has grieved all of you.....
  - a) Or, at least most of you.
  - b) False teachers may have condoned his actions
  - c) And some members had gone along with them.
  - d) Paul did not want to overstate the problem, but to be sure he was concerned over this person.
- 3) What one member does affects the whole church for good or bad.
  - a) I Cor. 12:26---"*And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.*"
  - b) The community does not make the distinction either.
  - c) If a member sins, they brand the church as such.
  - d) If a member is godly, it gives a good name to church.

**B. He states that their "punishment" upon this man was sufficient to bring about the desired end.**

- 1) Punishment
  - a) Meaning of word in Greek.
  - b) It is a form of punishment.
  - c) The church was told to:
    - 1—When you gather together
    - 2—Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so he can be saved.
    - 3—Not to company with him.
    - 4—Put him away from among yourselves.

- d) The church (or at least the majority) had evidently carried out these instructions.
- e) This punishment upon the guilty man:
  - 1—Expressed righteous indignation against sin
  - 2—Vindicated God's law...upheld it.
  - 3—Showed love for the person.
- f) This action has brought about repentance.

**C. Paul now calls upon them to forgive & comfort him.**

- 1) Repentance was evident.
  - a) He had been so affected by their actions that he awakened to his true condition before God.
  - b) He dismissed his father's wife and changed his ways.
  - c) Titus would have informed Paul of this action.
- 2) So, now you need to forgive him.
  - a) He had wronged the church by his actions.
  - b) They were to forgive him.
  - c) Eph. 4:32---“*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*”
  - d) To comfort him, reassure him of your love for him.
  - e) This would be shown by accepting him into their fellowship again, unconditionally.
  - f) Not holding his sin against him now.
  - g) Matt. 5:4---“*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*” (Reassured of their forgiveness)
- 3) Reason why such is so needed.
  - a) Less he be overwhelmed by his sin & their actions and just give up.
  - b) Many do quit, feeling that they are unworthy to be in the fellowship of the church.
  - c) So, take public action to reassure him of your acceptance & forgiveness.

**D. He gives another reason for writing to them. (vs. 9-11)**

- 1) He had written to them to see a proof of their obedience.
- 2) He had stated before, reasons for writing:
  - a) To avoid a painful visit;
  - b) To spare them;
  - c) To show special love to them;
  - d) And now, to test their full obedience to God's Will.
  - e) To withdraw from the man as commanded by God.
  - f) Now, offer him your love, compassion, forgiveness, comfort.
- 3) He states that he wanted to join them in that forgiveness.
  - a) Whom they forgive, Paul forgives too.
  - b) Showing a unity & harmony among God's people.
- 4) And, adds.....
  - a) Whatever I have had to forgive in your situation
  - b) I forgave it for your sakes (as Christ has shown us to do). (Eph. 4:32)

### E. The value of forgiveness.

- 1) It prevents Satan from gaining an advantage over us.
  - a) Lack of forgiveness is the devil's victory.
  - b) Where there is forgiveness, the devil loses the battle for the souls of men.
  - c) Forgiveness destroys Satan's ability to lead us away from God.
- 2) It deals with Satan's devices.
  - a) He is a schemer, wily plotter, deceptive, flatterer.
  - b) He uses false teachings in a skillful & crafty way to ensnare & defeat us.
  - c) God's people need to be aware of who the real enemy is.
  - d) Forgiveness dismantles his weapons!!

### CONCLUSION

1. Satan tries to get us to fall into sin & then keep us there.
  - a) If we repent, He tries to use the church to not accept us back, so we will be discouraged and quit.
  - b) The church, then, has a grave responsibility to help keep souls saved.
2. Here we see the uniting force of the Love of God:
  - a) It causes common sympathy for the person in sin;
  - b) It causes common punishment to help bring about repentance;
  - c) It causes common forgiveness to the penitent.
3. It is not easy to rebuke a brother in sin
  - a) It pains the one that does the rebuking.
  - b) It pains the one that is rebuked.
  - c) But love helps us to do what needs to be done for good of person.
4. "A wayward child is often conquered, not by the rod in his mother's hand so much, but by the tears in her eyes as she administers discipline."
  - a) Love demands discipline when needed.
  - b) But love does it with tears.
  - c) Tears demonstrate the sincere concern for the person.
  - d) Gal. 6:1---"***Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.***"
5. Do you need to come to God for forgiveness because of sin?

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

#### True & False

1. Paul's first letter to Corinth caused quite an alarm among them.
2. Titus brought bad news back to Paul from Paul's first letter to Corinth.
3. Paul wrote the first letter so he would not have to go there in person to deal with the problems.

- \_\_\_\_ 4. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul's writing and included his emotional feelings in the process.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. The person guilty of incest had repented and changed his life and was to be accepted back into their fellowship.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. The church had disfellowshipped this person and it brought about good results.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Paul had also written to them to prove their obedience to God's Word.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. Forgiveness destroys Satan's ability to destroy us.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Love sympathasizes with the person in sin, brings proper discipline to the person, and then forgives him whether he repents or not.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. It is easy to rebuke a brother in sin.

*Lesson Four*

## “THE FRAGRANCE THAT PLEASES GOD”

(II Corinthians 2:12-17)

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. There is a story that is told about Christ after he ascended back to heaven.
  - a) After he had finished speaking to the heavenly hosts regarding the work of atonement.....
  - b) An angel asked, “What are your plans for getting this good news to the world?”
  - c) Jesus’ replied, “I have left it in the hands of my chosen apostles. They will tell others, who in turn will tell others, etc.”
  - d) Angel replied, “But what if those men do not do the job? Or, what if the people they tell do not tell others? What then?”
  - e) Jesus’ statement: “I have no other plan.”
2. The scene is fictional---THE PLAN IS FOR REAL!!
  - a) This is indicated in these verses to study now.
3. The Apostle Paul first comes back to tell of his waiting for news about the church at Corinth.
  - a) And because Titus brings good news.....
  - b) He breaks forth in thanksgiving.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **I. HE EXPLAINS HIS TRAVELS TO THEM. (2:12-13)**

##### **A. Upon leaving Ephesus, he went to Troas.**

- 1) He preached with great success it seems.
  - a) A door was opened by the Lord.
  - b) Must have been encouraging to him.
  - c) I Cor. 16:9---“*For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.*”
- 2) He doesn’t seem to have stayed long.
  - a) He didn’t find Titus there.
  - b) However, when Paul and company returned back through this area, a flourishing church was there.
  - c) Acts 20:6-7---“*And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow*”
- 3) Reason---He is troubled in spirit.
  - a) In spite of the joy of success of the gospel at Troas,
  - b) His concern for the church at Corinth over-shadowed this joy.
  - c) He had no rest in his spirit...affected his work.

##### **B. He now goes into Macedonia.**

- 1) Possibly Philippi (not told).
- 2) Upon arriving, Titus was not there yet.
- 3) So...he had to wait longer, which caused more anxiety.

## **II. INTERRUPTION---TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD. (2:14-17)**

### **A. The reason for thanksgiving seems to be over Titus' coming and bringing good news.**

- 1) He doesn't directly state it here, but it is understood.
- 2) He does state it later in the letter. (II Cor. 7:5-8)
- 3) But it isn't limited to Titus' coming.
- 4) Paul seems to make use of an important event that most had either seen or heard of to illustrate the reason for his thanksgiving also.

### **B. The Roman triumphal entry to city of Rome after a great victory was a magnificent spectacle.**

- 1) It was to give great honor for the triumph in war to the army and its leader.
- 2) In the front of the procession would be the captives taken.
- 3) Next was the proud army who had been victorious.
- 4) Then, the leader of the army became the central point of view.
- 5) Every type of honor was paid to him.
  - a) Sacrifices were offered in Temple to their gods.
  - b) Incense bearers marched in procession to create a cloud of sweet aroma.

### **C. Paul seems to be depicting the warfare of the Word of God in the world.**

- 1) God is the leader.
- 2) His army comes from those conquered and made his friends.
- 3) They have shared in the victory over evil in the world...
- 4) And, now share in God's triumph over the enemies of truth & righteousness.
- 5) Paul changes imagery from one thing to another...WATCH CAREFULLY.
  - a) The captives are those conquered & made friends.
  - b) Then, they become incense-bearers that fill the streets with the sweet aroma of God's good news.
  - c) As the aroma is diffused throughout the streets, the captives look upon it differently:
    - 1—To one it is an aroma of death---taken and put to death.
    - 2—To another, it is an aroma of life...allowed to live!

### **D. "which always causes us to triumph in Christ"**

- 1) What was just a plan in Matt. 28:18-20 has now become a reality.
  - a) The plan was working magnificently throughout the world.
  - b) A short time later Paul could write....Col. 1:23.
- 2) It was working so well that Paul breaks forth into a joyous thanksgiving to God.
  - a) It is like a triumphal entry into the city after a great victory.
  - b) And we are privileged to be with the leader of the victory.
  - c) We are a part of those conquered in this great battle for souls.

### **E. "Makes manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place."**

- 1) God's knowledge (the gospel) is being made known in every place.
  - a) All over the world.
  - b) By those captivated by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- 2) But it is the savor of his knowledge.
  - a) Savor, fragrance, aroma.

- b) Like burning of incense.....fills house.
- c) Gives off a sweet smell....pleasing to smell.
- 3) Seems to emphasize the desirability of the gospel.
  - a) Matt. 5:13, 16---Salt, Light of world.
  - b) Acts 8:4---Those scattered went every where preaching.
  - c) I Pet. 2:12---see good works & glorify God.

