

**WESLEYAN HERITAGE Library**

*Commentaries*

**BEET'S COMMENTARY  
— II CORINTHIANS —**

By

*Joseph Agar Beet, D.D.*

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without  
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

Wesleyan Heritage Publications  
© 1998

**A**  
**Commentary on . .**  
**St. Paul's Epistles to**  
**the Corinthians . .**

**Volume 2**  
**Second CORINTHIANS**

By  
**JOSEPH AGAR BEET, D.D.**

## II CORINTHIANS

### PREFACE

The aim and method of the present volume are similar to those pursued in my *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. I have endeavored, by careful grammatical study of St. Paul's words, to trace the line of thought they were designed to convey; and to look, through his actual thoughts while writing, into his abiding conception of the Gospel and of Christ. The various elements of this conception, thus obtained, I have arranged in order along the course of my exposition; and have compared them, in the concluding dissertations, with the results gained in my volume on Romans. This orderly arrangement and comparison of the practical results of exposition give to this commentary a claim to be, like its predecessor, a contribution to Systematic Theology. And I hold firmly that the method here adopted is the only safe pathway to a correct and comprehensive and connected view of the truths which, through the lips of Christ and through the intelligence and the pen of His Apostles, God has made known to men.

The peculiar subject-matter of the Epistles to the Corinthians makes them to be also a record of St. Paul's movements a reflection of his surroundings, and a revelation of his inmost spiritual life. All these, St. Paul's movements, surroundings, and spiritual life, I have with the utmost care tried to reproduce and combine, in order thus to obtain a view, as full and correct as possible, of the great Apostle and of an apostolic church. Consequently, the present volume claims to be also a contribution to the Biography of St. Paul and to the Early History of the Christian Church.

A conspicuous feature of this volume, as of the last, is its direct reference, unique I believe among commentaries, to the Evidences of Christianity. At great length I have developed the proof that the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians came, practically as we have them now, from the pen of Paul. To those familiar with these epistles and with their literature, this proof may seem superfluous. For they know that no one calls it in question. But for my readers generally I thought it well thus to reveal the absolute strength of this first link in the historic chain which supports the Christian hope. And this example of absolute historic certainty, taking firm and visible hold of unquestionable matters of fact, is of great value as a standard with which to compare other historic evidence. The first great link of evidence here exposed to view receives its practical worth from the succeeding links unveiled in Dissertation I. of my volume on *Romans*, links sustaining our most deeply cherished hopes. To the great arguments there expounded, the argument of this volume is altogether subordinate.

The method I have adopted is the best approach to the credentials of Christianity. Many popular writers on this subject set themselves to prove that the Bible is all true. But whoever attempts this undertakes a task involving immense scholarship and very much which the general reader must take on trust; and exposes himself, and those who follow him, to attack along an extended line and from innumerable points. For every assault upon the historic correctness of a statement in the Bible, unless repelled, shakes his position. But against the line of argument pursued in these volumes such objections have no bearing whatever. For, without assuming or attempting to prove the Divine authority or historic truth of the Bible, and therefore without pledging ourselves to the correctness of all its statements, we have traced the Gospel, which we have stated in plain terms, by evidence

tested according to the principles of ordinary historic credibility, to the lips of Christ; and have discovered reliable evidence that He claimed to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that in proof of His claim God raised Him from the dead. In other words, the witnesses we have interrogated have led us into the presence of the Great Teacher, to the cross on which He died, and to His empty grave.

This line of investigation is also the best avenue to criticism of the date, authorship, and credibility of all other parts of the Old or New Testaments. For, from the point of view thus gained we can survey securely and calmly and clearly the entire domain of sacred scholarship. By reaching first, under guidance of numerous witnesses comparatively near to us, a firm ground for our faith, we are the better prepared to investigate matters further from our day or not attested by so abundant evidence.

But in every case the investigation must accord with the universal laws of human credibility. To attempt to withdraw the matters of fact stated in the Bible from this supreme court of appeal is as absurd as for a man to claim that because he is a Christian his conduct must not be tried by the laws of human morality. And, just as these laws of morality reveal the grandeur and the divine origin of that Gospel which both reveals a still higher morality and gives us power to realize it in our own lives, so the laws of human credibility reveal the absolute certainty of the Great Facts of Christianity and thus reveal in the drama of human history an historical Person infinitely higher than man.

Amid the infinite variety of opinion, even among professed Christians, about the Bible and its contents, opinions shading imperceptibly one into another along the whole line, two extreme groups are easily distinguished, those who deviate furthest from, and those who cling most tenaciously to, the traditional teaching of the churches. About each of these groups I have something to say.

To many writers who have denied the Great Facts for which in these volumes I have strenuously contended, Biblical Scholarship and the Church of Christ owe, by the kind Providence of God, an immense debt. Even the spiritual indifference with which some of them have handled sacred subjects has not been without advantage. For then it has left them free from the prejudice which has warped the judgment of so many earnest Christians. And their devotion to the philosophic study of the sacred languages and of the text and narratives and teaching of the Bible, looking at all these from a human point of view, has produced the best results. For, like the Personal Word, the Written Word is thoroughly human as well as divine. But, while cheerfully acknowledging this debt, I notice in many of their followers, of whom not a few are honest and earnest seekers after truth, a wonderful readiness to build up important theories on the scantiest foundation, and to accept with amazing confidence an hypothesis unheard of till yesterday. One is tempted to think that some of them make up for lack of faith by a large share of credulity.

On the other hand, very many who cling firmly to teaching which they and their fathers have proved to be a power of God to salvation betray an overweening satisfaction with even the details of their religious beliefs. All opinions new to them, they meet at once with hostility, and in proportion as these opinions differ from their own. And, to them, sacred scholarship seems to be of value chiefly as a weapon to defend their own views. But, surely, the most infatuated theologian cannot believe that, amid the infinite variety of religious opinions, his own system of doctrine is

absolutely correct and all others in error in proportion as they deviate from it. And if, as we cannot deny, error and imperfection cling to all human conceptions of the divine, and all error conceals some truth and obscures the harmony of related truths and thus lessens the moral power of the Truth in our hearts, it should ever be our aim to correct our own mistakes and to obtain fuller and deeper knowledge. Only those who are willing and eager to be both taught and corrected can correct others. Again, I am compelled to say that many popular theological works on what may be called the conservative side betray, by ignoring important adverse evidence, a very imperfect acquaintance with the facts of the case, at which they seem unwilling or unable to look; and, frequently, an utter absence of original investigation of the matter in hand. The chief aim of some writers seems to be, not to elucidate the subject, but merely to overthrow an opponent's argument. But it should never be forgotten that a reply which to persons unacquainted with the matter seems very clever may yet do nothing to prove the truth of the doctrine attacked; or even to remove objections to it. For, to those familiar with the whole case, many objections, like all good arguments, suggest much more than lies on the surface. Moreover, unless a man has positive teaching to offer he had better not write at all. For mere negations never satisfy.

Our only safeguard amid the Babel of opinions around us is a fuller and more accurate knowledge of Holy Scripture. This alone will enable us to distinguish, in teaching new to us, the true from the false. And it is not too much to hope that such fuller knowledge will not only preserve us from disquietude, but will reveal to us a nearer and clearer view of the Son of God, and thus work in our hearts and lives a richer likeness to Him. And this is the true aim of all Biblical Scholarship.

Throughout this work I have endeavored at every point and as far as possible to give proof of all I say, so as to make the fewest and least possible demands on the implicit confidence of my readers. Of this, my dissertation on the chronology of these epistles is a good example. And I think that this dissertation will prove that even for ordinary readers the details of the historic criticism of the New Testament, when clearly stated, have interest. For similar reasons I have discussed the date of the epistles to the Thessalonians, the authorship of the Book of Acts, and that of the Epistle of Clement. Necessarily, the validity of my proofs depends on the correctness of my quotations. But almost all these the English reader may test for himself in Clark's *Ante-Nicene Library*. And by so doing he will gain an intelligent conviction such as can never be derived from mere quotations.

I have also endeavored to distinguish the different degrees of confidence which different proofs warrant. Sometimes we have evidence which outweighs all that can be said on the other side but is not such as to remove doubt. And again, there may be evidence which justifies a confidence hardly to be distinguished from certainty and yet is inferior to other evidence open to no question whatever. Of this last, the proof that St. Paul wrote these epistles is a specimen. Upon evidence of this kind rest all the Great Facts of the Gospel. A grade lower is the evidence that the Fourth Gospel is from the pen of the Apostle John. This various worth and importance of various evidence I have kept in view throughout the reasoning of these volumes.

All quotations have been carefully verified. Except two, where the source is mentioned, all have been taken from the original works. A few errors which unfortunately have crept into my pages are noted below.

Like most modern commentators, I have given a table of contents of each epistle. These are of great value as affording a connected view of the whole epistle and of the mutual relation of its parts. A special feature of this work is that the titles of my Sections, read consecutively, form an outline of the epistles: the titles of the Divisions form another and still shorter outline. These outlines, the student will do well to keep constantly before him.

In addition to the tables of contents, I have frequently and from various points taken a retrospect of the ground already passed over, and have summarized the results gained. This may expose me to the charge of repetition. And my deep conviction of the immense importance, for intelligent and thorough comprehension, of going again and again over the same ground, has made me the less reluctant to look back at the same objects from different points of view.

The extracts from the Epistle of Clement afford a most instructive comparison and contrast with the Epistles of Paul. The references to the words of Christ, and the quotations from the Old Testament, are specially interesting, as revealing the form in which these were current in the first century. The influence of St. Paul's epistles, and the inferiority of the work of Clement, are conspicuous throughout.

Appendix B supplements Introd. iii. It marks out almost the whole area still open to doubt and of practical importance in these epistles; and will give the reader some idea of the frequent contradiction of the best documents and of the difficult task before the Textual Critic.

In addition to the commentaries mentioned in the preface to my volume on *Romans*, the work on these Epistles by the late lamented Dean Stanley has frequently and in various ways been useful to me. Of German writers, I have the able commentary of Osiander, and the very good and more recent one published by Kloepper. Of recent popular commentaries, the contribution of Dean Plumptre to Bishop Ellicot's *Commentary for English Readers* is, like everything from his pen, excellent. Canon Evans' work upon the First Epistle in the *Speaker's Commentary* is of great value, especially in its frequent renderings of St. Paul's words and in its first rate Greek scholarship. Occasionally, even in matters of grammar, I have ventured to dissent from the writer; but never without respectful consideration. I am also under obligations to Canon Evans' papers in *The Expositor*, vol. iii. new series, on the Revised Version. Also very good is Mr. Waite's contribution on the Second Epistle.

Of biographies of St. Paul, I have for many years owed much to the able and attractive work of Conybeare and Howson, which is by no means superseded now. Of equal value, especially for its abundant and well-chosen quotations from all sources and for its beautiful engravings, is the second edition of Lewin's *St. Paul*. His *Fasti Sacri* has also been, as a collection of facts, of great use to me. But he frequently builds up conclusions on very insufficient data and bases arguments (e.g. on **#Ac 18:21** in F. S. p. lxiv. f; in p. lxxiii. on **#Ac 27:16**) on readings indisputably spurious. Consequently, while his laborious collection of facts lays us under heavy obligation, his deductions from these facts must be received with great caution. These works, of which the value is chiefly in details, are supplemented by the living picture of the great Apostle, moving and speaking before us as a man among men, skilfully and beautifully painted in the great work of Canon Farrar. Of Neander's *Planting of the Christian Church* I have spoken in my former volume.

Quite different from the above, and written from an altogether different point of view, a point of view far removed from my own, the more valuable perhaps because of this difference, are F. C. Baur's scholarly and thoughtful work on *Paul the Apostle* and Renan's attractive volumes. These and others of the same school I have had constantly in mind, especially while writing Dissertations I. and II., and Dissertation I. of my *Romans*; and have endeavored to disprove their chief conclusions. But it was needless to quote them.

A few words now about the remainder of this series, I purpose to publish next a small volume on the Epistle to the Galatians; thus completing the Epistles written during St. Paul's third missionary journey. Then, if life and strength and opportunity be granted me will follow a volume on Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon; and another volume on Thessalonians, Timothy, and Titus. These I hope to supplement by a volume discussing St. Paul's teaching as a whole, and its relation to that of the other New Testament writers. These are my purposes. Their accomplishment is with God.

WARRINGTON,

*1st September, 1882.*

## II CORINTHIANS

# CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

- Sec. i. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT
- Sec. ii. ARE THE EPISTLES GENUINE?
- Sec. iii. ARE OUR COPIES AND VERSIONS CORRECT?
- Sec. iv. THE CITY OF CORINTH
- Sec. v. PAUL AND THE CHURCH OF CORINTH

### EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND EPISTLE

#### DIV. I. REVIEW OF RECENT EVENTS. CHS. I.—VII.

- Sec. 1. Ch. I. 1-11. Salutation. Praise to God for encouragement and deliverance in great peril.
- Sec. 2. Ch. I. 12-II. 4. Paul's reason for not coming to Corinth.
- Sec. 3. Ch. II. 5-11. He requests them to receive back the excommunicated man.
- Sec. 4. Ch. II. 12—III. 6. Praise for God's manifest approval of his labors.
- Sec. 5. Ch. III. 6-11. As minister of the more glorious Covenant.
- Sec. 6. Ch. III. 12—IV. 6. This is not disproved by some men's rejection of the Gospel which he proclaims without reserve.
- Sec. 7. Ch. IV. 7—V. 10. He proclaims it amid deadly peril, which, however, reveals the power of God; and cannot deter him, for it will be followed by endless life.
- Sec. 8. Ch. V. 11—VI. 10. Christ's love and Paul's commission from God move him to act as becomes an ambassador of God.
- Sec. 9. Ch. VI. 11—VI. 1. He begs that his love to the Corinthians be returned; and exhorts them to separate themselves from all defilement.
- Sec. 10. Ch. VII. 2-16. He is filled with joy by good news about his readers; and is not now sorry that he wrote to them his former letter. In his joy Titus shares.

#### DIV. II. THE COLLECTION FOR THE POOR AT JERUSALEM. CHS. VIII., IX.

- Sec. 11. Ch. VIII. 1-15. By the example of the Macedonians, Paul urges his readers to perform their own purpose of liberality.
- Sec. 12. Ch. VIII. 16—IX. 5. He has sent Titus and others, that the Collection may be ready when he arrives. [TITUS.]
- Sec. 13. Ch. IX. 6-15. He suggests a large and free gift; which will not only relieve distress, but also bring praise to God.



## DIV. III. PAUL'S REPLY TO HIS OPPONENTS. CHS. X.—XIII.

- Sec. 14. Ch. X. Paul begs them not to force him to use his divinely given authority, the limits of which he has never exceeded.
- Sec. 15. Ch. XI. 1-15. Paul's boasting: his refusal of maintenance;
- Sec. 16. Ch. XI. 16-33. His tuffs, perils, and hardships;
- Sec. 17. Ch. XII. 1-11. His rapture to paradise, and thorn in the flesh.
- Sec. 18. Ch. XII. 12-18. His credentials to, and love for, his readers.
- Sec. 19. Ch. XII. 19—XIII. 10. Unless the offenders repent, he will reluctantly give them severe proof of his authority.
- Sec. 20. Ch. XIII. 11-13. Farewell.

## DISSERTATIONS

- Diss. i. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS COMPARED WITH THOSE TO THE CORINTHIANS.
- Diss. ii. THE BOOK OF ACTS COMPARED WITH THESE THREE EPISTLES.
- Diss. iii. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THESE EPISTLES.
- Diss. iv. PAUL, AND THE CHURCH OF CORINTH AS HERE PORTRAYED.
- Diss. v. SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

## APPENDIX

- App. A. THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT OF ROME.
- App. B. DOUBTFUL VARIOUS READINGS.
- App. C. THE REVISED VERSION.

## II CORINTHIANS

### NOTES AND REPLIES

On page 106, Vol. 2. ( **#2Co 8:24** ) My rendering of **#2Co 8:24** rests upon a reading not noticed by the Revisers, but given by Lachmann, Tischendorf, in the text of the Tregalles, and in the margin of Wescott. The reading retained by the Revisers has preponderant documentary evidence; but looks very much like a simplification of the other more difficult reading. The difference is unimportant. In the one case Paul merely bids his readers show to the delegates a proof of their love remembering that they are observed by the various churches who sent them. In the latter case he reminds the Corinthians that proof of love shown to the delegates is shown really in the presence and under the eye of many churches.

On page 129, line 8 from below, Vol. 2. (**#2Co 11:13-15**) *Angel of light*: cp. **#Lu 2:9**, **#Mt 28:3**; **#Ac 1:10**; **10:30**. The angels in **#Ge 18:2**; **19:1** evidently appeared as ordinary men.

## II CORINTHIANS

# INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS

### *SECTION I.*

#### *RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT*

1. In a former volume I attempted to show that we have abundant proof that the Epistle to the Romans came from the pen of Paul; and that it is fairly reproduced in the Authorized English Version and still more correctly in the Revised Version. We learned, by study of the epistle itself, that its entire argument rests upon five unproved but confident assertions or assumptions, viz: that God in undeserved favor accepts as righteous all who believe the Gospel; by means of the death of His Son; that He designs believers to be, by union with Christ, sharers of the life of Christ, a life devoted to God; that this design is accomplished in all who believe the gospel promises, so far as they believe. by the agency of the Holy Spirit. It was evident to us that Paul accepted these doctrines because they were taught by Jesus, that he accepted the authority of Jesus as decisive because he believed Him to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that he believed this because he had what he thought sufficient proof that Jesus rose from the dead. We found also that in each of these matters Paul's belief was shared by the many and various writers of the New Testament; of which nearly the whole was before A.D. 200 accepted as authentic by the entire Christian Church. For this unanimous belief of the early disciples of Jesus, and for its effect upon them, and through them upon the world, we could conceive no explanation or sufficient cause except that Jesus actually rose from the dead, actually claimed to be Son of God, and actually taught these great doctrines.

Throughout our inquiry we did not ascribe to any part of the Bible an infallible or special authority. We merely accepted the Epistle to the Romans as written by an honest and intelligent man. And, although we referred to other writings of the New Testament, we did not assume even their historical correctness; but simply accepted their unanimous testimony as proof that the above-mentioned belief of Paul was shared by other early Christian teachers. Owing to the number and variety of these witnesses, their testimony would remain unshaken even if it were proved that some of their statements contradict each other or contradict reliable contemporary history. For their unanimity can be explained only by the truth of that in which they agree.

2. In our study of the Epistles to the Corinthians we will adopt the same method. We shall find equally valid for them the documentary evidence already quoted for the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans and for the correctness of our copies. And our study of the Epistles now before us and comparison of them with that to the Romans will afford internal evidence removing to an infinite distance from all possibility of doubt the genuineness of all three Epistles.

3. At the close of the former volume I pointed to a line of argument which if followed would lead, I confidently believe, to a full conviction that the extant writings of Paul are the authoritative voice of God. But this I do not wish to assume in the present volume. For the Epistles to the Corinthians

contain in themselves so strong a confirmation of the reality and the truth of the facts and the teaching of the Gospel that I prefer, in order to feel the strength of this confirmation, to study them for the present without reference to their apostolic authority. We have no need to bring to Holy Scripture any opinion about its divine authority. This we shall learn best from the Scriptures themselves.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION II.

#### ARE THE EPISTLES GENUINE?

1. The facts and arguments adduced to prove the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans are equally valid for those to the Corinthians.

2. Both Epistles are found in all Greek MSS. of Paul's Epistles; and in the Latin, Syriac, Egyptian, Gothic, Armenian, and Ethiopic Versions.

3. Tertullian (*Against Heretics* ch. 33) says: "Paul in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians speaks of those who deny or doubt the resurrection." So *On Modesty* ch. 13: "For they suppose that the Apostle Paul in the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians forgave the same fornicator whom in the 1st Epistle he commanded to be given to Satan for destruction of the flesh;" and then quotes in full **#2Co 2:5-11**. In chs. 13-16 he quotes expressly as Paul's **#1Co 1:14, 15; 2:2; 3:16, 17; 4:3, 4, 7-9, 13, 18, 21; #1Co 5:1, 2, 5, 6; 6:8, 9-11, 13, 14, 15-20; #1Co 7:1-3, 7-9, 26-28, 29, 31, 32-34, 40; 8:2; 9:1, 4, 5, 15; #1Co 10:12; 11:16; 16:22; #2Co 2:6; 4:1, 2; 6:14-7:1; 12:7, 9, 21**. In his work *Against Marcion*, bk. v. 5-12, he quotes as admitted by Marcion, whose teaching was nevertheless utterly opposed to that of these Epistles, **#1Co 1:18-22, 25, 27-29, 31; 2:6-8; #1Co 3:10, 13, 16-22; 4:5, 9; 5:1, 5, 7, 13; 6:13-15, 20; #1Co 7:10, 11, 29, 39; 8:4-6; 9:9, 10; 10:4, 11; 11:3, 7, 10; #1Co 12:8-10; 14:34; 15:12, 21, 22, 25, 29, 35-57; #2Co 3:13-18; 4:4, 7, 10, 16; 5:1-4, 8, 10, 17; 7:1; 11:4, 14; #2Co 12:7-9**. These quotations are complete proof, not merely that both by Tertullian and Marcion the Epistles were accepted as genuine, but that in the main they existed then in the form we now possess.

So CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Pedagogue* bk. i. 6: Most clearly the blessed Paul has relieved us from the inquiry, writing in such a way as this in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, *Brothers, be not children in understanding, etc.* " So elsewhere abundantly.

So IRENÆUS in bk. iv. 27. 3: "That the Apostle showed this very clearly, saying in the Epistle to the Corinthians, *I do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, etc.*," quoting **#1Co 10:1-11**. This seems to be a quotation from the teacher referred to on p. 6 of my *Romans*. In ch. 27 he also quotes, as written by the Apostle, **#1Co 5:6, 11; 6:9, 10**; and, in ch.26, **#1Co 12:28; #2Co 2:17; 7:2**.

Innumerable quotations make us quite certain that the above writers were unconscious of any doubt about the genuineness of these Epistles.

The FRAGMENT OF MURATORI says: "The Epistles of Paul, from whatever place and for whatever cause they were drawn up, themselves declare to those who wish to understand. First of all to the Corinthians forbidding the division of sect, etc."

In the Latin version which is all that remains of the latter part of POLYCARP'S letter to the Philippians (referred to in Irenaeus bk. iii. 3. 4) we read, "Do you not know that the saints will judge

the world, as Paul teaches?" IGNATIUS refers evidently, in ch. 2 of his Epistle to the Ephesians, to **#1Co 1:10**; and less clearly, in ch. 18 to **#1Co 1:20**.

Still more valuable proof of the genuineness of Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians is found in the letter of CLEMENT of ROME to the Corinthian church, of which I have given extracts in Appendix A. The express mention, in ch. 47, of the Epistle as Paul's, and the clear reference to its subject matter, prove conclusively that about A.D. 100 it was accepted by the churches of Rome and Corinth as written by Paul.

We find, therefore, that the Epistles to the Corinthians, like that to the Romans, were well known and were accepted without a shadow of doubt both by friends and foes before A.D. 200 in places so far apart as Carthage, Egypt, and Gaul; and that the First Epistle was referred to by three writers born before A.D. 100, and was appealed to within the lifetime probably of some who had seen the Apostle in a public letter from the church at Rome to that at Corinth as having been written to the latter church by Paul. We have thus external evidence for the Second Epistle equal to, for the First Epistle much stronger than, that adduced for the Epistle to the Romans.

4. For the genuineness of the Epistles to the Corinthians, we have moreover other evidence peculiar and irresistible. Their contents are such as no forger would dare to write; and such as would certainly prevent their acceptance by the church at Corinth except on evidence which forbade all doubt. Each letter abounds in severest condemnation. Self-conceited men (**#1Co 4:18**) evidently resisted the Apostle: and (**#1Co 5:2**) the whole church, inflated with pride, tolerated a crime not found even among the heathen. Church-members insulted the church (**#1Co 6:1**) by going to law against each other. Intercourse with harlots (**#1Co 6:18**) needed to be seriously warned against; and connivance (**#1Co 10:14ff**) at idolatry. The Lord's Supper (**#1Co 11:21**) was shamefully desecrated. And some church-members maintained a denial logically subversive of the whole Gospel. Bad men doing Satan's work (**#2Co 11:13ff**) and bitterly hostile to the Apostle were tolerated (**#2Co 11:20**) by the church. In spite of reproof (**#2Co 12:21-13:2**) some church-members persisted in gross sensuality. And the Apostle was accused (**#2Co 1:17**) of vacillation and weakness. Even if we suppose these descriptions of the church to have been true, no contemporary forger would dare to record them in a letter for which he sought acceptance as written by Paul: nor would any church accept, with careful scrutiny, so public a monument of its degradation. If at a later date the forgery were made, reverence for the earliest Christians at Corinth and for the Apostle would at once suggest a scrutiny which could not fail to detect the imposture.

That we have two condemnatory letters, increases the unlikeliness of forgery. For two letters would attract more attention than one. And two forgeries must necessarily be more difficult than one.

5. The above evidence, conclusive as it is, is yet by no means the whole. Our study of these Epistles, as embodied in Dissertations I. and II., will assure us that the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Romans came from the same author, from a man of vast mental power, of intense earnestness, and of the highest moral grandeur. Now the contents of the Epistles to the Corinthians are such as must be either genuine or written with an intent to deceive. Can we conceive a man able to write such letters as these three perpetrating a forgery in order to hide his own name in oblivion? Nay more: no man could do it. For the tone of reality throughout these Epistles is too clear to be

simulated. The living picture here presented can be no other than a genuine reflection of actual life. And, that it is such, will be strongly confirmed by our comparison of the Book of Acts. So abundant and unquestionable is this various evidence that in all ages these three Epistles and that to the Galatians have been accepted as genuine both by those who share, and those who trample under foot, the earnest faith of the great Apostle. As Renan says, (*Saint Paul*, Introd. p. v.,) they are "incontestable and uncontested."

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION III.

#### ARE OUR COPIES AND VERSIONS CORRECT?

1. The proofs given in my *Romans*, Introd. § 3, that our Authorized Version is, within narrow and specified limits, a correct reproduction of the words actually written by Paul are equally valid for the Epistles to the Corinthians. And they are strengthened immensely by the Revised Version. For, after a searching scrutiny during many years, by men of different theological opinions, the New Testament is presented to us in a form practically the same as the Old Version. It now remains to us only to note the principle changes in the Greek Text which the Critical Editors agree to propose, the principle variations of Text still open to doubt, and the extent to which the assured results of Textual Criticism in the Greek Text of these Epistles are adopted by the Revisers; and the Revisers' rendering of this Text.

2. Out of 233 variations from the text underlying the Authorized Version of 1 Corinthians which Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles agree to propose, Westcott and Hort (see my *Romans*, Appendix A) accept without note 226: they place 4 more in their text with an alternative in the margin, and 3 more in their margin; and overlook none. In 2 Corinthians, out of 120 variations which the earlier editors agree to propose, Westcott and Hort accept 119, placing only one (#2Co 1:8) in their margin. The only changes worthy of note proposed by them and not mentioned by the other editors are:—

#1Co 2:1: *mystery for testimony* which is put in their margin.

#1Co 13:3: *that I may glory, for may be burned.*

#1Co 15:54: *this corruptible shall put on incorruption* is removed to the margin.

#2Co 1:22: *who* marked as doubtful.

These Editors have carefully sifted for themselves the entire evidence on which rests the Text of the New Testament, using methods of research quite different from those of their predecessors. The remarkable agreement in results, noted above, is therefore a complete proof how solid is the basis of the Text which all recent Critical Editors agree to accept. And, by calling fresh attention to their reading of #1Co 2:1, Westcott and Hort have rendered special service.

3. Of readings (embodied or not embodied in the A.V.) materially affecting the sense, which the Critical Editors confidently agree to accept in the Epistles to the Corinthians, the Revisers accept every one without note; except that in #2Co 1:22 they omit one letter, questioned hitherto only by Westcott's brackets, and in #1Co 7:7; 11:24 they put notes against changes from the A.V. which are accepted without note by all the Editors. Out of 254 changes in 1 Corinthians given by the Revisers without note, 213 are found without note in all the Critical Editions; 17 more with another reading in the margin of one or more Editions: and only in 24 cases given by the Revisers without note do the Critical Texts differ. In the Second Epistle, of 143 such changes, 111 are accepted also without note by all the Editors; 3 more are accepted with an alternative in the margin: and only in 29 cases do the Critical Texts differ. Consequently, unless we question the united judgment of the Editors and



the Revisers, the area open to doubt is limited to the 24 + 29 places just mentioned, and the 16 + 12 textual marginal notes.

4. List of more important corrections agreed to by Editors and Revisers.

1. #1Co 1:15: *you were baptized* for *I baptized*.
2. #1Co 1:22: *signs* for *a sign*.
3. #1Co 1:23: *Gentiles* for *Greeks*.
4. #1Co 2:4: *of wisdom* for *of man's wisdom*.
5. #1Co 2:13: *the Spirit* for *the Holy Spirit*.
6. #1Co 3:3: omit *and divisions*.
7. #1Co 3:4: *men* for *carnal*.
8. #1Co 4:6: omit *to think*.
9. #1Co 5:1: omit *named*.
10. #1Co 5:3: omit *as*.
11. #1Co 5:7: omit *therefore* and *for us*.
12. #1Co 5:7: omit *therefore* and *for us*.
13. #1Co 7:3: *that which is due* for *due benevolence*.
14. #1Co 7:5: omit *and fasting*.
15. #1Co 7:17: transpose *God* and *the Lord*.
16. #1Co 8:2: *not yet learnt* for *knows nothing yet*.
17. #1Co 8:4: *no god* for *no other God*.
18. #1Co 8:7: *habitual intercourse with* for *conscience of*.
19. #1Co 8:11: *for for and;* and read *a brother for whom Christ died*.
20. #1Co 8:11: *for for and;* and read *a brother for whom Christ died*.
21. #1Co 9:1: transpose *apostle* and *free*.
22. #1Co 9:9: *the fruit* for *of the fruit*.
23. #1Co 9:10: read *he that thrashes, in hope of partaking*.
24. #1Co 9:15: read *or . . . no one shall make void*.
25. #1Co 9:20: add *not being myself under law*.
26. #1Co 9:23: *all things* for *this*.
27. #1Co 10:1: *for for moreover*.
28. #1Co 10:19: transpose *idol* and *idol-sacrifice*.
29. #1Co 10:23: omit *for me*.
30. #1Co 10:24: omit *every man*.
31. #1Co 10:28: *sacred-sacrifice* for *idol-sacrifice*.
32. #1Co 10:28: omit *for the earth . . . to end*.
33. #1Co 11:11: transpose twice *man* and *woman*.
34. #1Co 11:24: omit *take, eat*.
35. #1Co 11:26: *the cup* for *this cup*.
36. #1Co 11:27: *the bread* for *this bread*.
37. #1Co 11:29: omit *unworthily* and *of the Lord*.
38. #1Co 12:31: *greater* for *better*. (A.V. *best*)
39. #1Co 15:55: transpose *victory* and *sting*.
40. #1Co 15:55: *death* for *grave*.

41. **#2Co 1:12:** *holiness* for *simplicity*.
42. **#2Co 1:20:** read *for which cause also through Him*.
43. **#2Co 2:1:** *in sorrow* following *again*.
44. **#2Co 2:16:** *from death, from life* for *of death, of life*.
45. **#2Co 3:1:** omit *2nd commendation*.
46. **#2Co 5:12:** omit *for*.
47. **#2Co 5:14:** omit *if*.
48. **#2Co 5:17:** *they* instead of *all things*.
49. **#2Co 5:21:** omit *for* at the beginning.
50. **#2Co 7:13:** *our* instead of *your*; and rearrange the clauses.
51. **#2Co 8:4:** omit *that we would receive*.
52. **#2Co 8:19:** *our readiness* for *your readiness*.
53. **#2Co 9:5:** *before-promised* for *before-announced*.
54. **#2Co 9:10:** *shall supply, shall multiply, shall increase*.
55. **#2Co 10:7:** omit *Christ's* at end.
56. **#2Co 11:6:** *having made manifest* for *have been made manifest*.
57. **#2Co 11:32:** omit *desirous*.
58. **#2Co 12:11:** omit *in glorying*.
59. **#2Co 12:19:** *for a long time* for *again*.
60. **#2Co 13:2:** omit *I write*.

The reading displaced in No. 18 is a very early and widespread error. In Nos. 24, 31, 39 the displaced reading is in the margin of Lachmann: a variation affecting a part of No. 57 is given in the margin of the R.V. and of Westcott. All the other changes are given without note by the Revisers and by all the Editors: and all may be accepted with perfect confidence.

5. Of the 24 + 29 changes (see p. 7) accepted without note by the Revisers but about which the Critical Texts differ, the only cases worthy of mention are **#1Co 9:22**; **#2Co 12:7**, where I follow the Revised Version; **#2Co 11:4**, open to doubt; **#2Co 12:15**, which I reject; and **#1Co 8:8**; **#2Co 1:22**, where see notes. All the others are unimportant.

Only two variations from the Authorized Version of any moment, given without notes in any two Critical Editions, have the Revisers overlooked, viz.:—

**#1Co 10:20:** *they* for (A.V. and R.V.) *the Gentiles*

**#1Co 14:18:** *with a tongue* for (A.V. and R.V.) *with tongues*.

And the Revisers' reading is supported by evidence in the former case I think decidedly, in the latter slightly, preponderant.

6. Of the Revisers' Marginal Readings, the student will distinguish those said to be read by "many," and those by "some, ancient authorities." The former are:—

1. **#1Co 1:28:** omit *and*.
2. **#1Co 2:1:** *testimony for mystery* in text.
3. **#1Co 7:7:** *for* instead of *yet*.
4. **#1Co 7:15:** *you* for *us*.
5. **#1Co 7:33:** general rearrangement.
6. **#1Co 9:24:** insert *broken*.
7. **#1Co 13:3:** *that I may glory for to be burned*
8. **#1Co 14:38:** *he is not known for let him be ignorant*.
9. **#1Co 15:49:** *let us bear for we shall bear*.
10. **#1Co 15:54:** omit *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and*
11. **#2Co 3:9:** *to the ministration for the ministration*.
12. **#2Co 13:4:** *with him for in him*.

Of these, in Nos. 3, 6 the R.V. text is given without note by all Editors, on evidence so decisive that the marginal note seems needless. In No. 12 the R.V. text is accepted by all Editors, on evidence slightly preponderant; with the other reading in the margin of all but Tischendorf who gives no marginal notes. In No. 10 the R.V. text is accepted without note by the other Editors, on what seems to be sufficient evidence; and is put in the margin by Westcott, with the R.V. margin in the text. In No. 7 the Revisers' margin is given without note by Westcott, and in Lachmann's smaller Edition: in all other Critical Editions the Revisers' text is given, without note. In No. 2 the Revisers' margin is given without note by the earlier Editors: the Revisers' text, which I accept, is given in the text of Westcott. No. 5 does not perceptibly affect the sense. In No. 8 the Revisers' margin is given, with preponderant documentary evidence, by all Editors except Tregelles who puts it in the margin: and the Revisers' text is noted in Westcott's margin. It is a very difficult, and unimportant variation. I prefer the Revisers' margin to their text in Nos. 1, 11; and especially in No. 9, which is given by all Editors, Westcott alone noting in his margin the Revisers' text.

Of marginal readings worthy of mention said to be found in "some ancient authorities," in every case the Revisers' text is preferred by all Editors; except that in **#1Co 2:10; 15:14; #2Co 1:15; 2:1, 7; 7:7** Westcott and Hort prefer the Revisers' margin. So far as I can judge, the Revisers' text has in each case preponderant evidence. Possibly true are the unimportant marginal readings in **#1Co 1:4, 14**, especially the latter.

7. The above figures and lists prove that the assured results of modern Textual Criticism are embodied fairly and fully in the Revised Version. And they reveal how narrow, in the Epistles before us, is the area open to doubt. With the few and small exceptions noted above, the Revisers' Greek Text may be accepted with reasonable confidence as recording the exact words of the great Apostle. A few readings subject to doubt or of special interest, I have discussed in Appendix B.

8. Much more open to question than the Greek Text they have adopted, is the Revisers' Rendering of that Text into English. At this we need not wonder. For we can conceive a Greek Text presenting the exact words written by Paul; and therefore absolutely perfect. But no translation can possibly

reproduce exactly and fully the sense of the original. In every translation something is lost in accuracy and force and beauty. And opinions will differ as to which elements, in any given phrase, can be sacrificed with least loss on the whole. Moreover, the task of the Revision Committee was complicated by the fact that they were set, not to make a new Version, but to revise one made centuries ago. Archaic diction enshrined in the hearts of millions had its claims upon them. And they were frequently compelled to decide between these claims and those of the modern English reader wishing to know as clearly and fully as possible the sense intended by the Sacred Writers.

In Appendix C I have noted, as samples of numberless others, some of the more important improvements of rendering given in the New Version; also some passages in which, as I think, unwisely the Revisers retain the old renderings; and a few in which I venture to think that they have needlessly or wrongly altered the Old Version.

9. It may seem strange that even after the appearance of the Revised Version I have ventured to give a new version of my own. I have done so because I was not able to accept in every case the readings and renderings of the Revisers as the actual words and true meaning of Paul; and because it seemed to me that independent value would attach to a translation made on the principles expounded in § iii. 17 of my Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans, principles very different from those which different circumstances prescribed for the Westminster Revisers. They were bound to preserve as far as possible the familiar speech of the Old Version, and to use classic English suitable for public worship. I was absolutely free. My aim has been simply to reproduce as accurately and fully as I could, even sometimes by inelegant or uncouth grammatical forms or clumsy arrangement, the sense and emphasis of Paul's Greek. My translation was completed before the Revised Version was published; but has been revised, and in some passages amended, by its welcome aid. A few points of importance in which I am unable to accept the Revisers' judgment are discussed in my exposition.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION IV

#### *THE CITY OF CORINTH*

1. A moment's survey of the map tells us that Greece consists of two clearly marked divisions, a peninsula called the Peloponnese and now sometimes the Morea, and a part of the mainland of South-Eastern Europe. These divisions are united by an irregular bridge of land some 25 miles long, and averaging rather less than 10 miles across from sea to sea. The greater part of it is mountainous and difficult to traverse. But, as we approach the Morea, the mountains sink into a level stony plain ten miles long reaching to the mountains of the peninsula; and the sea encroaches on either side leaving a low neck of land at one point only four miles across. This is the Isthmus of Corinth the famous Isthmus which has given its name to similar necks of land all over the world. The ground is so nearly level that formerly along a path called the Diolcus or Pulling-through ships were dragged from sea to sea. As a low-lying isthmus uniting a mountainous peninsula to a mountainous mainland, it may be compared to the almost level ground at Llandudno between the Great Orme's Head and the mainland of North Wales.

2. Looking now from the narrowest part of the isthmus towards the Peloponnese, we notice that the receding shores of the sea leave a widening plain, blocked in, except a strip of rich soil along the Northern coast, but a range of hills which closes the entrance by land to the peninsula. In front of these, rising to the height of 1886 feet, is a very conspicuous, abrupt, steep, rocky mountain, perhaps the most gigantic natural fortress in Europe, the Acrocrinthus, or Citadel of Corinth. For its abruptness it has been compared to the rock of Dumbarton, which is however less than one-third its height. In height, a closer comparison is found in Penmaenmawr, opposite Llandudno. At the Northern base and in front of this mountain, on a broad level rock some 200 feet above the plain, in full view of the isthmus and the hills beyond it, and of the two seas which seem to lie submissive at its feet and to refrain from mingling their waves that their separation may enrich the city, on the site now occupied by a small modern town which bears the ancient name, once stood (Florus, ii. 16) "Corinth, head of Achaia, ornament of Greece, between two seas, Ionian and Aegean, as if exposed for public view."

A mile and a half to the North, connected formerly with Corinth by walls, like the Piraeus with Athens, is the ancient port of Lechaëum on the gulf of Corinth, affording ready access to Italy and the West. Eight miles away east-south-east, on the Saronic gulf is the port of Cenchrae, affording access to Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. And eight miles east-north-east, near to the ancient port of Schoenus also on the Saronic gulf, are remains of the temple and enclosure of Poseidon around which were celebrated during long centuries the famous Isthmian athletic Festivals. Also discernible, and forming part of the sacred enclosure of Poseidon, are remains of an ancient fortified wall which reached from the bay of Schoenus across the Isthmus.

