

Paul's Letters to the Church at Corinth

Examine Yourselves!

2 Corinthians 13

Lesson 21

*Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
May 26, 2013*

The Hidden Power of the Gospel

- ▶ Invisible reality
 - Death of Christ – “crucified with Christ”
 - Resurrection life of Christ – “nevertheless I live”
 - Union with Christ in His death and resurrection
- ▶ Visible reality
 - Share the sufferings of Christ (1:5)
 - Vessels of clay (4:7)
 - Thorn in the flesh (12:9)
- ▶ We walk by faith, not by sight (5:7)

The nature of Christian ministry

- ▶ The true ministry (1-6)
 - Proclamation of Jesus Christ (1:19; 4:5; 11:4)
 - Perfecting holiness in the fear of God (7:1)
- ▶ Grace received and dispensed (8-9)
 - Giving from poverty
 - Modeling Christ
- ▶ The ministry in action – Paul the apostle (10-13)
 - Response to criticism of his apostleship
 - Human weakness and divine strength
 - Not a defense of himself (12:19)

The Beginning and the Ending

- ▶ A letter of comfort (1:1-11)
 - Sharing the sufferings of Christ (1:5)
 - Relying on God who raises the dead (1:9)
 - The God of all comfort
- ▶ Paul ministers to the church at Corinth
 - A warning (13:1-4)
 - A charge (13:5-10)
 - An exhortation (13:11-14)

A Warning (13:1-4)

- ▶ Third visit
 - Visit #1 on 2nd Missionary Journey
 - Visit #2 from Ephesus on 3rd Missionary Journey (2:1)
 - Visit #3 on 3rd Missionary Journey
- ▶ “I will not spare them”
 - False teachers (11:3-4)
 - Immorality (12:21; 1 Cor 6:9-11)
 - Tendency to discord (12:20)
 - Sin noted in 1 Corinthians 5 has been settled (2:5-11)

What can Paul do?

- ▶ Taking evidence (13:1; Deut 19:15)
- ▶ Weapons are not of the flesh (10:4-6)
 - Ephesians 6:12-13 – not flesh and blood; the armor of God
 - Deliver to Satan (1 Cor 5:5-6)
 - Church discipline (Matt 18:15-20)
 - Warn and avoid a divisive person (Titus 3:10-11)
- ▶ Is Paul the man for this task?
 - He has just presented himself as weak (12:10)
 - The example of Christ (13:3)
 - Paul will “live with Him (Christ) by the power of God”

Proof that Christ is in Paul

- ▶ A war of words – “Christ is speaking in me” (13:3)
- ▶ Strength of Christ
 - “He is not weak in dealing with you” (13:3)
 - 8:9 – we are strong through His poverty/weakness
 - 13:4 – Christ lives by the power of God
- ▶ Paul’s authority came through the spoken Word
 - 1 Cor 1:18 – preaching: folly v. power
 - 1 Cor 5:4-5 – spirit and power of the Lord Jesus present

A Charge to the Church (13:5-10)

- ▶ Examine yourselves!
- ▶ Are you in the faith?
 - A body of truth
 - Truth to be believed
- ▶ Is Christ in you?
 - Not mere assent to a body of truth
 - A relationship with Christ

Examine Yourselves!

- ▶ What is the faith?
 - The Bible is God's Word
 - The Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – Teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness

Examine Yourselves!

- ▶ What does it mean – Christ in you?
- ▶ Gal. 2:20 - Christ lives in me – death to the world
- ▶ 1:5 – share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings
- ▶ 2:14-16 – the aroma of Christ to God”
- ▶ 3:3 – you are a letter from Christ written . . .
- ▶ 4:10 – always carrying the death of Jesus in the body
- ▶ 5:14-15 – the love of Christ controls us

Examine Yourselves!

- ▶ 5:17 – a new creation in Christ
- ▶ 5:20 – ambassadors for Christ
- ▶ 5:21 – in Him, the righteousness of God
- ▶ 6:14f – no unequal yoke (cf. Matt 11:28-30)
- ▶ 8:9 – rich through His poverty
- ▶ 10:7 – Christ's possession

Examine Yourselves!

- ▶ 11:3 – sincere and pure devotion to Christ
- ▶ 11:10 – the truth of Christ is in me
- ▶ 11:23 – servants of Christ
- ▶ 12:9 – power of Christ rests upon me
- ▶ The daily work of the believer

Paul's Prayer (13:7-10)

- ▶ Restoration – bring to completion or perfection (v9b)
 - Not sin (v7)
 - Do right (v7)
 - Be strong (v9)
- ▶ No concern for himself but for them
 - Rejoices in their strength
 - A ministry of edification (10:8; 12:19; 13:10)
 - 1 Thess 3:6-10 – “we live if you stand fast in the Lord”
 - Immune to criticism that he appears to be a failure (v7)
 - Writing to avoid having to be harsh (v10)

Final Exhortations (13:11-14)

- ▶ Rejoice – satisfied contentment
- ▶ Aim for restoration – perfection
- ▶ Comfort one another – encouragement
- ▶ Agree with one another – live in harmony
- ▶ Live in peace – tranquility; God of peace with you
- ▶ Greet one another with a holy kiss – love

A Trinitarian Blessing

- ▶ Grace of Lord Jesus Christ
 - Represents all of salvation (8:9)
- ▶ Love of God (the Father)
 - John 3:16 – first cause
- ▶ Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
 - Participation; partnership; union and communion

Lessons from Corinthian Epistles

- ▶ The wisdom of God v. the foolishness of man
- ▶ The strength of God v. the weakness of man
- ▶ A spiritual warfare
- ▶ The Christian ministry
- ▶ Examine yourself!