#### **F. “We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ”**

- 1) As the gospel of Christ is spread by God’s people....
  - a) It is like a fragrance that fills a room.
  - b) Souls are being saved by Christ’s gospel.
  - c) This is a very pleasing thing to God.
  - d) Phil. 4:18---“*But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.*”
- 2) Various translations:
  - a) “We are the fragrance of Christ ascending to God.
  - b) “We are indeed the incense offered by Christ to God.
  - c) “We are Christ’s incense offered to God.

#### **G. The differing affects of the fragrance!**

- 1) It is God’s will that the gospel be preached to the world by his people. (Mark 16:15-16)
- 2) It is a message of salvation....being preached to those who are perishing, but also to those who are being saved!

#### **H. “A savor of death unto death”**

- 1) To some, it is a message of Eternal death to those who are already spiritually dead.
  - a) Like doomed captives being led through streets of city.
  - b) They smell the sweet aroma.
  - c) But, it is a message of their doom, not freedom.
- 2) To others, it is a message of Eternal life to those who are willing to accept the message and live.
  - a) They, too, breathe the sweet aroma.
  - b) But, it is a message of their freedom.

### **III. PAUL NOW ASKED.....WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?**

#### **A. Can see what a tremendous, overwhelming task.**

- 1) It is staggering to think about.
- 2) It will require great courage & hard work.
- 3) But, with God’s blessings, it is being accomplished!
- 4) Our fitness to be that aroma to the world comes from God (Phil. 4:13).

#### **B. It will not be accomplished by those who corrupt the Word of God.**

- 1) Paid hirelings, who are more concerned about money than souls.
- 2) Who mix God’s truth with human speculations.
- 3) Such will tend to destroy the good effects of the gospel.
- 4) Instead of bringing life, they will bring death.

#### **C. Paul stresses the kind of persons whom God can use.**

- 1) Those who are sincere.
  - a) That are genuine.
  - b) Who are not people pleasers, but truth tellers.
  - c) True to the gospel message.
- 2) Those who are messengers of God.
  - a) Who go at His command to reach the world with his gospel.
  - b) Speaking to others as in the presence of God, Himself.
  - c) Always under His watchful eye.
  - d) That causes us to be humble, earnest, fearless, and not men-pleasers.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. Have we caught the vision Paul is describing?
2. We are the sweet aroma of God in our world.
3. We have the message of Redemption or Condemnation.
4. There is no other plan!!

### **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

#### **True or False**

1. Paul stated that he preached at Troas with great success.
2. Paul later came back by Troas and worshipped with them on his way to Jerusalem.
3. Paul was greatly saddened at the coming of Titus.
4. The Roman Triumphal Entry into Rome after a successful battle is used to help illustrate the great success of the Gospel around the world.
5. The Aroma of incense is used to illustrate the influencing of Christians over the world.
6. The aroma is also used to illustrate an indication of “life” or “death.”
7. Paul asked the question, “Who is sufficient to this great task?”
8. Those who mix human speculations with truth hinder the Word of God in its task.
9. Only genuine and sincere people can be used by God to accomplish the work of God.
10. Christians are the sweet aroma of God in our world.

*Lesson Five*

## “THE GREATER GLORY OF THE GOSPEL”

(II Corinthians 3:1-11)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Paul asked the question in Ch. 2:16---“*Who is sufficient for these things?*”
  - a) What?....To be the Aroma of Christ.
  - b) To spread this knowledge of Him everywhere.
  - c) Such a task calls for qualified people.
  - d) Paul will show his qualifications briefly here.
    - 1—The existence of the great Corinthian church!
    - 2—He was made a minister of the Gospel by God of a new and better covenant.
2. Paul’s apostleship was under fire.
  - a) Some looked upon him as an imposter or inferior to other apostles.
  - b) There was a need for him to uphold his apostleship to the church.
  - c) The last 4 chapters deal more with this defense.

**DISCUSSION****I. CREDENTIALS OF HIS APOSTLESHIP. (3:1-3)****A. Questions that get to the point.**

- 1) “Do we need again to commend ourselves?”
  - a) Can you possibly think we need to do this again?
  - b) It had already been done before.
  - c) In their midst & in the 1<sup>st</sup> letter.
  - d) The faction was saying he had not adequately proven his apostleship.
- 2) “Do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you?”
  - a) Do we need letters from Judea to introduce us to you?
  - b) False teachers evidently had letters from some people in Judea to support their claims.
  - c) The church was naïve enough to think that this made them greater than Paul, since he had none!
- 3) “Or, do we need letters of commendation from you?”
  - a) In Acts 18:27, a letter was sent with Apollos to the church at Corinth recommending him.
  - b) Does Paul need this from the church at Corinth in order to go preach elsewhere?
  - c) Paul’s apostleship did not depend upon the testimony of men.
  - d) It should have been obvious that he did not need letters from them or any other church to substantiate his apostleship.

**B. He answers his own questions:**

- 1) “Ye are our epistle”
  - a) Paul’s apostleship was his letter from Christ to them.
    - 1—Miraculous powers, gifts given to church.
    - 2—All testified that he was an apostle of Christ.
  - b) The existence of the church at Corinth was proof of his apostleship.

- 1—How did they become Christians?  
 2—How did they receive the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, but thru Paul.
- c) I Cor. 9:2---“*If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.*”
- 2) “Written in our hearts”  
 a) Others bring letters in their hand.  
 b) But Paul’s letter was on his heart.
- 3) “Known and read of all men”  
 a) Churches all over the empire knew of the church at Corinth.  
 b) So there would be no need of letters from anyone.
- 4) “Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us”  
 a) They existed as a church thru the preaching of the gospel of Christ.  
 b) That is all the recommendation Paul needed.
- 5) He stressed, “Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.”  
 a) Not written down as you would a real letter.  
 b) But a spiritual letter brought about through the Spirit’s work.  
 c) Not in tables of stone like the Ten Commandments.  
 d) But in fleshly tables of the heart.  
     1—Their heart is where the message found lodgment.  
     2—It brought about their conversion.  
     3—Their hearts were open to God’s truth.

## **II. GOD HAD MADE PAUL AN ABLE MINISTER OF THE NEW COVENANT. (3:4-6)**

### **A. Paul was confident of His calling by Christ.**

- 1) His successes with gospel, as well as his godly life, were all made possible by Jesus Christ.
- 2) Phil. 4:13
- 3) And all this he offers unto God for God’s glorification.

### **B. Paul’s sufficiency to the task given him:**

- 1) Was not of himself, but from God.
- 2) It was not Paul’s power being demonstrated, but God’s power.
- 3) It was God’s power that was accomplishing these things.

### **C. God made him an able (qualified) minister of the New Covenant.**

- 1) Called him and qualified him by inspiration & miraculous gifts.
- 2) He was not called to preach the Old Covenant as still being in force, but the New Covenant!
- 3) Paul uses two terms to represent these two Covenants:
  - a) The letter (Emphasis upon that which is written down)
    - 1---The Mt. Sinai Covenant with Israel.
    - 2---Exo. 34:27---“*And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.*
  - b) The Spirit (Emphasis on the heart).
    - 1---The New Covenant given through Christ.

- 2---Inspired by Spirit.  
 3---Preached to world by the Spirit thru apostles.  
 4---Confirmed by the Spirit.  
 5---Has a spiritual emphasis.  
 4) One brings death, the other brings life.

### **III. CONTRAST OF THE OLD & NEW COVENANTS. (3:7-11)**

#### **A. The Old Covenant (10 Commandments, etc.)**

- 1) It kills, brings death, brings condemnation.
- 2) The curse of disobedience to God is death. Rom. 6:23
- 3) All have broken God's law. Rom. 3:23
- 4) Thus, all are under its curse. Gal. 3:10
- 5) It is unable to give hope to man.
- 6) It had its day of glory (Splendor).
  - a) Such glory that Israel could not look on the face of Moses.
  - b) Exo. 34:27-30
  - c) Glorious events connected with it being given.
- 7) The Law was holy, just, and good. Rom. 7:12
  - a) It had the great wisdom given through inspired men.
  - b) It had grand concepts of Deity.
  - c) It taught great moral & spiritual truths for man's good.
  - d) It stressed obedience to the Divine Creator.
  - e) It produced a phenomenon in history of a nation educated in the knowledge of God.
- 8) But that glory has faded, been put aside by a greater glory.
  - a) It was judged inadequate for God's final purposes.
  - b) With all its glory, it could not do what was needed....Give life!!!
  - c) Rom. 7:6---"*Now we are delivered from the law...*" (*A Legal System for Justification*)
  - d) Col. 2:14---"*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us....took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross*"
  - e) Heb. 10:9---"*He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.*"
- 9) Why was it inadequate?
  - a) Rom. 8:3---"*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh...*"
  - b) Heb. 8:7-8---"*For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith,*"
  - c) It is man's inability to keep the Law of God perfectly.
- 10) Thus God planned to give a New Covenant.
  - a) Jer. 31:31-34
  - b) It would be a different kind of Covenant.
  - c) Major difference:
    - 1—A child born under the Old Covenant had to be taught to know the Lord...and His Law.

- 2—Under New, you have to be taught of God first before you can come under it.
- 3—They have to give their consent.
- 4—Only those who know the Lord can come under this Covenant.
- 5—God's law is put into their minds & hearts.