3. The summit of the Acrocrinthus, a space some half-mile square, is enclosed by a wall, in part double; which contained sixty years ago a small town, destroyed during the war of liberation and now completely in ruins except a barracks for thirty soldiers. In the old days of Greek freedom, the

fortifications of the city, ten miles long, embraced the Acrocorinthus; with the long walls to Lechaëum making Corinth to be, as it was often called, the citadel of the Peloponnese and of Greece.

The view from the Acrocorinthus is one of the most beautiful and most interesting in the world. And it explains in a moment very much of the history of Corinth. At our feet lies the port of Lechaëum on the bay of Corinth opening out into the gulf of Corinth which stretches before us like a great lake of surpassing beauty bounded by the endless mountain ranges of north-western Greece. Across the bay and across the low-lying isthmus rise in varied outline the Geranian mountains, terminating at the west in the promontory which separates the bay of Corinth from that of Alcyon, these bays together forming the eastern end of the gulf of Corinth. Beyond and above these mountains, at a distance of 25 miles, is seen the mountain range of Cithaëron, famous in heroic story. Due north, across the bay of Corinth rises the still loftier range of Helicon. And to the north-west, 60 miles away, but distinctly visible, are the snowy heights (8186 ft.) of Parnassus. Looking now rather north of east, the port of Schoenus and the site of the Isthmian Festival seem close at hand. And, across the Saronic gulf and above Salamis, island of illustrious fame, at a distance of 45 miles, lit up by the rays of the setting sun and awakening a multitude of reminiscences, the Acropolis of Athens is clearly seen; guarded as it were on left and right by Mounts Pentelicus and Hymettus. And not unfrequently is seen also the whole southern coast-line of Attica as far as the famous and lovely promontory of Sunium, some 60 miles distant. To the south the view is limited by the mountains of Argolis. But to the south-west the landscape reaches across a great part of the Peloponnese. Thus from this Roman Capital was seen, spread out in gorgeous panorama, no small part of the Roman province of Achaia; including parts of the ancient states of Attica, Megaris, Beotia, Phocis, Achaia, Arcadia, and Argolis. And this city of Corinth, commanding both geographically and socially a view of the whole province, was Paul's chosen center from which to hold forth to the eyes of Greece the light of the Gospel of the glory of God.

The geographical position of Corinth determined in great part its historical relations. Unlike Athens, whose relations were chiefly with the East, Corinth, while keeping her hand upon the East through her port of Cenchreae, turned her face towards the West, across the bay whose placid waters lay almost at her feet. Nearly all the early colonies of Corinth were westward: and doubtless its easier access from the West led the Romans to choose it as the metropolis through which to govern the province which included nearly all the soil of ancient Greece. We may therefore suppose that during his residence at Corinth for eighteen months Paul came into contact with the West as he had never done before; and that to his residence there we may attribute in great part his deeply cherished desire to carry to the nations of the West the good news of the blood shed for the whole world.

4. Corinth was famous in every age of Greek history. In the stories which have come down from the so-called heroic times it is mentioned in connection with Oedipus and with Jason. Homer (*Illiad* ii. 570: cp. xiii. 664) speaks of "wealthy Corinth." Thucydides (bk. i. 13) tells us that the Corinthians were said to have been the earliest to undertake seamanship in a way similar to that of his own day; that the earliest large ships were built at Corinth; that 300 years before his time (i.e. in B.C. 700) four ships were built there for the Samians; and that the earliest known sea-fight was between the Corinthians and their colonists the Corcyrians. He also says that "the Corinthians, inhabiting the city of the Isthmus, always had a market: for the Greeks of old, rather by land than by sea, both those within and those without the Peloponnese, had intercourse with each other through their country.

And the people were of great wealth: as has been made clear by the old poets; for they called the city wealthy." Strabo (bk. viii. 6. 20) says it was called wealthy Corinth. He speaks of the wealth of the dynasty of the Bacchiadae who ruled in Corinth and made profit by its merchandise for 200 years; and of Cypselus, who overthrew them in B.C. 655, whose wealth was attested by a large statue of beaten gold presented by him to the temple at Olympia. Under his son Periander, Corinth was the most wealthy and prosperous of the commercial cities of Greece. For this wealth Strabo accounts by the preference of the traders between Asia and Italy to carry their goods across the Isthmus rather than risk the great perils of sailing round the Peloponnese; and by the position of the Isthmus as the only route for merchandise between the peninsula and the mainland of Greece. The Corinthians thus commanded two streams of traffic, on both which they were able to impose toll; and their city was the best residence for the merchants who conducted the traffic. Strabo mentions also the Isthmian Festivals as a source of profit by bringing strangers to the city. See note under **#1Co 9:27**. As a proof, and means of increase, of the wealth of Corinth, he speaks of the temple of Aphrodite, which was served by a thousand sacred courtezans. This is sad proof that in Corinth abundance of material good had produced its frequent result of self-indulgence and gross sin. Strabo says that Corinth was also the chief home of painting and sculpture. We notice, however, that the wealth of Corinth, so conducive to the development of art, did little for intellectual development. Among the many great writers of ancient Greece, no Corinthian is found.

Although ever prominent among the commonwealths of Greece, Corinth never held the first place till the last days of Greek freedom. Its political importance and wealth at that time are attested by the fact that the final blow which crushed the independence of Greece was the destruction of Corinth in B.C. 146, by the Roman general Mummius; and also by the splendor of the triumph, a splendor unknown before, which the spoils of Corinth enabled the conqueror to celebrate at Rome.

The ruin was complete. Except the public buildings, all was destroyed. And the city lay in ruins for a hundred years. In B.C. 46 it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar, as a Roman colony; and became afterwards capital of the Roman province of Achaia, which was nearly coextensive with the modern kingdom of Greece before its recent enlargement.

5. This New Corinth, the city known to Paul, was in many respects very different from, and in many points similar to, the ancient city. Its geographical position was the same: and to its position Old Corinth owed its concourse of strangers, its wealth, and its consequent gross immorality. All this the new city inherited as lineal descendant of the old one. But Strabo's use of the past tense when speaking of the thousand priestesses of Aphrodite, and his simple mention of a small temple to her on the Acrocorinthus without any hint of the continuance of this gigantic service of sin, warns us not to infer that it existed in his day. But, if not exactly in this form, in other forms the new city emulated the sensuality of its predecessor. Moreover, Corinth was still in the midst of Greece: and the Greeks retained, in spite of the loss of independence, many of their ancient characteristics.

But very much was changed. New Corinth was, what the old city had never been, the acknowledged political capital of all Greece. But Greece was now the Roman province of Achaia: and Corinth was its capital as residence of a Roman governor. Seutonius (*Claudius* §25) tells us that the Emperor Claudius gave up Achaia to the senate. This would involve its being governed by a proconsul: and, by an interesting coincidence, this is the exact title given in **#Ac 18:12** to the ruler

of Achaia resident at Corinth. Suetonius also says, in agreement with **#Ac 18:2**, that Claudius "expelled from Rome the Jews, who at the instigation of Chrestus were constantly in tumult."

Corinth was a Roman colony. This term denotes a sort of translation into other soil of a part of the city of Rome. By a decree of the senate, a number of Roman citizens went forth, under appointed leaders, with all the pomp of war, to plant in foreign soil an offshoot of the mother-city. The bounds of the new city were marked out with a plow: a territory was assigned to it: and a portion of land was given to each colonist. The colonists were ruled by their own magistrates, called praetors or generals; the title correctly given in **#Ac 16:20** to the magistrates of the colony of Philippi. Other Roman colonies were Antioch in Pisidia, and Troas.

We must therefore think of Corinth in Paul's day, risen a hundred years ago from its ruins, as no longer a Greek city, but rather a city of foreigners in the midst of Greece. So Pausanias (bk. ii. 1) says: "none of the original inhabitants live still at Corinth, but strangers sent by the Romans." And Strabo, bk. viii. 6. 23: "Corinth, having lain desert a long time was restored, because of its natural excellence, by the divine Caesar; who sent strangers, for the most part of the class of freedmen." But doubtless, in the century which had elapsed since its restoration, the position of the city had attracted to it many of the inhabitants of the surrounding province. And we are not surprised to find, in so central and commercial a city, sufficient Jews to have a synagogue; nor to find (**#Ac 18:2**) that some of the Jews banished from Rome took refuge at Corinth. Perhaps nowhere in the world was there a greater concourse and mixture of races than in this city. In short, in Corinth, a Roman colony and the capital of a Roman province, the political capital of Greece, having a Jewish synagogue, and seated on two seas as the center of the commerce of the eastern Mediterranean, we have an epitome of the civilized world in the days of Paul.

6. The city of Corinth has lingered to our times, and is now rising; or rather is being rebuilt nearer to the coast. It suffered greatly during the war of liberation. In A.D. 1851 Mr. Lewin counted only fifty houses. It is now a straggling, uncouth, and rather unhealthy town of 8,000 inhabitants.

The only remains now of the city known to Paul are seven massive Doric columns, each consisting of one gigantic stone some 21 ft. high and 6 ft. diameter, surmounted by portions of the architrave; which once formed the front, and part of the side, of a temple, and now present a strange contrast to the poor modern town. The architecture of these columns betrays their extreme age. On this massive temple, which even then had survived the changes of probably 700 years, the great Apostle must have often looked, a monument as old in his day as the oldest monuments in our own land now.



## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION V.

#### *PAUL AND THE CHURCH OF CORINTH*

1. All we know of the church at Corinth is gathered from these Epistles and the Book of Acts.

2. Paul claims (**#1Co 3:6, 10; 4:15; #2Co 12:14**) to be himself alone the founder of the church. With this accords the authority which in these Epistles (e.g. **#1Co 5:3f**) he assumes. So also **#Ac 18:1ff**, where we learn that while his companions Silas and Timothy were still in Macedonia Paul came apparently alone from Athens to Corinth, and where even his host Aquila is spoken of only as "a Jew," and nothing is said of any Christians found by Paul at Corinth.

3. From Corinth probably Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonican church. For evidently they were written soon after the founding of that church; but not earlier (**#1Th 3:1**) than Paul's arrival at Athens and (**#1Th 1:1**) his reunion with Silas and Timothy, who (**#Ac 18:5**) rejoined him at Corinth. When he made his oration on Mars' Hill at Athens he was waiting (**#Ac 17:16**) for them there in compliance with his request. This request was, it would seem, for reasons unknown to us but easily conceivable, complied with only by Timothy; whom apparently Paul sent back from Athens to Thessalonica to allay by further tidings his anxiety (**#1Th 3:1**) about the church there. Paul was thus "left at Athens alone." That this intermediate journey of Timothy is not mentioned in the Book of Acts, is no presumption against it. And we may suppose that after sending Timothy northward Paul went to Corinth, where he was afterwards joined by Silas and Timothy, the latter bringing good news (**#1Th 3:6**) about the Thessalonican church. This good news prompted Paul's first letter, in the beginning of which (**#1Th 1:1**) he joins with himself Silas and Timothy, who had been his helpers in founding the church and now at Corinth were with him again. That Paul stayed at Corinth eighteen months and then went away almost direct to Syria, suggests that also from Corinth 2 Thessalonians was written. These Epistles cast little light on Paul's labors there or the state of the Corinthian church. But they will help us to understand (cp. **#1Co 15:12ff**) some of the questions raised at Corinth.

4. As usual, Paul began his work at Corinth in the Jews' synagogue, where each Sabbath he reasoned (**#Ac 18:4**) with Jews and Greeks. When his companions from Macedonia arrived, he was specially occupied with Jews. But these soon, by their opposition, made it expedient for him to leave the synagogue. He found, however, a suitable place next door, in the house of Titus or Titus Justus, a Jewish proselyte. This does not imply that Paul left his first home (**#Ac 18:3**) at the house of Aquila, but rather that the house of Justus was the place in which he preached.

Paul had marked success. The family of Stephanas, afterwards (**#1Co 16:15**) most devoted to church work, were the first converts not only at Corinth but in the province of Achaia. Since this province included Athens, this family must have been converted earlier than were (**#Ac 17:34**) Dionysius and Damaris. They may have heard Paul preach at Athens or elsewhere. But, when the First Epistle was written, they belonged to the church of Corinth: and they were an exception to Paul's assertion that he baptized none of his readers. Doubtless Aquila and Prisca were early

converts. We may also suppose that the conversion of the ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, with his family, marked an era in the founding of the church: as did perhaps the conversion of Gaius, probably the same as Paul's host (**#Ro 16:23**) when writing to the Romans, at whose house room seems to have been found for the church assemblies. That those were special cases, is made likely by the exceptional fact that (**#1Co 1:14**) of the baptism of them also at Paul's hands. A vision of Christ foretelling great success at Corinth moved Paul to stay there more than (**#Ac 18:11, 18**) a year and a half. During the latter part of his sojourn, a united effort of the Jews brought him before the court of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, on the charge that (**#Ac 18:13, 15**) although a Jew he taught a religion contrary to the Jewish Law. But this charge Gallio refused to consider; and did not prevent the mob, who were perhaps favorably disposed to Paul, from ill-treating even in the court of justice the leader of the Jews. After this incident Paul continued some time at Corinth; and then, apparently with external pressure bid adieu to the church, and sailed with Aquila and Prisca to Ephesus and then alone to Caesarea.

And now the curtain falls, hiding from our view for some years the church so auspiciously founded in the political metropolis of the most intelligent and enterprising nation of the ancient world; to be lifted only by the Epistles before us. From these, however, we shall gather some information about the state of the church in the interval. An unmentioned visit of Paul to Corinth, a lost letter, and the circumstances which prompted the existing letters, are discussed fully in the course of my Exposition and at the close of each Epistle. The results of this discussion are embodied in Dissertation IV. at the end of this volume.

To the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistles before us are a marked contrast; a contrast corresponding exactly to Paul's different thoughts at the moment of writing. To a church he had never seen but hoped soon to visit, he gives a connected view of his general teaching, i.e. of the Gospel and of its relation to the Old Covenant. To the Corinthians Paul wrote under the influence, in one case of news about them recently received, in the other of his own wonderful escape from peril and of the tidings just brought by Titus. Consequently, the one Epistle is the most complete and systematic exposition of the Gospel which the Bible contains: the others give, both singly and still more combined, the most graphic picture we have of an apostolic church in which we see the Gospel molding the thought, and contending with the imperfections, of living men. And, since a man's principles of action and his entire disposition are most clearly revealed in his treatment of the various details of life, these Epistles are our best reflection of the heart and inner life of Paul, and of the Gospel as permeating and ennobling the entire self and life of a richly endowed man.

Not less marked is the mutual contrast of these Epistles. The former is essentially matter-of-fact; and takes up one by one, and discusses calmly, a variety of topics. The second letter is from beginning to end a torrent of intense emotion. But each Epistle reflects Paul's circumstances and feelings while writing it. The first was written from Ephesus at the close of a long period of (**#1Co 16:9**) successful and promising labor, and in comparative security. The Second Epistle was written after an almost miraculous escape from what was perhaps the most deadly peril to which even Paul had been exposed, an escape from what seemed to be certain death. And the emotions aroused by his peril and by his deliverance, emotions most various, quiver in every line of the Epistle. Consequently, in no epistle so much as in this do we feel the beating of the great heart of the Apostle.

To the delightful study of these living pictures of one of the noblest of men, and of one of the most famous of the churches he founded, we now betake ourselves.

## II CORINTHIANS

# EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

## DIVISION I.

### REVIEW OF RECENT EVENTS

#### CHAPTERS I.-VII.

#### SECTION I.

#### *SALUTATION, PRAISE TO GOD FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND DELIVERANCE IN GREAT PERIL.*

#### CH. I. 1-11.

**Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God which there is at Corinth, with all the saints which there are in the whole of Achaia. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of the compassions and God of every encouragement, who encourages us about all our affliction, that we may be able to encourage those in every affliction, by means of the encouragement with which ourselves are encouraged by God: because, according as the sufferings of Christ abound toward us, so through Christ abounds also our encouragement. And, both if we are afflicted, it is on behalf of your encouragement and salvation: and, if we are encouraged, it is on behalf of your encouragement, which is effective in endurance of the same sufferings which we also suffer. And our hope is firm on your behalf: knowing that as you are sharers of the sufferings so also of the encouragement.**

**For we do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, about our affliction which took place in Asia, that exceedingly beyond our power we were burdened, so that we came to be without way of escape even for life. But ourselves within ourselves we have had the sentence of death, that we should not be trusting upon ourselves but upon God who raises the dead ones; who out of so great a death rescued us, and will rescue, in whom we have set our hope that He will also still rescue, while you also are working together with us on our behalf by prayer, that from many faces for the gift of grace to us by means of many, thanks may be given on our behalf.**

**Paul's salutation, #2Co 1:1, 2: an outburst of praise amid affliction, #2Co 1:3-7; prompted by recent peril and deliverance, #2Co 1:8-11.**

Ver. 1.-2. Cp. **#1Co 1:1f**. The movements of Timothy during the three months between the writing of the First and Second Epistles are uncertain. Not later (see **#1Co 4:17**) and perhaps rather earlier than he wrote the First Epistle, Paul sent (**#Ac 19:22**) Timothy to Macedonia; with instructions to go on to Corinth if he could, of which however (**#1Co 16:10**) Paul was uncertain. We now find Timothy with Paul in Macedonia. But Paul's anxiety (**#2Co 1:13; 7:5**) makes us quite certain that before his own arrival in Macedonia and his meeting with Titus, Timothy had not brought him tidings about the reception of the First Epistle by the church at Corinth. Now the warmth of the Second Epistle suggests that it was written very soon after the arrival of Titus; and its silence about the coming of Timothy makes it unlikely that he arrived from Corinth with Titus or between the arrival of Titus and the writing of this letter. Consequently, either, contrary to Paul's expectation, Timothy arrived at and left Corinth before the First Epistle; or he was, for reasons unknown to us but easily conceivable, unable to go there. In either case, we have no certain indication whether Timothy remained in Macedonia till Paul's arrival; or returned to Paul before he left Ephesus, was with him there during the tumult, and went with him to Troas and to Macedonia. But the latter supposition would more easily account for the absence (except **#2Co 1:19**) of any further reference to Timothy in this Epistle. Doubtless he was with Paul when Titus arrived. And his close connection with the founding of the church at Corinth (**#2Co 1:19; #Ac 18:5**) accounts sufficiently for the presence of his name here, supporting the apostle's earnest pleading.

**The church:** see **#1Co 1:2**.

**Of the saints which there are etc.;** asserts the existence of Christians in various parts of *Achaia*. See **#Ro 15:26**.

**In the whole of Achaia:** parallel with "every place belonging to them and to us," **#1Co 1:2**.

**Grace, etc.:** **#Ro 1:7**.

Ver. 3.-4. This Epistle, which more than any other bears marks of heavy trial, begins (cp. **#Eph 1:3; #1Pe 1:3**) with an outburst of praise. For the trials did but reveal the *compassions* of *God*. Moreover, Paul writes under influence of the good tidings which had just relieved his anxieties about his readers.

**God, the Father etc.:** **#Ro 15:6**.

**The compassions:** as in **#Ro 12:1**. Instead of speaking, as we should, of "the compassion of God" as an abstract principle, Paul speaks of its various concrete manifestations. These reveal the essential nature of the great Father and are therefore taken up into His Name. So also the *encouragement* (see under **#Ro 12:1**) which *God* ever gives. Cp. **#Ro 15:5**.

**Every encouragement:** meeting us whenever our hearts would sink or our ardor flag. Touching every element of *our affliction* God speaks to us from time to time words of exhortation and comfort, with the definite purpose *that we may* have words of encouragement even for those weighed down by *every* kind of *affliction*. Cp. "in everything afflicted," **#2Co 4:8; 7:5**.

**By means of etc.;** states in full, for emphasis, a truth already implied in the foregoing words, viz. that the comfort we receive from God is specially designed to be in our lips a means of comfort to others.

Ver. 5. *Cause* of the encouragement, and of the affliction which made it needful. The latter is in essential relation to the agony *of Christ* on the cross; and the former comes *through Christ*.

**Abound: #Ro 3:7.** In consequence of *the sufferings of Christ* similar sufferings fall in abundance upon Paul and his companions, arising from the same causes and working out the same glorious purposes. Cp. **#Php 3:10; #Col 1:24; #Mr 10:38.** Had not Christ died, Paul would not now be in constant deadly peril.

**Us:** Paul, Timothy, and perhaps others. In his sufferings Paul was not alone.

**Through Christ: #Ro 1:5.** This remarkable verse teaches emphatically that the pain inflicted upon Christ's people for His sake is a natural and necessary outflow of His own painful death. And this mysterious relation of us and Him implies that through Christ comes our encouragement also. Our sorrow and our joy have thus their *cause* in His death and resurrection.

Ver. 6. Not only is encouragement given to Paul in order that thus he may be able to *encourage* others; but for this very end, and for the consequent *salvation* of those whom he encourages, come both his affliction and his encouragement.

**On behalf of your encouragement:** "in order that by suffering we may learn, as none but sufferers can, the worth of that consolation which God provides for all who suffer; and may convey this consolation to you." This implies that Paul's hardships were not mere inevitable results of blind forces or of the malice of bad men, but were sent by God with a definite purpose of blessing. Cp. **#Joh 11:4.** All Christian *encouragement* is designed to lead to the *salvation* (**#Ro 5:9**) of those encouraged, by prompting them to persevere to the end. Without such encouragement they might fall and perish. This reveals the greatness of the purpose, viz. his readers' eternal life, for which the afflictions were sent to the apostle and his companions.

**#2Co 1:6b** repeats the teaching of **#2Co 1:4**, to develop it.

**On behalf of your encouragement:** exactly as above.

**Which is effective:** literally "which inworks itself." It produces results.

**In endurance etc.]** The encouragement works out *perseverance*, (see under **#Ro 2:7**), and *amid* this produces the further result of salvation.

**The same sufferings:** and therefore needing the same encouragement. They suffered, or were exposed to, persecution and other hardships arising from *the same* causes and working out the same purposes as the *sufferings* of Paul. Cp. **#1Th 3:3; #2Th 1:4.** And, in order that he might prepare them to endure these afflictions, Paul received encouragement from God. Ability to encourage and

thus save others, though not the only purpose, is a real and definite and very glorious purpose, of suffering. By it we become, through the encouragement God gives, able to bless and perhaps to save others.

Ver. 7. A result of Paul's affliction and consolation. He is quite sure that his good hope of his readers' final salvation will be realized.

**Knowing that etc.:** #Ro 5:3: good reason for this confidence.

**As . . . so:** cp. #2Co 1:5: *sufferings* and *encouragement* go together. Paul's readers suffer, as he does, for Christ's sake: accordingly, the encouragement he has, belongs equally to them. For them as for him are all the truths which lift him above the hardships of his lot and give him courage and perseverance in Christian enterprise. And *knowing* this, he has a *firm hope* that they, supported by the encouragement which gives him daily victory, will themselves persevere and be finally saved.

Thus Paul explains #2Co 1:4, which prompted the shout of praise in #2Co 1:3. Both his sufferings and his consolation come through Christ, who Himself suffered. His affliction is designed to enable him to comfort and save others: his encouragement is designed not only for himself but for others who suffer as he does. And a result of his affliction and consolation is that he has a firm hope that his readers will, in spite of all enemies, obtain final victory. For, though they suffer as he does they have the help in suffering which he has proved to be sufficient. Thus, as in #Ro 5:3f, affliction works out endurance and hope.

Ver. 8.-9. Paul now accounts for his exultant praise and for the mention of his affliction, by telling of a deadly peril from which he has been lately rescued. It is to sympathizing *brothers* that he tells the story.

**Asia:** the Roman province of which Ephesus was capital, #1Co 16:19; #Ro 16:5. A burden was crushing them immeasurably *beyond* their *power* to bear.

**So that we etc.:** measure of the greatness of the burden. They were brought into a position in which their path was so completely hedged up that there was, to human sight, no way of escape *even for life*. #2Co 1:9 is the very opposite of having a way of escape. [The perfect tense, poorly rendered *we have had*, recalls the abiding effect of the inward sentence.]

**The sentence:** more correctly *the answer*. Contemplating their circumstances they asked themselves whether life or death stood before them. And *the answer* they were compelled to give in the inmost chamber of their hearts the sentence touching their own prospects which in that inner court they were themselves compelled to pronounce, was that *death* was before them.

**That we should not be etc.:** purpose of God in bringing them into this position of utter helplessness, viz. that they should have no confidence in themselves, but should put their trust in Him. And so terrible was their position that no power could save them but that of Him (cp. #Ro 4:17) *who raises the dead*. Henceforth they were to lean only upon the arm of omnipotence.

Ver. 10.-11. **Out of the hand of death:** who stood before them in so *great* power. Cp. #2Co 11:23.

**Rescued us:** by some human instrumentality, or concurrence of events, unknown to us.

**And will rescue:** confident hope in face of many perils still threatening them.

**In whom etc.;** dwells upon and develops *will rescue*. Paul's expectation of a deliverance is trust in God.

**Will still rescue:** all future deliverance being a continuation of that already experienced.

**While you also etc.:** ground of Paul's hope, and a condition of future rescue, viz. that his readers pray for him. "by joining with us in our *prayer* for our deliverance, *you* are *working* both *with us* and for us. And *while* you do this, we expect deliverance."

**You also;** suggests that others are doing the same.

**That from many etc.:** purpose to be attained by rescue in answer to these many prayers. *From many* upturned *faces* of those who have prayed for Paul's deliverance and whose prayer has been answered, will praise be given to God.

**Faces:** a graphic picture of men in prayer looking up to God.

**Gift-of-grace: #Ro 1:11.** Paul will be rescued by the undeserved favor of God, *by means of the many* of whose prayers his rescue is the answer. Consequently, *from many* upturned *faces* of those who have prayed, will *thanks be given on behalf of* Paul. "God will save us because you are praying for us. and He makes our deliverance conditional on your prayers in order that the favor shown to a few men may call forth gratitude and thanks from many by whose prayers this favor has been obtained." This is a courteous acknowledgement that the Corinthian Christians are praying for Paul, that their prayers have power with God, and that his deliverance will evoke their praise to God. It is also a covert request for their prayers. Cp. #Ro 15:30; #Eph 6:19; #Col 4:3; #Php 1:19; #2Th 3:2. All this is the more appropriate because of the reproof in the First Epistle.

These verses reveal not only the terrible peril to which Paul had been exposed but its very deep impression upon him. In them we trace a dark shadow of death cast over him, a strong natural recoil from death, and firm confidence in God for future deliverance developed by this unexpected deliverance. It would seem that even in a life of peril this peril in Asia had marked an era.

It is impossible now to determine the connection between the tumult of Acts 19, and the peril recorded here: nor are we quite sure that the latter was at Ephesus. But each account confirms the other. For the selfish hostility of Demetrius and his companions, prompted as it was by monetary interests at stake, and the ease with which the mob was collected, are enough to account for the deadly peril referred to here. This hostility would be not appeased but exasperated by the dispersal of the mob. And we can well conceive it prompting some immediate and desperate and well-planned



attempt to kill the apostle and his colleagues. That Paul felt his danger, is proved by his sudden departure (**#Ac 20:1**) from Ephesus; whereas, a short time earlier, the number of his opponents had been (**#1Co 16:9**) a reason for remaining.

We have seen that it is not unlikely that Timothy was at this time with Paul, and shared his peril. If so, the word *us* would (cp. **#2Co 1:1**) include him; and possibly other companions of Paul. It reminds us that in these perils the apostle was not alone. Possibly it was at this time that Aquila and Priscilla (**#1Co 16:19**; **#Ro 16:4**) saved his life at the risk of their own.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION II.

#### PAUL'S REASON FOR NOT COMING TO CORINTH

##### CH. I. 12-II. 4.

For this our exultation is the witness of our conscience that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have behaved ourselves in the world and especially towards you. For no other things are we writing to you except what you read, or indeed acknowledge, and I hope that to the end you will acknowledge, according as also you have acknowledged us in part; because a ground of exultation to you we are, as also you to us, in the day of our Lord Jesus.

And with this confidence I wished to come first to you, that you might have a second grace; and through you to pass on into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be sent forward to Judaea. While wishing this then, do you infer that I acted at all with levity? Or, the things which I purpose, is it according to flesh that I purpose them, that there may be with me the Yes yes and the No no? But faithful is God that our word to you is not Yes and No. For, God's Son, Christ Jesus, who among you through us was proclaimed, through me and Silvanus and Timothy, did not become Yes and No, but in Him there has come to be Yes. For, so many promises as there are, in Him is the Yes, for which cause also through Him is the Amen, for glory to God through us. And He who confirms us with you for Christ, and has anointed us, is God, who also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

And for my part I call upon God as witness upon my soul that it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth. Not that we are lords of your faith: but we are joint-workers of your joy. For by faith you stand. But I determined this with myself not again with sorrow to come to you. For, if it is I that make you sorrowful, who then is it that makes me glad, except he that is made sorrowful through me? And I wrote this very thing, lest having come I should receive sorrow from those from whom I must needs rejoice; being confident about all of you that my joy is that of you all. For out of much affliction and constraint of heart I wrote to you amid many tears, not that you may be made sorrowful, but that you may know the love which I have the more abundantly towards you.

From § 2 we learn that at first Paul intended to go direct by sea from Ephesus to Corinth, then to Macedonia and back to Corinth, and then to Judaea. This purpose he had already abandoned when he wrote **#1Co 16:5ff.** And the earnestness of his self-defence in **#2Co 1:23** suggests that its abandonment had been quoted against him by enemies at Corinth as a mark of levity or guile. For his defence against this charge, he prepares the way by appealing in **#2Co 1:12-14** to his conduct at Corinth: he then meets it expressly by appealing in **#2Co 1:15-22** to the Gospel he preached; and by explaining in **#2Co 1:23-2:4** his real motive.

Ver. 12. Ground of Paul's confidence that he shall have the effective prayers of his readers, viz. his conduct towards them.

**This our exultation:** the joyful expectation just expressed.

**Is the witness etc.:** the strongest possible way of saying that Paul's joyful confidence is an immediate outflow of his *consciousness* (see #1Co 8:7 and #Ro 2:15) of having lived a holy and pure life at Corinth. #2Co 1:11, in which this confidence found utterance, is a voice of his *conscience* bearing *witness*.

**In holiness:** with a constant aim to work out the purposes of God. See note, #Ro 1:7.

**Sincerity:** as in #1Co 5:8.

**Of God:** wrought and given by God. Cp. "peace of God," #Php 4:7.

**Fleshly wisdom:** a faculty of choosing the ends and means best fitted to satisfy the desires, and supply the needs, of the body. Cp. #Jas 3:15. See note, #1Co 3:4. Such wisdom takes into account only those ends and means which the eye can see and the hand can grasp.

**In the grace of God;** expounds of God above. Paul's heart tells him that he has acted with pure loyalty to God, not on principles which are wise from the limited point of view of the present bodily life: but he remembers that his *holiness* and *sincerity* are gifts to him of the undeserved favor of God. Cp. #1Co 15:10. And he has acted thus even *in the* present wicked world.

**Especially to you:** giving them during his long intercourse (#Ac 18:11) abundant proof of the principles which guide him.

Ver. 13.-14. **No other things:** in *writing* #2Co 1:12 he means nothing more than they *read* in the plain meaning of his words, or than they already *acknowledge* to be true. His words have no hidden meaning.

**To the end:** as in #1Co 1:8.

**As also etc.:** courteous acknowledgment that all the recognition Paul hopes for in the future he already has.

**In part:** either a partial recognition by the whole church, or a recognition by a part of the church. Probably the latter, in accordance with the severe censure of DIV. III.

**Because a-ground-of-exultation to you etc.:** a fact justifying the foregoing words. Just as the Corinthian Christians, who are a result of Paul's toil and a proof of the power of the Gospel, call forth in him joyful confidence in God, so Paul, as a great monument of the grace of God, calls forth in their hearts a similar confidence.

**In the day etc.:** #1Co 1:8: suggested probably by *you to us*, (#Php 2:16; #1Th 2:19,) but embracing also *we are to you*. They who save a soul from death lay up for themselves joy in that Day when the light of eternity will reveal the true value of a soul. And the same light will reveal the true grandeur of the heroes of the church, and thus increase the joy of those who have been associated with them on earth. Paul declares that, just as he already possessed in his readers that which would be a joy to him in the day of Christ, so they regarded him. This justified him in saying that they had already recognized the truth of his words about himself in #2Co 1:11. Thus #2Co 1:12, 13 support #2Co 1:11.

Notice how wisely and lovingly Paul approaches his defence of himself in #2Co 1:15-22. He appeals to his readers' sympathy, by speaking of his great peril and its effect upon him. He wins their confidence by saying that he expects to be saved from future peril because they are praying for him. This reliance upon their prayers he justifies by saying that it is the voice of his conscience, of that faculty in man which knows the secrets of man's heart, declaring that he has acted towards the Corinthians as a man of God. For such a one, and one intimately associated with themselves, they cannot but pray. This testimony about himself Paul supports by saying that he means only what he says, and that his readers' exultation about him, an exultation which looks forward to eternity, is a proof that they recognize the truth of his words.

Ver. 15.-16. The change from "we," "us," to *I* (to be noted carefully throughout the Epistle) marks a transition to matters pertaining only to Paul after matters pertaining to his helpers, especially Timothy who joins in this letter and who shared his labors at Corinth and his perils in Asia.

**First to you:** before going to Macedonia. #2Co 1:17 suggests that the apostle's change of purpose had brought against him a charge of carelessness or vacillation, against which in #2Co 1:15 he begins to defend himself.

**Grace**, or *favour*, i.e. from God: cp. "gift-of-grace," #Ro 1:11; also #Ro 15:29. Through Paul's visit God's favor will reach and bless his readers.

**A second grace:** a second visit, i.e. one visit on the way to Macedonia and one on the return journey.

**And through you etc.:** continuation of Paul's wish.

**To be sent forward etc.:** the same wish is expressed in #1Co 16:6. This purpose to go to Judaea agrees with #Ac 21:15. To this plan of travel Paul was prompted by his *confidence* that he is to his readers a ground of exultation and that to the end they will recognize the godliness and purity of his conduct. He wished to see them as often as possible, and to have their assistance for his journey to Judaea.

Ver. 17. Paul comes now to the charge against himself based on the foregoing purpose. Consequently, this purpose, afterwards abandoned must have been in some way, possibly in the lost letter, (#1Co 5:9,) made known to the Corinthians.

**With levity:** hastily forming a purpose, and caring little whether it was accomplished.

**Or etc.:** another possible supposition. Paul answers his first question touching one special case in the past, *I acted*, by asking a second question about an abiding principle of his life, *I purpose*.

**The Yes, yes and the No, no:** emphatic assertion and emphatic denial of the same thing, of which one or other must necessarily be deliberate falsehood.

**According to flesh:** see **#Ro 1:4**. If Paul makes directly contrary statements about his own purposes, his purposes must, since the Spirit of God is the Spirit of the Truth, be prompted by considerations drawn from the present bodily life. But, of such considerations, his whole career of hardship and peril was an evident and utter trampling under foot. It was therefore impossible for him to say one thing and mean another; and equally impossible to form a careless purpose.

**May be with me:** graphic picture of the inconsistency of *Yes* and *No* dwelling together in a man like Paul. This inconsistency is represented as an aim which Paul is supposed deliberately to set before himself, and for which he sinks down to worldly motives. For without such motives he could not be guilty of the insincerity with which he was charged.

Ver. 18.-20. Solemn answer to the foregoing questions, followed by proof.

**Our word:** of Paul and his colleagues, for all whom holds good Paul's reply to a charge made against himself alone. *Our word*, not "words"; puts together in one category all they say and write, including the Gospel. This all-embracing *word* is not contradiction, but harmony. Of this, the trustworthiness of *God* is a pledge. Cp. **#1Co 1:9**. For we cannot conceive that God who claims implicit belief would send, and attest by miraculous powers, untruthful ambassadors. Of **#2Co 1:18**; **#2Co 1:19** is proof. See under **#2Co 1:22**.

**God:** placed before *Son* for emphasis, and taking up *faithful is God*. The full title of *Christ* is emphatic.

**Among you through us:** by the agency of Paul and his colleagues the incarnate Son of God was first proclaimed at Corinth.

**Through me etc.:** exact specification of *us*. Notice the agreement with **#Ac 18:5**.

**Silvanus:** in Acts, Silas: a prophet, and leading man in the church at Jerusalem, sent by that church to Antioch as bearer, in company with Paul and Barnabas, of the decree. After preaching for a time at Antioch and then returning to Jerusalem, he went with Paul on his second missionary journey. He and Timothy remained behind when Paul left Berea suddenly, but rejoined him at Corinth. See **#Ac 15:22, 32, 40; 18:5**. With this last verse agrees **#1Th 1:1; #2Th 1:1**. Whether **#1Pe 5:12** refers to the same man, we do not know: or why he disappears so suddenly and at the same time both from the Book of Acts and from the Epistles of Paul.

**Did not become;** i.e. prove itself to be.

**The Son of God**, whose advent as **Jesus**, the *anointed* King, Paul proclaimed at Corinth, and who is Himself the Word of God, did not prove Himself to be a self-contradictory word.

**In Him there has come to be**, in a sense unknown before, assertion; viz. the unwavering promise of God. This is explained and proved in **#2Co 1:20**.

**In Him is the Yes**. Christ incarnate was a solemn and costly declaration by God that He will fulfill every one of the ancient promises, a declaration not admitting denial of doubt.

**The Amen: #Ro 1:25**: the expression of man's faith that the promise will be fulfilled. Since *in* Christ God reasserts the old promises, *also through* Christ men believe them, and shout *Amen*.

**Through us**: by whose preaching *the Amen* has risen from the lips of many who never spoke it before. And this has been in order that *glory* may come *to God*, i.e. that His grandeur may shine forth and thus elicit admiration for men. Cp. **#Ro 15:7, 9**.

**Through us**; keeps up the connection between the Gospel and Paul, and it thus parallel to the same words in **#2Co 1:19**.

Ver. 21.-22. The source in God of that stability of Paul's character which excludes the possibility of levity or deception. We are thus led back to the faithfulness of God (**#2Co 1:18**) with which the argument began.

**Confirms us**: gives to us an immovable Christian character. So **#1Co 1:8**; **#Col 2:7**; **#Heb 13:9**. Of such character trustworthiness is an essential element.

**With you**: courteous recognition that the readers have or may have the same stability.

**For Christ**; who is the aim of all Christian excellence. In all our relations to Christ God makes us stable.

**And has anointed us**: formal installation into a sacred office. So **#Lu 4:18**; **#Ex 28:41**; **#1Sa 10:1**; **16:13**; **#1Ki 19:16**. It recalls the divine authority of these heralds of Christ. *With you* is not repeated: for the readers did not hold the same sacred office.

**Sealed us**. See **#Ro 4:11**; **#1Co 9:2**; **#Re 7:3**; **#Joh 6:27**. God had not only formally installed them in the office of herald but had also put a visible mark upon or in them as specially His own. What the *seal* was, he need not say. The following words sufficiently suggest it. Cp. **#Eph 1:13**; **4:30**. The Holy Spirit given to Paul and his colleagues was a divine mark, visible to himself and in some measure to those who knew him, that they belonged to God. Nay more. *The Spirit in their hearts* was an *earnest* of the good things for which they were sealed.

**Earnest**: English rendering of a Hebrew word (used in **#Ge 38:17**) which through Phoenician sailors passed into Greek and Latin, denoting a sum of money paid at the time of purchase as a pledge of the whole price. *The Spirit in the hearts* of believers is the beginning and pledge of future

blessedness. Cp. "first-fruit of the Spirit," **#Ro 8:23**. Day by day God *confirms* them, ever increasing their firmness: once for all He *anointed* and *sealed* them, and *gave* to them *the Spirit*.

