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!