**B. The New Covenant.**

- 1) This was given through Christ, His apostles, Holy Spirit.
- 2) Thus, it gives life, gives righteousness to sinful man.
- 3) It puts man in right standing with God thru Jesus' death.
- 4) Those who put their faith in Christ's death can be given life. Jn. 1:12
- 5) This Covenant has the greater glory.
  - a) It exceeds in glory and has greater honor.
  - b) It overshadows the glory of the 1<sup>st</sup> Covenant.
- 6) This Covenant remains, while the other is put away.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Strong emphasis upon the superiority of the New over the Old.
2. The Book of Hebrews goes into detail showing this.
3. We ought to be thankful that we have been given the privilege to come under this New Covenant with all its blessings.
4. Have you turned this offer down?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

1. Paul's Apostleship was being questioned by some at Corinth.
2. Paul said he would get a letter of recommendation from the other Apostles.
3. Paul said that the Corinthians church was his letter of recommendation.
4. The Corinthian Church was proof of Paul's Apostleship.
5. God called and qualified Paul to be an Apostle.
6. The "letter" and the "Spirit" represent the two Covenants.
7. The glory of the first Covenant fades in contrast to the glory of the New Covenant.
8. The Law, without Christ, is nothing more than a legal system that condemns sinful man.
9. The New Covenant gives life because it has the means of forgiveness.
10. It is a privilege to be under the New Covenant rather than the Old Covenant.

*Lesson Six*

## “THE TRANSFORMING GOSPEL”

(II Cor. 3:12-18)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The first part of Ch. 3 gave a comparison of the Law & the Gospel, the Old Covenant & the New Covenant.
  - a) Its superiority is shown in its ability to give life, not death.
  - b) Also, in its greater glory than the glory of the Law.
2. Now, Paul drives home a symbolic concept involved in the giving of the Law of Moses!
  - a) Types & Shadows abound in the Old Testament.
  - b) This is one that Paul uses to illustrate his point.
3. He shows that the New Covenant:
  - a) Can be spoken with great moral courage & boldness.
  - b) Can give spiritual vision to those blinded by a hardness of heart.
  - c) Can bring true liberty to the soul of man.
  - d) Can bring about a transformation that is glorious.

**DISCUSSION****I. THE NEW COVENANT CAN BE SPOKEN WITH ASSURANCE. (Vs. 12-13)****A. 1<sup>st</sup>, look at the ministering of the Old Covenant!**

- 1) Moses ministered it to the Israelite nation (Exo. 34:31-35).
- 2) Moses would go into the presence of God to get His Law.
- 3) When he came out, his face would shine, glow.
- 4) He would then speak the Commands of God to the people.
- 5) Then, he would put a veil over his face until he again went into God's presence.
  - a) The veil was not to protect the eyesight of the Jews.
  - b) Rather, it was to cover the fading of the radiance of Moses' face.
  - c) So the people could not see the radiance disappear.
- 7) Application:
  - a) The fading of the shine on Moses' face was like the fading glory of the Old Covenant.
  - b) Moses even told the people that there would come another prophet like unto himself (Deut. 18:15-18).
  - c) So, Old Covenant was not the final Revelation!
  - d) Also, Moses veiling his face suggests a lack of confidence or boldness.

**B. But....the ministers of the New Covenant are bold.**

- 1) Their boldness is there because they do not have to be veiled to hide a fading glory.
- 2) This New Covenant they proclaim is the final revelation of God to mankind.
- 3) It will last, endure. (Heb. 1:1-2)
- 4) It gives mankind the hope they needed....forgiveness of sins & eternal life.  
(No longer under curse of law breaking)
- 5) This boldness comes from the assurance of its superior glory.

- a) Look at Peter & John before the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13).
- b) Later, in prayer (Acts 4:29-30).

## **II. THE VEIL UPON THE HEARTS OF THE JEWS.(Vs. 14-17)**

### **A. “But their minds were blinded”**

- 1) The Jewish heart was veiled by prejudice & unbelief.
  - a) They could not see the fading radiance of Moses face.
  - b) So, symbolically, their minds are veiled from seeing the glory of Christ and the New Covenant.
  - c) Neither could they see the real purpose of the Old Covenant.
- 2) The Old Covenant was one of Types & Shadows.
  - a) While the Old Covenant contained the Law of God.
  - b) It also contained a Shadow of the coming Gospel.
  - c) It pointed to the coming of a Redeemer, through whom man could truly be justified.
- 3) But, the veil on the hearts of the Jews:
  - a) Caused them to regard the Old Covenant as complete in itself.
  - b) And failed to see its true glory in pointing to a greater glory in the gospel.
- 4) So, when Christ came:
  - a) They failed to recognize Him as the Messiah.
  - b) They would have followed a Messiah of Judaism, but not one of Christianity.
  - c) The veil blinded them to the true nature of the Messiah and the new Kingdom of God.
  - d) They felt that they could find salvation in the Old Covenant.
  - e) But Jesus told them: ***“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”***
  - f) Its types, figures, prophesies are as dark to them now as ever because of their prejudices & hardness of hearts.
  - g) Unfortunately, time has done nothing to remove this darkness from their hearts.
  - h) They are shrew, intelligent, adapting in every other way, but religion!!!

### **B. What will remove this veil from their minds or hearts?**

- 1) The problem is with man’s heart, not God’s reluctance.
  - a) God has done His part, Now....man must do his.
  - b) He needs to repent!!
- 2) This veil can only be removed when the heart is turned to the Lord with an open mind to see the facts!
- 3) Rom. 11:23--- ***“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.”***
- 4) Christ’s coming explained the Old Testament prophecies!
  - a) He came to fulfill them all. (Matt. 5:17)

- b) If one rejects Christ, he cannot understand the prophecies.
- c) But through Christ, they all become clear!
- d) When their blinded heart is turned to Christ, the veil is taken away!!

**C. It is the Spirit of the Lord that gives liberty, freedom.**

- 1) Letter brings death, Spirit gives life.
- 2) The New Covenant of the Lord gives us freedom!
  - a) Freedom to speak boldly, with assurance.
  - b) Freedom as sons of God. (Gal. 4:6-7)
  - c) Freedom from guilt. (Jn. 8:36)
- 3) Thus, obedience to God's Law is no longer a Law of Bondage and death.....but a Royal Law of Liberty thru Christ!!
- 4) Rom. 8:2---“*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*”

**III. THE TRANSFORMATION OF SINNERS! (Vs. 18)**

**A. 3 parallels here between 2 covenants:**

- 1) Old Covenant....3 principle characters:
  - a) God....giver of Old Covenant.
  - b) Moses...one who ministered it.
  - c) Israelites...those who were to receive it.
- 2) New Covenant...3 principle characters:
  - a) Christ....giver of New Covenant. Heb. 1:1-2
  - b) Apostles....ones who ministered it.
  - c) World (Lost Sinners)...those who were to receive it.

**B. Observations:**

- 1) The recipients:
  - a) Are those whom God wants to save & reign over.
  - b) Unfortunately, some believe, others do not.
- 2) The Givers:
  - a) God & Christ.
  - b) Moses stood in the presence of God & his face shone.
  - c) The apostles stood in the presence of Christ & saw His glory as “The Sun of Righteousness” and “The Light of the World”.
- 3) The ministers:
  - a) Moses veiled his face (not bold).
  - b) Apostles were bold, not veiled.
  - c) What qualified them to speak?
    - 1—They beheld the glory of the Lord.
    - 2—And were changed into His likeness.
  - d) From glory to glory---continuous development!

**CONCLUSION**

1. When the veil is removed:
  - a) All men can see that the glory of the Old Covenant has vanished.
  - b) They can then see the true glory of Christ and the New Covenant.
  - c) It will appear in its entire splendor, unfading and eternal.

- d) But the heart must be turned from SELF & SELF-INTEREST to see Christ as revealed in the New Covenant!
2. Jesus said, "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*" (Jn. 12:32)
- a) Like a magnet, he draws people to Himself.
  - b) And then, transforms them into little magnets to help draw people as well.
  - c) We are transformed into His likeness so that we may in turn draw others. (Matt. 5:16)
  - d) All become qualified ministers of the New Covenant!!
  - e) But only the Transformed ones!!
3. Have you opened your heart to truly see the glory of Jesus?
4. Are you being drawn to him?
5. Give in....surrender to His Lordship over your life!

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. The New Covenant can be spoken with courage and boldness.
- 2. The veil over Moses' face was to protect the eyesight of the Jews.
- 3. Moses' veil was to show a lack of confidence and boldness.
- 4. The boldness of speaking the New Covenant is because of its Superiority!
- 5. The Jewish heart was veiled because of prejudice and a closed heart.
- 6. The Old Covenant had a great Law, but it pointed to another prophet to come.
- 7. The Old Covenant is referred to by Paul as the law of sin and death.
- 8. The New Covenant is referred to by Paul as the law of the Spirit of Life.
- 9. The veil has to be removed from the Jews in order to see the glory of Christ.
- 10. Jesus is like a magnet that draws men to Himself.

*Lesson Seven*

## “WHAT TO DO WITH THIS GLORIOUS GOSPEL”

(II Cor. 4:1-6)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Many facets go into making the teaching of the gospel effective.
  - a) It can be taught incorrectly.
  - b) Our attitudes & actions can be a deterrent to its effectiveness.
  - c) Also, the hearts of the hearers play a part.
2. Paul is helping us to see that every Christian becomes a personal representative of Christ.
  - a) We are to be prepared to pass this glorious news on to others (I Pet. 3:15).
  - b) We are God’s AROMA to give a sweet odor in our world of sin.
  - c) How effective we are depends upon our transformation.
3. In Ch. 4:1-6, Paul is talking about what we should do with the gospel of Christ.

**DISCUSSION****I. THE PROPER WAY TO TEACH THIS GOSPEL. (4:1-2)****A. With a realization of having received this gospel by the mercy of God.**

- 1) This appointment to teach the gospel has been received at God’s hands....by his mercy.
- 2) By His mercy, He saved us; transformed us; and prepared us to teach the gospel.
- 3) His mercy triggers gratitude in our hearts, and motivates us to serve fearlessly & vigorously in His service.