Review of 18-22. The questions of **#2Co 1:17** were their own answers. For, evidently, Paul's purposes were not prompted by the present bodily life. But he thinks it fit to record an emphatic denial followed by proof. And his denial covers everything said to his readers from time to time by himself and his colleagues. In proof that their word was not contradictory Paul reminds his readers that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who had become known to them through the agency of himself and his helpers, was Himself the solemn and unwavering voice of God to man, and had proved Himself to be such to the Corinthians. In Him every one of the old promises was reaffirmed, in a manner which called forth the response of faith. And at Corinth this response had been elicited by Paul's agency, for the glory of God. To the office of herald he and his companions had been anointed by God and in their hearts they bore the proof and pledge that they belong to Him and are heirs of infinite blessing. And Paul acknowledged that the unwavering stability which gave them a right to claim the confidence of their converts was God's work in them day by day. Now, could it be supposed that heralds, to whom had been committed the proclamation of this unfailing word of God, could themselves be guilty of vacillation and deception? The dignity of the office in which God has placed them forbids the thought.

This argument warns us not readily to charge with frivolous or selfish motives those who bear, in the success of their Christian work a visible mark of God's approval and support. And it is a warning to all engaged in such work, to speak and act, by exact truthfulness and by fulfilling all their promises as far as they can, worthily of Him whose sure word they proclaim as the ground of all our hope and the source of our life.

Ver. 23. After showing in **#2Co 1:18-22** how inconsistent with the Gospel he preached amid God's evident approval and help would be a worldly change of purpose, Paul will explain in **#2Co 1:23-2:4** his real motive for the change.

**I for my part:** about Paul alone, in contrast to the foregoing general statements. See **#2Co 1:15**. The solemn earnestness of the appeal implies that on the ground of his delay in coming to Corinth a serious charge had been brought against the Apostle. Cp. **#2Co 1:17; #1Co 4:18**.

**Upon my soul:** as in **#Ro 2:9**. Laying open the seat of life to be smitten if he speak falsely, Paul appeals to God. In delaying his visit he was *sparing* them the punishment which, had he come, he would have been compelled to inflict. Cp. **#1Co 4:21**. Instead of punishing, he wrote (**#2Co 2:3**) the First Epistle.

**Come again;** implies, taken with **#2Co 2:1**, that between the departure recorded in **#Ac 18:18** and the writing of the First Epistle Paul had visited Corinth; and places the unrecorded visit in some relation to that which Paul now proposes. See under **#2Co 2:1**.

Ver. 24. A corrective to **#2Co 1:23**. By using the word "spare," which implies authority to punish, Paul does not mean that he can control their *faith*, and thus cut them off from Christ. In spite of all

he can do, his readers may still take hold of Christ by faith and thus obtain eternal life. This ought never to be forgotten by those who pronounce an ecclesiastical sentence.

**But joint-workers etc.:** Paul's true relation to his readers and a reason for "sparing" them. He was working with them and was thus working out *joy* for them. For all growth in the Christian life in both individuals and communities, is an increase of joy. Only as a means of greater joy ought Christ's servants to inflict pain; and therefore as little pain as possible to attain this end. This being Paul's mission, he delayed his visit to Corinth. For, had he come sooner, he would have been a messenger of sorrow. And he preferred to give pain by a letter rather than by a personal visit.

**By faith you stand;** justifies *not lords etc.* Open as they were to censure, they yet maintained, though imperfectly, their Christian position; and this by their belief of the words of Christ. And the dignity of their position he cannot forget, even while using words of authority.

Ver. 1.-2. Paul will now show how his delay was designed to spare his readers.

**I determined:** as in **#1Co 2:2**.

**For myself:** i.e. saving himself sorrow by sparing them.

**With sorrow:** which he will inflict, as proved by **#2Co 2:2**.

**Again with sorrow;** can only mean a second painful visit. For this only will account for the prominent and emphatic position of *again*. Otherwise this word is quite needless. For, since Paul has already been at Corinth, to go there now is necessarily to go again. Whereas *again with sorrow* has almost tragic force. Paul remembers a former sad visit, and fears that his next will be the same. This former visit cannot have been his first, recorded in **#Ac 18:1**: for then there was no church at Corinth to whom or from whom he could give or receive sorrow. It must therefore have been a visit not mentioned in the Book of Acts. See further under **#2Co 13:2**. For the foregoing decision **#2Co 2:2** is a reason, betraying Paul's earnest love for his readers. To give them sorrow, is to inflict sadness upon the only persons who are a joy to himself. In other words, he has no human joy except the fellowship and love of his converts; and therefore cannot lightly make them sad.

Ver. 3.-4. To Paul's resolve (**#2Co 2:1**) **#2Co 2:3a** adds what he actually did to accomplish it.

**This very thing:** his First Epistle, which in thought now lies before him.

**Lest having come:** he wrote instead of coming.

**I should have sorrow:** in contrast to "makes you glad" in **#2Co 2:2**.

**I must needs etc.]** To rejoice in his converts was to Paul an absolute necessity. Cp. **#1Th 3:8**, "we live if you stand in the Lord."



**Being confident etc.:** a confidence which moved him to write instead of incurring the risk of a painful visit. To avoid what his confidence in his readers tells him would be sorrow to them as well as to himself, he wrote instead of coming.

**All of you:** even the erring ones, who in their heart of hearts loved Paul.

**Out of much affliction etc.:** state of mind which moved him to write, given in support of the just mentioned aim of his letter. His sorrow and tears prove the purity of his motive.

**Constraint:** cognate with "holds fast" in #2Co 2:14. A great burden resting upon his heart, and holding him as if in bonds, forced him to write. There is nothing to suggest a reference here to anything except the First Epistle. For its tone is condemnatory almost throughout. Would that all Christian reproof had a similar motive!

**Amid many tears:** interesting mark of the intensity of the apostle's feelings, and a close coincidence with #Ac 20:19, 31.

**That you may be made sorrowful:** an evitable and foreseen result of the letter, but *not* its aim. Love to the Corinthians moved him to write and guided his pen. And he wrote that his love might reveal itself to them.

**Specially towards you:** as in #2Co 1:12. As he writes to, and thinks of, them, he feels how specially dear to him are his converts at Corinth.

With #2Co 2:1-4 agrees #1Co 16:5, which shows that while writing the letter Paul had already given up his purpose of coming direct to Corinth.

From #2Co 1:23-2:4, and from this whole epistle more than any other, we gain an insight into the inner life of Paul. Little did we think as we read his former letter and felt the severity of its indignant reproofs that it was prompted by deep sorrow and moistened with tears.

While purposing to come direct to Corinth Paul received bad news about the state of the church. Perceiving that to come now would be a visit of sorrow, not to himself only but to them, he resolved to delay his visit. And, while thinking of punishment, he remembers that, apart from anything he can do, his converts at Corinth can and do take hold of Christ by faith, and thus maintain, in spite of many imperfections, their place in the family of God. His work is simply to increase their joy. Already he has come once to Corinth as a bearer of sorrow; and he does not wish to do so again. And for this he has a personal motive. To grieve them is to cast a shadow on the only earthly source of joy to himself. To avoid this he wrote to them, moved by an assurance that in writing he was seeking the joy both of himself and them. The burden of heart which moved him to write and the tears which fell as he wrote testify that he had no other motive, and that his letter was an outflow of his special love to his converts at Corinth.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION III.

#### HE REQUESTS THEM TO RECEIVE BACK THE EXCOMMUNICATED PERSON

##### CH. II. 5-11.

Moreover, if any one has caused sorrow, not to me has he caused sorrow, but (in part, that I may not press heavily) to all of you. Sufficient for the such man is this punishment, that inflicted by the more part: so that on the contrary for you rather to show favour and encourage, lest by his more abundant sorrow the such man be swallowed up. For which cause I exhort you to confirm towards him love. For to this end also I wrote, that I may know the proof of you, whether in reference to all things you are obedient. And to whom you show any favour I also do. For I also, the favour which I have shown, if I have shown any favour, it is because of you, in the presence of Christ, that we may not be over-reached by Satan: for of his thoughts we are not ignorant.

In saying (#2Co 1:23) that he delayed his visit to Corinth in order to spare his readers, Paul doubtless thought chiefly of the immoral man whom in #1Co 5:3f he bids them hand over to Satan, and of their guilty toleration of his sin. For to this case refers the severest passage in the First Epistle. Cp. #2Co 7:12. About this man Paul has now something more to say.

Ver. 5. **If any one:** delicate allusion to the excommunicated man.

**Not to me.** The bitterness of spirit resulting from the spiritual injury caused by this man's sin fell not upon Paul but upon every member of the church. For all tolerated the offence (#1Co 5:2) and were therefore damaged by it. It is true that it gave Paul holy grief: but this, as not implying the deeper bitterness of spiritual injury, he leaves out of sight.

**In part;** i.e. not quite full of sadness. This modifies *sorrow to all of you*. These words Paul inserts that he *may not*, by what he says here, *press heavily*, i.e. upon the guilty man. The strong words of #1Co 5:1-5 might lead some to suppose that Paul looked upon the offence as a special sin against himself. He reminds them that the real injury was inflicted not upon himself but upon those who tolerated the crime. That he needs, in mercy to the guilty man, to modify these words, reveals how great was the injury inflicted by this one man upon the whole church.

Ver. 6. **The such man;** points to a definite man, and takes into account all that he has done and is.

**By the more part;** implies a dissenting minority.

**This punishment,** was doubtless in obedience to Paul's command in #1Co 5:1-5. Apparently, some deliberate opponents of the apostle had refused to concur in, and execute, the sentence. But the rest had in some way punished the offender. What *this punishment* actually was, and how far it went

towards that prescribed by the apostle, viz. surrender to Satan, we do not know. But it was followed by genuine and overwhelming sorrow in the guilty man: and, this being taken into account, it was considered by the apostle to be *sufficient*. Probably, by quick and full repentance the sinning one saved himself from the full mysterious penalty.

**So that etc.:** result and measure of this sufficiency.

**On the contrary:** his total change calling for corresponding change in the action of the church.

**Show-favour:** by forgiving him. Same word in **#2Co 2:10** three times, also **#Eph 4:32**; **#Col 3:13**; in the same sense of forgiveness, i.e. favor towards those who have injured us.

**More abundant sorrow:** which he will have if you refuse to forgive and encourage him.

**The such man:** again substituted, in kindness, for the man's name.

**Swallowed up:** nothing left of him. Same word in **#1Pe 5:8**; **#1Co 15:54**.

**For which cause:** because the punishment already inflicted is sufficient, and to avoid this more abundant sorrow.

**I exhort]** Laying aside his apostolic authority, he begs them to do it, that thus it may be their act as well as his.

**To confirm:** to declare formally and authoritatively that he is an object of their *love*: same word in **#Ga 3:15**, and (LXX.) **#Ge 23:20**.

Ver. 9. Motive for "confirming love."

**I also wrote:** viz. the First Epistle, as in **#2Co 2:3**.

**The proof of you:** as in **#2Co 8:2**; **9:13**; **13:3**; **#Ro 5:4**.

**Whether in reference to all things you are obedient:** an element of character which Paul wished to test. Notice the apostolic authority here assumed. To evoke, for his own satisfaction, his readers' loyalty to his authority, was one purpose of his former letter. To say this is a quiet assertion of authority; and therefore supports the exhortation of **#2Co 2:8**.

Ver. 10.-11. Paul supports his request still further by saying that if his readers in their favor forgive anything he seals their forgiveness with his own authority; thus expressing his confidence in their judgment. And this he confirms by saying that the pardon he has already granted was for their sakes, in the sight of Christ, and to save both himself and them from the greed of Satan.

**Favour-I-have-shown:** viz. in **#2Co 2:7** towards the excommunicated man.

**If I have etc.:** modifies the foregoing words. Paul hesitates to say that he has forgiven. For this would imply an offence against himself; whereas he has said in **#2Co 2:5** that the real injury was done not to himself but to those who tolerated the offender.

**Because of you:** moved by desire for your good.

**In the presence of Christ:** before whom, and to please whom, Paul acts and speaks. He forgives the excommunicated man and wishes to save him, lest Satan gain a victory, by robbing the church of a member and the apostle of a child in the Gospel. Thus *that we may not etc.* (cp. **#Eph 6:11f**; **#1Pe 5:8**) expounds because of you. And while expounding it Paul puts himself among his readers as one who will suffer loss if the man be not saved.

**Of his thoughts:** viz. his purpose to overreach the people of God. Paul's knowledge that Satan was planning their injury, a knowledge shared by others, moved him to take steps to guard against such injury. Of these steps, pardon of the notorious offender was one.

REVIEW. Paul's mention of the tears amid which he wrote his First Epistle prompts him to speak further about the saddest matter it contained. He reminds us that the injury which caused his tears was done, not to him, but to the whole church. The punishment inflicted, though all did not concur in it, is nevertheless sufficient; so that now it may give place to public and formal pardon and encouragement. Indeed, the erring man's deep penitence calls for this. While begging mercy for him, Paul reminds us of his apostolic authority. He also expresses confidence in his readers' judgment by saying that he is ready to endorse at any time their forgiveness by his own authority, and that the forgiveness he has just pronounced is for his readers' good, to save them from the wiles of that enemy who, as all know, ever seeks to defraud the people of God.

Of the light shed by this section on the effect at Corinth of the First Epistle, further use will be made under **#2Co 7:16**.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION IV.

#### PRAISE FOR GOD'S MANIFEST APPROVAL OF HIS LABORS.

#### CH. II. 12-III. 6.

Moreover, when I came to Troas for the Gospel of Christ, and a door was open to me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit, through my not having found Titus my brother: but I bade farewell to them and went forth into Macedonia. But to God be thanks who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and makes manifest through us in every place the odour of the knowledge of Him. Because a perfume of Christ we are to God, among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing to these, an odour from death for death; but to those, an odour from life for life.

And for these things who is sufficient? For we are not, as the many are, huckstering the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, before God in Christ we speak.

Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some do, commendatory letters to you or from you? Our letter you are, written in our hearts, known and read by all men: being made manifest that you are a letter of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not in stone tablets but in tablets which are fleshen hearts. A confidence of this kind we have through Christ in reference to God. Not that of ourselves we are sufficient to reckon anything, as from ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God. Who also has made us sufficient to be ministers of a New Covenant, not of Letter but of Spirit.

Ver. 12.-13. Further proof, after the necessary digression of #2Co 2:5-11 of Paul's deep interest in his readers, shown in his movements after writing his First Epistle. This is followed by an assertion and proof and defence of the grandeur of his ministry, occupying #2Co 2:12-6:10. See under #2Co 6:10.

**Having come to Troas;** agrees with #Ac 20:1, which says that after the tumult Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia.

**Troas:** now Eski Stamboul or Old Constantinople, where there are considerable ruins: an important Roman colony on or near the site of ancient Troy, on the coast of Asia Minor and near the entrance of the Dardanelles. It was the chief landing place for those coming by sea from Macedonia to western Asia. Cp. #Ac 16:8; 20:6.

**For the Gospel:** #Ro 1:1: i.e. to proclaim it.

**Door being open,** or *standing opened*: as in #1Co 16:9. The opportunity afforded at Troas was *in the Lord*: i.e. in relation to the Master Christ. Notice an important coincidence with #Ac 20:7ff,

where, though we have no account of Paul's previous preaching at Troas, (cp. #Ac 16:8; 20:1), yet on his return after visiting Macedonia and Corinth we find Christians at Troas with whom he celebrates the Lord's Supper. These were probably, in whole or part, a result of labors at the time referred to here. We must therefore suppose that after the tumult at Ephesus Paul went to Troas with a view to preach the Gospel there; and found an abundant opportunity of doing so.

**To my spirit:** as in #2Co 7:13; #1Co 16:18.

**Had no rest:** cp. and contrast #2Co 7:5.

**Titus my brother;** suggests the special relation of Titus to Paul as colleague in apostolic work. This trouble at not finding Titus suggests that he had been directed to rejoin Paul at Troas; and implies clearly that Paul expected him to bring news about the Corinthians. See note under #2Co 9:5. The expected meeting at Troas was prevented either by Paul's earlier arrival owing to the tumult, or by some delay of Titus.

**Bid farewell;** suggests reluctance to leave Troas.

**To them:** to the converts at Troas. All details about them are unknown to us.

Notice the vivid picture in #2Co 2:12, 13 of Paul's deep anxiety about his readers' spiritual welfare. He has come to the important city of Troas to proclaim there the good news about Christ; and finds a way open to do so. But he cannot preach. For his spirit is ill at ease, waiting eagerly for tidings about his beloved children at Corinth. Drawn by this intense desire he bids adieu to some at Troas who would gladly keep him, and once more crosses the blue Aegean to Europe. This anxiety suggests the greater importance, recognized by all true evangelists, of securing old converts than making new ones.

Ver. 14a. In Macedonia Paul met Titus, (#2Co 7:6f.) and received from him most gratifying news about the effect of his First Epistle. And we cannot doubt that this caused really the joy which finds utterance here. But instead of mentioning these tidings Paul begins a long digression (#2Co 2:14-6:10) about the grandeur of his work. This suggests that the good news received in Macedonia revealed to Paul's mind and heart the success and grandeur of his work as a whole, and thus called forth his thanks to God. Hence the word *always*, in emphatic prominence. The Greek word *Thriambos*, rendered here *triumph*, denoted originally a hymn sung in those festal processions to the honor of the god Dionysius which were so common in ancient Greece. But in this sense it is found, in all extant Greek literature, perhaps only once. It is, however, found some four times as an epithet of the god to whom the hymns were sung. It was also the usual Greek equivalent for the Latin word *triumph*, the technical term for the military processions in which illustrious conquerors, accompanied by their soldiers, captives, and booty, entered in state the city of Rome and marched to the Capitol. Cp. Polybius, bk. vi. 15. 8, iv. 66. 8 xvi. 23. 5; Plutarch, *Pompey* xlv. 14, subst. six times, verb three times; Josephus, *Wars* bk. vii. 5. 3, 4, 7. This use of the word suggests that it had been used not only for the hymn sung to Dionysius but for the procession in which it was sung. But of this use no example is extant. In later ages, when both pagan festivals and Roman triumphs had passed away, the word was used for any public procession. It is difficult to say to what extent details of a Roman

triumph or of a pagan festival\* (\*See an interesting paper by G. G. Findlay in The Expositor, vol. x. p. 403.) were present to Paul's mind when writing these words. But in any case the two kinds of triumph had enough in common to link with these words a definite idea. And the Roman triumph suggests a good meaning here. Paul thinks of his life of wandering and hardship, driven from Ephesus by a tumult and from Troas by anxiety about the Corinthians. But he remembers that, just as in Roman triumphs the long and sad train of captives and booty revealed the greatness of the victory and the victor, so his own long and weary wanderings over sea and land revealed the grandeur of God. Cp. Polybius, bk. xvi. 23. 5: "And, when he entered the city in triumphal procession, then even still more, being reminded of their former dangers by sight of those led along, their emotions were aroused both of thanks to the gods and of goodwill towards the cause of so great a change." Perhaps Paul's words were suggested in part by remembrance, ever present to him, of his former hostility to God. As a captive he is led along. And his absolute submission, shown in his apostolic work, reveals the completeness of the victory of Him against whom Paul once fought. That his march in the train of his conqueror was with a song of praise to the conqueror, is explained in the words which follow.

**In Christ:** as the cause, the aim, the director, and the encompassing element, of all his journeys.

Verse 14b. Explains "leads in triumph," and accounts for Paul's "thanks to God."

**Odour:** #Joh 12:3; #Eph 5:2; #Php 4:18: any kind of scent.

**Manifest:** set conspicuously before men. See under #Ro 1:19.

**Knowledge of Him:** of Christ, as proved by "perfume of Christ" in #2Co 2:15. This *knowledge* of Christ is an *odour* which, by leading Paul along in triumph, God *manifests*, i.e. presents to men's minds. We may conceive the triumphal procession accompanied by incense-bearers, and revealing its approach by the perfume scattered around. So Paul's presence, wherever he went, made Christ known, as it were silently and invisibly but pervasively, to those among whom he moved. And that he was a means *through* which God made Christ known to men to be their eternal life, filled his lips, even amid weariness and anxiety, with "thanks to God."

The two parts of this verse present two aspects of Paul's life. He was both well known and unknown. Before the eyes of men the once proud Pharisee walked, a conspicuous token of the victory and majesty of God; meanwhile imparting unobtrusively to those ready to receive it, the life-giving knowledge of Christ.

Ver. 15.-16. A fact which explains and justifies the assertion of #2Co 2:14b.

**Perfume of Christ:** something revealing, as perfumes do, the nature of that from which it proceeds; and therefore practically the same as "odour of the knowledge of Him," but adding to it the idea of pleasantness *to God*. Similarly, the self-sacrifice of Christ (#Eph 5:2) and the money given by the Philippians to Paul (#Php 4:18) were "an odour of perfume." Same words in #Le 1:9, 13, 17, etc. Wherever Paul went he presented unobtrusively to men around the knowledge of Christ, and thus pleased God. He was, therefore, himself *a perfume of Christ to God*. For through his life

and work shone the glory of Christ. And this, both when surrounded by those who accept Christ and are thus in the way of salvation and by those who reject Him and are thus perishing. See under **#1Co 1:18**. For in each case his word is acceptable to God, as accomplishing a divine purpose. In **#2Co 2:16** Paul lingers on these contrasted cases, and explains more fully the meaning of his solemn words.

**Odour:** more appropriate to the word *death* than is "perfume."

**From death for death:** (cp. **#Ro 1:17**;) a scent proceeding *from*, and thus revealing the presence of, *death*; and, like malaria from a putrefying corpse, causing *death*. Paul's labors among some men revealed the eternal death which day by day cast an ever deepening shadow upon them; and, by arousing in them increased opposition to God, promoted the spiritual mortification which had already begun. But even among such he was nevertheless a revelation of Christ, acceptable to God, i.e. "a perfume of Christ to God." For it pleases God, the righteous Judge, that the foundation Stone crushes to death (**#Lu 20:18**) those who refuse to build upon it. Among those who believed, Paul's labors both gave proof of the eternal life they already possessed, and strengthened it. Thus, through the apostle and his colleagues, driven rudely from place to place, revealing and causing among different men different moral states and different results, God was spreading, unobtrusively yet pervasively, the knowledge of Christ. And for this honor Paul cannot forbear to give exultant "thanks to God."

Ver. 17. A question suggested by the solemnity of the position just described, before Paul passes to God's commendation of his work by the conversion of the Corinthians; and a reason for this question, viz. that Paul is very far from looking upon the Gospel as mere merchandise for self-enrichment.

**Huckster:** one who bought from the merchants and sold by retail. Same word in Sirach 26:29; **#Isa 1:22** "thy hucksters mix the wine with water." Cp. Plato, *Protagoras* p. 313d: "They who carry about education from city to city and sell and *huckster* it." Not thus did Paul with the Gospel, making gain of it.

**As the many are:** a terrible charge. It does not necessarily mean the greater part of Christian teachers; but implies a large and definite number present to Paul's thought. Sincerity was the human source or motive of his words, as it was (**#2Co 1:12**) the element of his whole behavior. The original source was *from God*.

**As from** (cp. **#Joh 1:14**) . . . **as from:** his words correspond with their human and divine source.

**Before God etc.:** completes the inward picture of Paul's preaching; his words spring not from selfish, but from genuine purposes, and from God; and are such words as men speak when sincere and when moved by God. They are spoken in the presence of God and in union with Christ as their encompassing element. Cp. **#2Co 12:19**.

Ver. 1. Paul now proceeds to recall plain proof (in **#2Co 3:2, 3**) of the dignity claimed by him in **#2Co 2:14f**. But he remembers that his words above may be thrown in his teeth by opponents at



Corinth as mere self-commendation. This hostile reply he anticipates by the first question of **#2Co 3:1**; and overthrows it by a second question, which compels his opponents to admit that he has no *need* to commend himself. Then as an answer to the second question he gives proof of his divine mission.

**Commendatory letters:** containing credentials needful for those who go among strangers. Such letters Apollos brought (**#Ac 18:27**) to Corinth. But Paul did not *need* them either *to* the Corinthians or *from* them to others.

**As some do:** probably Jewish or Judaizing teachers who came with letters from known Jewish teachers in other places. The mention of such letters reveals the infinite difference between the great Apostle who came alone to Corinth and founded the church and these unknown teachers.

Ver. 2.-3. **Our letter:** practically the same as "the seal of my apostleship," **#1Co 9:2**. Both to themselves and to others, "to you" and "from you," the Christians at Corinth were a proof that God sent Paul. "Others bring letters in their hands: but *in our hearts* you ever are as a plain declaration to ourselves of our divine mission." This shut out all need for commendatory letters. These words are forerunners of "confidence" in **#2Co 3:4** and "hope" in **#2Co 3:12**.

**Known and read.** The Corinthian church was not only in the heart of the apostle but was also visible to *all men*, as a proof of Paul's divine mission. His credentials were so conspicuous that all saw them; and so plain that all read their significance.

**All men:** believers and unbelievers: for in their hearts even enemies knew the work Paul had done at Corinth.

**Being manifested that you are etc.:** since you stand before the eyes of the world as *a letter* written by *Christ* and therefore carrying His authority.

**Ministered** (see under **#Ro 12:7**) **by us:** by Paul and Timothy, who, as servants of Christ, founded the Corinthian church, which is here described as a letter written by Christ. These words correspond with "through us" in **#2Co 2:14**. Not "written by us": for the writer was Christ, whose helper Paul was. The Holy *Spirit* dwelling in the hearts of the Christians at Corinth through the agency of Paul and Timothy was an abiding divine testimony to them, to their converts, and to others that they were sent by God. To the converts, the presence of the Spirit was known directly by the new cry Abba, Father, put into their hearts and lips, and by victory over sin given to them day by day; and to others, by "the fruit of the Spirit" in their holy lives. Cp. **#Ro 8:13-16**; **#Ga 5:22**.

**Living God:** in contrast to lifeless *ink* or *stone*. Cp. **#1Th 1:9**; **#1Ti 3:15**; **4:10**; **#Ac 14:15**; **#Heb 9:14**; **#De 5:26**; **#Jos 3:10**; **#Ps 42:2**, etc. It suggests the activity of God, ever blessing, protecting, or punishing. After placing in contrast to the letters *written with ink* brought by his opponents the gift of the Holy Spirit, Paul places this gift in further contrast to the *stone tablets* received by Moses on Mount Sinai. And very suitably. For these tablets of stone, preserved during long ages, were an abiding and visible and famous witness of the divine authority of Moses and of the Covenant of which he was minister. No human hand, but the Hand which made Sinai and the world, traced those

venerable characters. But they were written only on lifeless stone, on material apparently the most lasting yet doomed to perish. But the divine writing of which Paul had been the pen was on living human hearts, destined to retain and show forth in endless life the handwriting of God.

**Flesh:** the visible and controlling embodiment of human life, and a conspicuous contrast to *stone*. Same contrast, and same phrase, in **#Eze 11:19; 36:26f**. Paul's commendation was engraved on the flesh and blood walls of the inmost chamber of his readers' being.

By the second contrast of **#2Co 3:3** Paul opens a way for important teaching to follow. And this second contrast increases immensely the force of the foregoing rebuke to his opponents. Amid much affliction but in words of glowing gratitude to God Paul has been speaking (**#2Co 2:14f**) about his own ministry. To this some might object as being self-commendation. The apostle asks whether he has any need for commendation. The absurdity of this suggestion, and the infinite difference between himself and his detractors, he reveals by asking whether when he came to lay the foundation of the church at Corinth he brought commendatory letters with him, or had ever asked his readers for such. Yet he has a letter of commendation, not in his hand but in his heart. His readers themselves are a divine commendation of himself and his fellow-laborers. Others brought letters written in characters of ink. His commendation was the presence of the life-giving Spirit in his readers' hearts. Nay more. Not only were Paul's credentials of a kind quite different from those of his opponents, but they were infinitely superior even to the venerable credentials with which God confirmed the Covenant made amid the thunders of Sinai and confirmed the authority of the great Lawgiver of Israel. For Moses brought down from the mountain a testimony written by God on blocks of silent stone. But Paul could point to a testimony written also by God, in the hearts of living men. On Jewish opponents glorying in Moses, this argument would fall with overwhelming force.

Ver. 4.-6a. A comment on **#2Co 3:2, 3**.

**Confidence:** an idea recurring throughout §§ 5, 6.

**Of this kind:** viz. grounded on the fact that through his agency God had written His name by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of living men.

**Through Christ:** "through whom we received grace and apostleship," **#Ro 1:5**.

**In reference to God;** as in **#Ro 4:2**. Paul's confidence took hold of God and came through the work and death of Christ. For it rested on what God had wrought through Christ. To **#2Co 3:4; #2Co 3:5** is a corrective: cp. **#2Co 1:24**.

**Reckon:** the mental process resulting in Paul's confidence. See under **#Ro 6:11**.

**Of ourselves:** apart from influences from without or from above. (Similar words convey important truths in **#Joh 5:30; 16:13**.) Paul's confidence just expressed, is not a result of mere human reasoning. For confidence referring to God, mere mental powers are not *sufficient*.

**As from ourselves:** i.e. looking to our own powers as the source of success. Had Paul's confidence been a result of mere human calculation, it would have looked for results from his own unaided powers.

**Our sufficiency:** our ability to make the reckoning which results in the confidence of **#2Co 3:4**. Of this confidence *God* is the source. And He *has also* given us spiritual powers fitting us to be *ministers of a new covenant*. These last words take up again, in order to develop it fully, the contrast introduced for a moment in **#2Co 3:3**.

**A New Covenant;** implies a complete difference between the gospel dispensation and the older one: for it implies a new engagement of God with men. These words confirm **#Lu 22:20**, (which, supported by all the oldest Greek MSS., I cannot doubt to be genuine,) where, as in **#1Co 11:25**, similar teaching is attributed to Christ; teaching from which Paul's words here were doubtless derived. Cp. also **#Heb 8:6ff; 9:16**. Christ, and, taught by Him, Paul, thus proclaimed that in the Gospel the prophecy of **#Jer 31:31** was fulfilled.

**Ministers of a New Covenant:** whose work it is to make known and carry out a new agreement of God with men. So "ministers of righteousness," **#2Co 11:15**; "of the Gospel," **#Eph 3:7; #Col 1:23, 25; #Ga 2:17**.

**Not of letter etc.:** in apposition to *new covenant*, and describing its nature. As minister of the New Covenant it was Paul's work to convey to his hearers an indwelling *Spirit*; not a written *letter*, like that given to Israel through Moses and engraved on tablets of stone or written on the pages of a book. Similar contrast, in the lips of the Baptist: **#Joh 1:17**. This contrast Paul expounds in **#2Co 3:6b-11**; and shows in **#2Co 3:12-4:6** that his conduct corresponds with it.

REVIEW. After speaking about his former letter and the man whom in that letter he excommunicated, Paul speaks in § 4 of his movements after writing the letter. He came to Troas to preach the Gospel. But, drawn by intense anxiety about the Corinthian church, he abandoned the favorable opportunity there presented and came at once to Europe. At this point, without assigning any cause, he bursts into a song of praise to God. The state of mind which made this outburst of praise easy was doubtless prompted, though Paul does not say so, by his joyful meeting with Titus. But the matter of his praise is his entire apostolic work. His sad and weary journeys are a triumphal procession revealing the greatness of God his conqueror, a procession which makes Christ known everywhere, as by the silent perfume of incense. A perfume to God is Paul's whole life, both among those who receive and those who reject his word. The responsibilities of his work well-nigh appall him. For to him the preaching of the Gospel is no cloak for self-seeking; but is intense reality. This is not self-commendation. For such is needless. While others bring letters of commendation he merely points to God's evident work in the hearts of his readers, an evidence treasured in Paul's own heart. The presence in them of God's Spirit is a nobler testimony than the letters brought by his adversaries, or even than the tablets of stone brought by Moses from Sinai. The confidence in God which moves him to speak thus is no mere human interference, but a gift of that God who has also given him ability to do gospel work, and has made him a minister of a Covenant nobler than that established through the medium of Moses.

Notice that Paul's appeal in support of his apostolic authority is a courteous recognition of the genuineness of the religion of his readers. They cannot deny the one without denying the other.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION V.

#### THE MORE GLORIOUS COVENANT

##### CH. III. 6-11.

**Ministers of a New Covenant, not of Letter but of Spirit. For the Letter kills: but the Spirit gives life. Moreover, if the ministry of death, engraven on stones, in letters, became glorious, so that the sons of Israel were not able to gaze at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, the glory which was coming to nought, how shall not the ministry of the Spirit be the more in glory. For indeed the glorified is not glorified in this matter, because of the surpassing glory. For if that which comes to nought was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.**

While giving proof that he is a minister of God Paul has incidentally given proof of the exceeding greatness of the ministry commended to him. For he has said that his credentials are written, not like those of Moses on tablets of stone, but on human hearts; and that as minister of the New Covenant he imparts, not a written word, but a living Spirit. This contrast of the Old and New Covenants he will now develop.

Verse 6b. Reason why God has made Paul a minister of Spirit not of Letter, a reason revealing the essential and infinite superiority of the New Covenant.

**The letter:** the written word which Moses, as minister, and mediator, of the Old Covenant, gave to Israel and to the world. Cp. **#Joh 1:17**.

**The letter kills:** exactly parallel to **#Ro 7:10ff**. Had there been no commandment, sin would (**#Ro 4:15**) have been impossible: and had there been no sin, death, its punishment, would never have been. Thus death was an inevitable consequence of the Law. For man born in sin could not obey it; and therefore could not escape the condemnation it pronounced and the penalty it threatened. Moreover, to bring men under condemnation to death was a specific and immediate aim of the Law: **#Ro 3:19; 5:20; 7:9ff**. In this sense *the Letter* of the Law *kills*. The written command causes first sin, then (**Ro 6:16, 23; 7:5, 9**) death. And of this condemnatory and destroying letter Moses was the minister. For through his agency it was given. This does not imply that there was no disobedience before Moses. For the Law was written from the beginning in every man's heart. And by this inward law they who have not heard of Moses will be judged: **#Ro 2:12**. But at Sinai this universal law took visible and historic form. Consequently, what is true of the Law as a universal principle may be said of its historic form. For the historic form was in harmony with the inward reality of the Law. Moses gave to Israel a written embodiment of a command which, instead of saving, could of itself only destroy. Paul was an agent through whom his readers received *the Spirit*, i.e. the Holy Spirit, whose presence in the heart *gives life*, and his a pledge of life eternal.

**Life:** the normal state of intelligent creatures, viz. union with God, an immediate outworking of the Spirit in the heart developing into eternal life; in absolute contrast to that separation from God

which is an immediate result of sin, and which, unless arrested by Him who raises the dead, will develop into eternal death. See under **#Ro 7:9**.

Notice carefully the infinite superiority which Paul claims for the New Covenant. It brings life; whereas the Old Covenant brought death. This contrast is not obscured by the truth that the death brought by the Law is designed by God to be the way to life. See under **#Ro 7:14**. For, had not the Law been followed by the Gospel, it could not, even indirectly, have led to life. And that the Old Covenant was preparatory to, and receives its entire value from, the New which gives life at once to all who accept it, proves the infinite superiority of the latter.

Verse 6a would be utterly meaningless to us if we had not the Epistle to the Romans. It is therefore a mark that the two epistles came from the same pen, and that Paul had spoken at Corinth the truths afterwards embodied in his letter from Corinth to Rome.

Ver. 7.-8. Argument based on the foregoing contrast.

**The ministry of death:** that of Moses who gave to Israel the death-bringing Law. It is explained by "ministry of condemnation," **#2Co 3:9**.

**Engraven on stones with letters:** a full and graphic delineation of the ministry of Moses. The whole Law was but an amplification of the words brought down from the mountain. Consequently, in the *letters engraven on the stones* the whole work of Moses found visible and conspicuous embodiment.

**Became glorious:** literally, in glory. In the course of its development it became surrounded with glory.

**So that. . . could not etc.:** proof and measure of the glory. This is implied clearly in **#Ex 34:30**. [The distinction between *ωστε* with infinitive and with indicative is rightly given by Canon Evans in the *Expositor*, and series vol. iii. p. 3; but cannot here be reproduced in English. The infinite presents the inability to behold, not as simple fact, but as giving to the reader a measure of the greatness of the *glory*. Cp. **#1Co 1:7; 5:1; 13:2; #2Co 1:8; 2:7; 7:7**.]

**Glory of his face:** its supernatural brightness. This illustrates the central idea of the word *glory*. See under **#Ro 1:21**. The word "shone" in **#Ex 34:29, 30, 35**, the LXX. render "glorified," the exact word and tense used here in **#2Co 3:10**. This may have suggested the words before us.

**Coming-to-nought** or *passing-away*; (see **#1Co 1:28**;) suggests in anticipation the argument of **#2Co 3:11** and of **#2Co 3:13-18**. Without doubt the brightness on Moses' face did not continue, but gradually and totally vanished. This is very suggestive. Though the brightness was more than Israel could bear, it was nevertheless a fading glory.

**How shall not etc.:** same form of argument as **#Ro 8:32**.

**The ministry of the Spirit:** the ministry of the Gospel, which conveys the Spirit to those who believe. Cp. **#Ga 3:4**: "he that supplies to you the Spirit."

**Shall be in glory:** inference from the splendor of the ministry of Moses. From the supernatural brightness which encompassed Moses as he gave to Israel the death-bringing letters, Paul infers that a still greater splendor awaits those through whom is imparted the life-giving Spirit. And, since no such splendor surrounds them now, he speaks of it as something which *shall be*. He refers (cp. "hope" in **#2Co 3:12**) to the brightness in the world to come of those who (**#Da 12:3**) now "turn many to righteousness."

Ver. 9. Develops and thus supports the argument of **#2Co 3:7, 8**.

**Condemnation:** the link connecting "letter" with "Kills" in **#2Co 3:6**. The Law pronounces the condemnation (**#De 27:26**) of all who disobey it; and therefore of all men. For none can obey it. Consequently, the only immediate effect of the Law is that just so far as we know it we are condemned by it. For "through law comes understanding of sin": **#Ro 3:20**. By conveying to men such a law Moses was a minister of condemnation. Cp. "minister of sin," **#Ga 2:17**.

**Of righteousness:** manifested in the Gospel by faith for all who believe, **#Ro 1:17; 3:21f**. As minister of the Gospel Paul was a means of imparting to men this righteousness. It is the link connecting the Gospel preached by Paul and the Holy Spirit received by those who believe it. The immediate effect of the Law is to bring men under God's frown: the immediate effect of the Gospel is that they rejoice in the smile of God. And Paul argues that if, as recorded in **#Ex 34:29**, glory pertains to the former then more abundant glory pertains to the latter.

Ver. 10. Supports **#2Co 3:9** by a statement which goes beyond it, and which we are compelled to admit.

**In this matter:** in the comparison of the two Covenants.

**The glorified:** general term including any glorious object. The Old Covenant belongs to the category of objects glorious in themselves which lose their glory by the *surpassing* splendor of some brighter object. Just so the moon is as bright after sunrise as before: but, practically, its brightness is completely set aside by that of the sun. It is so *in the matter* of the Old Covenant. In it is illustrated the general principle, *the glorified is not glorified because of the surpassing glory*. The brightness of Moses' face revealed the splendor of his ministry. And while we look at his ministry alone, amid the darkness of surrounding night, it is in our eyes covered with glory. But when we compare it with the ministry which proclaims righteousness for men whom the Law condemned, and which imparts, not letters graven on stones, but the abiding presence of the life-giving Spirit, the glory of the former covenant fades utterly; and we think only of the greater splendor of the ministry of the New Covenant. This strengthens immensely the argument of **#2Co 3:7, 8**. If a supernatural brightness attested the grandeur of the Old Covenant, and if the Old Covenant now sinks into insignificance in presence of the New, surely an infinite splendor belongs to, and therefore awaits, the ministry of the New Covenant. For nothing less than infinite splendor can throw into the shade the splendor of the Old Covenant.

Ver. 11. A reason of this greater splendor, suggested at the end of #2Co 3:7, and supporting the argument of #2Co 3:7f. It also prepares the way for § 6.

**That which is coming to nought:** the ministry of the Law, which is valid only till (#Ga 3:22ff; #Ro 10:4; 6:14) the Gospel comes.