**B. Teach it with Courage.**

- 1) “*We faint not*”
  - a) We have a holy courage, strength to do His bidding.
  - b) To teach it with faith, believing in its results.
  - c) What God has done for us, He can do for others.
  - d) So, be bold, brave, and courageous in your efforts.
  - e) We have nothing to be ashamed of.
- 2) We must not be discouraged because of foes.
  - a) II Thess. 3:13---“*And ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*”
  - b) We must persevere, be diligent, and be faithful.
  - c) Difficulties will always be there.

**C. With Right methods.**

- 1) “*We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty.*”
  - a) “Hidden things that bring shame”
  - b) “Disgraceful & underhanded ways.”
  - c) Impostors hid their shameful things from hearers.
  - d) The apostles had rejected these things and commanded them to be gone.

**D. With right motives.**

- 1) “*Not walking in craftiness*”
  - a) Subtle, cunning, underhand dealings.
  - b) Motive of person who acts this way is wrong.
- 2) I Thess. 2:3-6
  - a) His motives were pure & above board.
  - b) He was not seeking praise, pay, position, or power for himself.
  - c) Neither did he do these things to please people, but rather God.
  - d) He did not make loud pretensions of honesty & purity, and secretly gratify his lusts without restraint.

**E. With Right Message.**

- 1) “*Not handling word of God deceitfully*”
  - a) He refused to tamper with God’s word, to misuse it, to adulterate it.
  - b) To do so is willful rebellion & disregard of God’s truth.
  - c) Did not season it to the taste of carnal men.
- 2) Paul did not speak the gospel in lofty words of man’s wisdom either.
  - a) I Cor. 2:1-5
  - b) He taught plainly & fully the true doctrine.

**F. With Right Manner.**

- 1) “*By manifestation of the truth*”
  - a) By open statement of the truth.
  - b) He did not hold back what needed to be taught.
  - c) Infers INTEGRITY, HONESTY, CONFIDENCE.
- 2) “*Commending ourselves to every man’s conscience*”
  - a) His life was an open book for all to see.
  - b) What he taught made its appeal to the consciences of men.
  - c) His life was upright...no fear of examination (I Thess. 2:8, 9-12).
  - d) The Message of a crucified & living Savior was being communicated through a crucified & living Messenger. (Gal. 2:20)
- 3) “*in the sight of God*”
  - a) All done with full knowledge of God seeing all.
  - b) He has done all under the watchful eye of God.
  - c) And once the message has been presented correctly, the responsibility then is upon the hearers.

**II. WHY DO SOME NOT RESPOND TO THIS GLORIOUS GOSPEL? (4:3-4)****A. “*If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*”**

- 1) If it has been clearly manifested, why can’t some see it?
- 2) What causes them to reject it so easily?

**B. 1<sup>st</sup> of all, the “god of this world” is involved.**

- 1) Term is used not in the sense of true deity, but to the position that men have given Satan.
  - a) They worship him as a god.
  - b) They allow him to reign over their lives.
  - c) He is the great usurper!

- 2) The god of this world does not blind men directly apart from man's will.
- a) If He did, then all would be blinded!
  - b) He works hard to blind men to the glory of Christ's gospel.
  - c) He does it by appealing to man's:
    - 1—Sensuality, lusts
    - 2—Worldliness
    - 3—Human pride & prejudices.  - d) He uses his followers to so entice others to follow.
  - e) False teachers are his henchmen.
  - f) The veil was not on the gospel, but the hearts of men.
  - g) And they love to have it so (John 3:19-21).

### C. By man's unbelief.

- 1) "*blinded them which believe not*"

  - a) They choose not to listen, to understand, to believe.
  - b) So, they reject the gospel and are perishing.

- 2) "*lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.*"

  - a) They choose to shut their eyes to the light that comes from Christ.
  - b) Unbelief is not because of obscurity of the gospel, but because of man's lusts & prejudices.
  - c) Men love darkness, rather than light!

## **III. WHAT IS TO BE PREACHED. (4:5)**

### A. Certainly not ourselves!

- 1) To build up oneself to make a following.
- 2) To parade our own ideas, talents, learning, to our own ends.
- 3) We put ourselves, not Christ, out front!

### B. But Christ Jesus, the Lord!

- 1) Christ is the heart and soul of the gospel.
- 2) His incarnation, ministry, humiliation, obedience, sufferings & death, resurrection & exaltation.
- 3) Without Christ, there is no gospel of hope.

### C. And ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

- 1) Jesus came to be a servant, not to be served. Matt. 20:28
- 2) The gospel is enhanced in the eyes of men by a serving & caring spirit.

## **IV. FROM WHENCE CAME THIS GOSPEL? (4:6)**

### A. From God.

- 1) From the God of creation.
- 2) Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness.
- 3) He is the father of lights.
- 4) He sent His Son to be the Light of the World.

### B. This light hath shined in our hearts.

- 1) He, too, sent this great & glorious light.
- 2) This light gives understanding to our hearts, appeals to our consciences.

### C. The purpose for this great light in our hearts????

- 1) Not only for our sake, but that we might transmit that light to others.
- 2) To give others the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

**D. This light radiated from the face of Christ.**

- 1) "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father."
- 2) The glory of the Father showed clearly on the face of Jesus.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Our teaching of the gospel must:
  - a) Inform the hearers;
  - b) But also, transform them into the image of Christ.
2. It must:
  - a) Bring people into a saved relationship with God;
  - b) But also, bring about godly & righteous lives.
3. And because God has shown us mercy:
  - a) We reach out to others with this message of transformation.
  - b) And do not lose heart when there are foes!
4. What has been your response to this glorious gospel?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

**True or False**

- 1. Our attitudes and actions can be a deterrent to the effectiveness of the Gospel.**
- 2. The Gospel needs to be taught believing in its effectiveness to convert people.**
- 3. It is wrong to handle the Word of God craftily.**
- 4. The Gospel must not be seasoned to the taste of carnally-minded people.**
- 5. Our conscience needs to be clear in all that we do.**
- 6. The god of this world blinds man to the truth of the Gospel.**
- 7. Man's unbelief of the gospel is caused by a blindness against his will.**
- 8. Preachers need to preach themselves as servant not lords over God's people.**
- 9. Jesus said if they had seen him that they had seen the Father.**
- 10. Teaching of the Gospel is to inform and transform people.**

*Lesson Eight*

## “THE DEATH-LIFE CYCLE”

(II Corinthians 4:7-12)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Paul has shown thus far:
  - a) The Superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant.
  - b) The glory of the New far outshines the glory of the Old that has faded into Obsolesce.
2. He now deals with the Ministry of this Gospel to the world.
  - a) It is through Christians that become the aroma of Christ.
  - b) But there is a cost to be paid in the process that will now be shown.
3. In v. 7, Paul reminds Christians that this great treasure has been placed in earthen vessels.

### DISCUSSION

#### I. REASON WHY TREASURE PUT IN EARTHEN VESSELS. (4:7)

##### A. As opposed to angels.

- 1) God did not give the job to angels, but to men!
- 2) Illustrated in Acts 8:
  - a) Angels directed Philip to the Eunuch.
  - b) Angels did not preach, but Philip did.
- 3) Even greater illustration Acts 9:
  - a) The Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus.
  - b) Did not tell him what to do to be saved.
  - c) Told to go into city to be told.
  - d) Ananias was sent to tell him what to do.

##### B. He gave the job to men who were Weak, Frail, Imperfect, Lowly, unimposing.

- 1) Ad in paper that reads:
  - a) WANTED: Containers for priceless treasure.
  - b) QUALIFICATIONS: Earthen, humble, meek, willing to serve, ready to spend & be spent, willing to lay down one's life.
- 2) Would you or I apply for the job?
- 3) Would we fit the qualifications?

##### C. But Why has God done this?

- 1) “*That the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*”
- 2) The contrast brings out the beauty of the treasure!
- 3) The power to accomplish this is seen to be in God, not man.

##### D. Look at the Power of God at work in the world at that time!

- 1) 1<sup>st</sup>, look at the gospel itself.
  - a) Its doctrines, precepts, promises.
  - b) All are in perfect agreement to fit mankind's needs and longings.
  - c) Its elevated view of Deity in so many ways.
- 2) 2<sup>nd</sup>, look at the miraculous confirmation of the gospel.
  - a) Heb. 2:1-4
  - b) And then the spiritual gifts given to the early church to help stabilize them in the faith. I Cor. 12-14.

- 3) 3<sup>rd</sup>, look at the outcome of the gospel on people & nations.
  - a) Great numbers forsook idolatry & turned to worship the true & living God.
  - b) They turned from their wickedness to a holy life.
  - c) From their lust & passion for the things of this world to a longing for a heavenly home.
- 4) 4<sup>th</sup>, look at the things that people had to overcome to accept this gospel.
  - a) Ungodly examples of parents & friends.
  - b) Past erroneous religious teachings.
  - c) Persecution that threatened the possessions & even their lives.
  - d) And they did overcome these things.
- 5) 5<sup>th</sup>, look at the ones who first preached the gospel.
  - a) Lowly born Jews from a despised nation.
  - b) No position or power to recommend them, nor defend them among their enemies.
  - c) These men truly were “earthen vessels”.

#### **E. Obvious conclusion!**

- 1) These men could not have contrived such a religion.
- 2) That by just some words,
  - a) Men turned from the religion of their forefathers;
  - b) Forsook their evil associations & ways;
  - c) Overcame all obstacles to become Christians;
- 3) The Power of God had to be at work in all of this!!
- 4) The glory goes to God....the power is not in men and their devices.