**That which remains:** i.e. the Gospel. In the history of the world, as in the experience of each individual God speaks first in the form of Law, "Do this or die." When we hear the good news, "He that believes shall not die," the voice of condemnation loses its dread power, and comes to nought. But the good news of life will remain sounding in our ears for ever. Paul argues, "If the temporary dispensation was accompanied by splendour, of which splendour the brightness on Moses' face was a conspicuous example, surely the abiding voice of the Gospel is or will be surrounded by still greater splendour." [Notice the appropriate use of *διὰ* and *ἐν*, as in #Ro 1:2, for the temporary and the permanent.] With the passing nature of the Covenant of which he was Mediator, the passing brightness of Moses' face was in beautiful though incidental agreement. Even the little outward details of the two Covenants were in harmony with their inward essence.

SECTION 5 proves how infinitely superior is the New Covenant to the Old; thus increasing Paul's claim, as a minister of this Greater Covenant, to his readers' respect. At the end of § 4 he asserted the contrast of the Covenants in the contrasted words "letter" and "spirit," which he gave as their characteristics. This contrast he develops forcibly by stating the reason of it, viz. that the letter works death, the Spirit works life. In other words, God has made him minister of a New Covenant because the Old one could not attain His purposes of mercy. Whereas the Old Covenant consisted only in letters graven in stones, and in words of condemnation, words producing death, (for none can obey them, and death is the penalty of disobedience,) the New Covenant conveys righteousness, and the Holy Spirit, and life. The Old Covenant set up a relation between God and man destined to be only for a time: the New Covenant sets up a relation destined to continue for ever. When placed in contrast, the grandeur of the Old Covenant fades utterly before the infinitely greater brightness of the New. Nevertheless, the Old Covenant was accompanied by splendor so great that the Israelites could not look on the face of Moses: and that splendor bore witness to its real worth. From this Paul argues triumphantly that to the New Covenant, before whose greatness the Old Covenant sinks into insignificance, belongs a splendor infinitely surpassing that which dazzled the eyes of Israel. And of this splendor he is content to speak as a thing of the future.

Under the above argument lies an important principle, viz. that with inward reality outward manifestation must always eventually correspond; that power, however veiled for a time, must sooner or later clothe itself in appropriate glory. The Old Covenant was at once surrounded by splendor appropriate to its importance. The New Covenant was not. The appearance neither of Christ nor of His servants revealed the grandeur of the kingdom they were setting up. And the contrast between what they were and what they seemed to be proclaimed unmistakably the glory awaiting them.

Although Paul's relation to the Gospel is shared by no one living now, yet the glory of the better Covenant remains; and gives infinite importance to the work of every one who, officially as preacher or teacher, or casually, announces the good news of salvation. In a true sense the humblest Sunday



School teacher who tells with effect the story of the cross is greater, i.e. in privilege, than Moses. For his word imparts at once the Spirit of eternal Life for which the words of Moses did but prepare the way.

These arguments are quite consistent with the infinite importance of the Law as the absolutely necessary preparation for the Gospel. As subordinate to the Gospel the value of the Law cannot be overestimated. Apart from the Gospel it has no value. Paul has really in view, men who set up the Law as independent of, and greater than, the Gospel. Against such, his argument has full force. And, that the one is preparatory, the other final, proves, from every point of view, the infinite superiority of the Gospel.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION VI.

*THAT, IN SPITE OF PAUL'S UNRESERVED PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL,  
SOME MEN REJECT IT, DOES NOT DISPROVE ITS SUPERIORITY*

#### CH. III. 12-IV. 6

**Having then such a hope we use great openness of speech. And not as Moses used to put a veil upon his face, that the sons of Israel might not gaze at the end of that which was coming to nought. But their thoughts have been hardened. For until this day the same veil remains upon the reading of the Old Covenant: it not being revealed that in Christ it is coming to nought. But until today whenever Moses is read a veil lies upon their heart. But whenever it may turn to the Lord the veil is taken away. Moreover, the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, is freedom. But we all with unveiled face beholding reflected in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being transformed to the same image, from glory to glory, as from the Lord of the Spirit.**

**Because of this, having this ministry as we have received mercy, we do not fail. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor using with guile the word of God, but by the manifestation of the Truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God. And our Gospel, if indeed it is veiled, among those that are perishing it is veiled; in whom the god of this world has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers, that there may not shine forth the light-giving of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For not ourselves do we proclaim, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves your servants because of Jesus. Because God, who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, it is who has shined in our hearts, to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.**

After proving in § 5 the superiority of the New Covenant, Paul shows in § 6, keeping before us and making use of the idea of glory introduced in § 5, that his conduct corresponds with this superiority; and explains the rejection by the Jews and others of so great a blessing. In **#2Co 3:12-18** he speaks of the rejection of the Gospel by Jews; in **#2Co 4:1-6**, of its rejection by unbelievers generally.

Ver. 12. Sums up § 5, and shows its bearing on Paul's conduct.

**Such a hope:** viz. that glory awaits the New Covenant and its ministers, a hope based on the glory of the Old Covenant and the superiority and permanence of the New. In **#2Co 3:4** Paul expressed "confidence" that by God's grace he was a minister of God. This confidence the argument of § 5 has developed into a "hope of glory." This *hope* prompts him to proclaim without reserve the Gospel on which it rests.

**Openness-of-speech;** **#2Co 7:4, #Eph 6:19; #Php 1:20; #Ac 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31:** literally *saying-everything*, without fear, or, as here, without concealment.

Ver. 13. Paul does *not* act as *Moses* did. See **#Ex 34:29-35**. This contrast, suggested by the contrast developed in § 5, both puts Paul's conduct in a very clear light and prepares the way for an exposition of the conduct of some who rejected his plainly spoken words.

**Used-to-put a veil;** agrees with **#Ex 34:34**, which seems to imply that Moses habitually wore a veil.

**That which was coming-to-nought:** probably the fading brightness (**#2Co 3:7**) of Moses' face, which was the immediate object hidden from the gaze of Israel. But this fading brightness reminds us that the covenant it certified was itself transitory. The radiance on Moses' face as he came down from the mountain testified that he had been with God, and revealed the grandeur of the work given him to do. He spoke to Aaron, to the elders, to the people. And when he had finished speaking he put a veil over his face until he went again into the presence of God. [The word "till" in **#Ex 34:33** (A.V.) should be "when."] And this he seems to have done constantly. Moses' purpose in putting on the veil is not stated in Exodus. But we are here taught that it was that the Israelites might not see *the end* of the splendor upon his face, that their peering eyes might not find out that the glory *was passing away*. And these words suggest that had they seen this they might have inferred that the Mosaic Covenant was itself only temporary. This explanation of Moses' motive, though not even suggested by the story of Exodus, yet agrees with it remarkably well. For we cannot doubt that the glory was not permanent but passing. And it may be that a half consciousness of this moved Moses to hide his waning glory. Certainly, both the fading of the brightness and its concealment were in harmony with the temporary nature and the partial revelation of the Old Covenant. We need not discuss the source of Paul's explanation of Moses' motive. For it is given not as argument but only to illustrate by contrast his conduct in preaching the Gospel and to explain Israel's rejection of the word so plainly preached. Since the New Covenant is abiding (**#2Co 3:11**) Paul has no need to do *as Moses* did.

Ver. 14. **But etc.:** i.e. in spite of Paul's openness of speech, so different from the conduct of Moses.

**Hardened:** become insensible to divine influences. See **#Ro 11:7**; **#Eph 4:18**. This hardening is the work both (**#2Co 4:4**) of Satan and (see under **#Ro 9:18**; **11:8**) of God.

**Their thoughts:** **#2Co 4:4**: nearly but not quite the same as "minds." It denotes the mind active, i.e. producing thoughts, purposes, etc., but such as could not receive divine impressions. [The Greek aorist leaves quite indefinite whether Paul refers to the hardening of ancient Israel or of the Jews in Paul's day. It combines the sense of *have been hardened* and "were hardened." Since the story of Moses is introduced merely to illustrate the rejection of the Gospel it is best to refer these words to the Jews who rejected Christ. I have therefore chosen the former rendering. So R.V. in **#2Co 4:2, 4**. See *The Expositor*, First Series vol. xi. pp. 299, 380. This is one of the many passages in which the difference of the Greek and English tenses compels the translator to become also an expositor.]

This hardening of the Jews, **#2Co 3:14b** accounts for in a way which links their state in Paul's day with the story of Moses' veil.

**Until today the same veil remains;** makes very conspicuous the continuity of their spiritual position. In "the Book of the Covenant," **#Ex 24:7**, *the Old Covenant* itself was *read*. By a strong figure Paul says that, just as a veil covered Moses' face, hiding from Israel the face that its glory was fading, so the open page of the Old Covenant, even while being read, was veiled.

**Inasmuch as it is not revealed etc.;** justifies the assertion that *the same veil remains*.

**Revealed:** made known, as only God can make it known, to the consciousness of those who hear the Old Covenant read. See under **#Ro 1:17**. The Jews did not know that the Old Covenant was only preliminary, *that in Christ it comes to nought*, i.e. its validity passes away. As a guide of conduct, the Law was not annulled but established (**#Mt 5:17**) by Christ. For, in Christ, whatever the Law bids we do. But as a covenant between God and man, and as a basis of approach to and intercourse with God, the Old Covenant, "Do this and live," has utterly passed away. So **#Ga 3:19, 25; #Ro 8:4; 10:4**. Now, just as the brightness of Moses' face was actually waning, but Israel could not see this because though present among them his face was veiled, so the transitory nature of the Old Covenant was written plainly upon the pages of the Book of the Covenant (cp. **#Jer 31:31ff**), but the Jews did not know it though the book lay open before them. In other words, the book was veiled.

Ver. 15. **But until today etc.:** in contrast to "revealed that in Christ it comes to nought; expounding still further and from another point of view the hindrance which prevents Israel from knowing the true nature of the Old Covenant.

**Until today:** graphic repetition, fixing attention upon the still unchanged state of Israel.

**Moses is read:** more forceful than "the reading of the Old Covenant." Cp. **#Ac 15:21**. In the Book the veiled Lawgiver was still present.

**A veil:** not "the same veil": for the metaphor is changed, to show that the real hindrance is not in the book but in *their heart*. The book is veiled, inasmuch as only God can reveal its mysteries. The veil was *upon their heart*, inasmuch as in themselves was the reason why the mysteries were not revealed to them.

**Heart:** the seat of the intelligence and the source of action. See under **#Ro 1:21**.

Such is Paul's explanation of the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews. Just as their fathers could not see that the brightness of Moses' face was fading and that the Covenant of which he was mediator was itself destined to pass away, because his face was hidden from sight by a veil, so even now, after the lapse of many centuries, the Book of Moses, which would tell them if they understood it that the Mosaic dispensation was destined to pass away, is not understood, although read to them every Sabbath. Like its author at Sinai, the book is veiled. Or, rather, on the readers' hearts a veil lies. For the hindrance is in themselves.

Ver. 16. Paul cannot leave his people in their darkness without expressing a hope that they will some day come to the light. The form of his words was suggested apparently by **#Ex 34:34, LXX.:** "whenever Moses went in before the Lord the veil was taken away."

**To the Lord:** to Christ, from whom Israel now turns away.

**It may turn:** viz. the heart of Israel. The word *it* suggests a general conversion: cp. **#Ro 11:26**. But **#2Co 3:16** is true of each individual who turns to Christ.

**Is taken away:** a fixed unchangeable principle of the kingdom of God. So surely as one turns to Christ, the veil is removed. It also expresses confidence of Israel's salvation. Cp. **#Mt 3:10**. That by God the veil is removed, Paul leaves his readers to infer.

Ver. 17. Two truths, which taken together prove and explain **#2Co 3:16**.

**Is:** practical identity, as in **#1Co 10:16**; **#Ro 1:16**. To "turn to the Lord," i.e. to receive Jesus as Master, is to receive the Holy Spirit as the animating principle of our life. By receiving the one we receive the other. Hence the coming and the presence of the Spirit are spoken of as the coming and presence of Christ: **#Joh 14:18**; **#Ro 8:9f**; **#Ga 2:20**. This intimate and essential relation between the Son and the Spirit, amounting to practical identity of these Two Divine Persons, Paul asserts by the strong words *the Lord is the Spirit*. (Similarly, in **#Joh 10:30** Christ says, "I and my Father are one" in proof that none can pluck His sheep from His hands because to do so would be to pluck them from the Father's hand.) In virtue of this essential relation of the Son and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, sent by Christ (**#Joh 15:26**) and the bearer of Christ's presence, is called *the Spirit of the Lord*, and Christ is, in **#2Co 3:18**, "the Lord of the Spirit."

**Freedom:** in the widest sense possible. The Holy Spirit is absolutely *free*, i.e. unrestrained by any will or force external to Himself. For the entire universe is under His control. And this freedom He gives to those in whom He dwells. Nothing can hinder them; not even the necessary limitations of life. For, taught by the Spirit, they look upon these limitations as affording opportunities of working out their most deeply cherished desires. They are in harmony with the all-controlling Spirit and are therefore free indeed. Cp. **#Joh 8:36**; **#1Co 7:22**. Now the veil of **#2Co 3:14-16** is a restraint hindering spiritual vision. By it Israel's heart is bound. It will therefore be removed when Israel turns to the Lord. For, to receive the Lord is to receive the Spirit. And such a hindrance to spiritual vision the Spirit cannot tolerate: for where the Spirit is *is freedom*.

Ver. 18. **But we:** emphatic contrast. From the general principles of **#2Co 3:17** Paul turns to himself and his readers as exemplifications of it; and places them in express contrast to those whose hearts are still veiled.

**All;** marks a blessing common to all believers: for (**#Ro 8:9**; **#Ga 4:6**) all have the Spirit.

**With unveiled face:** from which a veil has been taken away: put forward in conspicuous contrast to the veiled heart (**#2Co 3:15**) of Israel.

**Face:** not "heart" as in **#2Co 3:15**. For Paul pictures them not as comprehending but as looking.

**The glory of the Lord;** denotes in **#Ex 16:10**; **24:17**; **#Nu 14:10**; **#Lu 2:9**; **#Joh 12:41**; **#Ac 7:55**; **22:11**, a visible and supernatural brightness revealing the presence and grandeur of God: it is

here the outshining, through His works and words, of the moral grandeur of Christ; an outshining far more wonderful than any visible brightness. Cp. #Joh 1:14; 2:11; 11:40; #Ro 6:4.

**Beholding reflected in a mirror:** i.e. in the Gospel, where the words and works of Christ are recorded. So #1Co 13:12, where the Gospel mirror is contrasted unfavorably with direct vision in the world to come. And in this glass we behold, not mere abstract moral grandeur, but moral grandeur combined into an *image*, into a picture of a living man, even Jesus. The early disciples saw Him face to face, and as they heard His words and watched His works they (#Joh 1:14) beheld His glory. But we can do so only by pondering the Gospel. We thus see His image and behold His glory.

**Behold:** very appropriate for the continued contemplation of Christ as portrayed in the Gospel.

**Are being transformed:** gradually, day by day, as we continue gazing: wonderful result of our contemplation of Christ. Same word in #Ro 12:2; #Mt 17:2; #Mr 9:2: cognate word in #Ro 8:29; #Php 3:21. *The image* reflected in the Gospel mirror reproduces itself in those who gaze upon it. This agrees with #Ro 6:10f; #1Jo 4:17, which teach that what Christ is we are to be. This effect of our vision is similar to, but infinitely more glorious than, that (#2Co 3:7) of Moses. Notice here a gradual development of the Christian life and character; one practically the same as that in #Ro 12:2. This change is inward and spiritual resulting from inward and spiritual vision of Christ. Soon we shall see Him face to face: and so wonderful will be the effect of that vision that even our bodies (#Php 3:21: cp. #1Jo 3:2) will be changed and made glorious like His.

**From glory to glory:** the change proceeds from the moral splendor reflected in the Gospel, and results in splendor imparted to us. Cp. #Ro 1:17.

**The Lord of the Spirit:** the divine Master at whose bidding (#Joh 16:7) goes forth the Holy Spirit, who is therefore "the Spirit of the Lord," and (#Ro 8:9) "of Christ."

**As from the Lord of the Spirit:** the result produced by the image of Christ in those who contemplate it corresponds with the dignity of Christ as the Master who sends forth the Spirit. Earthly beauty, however skilfully portrayed, cannot reproduce itself in the beholder. But from Christ, and therefore from the image of Christ reflected in the Gospel, go forth life-giving spiritual influences which stamp His moral image in and on those who behold it. Similarly, in photography the silent and mysterious power of the light stamps on the prepared plate an image of the object. Thus the glory received comes *from* the *glory* reflected in the mirror, *from the Lord of the Spirit*, and is such *as* we might expect *from* Him who sends forth the Spirit.

This verse reveals the infinite value of persevering Christian contemplation. As we continue looking into the gospel mirror there rises before us with increasing clearness an image in which are combined every element of moral grandeur in its highest degree, the image of the God-Man. As we contemplate it we feel its power: (for it is a living and life-giving image of the Lord of the Spirit:) and ourselves are changed, in a manner corresponding with Christ's gift of the Spirit, into a likeness of Him at whom we gaze.

The word I have rendered *beholding-reflected-in-a-mirror* is derived from the common Greek word for *mirror*; and is found in the active voice in Plutarch, *Morals* p. 894d, meaning to "show reflected in a mirror." The middle voice, in the sense of seeing oneself in a mirror is found in a few places. It is also found, in the sense of seeing an object in a mirror, in Philo, *Allegories* bk. iii. 33: "Let me not see Thy form mirrored in anything else except in Thyself, even in God." This passage, like that before us, refers to Moses talking with God at Sinai. A cognate and equivalent verb is found in Clement's epistle, ch. 36 (see Appendix A,) in the same sense. In all these cases the middle voice denotes, as frequently, the effect of the vision on him who beholds it. [This is confirmed by Philo, *Migration of Abraham* ch. 17, where to denote seeing oneself in a mirror the middle voice *ἐνοπτρίζωνται* is followed by *ἐάντων*. Cp. also Plutarch, *Morals* pp. 696a, 141a.]

Chrysostom, followed by Theodoret, and by the Revised Version (text,) expounds the word to "reflect like a mirror." But this sense was probably suggested to Chrysostom only by this verse. It is not found in any Greek writer. The word is never predicated in the middle voice of the reflecting mirror, but always of him who sees reflected in a mirror either himself or some object beneficial to himself. Moreover, if the unveiled ones already reflect *the glory* of Christ, it is needless and meaningless to say that they *are being transformed into the same image*: for the change would be already effected, especially as an image is outward form, not inward essence. The exposition adopted above gives the cause of the change, viz. contemplation of the reflected glory; and thus supplies the connection between the unveiled face and the progressive change into the same image. It also keeps up the contrast, suggested by we all, of the unveiled Christians and the veiled Jews; while the word transformed reminds us of Moses returning unveiled into the presence of God and thus rekindling his fading brightness.

The last words of **#2Co 3:18** refer certainly to **#2Co 3:17**. But Paul's reference is, I think, sufficiently conveyed by the rendering *the Lord of the Spirit*; the genitive simply implying, as always, a relation between the governed and governing nouns leaving the nouns themselves and the context to determine exactly what the relation is. That Paul wished to put *the Lord* and *the Spirit* in apposition, (as the R.V. does,) is the less likely because the identity asserted in **#2Co 3:17** is administrative, and not personal. In virtue of this identity both is Christ *Lord of the Spirit* and the Holy Spirit is *the Spirit of the Lord*. See further in *The Expositor*, 2nd series vol. iii. p. 384.

Ver. 1.-2. Parallel to **#2Co 3:12, 13**; as are **#2Co 4:1-6** to **#2Co 3:12-18**.

**Because of this**: viz. the wonderful change in **#2Co 3:18**.

**This ministry**: that of **#2Co 3:6ff**. As in **#2Co 3:12**, Paul now shows the bearing of his foregoing teaching upon his own conduct.

**According as we have received mercy**: stronger than **#1Co 15:10**. It is a humble acknowledgment of helplessness, unable to do any good to himself or others, and of the pity shown to him by God in making him a minister of the more glorious covenant. Whatever position we hold in the church is by the compassion of God. Cp. **#Ex 33:19**.

**Fail**: turn out badly in something, to lose heart and give up through weariness or fear.

**Hidden things of shame:** the many and various things which shame compels us to hide, especially all unworthy motives and means. To these we shall turn if we become weary or timid in our work. But Paul, brave and persevering, had *renounced* them. He did so *because* he remembered the wonderful effect of the image reflected in the gospel glass, which in his *ministry* he held before men. Paul's actual conduct, in accord with *we have renounced etc.*, is portrayed in the rest of **#2Co 4:2**.

**Walk:** as in **#1Co 3:3**; **#Ro 6:4**.

**Craftiness:** **#2Co 11:3**; **#1Co 3:9**: literally, *doing anything* to gain our ends. So Plato, *Menexenus* p. 247a: "All knowledge apart from righteousness and other virtue is craftiness, not wisdom."

**Using with guile the word of God:** cp. "huckstering the word of God," **#2Co 2:17**: using the Gospel as a means of working out our own secret and unworthy purposes. To do this, is to *walk in craftiness*.

**Manifestation of the truth:** exact opposite of the foregoing.

**Manifestation:** see under **#Ro 1:19**; **#Col 4:4**. The truth is made manifest to all, but not revealed to all.

**The truth:** including (**#Ps 119:142, 151**) the Law and (**#Col 1:5**) the Gospel; as being words which correspond with reality. See note, **#Ro 1:18**.

**Conscience:** see notes, **#1Co 8:7**; **#Ro 2:15**.

**Every conscience of men:** more forceful than "every man's conscience." Cp. **#Ro 2:9**. Each individual conscience is to Paul a definite object of thought. The truth appeals to every conscience, however wicked and ignorant. For it sets forth, and agrees with, the spiritual realities of every man's own heart, and proclaims that which every man's heart knows to be true. For the written Law accords with the law written in the heart; and the Gospel accords with man's need of salvation. Otherwise there would be no hope for the unsaved. And, by its appeal to each man's conscience, the truth claims respect for those who announce it. Indeed, the preacher's words will come with authority in proportion as they agree with the facts of his hearers' inner life. And this will be in proportion as he makes *manifest the whole truth*. He who does this has therein sufficient commendation, and has no need for *craft* and *guile*. While speaking to men Paul stood *before God*: cp. **#2Co 2:17**; **5:11**. And in His presence *guile* can find no place. This verse expounds, and accounts for, the "much openness of speech" in **#2Co 3:12**.

Ver. 3.-4. Parallel to **#2Co 3:14, 15**. Paul cannot forget that, although by manifesting the truth he recommends himself to every conscience, yet many reject his words.

**My gospel:** as in **#1Co 15:1**; **#Ro 2:16**.



**In (or among) them that are perishing;** recalls #2Co 2:15. They are pictured as standing round the Gospel, but unable, because it is veiled, to see the glory therein reflected. That the Gospel, like the Law, is veiled, Paul must admit. But it is so only among those in the way to destruction. The veiled Gospel is therefore a proof of their deadly peril.

**In whom etc.;** says that the hindrance is in themselves, in a form which proves the assertion of #2Co 4:3.

**In whom:** graphic picture of the locality of the blinding, viz. that inmost chamber whence come their *thoughts*.

**This age:** as in #Ro 12:2.

**God of this age:** the most tremendous title of Satan, as a supreme controlling power using for his own ends the men and things belonging to the present life. Him the men of this age (#1Co 2:6ff) worship and serve. Cp. #Joh 12:31; 14:30; #Eph 2:2; 6:12; also #Php 3:19.

**Blinded:** #Joh 12:40; #1Jo 2:11.

**Blinded the thoughts:** cp. #2Co 3:14. Their thoughts have no intelligence, and cannot see the gospel light.

**Of the unbelievers:** not needful to complete the sense, but added to point out the cause of their surrender to the cruelty of Satan. Paul refers only to those who heard and refused the Gospel. For this blinding was a punishment for rejecting the light. And rejection of the light of nature (#Ro 1:21) would not make them *unbelievers*. Because they turned away from the glory reflected in the gospel mirror, God permitted Satan to destroy, in whole or in part their capacity for spiritual vision.

**That there may not shine etc.;** cruel purpose (and inevitable result) of this blinding. It reveals the loss sustained by the blinded ones. It is as though, in the wilderness, that he might not look at the brazen serpent and live, one put out the eyes of a bitten man.

**The glory of Christ:** same as "glory of the Lord" in #2Co 3:18.

**The Gospel of etc.:** the gospel mirror in which the *glory* is reflected.

**The light-giving:** "lest the Gospel shine upon them and give them light."

**Image of God:** #1Co 11:7; #Col 1:15; #Heb 1:3. Cp. Wisdom 7:26: "An outshining is (wisdom) of everlasting light, a spotless mirror of the energy of God, an image of His goodness." And Philo (*On Monarchy* bk. ii. 5, *On Dreams* bk. i. 41, etc.) speaks often of "the Word" [λογος] as an "image of God." See Lightfoot's valuable note on #Col 1:15. These words set forth an important relation of the Son to the Father. Of the invisible Father the Son is a visible manifestation and outshining, visible once on earth, though veiled in human flesh, and visible now to those who surround His throne. We know, in part, what God is because we have seen Christ reflected in the gospel mirror.

That Christ is the *image of God*, reveals the greatness of His glory and of *the light* which proceeds from *the Gospel* in which His *glory* is reflected, and the infinite loss of those whose blinded thoughts cannot see this glorious light.

Many of those to whom Paul preached had evidently never seen the image of Christ portrayed in the Gospel. For they were unmoved by it. To them, therefore, the Gospel was veiled. And, since the truth was set plainly before them, the hindrance to sight was not in the Word but in the hearts of those who did not believe it. By not seeing the image set before them they proved themselves incapable of seeing it. And their blindness was so unnatural that it must have been inflicted. And it could be a work only of the enemy of the race. Since the blinded ones were wholly occupied with things of the present life and were thus prevented from beholding the Gospel light, Paul says that they were blinded by the God of this age. And, since the inevitable result of their blindness was that they were unable to see the light which shines forth from Him who reveals to men the face of God, he properly speaks of this as the dire purpose of the blindness inflicted by their foe.

This blindness was wrought, not only by Satan, but by God: as is taught expressly in **#2Th 2:9ff**; **#Ro 11:8**; **#Joh 12:40**. In just punishment God surrenders to the cruelty of Satan those who reject the Gospel, that He may destroy their capacity for receiving it. This dual source of spiritual insensibility is illustrated in **#2Sa 24:1** and **#1Ch 21:1**. The blindness is also attributed to the word, and to those who preach it: **#Isa 6:10**; **#Mr 4:11f**. For, by God's ordinance, the Gospel hardens those whom it fails to soften.

This blindness, though terrible, is not necessarily final; any more than is the death described in **#Ro 7:9ff**. For Christ, who raises the dead, gives sight (**#Lu 4:18**) to the blind. But the blindness and death are such as no earthly power can save from. Yet in our deepest darkness we know the direction of the light. And, as we turn towards it, the light of life by its creative power gives eyes to the blind.

Notice that, as in **#1Co 3:23**; **8:6**; **11:3**, the Father is called *God* even in distinction from the Son.

Ver. 5.-6. These verses justify by contrasted denial, the foregoing description of the Gospel preached by Paul. Its grandeur moves him to rebut a possible or actual insinuation against himself.

**Proclaim:** as heralds, **#Ro 2:21**.

**Ourselves:** i.e. our own authority, skill, power, etc.

**As Lord:** as claiming the homage and obedience of all, and claiming to be the aim of their life and effort.

**Servants:** see under **#Ro 1:1**.

**Ourselves your servants**, or *slaves*: strange proclamation. Cp. **#1Co 9:19**; **#2Co 1:24**. As a servant or slave toils not for his own profit, except indirectly, but for his master's, so Paul puts forth all his powers, forgetful of himself, to advance the highest interests of his readers.

**Because of Jesus:** constrained (#2Co 4:14) by His love to men. This proclamation reveals "the glory of Christ" who has gained over Paul a victory so complete.

**Because God etc.:** a fact which moved Paul and his companions to become *servants because of Jesus*. Cp. "because of this" in #2Co 4:1.

**Who said etc.:** the first word of creation, #Ge 1:3. *Out of the bosom of darkness, light* sprang at the bidding of God: graphic picture.

**Who has shined:** has irradiated by His own light, i.e. by a display of Himself. The creative power which at the first changed darkness into light by a word is at work again in the word of the Gospel. Thus the grandeur of the Old Creation reveals that of the New.

**To-bring-to-light etc.:** great purpose of the shining forth of this divine light in the heart.

**Bring to light:** same word as light-giving in #2Co 4:4.

**The knowledge of the glory of God:** to make known the grandeur of God, as the shining forth of light makes an object known.

**In the face of Christ:** from which shines forth the light which reveals the glory of God. While we gaze upon that face as reflected in the gospel mirror, i.e. while we contemplate His character as portrayed in the Gospel, we behold *in the face of Christ* the greatness of God. That the light which filled Paul's heart was an outshining of God in creative power, and that it had shone forth in him that men might know and wonder at the grandeur of God, moved him to devote himself to the service of men by proclaiming this glorious Gospel.

Notice the three steps of #2Co 4:1-6; viz. 1, 2; 3, 4; 5, 6; each culminating in a description of the Gospel. In the 1st and 3rd Paul explains his own conduct; in the 2nd, that of the unbelievers. Also the close connection of #2Co 3:12-18 with #2Co 4:1-6. Each begins with the practical effect on Paul with the grandeur of the Gospel; then passes on to treat of its rejection by some; and concludes with a still nobler description of its purpose and efficacy. And they are introduced by similar words. Prompted by the reference to Moses in § 5, #2Co 3:12-18 deals with the Jews: #2Co 4:1-6, with unbelievers generally. A link binding the whole together is the conspicuous word *veil*.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION VII.

*PAUL PROCLAIMS THE GOSPEL AMID DEADLY PERIL, WHICH HOWEVER  
REVEALS THE POWER OF GOD; AND CANNOT DETER HIM, FOR IT  
WILL BE FOLLOWED BY ENDLESS LIFE.*

#### CH. IV. 7-V. 10

We have, however, this treasure in earthenware vessels, in order that the excess of the power may be God's and not from us: in everything being afflicted, but now helpless, perplexed, but not utterly perplexed, pursued, but not deserted, thrown down, but not perishing: always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus, that also the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our body. For always we who live are being given up to death because of Jesus, in order that also the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death is at work in us, but life in you.

But having the same spirit of faith according as it is written, "I have believed: for which cause I have spoken," (#Ps 116:10,) also we believe: for which cause we also speak. Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sake, that grace, having multiplied, may by the greater number cause the thanksgiving to abound for the glory of God. For which cause we do not fail. For if indeed our outward man is corrupting nevertheless the inward man is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our affliction is working out for us exceedingly to excess an eternal weight of glory; while we do not look at the things seen, but at the things not seen: for the things seen are temporary; but the things not seen, eternal.

For we know that, if our earthly house of the tent be taken down, a building from God we have, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For indeed in this tent we groan, longing to put on as overclothing our dwelling-place which is from heaven. If, at any rate, also clothed, not naked, we shall be found. For indeed we who are in the tent groan, being burdened: because we do not wish to lay aside our clothing but to put on overclothing, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life. And He who has wrought in us for this very thing is God, who has given to us the earnest of the Spirit. Being then of good courage always, and knowing that while at home in the body we are away from home from the Lord- For by faith we walk, not by appearance. But we are of good courage, and are well-pleased rather to go away from home from the body, and to go home to the Lord.

For which cause we also make it a point of honour, whether at home or away from home, to be well-pleasing to Him. For all of us must needs be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may obtain the things done through the body, in view of the things he has practised, whether good or bad.

The grandeur of the Gospel, expounded in §§ 5, 6, Paul now reconciles with the unfavorable circumstances of those who proclaim it, by giving in **#2Co 4:7-12** the purpose of their afflictions, viz. to reveal the power of God; and sets forth in **#2Co 4:13-5:10** the motives which prompt and enable him to speak amid hardships and perils so great.

Ver. 7. **This treasure:** the life-giving Gospel of the glory of God.

**Earthenware vessels:** human bodies, liable to be destroyed in the confusion of the world and the storm of persecution.

**In order that etc.;** implies that the earthenware vessels are part of a deliberate purpose of God.

**The excess of the power:** which preserves unbroken these fragile vessels, thus proving that it exceeds the force of the storm around.

**May be God's.** God designed that the vessels should be preserved by His own power; *and not* by a power inherent in, and proceeding *from* the vessels, as would have been had they consisted of material strong enough to resist the storm. And for this end He committed the gospel treasure to men whose bodies were liable to be destroyed by the foes whose fury He foresaw the Gospel would arouse.

**From us:** as if we were the source of power.

Ver. 8.-9. Description of the weakness of the earthenware vessels, and of their preservation.

**Helpless:** confined in narrow space. Same word in **#2Co 6:12**; **#Ro 2:9**. See notes. This verse proves that it denotes something worse than *afflicted*. At every point difficulties press upon them: but they are not without way of escape.

**Perplexed:** not knowing which way to go, seeing no way open to them.

**Utterly-perplexed:** same word as "without-way-of-escape" in **#2Co 1:8**. Although there seemed to be no way open to them, they were not absolutely without a way. This is not contradicted, but confirmed, by **#2Co 1:8**. From their own point of view there was then no way of escape: but God made one.

**Pursued:** as in **#Ro 12:14**.

**Not deserted,** or *not left behind in* peril: not abandoned to their pursuers. Cp. **#Heb 13:5**.

**Thrown down:** as if in their flight.

**Not perishing:** a last triumphant denial. Notice the climax. At every step they are heavily pressed: but their path is not hedged up. They do not know which way to go: but they are not altogether

without a way of escape. Enemies pursue them: but they are not left alone in their flight. They fall: but even then they survive.

Ver. 10. While apparently continuing the description of his hardships Paul now explains their relation to the sufferings of Christ, and then states their divine purpose. Thus #2Co 4:10a is parallel to #2Co 4:7a, which is developed in #2Co 4:8, 9; and #2Co 4:10b to #2Co 4:7b.

**Always:** parallel to "in everything," #2Co 4:8.

**The putting to death:** the whole process which ended in the death of Christ.

**Carrying about etc.:** explained in #2Co 4:11, "given up to death because of Jesus." Paul's hardships and deadly peril arose from the same cause as those which led Christ to the cross; and were therefore in some sense a repetition and reproduction of them. Cp. #2Co 1:5, "sufferings of Christ; #Php 3:10; #Col 1:24. Thus in his own *body* Paul was carrying about wherever he went, so that many could see it, a picture of *the putting to death of Jesus*.

**In order that etc.;** lays stress on the divine purpose of these perils.

**Also the life:** the resurrection life, placed in conspicuous contrast to the death, of Christ.

**Made manifest.** Paul's body, rescued by God's power from deadly peril, was a conspicuous picture of Jesus alive after He had been put to death. For the miraculous power which raised Christ from the grave saved Paul from going down into it. Cp. #2Co 13:4. It was a picture of Christ's death that it might be also a picture of His *life*; in order that thus the power (#2Co 4:7) of God might be manifested.

Ver. 11. Explains and justifies #2Co 4:10.

**We who live:** in contrast to Christ who died, and to the death into which day by day they are being given up. They were living victims of death.

**Given-up:** as in #Ro 1:24.

**Are given-up:** each day death was there and then claiming them for its prey. Cp. #1Co 15:31; #Ro 8:36.

**Because of Jesus:** because they obeyed Him by proclaiming the Gospel. Since this moved the enemies to persecute, by them probably Paul looks upon himself as *given-up*. By taking steps to kill him, his enemies were practically handing him over to the king of terrors. But the purpose which follows reminds us that even the purposes of bad men were used by God to work out His own purposes. Cp. #Ac 2:23.

**That also the life etc.:** emphatic repetition of #2Co 4:10b, fixing our attention upon the divine purpose of these perils.

**Mortal flesh:** more vivid picture than "our body" in #2Co 4:10. That Paul's body was flesh and blood, and thus by its very nature exposed to death, revealed the greatness of the power which preserved it safe even in the jaws of death. Notice the name *Jesus* four times in #2Co 4:10, 11; as though Paul loved to repeat it.

Ver. 12. Inference from #2Co 4:7-11.

**Death:** the abstract principle personified. In the plots and attacks of enemies *Death* was active, stretching out its hand to take them. And in their spared life, preserved by God's power and spent in proclaiming the Gospel, the abstract principle of *Life* was at work among their hearers. The preachers daily felt themselves sinking into the grave: and their daily deliverance was daily working eternal life among their converts.

Review of #2Co 4:7-12. Although a bearer of treasure so great, Paul was in momentary peril of destruction. His wonderful preservation day by day was evidently wrought by divine power greater than the destructive forces around, even by the power which raised Jesus from the grave. He therefore cannot doubt that it was in order to manifest this power to men around, and thus make him wherever he went a visible picture of the resurrection of Christ, that he was permitted to be exposed to perils so tremendous. Thus even the perils of the apostles advanced, and were designed to advance, the great purpose of their lives. If in themselves death was at work, consuming their life, yet the very life they lived, unconsumed in fire, was working out eternal life for those around. How terrible a picture does this give of the greatness and constancy of their perils! Their spared life was an ever recurring miracle.

Just as the death of Christ, which at first seemed to disprove His Messiahship, gave occasion for the great proof of it, viz. His resurrection; so the apostles' perils, which seemed to be inconsistent-with their claim to be ambassadors of God, really supported this claim by giving occasion for display of the preserving power of God.

Ver. 13.-5:10. Having explained the purpose and result of the perils around, Paul now gives the motives which enable him to continue his work in spite of them. He can do this because, led by the Spirit, he believes the promises of God. By faith he knows (#2Co 4:14) that God will raise him from the dead in company with his converts; that (#2Co 4:1-4) if his present body die a better one awaits him; that (#2Co 4:6-8) death will but remove him to the presence of Christ; and that (#2Co 4:10) from Him he will receive due reward for his work.

Verse 13. A new branch of the subject.

**Spirit of faith:** the Holy Spirit moving men to believe the promises of God, especially the promise of resurrection and of life with Christ. Cp. #1Co 4:21; #Eph 1:17. Although faith is the condition (#Ga 3:14) on which we receive the Spirit, yet, when received, by revealing to us (#Ro 5:5) the love of God, He works in us a firmer and broader confidence in God. The assurance which enabled Paul to pursue his apostolic path, he felt to be a work of the Spirit.

**The same Holy Spirit:** who moved the Psalmist to write.

**I believed: for which cause I spoke:** word for word from #Ps 116:10, LXX. The original Hebrew is very difficult. It may perhaps be rendered "I have believed when I say, I have been much afflicted:" i.e. "I tell the story of my affliction with faith in God." But the words quoted, though not an exact rendering, sum up accurately the sense of the whole Psalm. Like Paul, the writer has been in deadly peril; and has been delivered by God, in answer to his prayer. His deliverance has given him strong confidence in God, a confidence which finds expression in this Psalm.

**Also we believe:** as did the Psalmist.

**Speak:** viz. the Gospel which Paul, rescued from peril, preaches. The Psalmist's faith, strengthened by peril and deliverance, moved him to song: Paul's faith moves him to proclaim the Gospel, undeterred by the prospect of future perils. But it was the same faith, wrought by *the same Spirit*. And in each case faith found suitable utterance. As usual, the real reference is not so much to the words quoted as to their entire context.

The rest of § 7 is an exposition of the faith which moved Paul to speak even amid deadly peril.

Ver. 14.-15. **Knowing that etc.:** parallel with "we believe," giving the assurance which moves him to speak. Cp. #1Co 15:58; #Ro 5:3. By faith he knows. So #2Co 5:1. For he believes, on sufficient grounds, that which will come true. Such belief is knowledge.

**Raised the Lord Jesus:** the divine act on which rests Paul's assurance that he will himself be raised. Cp. #1Co 6:14; #Ro 8:11.

**With Jesus.** Since our resurrection at the last day is a result of Christ's resurrection, wrought by the same power, in consequence of our present spiritual union with Christ, and is a part of that heritage which we share with Christ, Paul overlooks the separation in time and thinks of his own resurrection and Christ's as one divine act. Cp. #Col 3:1; #Eph 2:5f.

**Will present:** before the throne amid the splendors of that day. Cp. #Col 1:22.

**With you]** Amid perils Paul is encouraged by knowing that in glory he will be accompanied by those whom he is now laboring to save. These words keep before us the thought of "at work with you" in #2Co 4:12. They are also a courteous recognition of his readers' true piety. #2Co 4:15 develops *with you* in #2Co 4:14, thus leading the way to § 8.

**All things, or all these things:** all Paul's hardships and perils. Cp. #2Co 5:18.

**That grace having etc.;** expounds *for your sake*. All these perils Paul endures in order that the pardoning favor of God may *multiply*, i.e. may shine on a larger number of persons; that thereby the favor of God may increase abundantly the thanksgiving which from this larger number will go up to God, and may thus manifest the grandeur of God. Cp. #2Co 1:11; #Ro 3:7.

Ver. 16. **We do not fail:** as in #2Co 4:1. Paul there said that because of the grandeur of the Gospel he does not turn out badly in the day of trial as he would do if through craft he concealed it.



He now says that because he knows that God will raise him from the dead, and knows that in the resurrection he will be accompanied by his readers and that his hardships are increasing the praises which will for ever go up to God, for this cause he does not lose heart in face of peril and forbear to proclaim the Gospel. *For which cause* thus corresponds inversely to "knowing that etc." in #2Co 4:14; and is practically parallel to "for which cause etc." in #2Co 4:13.

**But if indeed etc.:** contrast to losing heart in the conflict; and the secret of not doing so.

**The outward man:** the body, which alone is visible.

**Is corrupting:** wearing out and being destroyed by hardships.

**Nevertheless:** conspicuous contrast.

**Inward man:** same words in same sense in #Ro 7:22. It is the invisible and nobler part of the man.

**Is renewed;** denotes in #Col 3:10 gradual restoration to the primeval image of God lost by sin. But here since we have no reference to sin or imperfection, it denotes probably the healing *day by day* of the wounds inflicted upon Paul's own spirit by personal peril and by anxiety for the churches. Of such wounds we find abundant marks on the pages of this epistle. They were gradually wearing out his body. But the daily application of healing balm kept them from injuring his real inner life. Consequently, he does not grow weary in his work.

Ver. 17.-18. Explains #2Co 4:16, by stating a truth which daily restores Paul's inner man; and which teaches him to "exult in afflictions," thus saving him from the injuries these might otherwise inflict on his spirit.

**Works out for us glory:** viz. his reward for preaching the Gospel, (cp. #Da 12:3,) which could not have been his had he not exposed himself to the hardship and peril involved in his work. In this sense the glory was a result of *the affliction*, which compared with it was *momentary* and *light*. Or, in more forceful words, *the momentary lightness itself works out etc.*

**Exceedingly, to excess:** the manner and the extent of the working out of glory.

**Eternal weight:** in strong contrast to the momentary lightness. In a manner and to an extent passing all comparison Paul's present hardship and peril are producing for him a glory which by its greatness and endlessness make them appear both light and momentary. He thus heaps word on word to convey a truth passing all human language or thought.

**While we look etc.:** Paul's state of mind while writing #2Co 4:17. It explains, and nothing else can, his foregoing words. Only to those whose eyes are fixed on the unseen can hardships like his appear momentary and light.

**Looking:** more fully looking with a purpose, especially with a view to avoid, imitate, or obtain. Same word in **#Ro 16:17; #Php 3:17; 2:4**. We fix our eyes on things beyond mortal vision and make them the objects of our pursuits. For this, **#2Co 4:18b** gives a good reason. **#2Co 4:17** accounts for the daily inward renewing by pointing to the coming glory: **#2Co 4:18** notes the subjective condition (which Paul proves to be reasonable) of the present effect of this coming glory.

Ver. 1. Supports the reason just given and its practical influence on Paul, by declaring that in "the things not seen" he has a share and that he *knows* this. He thus supports the argument of **#2Co 4:13-18** by proving that future glory is not dependent on rescue from bodily death.

**For we know:** words of confidence, calling attention to the effect of this knowledge on Paul.

**Tent** or *booth*: not else in the New Testament; but akin to the word used in **#Mt 17:4; #Lu 16:9; #Ac 7:43, 44; #Heb 8:2, 5; 9:2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 21**; and to another in **#Ac 7:46; #2Pe 1:13f**: used in classic Greek only as a metaphor for the body of men or animals. Same word in Wisdom 9:15: "A corruptible body weighs down the soul; and the earthen tent burdens the much-thinking mind."

**Our earthly house of the tent:** the body belonging to the present world, looked upon as fragile and easily *taken down*, by death. This suggests, but hardly proves, that Paul was in doubt whether he would survive the coming of Christ.

**Building:** a permanent abode, in contrast to *the tent*.

**Building from God:** the resurrection body. It is *from God*, as being an immediate outworking of His miraculous power.

**Not made with hands:** in contrast to other buildings. It is parallel to *from God*, keeping before us the supernatural origin of the resurrection body.

**Eternal:** in contrast to *be taken down*.

**In the heavens:** secure place in which the saved dead *have*, though they do not yet wear, the resurrection body. Cp. **#Php 4:20; #1Pe 1:4**. It is practically in heaven: for the power which will raise it is there. When Christ appears from heaven we shall receive our permanent bodily abode. Hence it is also "our dwelling place from heaven," **#2Co 5:2**. Consequently, this building is completely beyond reach of the uncertainties of earth.

Ver. 2.-4. Appeal to present yearnings in proof that there is a resurrection body.

**Even in this tent:** before it is taken down.

**Groan:** as in **#Ro 8:22f**; where we have the same argument. The burdens of the present life force from us a cry.

**Longing to clothe ourselves:** the cause and meaning of the cry.

**Our dwelling-place etc.:** the risen body which we shall receive when Christ returns *from heaven* to earth.

**To clothe:** new figure, viz. the risen body looked upon now as a garment.

**Put-on-as-overclothing**, or *overclothe-ourselves*: i.e. without taking off our present mortal garment, without passing through death. In other words, Paul longed to survive, in his present body, the coming of Christ. In that case there would be (#1Co 15:51) change, but no disrobing. #2Co 5:3 gives a supposition necessarily implied in this yearning for a heavenly body.

**We shall be found:** by Christ at His coming, when we shall stand before Him.

**Clothed:** in bodies, *not naked* disembodied spirits. This conditional clause uncovers the argumentative point of #2Co 5:2 in proof of #2Co 5:1. See below. Perhaps it is also a reference to some of those who denied the resurrection, suggesting how inconsistent is such denial with the Christian's aspirations. #2Co 5:4 supports #2Co 5:3, which is really a restatement of #2Co 5:1, by restating more fully the argument of #2Co 5:2.

**For even we who are in the tent:** parallel with *for even in this tent*.

**Even we who are:** in contrast to *we shall be found*. The perils and hardships of life were a *burden* forcing from them a cry for deliverance.

**Inasmuch as we do not wish etc.:** explains this cry by pointing back (#2Co 5:2) to the longing, intensified by present adversity, which prompted it.

**Swallowed up:** caused to vanish completely out of sight, as in #1Co 15:54. Paul did not wish to lay aside his mortal raiment, i.e. to die, but without dying to receive his immortal body. In that case *the mortal body would be swallowed up by the endless resurrection life*.

Argument of #2Co 5:2-4. By Christians now death is looked upon without terrible recoil, as being the only entrance into Life. We bow to the inevitable. But in the early Christians the possibility of surviving the coming of Christ woke up with new intensity man's natural love of life, and made death seem very dark. They therefore longed eagerly for Christ's return, hoping thus to clothe themselves with immortal raiment without laying aside their mortal bodies. This yearning for an immortal body, Paul felt to be divinely implanted; (for it was strong just so far as he was full of the Holy Spirit,) and therefore not doomed to disappointment. But the possibility of death was to Paul too real to be ignored. Therefore, in view of it, his yearning for an immortal body assured him that if his present body be removed by death a heavenly body awaits him. For, otherwise, he will stand before Christ as a naked spirit, in utter contradiction to yearnings which he felt to be divine, and of whose realization he had a divine pledge. In other words, his instinctive clinging to his present body was to him a divine intimation that when Christ comes we shall not be naked spirits, but spirits clothed in bodies; and was, therefore, a proof that if our present body be removed by death a heavenly and eternal body awaits us. Thus a purely human instinct, not weakened but intensified by Christianity,

and sanctified by the felt presence of the Holy Spirit, is seen to be a prophecy of God's purpose concerning us. Similar argument in **#Ro 8:23**.

Ver. 5. A statement of what is the real force of the foregoing argument.

**Wrought in us**, or, *wrought us out*: same word in **#2Co 4:17**. They were material in which God had worked out results.

**For this very thing**: the aim of this divine working, viz. either the heavenly clothing or Paul's yearning for it. Probably the latter: for the yearning itself is the basis of the argument. If so, *this very thing*, viz. this yearning for an immortal body, is both a result, and the aim, of God's working in Paul.

**Wrought in us** denotes a result; **for this very thing**, the aim.

**Who has given etc.**: a fact which proves the foregoing statement.

**Earnest of the Spirit**: as in **#2Co 1:22**. Practically the same as "the firstfruit of the Spirit" in the similar argument of **#Ro 8:23**. The Holy Spirit in Paul's heart was a pledge that the promise he had believed would be fulfilled; and was thus an earnest of the coming inheritance. Cp. **#Eph 1:14**. Since Paul's clinging to his present body while yearning for a better is introduced merely in proof that if he die there awaits him a body from heaven, the words *this very thing* refer probably only to the yearning for the heavenly body, without reference to his reluctance to die. For he could not say that this reluctance was God's work, nor that the Spirit was a pledge that he should not die. These verses warn us to distinguish carefully between a divinely breathed yearning and the purely human longing which often accompanies it. The latter is frequently disappointed, as Paul's was; the former never.

Ver. 6.-8. Practical effect upon Paul of the assurance of **#2Co 4:14**, which was developed and justified in **#2Co 4:16-5:5**; and therefore parallel with "for which cause we do not fail" in **#2Co 4:16**.

**Always**; corresponds with "in everything . . . always . . . every" in **#2Co 4:8, 10, 11**.

**And knowing**: also a result of the foregoing argument. This knowledge prompts and justifies the *courage*.

**Away from home**; points to our other home, from which we are absent so long as our *home* is in the body. To justify this mention of another home, **#2Co 5:7** breaks off the foregoing sentence. It is completed, in a slightly changed form, in **#2Co 5:8**. Cp. **#Ro 5:12**. As we pursue our path the objects before our eyes are those seen only *by faith*: the keynote (cp. **#2Co 4:13, 18**) of **#2Co 4:13-5:10**.

**Not by appearance**] The objects which direct our steps do not yet appear. We walk amid eternal realities, now unseen, but known through the word we have believed. Chief among these is our home in the presence of Christ. Hence we speak of a home unseen by mortal eye. Same thought in same connection in **#Ro 8:24**.

**But we are of good courage:** although our home is as yet seen only by faith.

**Well-pleased:** not only brave in presence of death, but content to die.

**Rather:** in preference to remaining in the body. Same thought in **#Php 1:23**.

**To go away from home from the body:** to die before Christ's coming, and thus to be for a time without a body. They who survive His coming will at once receive the body "from heaven" by undergoing instant change.

**To go home;** implies that dead believers go at once, even while disembodied, into the presence of Christ. Paul's own clinging to his present body, even while looking for a better, assures him that even if he die this better body awaits him. This implies, since death rends the only veil which separates the believer from Christ, viz. his mortal life that even while waiting for the resurrection body his spirit will be with Christ. And, therefore, he is willing to die; and is brave in face of deadly peril. Notice that Paul's sure confidence that death will take him at once to Christ rests upon his assurance that a glorified body awaits him at the coming of Christ. This agrees with 1Cor. 15, where future happiness is assumed to be conditional on resurrection of the body.

These verses shed light on a matter of which the Bible says little, the state of the unsaved between death and resurrection. For Paul evidently thinks of no alternative except to be *at home in the body* and *at home with the Lord*. Therefore departed believers are with Christ; and, if so, not unconscious: for the unconscious are practically nowhere. Their nearness to Christ is such that compared with it their present spiritual union with Him is absence. And, although they have not yet entered their "eternal house" and put on their heavenly clothing, yet in the presence of Christ they are *at home*. And their eternal intercourse with Christ (**#1Th 4:17**) has begun. Same teaching in similar circumstances in **#Php 1:20ff**. Cp. **#Lu 23:43; 16:23**.

Ver. 9. Further result of Paul's joyful confidence that there is a life beyond death.

**We make-it-a-point-of-honour:** same word in **#Ro 15:20; #1Th 4:11**. This is the only ambition worthy of Christians.

**Whether at home:** in the body.

**Away from home:** from the body. That these words have the same reference, the alternative implies. That they refer to the body, is suggested by *well-pleasing to Him*: for our conduct on earth is our first matter of present solicitude.

**Well-pleasing to Him:** at the judgment day (**#2Co 5:10**) and in reference to actions done on earth. Paul was emulous, whether the coming of Christ find him in the body or away from it, to be approved by Him. To him, life and death are, in agreement with the scope of the whole section, of secondary importance; the approval of Christ is all-important. That the former is of secondary importance, results (*for which cause*) from the confidence expressed in **#2Co 5:8**. That the latter is all-important, will be proved in **#2Co 5:10**.

Ver. 10. **All of us:** even Christians.

**Must needs:** marks the inevitable.

**Be-made-manifest:** #1Co 4:5; #2Co 3:3; 4:10, 11; 5:11; see #Ro 1:19: our inmost nature and most secret actions will be set before the eyes of all.

**Judgment-seat of Christ:** practically the same as "of God" in #Ro 14:10. For the Father "has given the whole judgment to the Son," #Joh 5:22.

**That each one etc.:** definite purpose for which our lives and characters will then be brought to light.

**May obtain:** to be his abiding possession. It is a graphic picture of exact retribution. Each man will receive back, by seeing their true nature and results, his own past actions to be themselves his eternal glory or shame. So #Eph 6:8; #Col 3:25. Cp. #1Th 2:19f.

**Through the body:** as the channel by which purposes pass into actions.

**In view of etc.:** action the measure of recompense. [Cp. #Ro 8:18.]

**Good or bad.** To both kinds of actions this principle will be applied, in contrast to human tribunals which deal only with crime; as well as to all kinds of persons.

That both saved and lost will receive recompense proportionate to the good and bad actions of each, is quite consistent with forgiveness of sins by God's undeserved favor. Entrance into eternal life is God's free gift to all who believe and who abide in faith. But the degree of our glory will be measured by the faithfulness of our service; and the punishment of the lost, by their sins. Moreover, a man's good actions are God's work in him by the Holy Spirit. And unless we yield to the Spirit, and thus bear the fruit of the Spirit, we cannot retain our faith. Consequently, without good works we cannot enter heaven. The good actions of the lost, which we need not deny, will lessen their punishment: the sins of the saved, before or after conversion, will lessen their reward. Thus, although salvation is entirely the free gift of God, each man will receive an exact recompense for his entire conduct. Cp. #Ro 2:5f; 14:10; #1Co 3:8, 13f. A remembrance of this exact recompense will make us comparatively indifferent about life or death, and emulous so to act as to please our Judge.

SECTION 7 accounts for the perils amid which Paul proclaims the Gospel, #2Co 4:7-12; and explains the motives which raise him above them, #2Co 4:13-5:10. By the design of God the gospel treasure is entrusted to fragile vessels, that the preservation of the vessels may be a manifestation of the power of God. The apostles are thus a moving picture of Him who gave up Himself to death for the world's salvation, and who was rescued from the hand of death by the power of God. He braves these perils simply because, like the Psalmist in similar circumstances, he believes the word of God. He knows that God will raise him from the dead, and that by exposing himself to these dangers he is increasing the song of praise which will go up to God for ever. And this assurance restores his wearied spirit. His very clinging to life, while yearning for immortality, assures him that if his body

perish a nobler body awaits him. And, if so, separation from the body must be immediate entrance into the presence of Christ. His one thought is, not about life or death, but to stand the approval of that Judge before whom all must soon stand, and in the light of whose appearing the inmost secrets of the present life will be made visible to all.

This section confirms the teaching of **#1Co 15:51f** and **#1Th 4:15** touching Paul's expectation about the second coming of Christ. That he speaks of resurrection from the dead, does not imply an expectation that His coming will be long delayed. For every day death threatened him. But fear of it was removed by joyful confidence that it would but take him to the presence of Christ. Whereas the alternative mentioned in **#2Co 5:9**, and perhaps the word "if" in **#2Co 5:1**, suggest that he was not sure that he would die.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION VIII.

#### *THE LOVE OF CHRIST AND PAUL'S COMMISSION FROM GOD MOVE HIM TO ACT AS BECOMES AN AMBASSADOR OF GOD.*

#### CH. V. 11-VI. 10.

Knowing then the fear of the Lord we persuade men, but to God we have been made manifest. And I hope also in your consciences to be made manifest. Not again are we recommending ourselves to you, but I write this giving occasion to you for matter of exultation on our behalf, that you may have it in view of those who exult in appearance and not in heart. For both if we have gone out of our mind, it is for God; and if we have sound sense, it is for you. For the love of Christ holds us fast, we having judged this, that One died on behalf of all, therefore all died, and on behalf of all He died in order that they who live may no longer live for themselves but for Him who on their behalf died and rose. So then we henceforth know no one according to flesh. If even we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now no longer do we know men thus. So that if any one be in Christ he is a new creature: the old things have gone by; behold they have become new. And all things are from God who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave to us the ministry of the reconciliation. Because that God was, in Christ, reconciling to Himself the world; seeing that He is not reckoning to them their trespasses and has put in us the word of the reconciliation. On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as though God were exhorting through us: we beg, on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin, on our behalf He made to be sin, that we may become righteousness of God in Him. And working together with Him we also exhort that not in vain you accept the grace of God. For He says, "At an acceptable season I have listened to thee: and in a day of salvation I have helped thee." (#Isa 49:8.) Behold now is the well-accepted season, behold now is the day of salvation.

And this we do, in nothing causing stumbling, that the ministry be not blamed: but in everything recommending ourselves as God's ministers, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in positions of helplessness, in beatings, in prisons, in tumults, in toils, in watchings, in fastings; in purity, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in love without hypocrisy, in the word of truth, in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, with glory and dishonour, with bad report and good report; as deceivers and true, as unknown and becoming well-known, as dying and behold we live, as being chastised and not being put to death, as being made sorrowful but ever rejoicing, as poor but enriching many, as having nothing and possessing all things.

In § 7 Paul explained why a ministry so glorious was surrounded by constant and deadly peril, viz. because this peril gave opportunity for a constant manifestation of divine power; and stated the motive which led him forward even in face of such peril, viz. his belief of God's word that He will raise the dead, that death leads at once to the presence of Christ, and that in the Day of Judgment due recompense will be given. Having thus told us the power which saves him from fear of death he now



tells us the motive of his efforts to save men, viz. the love of Christ who died for them and his own divine commission to be an ambassador for Christ; and concludes his exposition, begun in § 4, of the apostolic ministry, its credentials, its grandeur, its perils, its hopes, and its recompense, by a graphic picture of the circumstances and the spirit in which he discharges it.

Ver. 11. **Then:** in view of the judgment-seat of Christ.

**Fear of the Lord:** cp. **#Ro 3:18**. Reverent fear of Christ is a state of mind familiar to Paul. Cp. "know sin," **#2Co 5:21**; **#Ro 7:7**; "know grief," **#Isa 53:3**.

**Persuade men:** to "be reconciled to God," **#2Co 5:20**. This was his chief work. The persuasion denied in the question of **#Ga 1:10** had a different motive, as is implied in the following words. This persuading of *men* was prompted by remembrance of the great assize and by desire to please the Judge. *But*, although *men* are the direct objects of his persuasion, yet in persuading them he stands before the eye of God.

**Manifest:** as in **#2Co 5:10**.

**Made-manifest;** more vivid than "manifest," picturing the act of God setting us permanently under His own eye.

**And I hope etc.;** reminds us that §§ 4-8 were written in self-defence. [There is nothing to demand the rendering (A.V. and R.V.) "that we are made manifest." For the aorist after *ἐλπίζω* always refers in the N.T. to something future. And the perfect tense (cp. **#1Ti 6:17**) merely adds to the aorist the idea of permanent results. Paul does not say whether the manifestation he hopes for is present or future. But the word *hope* suggests the latter.]

**Your consciences:** the faculty which contemplates a man's inner life. See under **#Ro 2:15**. Paul hopes that through his labors spiritual results have been attained in his readers, results which will appear to them as they contemplate their own inner life. Cp. **#2Co 4:2**. Such results will thus be a proof, clearly visible to the eye of conscience, of Paul's divine commission. These words recall the argument of **#2Co 3:2f**.

Paul's mention of the judgment-seat reminds him that to the eye of God the real worth of his apostolic service lies open. And he hopes that it will lie permanently open also in the heart of hearts of those among whom he has labored. He thus suitably introduces a further exposition of the motives of his work.

Ver. 12. Like **#2Co 2:17**; **#2Co 5:11b** might seem to be self-recommendation. With delicate tact Paul says that he is only giving his readers an argument with which they may defend him; thus implying that they are not his opponents, but are ready to defend him.

**Again recommending ourselves:** as in **#2Co 3:1**. The repetition suggests that these were words of his opponents.

**Occasion:** or "starting point," as in **#Ro 7:8**.

**Giving you etc.:** while speaking about being made manifest in their consciences, Paul was really putting them on a track towards a matter of exultation in his favor which they might remember and use against his opponents. These last he designates as exulting *in appearance* (or *in face*) and *not in heart*. What our *face* is, we seem to be: what our *heart* is, we are. For the heart is the inmost center of our real life.

Ver. 13. Paul's real motives, which are a matter of exultation for his readers.

**Gone-out-of-our-mind:** become mad. These strange words can be accounted for only as being actually spoken by his enemies. The relatives of Christ said (**#Mr 3:21**) the same of Him. We can well conceive that Paul's ecstatic visions, (**#2Co 12:2ff.**) his transcendental teaching, which to many would seem absurd, his reckless daring in face of peril, and his complete rejection of all the motives which rule common men, would lead some to say and even to believe that he was not in full possession of his senses. The same has been said in all ages about similar men.

**For God:** to work out His purposes.

**Of sound mind:** exact opposite of madness. Same contrast in **#Mr 5:15; #Ac 26:25**.

**For you:** to do you good. "If, as our enemies say, we are mad, we have become so in order to serve God and do His work. And, therefore, our very madness claims respect. If we are men of sound sense we use our sense, not, as most others do, to enrich ourselves, but to do you good." Paul thus appeals to his readers' observation of his conduct. They knew that where human prudence might condemn his recklessness his purpose was to serve God; and that whatever mental power he possessed was used for the good of others.

Ver. 14.-15. The motive of this unsparing devotion to God and to the interests of his readers. "*The love of Christ* towards men, revealed in His death for them, *holds us* so *fast* that we cannot forbear to devote ourselves to the service of God, even to an extent which some call madness, and to use all our powers for your good."

**Having judged this:** practically the same as "reckon" in **#Ro 6:11**. Since this judgment rests solely on the word of God, it is an expression of faith. And only so far as it is firm and broad do we feel the binding influence of the love of Christ.

**One on behalf of all:** conspicuous contrast. A name written on every heart, it was needless to mention. To this statement of the purpose of the death of Christ Paul gives emphasis by the change from *us* to *all*, thus directing attention to a general truth. But, since he does not say "all men," we cannot appeal to this verse in proof that He died for all men. This, Paul asserts elsewhere in plainest terms. See notes under **#Ro 5:18, 19**. Therefore, although the compass of this verse is indefinite, each one may place himself within it, and pronounce this judgment about himself.

**Therefore all died:** Paul's inference from one died on behalf of all. Virtually they for whom He died themselves died in His death. For the full result of His death belongs to them. This inference rests upon the broad truth that Christ died that we may be so united to Him as to share all that He has and is. Cp. **#Ro 6:3**. Now Christ by His death escaped completely from the burden and curse of sin. Paul reckons therefore that the former life of sin of those for whom Christ died has come to an end on His cross, and that, like Him, they too are dead to sin. See **#Ro 6:10f**. Objectively and virtually they died to sin when Christ died: they died subjectively and actually only when and so far as in faith they pronounced touching themselves the judgment of this verse, i.e. when they reckoned themselves to be dead to sin. Paul says that *all died*, because the subjective and actual death to sin of those who dare pronounce this judgment is a direct outworking and communication of the objective and historic death of Christ and of our divinely ordained union with His death.

The rest of **#2Co 5:15** is a further inference, expounding *one on behalf of all*.

**Who live:** not needful to complete the sentence, but thrust in conspicuously to tell us that though their old life of sin has ceased they are not lifeless but are living a new resurrection life.

**No longer for themselves;** implies that apart from the death of Christ self is the aim of life to all men; and that therefore all men need a radical change.

**Who on their behalf etc.:** emphatic repetition of the chief idea of **#2Co 5:15**. Christ died in order that we may live a life in which every thought and purpose and effort point to Him, and all our powers and opportunities are used to please and exalt Him and to do His work. Thus Christ will be, what self once was, the one aim of life.

**And rose:** i.e. on our behalf. It is expounded in **#Ro 4:25**.

**He died for all,** i.e. to reconcile their salvation with (**#Ro 3:26**) the justice of God: He *rose for all*, i.e. to give them ground for the faith which saves. At the beginning of the sentence His death only is mentioned, to confine our attention to the costliness of the means used to secure our devotion to Himself.

**#2Co 5:14, 15** are a close parallel to **#Ro 6:10, 11**. In each passage the historic fact of Christ's death and His abiding devotion to the Father produce their counterparts in us. In each the counterpart is produced by the mental reckoning or judgment of faith.

This judgment Paul and his colleagues had pronounced. They knew that they were among the *all* for whom Christ died. They therefore ventured to believe that in His death their own former life of sin and self had died, and was therefore a thing of the past. They knew that He died in order that they might live a life of absolute devotion to Him. And, as they contemplated the infinite cost of the means used to secure their devotion, and the love thus manifested, they felt the power of that love; and felt themselves compelled to serve, with a self-abnegation which some called madness, the God who gave His Son to die for them, and to toil for those He died to save.

That to secure our devotion to Himself Christ must needs die, proves how completely selfishness is inwoven into human nature; and proves the earnestness of His purpose to destroy it. The need of so costly a means can be explained only on the principle that surrender to selfishness is a punishment of sin, and that the punishment cannot be remitted without a corresponding and adequate manifestation of divine justice. If so, **#2Co 5:14, 15** imply, and thus support the great foundation doctrine of **#Ro 3:24-26**. Moreover, that our life of devotion to Christ is stated here to be an aim of his death, implies that only in proportion as we thus live do we and shall we obtain the blessings which result from His death.

Ver. 16. Result of Paul's judgment that Christ died that men may live a life altogether new.

**We:** emphatic. Paul returns now, after the foregoing general statement, to himself and his colleagues who have pronounced the judgment of **#2Co 5:14** and have felt the constraining power of the love of Christ.

**Henceforth:** from the time of this judgment, which was an era in their lives, an era ever present to their thought.

**According to flesh;** may refer either to the persons known, i.e. to the appearance and circumstances of their bodily life, as in **#2Co 11:18; #Php 3:4**; or to those who know them with a knowledge determined and limited by their bodily life, as in **#2Co 1:17; #1Co 1:26**. These senses coalesce here. For they who look at others from the point of view of their own bodily life, with its needs, desires, and pleasures, see them only as men of flesh and blood like themselves. But to Paul the former life has so completely ceased that to him men around are no longer judged of thus. He sees them not as rich or poor, Jews or Gentiles, enemies or friends, but as men for whom Christ died.

**If even we have known etc.:** a conspicuous contrast to the foregoing, from Paul's own past life.

**Known Christ etc.:** an extreme case of knowing men *according to flesh*. At one time Paul was so accustomed to look upon men according to bodily appearance and surroundings that even upon *Christ* he looked thus: he thought of Him as a mere Jew from Nazareth, a feeble man of flesh and blood. This does not imply that he had actually seen Christ. For, while persecuting Christians, Christ was present to his thought, but only as a mere man whose teaching he could crush out. And all the disciples knew Christ first as a man; till through the veil of flesh they saw His real dignity.

**Nevertheless:** in spite of having gone so far in knowing men according to flesh as to know even Christ thus.

**Now no longer:** emphatic note of change.

**We know:** without saying whom they know. Paul cannot refer to his no longer knowing Christ (so A.V. and R.V.) according to flesh. Surely this would not need emphatic and contrasted assertion. He simply repeats the general assertion which is the chief matter of this verse. In consequence of Paul's judgment about the death of Christ he no longer looks upon men according to their appearance in flesh and blood. Yet he admits that he did so once, even in the case of Christ. But so completely

is he changed that, in spite of this aggravated case in his past life, he no longer knows men according to flesh.

Ver. 17. A logical result, or inference, from **#2Co 5:16**. Nothing less than *a new creation*, and a passing away of old surroundings, is implied in the new light in which we now see our fellow-men.

**In Christ:** see under **#Ro 6:11**. Christ is Himself the life-giving element in which His people are and live and think and act.

**New creature**, or *creation*: **#Ga 6:15; #Eph 2:10; 4:24**. To those who are *in Christ*, the power of the Creator has wrought a change analogous to the creation of Adam out of dust of the earth.

**The old things:** everything around and within us. Through our union with Christ, and so far as we live in spiritual contact with Him, the world in which we live, and we ourselves are altogether changed. For to us the world has lost its power to allure and terrify and control. The old multifarious influence which our surroundings once exercised over us, an influence which ruled our entire life, has altogether passed away. Consequently, *the old things*, in the widest sense possible, *have gone by*.

**Behold:** as if a sudden discovery. The old things have gone by; but not in every sense. For they are still here, but completely changed. The world with its men and things is still around us: but in its influence upon us it is *become* entirely *new*. Our fellowmen are objects now for Christian effort: wealth is but an instrument with which to serve God: and the world is a school for our spiritual education, a place in which we may do God's work, and a wisely chosen path to heaven. Thus inward contact with Christ changes completely our entire surroundings in their aspect, and in their influence upon us. This change is therefore a measure of our spiritual life. And it is a logical result of our deeper knowledge of our fellow-men, a knowledge no longer determined by their outward appearance. We see them as they really are; powerless to injure us, in peril of eternal death, but within reach of the salvation which God has bidden us proclaim. All this is a result of the power of Christ's love over those who have comprehended the purpose of His death. And it explains (**#2Co 5:17**) Paul's unreserved devotion to God's work and to the welfare of men.

Ver. 18.-19. After explaining the motives stated in **#2Co 5:13**, by tracing them to their source in the death and love of Christ, Paul now traces them further, as his wont is, to their source in God.

**All things:** the complete change wrought through the death of Christ. That this change has its origin in *God*, and how He wrought it, the rest of **#2Co 5:18** proves and explains.

**Reconciled to Himself:** see under **#Ro 5:1**. By means of the cross and word of Christ, God has removed the hostility between Himself and us, so that there is now "peace with God through Christ."

**Us:** true of all believers; but Paul thinks specially of himself and colleagues, as the following words show.

**The ministry of the reconciliation:** same as "the ministry of righteousness, of the Spirit," in #2Co 3:8f. The whole difference between Saul of Tarsus and the character described in #2Co 5:14ff results from two facts, viz. that God has reconciled an enemy and has given him the office of conveying to others the reconciliation he has received. Consequently the whole change just described is *from God*.

**Through Christ:** as in #Ro 5:1. While rising from the Son to the Father Paul keeps the Son still before us.

Ver. 19. Lends importance to the foregoing facts in the life of Paul, by tracing them to their source and cause in a world-embracing purpose of God. [The word  $\omega$ , which cannot here be reproduced in English, represents this fact in a subjective aspect, i.e. as contemplated in its bearings by the mind of Paul.]

**Reconciling the world:** not "reconciled," which would not be true. Paul tells us the work in which God was engaged when He gave Christ to die. Similarly, in #Ro 2:4, God "is leading" all men "to repentance." For although, as this verse implies, reconciliation is entirely God's work, its accomplishment depends entirely upon each man's acceptance of it. [The absence of the article before *world* leaves us to contemplate the abstract significance of this word. It was *a world* that God was reconciling to Himself.]

**In Christ:** as in #Ro 3:24. It keeps before us "through Christ" in #2Co 5:18.

**Was;** refers to the past event of Christ's death. The emphatic words of this clause are *God* and *world*; the former keeping before us "from God" in #2Co 5:18, and the latter revealing the wide bearing of God's action.

**Seeing that etc.:** double proof of the foregoing. [A similar construction in #2Co 3:3, 14.]

**Not reckoning trespasses:** forgiving them, as in #Ro 4:8.

**To them:** a general expression. That it refers only to believers, to whom alone God forgives sin, Paul leaves his readers to observe. That through the death of Christ God forgives men's sins, a fact of constant occurrence, is proof that in giving Christ to die God was at work making peace between Himself and mankind.

**And has put etc.:** another proof of the same, viz. that God has bid Paul proclaim peace for all who believe. Notice that he assumes that the forgiveness which already from time to time takes place and which he is commissioned to proclaim is designed for all men. Else it would not be proof that in Christ God was reconciling the *world*. See note, #Ro 5:19.

**The word of the reconciliation:** like "word of the cross" in #1Co 1:18: the word announcing reconciliation by faith. To proclaim this word is "the ministry of the reconciliation," #2Co 5:18. Notice the importance with which Paul invests these two facts by appealing to them twice in argument, once to prove that the change in himself was wrought by God, and then to prove the

world-embracing purpose of this divine activity. As usual, the second statement is fuller than the first. "Us" is widened into *world*: and "ministry of reconciliation" is explained by its great instrument, *the word of the reconciliation*.

Ver. 20. Inference from **#2Co 5:19**, showing its bearing on Paul's work. Since he has received "the word of reconciliation," he is an *ambassador*: since the reconciliation is "in Christ," his embassy is *on behalf of Christ*.

**We are ambassadors: #Eph 6:20**: messengers sent formally by a king, especially to make peace. Very appropriate to apostles sent formally and personally by Christ: **#Joh 17:18; 20:21; #Ac 26:17, #Ga 1:1**.

**On behalf of Christ**: to do the work in which He is so deeply interested.

**As though God etc.**: another view of the same embassy.

**God exhorting through us**. The earnest entreaty of an ambassador is ever received as the earnest entreaty of the king he represents. [ως, as in **#2Co 5:19**. We must remember that in the earnest pleading of Paul God Himself is pleading.]

**On behalf of Christ**: emphatic repetition.

**We beg**; develops the word exhort with pathetic emphasis. For to *beg* is usually a mark of the earnestness of an inferior. Cp. **#Ac 21:39; 26:3**.

**Be reconciled to God**: accept by faith the offered reconciliation. We cannot reconcile ourselves: this is God's work. But this exhortation implies that it rests with us whether we are reconciled. Notice the double parallel in this verse, keeping before us the relation of Paul's ministry to Christ and to God. He is an ambassador, sent to do Christ's business: his earnest voice is therefore the voice of God, who gave Christ to die and sent Paul to proclaim reconciliation through Christ. The ambassador almost prostrates himself before those to whom he is sent and begs them to accept peace. And in this self-humiliation he is doing Christ's work, and seeking to lead men to peace with God. To reject such an embassy, is to set at nought the mission of Christ, the earnest entreaty of God, and the tremendous power of Him with whom the unsaved are at war.

Ver. 21. Paul's comment on his own entreaty, "Be reconciled to God"; giving a strong reason for yielding to it. As in **#2Co 5:19**, he goes back to the great historic fact on which our reconciliation rests, and to its meaning and purpose.

**Him who knew etc.**: with emphatic prominence.

**Knew no sin**: as in **#Ro 7:7**. He had not the acquaintance with sin which comes from committing sin.

**On our behalf**: in emphatic prominence: see under **#Ro 5:6**.

**Made to be sin:** in some sense, an impersonation and manifestation of sin. Cp. **#Ga 3:13**. Practically the same as, but stronger than, "made to be a sinner." By laying upon Christ the punishment of our sin, God made Him to be a visible embodiment of the deadly and far-reaching power of sin. Through God's mysterious action, we now learn what sin is by looking at the Sinless One. Cp. **#Ro 5:19**: "through one man's sin, the many were constituted sinners" inasmuch as they suffer the threatened punishment of his sin. But the cases differ in that the many received in themselves the moral and spiritual effects of the one man's sin; whereas, even while revealing in His own sufferings the awful nature of sin, Christ remained unstained by sin. Augustine\* (\*In Sermons 134, 155. ) and others expound *sin* to be "sin-offering. This use of the word is found in the Hebrew text of **#Le 6:25**: "this is the law of the sin . . . the sin shall be slaughtered before Jehovah"; **#Le 6:30**, "every sin whose blood shall be brought etc." But it is not found in the LXX. or in the New Testament; is in no way suggested here; and is forbidden by the contrast of *sin* and *righteousness*. Rather, the sacrificial use of the word is explained by, and is an anticipation of, this verse. The sacrificed animals were embodiments of sin.

**That we may become etc.:** expounds *on our behalf*. This purpose is accomplished as each one receives "the righteousness which is from God by faith," **#Php 3:9**.

**Righteousness of God:** see under **#Ro 1:17**. By accepting us as righteous, God makes us an embodiment of divinely-given righteousness. By looking at us men learn what it is to enjoy the approval of the great Judge.

**In Him:** as in **#2Co 5:19**. In virtue of Christ's death, and by spiritual contact with Him, we have the righteousness which God gives.

This verse asserts in plainest language that God gave Christ to die in our stead. For the Sinless One was put so completely in the sinner's place and thereby delivered us so completely from our position as sinners that He is said to have been *made sin in order that we* who have no righteousness of our own *may become* an impersonation of *righteousness*. So **#Ga 3:13**: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become on our behalf a curse." Cp. **#Heb 9:28**; **#1Pe 2:24**; **#Joh 1:29**. All this is explained in **#Ro 3:26**. For if Christ died in order to make our justification consistent with the justice of God, and thus possible, his death was the price of our forgiveness. And, since death is the threatened punishment of sin, it may be correctly said that God laid on Christ our punishment that we may escape from it. In this sense He died, by God's ordinance, in our stead.

Ver. 1. After saying what God has done for man's salvation, Paul adds what he and his colleagues are doing for the same object.

**Working together with Him:** not with Christ, but with Him who gave Christ to be sin for us. So **#1Co 3:9**. For in **#2Co 5:18ff** we read of the activity of the Father rather than of the Son. Paul works with God by urging men to accept, and make good use of, the favor of God.

**Accept the grace of God:** claim by faith the various spiritual benefits which God in undeserved favor offers us.



**Not in vain**, or *not for an empty thing*: **#Ga 2:2; #Php 2:16**: put prominently forward as the special matter of Paul's exhortation. If we fail to put to practical use in the details of life the spiritual benefits received by the favor of God, even His favor becomes to us a useless and empty thing. An unread Bible, a wasted Sunday, and such knowledge of the truth as does not mold our life, are the grace of God received in vain. Paul bids his readers so to lay hold of the grace of God that it shall not be in vain. He thus sums up the whole matter of his teaching to believers.

Ver. 2. A quotation of **#Isa 49:8**, word for word from the LXX., supporting the exhortation of **#2Co 6:1**. The prophet says, "Thus says Jehovah, in a time of favour I have heard thee: and in a day of salvation I have helped thee"; and thus proclaims a definite time coming when God will listen with favor to His people and save them. His words are evidently fulfilled in the Gospel. The change from "time of favour" to *acceptable season*, is unimportant. And the Gospel was announced to the world at a time which God thought fit to *accept* for this purpose. Cp. **#Isa 59:2**, quoted in **#Lu 4:19**.

**Behold now etc.**: Paul's comment on the words of Isaiah.

**Well-accepted**: stronger than *acceptable*. Paul supports his exhortation in **#2Co 6:1** by reminding his readers that they lived in a time looked forward to by the ancient prophets with bright expectation. The quotation was prompted by a consciousness of the great privilege of living in gospel days, in that time which from the beginning of the world God chose for His great salvation.

Ver. 3.-10. Graphic description of the manner and circumstances in which Paul and his companions give the exhortation of **#2Co 6:1**. It concludes his long exposition and defence, occupying §§ 4-8, of his ministry.