## **II. A CONTRAST IN EARTHEN VESSELS. (4:8-9)**

#### **A. Compare the Lord’s earthen vessels to the world’s earthen vessels.**

- 1) All are earthen.
- 2) All are subject to similar stresses, fatigues, & strains.
- 3) The difference is in the power to deal with all of these and still be a useful tool in God’s hands.
  - a) Christians do not deal with them the same way.
  - b) They are ordinary people, but possessing an unordinary quality about them.
- 4) This makes manifest the power of God in their lives!

#### **B. How The Lord’s earthen vessels handle life’s vicissitudes.**

- 1) “*Troubled on every side, yet not distressed*”.
  - a) Opposed by adversaries every where they went.
  - b) Suffered special afflictions from such.
  - c) But not defeated & give up.
- 2) “*Perplexed, but not in despair*”
  - a) Caught in situations that they did not know how to get out of.
  - b) Stunned, stopped for the moment.
  - c) But not brought to despair.
  - d) They did not despair of winning the ultimate victory.

- e) "Being at a loss, but not utterly at a loss."
- 3) "*Persecuted, but not forsaken.*"
  - a) Pursued by their persecutors to try and discourage them.
  - b) But they are not forsaken by their God.
  - c) Heb. 13:5-6--- "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*"
- 4) "*Cast down, but not destroyed.*"
  - a) Put to the ground, humbled.
  - b) But not disabled from getting up & teaching again the glorious gospel of Christ.
  - c) Ps. 37:24--- "*Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.*"

### **III. WHY HAS GOD ORDAINED THE FACING OF DEATH FOR HIS PEOPLE? (4:10-12)**

#### **A. The fact of facing death.**

- 1) The Apostles & many early Christians illustrate the facing of death daily.
  - a) "*We die daily*"
  - b) Rom. 8:36--- "*As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*"
  - c) They suffered in their bodies similar persecutions to that of the Lord Jesus.
  - d) In a sense, His life & death was being relived in them.
- 2) And through the centuries, faithful Christians have suffered a similar fate.

#### **B. But why?**

- 1) So that God's power might be manifested to all.
  - a) Over & over again, the apostles were delivered by God's power.
  - b) To show that a dead impostor could not so deliver his apostles time & again.
- 2) Such also made manifest the life of Christ and the power it has in His followers' lives.

#### **C. But there is also a life & death cycle that needs to be seen here.**

- 1) It is all around us!
  - a) Winter (death-like) and then Spring (life again).
  - b) Insects...mate, lay eggs, to die...new life comes again.
  - c) A woman goes to gates of death to bring forth new life into the world.
- 2) Jesus stated the principle in Matt. 16:24-25.
  - a) In order to have life, there must be death.
  - b) Gal. 2:20
  - c) Rom. 6:2-4

#### **D. This death-life cycle is not only at the heart of conversion, but in the Christian life as well.**

- 1) To reach out to others is a cost to be paid.
  - a) It is a dying to self...becoming unselfish.
  - b) A willingness to be spent to help others.

- c) To become a servant to others, as Jesus was.
- 2) Jn. 12:23-25
  - a) The principle stated in regards to His coming death & resurrection to glory.
  - b) The principle applied to His followers then.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Illustration:
  - a) In 1860, a steamboat & a schooner collided at night during a storm on Lake Michigan.
  - b) The steamboat sank about a mile off-shore.
  - c) 279 of the 393 passengers drowned.
  - d) One of the heroes of this tragedy was a young student at Northwestern Univ., Edward Spencer.
  - e) He helped to save 17 people that night.
  - f) The strain on him brought on a condition that rendered him an invalid, confined to a wheelchair for life.
  - g) On his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, he was asked: "*What was his most vivid memory of that dreadful day.*"
  - h) His reply was: "*That not one of the persons I help to save returned to express their gratitude.*"
2. But maybe, even more important to our lesson.....
- a) Did any of the 17 saved, get a life-preserver and swim back out to help save others?
- b) May never know.
- c) But for sure, there are not many Edward Spencer in the world.
- d) People giving themselves freely to help others.
- e) But that is the kind of people Jesus is calling to follow him into a meaningful ministry!
3. Are we the earthen vessels Paul is speaking of here?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

1. God allowed Angels to preach His Gospel to the Lost.
2. Only humans are allowed to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Lost, but at a cost.
3. God had a reason for choosing who would preach His Gospel to the Lost.
4. God placed the power to save in the Gospel, not in the wisdom of men.
5. Paul said that God's people were persecuted, but not forsaken.
6. It is said of the Apostles that they died daily.
7. Jesus stated that in order to have life, there must be a death.
8. The Bible advocates a life-death cycle.
9. The life-death cycle is at the heart of conversion.
10. Jesus illustrated this principle while on earth.

*Lesson Nine*

## ***“THE SAME SPIRIT OF FAITH”***

**(II Corinthians 4:13-18)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. God's people have a Great Treasure to share with the world.
2. But sharing it isn't easy:
  - a) It takes diligence & steadfastness;
  - b) It takes courage to take a strong stand for truth;
  - c) There is a price to be paid in many instances:
    - 1—Rejection by those we want to teach;
    - 2—Various forms of persecution are often brought upon us;
    - 3—in some instances, death itself!
3. What gives true Christians the motivation to keep going and trying to teach the lost?
  - a) Paul first deals with the great value of faith in our lives.
  - b) Then, deals with the great value of afflictions.

**DISCUSSION****I. THE GREAT VALUE OF FAITH. (4:13-16)****A. We have the same great faith that O.T. saints possessed!**

- 1) He quotes from Ps. 116:10 to show this!
  - a) Read Ps. 116:1-19
  - b) David faced many trials.
    - 1—His faith is what kept him going!
    - 2—It caused him to speak out to others about trusting in God!
    - 3—God brought David safely through it all.
    - 4—Results:
      - a) He lifted up a cry of Salvation;
      - b) He called on the name of the Lord;
      - c) He paid his vows to the Lord in the presence of the people.
  - 2) Paul has just said that he, too, faced:
    - a) Afflictions, was perplexed, persecuted, cast down, given up to death.
    - b) But his faith sustained him.
    - c) God delivered him out of it all.

**B. This kind of faith then does two things primarily:**

- 1) It motivates us to speak.
  - a) “We also believe, and therefore speak”
  - b) Paul could not keep quite about his deliverance by the Lord.
    - 1—I Tim. 1:14-17
    - 2—Tit. 3:3-5
  - c) Paul regarded his salvation as the greatest of his possessions.
    - 1—Phil. 3:7-9a

- d) And he “KNEW” that He who raised up the Lord Jesus would also raise him up with Him.
- 1—II Tim. 1:12  
2—Look at Peter & John.....Acts 4:20  
3—Look at Jeremiah.....Jer. 20:9
- 2) It motivates us not to lose heart!
- a) *“For which cause we faint not”*
  - b) Satan cannot keep us from speaking.....  
1—Whatever he does, short of death;  
2—As long as we truly believe.
  - c) He cannot discourage us by Trials, Afflictions, Persecutions.....if we believe!
  - d) If he can cause us to doubt.....  
1—Then, we will no longer speak;  
2—And will lose heart.
  - e) He will end our aroma for Christ!

## **II. THE GREAT VALUE OF AFFLICTIONS. (4:15-17)**

### **A. These afflictions are called “Light”.**

- 1) They are “light” in view of the value or outcome of such.
  - a) *“The slight trouble of the passing hour”*
  - b) *“Our troubles are slight and short-lived”*
  - c) *“These troubles and sufferings of ours are, after all, quite small and won’t last very long”*
- 2) They are for only a “moment” in view of eternity!
  - a) *“Is achieving for us, beyond all proportions, an eternal weight of glory”*
  - b) *“Is piling up for me an eternal blessedness beyond all comparison”*
- 3) Suffering does not merit salvation, but:
  - a) It can cause us to realize where our help (GRACE) comes from to endure & not faint.
  - b) Phil. 4:11-13
  - c) II Cor. 4:15

### **B. The value of these afflictions:**

- 1) Makes us more aware of our mortality!
  - a) We are growing old!
  - b) Our time is short upon this earth!
  - c) We need to be thinking about what really matters!
  - d) A sense of FUTILITY must engulf those who put their trust in the physical, visible things.
  - e) They must lose heart as they see their bodies waste away.
  - f) But Paul’s sight was focused on the inner man, which is eternal.
  - g) And it can be renewed day by day by God’s grace.

- 2) Our faithfulness brings glory to God.
  - a) *"the greater the number to whom the grace is given, the greater is the praise to the glory of God"*
  - b) *"So that, as the bounding grace of God is shared by more and more, the greater may be the chorus of thanksgiving that ascends to the glory of God."*
- 3) These help us to realize what faith really is!
  - a) Heb. 11:1—*"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*
  - b) It is realizing that the unseen are the eternal realities.
  - c) They are unchanging & unending.
  - d) They give emotional stability to life & our work.
  - e) When we fail to set our sights on the unseen, we invite discouragement....a loss of heart!

**CONCLUSION**

1. The physical is perishing....the eternal is unending!
2. Faith keeps us:
  - a) Speaking the message of hope to a lost world;
  - b) Keeps us from becoming faint, losing heart.
3. Friend, where is your sight set...Temporal or Eternal things?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

1. This section of verses deal with faith and afflictions
2. The Apostle said that his faith sustained him in the midst of his afflictions.
3. It is one's faith that keeps him from fainting.
4. The Devil cannot discourage us by trials or afflictions if we truly believe.
5. Afflictions are called "light" because of their shortness of duration.
6. Suffering for Christ automatically brings salvation.
7. Afflictions make us more aware of our mortality.
8. Faithfulness in tribulations brings glory to God.
9. When we set our sights on the unseen, we tend to falter.
10. Faith keeps a Christian speaking the Gospel message to the lost.