Verse 3.-4a. **No cause of stumbling**: **#Ro 9:32; #1Co 8:9**: anything which might overthrow a man's faith.

**In nothing**: in no part of his work and life so acting as to cause others to fall. For an example, see **#1Co 9:12**.

**The ministry**: the important office held by Paul and his companions. See under **#Ro 12:7**. He felt that the influence of Christianity upon the world depended very much upon the collective impression made by its prominent advocates; and that this impression would be determined in no small measure by his own personal conduct. He was therefore careful so to act in everything as to cause no spiritual injury to any one, lest such injury might lessen the collective influence of the leaders of the church.

**But in everything**: positive counterpart of *in nothing giving etc.* In everything they so act as to claim respect; remembering that they are God's *ministers*.

Ver. 4b.-5. **In much endurance**: see under **#Ro 2:7**: amid much hardship they pursue their course, and thus claim respect.

**In afflictions etc.**: nine points, describing the variety of these hardships.

**Helplessness:** as in #2Co 4:8.

**Necessities:** as in #1Co 7:26.

**Beatings, prisons, tumults:** three specific cases all coming under each of the three foregoing general descriptions, and caused by enemies. Examples are found in #Ac 16:19-23; 21:28-32, etc. Cp. #2Co 11:23ff.

**Toils, watchings, fastings:** three more specific hardships, not necessarily caused by enemies.

**Toils:** #2Co 11:23: in preaching the word; and in Paul's labor to support himself and his companions, #1Co 4:12; #1Th 2:9; #2Th 3:8; #Ac 20:34.

**Watchings:** absence of sleep, through bread-winning or evangelical labor continued into the night.

**Fastings:** #2Co 11:27: want of food, as in #Mt 15:32. For it is unlikely that Paul would enumerate voluntary abstinence for his own spiritual good among the apostolic hardships mentioned here: whereas want of food is naturally suggested by want of sleep. Cp. #1Co 4:11. By the accidents of travel or through sheer want Paul may have been occasionally without food: and, if so, this was the climax of his hardships.

Ver. 6.-8. Further specification of matters in which Paul claims respect, viz. four personal characteristics, followed by their divine source and their one foundation excellence.

**Purity:** absence of sin and selfishness.

**Knowledge:** acquaintance with the things of God.

**Longsuffering, kindness:** as in #1Co 13:4.

The **Holy Spirit:** whose presence was revealed in his conduct.

**Love-without-hypocrisy:** #Ro 12:9: the human, as the Holy Spirit was the divine, source of his actions. After these delineations of personal character, the *word of truth* and *power of God* direct us to his work as an evangelist. By speaking words which men felt to be true, (#2Co 4:2,) and which were accompanied by the power of God sometimes working miracles to confirm them and always working results in men's hearts, Paul and his colleagues claimed respect and acted as ministers of God.

**With the weapons etc.:** further description of the apostle's work, looked upon as a warfare. So #2Co 10:3.

**The righteousness:** in Paul's usual sense of righteousness by faith, as in #2Co 5:21. Cp. #Eph 6:14, "breastplate of righteousness." This great doctrine gave to Paul, as to Luther, powerful weapons with which to fight for God.

**On the right hand and left:** complete equipment on both sides. With a sword in his *right hand* the soldier struck his foe: with a shield in his *left* he defended himself. Justification by faith is to the preacher both sword and shield.

**With (or amid) glory etc.:** see under #Ro 1:21; 3:23. Both by the approbation which his conduct evokes in good men, and by the dishonor it provokes from the bad, Paul recommends himself. For the approval of the good and the hostility of the bad alike proved that he was doing God's work. This last point, Paul develops into the climax of #2Co 6:9, 10; for which he prepares a way by the exact antithesis *good report and bad report*.

Ver. 9.-10. Exposition of this antithesis. After developing in #2Co 6:4b-7a "in everything" of #2Co 6:4a, Paul now develops "as God's ministers." Between these, #2Co 6:7b, 8 are a connecting link. In the evil report of their enemies they are *deceivers*: and good men know that they are *true*. It is objected that they are obscure and *unknown*. And really they are daily becoming *well-known*, and the principles of their conduct are day by day better understood. So great is their peril that they seem to be actually falling into the grave. Cp. #2Co 4:11; #1Co 15:31; #Ro 8:36. Yet, in the moment of apparent destruction, suddenly comes deliverance.

**And behold we live:** graphic picture, retaining even the exclamation of wonder at unexpected rescue.

**As chastised:** to some men they seem to be put by God under special discipline. So seemed a more illustrious Sufferer: #Isa 53:4. But the chastisement does not come to the extreme form of *death*.

**As sorrowful:** examples in #2Co 2:4; #Ro 9:1. This sorrow might be made a reproach, as though their lot were wretched. But under their sorrow shone a changeless *rejoicing*, kindled by the brightness of the coming glory and the brightness of their Father's smile.

**Poor:** toiling for a living and sometimes (#2Co 11:8) in want.

**Enriching many:** by making them heirs of the wealth of heaven. Thus Paul followed the example of Christ: #2Co 8:9.

**Having nothing:** stronger than *poor*.

**All things:** as in #Ro 8:32; #1Co 3:22. The whole wealth of God is theirs, and will be their eternal enjoyment. Wonderful climax, and counterpart to the picture in #2Co 6:4, 5.

Each side of these contrasts commends the apostles as ministers of God. That men whom some decry as deceivers are found to be true, that men set aside as unknown become day by day more fully

known, that men who seem to be in the jaws of death are rescued and men apparently smitten by God live still, that underneath visible sorrow there is constant joy, and that utter poverty is but a mask hiding infinite wealth, is abundant proof that they in whom these contradictions meet are indeed servants of God. Thus amid many and various hardships, in a spotless and kindly life animated by the Holy Spirit and by sincere love to men, and armed with a word which commends itself as the truth and is confirmed by the manifested power of God, in everything Paul and his companions claim respect and act as becomes ministers of God.

FROM THIS POINT we will review §§ 4-8, which contain Paul's exposition and defence of his apostolic ministry, and are thus the kernel of DIV. I. and of the whole Epistle. This exposition was suggested by thoughts about his deadly peril in Asia and about the anxiety which drove him from Troas and gave him no rest even on his arrival in Macedonia. But it was written under the influence of a wonderful rescue from peril, and of his joyful meeting with Titus who brought good news about the Corinthian church. Consequently, the exposition begins and ends with an outburst of triumph. Paul praises God that his weary toil, among both good and bad men, makes Christ known and is a pleasant perfume to God. His readers' spiritual life proves to them that he is a servant of God. And, as imparting a life-giving Spirit instead of a death-bringing Law, his ministry is more glorious than that of Moses. Yet, in spite of Paul's unreserved proclamation of it, the Gospel remains hidden to many, both Jews and Gentiles. But this only proves that their hearts are veiled or blinded. The grandeur of the Apostle's work is not lessened by the deadly perils amid which it is performed, and which are every moment ready to destroy him. For these perils do but reveal the power of Him who ever provides a way of escape. And they cannot silence the preachers: for moved by the Spirit, they believe God; and therefore know that death will be followed by resurrection, and indeed by immediate entrance into the presence of Christ, and that beyond death due reward awaits them. Their efforts to save men are prompted by the love manifested in the death of Christ, and by their commission as ambassadors of God. With this commission their whole life accords.

More than once (**#2Co 3:1; 5:12**) Paul tells his readers that it is not they whom he seeks to convince-for this is needless: they are themselves as proof of what he says-but that he is giving them a weapon which he takes for granted they will use to defend him against others. Also, throughout the whole, the words *we* and *us* imply that his dignity, peril, and faithfulness, as ambassador for Christ, are shared by others. He certainly includes Timothy, his fellow-laborer in founding the church at Corinth and a faithful companion in peril and toil, and joint-author of the Epistle; and probably Titus (**#2Co 12:18**) and other similar helpers.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION IX.

*PAUL BEGS THAT HIS LOVE TO THE CORINTHIANS BE RETURNED: AND EXHORTS THEM TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES FROM ALL DEFILEMENT.*

CH. VI. 11-VII. 1.

**Our mouth is opened to you, Corinthians; our heart is enlarged. You are not narrowed in us: but you are narrowed in your hearts. The same recompense-as to children I say it, be you also enlarged.**

**Do not become differently yoked to unbelievers. For what partnership is there for righteousness and lawlessness? Or, what fellowship for light with darkness? And what concord of Christ with Beliar? Or, what portion for a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement for God's temple with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, according as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people." (#Le 26:11.) For which cause "Come forth out of the midst of them and be separated," says the Lord, "and touch not an unclean thing" (#Isa 52:11). And I will receive you and will be to you for a father and you shall be to me for sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. These promises then having, Beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, accomplishing holiness in the fear of God.**

After completing his long exposition of his apostolic work, its credentials, grandeur, encouragements, and motives, by a graphic picture of the circumstances in which he performs it, Paul turns suddenly to his readers and addresses to them a tender (#2Co 6:11-13) and solemn (#2Co 6:14-7:1) appeal.

Ver. 11.-13. **Our mouth:** of Paul and Timothy, writers of the Epistle.

**Is opened:** #Eze 33:22; #Mt 13:35; #Ac 18:14; #Eph 6:19, etc.: more graphic than "we have begun to speak to you." It is Paul's contemplation of his own bold words. Cp. #Ge 18:27.

**Corinthians:** a loving appeal, like #Php 4:15. The *heart* is enlarged when its thoughts, emotions, purposes, increase in depth and breadth and height. Cp. #Ps 119:32; #Isa 60:5. Paul refers evidently to his great love for his readers. While speaking to them he has become conscious of its intensity.

**Narrowed:** cognate to the word I have rendered "helplessness" in #2Co 4:8; 6:4; 12:10; #Ro 2:9; 8:35; and used here in its simple sense of being shut up in narrow space. From this is easily derived its frequent sense of being in extreme difficulty and almost without way of escape. It is the exact opposite of enlargement. No narrow place in the hearts (#2Co 7:3; #Php 1:7) of Paul and Timothy do the Corinthians occupy.

**But you are narrowed etc.:** sad and earnest rebuke. The word rendered in the A.V. "bowels," in the R.V. "affections," denotes, not specially the lower viscera, but (cp. #Ac 1:18) the inward parts generally, heart lungs, etc. It is used for the seat of the emotions, and in the Bible especially for love and compassion. Cp. #2Co 7:15; #Lu 1:78; #Php 1:8. We have no better English rendering than *heart*. The Corinthians were thrust into a narrow place, not in Paul's affection for them which was deep and broad, but in their own affection for him. They were narrow-hearted. For littleness of love towards those who deserve our love is a mark of a defective nature. Paul asks for *the same* affection, as a *recompense* for his affection towards them.

**As to children:** #2Co 12:14; #1Co 4:14; #1Th 2:7.

**Be you also enlarged:** make a large place for me in your hearts, and thus yourselves become nobler.

As Paul speaks to his readers, he feels how great is his love to them. Not in this do they fall short; but in their own affection to him. He asks therefore as a recompense, speaking to his own children in Christ, that they will cherish for him a love like his for them, and thus themselves be ennobled.

Ver. 14.-VII. 1. **Do not become:** milder than "be not," as suggesting that they are not yet joined to unbelievers. Cp. #1Co 7:23.

**Differently-yoked to unbelievers:** like an ass joined to an ox by being put under its yoke. It recalls the prohibition of #De 22:10. The suddenness of this warning, and the earnest questions and quotations supporting it, prove that Paul had in view real defect or danger at Corinth. And the question of #2Co 6:16, following a question equivalent to this warning, proves that Paul refers here specially to participation in idol rites; as in #1Co 10:14ff, where we have similar words. And this agrees with the worldly spirit betrayed in #1Co 3:3; 6:1; 8:10. But his words simply forbid such alliances with unbelievers as imply common aims and sympathies. There is no hint that Paul refers here specially to marriage. But this most intimate of all human alliances is certainly included in his prohibition. Those already married to heathens, Paul deals with in #1Co 7:12, as a special case: and he does not forbid (#1Co 5:10) all intercourse with bad men. The practical application of his words must be left to each man's own spiritual discernment.

Verse 14b.-15. Two pairs of questions, suggesting an argument in support of the foregoing warning.

**Righteousness, lawlessness:** practical conformity to the Law and practical disregard of it. Same contrast in #Ro 6:19. The former is a designed consequence of the righteousness reckoned to all who believe, and a condition of retaining it.

**Light, darkness:** #Ac 26:18; #Col 1:12f; #Eph 5:8ff; #1Pe 2:9.

**Light:** a necessary condition of physical sight, and of spiritual insight.

**Darkness:** causes ignorance of our surroundings, physical or spiritual. Cp. #1Jo 2:8ff. This second contrast makes us feel the force of the first. All who keep the Law are in the light; all who disregard it, in the dark. And these cannot go together.

**Beliar:** evidently a name of Satan, the great opponent of *Christ*. Same word probably as "Belial," #1Sa 1:16; 2:12, etc., a Hebrew word denoting apparently "No-good." From the abstract contrast of light and darkness Paul rises to the personal contrast of the Sun of righteousness and the Prince of darkness. Same argument in #Mt 6:24. The 4th question brings questions 1, 2, and 3, of which no. 3 is a climax, to bear directly on the matter in hand. If conformity to the Law and disregard of it are as incompatible as light and darkness, and as utterly opposed as Christ and Satan, what in common can there be to one who by faith accepts Christ and one who tramples His word under foot? This conclusion comes to us with sudden force, because it is put in the same form as the argument from which it is drawn. The inference is treated as itself the climax of the argument.

**Unbeliever;** denotes here one who rejects the Gospel: for his supposed alliance with a believer implies that he has heard of it.

Ver. 16. Reveals the special reference of the general warning of #2Co 6:14; which, after being supported by questions 1, 2, and 3, has just been repeated in question 4. From the general matter of "unbelievers" Paul comes now to the specific matter of idolatry. Against this he warned the Corinthian Christians in #1Co 10:14ff, by referring to the Lord's Supper: he warns them now by the great truth that believers are the temple of God. Similar argument with other purposes in #1Co 3:16; 6:19. See notes. The word we puts Paul among those he warns. They share with him this great dignity; and he with them the duty it involves.

**Living God:** in contrast to lifeless idols, as in #1Th 1:9. See under #2Co 3:3. The words temple of God bring before us the inviolable sanctity of the Old Testament sanctuary, which was strictly separated from whatever was not sanctified. This absolute separation every Jew was eager to defend, even at the cost of life. Paul now says that his readers are themselves the sanctuary of Him who dwelt of old in the Tabernacle. And, that they may feel the force of this reference, he supports it by a free quotation giving the exact sense and scope, and in part the words, of God's solemn summing up, in #Le 26:11 of the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant. Notice especially #Le 26:1. With God's words to Israel, the words of Paul to the Corinthians *accord*.

**I will dwell among them;** implies that the essential idea of a temple is, the Dwelling-Place of God. That God might dwell in the midst of Israel, i.e. in order that day by day He might reveal Himself among them, He bade them erect the Tabernacle. Cp. #Ex 29:44-46. He was thus fulfilling His ancient promise (#Ge 17:7f) to stand in special relation to Abraham's children as their God. Notice carefully that Paul assumes that the ancient promise, fulfilled in outward and symbolic form in the ritual of the Tabernacle, is valid now; and assures believers of the inward and spiritual presence of God in themselves. For the entire ritual was an outward symbol of the spiritual realities of the better covenant.

Ver. 17.-18. **For which cause:** Paul's own words, introducing a quotation from **#Isa 52:11**, as an appropriate practical application of the truth asserted in the foregoing quotation. He gives the sense, and in part the words, of Isaiah.

**From the midst of them:** of the heathens. Isaiah says "from the midst of her," i.e. of Babylon, the place of bondage to idolaters.

**Be separated;** i.e. from idolaters: LXX. rendering for "be cleansed." In prophetic vision Isaiah beholds the sacred vessels given back (by Cyrus, **#Ezr 1:7**) to Israel; and bids the Levites lay aside the ceremonial defilement of Babylon and fit themselves to bear the vessels back to Jerusalem.

**Touch not an unclean thing:** Isaiah's warning to the returning exiles not to take with them anything belonging to the idols of Babylon; repeated by Paul to those who had escaped from the idolatry of Corinth. An appropriate quotation: for all idolatry is bondage.

**And I will receive you:** not found in Isaiah. But the sense, viz. that those whom God leads out of the land of bondage He will Himself receive to be His own, is frequent in the Old Testament. Cp. **#Eze 11:17-21**: "And I will receive them from the nations. . . . and I will give them to the Land of Israel."

**And I will be to you:** not found word for word in the Old Testament, but reproducing the sense of many passages. It may have been suggested by **#2Sa 7:8, 14**, "These things *says* the *Lord Almighty*, (LXX..) . . . *I will be to him for a Father, and he shall be to me for a son*"; **#Jer 31:9**. "I have become a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn"; **#Isa 43:6**, "Bring *my sons* from far, and *my daughters* from the ends of the earth." The last two passages refer specially to return from captivity. The words *sons and daughters* in **#Isa 43:6** point specially to the equality of the sexes in the family of God: cp. **#Ga 3:28**.

**Almighty:** and therefore able to perform His promises. Cp. **#Ge 17:1**.

Ver. 1. Practical application of these quotations, in harmony with **#2Co 7:14a** and **16a**. Notice carefully that God's words to Israel in the wilderness and through Isaiah are *promises* now possessed by Christian believers. For God acts always on the same principles: and therefore His words to one man are valid for all in similar circumstances. Moreover, the Mosaic ritual and the Old Testament history are symbolic of the Christian life. God's visible presence in the midst of Israel was an outward pattern of His spiritual presence in the hearts of Christians: and the obligations which His presence laid upon Israel were a pattern of those resting upon His people now. And when, through the pen of Isaiah, God called the exiles returning from the dominion of idolaters His sons and daughters, He taught plainly that in days to come He would receive as such those whom He rescued from sin. Indeed, the universality, to believers, of the favor of God in gospel days makes His promise to David a promise of adoption for all believers.

**Let us cleanse ourselves;** (cp. **#1Pe 1:22**; **#1Jo 3:3**;) refers probably to abstinence from the outward corruptions of idolatry. It is justified by the truth that deliverance from sin, although it is God's work in us, is yet obtained by our own moral effort and our own faith. It therefore depends



upon ourselves whether we are made clean. [The aorist subjunctive exhorts us, not to a gradual and progressive, but to a completed, cleansing *from all defilement*. So **#Eph 4:22, 25**; **#Col 3:5, 8**; **#1Jo 1:9**.] Our *flesh* is defiled when our hands and feet and bodies do the bidding of sin; our *spirit*, when we contemplate sin with pleasure. *Flesh* rather than "body," because the defilement comes from desires belonging not so much to each individual organized body as to the common material and nature of all living bodies. Even the *spirit*, that part of us which is nearest to God, is capable of defilement. Cp. **#1Co 8:7**; **#Tit 1:15**. Perhaps Paul had in view the sensuality always and specially at Corinth, connected with idolatry. He warns his readers, not only against all actual contact with sensuality, but also against that consent of the spirit which often defiles the inner life even when there is no outward sin.

**Accomplish**: to perform a purpose, or complete something begun. Same word, **#2Co 8:6, 11**; **#Ro 15:28**; **#Ga 3:3**; **#Php 1:6**; **#Heb 8:5**; **9:6**; **#1Pe 5:9**.

**Holiness**; brings to bear on the foregoing exhortation the teaching in **#2Co 6:16** that we are the temple of God. Cp. **#1Co 3:17**.

**Accomplishing holiness**: not identical with *cleanse yourselves*; or it would be needless. It denotes everything involved in being "the temple of God"; viz. absolute reservation for God alone. See note under **#Ro 1:7**. For God claimed that none set foot in the temple except to do His work. Now this devotion to God implies cleansing from all sin. For all sin is opposed to God. Therefore, that God has given us the honor of being his temple and has promised to receive us as His children, is a strong motive for cleansing and consecrating ourselves. For only thus can we be His temple.

**In the fear of God**: cp. **#Eph 5:21**. It brings before us the dread presence and power of Him who slew Nadab and Abihu, and the company of Korah: **#Le 10:2**; Num. 16. Cp. "Living God" in **#2Co 6:16**. All contact with impurity is in us a defilement of the temple of God and an insult to the majesty of Him who dwells therein. Therefore *fear* as well as hope should prompt us to abstain from all sin.

The argument of this verse is akin to that of **#Le 11:43ff**; **#Le 20:1ff, 25ff**. God has promised to dwell in our midst. And, since He can tolerate no rival, His presence in us requires absolute devotion to Him: and this involves separation from whatever, in symbol or reality, is opposed to Him. Therefore, that God has promised to dwell in us as His temple and receive us as His children, ought to move us to turn from all sin and to claim by faith that complete purity (cp. **#Ro 6:11**) which He is ready to work in us. This reference to the Old Testament also teaches that the service of Christ is quite incompatible with that of Satan; and that therefore there is no true harmony between believers and unbelievers.

Paul's appeal in **#2Co 7:11-13** was prompted naturally by his foregoing defence of his apostolic work, which was really throughout an appeal to his readers. But the reason of the sudden transition in **#2Co 7:14** is not so evident. It may be that he knew that the disaffection towards himself of some at Corinth arose from their tolerance in some measure of the corruptions of idolatry. Or, the warning may have been prompted simply by the greatness of the peril. Certainly, of the exhortation in **#2Co 6:1** this is a practical application.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION X.

*PAUL IS FILLED WITH JOY BY GOOD NEWS ABOUT HIS READERS;  
AND IS NOT NOW SORRY THAT HE WROTE TO THEM HIS  
FORMER LETTER. IN HIS JOY, TITUS SHARES.*

#### CH. VII. 2-16

**Make room for us. No one have we treated unjustly: no one have we damaged: no one have we treated with greed. I do not say it to condemn you. For I have before said that in our hearts you are, to die together and to live together. Much openness of speech have I towards you: much exultation have I on behalf of you. I am filled with my encouragement: I abound beyond measure with my joy amid all our affliction. For even when we had come to Macedonia no relief our flesh had, but we were in everything afflicted: without, battles; within, fears.**

**But He who encourages the lowly ones encouraged us, even God, by the coming of Titus; and not only by his coming but also by the encouragement with which he was encouraged about you, while announcing to us your longing, your lamentation, your jealousy on my behalf so that I rejoiced the more. Because, if even I made you sorrowful by the letter, I do not regret it. If even I was regretting it. (For I see that that letter, if even for an hour, made you sorrowful.) Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful for repentance. For you were made sorrowful in a way pleasing to God, that in nothing you might receive loss from us. For the sorrow pleasing to God works repentance for salvation not to be regretted. But the sorrow of the world works out death. For see this very thing, being made sorrowful in a way pleasing to God, how much it wrought out for you of earnestness; nay, self-defence; nay, indignation, nay, fear; nay, longing; nay, jealousy; nay, vengeance. In everything you proved yourselves to be pure touching the matter. Therefore, if indeed I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of him who acted unjustly, nor for the sake of him who suffered injustice, but for the sake of your earnestness on our behalf being made manifest in your presence before God. For this cause I have been encouraged.**

**Moreover, in addition to our encouragement more abundantly did we rejoice the more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has received refreshment from you all. Because, if at all to him on your behalf I have boasted,\* (\*Or, Exulted, exultation: so to end of the Epistle.) I was not put to shame. But, as all things in truth we have spoken to you, so also our boasting\* (\*Or, Exulted, exultation: so to end of the Epistle.) before Titus was found to be truth. And his heart is more abundantly towards you, remembering the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you welcomed him. I rejoice that in everything I am in good heart about you.**

Ver. 2.-4. **Make room for us:** in your hearts. Paul here takes up **#2Co 6:13**, "Be you also enlarged." This sudden return to the same subject, and the sudden and unexpected digression of **#2Co 6:14-7:1**, suggest that he knew that the disaffection at Corinth was caused by sinful toleration of idolatry.

**No one . . . no one . . . no one:** emphatic repetition. These sudden and unexplained denials must have been prompted by charges against Paul. Some might think that by his strict moral teaching, which required abandonment of idolatry and of all unjust gains, he had inflicted loss on his readers.

**Greed;** refers perhaps, as it does in **#2Co 12:17f**, to the collection for Jerusalem. Paul declares that while urging them to contribute he was not enriching himself. He denies any unfairness or loss to his readers, or gain to himself. And what he has *before said* (in **#2Co 6:11, 12**) about his love to his readers proves that he does *not say this to condemn* them, i.e. to announce coming punishment for wrong doing. For this is never the ultimate aim of our words to those we love.

**In our hearts you are:** implied in the similar words in **#2Co 6:11**, "our heart is enlarged."

**To die together and live together:** Paul's purpose when giving them a place in his heart. It reveals the greatness of his love to them.

**To die together:** put first, as in **#Ro 8:38**, because deadly peril was ever before both Paul and his readers. So great is his affection that he has cast in his lot with them, that they and he may stand side by side in face of death ever threatening them and him, and throughout life. Cp. **#Php 1:7**.

**Openness of speech:** **#2Co 3:12**; shown in **#2Co 6:11-7:3**.

**Boasting or exultation:** see under **#Ro 2:17**; **#1Co 1:29**. Here and in **#2Co 7:14** it evidently found vent in words. Hence my rendering *boast*, continued throughout the Epistle. This is an apology for Paul's bold language to his readers. To them he speaks without reserve strong words of warning: to others he speaks about them glowing words of joy and confidence, examples in **#2Co 7:14**; **9:2**. He thus prepares the way for a recognition of the improved state of the Corinthian church, with which he appropriately concludes his "Review of recent events."

**With my encouragement:** explained in **#2Co 7:6**. It gave him abundant joy. That good news about his readers fills him to overflowing with encouragement and joy, a joy which *all his affliction* cannot quench, proves the intensity of his love.

**Filled with encouragement and abound beyond measure with joy:** a double climax.

Ver. 5.-7. Exposition of **#2Co 7:4b**: **#2Co 7:5** describes the "affliction"; **#2Co 7:6, 7** the "encouragement" and "joy." Paul's anxiety at Troas (**#2Co 2:13**) continued *even* after arriving in Macedonia.

**We:** probably Paul and Timothy. See under **#2Co 1:1**. Contrast **#2Co 2:12**.

**Our flesh;** depicts the effect on their body, in virtue of its constitution, of their anxiety about the Corinthians. In **#2Co 2:13** the same anxiety is looked upon as affecting Paul's "spirit."

**Relief:** cessation from "affliction," **#2Th 1:7**. It recalls **#2Co 2:13**.

**Without, within;** expound in *everything*.

**Battles:** with opponents in Macedonia unknown to us.

**Fears:** probably, as suggested by **#2Co 7:6**, about the Corinthian church and the effect of his letter. Cp. **#2Co 2:4**. The state of that church might well give him dark forebodings.

**Encourages:** as in **#Ro 1:12**. See under **#Ro 12:1**.

**Lowly:** in mind body, or estate: opposite to "exalted." Paul gratefully remembers that God's kindness to him was His usual treatment of all in similar circumstances. Amid outward perils and inward anxieties Paul received encouragement *not only* from the face and presence of a beloved helper *but also* from the *encouragement* which Titus had evidently received from the conduct of the Corinthians. For, that Titus, who shared Paul's anxiety, was himself encouraged by what he saw at Corinth, was proof to Paul of improvement there.

**While announcing:** i.e. the joy of Titus became more intense as he narrated to Paul the effect of the first Epistle. A genuine trait of human nature.

**Your, your, your:** each time emphatic. The *longing*, the *lamentation*, the *jealousy*, had been Paul's: now they were implanted in the breasts of the Corinthians.

**Longing:** to see Paul.

**Lamentation:** about their former misconduct, especially in tolerating the gross offender of **#1Co 5:1f**.

**Jealousy** (or *zeal*: see under **#1Co 12:31**) **for me:** earnest defence of the apostle's honor. Rejoiced, completes the exposition of the "joy" of **#2Co 7:4**.

No scene is more worthy of an artist's skill than Titus, perhaps surrounded by sympathizing Philippians, narrating with a joy which increases while he narrates, the sorrow and earnestness of the Corinthian Christians, and by his own joy turning into joy the anxiety of the apostle. Well might this joy reveal to Paul (**#2Co 2:14**) the grandeur, in spite of many hardships, of the gospel ministry. Notice that Paul attributes to *God* the joy he received through the coming and the joy of Titus; implying that the good done to us by others is an accomplishment of God's purposes of mercy.

Ver. 8.-9. Cause of the special joy occasioned to Paul by the coming and the joy of Titus.

**By the letter:** specially by **#1Co 5:1ff**. Cp. **#2Co 7:12**; **#2Co 2:4**.

**If I even was regretting;** reveals Paul's tender sympathy. He wrote the letter in tears, (**#2Co 2:4**) and regretted afterwards that he had written so severely.

**For I see etc.]** The intelligence which removed Paul's regret shows that there was a temporary cause for it, viz. the sorrow occasioned to the Corinthians. "Although after writing the letter I was sorry that I had done so, (and I now see that in the sorrow I caused you I had reason for myself being sorry,) yet now I rejoice."

**Not that you were made sorrowful]** So careful is Paul to show that his readers' sorrow was not a matter of indifference to him. Not the immediate result, only the final result, of his letter gave joy to Paul.

**Repentance:** see under **#Ro 2:4**. Their sorrow brought about in them a change of mind and purpose. This *sorrow to repentance*, **#2Co 7:9b** explains, and shows it to be just cause of joy to Paul.

**In a way pleasing to God:** literally according to God. Same phrase in **#Ro 8:27**. It represents God Himself as a standard with which something is compared. This sorrow brought about a change of mind for the better because it was such sorrow as, in unfaithful ones, God desires to see.

**That in nothing etc.:** God's purpose in causing them this sorrow. Had their sorrow been without result, it would have been an injury, a small and undesigned one, caused to them by Paul. But God designed their sorrow to be a means of blessing, so that not even in the least degree they might receive injury from the Apostle.

Such was the cause of the joy occasioned to Paul by the coming of Titus. He found that he had not inflicted upon his readers the damage of needless sorrow. So deep was his sympathy for them that he had regretted his well-deserved rebuke to them, because of the sorrow he feared it would cause. In this fear, he sees that he was not mistaken. But, to his great joy, he sees that the sorrow he caused had done them good. Consequently, his affectionate regrets about his letter are now altogether past.

That Paul was sorry for having written words which all Christian churches put on a level with those ancient Scriptures which Paul himself accepted as the voice of God, proves how thoroughly human was the composition of the New Testament. It suggests perhaps that he was unconscious that the words he wrote were the words of the Spirit of God. But it by no means proves that they were not such. For his regret soon passed away. We are thankful now that the words which caused regret were written. And we are all sure that he wrote them under the influence of one who cannot regret or err.

Ver. 10. A broad general principle, explaining the connection between "sorrowful" and "in nothing receive loss." The sorrow which accords with God's will is a sorrow for wrong doing, arising from an intelligent comprehension of the evil of sin and prompting a resolve to forsake sin. It thus *works repentance*. This is a necessary condition of *salvation* from sin and from death: and salvation will never be master of *regret*. Consequently, no one can regret, not even the tender heart of Paul, a sorrow which is in accordance with the will of God. And, by causing this sorrow to the Corinthians, he did them no injury. And God designed it to be so. All this is made more evident by the contrast in **#2Co 7:10b**.

**The world:** as in #1Co 2:12.

**The sorrow:** with which unsaved men are sad.

**Death:** in its fullest sense, i.e. of body and soul in Gehenna. All mere worldly sorrow tends to deaden spiritual sensibility, and to make us impervious to the divine influences which alone save from death. Such would have been the effect of Paul's letter had it produced only worldly vexation. And such was the effect of the sorrow of Cain: #Ge 4:5.

Ver. 11. Proof that godly sorrow works repentance; overleaping #2Co 7:10b, which was added only to bring out by contrast the force of #2Co 7:10a.

**This very thing:** their own sorrow was a case in point.

**Earnestness:** explained and proved by the six particulars following.

**Nay . . . nay;** again and again breaks off the foregoing as not being a full statement of the case. No sooner did they hear Paul's charge (#1Co 5:2) against the whole church than in *self-defence* they repelled it; and with *indignation*, i.e.: with intense disapproval. This was accompanied by *fear* of the angry parent (#1Co 4:15, 21) who threatened to come with a rod, mixed with *longing* to see the beloved teacher whom they had grieved so much. They were filled with *jealousy* for the honor of their church, and with *vengeance*, i.e. a resolve (cp. #Ro 12:19; #2Th 1:8) to inflict punishment on the wrong doer. This last word gives the chief thought which Paul's letter left in the mind of those who heard it read in the church at Corinth.

**Pure in the matter:** not implicated in the sin which one of them had committed.

**In everything pure;** does not imply that the general rebuke of #1Co 5:2 was not deserved. Paul is now convinced that the church members generally had not in any way sanctioned the crime. But we have no proof that they were plunged into sorrow by it: nor did they at once remove the offender from their midst. And this would be sufficient proof of the low spiritual state of the church.

Ver. 12. Inference touching the purpose of Paul's letter, which his readers may fairly draw from its just described effect.

**Him who suffered injustice:** a definite and known person, evidently the stepmother's husband, and probably the culprit's own father, still living, and therefore injured by this incestuous marriage. The woman was probably a heathen. See under #1Co 5:1. And, that her husband was such, is the easier supposition. For this would explain Paul's silence about him elsewhere, and the comparative indifference expressed here; and the church's oversight of the offence. A church-member would probably have compelled the church-officers to take action.

**Among you:** almost the same as to you. Paul wishes that in the church at Corinth, and therefore to the church-members, the earnestness of the whole church on his behalf should be made manifest; in other words he wishes them to become conscious of their loyalty to himself. And this wish

prompted him to write; not a desire to inflict punishment, or even to do justice to the injured man. For it was not the apostle's work to set right all wrongs.

**Before God**; adds solemnity to Paul's purpose by pointing to God contemplating, and interested in, the conduct of the church. The word *made-manifest* suggests that Paul knew that underneath apparent disaffection lay real loyalty to himself. The purposes mentioned here and in #2Co 2:4 and 7 are in complete harmony. Paul wrote in tears: for he knew that his letter would inflict pain. He wrote to arouse the dormant loyalty which he knew existed; that he might put to the proof their full obedience; and that thus by doing them good he might make known to them his great love for them. And, that this was the purpose of his letter, they might infer from its effect.

Ver. 13a. Corresponds with *I rejoiced*, #2Co 7:7; marking the completion of the exposition, begun in #2Co 7:8, of "your jealousy on my behalf," #2Co 7:7. Because the purpose of his letter was that just described, the news brought by Titus filled Paul with encouragement: for it showed that his purpose was attained, and that the sorrow which he foresaw his letter would cause had produced its designed good effect.

Verse 13b.-16. Another joy, in addition to the encouragement just described. Here, as in #2Co 7:7, we have joy upon joy.

**Because his spirit etc.**: cause of the joy of Titus, viz. that without exception the Corinthian Christians were to him, in his intercourse with them, a source of spiritual refreshment. Cp. #1Co 16:18. [The perfect tenses note the abiding effect of the encouragement and of the refreshment, and the abiding position as a responsible witness in which Paul's boasting about the Corinthians had placed him.] #2Co 7:14 gives a reason why the joy caused to Titus by his intercourse with the Corinthians was a special encouragement to Paul.

**If at all . . . I have boasted**: a delicate compliment to the Corinthians, viz. an intimation that he had expressed to Titus his joyful confidence in them. He is delighted to find that his expressed confidence was justified by what Titus himself saw. Otherwise, Paul's good opinion about them would have *put him to shame*. Cp. #2Co 9:2-4. #2Co 7:14b states, in contrast to *put to shame*, what actually happened, with a reason why Paul was specially glad that his boasting about his readers had proved to be true. As herald of Him who is The Truth, he made it a point of honor to speak always exact truth; that thus by claiming respect for his own word he might claim respect for the Gospel he announced. In this he is a pattern to all Christian teachers. Conversely, in #2Co 1:18f he appeals to the Gospel he preaches in proof of his own general truthfulness.

**Was found to be true**: literally, *became true*; or, colloquially, *turned out true*.

**Heart**: as in #2Co 6:12. As Christians, Titus loves them. But his intercourse with them called forth a more abundant affection.

**Remembering**; reveals the abiding, and therefore deep, effect upon his mind.

**All of you**: emphatic, laying stress on the universality of their submission. Cp. #2Co 7:13.

**Obedience:** to the apostle's words brought by Titus.

**How with fear and trembling (#1Co 2:3; #Eph 6:5; #Php 2:12) etc.;** expounds *obedience*. It reveals the deep mark which Paul had made in his readers' minds.

**Welcomed him:** respectfully and readily, as armed with Paul's authority. **#2Co 7:16** is the happy conclusion of DIV. I. In every point Paul has good hopes about them: and this gives him joy.

SECTION 10 brings to light Paul's feelings while writing the first Epistle, and its effect on the church at Corinth. He wrote it with bruised heart and with tears; moved, not by a wish to punish the chief offender or even to vindicate the injured man, but by a desire to put to the test, and thus manifest to himself and to them, the loyalty which he knew underlay his readers' apparent callousness. He was moved to write by his love to them; which he hoped to make better understood by them even through this stern reproof.

So great was his reluctance to cause them pain that he afterwards regretted his well-intended letter. For the purity of his motive did not save him from anxiety about its effect. And he waited eagerly for the return of Titus, with tidings from Corinth. Not finding him at Troas Paul gave up the good opening for the Gospel there presented, and hasted to Macedonia; but only to be plunged into deeper anxiety by not finding Titus even there. At last he came; and with more pleasant news. The letter has produced its designed effect. It has moved the heart of the Corinthian Christians. They were eager to clear themselves from the charge of intentional complicity in the crime, were alarmed at their toleration of it, longed to see their offended father in Christ, and were determined, for the honor of their church, to punish at once the guilty member. Such was the outflow of spiritual life that it touched and refreshed the heart of Titus. And his mission to Corinth laid the foundation of a lasting friendship. With gushing joy Titus narrates all this to Paul.

The joy of Titus, and the improvement at Corinth, of which it was a witness, filled the apostle with joy. The many perils which still surround him, and of which at times he is so deeply conscious, are for the moment forgotten. For, his anxious fears about the success of his labors in the important city of Corinth are dispelled.

REVIEW OF DIVISION I. Already we have seen that of DIV. I. as of the whole Epistle Paul's famous exposition and defence, in **#2Co 2:14-6:11**, of the apostolic ministry is the central and chief part. And we have just seen that the framework in which this exposition is embedded tells us its specific occasion.

DIV. I. begins with an outburst of praise to God, and ends with abundant joy. But the praise was prompted by the apostle's hardships and perils, in a consciousness that these were a means of good to his readers. In view of a wonderful deliverance from death, he expresses hope for continued deliverance, a hope strengthened by an assurance that his readers pray for him. This assurance rests upon his consciousness of having lived unblameably among them. Having thus claimed their confidence, he repels, as unworthy of a herald of the Gospel, a charge of vacillation in postponing his visit to Corinth. His real motive was kindness. This recalls to him the tears amid which he wrote his former letter. He begs them to receive again the church-member, now repentant, whom in that



letter he so severely condemned. He claims their affection still further by saying that his anxiety for them moved him to abandon a favorable opportunity for Christian work at Troas, and drove him in haste to Macedonia.

A review, from this point, of his toils, hardships, and perils, reveals to him the grandeur of his apostolic work, elicits a shout of praise to God, and moves him to set forth at length the credentials and the surpassing greatness of his office, and to show that this greatness is consistent with the fact that many reject the Gospel he unreservedly proclaims and with the deadly perils amid which he proclaims it. These perils are designed to make known the power of God, who rescues him from them. And they cannot deter the apostles: for with the eye of faith they look forward to the resurrection of the dead, to an immediate entrance at death into the presence of Christ, and to the reward of the great day. Their devotion to Christ's great work is prompted by Christ's great love, and by their own commission from God. With this commission their entire conduct accords.