*Lesson Ten*

## “OUR HOPE & OUR LABORS”

(II Cor. 5:1-11)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. In these verses, Paul is stressing the confidence of the Christian!
  - a) “For we know”
  - b) Uses the concept three times:
    - 1—5:1—“For we know...”
    - 2—5:6—“always confident, knowing that...”
    - 3—5:11—“knowing the....”
2. Upon what is this knowledge based, this assurance?
  - a) John 8:32---“***Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.***”
    - 1—They had come to a knowledge of that truth, and were made free!
    - 2—It is this continuing, growing knowledge of God’s truth that gives us confidence and assurance!
  - b) It is this growing knowledge of truth:
    - 1—That assures us of our Hope;
    - 2—That causes us to labor as we do!
3. Read verses 1-11, cutting out the parenthetical expressions:

(verse 1)---“***For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens***

(verses 5-6)---“***For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.***”

(verses 8-9)---“***We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.***”

**DISCUSSION**

### I. **WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR EARTHLY BODY IN VIEW OF OUR HOPE. (5:1-8)**

#### A. **It is earthly, physical, perishing!**

- 1) “*Earthly house of this tabernacle*”
  - a) Tent---temporary home....not permanent one.
  - b) “*earthly house, which is a tent*”
  - c) “*If our tent, that earthly body which is now our home....*”
  - d) “***If the earthly frame that houses us today....***”
- 2) “*were dissolved*”
  - a) Could be translated “destroyed”---Possible violent death.
  - b) “*dissolved*”---wasting away, gradual decay.
  - c) We are gradually dying daily....in physical sense!
  - d) II Cor. 4:16—“*our outward man perishes.*”

- 3) We know we are dying....the body goes back to dust.
- a) When it comes, how will we greet this solemn occasion?
  - b) What will be our frame of mind at death?
  - c) Can we say with Paul, “For we know”....have great confidence in the face of death!
- 1—To be uncertain, is defeat!  
2—The Christian needs to have confidence in the face of death!

**A. Our hope causes us to groan to be clothed with a heavenly body!**

- 1) This groaning is because of burdens of this life.
  - a) The weakness, misery, pain, sickness, etc.
  - b) We want this mortal body to be replaced with a body fit for eternal life & happiness!
  - c) I Cor. 15:53---“*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*”
- 2) But, this groaning is to be clothed upon, not unclothed!
  - a) Clothed upon with a house:
    - 1—Not made with hands ....(Men build houses of clay)
    - 2—But a building made by God.
    - 3—One that is eternal in the heavens!
  - b) Rom. 8:23---“*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*”
  - c) We don’t want to be found naked!
    - 1—To be found naked....means “NO HOPE”
    - 2—God has promised us an immortal body someday.
    - 3—Not to have assurance of this hope is to be naked!
  - d) We want a body that represents life to us!
- 3) It is God who has wrought us for this very thing!
  - a) In creating us, He designed us to this end!
  - b) In redeeming us, He has made this a reality!
- 4) And He has given us His Spirit as a guarantee of this!
  - a) His Spirit has not only revealed this promise to us.....
  - b) But confirmed it with miracles, wonders and signs.
  - c) And then, placed His Spirit within us.
  - d) The purpose of the indwelling Spirit:
    - 1—To brighten that desire in our hearts to be with the Lord as we grow older.
    - 2—To strengthen that desire to be pleasing to the Lord.
  - e) These should be our ever growing, consuming passion.
  - f) Every action, word, desire, relationship is to please Him.
  - g) Our occupation, recreation, music, books, dress, thoughts, money, movies, food, drink, etc., are to be brought under His control.

**C. We know that while we are in this body, we are absent from the Lord.**

- 1) Not in the sense of fellowship.
  - a) I John 1:7

- b) But in the sense, of the reality of the promised hope!
- 2) We would prefer to be absent from this body in order to be with the Lord.
  - a) Reason....we will be clothed upon with immortality!
  - b) Our confidence of this comes from God's promise.
  - c) The fear of putting off this mortal body is greatly lessened!
  - d) I Cor. 15:54-57
- 3) All of this is a matter of faith, not sight!
  - a) The confidence of our hope is not based on things that are seen, but on things unseen.
  - b) The unseen is the real....the seen is but the shadow...unreal!

## **II. OUR LABORS IN THE LORD. (5:9-11)**

- A. We want our actions to be pleasing, acceptable to the Lord.**
  - 1) This is our aim, for this we strive earnestly.
  - 2) To please the one that has done so much to please or satisfy our great needs!
- B. We do so in view of a coming judgment.**
  - 1) When we will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
  - 2) We are accountable for our actions, our lives, and our labors.
  - 3) This judgment will be based on our actions while in this mortal body....not after death!
  - 4) This judgment will be based on whether our actions have been good or bad, righteous or unrighteous, right or wrong.
- C. We also labor to persuade men to turn to God in Righteousness!**
  - 1) Because of the awesomeness of the Lord!
    - a) To stand in his presence in Judgment will be awesome!
    - b) For the unprepared, it will be a terrifying time!
  - 2) Our intention of doing good should be open & known by God.
  - 3) I trust that it is also understood in your hearts as well.
    - a) *"Yet my uprightness is manifest in the sight of God; and I hope also that it is manifested by the witness of your consciences."*
    - b) *"What I am is plain to God without disguise, plain also, I trust, to your own conscience."*

## **CONCLUSION**

1. So.....the servant of the Lord is:
  - a) Confident of his destiny;
  - b) Filled with the Spirit of God;
  - c) Longs for that heavenly home as the body ages;
  - d) Consumed with the desire to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things!
2. Do you have that confident hope of immortality?
  - a) Have you become a child of God by obedience to the gospel?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

- 1. Confidence as a Christian is not wrong.**
- 2. To be of value, confidence must be based on evidence.**
- 3. Our body is referred to as a tent or tabernacle by Paul.**
- 4. We are dying daily in a physical sense.**
- 5. The uncertain person is defeated before he begins.**
- 6. The Christian should “groan” to be clothed on with a spiritual, heavenly body.**
- 7. To be “unclothed” is to be without a body.**
- 8. The abiding Holy Spirit in the Christian is our assurance of a new spiritual body.**
- 9. “To be absent from the Lord” means we do not have fellowship with Him.**
- 10. Our confidence is not based on the things that are seen, but that are unseen.**

### *Lesson Eleven*

## “The Constraining Love of Christ”

(II Cor. 5:11-17)

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Read Vs. 10-11
  - a) Paul gives the basic reasons for his efforts to preach to the lost.
  - b) It is 3-fold!
2. 1<sup>st</sup> .... Knowing that all will be judged.
  - a) All will give an accounting to God for deeds done in this body.
  - b) Rom. 2:6-9
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> .... Knowing the terror of the Lord.
  - a) Paul knew the wrath of God would be revealed at Judgment.
  - b) Rom. 1:18---“**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.**”
  - c) Paul wanted to spare man that horrible punishment.
4. 3<sup>rd</sup> .... Knowing the love of the Lord. (v. 14)
  - a) Fear naturally comes before love.
  - b) Just like:
    - 1—Law comes before Grace.
    - 2—Conviction comes before conversion.
  - c) So, fear causes a man to open his heart to see the love of God extended to him.
5. Don’t confuse the motive that caused Paul to preach, and his message!
  - a) Paul’s motives for preaching were: coming judgment, coming punishment, and the love of God extended to mankind.
  - b) But, his message was good news!!
  - c) Man didn’t need to hear so much of judgment & punishment....should already be aware of that.
  - d) What they needed to hear was “good news”.
    - 1—Not “Sinners in the hands of an angry God”
    - 2—But “Sinners in the hands of a loving God, willing to forgive”
6. In the last part of verse 11:
  - a) Paul reverts back to why he is giving a defense of his actions.
  - b) He knew the Lord knew why he so acted, as well as what was in his heart.
  - c) He also hoped that the church there could see his sincerity in his actions.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **I. DON’T MISJUDGE MY REASONS FOR DEFENDING MYSELF. (5:12-14A)**

- A. “*We commend not ourselves to you again.*”
  - 1) His purpose was not to exalt himself or gain praise of men.
  - 2) He did not have pride in his position as an apostle to look down upon others.
- B. “*But give you occasion to glory on our behalf*”
  - 1) Give you an opportunity to be proud of us as a commissioned apostle of Christ, well qualified for the work.
  - 2) Give you an opportunity to have somewhat to answer my opponents.

**C. “To answer those who pride themselves or glory in appearance, and not in the heart.”**

- 1) Pride of position causes men to devalue those in lesser positions.
- 2) Paul’s critics had devalued him and his work to exalt themselves.
- 3) Their judgment was based on the outward, not inward.
- 4) On external qualities, as opposed to internal qualities.....
- 5) Such as sincerity, honesty, humility, kindness, genuine concern for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.
- 6) John 7:24---“*Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*”
- 7) James 2:1-12 condemns respecting the rich over the poor!

**D. How Paul wanted them to understand his actions!**

- 1) “*For whether we be beside ourselves*”
  - a) As some had evidently been saying!
  - b) Possibly pointing out that he is constantly exposing himself to dangers, etc.
  - c. Then, let it be understood, it is done to the glory of God.
- 2) “*or whether we be sober*”
  - a) In our right mind, acting more rational in their views.
  - b) Possibly shunning persecutions.
  - c) Then, let it be understood it is done for your benefit!

**E. He wanted them to understand the real reason for his actions!**

- 1) “*The love of Christ constraineth me*”
  - a) To brave the great perils;
  - b) To oppose the great powers;
  - c) To make the great sacrifices.....
  - d) Christ’s love caused him to do it all!
- 2) It was not Ambition, Money or Position...BUT LOVE!
  - a) Love had compressed all his energies into one direction!
  - b) It had turned Paul from:
    - 1—One willing to kill others for his convictions;
    - 2—To one willing to be killed for his convictions.
  - c) It was the POWER in his life that caused him to so live.

**II. NOW CONCERNING THIS LOVE THAT CHRIST HAS SHOWN. (5:14b-15)**

**A. It caused Christ to die for all men!**

- 1) Not just for Jew, but for Gentile as well.
- 2) The objects of Christ’s love:
  - a) John 15:13---“*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*”
  - b) Rom 5:8---“*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*”
  - c) John 12:32---“*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*”
- 3) The proofs of Christ’s love:
  - a) His leaving heaven to come to earth as a man. Phil. 2:5-8

- b) His ministry among men.
  - 1—Went about doing good.
  - 2—Healed the sick, lame, blind.
  - 3—Expelled demons & evil spirits.
  - 4—Pardoned sins.
- c) His death on the cross, with all its agonies...both physical and spiritual.
- d) His present intercession & care for us.

**B. 1<sup>st</sup> reason why He died for all men!**

- 1) Because all were under the curse of death.
- 2) Gal. 3:10—"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse...."
- 3) All needed redemption from death, from Adam to the present.
- 4) Christ's death is for the benefit of all...from Adam on!

**C. 2<sup>nd</sup> reason why He died for all men!**

- 1) To show how the redeemed should live.
- 2) Not unto themselves....
  - a) Not a selfish, egotistical life.
  - b) Not concerned only for their own interest, but for others.
  - c) Phil. 2:2-4
- 3) But as unto Christ.
  - a) For Christ's pleasure.
  - b) In gratitude for giving us life & hope, we seek to please him.
  - c) To imitate the kindness & love of God towards all men.

**III. AND NOW, IN VIEW OF THESE THINGS! (5:16-17)****A. "Wherefore, henceforth....."**

- 1) "We know no man after the flesh!"
- 2) A new social standard has now been given!
- 3) The world has wrong standards by which it judges men: Birth, Wealth, Office, Position, Looks, etc.
  - a) All outward & superficial....All wrong!!
  - b) It is like a huge boil on the face of unregenerate humanity!
  - c) It is like a cancer that eats out the heart of religion.
  - d) It threatens true discipleship.
  - e) It makes a mockery out of the religion of Christ!
- 4) The new social standard is:
  - a) Respect no man because of his nation, ancestors, station in life, etc.
  - b) That which shows that all men are equally dear to God.
  - c) That salvation is for all men, not just a select few.
- 5) Thus, if Paul's preaching to the Gentiles offended the Jews....
  - a) That's too bad!
  - b) But, he will not change his actions.

**B. He now illustrates his point with Christ!**

- 1) At one time, Paul said, he looked upon Christ in a fleshly way.
  - a) He regarded Christ from a human point of view before his conversion.
  - b) He saw Him as a DECEIVER.
  - c) Possibly, after his conversion.....  
 1—He gloried in the fact that He was a Jew by birth.  
 2—Gloried in this outward fact!
- 2) But, he adds....no longer!
  - a) We look at Him no more in this way!
  - b) Even though Jesus was a Jew by birth!
  - c) His death was for all men!

**C. Therefore, if any one is in Christ:**

- 1) He is a new creation (creature).
  - a) He is neither Jew nor Gentile, but a child of God.
  - b) A spiritual regeneration has taken place!
    - 1—His outlook changes
    - 2—He looks at people differently.
    - 3—He no longer looks at them from a human point of view.
    - 4—But rather from a Christ-view!
- 2) Paul's life well illustrates this!
  - a) Acts 9:1-2; 26:10-11
  - b) He saw people from a human point of view that caused him to act like he did!
    - 1—He did not value people, nor their rights or lives.
    - 2—He wanted to crush them & their movement!
  - c) But something happened to change all this.
    - 1—Paul encountered the risen Christ one day!
    - 2—And what a dramatic change took place!
    - 3—How differently he viewed others after that!
  - d) When his attitude changed towards Christ:
    - 1—It changed his attitude towards people.
    - 2—He valued them differently.
    - 3—“*From now on we regard no one from a human point of view.*”
    - 4—The reason... “*Christ died for all*”.
  - e) He now sees people in the light of the cross....lost & needing a Savior!

**D. “*The old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*”**

- 1) The wrong, former attitudes & actions have passed away.
  - a) The bad practices, bad attitudes, corrupt principles are now gone.
  - b) His former estimate of others has been done away!
    - 1—Not by rank, but by the heart.
    - 2—Not by station, but by the spirit within.
    - 3—Not by poverty, but by principles.
  - c) He no longer sees people in this way!
- 2) The new outlook has taken its place.
  - a) The way Christ views mankind has become his view.
  - b) The dignity to mankind has been greatly enhanced.

**CONCLUSION**

1. Gal. 3:26-28
2. The love of Christ now controls, motivates our attitudes & actions now.
3. How do you view people?
4. Are you a new creation in Christ?

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

1. Paul preached the Gospel because he knew all men would come into judgment someday.
2. Paul preached the Gospel because of God's love for mankind.
3. The Lost need to hear a message of hope, not condemnation.
4. Paul stated that it was the love of Christ that constrained him to do what he did.
5. Christ's death on the cross had both spiritual as well as physical afflictions.
6. Christ's death was for all men because all men are lost.
7. The world's standard for judging men is not the same as the Christian.
8. Salvation is to be offered to all men, not just a select few.
9. A person only becomes a new creature when he comes into Christ.
10. When we change our attitude towards Christ, we also change our attitude towards people.

*Lesson Twelve*

**“GOD’S DESIRE  
FOR MAN’S RECONCILIATION”**  
**(II Corinthians 5:18-21)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Paul has emphasized to God’s people at Corinth:
  - a) That all of God’s people need to be an AROMA of Christ to the World.
  - b) That He has placed this great treasure, The Gospel, in earthly vessels.
  - c) That His people need to know the Lord, as well as the Lost, in order to reach out with this Gospel.
2. And now, what this is all about is RECONCILIATION!
  - a) Not a reconciliation of God to man;
  - b) But of man to God!
3. The process of RECONCILIATION is stated & inferred in these few verses!
  - a) It is a two-fold process.
    - 1—God’s part in the process.
    - 2—Man’s part in the process.
  - b) One is of no avail without the other....It takes both!
  - c) Let’s look at that process!

**DISCUSSION****I. 1<sup>ST</sup>, THERE MUST BE A NEED SEEN FOR RECONCILIATION!****A. A fact widely understood is:**

- 1) There is a moral Ruler in this universe, and he rules by Law.
- 2) Man has not only rebelled against this Ruler, but has broken his Law as well.

**B. The Bible calls “Law-breaking”, Lawlessness or Sin. (I John 3:4)**

- 1) Again, this is a Truth well understood by mankind in general.
- 2) The Bible states that all have sinned & fallen short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23)

**C. Man thus becomes an enemy of God.**

- 1) He is afraid of God and His wrath because he knows he has sinned.
- 2) Like Adam & Eve.....When God approached, they were afraid, and went and hid from God (they thought).

**D. But the worst thing about sin is its threatened punishment!**

- 1) Adam & Eve were warned, “If you eat, you die”.
  - a) They ate, both of them.
  - b) They died that day (spiritually) .... Alienated from God by Sin.
  - c) And then, were driven from the Garden of Eden to die physically.
  - d) God’s punishment upon the wicked world in Noah’s day shows that sin will be punished (Gen. 6:5-8; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:46)
- 2) Sin results in alienation, estrangement, and broken fellowship with God.
- 3) Sin is the source of all of our miseries.

**E. One more fact must be recognized!**

- 1) Man cannot remove his sin nor its consequences upon his soul.
- 2) Since he cannot live God's Law perfectly, he is under the curse of death. (Gal. 3:10).
- 3) And he has no means of removing this curse from his soul.

**II. GOD'S PLAN OF RECONCILIATION. (5:18-21)****A. The Desire for Reconciliation was on God's part.**

- 1) Possibility of reconciliation originated with God.
- 2) "All things are of God"
  - a) It didn't originate with man.
  - b) God planned it and worked the plan.
  - c) He took hundreds of years to bring it about in the fullness of time.
- 3) His love is what made all this come true.

**B. But God had a tremendous problem.**

- 1) He had His Law to uphold, to stand behind.
- 2) His Law condemned sin and the sinner.
- 3) God could not be JUST and ignore His Law!
- 4) God's great Love worked out a just way to reconcile man back to Himself.

**C. Jesus came and met the demands of the Law!**

- 1) Jesus was "he that knew no sin".
- 2) He lived in a sin-filled world, among sinners, but never sinned!
- 3) "He was tempted in all point like as we are, but without sin" (Heb. 4:15)
- 4) He became man's sin substitute.
  - a) "He hath made him to be sin for us"
  - b) Isa. 53:6--- "He hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."
  - c) Isa. 53:10--- "To make his soul an offering for sin"
  - d) Isa. 53:11--- "for he shall bear their iniquities."
- 5) "There was a real laying of our sins on the Lamb of God, so there could be a real laying on of Divine Righteousness upon pardoned mankind."