Supported by this exposition of the principles of his life, Paul claims his readers' affection. And, remembering the secret source of the disaffection at Corinth, he warns them to shake off all connection with idolatry and sin. He indignantly repels the charge that he has treated them with injustice and rapacity. And, to strengthen his appeal, he says that to others he speaks confidently in their favor; and that he is now filled with joy by the good news about them which Titus has brought. He rejoices the more because he now sees that his letter to them, which he afterwards regretted, has gained its purpose. The sorrow which he foresaw it would cause has done them good. He is overjoyed to find that their conduct has filled Titus with warm love to them. And he concludes his long defence of himself and his office by a joyful expression of complete confidence in his readers.

Notice that throughout DIV. I., when speaking of the grandeur and the perils of his work and of his faithfulness therein, Paul says *we, us*, remembering that all this is shared by Timothy who joins him in the letter, and by others. But when (**#2Co 2:3-11**) speaking of his former letter, in which Timothy had no share, or (**#2Co 1:15-2:2**) of the specific charge against himself of vacillation in his purpose to come to Corinth, he says, *I, me*. About his journey to Macedonia, he says first (**#2Co 2:12f**) *I, me*, thinking only of his own deep anxiety; and afterwards (**#2Co 7:5**) *we came*, remembering that he was accompanied by others, and probably by Timothy. Throughout the whole, when speaking of blame, he prefers to stand alone: when speaking of perils and of faithfulness, he associates others with himself.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DIVISION II.

#### THE COLLECTION FOR THE POOR AT JERUSALEM

##### CHAPTERS VIII., IX.

##### *SECTION XI.*

*BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE MACEDONIAN CHURCHES, PAUL URGES  
HIS READERS TO PERFORM THEIR OWN PURPOSE OF LIBERALITY*

##### CH. VIII. 1-15.

Moreover, we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia; that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy is, and their deep poverty has abounded for the riches of their sincerity. Because, according to their power, I bear witness, and beyond their power, of their own accord, with much exhortation begging of us the favour\* (\*Or, grace.) and the partnership in† (†Greek, of) the ministry for the saints, and not as we hoped but themselves they gave first to the Lord and to us by the will of God; that we might exhort Titus that according as he had before begun so he should also complete in reference to you this grace also.

Yes, just as in everything you abound, faith and utterance and knowledge and all earnestness and love from you to us, that also in this grace you may abound. Not by way of command do I say it, but by means of other men's earnestness putting to the proof the genuineness of your love. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that because of us He became poor, although rich, that you by His poverty may become rich. And an opinion in this matter I give. For this is profitable for you, who not only to do but also to wish began first, last year. And now complete the doing also, in order that just as there was the readiness to wish so there may be also the completing, according as you possess. For, if the readiness exists, according to whatever one may have it is acceptable, not according to what he has not. Not in order that to others there may be relief, to you pressure: but by way of equality, in the present season your abundance for their deficiency, that also their abundance may come to be for your deficiency; that there may be equality, according as it is written, (#Ex 16:18,) "He that had much had not more: and he that had little had not less."

Ver. 1.-2. For the altogether new matter of DIV. II. Paul has prepared the way by the confidence and joy about his readers expressed in 2Cor. 7, and especially in #2Co 7:16. He now enters it by recounting the great liberality of the Macedonians, from whose midst he writes to the Corinthians. This liberality he introduces *as grace of God given*, i.e. as a gift of the undeserved favor of God. Thus, while holding up human excellence as an example, he shuts out beforehand all human merit. With the same thought (#2Co 9:14, 15) he concludes DIV. II.

**In the churches etc.:** the locality *in* which *the grace* was given. Cp. #2Co 8:16. The kind of grace given, #2Co 8:2 states in plain words.

**Much proof of affliction:** affliction putting to the test, and thus manifesting, their faith. Cp. #Ro 5:4. It directs attention to the spiritual significance of their affliction.

**The abundance of their joy is.** We should say "their joy abounds." Their abundant joy is represented as a definite object of thought. [Similar construction in #2Co 8:11.] For an example of Macedonian joy amid affliction, see #1Th 1:6.

**And their deep poverty etc.:** a second excellence.

**Abounded for:** #Ro 3:7: produced abundant results in the direction of spiritual *riches*.

**Their sincerity:** the purity of motive of their Christian life; the opposite of guile.

**Riches of sincerity:** more than *abundance*. For sincerity is true wealth. The liberality of the Macedonians was of value to Paul chiefly as proof of the sincerity of their profession of Christianity. *Their deep poverty* increased the force of this proof, and thus itself produced abundant results in the direction of spiritual wealth.

Ver. 3.-5. A statement of fact, in proof of #2Co 8:2.

**I bear witness:** writing from the midst of this liberality.

**Of their own accord:** probably, while Paul told them (#2Co 9:2) of the readiness of the Corinthians, and without any suggestion from him.

**With much exhortation etc.:** they pleaded hard to be allowed as a favor to join with the other churches in this service for the brethren in Judaea. This suggests that Paul hesitated, because of their poverty, to accept their cooperation.

**Exhortation:** see under #Ro 12:1.

**Favour** or *grace*: as in #2Co 8:19; see under #Ro 1:5. It is in apposition to *partnership*. They begged for the *favour*, viz. *the partnership etc.*

**Ministry:** often used for supply of bodily needs. See under #Ro 12:7. That the collection was *for the saints*, (cp. #1Co 16:1,) i.e. for men standing in special relation to God, gave it special significance.

**And not as we hoped but themselves:** last point which Paul specifies. *They gave, beyond their power of their own accord*, earnestly *begging* to be allowed to give, and beyond Paul's expectation they *gave themselves*. Disregarding their own need, and moved by loyalty to Christ, they gave. So

that their gift was not money but themselves, not to men but to Christ. And this was the primary element of their gift:

**first to the Lord. And to us]** Their self-surrender to Christ was also a surrender to those whom Christ had set in authority in His Church. For the liberality of the Macedonians was loyalty to Paul as well as to Christ.

**By the will of God:** as in #2Co 1:1. The Macedonians recognized by their gift Paul's divinely given authority: they thus did *the will of God*.

The instructive parallel of #Php 4:10-18 suggests that in the liberality of *the churches of Macedonia* the Philippians (#Ac 16:12) took a prominent part. They who were the first to contribute to the support of their beloved teacher while preaching to others were also abundant in their liberality to unknown and far off brethren. And since we read here not of Philippian but of Macedonian liberality, we may suppose that their example had moved to liberality other Macedonian churches.

Ver. 6. Paul's request to Titus (cp. #2Co 8:17) is represented as not only a result of the liberality of the Macedonians, but as a designed result; i.e. designed by God. This implies that the request was itself an accomplishment of a purpose of God by means of "the grace given" to the Macedonians. God intended Paul to send Titus to Corinth, and used the liberality of the Macedonians to bring this about. Thus Paul viewed his own action as an outworking of a divine purpose.

**He had begun before:** on a former visit to Corinth; doubtless that referred to in #2Co 12:18, undertaken at Paul's request, probably with express reference to this collection, some time before Paul wrote the First Epistle. See under #2Co 9:5.

**Your grace, or favour:** as in #2Co 8:19, the unmerited kindness of the contribution for the poor at Jerusalem. Moved by the liberality of the Macedonians Paul begged Titus to go to Corinth and complete the work he had already begun there. And in making this request he felt that his meeting with Titus amid churches manifesting such wonderful liberality was by divine arrangement to encourage them to press forward the contribution at Corinth. Thus Paul introduces, as an accomplishment of a divine purpose, the specific matter of DIV. II.

Ver. 7.-8. **Just as etc.;** appeals to them on the ground of their excellence already shown.

**In everything you abound:** #1Co 1:5.

**Faith, utterance, etc.:** having these, they are in everything spiritually rich.

**Utterance and knowledge:** #1Co 1:5.

**All earnestness:** an example in #2Co 7:11.

**Love to us:** manifested in the "longing" of #2Co 7:11.

**Also in this grace:** this act of undeserved kindness.

**That. . . you may abound:** Paul's purpose in requesting Titus to complete the collection at Corinth. Practically, it is an exhortation: for it is *not given by way of command*.

**Putting to the proof:** as in #2Co 2:9.

**Your love:** to fellow-Christians and to mankind, as in 1Cor. 13. It is the essence of Christian character. Therefore, to put to the *proof* the genuineness of their *love*, is to test the worth of their Christian profession. And there is no surer way of doing this than to ask money for Christian purposes. For men generally trust in, and cling to material good.

Ver. 9. A reason why Paul has no need to "command," but only to put to the test his readers' Christian love. To those who *know the grace of Christ* towards themselves, command to be kind to others is needless.

**The grace of etc.:** the free undeserved favor which moved Christ to become man to save men. So #Ro 5:15; #1Co 16:23; #2Co 13:13.

**That because of us etc.;** recounts *the grace of Christ*.

**He became poor;** involves, as do #2Co 13:4 and #Php 2:7, the mystery of the incarnation. It means infinitely more than abstinence from material good while on earth. For *riches* denotes, not actual enjoyment of the things possessed, but control over things needful or pleasant to us. This is the real worth of money. Poverty is the absence of control over things needful or pleasant. Now, from eternity the Son of God had absolute control over all things; and was therefore infinitely *rich*. Want was unknown to Him. But at His incarnation He laid aside this absolute control, and submitted, in a way to us inconceivable because divine, to creaturely and human limitations, that thus by personal experience He might become conscious of human dependence and need. All this is implied in #Mr 13:32, (#Lu 22:43, genuineness very doubtful,) #Heb 5:7. This self-impoverishment of Christ I venture to illustrate by supposing a rich man to leave the luxuries of home and go to the Arctic Regions to rescue a friend. For by doing so he not only abstains from his accustomed comforts but puts himself for a time beyond reach of them. And only by some similar conception, excluding however all idea of peril and thinking only of hardship, can we attach any meaning to the words *He became poor*; and to #Php 2:7, "He emptied Himself." But He did not (for He could not: #2Ti 2:13) lay aside even for a moment His divine Nature, of which the essence is Love. Never before did the divine Love of the Son of God shine forth so wonderfully as when to save men He became Man.

**Because of you:** more forceful than "because of us." Cp. #Ga 2:20. Paul sets the Corinthians alone, and says that Christ died for them.

**May become rich:** all our needs and desires supplied in the wealth of our Father's house, and already in sure anticipation of it. The self-impoverishment of Christ is a motive for Christian liberality. For, by giving money we limit our own control over things needful and pleasant to us, in order to supply the needs of others. And this we cannot refuse to do, in the lower sphere of material

good, in view of the infinite self-sacrifice of Christ for our eternal enrichment. Thus, after setting before his readers the example of the Macedonians, Paul strengthens his appeal by pointing to the infinitely greater example of Christ.

Ver. 10.-11, Continues #2Co 8:8, after supporting it in #2Co 8:9 by the example of Christ. Far from commanding, Paul merely gives in #2Co 8:7-11 *an opinion* (#1Co 7:25, 40) about what is best for his readers.

**For this:** viz that he gives an opinion, not a command.

**For you:** emphatic, a courteous recognition of the readiness of the Corinthians. For others less ready a command might be needful.

**Who not only etc.:** proof of the foregoing words.

**Began first:** literally *began before*, as in #2Co 8:6; i.e. before the Macedonian Christians.

**Last year:** cp. #2Co 9:2: not necessarily a full year ago. When, about Easter, Paul wrote #1Co 16:1, the collection was already well known at Corinth. And, since about Titus who began (#2Co 8:6) the collection there no mention is made in the First Epistle, probably he went to Corinth some time before it was written. The Corinthians took up the matter at once. Consequently, the collection may have been begun, and in some sense the Corinthians "ready," (#2Co 9:2,) the autumn before these letters were written. And this would be naturally spoken of as *last year*. During the previous year the Corinthians had not only *begun* it *before* the Macedonians, but were before them in wishing to contribute. They were earlier, *not only* in beginning to give, *but* also in wishing to give. For such ready contributors an *opinion* was certainly better than a "command."

**And now also the doing:** in addition to what last year they did and wished to do.

**Complete:** (same word as *accomplish* in #2Co 7:1:) in contrast to *begin*. Same contrast in #Php 1:6. A year ago they were first to begin not only to do something but to wish to do. The wish continues: but the doing is not yet completed. Paul bids them complete what they then began, and accomplish what they then wished.

**That according as . . . so also:** that with the purpose, which was so *ready*, (see under #2Co 8:19,) performance may correspond. It suggests the uselessness of a purpose not followed by corresponding action.

**According as you possess:** developed and supported in #2Co 8:12. Only so far as they were able could their *performing* correspond with their wish. Paul thus reminds his readers that in asking for the accomplishment of their purpose of liberality he takes into account their limited resources.

Ver. 12. Justifies the foregoing words, by stating the general principle that the limits of our ability to give do not limit the reward of our liberality, and yet are the measure of our reward. For, according to our ability, the *readiness* (or *eagerness*: see #2Co 8:19) itself is *acceptable*. But, if genuine, it

will, according to *whatever* the giver *may have*, develop into action. The contrasted negation, *not according to what he has not*, restates emphatically the standard of acceptability. This verse, introduced to explain #2Co 8:11, shows that Paul was thinking not about the gift itself but about its acceptability to God.

Ver. 13.-14. That Paul was seeking something acceptable to God, not a large sum of money, he now proves by stating his real purpose in making the collection, viz. not to enrich others by impoverishing the Corinthians, but to bring them material gain.

**Relief:** removal of affliction; cp. #2Th 1:7.

**To you pressure:** literally *affliction*: privation of the necessities of life, through liberality towards the Christians of Judaea.

**By way of equality:** taking equality as his standard and aim.

**Their abundance . . . your deficiency:** in the same sense as #2Co 8:13, viz. material good. For, the spiritual blessings from the Jews to the Gentiles (#Ro 15:27) had been already received: but Paul refers to something still future. Although now the Corinthians are richer than the Judaeans Christians, matters may some day be reversed. And in view of the uncertainties of the future Paul now presses this collection, in order that in days to come those who now give may themselves receive material help; and that thus in the family of God *there may be* an *equality* unknown outside it. Therefore, so far from seeking to enrich others at his readers' cost, Paul is really seeking, in view of the uncertainties of life, ultimately to enrich them. In #Ro 15:27 he gives a nobler justification than this, and in #2Co 9:12ff a nobler result, of the collection. But these do not cause him to overlook its material benefits. By establishing the principle of mutual monetary help, he was doing something to shelter the people of God in the dark days awaiting the Church and the world.

Ver. 15. As a pattern of what he desires to see in the Christian Church, Paul quotes #Ex 16:18, almost word for word from the LXX., viz. the narrative of Israel in the wilderness, supplied by the gift of God so that none had too much and none too little.

**Had not more, had not less;** than he needed. For they gathered according to the size of their families. So far as the Christian life permeates church-members and churches will there be reproduced this ancient and beautiful ideal of a company in which each has sufficient, an ideal never realized in material good so completely as in Israel in the wilderness. For all men are but gatherers of food freely given by God.

The important matter of the collection for the Christian poor in Judaea, Paul introduces by the noble example of the Macedonians, whose liberality he speaks of as a gift of the undeserved favor of God working out for them spiritual wealth. This liberality moved him, by the design of God, to send Titus to Corinth, that the Corinthians, so rich in spiritual gifts, may be rich in spiritual liberality. To them he forbears to give commands: for the example of the Macedonians is enough, and his readers know the greater example of Christ. Indeed they were themselves the first not only to begin, but also to wish to join in, this contribution. Paul asks therefore that with their readiness to purpose

performance may correspond. He asks only for gifts in proportion to ability: for this will be the measure of the reward. For his purpose is, not to enrich others by impoverishing them, but ultimately to bring them material help. He wishes to bring about in the people of God the equality of those who in the wilderness were fed by the providence of God sufficiently, but not in excess.



## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XII.

*PAUL HAS SENT TITUS AND OTHERS, THAT THE  
COLLECTION MAY BE READY WHEN HE ARRIVES.*

CHS. VIII. 16-IX. 5.

**But thanks to God who gives the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus: because, the exhortation, on the one hand, he accepted; but, being more earnest, of his own accord he came forth to you. Moreover, we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the Gospel is throughout all the churches: and not only so but also elected by the churches as our fellow-traveller with this grace which is being ministered by you, in view of the glory of the Lord and our earnest wish: guarding this, lest any one blame us in this fulness which is being ministered by us. For we "take forethought for honourable things," not only "before the Lord" but also before "men." (#Pr 3:4.) And we have sent with them our brother whom we have proved in many things often to be earnest, and now much more earnest through much confidence, his confidence in reference to you. Whether on behalf of Titus we speak, he is a partner of mine, and a fellow-labourer for you: or it be our brothers, they are apostles of churches, a glory of Christ. The proof then of your love and of our boasting on your behalf, while you show towards them, you do so in the presence of the churches.**

**For, on the one hand, about the ministry for the saints it is superfluous to me to write to you. For I know your readiness, of which on your behalf I boast to Macedonians, that Achaia has been prepared from last year. And your zeal has stirred up the more part of them. But I have sent the brothers lest our ground of boasting on your behalf be made vain in this matter; that, as I said, you may be prepared, lest in any way if Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared we be put to shame, that I may not say you, in this confidence. Necessary then I deemed it to exhort the brothers, that they may come beforehand to you and may prepare beforehand your before-promised blessing, that this may be ready, in this way, as blessing and not as greediness.**

After giving, in #2Co 8:7-15, as it were covertly, three strong motives for the contribution, Paul takes up again his request (#2Co 8:6) that Titus should come to Corinth. He speaks of the mission of Titus (#2Co 8:16, 17) and another (#2Co 8:18-21) and (#2Co 8:22) a third; and (#2Co 8:23, 24) commends them to his readers. The contribution itself he needs to touch (#2Co 9:1, 2) only for a moment; and then gives (#2Co 8:3-5) his purpose in sending the brethren, viz. that when he himself comes he may not be put to shame by the contribution not being ready.

Ver. 16.-17. Paul's thought about Titus, who had brought from Corinth news so good and who acceded so readily to Paul's request to go there on this errand, elicits a shout of joy; as usual, in the form of praise to God. So #2Co 9:15; 2:14; #1Co 15:57; #Ro 6:17. For the readiness of Titus, like all good in man, is the work and gift of God.

**The same earnestness:** as in Paul.

**Gives:** it flows forth each moment from God, *in the heart of Titus*: as in **#2Co 8:1**: the spiritual locality in which God works and *gives* this *earnestness*. **#2Co 8:17** states, in contrast, two facts which together explain *the same earnestness*.

**More earnest;** than the foregoing words, had they stood alone, would imply. *On the one hand*, when Paul asked Titus to go to Corinth he did so, and went there sent by Paul: *but* so eager was he to complete the work he had begun that his journey was really an outflow of his own *earnest* wish.

**He went forth:** as bearer of this letter. Cp. **#2Co 8:18, 22; 9:3; #Ac 15:22f, 27**. For, the explanation of his mission given in **#2Co 9:5** would be needed as soon as he arrived in Corinth: and this verse implies that the letter did not precede him.

Ver. 18.-21. **We:** probably Paul and Timothy; cp. **#2Co 1:1**. So ready was Paul to join others with himself in all acts of authority.

**Together with;** lays emphasis on the companionship in this mission.

**In the Gospel:** **#Ro 1:9**: in proclaiming and furthering it. For this he was well spoken of in *all the churches*. Such men must have been then, as now, a link binding together the various churches. He was *not only* praised in all the churches *but also elected* to accompany Paul in taking the contribution to Judaea. Cp. **#1Co 16:3f**.

**By the churches:** probably of Macedonia only. Cp. **#Ro 15:26**. It is difficult to say whether *our* fellow-traveller, by *us*, include Timothy, or refer only to Paul as in **#1Th 3:1-6**. For we do not know whether Timothy went, or when this letter was written intended to go, to Jerusalem. But, that we have no proof that elsewhere in this Epistle Paul uses the words *we*, *our* of himself alone, and Timothy's presence with him (**#Ac 20:4**) when starting from Corinth for Jerusalem, suggest that these words refer to Paul and Timothy.

**Elected:** same word in **#Ac 14:23**. In both passages apostolic authority (*we sent*) is combined with popular election.

**This grace:** as in **#2Co 8:4, 6, 7**.

**Ministered:** as in **#2Co 3:3**; see under **#Ro 12:7**. By suggesting, carrying out, and taking to Jerusalem, the contribution, Paul performed a free and honorable service for the brethren there.

**With a view to etc.:** two considerations before the Macedonian Christians when electing this brother as Paul's companion; viz. *the Lord's glory*, i.e. the exaltation of Christ in the eyes of men through performance of the work for which he was elected, and Paul's earnest wish that some one should be chosen to go with him. The former consideration reveals the spiritual aim of the election, and that the honor of Christ was involved in it: the latter shows that the election was compliance with a wish of the apostle.

**Earnest-wish:** same as *readiness* or *eagerness* in #2Co 8:11, 12; 9:2; #Ro 1:15; #Ac 17:11. It is the disposition which prompts men to act.

**Guarding this etc.;** grammatically connected *we have sent*, explains *our earnest wish*, which needs explanation. In wishing for a colleague Paul, and perhaps Timothy, were *guarding* against *blame* which otherwise might attach to themselves. Cp. #2Co 6:3.

**Fulness:** rich liberality. It is an acknowledgment of the greatness of the contribution.

**For we** (Paul and his colleagues) **take forethought etc.:** reason for guarding against blame. It is a general principle, quoted almost word for word from #Pr 3:4, LXX. Cp. #Ro 12:17. They sought the approval, not only of Christ who reads the heart and who knew their honesty, but of *men*, who judge by appearances. They therefore suggested that a colleague be elected for them in this financial business. Thus the election was for the glory of Christ, and in compliance with an earnest wish of the apostle.

Notice Paul's careful *forethought*. Although his own honesty was probably above suspicion, he foresaw a time when similar matters must be entrusted to men less known than himself, and felt the great importance of guarding, in church finance, against even a breath of suspicion. He therefore urged the Macedonian Christians to establish the precedent of committing such matters to at least two persons; a precedent well worthy of imitation now.

Who the elected brother was, we have no means of knowing. All guesses are worthless. His formal election by the Macedonians, which would be announced to the Corinthians, made mention of his name unnecessary.

Ver. 22. A second companion of Titus; and like the former, quite unknown to us. He had *proved* himself to be an *earnest* man, not in some one matter but in *many*, and *often*: and at the present time he was *much more earnest* than usual, moved to earnestness by his *confidence* about the Corinthians. Therefore, both his general character and his special interest in them commend him to the readers. And of all this Paul has had *proof*. This testimony suggests that his brother was less known than the former one. And, that only the first brother is said to have been "elected" by the churches, and that the purpose of the election (#2Co 8:20) is stated before mention of the second brother, suggests that he was not thus elected. If so, the word "apostles" in #2Co 8:23 denotes only that his association with the chosen delegate was approved by the churches.

Ver. 23. A commendation of the three messengers.

**Partner:** in toil and peril. Same word in #2Co 1:7; #1Co 10:18, 20; #Phm 1:17; #Heb 10:33; #1Pe 5:1; #2Pe 1:4; #Mt 23:30; #Lu 5:10.

**Fellow-worker:** #2Co 1:24; #1Co 3:9; #Ro 16:3, 9, 21. That Titus was a companion of their beloved apostle and a worker with him for their good, was his high commendation. The other two have three commendations. They are *brothers* in Christ, *apostles* approved and sent by Christian churches, men whose mission and work reveal the *glory of Christ*.

**Apostle:** in its simplest sense of "one sent on some special business." See under **#Ro 1:1**.

**Glory of Christ;** recalls **#2Co 8:19**, "for the Lord's glory." Cp. **#1Co 11:7**; **#1Th 2:20**. As men sent "with a view to the Lord's glory," i.e. to guard and magnify His honor, they were themselves in their mission and work an embodiment of His glory. Notice the gradation. To Paul and his readers they are *brothers*: to whole churches they are specially related as their *apostles*; and to *Christ* as men bringing Him *glory*.

Ver. 24. A motive, drawn from **#2Co 8:23**, for receiving the messengers worthily. "Owing to their just stated relationships, what you do to them, you do *in the presence of the churches* who sent them."

**Your love:** to Christians generally. So **#2Co 8:8**, "proving the genuineness of your love." It includes kindness to the messengers and liberality towards the poor saints at Jerusalem.

**Our exultation:** explained further in **#2Co 9:2-4**, for which these words prepare the way. On the various reading see "Notes and Replies" on page XIII.

Ver. 1.-2. After commending the three messengers, Paul gives in **#2Co 9:3-5** the purpose for which he has sent them. But this he prefaces by saying in **#2Co 9:1, 2** that he has no reason to write to them about the collection itself.

**For about etc.:** reason why, instead of speaking about the collection, Paul merely bids his readers receive the messengers worthily.

**On the one hand;** implies that Paul mentions *the ministry for the saints* (**#2Co 8:4**) only by way of contrast to a detail about it, viz. the mission (**#2Co 9:3**) of the three brethren.

**Superfluous etc.;** (cp. **#1Th 4:9**;) reveals the apostle's usual courtesy and tact.

**For I know, etc.:** reason why it is superfluous to write.

**Eagerness, or readiness:** **#2Co 8:19**.

**On your behalf:** in your favor.

**I exult:** even now he continues to boast about them.

**To Macedonians:** to some, not necessarily all of them.

**That Achaia etc.:** the matter of Paul's boasting. It implies that not only at Corinth but throughout the province the collection was eagerly agreed to from the first.

**Has been ready:** i.e. they had according to Paul's advice, (#1Co 16:1,) the money ready at home. For it is evident that the general gathering had not yet been made: whereas, that Paul continues to boast, proves that his boasting was not a mistake.

**From last year:** as in #2Co 8:10.

**Stirred up:** same word in a bad sense in #Col 3:21.

**The more part:** the majority, as in #2Co 2:6.

Paul's continued boasting about the Corinthians implies that, in the previous year when the matter of the collection was first brought before them, they took it up eagerly, and were prepared to contribute at once and actually began (#2Co 8:10) to contribute. Even the liberality of the Macedonians, for which Paul is so thankful to God, was in great part a result of the example thus nobly set by the Corinthians. All this proves that it is needless for him to write to them *about the collection*. But it does not prevent him from telling them of the liberality of the Macedonians, that the example of those whom their own liberal purpose had aroused might prompt them to complete at once the work they had been the first to begin. Thus example acts and re-acts.

Since the Corinthians were a year ago ready for the collection, and since three months ago Paul received at Ephesus a deputation of Corinthians who would naturally tell him all that the church had done, we infer that the boasting in #2Co 9:2 was prompted, not by news received in Macedonia from Titus which seems to have been rather unfavorable though not such as to put an end to Paul's boasting, but by earlier news.

Ver. 3.-5. About the collection Paul has no need to write; *but* he has need to explain why he *sent the* before mentioned *brethren*.

**Our ground-of-exultation be-made-vain:** #1Co 9:15: lest the excellence of which we boast in your favor be found out to be an empty thing.

**In this matter;** implies that Paul's exultation about them embraced other points. He feared lest in this detail his boast might prove to be misplaced.

**That as I said etc.:** parallel to, and explaining, the foregoing purpose.

**As I said, you may be etc.:** opposite to *ground of boasting be made vain*.

**Prepared;** takes up the same word in #2Co 9:2. #2Co 9:4 is a further negative purpose.

**We, you:** emphatic. Paul speaks of his own *shame*, that he may avoid speaking of the greater shame which, if found *unprepared*, would fall upon them.

**Exhort:** see #2Co 8:6.

**Come-beforehand . . . prepare-beforehand:** before Paul came.

**Before-promised:** by Paul. For Paul's boasting about them was virtually a promise of what they would do. It takes up *as I said* in **#2Co 9:3**.

**Beforehand . . . beforehand . . . before:** emphatic alliteration.

**Blessing:** a benefit, as in **#Ge 33:11**; **#Jud 1:15**. But usually it denotes a benefit conveyed by a good word. See under **#Ro 1:25**.

**In this way etc.;** dwells upon the word *blessing*, which was chosen to suggest this explanation. Paul begs them to contribute not as though it were an act of *greedy* self-enrichment, (in which case they would do as little as possible to attain their end,) but as an outflow of benevolence, and therefore measured by the greatness of their love. The word *blessing* is specially appropriate, as recalling God's benefits in contrast to man's selfishness.

**Greediness, or covetousness:** literally, "having more." Same word in **#Eph 4:19**; **5:3**; **#Col 3:5**; **#1Th 2:5**; **#Lu 12:15**. This exhortation we shall do well to remember in all our gifts.

Of *TITUS* nothing is said in the Book of Acts. This, though remarkable, accords with the scantiness of its reference (**#Ac 20:2**) to the period when this Epistle was written. Nor is he mentioned, apart from this Epistle, except in **#Ga 2:1, 3**; **#2Ti 4:10**; **#Tit 1:4**. Yet he was evidently a noble and valued helper of the apostle.

Titus was (**#Ga 2:3**) a Greek: i.e. not necessarily born in Greece, but of Gentile parents. See under **#Ro 1:16**; and contrast **#Ac 16:3**, referring to almost the same time as **#Ga 2:3**. His birth-place is quite unknown. He seems (**#Tit 1:4**) to have been converted by Paul.

We first meet Titus going with Paul to Jerusalem as narrated in **#Ga 2:1**, (same journey apparently as **#Ac 15:2**;) probably as representative of the Gentile Christians.

From **#2Co 7:14f** we infer that Titus was not a member of the church at Corinth. But Paul (**#2Co 12:17**) sent him there, from Ephesus probably, to promote the collection for the poorer Christians at Jerusalem. That Titus began (**#2Co 8:6**) this collection at Corinth, and that Paul assumes in **#1Co 16:1f** that his readers already know about it, implies that this first mission of Titus was not later than the First extant Epistle to the Corinthians, and suggests strongly that it was some time earlier. This is confirmed by the absence of any reference to Titus, Paul's valued colleague, in the First Epistle, and by the fact that, at the instance (**#2Co 8:6**) of Titus, the Corinthians were ready (**#2Co 9:2**; **8:10**) a year ago to contribute. This seems to prove that some months before the First Epistle was written, perhaps in the previous autumn, Paul sent (**#2Co 12:18**) Titus and another to Corinth to begin the collection; and that he did so. Now, **#2Co 2:13**; **7:6ff**, imply that personally or by message Paul requested Titus to meet him at Troas, expecting thus news from Corinth, especially about the effect of the First Epistle. That Titus was not at Ephesus or at Corinth when Paul wrote the First Epistle, is made almost certain by its silence about him. But this expectation implies that, although not at Corinth then, Titus was likely to be there either by Paul's request or otherwise soon afterwards. He

may have come to Ephesus, and have been at once sent back to Corinth, with directions to meet Paul at Troas: or, while residing elsewhere he may have been requested by Paul to visit Corinth. This would imply, as is by no means unlikely, that Paul sent Titus three times to Corinth. Either of these suppositions would account for all our scanty indications of the movements of Titus. The latter suggestion, as implying less travelling, is rather the more likely of the two. In many ways unknown to us messages may have been sent by Paul to Titus.

After his own hasty (**#Ac 20:1**) departure from Ephesus, not finding Titus at Troas, Paul crossed over to Macedonia. Here, though not immediately, Titus met him with good news about the deep repentance and Christian earnestness of the Corinthians, and with information about the progress of the collection. Moved both by the liberality of the Macedonians and by the readiness of the Corinthians, Paul begged Titus (**#2Co 8:6**) to return to Corinth and complete, before (**#2Co 9:5**) the apostle's own arrival, the collection he had begun. This, Titus gladly (**#2Co 8:17**) agreed to do; and went from Macedonia to Corinth, accompanied by one brother chosen by the Macedonian churches to go with Paul to take the collection to Jerusalem, and by another sent with the approval of the churches by Paul himself. These messengers took with them (**#2Co 8:18; 9:3f**) the Second Epistle. The collection at Corinth was (**#Ro 15:26**) duly made; doubtless in great part by the activity of Titus.

And now we lose sight of Titus for at least five years. In **#Tit 1:5** we find him again a trusted helper of the apostle, deputed to set in order the imperfectly organized churches in Crete. Paul is very wishful (**#Tit 3:12**) to see him at Nicopolis during the winter. It would seem that later (**#2Ti 4:10**) Titus was with Paul in his last imprisonment at Rome. And, with a touch of sadness, the lonely prisoner says that he has gone, doubtless for a sufficient reason, to Dalmatia.

The gushing joy (**#2Co 7:7**) of Titus about the repentance of the Corinthians, his warm affection (**#2Co 7:15**) for them, and his eagerness (**#2Co 8:16f**) to visit them again, betray an ardent temperament. He worked in perfect accord (**#2Co 12:18**) with Paul. And, though little known to us, he doubtless had no small share in founding Gentile Christianity.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XIII.

*PAUL SUGGESTS A LARGE AND FREE GIFT; WHICH WILL NOT ONLY RELIEVE DISTRESS BUT ALSO BRING PRAISE TO GOD.*

CH. IX. 6-15.

**And this: he that sows sparingly, sparingly will also reap; and he that sows with blessings, with blessings will also reap. Each one according as he has resolved in his heart, not with sorrow, or from necessity. For "a cheerful giver God loves." (#Pr 22:8, LXX.)**

**And God is able to make every grace abound towards you, that in everything always having all sufficiency you may abound for every good work: according as it is written, (#Ps 112:9,) "He scattered, he gave to the poor; his righteousness remains for ever." And He that supplies seed to the sower and bread for eating will supply and will multiply your sowing, and will increase the fruits of your righteousness; while in everything you are being enriched for all sincerity, which works out through us thanksgiving to God. Because the ministry of this public service not only is supplying the shortcomings of the saints but also abounds through many thanksgivings to God: while through the proof of this ministry they glorify God for the submission of your confession, in view of the Gospel of Christ, and for the sincerity of the partnership towards them and towards all men, while themselves with supplication on your behalf long for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Thanks to God for His indescribable gift.**

Paul now uses the word "blessing," chosen to be so used, as a stepping stone to a suggestion that the gift be (#2Co 9:6) abundant and (#2Co 9:7) free. To this he encourages his readers by pointing to God, who is (#2Co 9:8, 9) able to bless them and (#2Co 9:10, 11) will do so; and (#2Co 9:12-15) to the spiritual results of their liberality.

Ver. 6. **And this;** directs attention to a new and important point, viz. that acts of kindness to God's people are seeds thrown into the ground, which by the outworking of the laws of life produce similar and multiplied results. So #Ga 6:7; #1Co 9:11; #Jas 3:18; #Pr 22:8.

**Sparingly, sparingly:** exact retribution. Since gifts are seeds, he that holds himself back from giving thereby holds himself back from the harvest.

**With blessings:** recalls "as blessing" in #2Co 9:5. They who in giving think, not how little they can give, as they would if self-enrichment were their aim, but of benefits to be conferred, will receive back on the same principle. As they to others, so God will act to them. The plural denotes a variety of *blessings*. These words will be fulfilled both in the various blessings in this life to those who do good and in the infinite recompense of the great Day. This sufficient motive for liberality makes direct exhortation for a large gift needless.



Ver. 7. A direct exhortation, but only on a matter of detail, viz. the freeness of the gift. Whatever be the amount, it must be an outflow of *each one's* own previous *resolve*. The choice must be *in his heart*, the inmost center of the man, where standing alone he chooses his own action. See under **#Ro 1:21**.

**Not with sorrow or from necessity**; lingers over and expounds *as he has resolved in his heart*. The gift must not be with regret, nor be a surrender to pressure from without. For this a reason is given, almost in the words of **#Pr 22:8**, where instead of "The man with kindly eye shall be blessed: because he has given of his bread to the poor," the LXX. render "A man cheerful and a giver, God blesses." The sense is practically the same, and bears on the case before us. The cheerfulness and freeness of the gift mark it as being a genuine outflow of Christian life, in which everything is free and cheerful; and are therefore acceptable to God.

Ver. 8. An added thought expounding the worth of the foregoing quoted words, viz. the ability of God to supply all our need.

**Every grace**: emphatic: all the various gifts of God, including earthly gifts looked upon as marks of His undeserved favor; nearly the same as "gift-of-grace" in **#1Co 1:7**. See under **#Ro 1:5**.

**That in everything etc.**: purpose cherished by *God who is able etc. In everything*, takes up *every grace*. The five consecutive universals are exceedingly emphatic. They are evidently chosen to include conspicuously all material needs.

**Sufficiency**: objective possession of, or subjective consciousness of possessing, all that they need. The latter sense here. Same word in **#1Ti 6:6**; **#Php 4:11**. They who know that God will supply all their need, and they only, are independent of the uncertainties of life. They can therefore afford to give away money to others. Thus *sufficiency* is essential for large and cheerful giving. The quotation in **#2Co 9:9** suggests that *every good work* refers to, or specially includes, acts of beneficence.

**Abound**: literally, "have something over." "God is able to pour out upon you abundantly in undeserved favor every good thing; in order that thus in every point and at all times having every need supplied, and being conscious of this, you may have a surplus for every kind of beneficence."

Ver. 9. Quotation, word for word, of **#Ps 112:9**, *according* with, and thus supporting, the foregoing exposition of God's purpose.

**Scattered**: gave with a liberal hand, as men sow seed. The quotation was perhaps suggested by **#2Co 9:6**, and itself suggests **#2Co 9:10**.

**Righteousness**: such conduct as the judge approves and will reward. Cp. **#De 6:25**; **24:13**. See under **#Ro 1:17**. The act of beneficence will have an endless reward. This is forcibly represented as a continuance to eternity of the act itself as, by God's undeserved favor, a claim for reward. But even this *righteousness* is by faith: for it is an outworking of faith and of the Holy Spirit given to believers. This suitable quotation reminds those familiar with it, as does that of **#2Co 9:7**, that liberality to the poor is approved and will be rewarded by God.

Ver. 10. An assurance, based on an analogy in nature, that God (who is able to do so, #2Co 9:8) actually will supply whatever is needed "for every good work." The analogy was suggested, as was probably the word "scattered" in #2Co 9:9, by the metaphor of #2Co 9:6.

**Supplies:** derived from a word denoting the payment by wealthy citizens at Athens and elsewhere of the costs, frequently very large, of a "chorus" of singers or dancers at festivals or public entertainments. It suitably describes God's bountiful supply of the needs of all mankind. Same word in #Ga 3:5; #Col 2:19; #Eph 4:16; #Php 1:19. By supplying *seed for the sower* God supplies *bread for every one's eating*. These exact words are taken from #Isa 55:10.

**Supply and multiply etc.:** will give us, and in increasing measure, the *sowing* needful for the reaping of #2Co 9:6, viz. the material means of doing good.

**And will increase:** or *make-to-grow*, i.e. make your acts productive of good results. Same word in #1Co 3:7.

**Fruits:** same word in #Mt 26:29. See under #Ro 1:13.

**Righteousness:** practical conformity with law, i.e. with the higher law of the Gospel of love. Cp. #Mt 5:10; 6:1. It suggests that in giving their money they were only doing what is right (cp. #Ro 15:27) and were doing what God will reward. Cp. #2Co 9:9. Of this abstract principle of *righteousness* Christian liberality is a natural concrete outgrowth produced by God. He will provide, and in increasing measure, the means of Christian liberality, and will thus give seed to sow for the great harvest; and will make their just liberality productive in still greater degree of good results. In #Isa 55:10 God declares that, just as He provides for the material needs of men, so the provision in His word for their spiritual needs shall not be in vain. And, by clothing his own spiritual metaphor and argument in the words of Isaiah, Paul gives to it Old Testament authority.

Ver. 11. Same truth as in #2Co 9:10, from another point of view.

**In everything:** as in #2Co 9:8. It denotes such supply from time to time of every material need as will leave something to spare for Christian giving.

**Rich;** reminds us that they who have more than they need are practically rich.

**For all sincerity:** God's purpose in thus enriching them. The gifts for the poor Christians at Jerusalem were a wonderful proof of the genuineness of the faith of the Corinthian Christians. And, that they may afford such proof, Paul is confident that from time to time God will give them a measure of wealth.

**All sincerity;** suggests that, though proved in other ways, Christian sincerity is in some sense defective if not proved by liberality.

**Which:** viz. their sincerity, thus proved, *works out*.

**Through us:** viz. Paul and his colleagues, who suggested and carried out this contribution. Paul added these words remembering that of the praise evoked by the collection he was an instrument. The abstract principle of Christian sincerity, operating through the collection suggested by Paul, called from the lips of those who received it, *thanksgiving to God*. That the sincerity of the Corinthians, thus manifested, is bringing praise to God, both strengthens the assurance that God will give the means of liberality and becomes a stepping stone to the exposition in **#2Co 9:12-14**.