**D. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself."**

- 1) What is reconciliation?
  - a) Man's sin had brought on rebellion & enmity toward God.
  - b) God wants to mend that relationship with His creatures.
  - c) It is full & complete pardon for his disobedience.
  - d) It is a restoring of that broken relationship.
  - e) The one sinned against, takes the 1<sup>st</sup> step to reconciliation.
- 2) "Not imputing their trespasses unto them."
  - a) God is willing no longer to hold our sins against us.
  - b) He no longer will reckon us guilty of sin.
  - c) Because Christ's death in our stead made this possible justly.
- 3) "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."
  - a) So that we can be looked upon as righteous, when we really were not.
  - b) Made possible through Christ's death.
  - c) We take upon us the Righteousness that Christ gives!

- d) It is done upon our obedient faith to the Gospel!

### **III. MAN'S PART IN RECONCILIATION.**

#### **A. Man must have a knowledge of God's plan of Reconciliation.**

- 1) His Son first came to make known the factual reality of this Plan.
- 2) The Chosen Apostles of Jesus were then to fully reveal God's Plan and write it down for future generations to know of it.
  - a) *"And gave us the ministry of reconciliation."*
  - b) *"Entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."*
- 3) So that an estranged world could hear the wonderful message of the offer of reconciliation with God.
- 4) And thus, be able to accept God's gracious offer....God's great gift to sinful man.
- 5) And then, God depends upon all reconciled persons to carry this same great message to the lost around them.

#### **B. "We are ambassadors for Christ"**

- 1) The Apostles & all redeemed people become personal representatives to speak God's message to man.
- 2) We act on behalf of another.
- 3) We have no message of our own, it is God's message.
- 4) It is a recognition that Jesus' death is worthless unless announced to the world.
- 5) And we are those who must proclaim it for the world to hear!

#### **C. It is as though God "is beseeching you by us."**

- 1) It is as though God is using our lips to speak to the lost about being reconciled to God.
- 2) He has taken broken vessels and transformed them into vessels unto honor.
- 3) And He has placed in us this great treasure, so the world might:
  - a) Both hear and see in us God's desire for reconciliation.
- 4) We urge & entreat men to accept the gospel and enjoy the blessings of reconciliation with God.

#### **D. We stand before people in Christ's stead.**

- 1) He cannot be here in person.....so we speak in his stead.
- 2) We urge people to be reconciled to God through Him.
- 3) We pass on the Words of Christ Himself....
  - a) Matt. 23:37--- *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"*

### **CONCLUSION**

1. Have you heard the message of reconciliation through Christ?
2. What has been your reaction?
  - a) Could you truly see the Love of God towards man in his great plan of reconciliation?
  - b) Or, were you just not interested in what God has to say to you?

3. As a personal representative of God through Christ, we appeal to you, we urge you to accept God's offer of reconciliation!
4. Come Believing in Jesus, Make a decision to turn from Sin to obedience to God, and upon a confession of faith in Christ, be immersed for remission of sins!

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

#### True or False

- 1. The Gospel is not a message of Reconciliation of God to man, but man to God.**
- 2. For Reconciliation to take place both God and man have to be involved.**
- 3. Sin is defined as the breaking of God's Law.**
- 4. Man becomes the enemy of God when he stops listening to God.**
- 5. The worst thing about sin is its threatened punishment.**
- 6. Man has no power to remove his own sin.**
- 7. The Desire for reconciliation was on God's part at first, not man's.**
- 8. Jesus made it possible for God to uphold His Law and still forgive man.**
- 9. Man has to have a knowledge of God's plan of redemption before he can be reconciled to God.**
- 10. God beseeches the lost to be reconciled through the Christian.**

*Lesson Thirteen*

## “THE FAITHFUL WORKER”

(II Corinthians 6:1-10)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. God's Plan of Reconciliation has just been explained:
  - a) It's greatness in concept;
  - b) It's dignity (personal representatives of God);
  - c) It's necessity!
2. He now entreats, urges, beseeches those who teach this gospel to:
  - a) Show the utmost faithfulness & diligence in their efforts;
  - b) And not to invalidate the great plan of God by their unfaithfulness or neglect.
  - c) And most of all....do not receive the Grace of God in Vain.
    - 1—They had been saved by God's Grace.
    - 2—That grace had provided the means of propagating this message.
3. This lesson: How could we be sure of not receiving it in vain!

**DISCUSSION****I. BY RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRESENT. (6:1-2)****A. We are workers together!**

- 1) All of us are or should be involved in this great work of reconciliation.
- 2) It is a great work....that requires all of us!

**B. And the emphasis is....."Now is the Time" to work!**

- 1) Not tomorrow, next month, next year....but now!
- 2) Procrastination will not get the job done.
- 3) And we need to recognize:
  - a) That receptivity is often an open door for a limited time.
  - b) When the door is open, we need to enter it.
  - c) Take advantage of opportunities open to us.

**II. BY GIVING NO OFFENSE IN ANYTHING. (6:3)****A. Give no reason for anyone to blaspheme the gospel.**

- 1) Tit. 2:5---(Young women are to so live) "*that the word of God be not blasphemed.*"
- 2) Bring no shame to the great work of Reconciliation.
- 3) When blame can be laid at the feet of a Christian, it weakens his message of salvation to the lost.

**B. Look how men in the world bring offense:**

- 1) Business men degrade commerce by their bad actions.
- 2) Doctors degrade their field of medicine by their bad actions.
- 3) Judges degrade the justice system by their bad actions.
- 4) Politicians degrade the legislative system by their bad actions.

**C. But how much more so....how much worse.....**

- 1) For a Christian to degrade God's Plan of Reconciliation by ungodly actions.
- 2) Our actions are critical!!

- 3) They can undermine, cause a stumblingblock before others.

### **III. BY APPROVING OURSELVES BY OUR ATTITUDES & ACTIONS. (6:4-10)**

#### **A. We must uphold the dignity of our work as servants of God.**

- 1) By correct doctrine (sound & healthy);
- 2) By a godly life (privately & publicly);
- 3) By godly attitudes
- 4) By willingness to suffer hardships & wrongs in the right spirit.

#### **B. Paul now gives a picture of what he endured to avoid bringing offense. (Paul illustrates with his own life)**

- 1) He endured wrongs patiently. (6:4-5)
  - a) He endured all kinds of afflictions;
  - b) He endured hunger & other necessities of life;
  - c) He endured extreme pressures (distresses of life);
  - d) He received many, many stripes without complaint;
  - e) He had been imprisoned many times for his work in preaching the gospel;
  - f) He had been mobbed several times & barely escaped death.
  - g) His labors took him all over the world;
  - h) He spent many sleepless nights;
  - i) He was forced to “fast” time after time because of conditions.
  - j) BUT ALL WAS ENDURED PATIENTLY!
- 2) How he was able to deal with these things. (6:6-8a)
  - a) By pureness (chastity, sincerity---singleness of motive)
  - b) By knowledge (enlarged view of God’s providence in his life).
  - c) By long-suffering (enduring injury & insult, but no desire to retaliate....forgiving spirit).
  - d) By kindness (returning good for evil, gentleness, courteous)
  - e) By the Holy Spirit (Under the influence of the teachings of the Holy Spirit).
  - f) By love unfeigned (Sincere love for God & Man....shown in his behavior).
  - g) By the Word of Truth (Held to & constantly taught the Truth of God to others.....MADE SENSE).
  - h) By the Power of God (Phil. 4:13).
  - i) By the means of the armor of Righteousness (upright behavior on all sides, in all circumstances).
  - j) By dealing with honor & dishonor from men.
  - k) By dealing with evil reports and good reports from men.
  - l) He would not let these hinder his faithfulness....NOR OUR’S!!!
- 3) By realizing that things are not what they seem to be. (6:8-10)
  - a) Accused of being a deceiver, but knew he was truthful.
  - b) Accused of being a dying man like everyone else, but knew he was alive in Christ.
  - c) Tried by suffering, but not destroyed, stopped.
  - d) Brought to times of sorrow, but yet rejoicing in the Lord.

- e) Poor himself, but making others rich with the knowledge of salvation.
- f) Destitute, but in reality possessing that which really matters.

**CONCLUSION**

1. One of Jesus' famous sayings was: "***Judge not by appearance, but judge righteous judgment.***" (John 7:24)
  - a) Mankind judges by outward, material things, things happening to them at that moment.
  - b) But the Christian has a different view of things that gives him courage and strength to endure patiently in this life.
  - c) What the world would see as undesirable, may be of immense value to one who has a spiritual outlook.
2. God has entrusted the great work of reconciliation to His people:
  - a) Let's not bring an offense to undermine this great & vital work;
  - b) Let's approve our selves by the way we conduct our lives as Christians;
  - c) Let's be faithful to our task!
3. God is calling for man to be reconciled to Himself.
  - a) He says you are an enemy, in rebellion, disbelieving & disobedient.
  - b) But He is willing to forgive you and bring you back into fellowship with Himself.
  - c) Will you be reconciled to God today!!
  - d) Be reconciled, or Lost forever!

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION****True or False**

- 1. The Christian can invalidate God's plan of Redemption for lost mankind.
- 2. Receptivity is an open door for a limited time.
- 3. We can bring offense to the Gospel in the same way that men bring shame to their businesses.
- 4. The Christian needs to uphold the dignity of his work as a servant of God.
- 5. Paul was mobbed several times evidently, narrowly escaping death.
- 6. The Christian can cause people to blaspheme the name of God.
- 7. The Apostle did not allow anything to weaken his faithfulness to God.
- 8. What the world may consider as being undesirable may be of immense value to one who has a spiritual outlook.
- 9. Paul was destitute at times, but in reality possessing that which really mattered.
- 10. God message to man is "be reconciled or be lost forever!"