Argument of **#2Co 9:8-11**. Liberality is an element, even in the Old Testament, of the character which God approves and will reward. And God designs it to be a proof of the genuineness of His people. But this proof cannot be given unless we first receive from Him a measure of material good. Some degree of wealth is therefore needful for a full development of the Christian life. This, God is able to give. And, just as He supplies the food needful to maintain and develop bodily life, so we may be sure that He will supply all that is needful, including a measure of material good, to develop the spiritual life. How small a measure is sufficient for this end, we learn from **#Lu 21:2**. But, if the widow had not had the mites, she could not have given this noble proof of her sincerity. And many lowly Christians have given from their small store; confident that God designed them to do so, and that He would supply not only their bodily needs but also something to give away. And they have found that day by day God makes them rich enough to give, while some richer men plead poverty.

Ver. 12.-15. **Because etc.;** explains the foregoing words by a matter of fact.

**Public-service:** see under **#Ro 15:27, 16; 13:6**. It reveals the solemn and public importance of this collection.

**The ministry, or ministration, of etc.:** the voluntary attention to the needs of others implied in this public service. See under **#Ro 15:25**.

**Not only supplying etc.:** the material benefit of the collection, which must be mentioned together with its spiritual gain.

**Abound:** **#2Co 9:8**: producing results beyond the just mentioned material results.

**Thanksgiving to God;** takes up the same word in **#2Co 9:11**, and is expounded in **#2Co 9:13**. "By means of *the proof* that your Christian profession is genuine, proof afforded by *this ministration*, the Christians in Judaea are *glorifying* (see under **#Ro 1:21**) *God*. In their eyes God was magnified through the proved sincerity of the Gentile Christians. The present tense suggests that they had already heard of the collection. This accords with the fact (**#2Co 9:2**) that it was projected a year ago.

**For the submission of your confession . . . the sincerity of your fellowship:** two matters about which they *glorify God*. The submission is that rendered either by their confession or by themselves to their confession. Cp. "obedience to faith" in **#Ro 1:5**. In both places, the two expositions are practically the same. This collection was a conspicuous act of submission to the apostolic authority which enjoined it and to Christ (cp. **#2Co 8:5**) for whose glory it was made, by those who professed to be His servants.

**Confession, or profession: #Heb 4:14; 10:23.**

**In regard of the Gospel of Christ;** goes with *glorifying God*. [Cp. #Ga 6:4; #Ro 4:2.] The good news about the Messiah had led Paul's readers to confess Him and to lay themselves and their possessions on the altar of God. Therefore, the praise of God evoked by their gifts had *reference to the Gospel*.

**Fellowship etc.:** partnership in rendering help to those in need, as in #2Co 8:4. See under #Ro 15:26f. *The sincerity* was manifested in *the fellowship*. This recalls #2Co 9:11; 8:2. And the gift to the unknown brethren in Judaea was a manifestation of brotherhood not only *towards them* but also *towards all men*. This was its real worth. The submission to the common Master, and the sincere spirit of brotherhood, of both which proof was given by this collection, revealed to the Jewish Christians the glory of God who had wrought such a disposition in these far off foreigners.

Ver. 14. Another result produced in the Jewish Christians.

**Longing for you:** i.e. "to see and know you," as in #Php 1:8; #Ro 1:11. This longing was mixed *with supplication* on their behalf. The present tenses in #2Co 9:12-14 seem to imply that already news of the collection had reached Jerusalem and was already evoking this thanksgiving and affection. For this is evidently the language not of expectation but of narrative. And for all this there was sufficient lapse of time since (cp. #2Co 9:2) the collection was mooted.

**Grace of God,** closes DIV. II. with its opening thought, #2Co 8:1. The Jewish Christians wonder at the undeserved favor of God which had wrought in the Gentiles such submission and brotherhood and sincerity. Thus they glorified God. They longed to see those in whom He had worked such blessings; and returned their kindness by prayer for them.

Ver. 15. As frequently, Paul concludes DIV. II. with an outburst of praise.

**His indescribable gift:** probably of Christ and Christianity, of which all-embracing gift the liberality given to the Gentiles was one element. The exultation which culminates in #2Co 9:15 proves how all-important in Paul's view were the spiritual results of this collection. Whether he had them in view in suggesting the collection, we do not know. But it is not unlikely.

Paul begins § 13 by reminding his readers that the money given for the collection is seed sown which will produce a harvest; and that therefore to limit their gifts is to limit their reward. But, while thus suggesting a large gift, he asks that it be, by each one's own deliberate choice: for, as Solomon taught, it is the cheerful giver whom God loves. Their gifts may well be both large and free. For God is able to supply every need of every kind, that they may have a surplus for every kind of good work. Indeed, this surplus for giving away is implied in an ancient promise that gifts to the poor shall be followed by endless reward. That God supplies our material needs, was appealed to by Isaiah in proof that His word shall accomplish its spiritual aims: and it is a pledge now that He will both supply the means of sowing spiritual seed and make the seed sown productive of spiritual good. Such supply is designed to give proof of Christian sincerity, and thus to bring, as this contribution is already bringing, praise to God. This last point Paul develops. This contribution not only supplies

the needs of God's people, but, by affording proof that the Gentile professors of Christianity really submit to Christ and that their Christian brotherhood is genuine, reveals the grandeur of God. And it evokes prayer for them, and an affectionate desire to see them, on the part of those whose needs they are relieving. Of the praise to God thus evoked Paul's own warm gratitude is an example.

The word *sincerity* in **#2Co 9:11, 13; 8:2**, reveals the great spiritual use of earthly wealth, viz. as a proof of our purity of motive in religion. When we spend for Christ and for strangers that which we might spend in self-gratification, we give thereby conspicuous proof that our Christian profession is genuine. This proof, all should be eager to give. And, that a measure of wealth is needful for it, is a pledge that, in ordinary circumstances, God will give this to His people.

THE COLLECTION for the Christian poor at Jerusalem marks an important era in Paul's life. Hitherto his labors have been confined to the eastern division of the Roman empire. But his work there is now (**#Ro 15:19, 23**) complete: in all the great centers he has planted Christianity. And his thoughts now turn (**#Ro 15:24; #Ac 19:21**) towards the West.

Throughout all his labors, Paul has felt (**#Ga 2:2**) the importance of unity and harmony between the Jewish and Gentile parts of the one Christian Church; and has striven to maintain it. His earnest desire to work in connection with the apostles of the circumcision is attested by his visits to Jerusalem after each missionary journey. But his desire for concord has not led him to modify in the least his teaching that the Christian Church is not bound by Jewish trammels. From **#Ga 2:11f** we learn that, although this freedom was formally acknowledged by the other apostles, it was not always courageously maintained by them. And we may well believe that Paul felt that upon himself mainly rested the task of maintaining on the one hand the perfect freedom of the Gospel and on the other the unity of the entire Church.

For some reason, the church at Jerusalem was exceptionally poor. Years ago, (**#Ac 11:28**.) when a general famine had been foretold, the Christians at Antioch, perhaps at Paul's suggestion, thought of, and resolved to relieve, the foreseen distress at Jerusalem. And at a later date (**#Ga 2:10**) Peter urged the same matter on Paul's attention.

At the time this Epistle was written the same poverty was pressing, and for some time (**#1Co 16:1**) had been pressing, upon the mother church of Christendom. And Paul resolved to fulfill his promise (**#Ga 2:10**) made long ago to Peter. That Paul gave directions (**#1Co 16:1**) for the collection in Galatia, Macedonia, and Greece, makes it very probable that he did the same at Ephesus, where he was living when he gave these directions and where he labored so long and so successfully. We may therefore infer that he started a united effort throughout the Gentile churches to relieve the distress at Jerusalem. It was probably the first general effort by men of one nation for the help of another.

Paul's earnestness in this matter, and his joy at the spiritual effects already produced (**#2Co 9:12ff**) even by the promise of help, suggest that these spiritual effects were foreseen by him and were his chief aim in the whole effort. We may well conceive that he desired to give to the Jewish Christians this proof (**#2Co 9:13**) of the reality and extent of the work among the Gentiles, that thus he might link together in the ties of affection the Jewish and Gentile parts of the Church, while at the same

time he taught the Gentiles how much they owed to the ancient people of God and taught the Jewish Christians, what they were evidently very slow to learn, that the full possession of Gospel privileges was not confined to those who were circumcised. Before going to the West, the Apostle of the Gentiles wished to erect a monument to the success of his preaching in the East and to the truth of the free Gospel he had preached.

When and how the first directions were given to the Galatians and Macedonians, we do not know. But Titus, sent by Paul, began the contribution at Corinth. See note under **#2Co 9:5**. The Corinthians took up the matter so readily, and were so eager to contribute at once, that, moved by their example which Paul quoted, the Macedonians not only showed a similar or greater readiness but accomplished at once their good purpose. The effect of the example of the Corinthians, and his own credit for veracity, made Paul now anxious that their action should correspond with their promises. He therefore sent Titus again to Corinth, accompanied by two others, to push forward the collection, so that on Paul's arrival it might be ready. And for the same end he wrote DIV. II. of this Epistle, and sent the Epistle to Corinth by Titus and his companions.

Paul introduces the matter by describing the liberality of the Macedonians. This example, he has no need to urge the Corinthians to imitate. The greater example of Christ is sufficient for them. He remembers that they were the first to accept his suggestion for a collection; and that their gifts must be measured by, and will be accepted in proportion to, their ability to give. Paul then commends Titus and his companions, and explains the purpose of their mission. While doing so, he again refers for a moment to his readers' readiness to help and to its effect upon the Macedonians. He then concludes his reference to the contribution by reminding his readers that it is seed sown which will produce a harvest and should therefore be given cheerfully; that God is able to give them all means needful for the development of their Christian life, and therefore the means of Christian liberality; and that the promised contribution is already working out abundant spiritual results.

That in the Book of Acts we have no direct mention of this collection, accords with the scanty notice (**#Ac 20:1-3**) of the period in which it was made; and gives great value to the undesigned reference in **#Ac 24:17**. That in the Epistle to the Galatians we have no reference to it, suggests, as does the great similarity of the contents, that it was written about the same time as the Epistle to the Romans, when the collection was everywhere completed. And **#Ga 2:10; 6:9f** show that the poverty of the Christians at Jerusalem and the need for Christian liberality were present to the apostle's mind. The various references in the New Testament to his collection afford by their many coincidences a most valuable confirmation of the genuineness and the historic truthfulness of the writings which contain them.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DIVISION III.

#### PAUL'S REPLY TO HIS OPPONENTS

#### CHAPTERS X.-XIII.

#### *SECTION XIV.*

*HE BEGS THEM NOT TO FORCE HIM TO USE HIS  
DIVINELY-GIVEN AUTHORITY, THE LIMITS OF WHICH  
HE HAS NEVER EXCEEDED.*

#### CHAPTER X.

I Paul myself exhort you by the meekness and clemency of Christ, who, though face to face lowly among you yet when absent am bold towards you. But I beg that I may not when present be bold with the confidence with which I reckon it needful to be daring towards some who reckon us as walking according to flesh. For, though walking in flesh, not according to flesh do we make war. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful before God for pulling down of strong places, while we are pulling down reasonings and every high thing which lifts itself up against the knowledge of God and are leading captive every thought to the obedience of Christ, and are holding ourselves in readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience may be made full.

At the appearances, do you look? If any one trusts to himself to be Christ's, this let him reckon again in himself, that as he is Christ's so also are we. For even if something more abundantly I boast about our authority which the Lord gave for building up and not for pulling you down, I shall not be put to shame; that I may not seem as though terrifying you with the letters. Because the letters, says one, are heavy and strong; but the bodily presence is weak, and the utterance despised. This let such a one reckon, that such as we are in our word by letters when absent such also when present in our work.

For we dare not place ourselves among, or compare ourselves with, some of those who recommend themselves. But they, measuring themselves with themselves, are not intelligent. We, however, not in reference to the measureless things will we boast, but according to the measure of the standard which God has measured to us, a measure to reach even as far as you. For not as not reaching to you do we stretch ourselves beyond bounds. (For as far as even you we have advanced in the Gospel of Christ.) Not in reference to the measureless things boasting in other men's labours, but having hope, while your faith is increasing, among you to be enlarged according to our standard, to abundance, to preach the Gospel as far as the places beyond, not to boast in another man's standard touching the things already done.

**But "he that boasts, let him boast in the Lord." (#Jer 9:24.) For not he who commends himself, not that man is approved, but whom the Lord commends.**

Placing himself suddenly and conspicuously before his readers, Paul opens DIV. III.; in which he defends himself, not as in DIV. I. against general suspicion and by a general proof of the grandeur of the apostolic ministry, but against specific misrepresentations by definite persons. And, just as the joyful ending of DIV. I. opened a way for the financial business of DIV. II., so the grateful ending of DIV. II. affords an easy platform of approach to the unpleasant matter of DIV. III.

That DIV. III. is a reply to calumnies known now only by this reply, makes it in part obscure to us. As we pass along we must gather, as well as we can, the nature of these calumnies, and then endeavor to understand Paul's reply to them.

Ver. 1. **I myself Paul:** the great Apostle, condescending to plead, alone his own cause before his children in the Gospel.

**Meekness:** see under **#1Co 4:21**. *Christ* on earth (**#Mt 11:29; 21:5**) constantly refrained from asserting Himself. This appeal reveals Paul's consciousness of the danger, when reproving others, of indulging a self-assertion unworthy of Christ; a beautiful trait of his character.

**Clemency:** a disposition to temper justice with equity, kindness, and benevolence. Same word in **#Ac 24:4; #1Pe 2:18; #Php 4:5**. Paul strengthens his appeal (cp. **#Ro 12:1**) by pointing to the known character of Christ. "Do not compel me to lay aside the meekness and clemency so conspicuous in Christ, my Master and Pattern."

**Who face to face etc.:** the very reproach of his enemies (**#2Co 10:10**) used as an additional plea.

**Lowly among you:** during his previous visit to Corinth; a beautiful picture of the apostle, going about unobtrusively among his converts, asserting as little as possible his apostolic authority, and not even claiming from them maintenance. Cp. **#1Th 2:7**. He had thus imitated *the meekness of Christ*. But he fears that he must now act otherwise.

**Am bold** (or *courageous*, **#2Co 10:6**) **towards you:** in the strong and fearless language of the First Epistle and in the rest of this. Paul's habitual gentleness when at Corinth claims respect for his present fearless severity. This verse suitably and modestly introduces DIV. III., where more than anywhere else in his writings he puts himself prominently before his readers.

Ver. 2. **But I beg;** takes up and strengthens "I exhort" in **#2Co 10:1**. Paul entreats them not to compel a man who has hitherto been gentle in their midst and bold only from a distance to be now bold when present with them.

**With the confidence;** explains the boldness he is reluctant to manifest.



**I reckon:** Paul's calculation about his own conduct when he shall come to Corinth. [Cp. "judge" in #2Co 2:1; #1Co 2:2; 7:37.] The inserted word *needful* is necessary for English idiom and gives the evident ground of his calculation.

**Daring:** same word in #1Co 6:1; #Ro 10:20; 5:7. It is stronger than "bold" in #2Co 10:1, and suggests peril. It makes therefore a climax. Paul has resolved to trample under foot, if need be, fear of man and of consequences. But he begs his readers not to compel him to do this.

**Towards some etc.;** introduces definite opponents, whose presence we shall feel throughout DIV. III. Their opposition arose from false *reckoning* about Paul's conduct. They have made their reckoning about him and he has made his reckoning about what he will do to them. Cp. #2Co 12:20; 13:2.

**According to flesh:** as in #2Co 1:17, which refers to the same false estimate. Cp. #Ro 8:4. They supposed that Paul's steps were directed by the needs and desires of the present bodily life.

This verse implies that there may be occasions requiring the Christian to lay aside the meekness and clemency which Christ loved to manifest, and to assert himself and act with severity. Sometimes (#Joh 2:15) Christ did so. But Paul's example warns us to do this, as he did, reluctantly and only after efforts to avoid it have failed, as something abnormal caused and justified by abnormal circumstances.

Ver. 3.-5. These verses justify Paul's "confidence," and thus both support his request and disprove the false reckoning of his opponents.

**Walk, carry on war:** a climax. His path is beset with foes: and therefore his march is a battle.

**In flesh, according to flesh:** conspicuous contrast. A body of *flesh* is the surrounding element in which, (cp. #Ga 2:20; 5:17,) but not the directive principle *according to* which, he carries on the conflict of life. See under #Ro 8:4.

**According to flesh;** with aims, means, and methods, suggested by the needs and desires of bodily life.

**The weapons:** #Ro 6:13: an important element in all war, determining almost all else. According to our *weapons* will be the aim and the method of our *warfare*.

**Fleshly:** #Ro 15:27; #1Co 3:3. The means on which Paul relies for victory do not belong to our present bodily life. It is needless to say "but are spiritual." Paul therefore adds as a contrast what is practically a proof that *the weapons are not fleshly*, viz. their supernatural effectiveness.

**Powerful before God:** literally *to God*, i.e. in God's estimate. Cp. #Ac 7:20.

**Strong-places:** a common word for fortresses. Same word in #Pr 10:29; 21:22.

**While we pull down etc.:** depicts the actual efficacy of these weapons in the hands of Paul.

**Reckonings:** calculations about things around and about our own conduct.

**And every high thing:** wider than *reckonings*. All lofty thoughts about ourselves and our powers hinder us from knowing God. For we cannot know Him as the supply of all our needs, as our strength and joy and life, until we have seen ourselves to be needy and helpless and lost, i.e. until every high thought within us has been brought down to the dust. Therefore *every high thing* in man lifts *itself up against the knowledge of God*. Cp. #1Co 1:20, 27ff.

**And leading-captive, etc.:** another aspect of the victory which Paul is gaining.

**Thought:** result of perception, or mental vision. Formerly our thoughts raised themselves up, thus keeping out the knowledge of God. Now, they not only bow down into the dust but bow to Christ who died for us that He may be our Lord. Not only ourselves but *every thought* in us must bow to Him. The present participles do not imply actual universal achievement, which #2Co 10:6 contradicts; but, according to Greek usage, the meaning and purpose of the work in which Paul was actually engaged. Cp. #2Co 5:19; #Ro 2:4. God permits men to resist both His own influences and His servants' efforts.

Ver. 6. Another element in Paul's warfare, and another proof that his weapons have superhuman power.

**Every disobedience;** implies that some professed Christians do not surrender themselves to obey, but actually resist, Christ.

**Avenge:** merited and conspicuous punishment. Cp. #2Co 13:2ff; #1Co 4:21; 5:5; #Ac 13:11; 5:5; terrible proofs of apostolic power.

**Holding ourselves in readiness etc.:** but not actually avenging. This suggests that Paul was not accustomed to vengeance, though he was prepared for it.

**Your obedience:** in contrast to these opponents whom Paul is careful throughout DIV. III. to distinguish from his readers. This suggests that they were few, and perhaps foreigners, i.e. Jews. For them Paul betrays no hope: upon them he is able and ready to inflict severe punishment.

**Your obedience made full:** by shaking off all connection with those who resist Paul. Else they would be involved in the punishment. Therefore Paul delays to punish till his readers have cleared themselves from complicity with the crime: and with this motive (#2Co 1:23) he postponed his visit to Corinth.

The opposition of his enemies suggests to Paul a military metaphor. To him life is not only a walk but a warfare. But he is equipped with superhuman weapons, with which he pulls down whatever in man lifts itself up, thus hindering men from knowing God, and brings every thought to bow to God; and with which he is able to punish all that resist. This reveals the error of those who look upon

Paul as acting merely from human motives and with human powers. And it gives immense force to his appeal to be allowed to leave unused these great punitive powers and to imitate the meekness and clemency of Christ. Thus Paul begins his self-defence by an entreaty that his opponents will not compel him to punish them; and gives proof of his power to do so by pointing to the spiritual triumphs of blessing, far above human power, which he obtains day by day in the hearts of men. For these triumphs prove that the power of God is with him. Similarly in #2Co 1:19, he claims credit for veracity by pointing to the truthfulness of Christ whose word he preaches.

Ver. 7.-8. After pointing to the spiritual victories which prove his divine mission, Paul reasserts (#2Co 10:7-11) in contradiction to his opponents his authority and power; and declares (#2Co 10:12-18) that in exercising it among the Corinthians he is keeping within the limits marked out for him by Christ.

**Appearances:** same word as, and recalling, "face to face" in #2Co 10:1. Cp. #2Co 5:12. Some despised Paul because of his lowly appearance and demeanor among them. He asks whether it is on the outside of things that they fix their attention; and then directs them to something which merits their thoughtful calculation.

**Trusts to himself to be Christ's;** is easily understood apart from, and therefore does not of itself imply, any reference to the Christ-party (#1Co 1:12) at Corinth. Whether this party was actually in Paul's thought, we cannot now determine. He bids his opponents, instead of looking at externals and reckoning accordingly, to make another *reckoning* from the solitude of their inner selves. He does not think fit to deny here that his opponents are *Christ's* servants, but he claims to have given proof that he *also* is such. This appeal derives its force from the proof given in #2Co 10:5 that Paul and his colleagues are doing with superhuman weapons Christ's work. And it is worthy of thoughtful consideration by all who engage in religious controversy. #2Co 10:8 asserts that Paul not only is Christ's but has received from Christ special authority.

**Somewhat more abundantly;** even than he has done in #2Co 10:3-6.

**Building up, not pulling down:** #2Co 13:10. He may have to pull down; but only in consequence of abnormal circumstances and with a view to further building up. Therefore he will pull down as little as possible. The contrast, *I boast, our authority*, found throughout the Epistle, suggests that the plural is chosen, not as in 1Th. 3: if probably for Paul alone, but to include others. They share *the authority*: the *boast* is his only.

**Shall not be put to shame:** facts will justify even this larger boast.

Ver. 9.-11. God will make good even this larger boast *in order that* His servant's written words *may not seem to be empty terrifying*; as they would seem if he were "put to shame."

**The letters:** the First Epistle, the lost one, (#1Co 5:9,) and possibly others unknown to us.

**Heavy:** severe.

**Strong:** such as influence men.

**Bodily presence weak;** does not necessarily mean that Paul's personal appearance was even by his enemies thought to be undignified. For this taunt will be disproved (#2Co 10:11) when he comes. Cp. #1Co 2:3. It is sufficiently accounted for by Paul's unobtrusive demeanor (#2Co 10:1) among his converts. Nor can reliance be placed on uncertain traditions about his small stature and bodily weakness: although the latter is not unlikely. For they are sufficiently explained by his name (Paulus: a little one) and by this verse.

**Despised:** by his opponents; perhaps owing to his studied simplicity (#1Co 2:1) of style. Another verdict is given in #Ac 14:12.

**Let such a one reckon:** "Let him reasonably infer from the character revealed in my letters how I shall act when present." Paul made his presence little felt among the Corinthians because there were then no gross offences requiring punishment. And he preferred to do good in an unostentatious manner, not even (#1Co 1:16) baptizing his own converts. He now bids his opponents infer from his letters how he will act in altered circumstances.

Ver. 12.-16. Exposition, after expounding the word "terrify" in #2Co 10:9, of "the authority" claimed in #2Co 10:8. Paul thus supports the foregoing threat.

**We dare not;** suggests the peril of the conduct of his adversaries. Cp. #Ro 15:18.

**Or compare ourselves:** "place ourselves among or place ourselves beside."

**Some of those;** singles out definite persons whom Paul has in mind.

**But they:** in contrast to Paul who dares not measure himself thus.

**Among themselves;** includes each with himself, and each [cp. #Eph 4:32; #Col 3:13, 16] with others of the same class. They take themselves and their companions as a standard of what men ought to be; and having no other standard they form a senseless estimate.

**Intelligent:** same word in #Ro 3:11; 15:21; #Eph 5:17; #1Co 1:19; #Ro 1:21; #Eph 3:4: so to put things together as to interpret rightly their significance and to understand their real nature. These men, by taking themselves as their measure, showed that they did not rightly interpret conduct and character.

**But we:** in conspicuous contrast to the foregoing.

**The unmeasured things:** the indefinite and undefinable fancies which were all that the boasting of the opponents had in view. Paul declares that he will not boast in reference to such phantoms.

**But according to the measure etc.:** the standard by which Paul's boasting shall be measured, viz. the divinely marked out limits of his apostolic work.

**The standard:** literally the *canon*, which is a Greek word denoting a straight wooden staff, then a measure of any material, then an authoritative rule of conduct. Paul represents God as marking out, as if with a measuring staff, his apostolic field of labor, (cp. **#Ga 2:7**,) and declares that according to the measure thus marked out his boasting shall be. Of anything beyond these limits, he will not speak. His highest boast will be "I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do."

**A measure etc.;** specifies the measure thus marked out, viz. that it includes Corinth.

Ver. 14. Proof of the last words of **#2Co 10:13**. The argument is: Corinth is within our limits; for beyond these we do not stretch ourselves; yet we have actually come to Corinth. [*Yet*: best rendering of *γὰρ*, when, as here and often, it introduces the minor premise. It has thus its usual confirmatory force.] That Paul does not go beyond his divinely-appointed limits, he leaves his readers to judge from the divinely-given success of his labors. And, if not, Corinth is within his appointed sphere. In other words, in coming to Corinth he was sent by God.

**In the Gospel:** as in **#2Co 8:18**; **#Ro 1:9**; **#1Co 9:18**. It expounds the spiritual and soul-saving significance of "as far as even to you we have advanced."

Ver. 15.-16. **Not in reference to the unmeasured things boasting;** takes up the same words in **#2Co 10:13**, and continues the description of the boasting in which Paul will not indulge. Consequently, **#2Co 10:14**, needful to prove the last words of **#2Co 10:13**, is a parenthesis.

**In other men's labours:** cp. **#Ro 15:20**. The opponents boasted of the influence they had gained in a church which Paul's toilsome and weary labors had founded and among men who directly or indirectly owe to him their conversion.

**Having however hope:** Paul's actual feelings about the Corinthians. The continued *increasing* of their *faith* was a needful condition of the enlargement of Paul's field of labor.

**In you to be enlarged:** same phrase in **#Php 1:20**, but in a different sense. It is explained in **#2Co 10:16**. Paul suggests, though perhaps he does not necessarily imply, that their *faith* is already *increasing*. And, if so, he will be able to leave them and go to preach to others beyond. Thus *in* them, i.e. through their growing *faith*, Paul's field of labor, and therefore himself, i.e. his own influence and success, will be *enlarged*. But even this hoped-for enlargement will be *according to* his divinely-given *standard*. For to all the Gentiles (**#Ro 1:5**) he is sent.

**For abundance:** something beyond and above. See under **#2Co 9:12**. It is explained in **#2Co 10:16**, which gives Paul's purpose in cherishing this hope, viz. to preach the Gospel in places still further off than Corinth. He is thinking probably of his projected (**#Ro 15:24**; **#Ac 19:21**) journey to Rome and Spain: an interesting coincidence of thought. The repetition in **#2Co 10:16b** reveals Paul's deep sense how unjust is his opponents' boasting. While his thoughts about the Corinthians, whom he had led to Christ, were that their increasing faith would enable him to break up new ground still further off, his opponents were exulting about things in a field allotted by God to Paul, and in reference to work which they found *already done*. With such men Paul dares not compare himself.

And, since he is acting, as he has asserted and in some measure proved, within his appointed limits, his readers may expect to find him carrying out when present at Corinth the threats of his letters.

Ver. 17.-18. A general principle suggested by the contrary conduct of Paul's opponents, supported by another general principle, and suitably preparing the way for Paul's boasting in §§ 15-18. Same words in **#1Co 1:31**. **#2Co 10:18** is a reason why they who exult should have Christ, for whom they labor and from whom they expect reward, as the element of their exultation.

**Who recommends himself:** as (**#2Co 10:12**) these men did.

**Approved:** proved to be genuine, as in **#1Co 11:19**.

**The Lord commends;** by evident marks of approval. If we remember that the only proofs of real worth are those which Christ gives, all our exultation will have Him for its element, and all mere human boasting will be shut out.

Paul begins his defence by threatening reluctantly to lay aside his accustomed and Christlike lowliness, and fearlessly to punish his opponents. That he is able to do this, is proved by the superhuman power with which he is accustomed to overcome in his converts the spiritual forces of evil. With the same power he is prepared to inflict punishment. But he waits till his readers have shaken themselves free from all connection with his enemies, lest the blows which will fall upon these also strike them.

Men must not look at externals, but must reason intelligently about realities. To Paul, Christ has given authority over His Church. About this he might say more than he has said, without exceeding what will be proved to be true. For he is not one who terrifies merely from a distance. But he remembers that the purpose of his authority is not to pull down but to build up. His readers have abundant proof that he will make good the threats of his letters. How great the contrast between himself and his opponents! All their boasting is reckless self-commendation. No standard except themselves and their companions have they for their self-measurement; which is therefore no measurement at all. All their boasting is about their influence over men who but for Paul would not have been Christians. But, when speaking about his readers, Paul speaks about those who are within the bounds specially marked out for him by God. For, in view of his spiritual success, none can say that, when he came to Corinth, he exceeded those bounds. So far is he from boasting without a measure and about other men's labors that his chief thought about his own converts at Corinth is that their increasing faith will enable him to enter the fresh ground which still remains untouched within the marked out boundaries of his apostolic work. He concludes by reminding his opponents and himself remembering that all boasting must have Christ for its element: for the only commendation which is proof of real worth comes from Him.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XV.

#### *PAUL'S BOASTING: HIS REFUSAL OF MAINTENANCE.*

#### CH. XI. 1-15.

Would that you bore with a morsel of senselessness of mine! Nay, indeed, bear with me. For I am jealous about you with a jealousy of God. For I have betrothed you to one man, to present to Christ a pure virgin. But I fear lest in any way as the serpent deceived Eve with his craftiness so your thoughts be corrupted from simplicity and purity towards Christ. For if he who comes is proclaiming another Jesus whom we did not proclaim, or another kind of spirit you are receiving which you did not receive, or another kind of gospel which you did not accept, you would bear with it nobly. For I reckon to have fallen nothing short of the overmuch apostles: but if I am indeed uninstructed in utterance, yet not in knowledge; but in everything we have made it manifest among all towards you.

Or, a sin did I commit, when humbling myself that you may be exalted, that as a free gift God's Gospel I announced to you? Other churches I plundered, by taking wages for ministry to you. And when present with you and brought to want I pressed upon no one. For my want the brothers supplied when they came from Macedonia. And, in everything, not burdensome I kept myself, and I will keep. It is truth of Christ in me that this boasting shall not be put to silence in reference to me in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I do not love you? God knows. But what I do I also will do, that I may cut off the occasion of those who wish an occasion, that in the matter in which they boast they may be found to be as we also are. For such men are false apostles, guileful workmen, men fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder: For Satan himself fashions himself into an angel of light. No great thing then if also his ministers fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end will be according to their works.

Sections 15-18, containing Paul's boasting about himself, are the kernel of DIV. III.; as are §§ 4-8, containing his boasting about the apostolic ministry, of DIV. I. Already, in **#2Co 10:12-16**, by contrasting himself with them, he has rebuked his adversaries. He will now cover them with shame, that thus he may rescue his readers from their snares, by a recital (§ 15) of his own refusal to be maintained by the church, of (§ 16) his hardships and perils, of (§ 17) his wondrous revelations tempered with special affliction, and of (§ 18) his credentials to and love for his readers. Of this, as of all human boasting, he has already in **#2Co 10:17f** struck the true keynote.

In **#2Co 11:1-4** Paul apologizes for, and justifies, his boasting, by his relation to his readers and his fears about them. In **#2Co 11:5, 6** he begins his boasting by comparing himself with his opponents, and by a general statement about himself and his colleagues. In **#2Co 11:7-12** we have the first item of boasting, justified in **#2Co 11:13-15** by a terrible description of his opponents.

Ver. 1. **My morsel**: more literally, *my little bit of senselessness*. Paul admits the foolishness of talking about oneself; but claims forbearance on the ground that he does not say much.

**Senselessness**: #2Co 11:16, 17, 19, 21; 12:6, 11: without intelligence, opposite to "prudent," #2Co 11:19. To talk about oneself is usually a mark of unsound mind. Of this folly, to a small extent and (#2Co 11:13) to serve God, Paul will now be guilty. These words (cp. #2Co 11:16; 12:1, 11) betray a man unaccustomed to speak about himself. He cannot do so, even to serve God, without apology.

**Nay, indeed, etc.**; corrects the foregoing lament that his readers do not bear with his momentary weakness, by a request that they will do so.

Ver. 2. Reason why they should bear with Paul.

**Jealousy** (see under #1Co 12:31) **of God**: which God cherishes about them. Paul's thoughts about the Corinthians are an outflow of thoughts in the breast of God. And this gives him a strong claim to their indulgence. This jealousy, #2Co 11:2b explains and justifies.

**Betrothed, to present**: the marriage not yet consummated. So #Eph 5:27; #Mt 25:6; #Re 19:7ff. Already believers are Christ's in spirit: in that day they will be His in body also. And this affiancing of the Corinthians to Christ was brought about by the labors of Paul.

**One man**; makes prominent Christ's unique claim to their undivided devotion.

**To present etc.**: Paul's purpose in the betrothal. Cp. #Eph 5:27.

**Pure virgin**: each word significant. Paul's feelings about the Corinthians were similar to those of Abraham's servant when bringing to Canaan a maiden to be wife of his master's son. Cp. #Jer 3:1-14; Eze. 16: etc. The frequency of this metaphor reveals the importance of the analogy on which it rests. What every man claims from his betrothed, God claims from us. Thus the human is, and doubtless was designed to be, a pattern of the divine.

Ver. 3. Continues Paul's explanation of his "jealousy."

**In any way**; reveals, as in #2Co 2:7; 9:4; 12:20, a watchful anxiety which takes everything into account.

**Serpent, Eve, deceived, craftiness**; recall vividly the details of #Ge 3:1-13.

**Corrupt**, or *damage*: as in #2Co 7:2; #1Co 3:17; 15:33; #Eph 4:22.

**Thoughts**: the products of their mental activity, as in #2Co 10:5; 2:11; 3:14; #Php 4:7.

**Sincerity towards Christ**: singleness of purpose, i.e. a heart ruled by the one purpose of loyalty to Christ. Same word in same sense in #2Co 8:2; 9:11, 13; #Ro 12:8; #Eph 6:5. Paul feared lest



their thoughts should be so injuriously affected as to turn away from the absolute fidelity which Christ claims from His betrothed. The comparison with Eve, easily suggested by the metaphor of **#2Co 11:2**, both justifies Paul's fear and finds excuse for the objects of it. For Eve in Paradise was pure: yet she fell. And *the serpent's craftiness* suggests, as **#2Co 11:15** asserts, that the Corinthians were exposed to similar perils.

**And purity:** see Appendix B.

This comparison suggests that Paul accepted **#Ge 3:1-13** as historic fact. See my *Romans* Diss. iii. For a fable could give no ground for his fear, and would be inconsistent with the earnestness of this passage. And the comparison suggests that the serpent was a mouthpiece of a spiritual foe. Cp. **#2Co 11:14; #Re 12:9; 20:2**; Wisdom 2:24.

Ver. 4. Reason for Paul's fear, viz. his readers' conduct and disposition.

**He who comes:** any strange arrival, looked upon in Paul's vivid conception as a definite person. It suggests that Paul's opponents at Corinth were men from without. So **#2Co 10:6**.

**Proclaim:** as a herald; see **#Ro 2:21**. They acknowledge *Jesus* of Nazareth to be the Christ; but so misrepresent His teaching as practically to portray *another Jesus*, i.e. a man quite different from Him whom Paul *proclaimed*.

**You are receiving:** not necessarily actually received; but their minds were going in that direction. See **#2Co 10:5**.

**Another kind of spirit;** probably does not refer to "the spirit of the world," (**#1Co 2:12**: cp. **#Eph 2:2**;) but suggests in irony the powerlessness of the opponents to impart the Holy Spirit. Any animating principle received from them must be of *another kind* from Him whom they had already *received* through Paul's ministry. Cp. **#Ga 3:2**.

**Another kind of Gospel:** **#Ga 1:6**.

**Accepted:** **#1Th 2:13**: welcomed as true. Paul supposes them to be listening to something quite different from the good news which they had heard and accepted from his lips.

**Received, accepted;** claims their own previous welcome to the Gospel in support of what he now says.

**Jesus, the Spirit, the Gospel:** the three great factors of the Christian life. Touching each of these, Paul contrasts his teaching and its results with that of his opponents.

**Nobly:** bitter irony.

**You would bear with it:** or (R.V. Greek text) *you bear with it*. The latter reading states simple matter of fact. The former represents Paul as feeling the utter impossibility of his own supposition;

and, instead of saying, "you bear it," as merely saying that if it were possible his readers *would bear with it nobly*. The reading is quite uncertain.

Ver. 5.-6. A short summary, introducing the boasting of §§ 15-18; and justifying the contrast, unfavorable to the opponents, implied in **#2Co 11:4**. It reveals the purpose of the whole boasting, viz. to cover Paul's opponents with shame, and thus save his readers from their snares.

**Fallen-short: #2Co 12:11; #1Co 1:7; 12:24:** to be behind, or deficient, in anything. Grammar does not decide whether Paul refers to a past and now continuing falling short, or to something future and continuing. Cp. **#2Co 10:10; 5:11**. The former is more likely.

**The overmuch apostles:** the false apostles of **#2Co 11:13**. It continues the irony of **#2Co 11:4**. There is no hint of a reference to the twelve. **#2Co 11:6** begins Paul's boasting, by meeting a charge of his opponents, already quoted in **#2Co 10:10**.

**Uninstructed:** same word as "private-member" in **#1Co 14:16, 23f**. See notes. Paul admits that he has not had the special training in rhetoric given in the schools. But this is not inconsistent with that eloquent which is the natural outgrowth of full knowledge and deep earnestness, and which breathes in every page of Paul's epistles. Yet we can well conceive that Paul did not use the artificial modes of arrangement and expression then in vogue in the schools, to which probably then as in all ages inferior men attached great importance.

**Not in knowledge:** acquaintance with the matter in hand, which is infinitely more important than modes of utterance.

**We have made it manifest:** viz. the just-mentioned *knowledge*. Paul means probably that *in everything* he did he gave proof, *among all* men, of his knowledge, by his action towards the Corinthians. He thus appeals, in support of the assertion in **#2Co 11:6a**, to his own known work.

**Towards you:** cp. **#2Co 1:12**.

**Manifest in:** as in **#2Co 4:10f**.

**I am . . . we have.** While defending himself Paul remembers that his defence avails equally for his colleagues.

Ver. 7. From his first boast, viz. of "knowledge," Paul now turns to a second.

**Or was it a sin etc.;** suggests perhaps, but does not necessarily prove, that this boast, like the last, may be a reproach from his adversaries. For it may be that Paul merely throws his boast into the form of a reply to a conceivable objection that thus he may place his conduct and that of his opponents in a stronger light.

**When humbling myself etc.;** a preliminary comment on the following fact, revealing its bearing upon this question. Paul submitted to menial toil and actual want (**#2Co 11:8**) in order that thus the

Gospel might have unhindered progress (#1Co 9:12) and might raise the Corinthians into the lofty position of sons of God. Cp. #2Co 8:9.

**That-as-a-free-gift etc.:** the supposed sin committed by Paul.

**As-a-free-gift:** without receiving pay from his converts.

**Free-gift. . . . Gospel of God:** appropriate collocation. Cp. #Ro 5:15. It could not be a sin to announce without cost the good news which God had sent into the world; especially when in doing so he was making himself low that his hearers might be lifted up.

Ver. 8.-9. Facts explaining, and showing the force of, the statement implied in the question of #2Co 11:7.

**Other churches:** those of Macedonia (#2Co 11:9, #Php 4:15f) and possibly others; from whom Paul received money to enable him to preach at Corinth without cost to the Corinthians.

**Plundered:** a daring hyperbole. If sin was committed, it was against the *other churches*.

**Minister to you:** to render them the free and honorable service of preaching the Gospel. Cp. #2Co 5:18. The following words suggest that #2Co 11:8a refers to money received before Paul came to Corinth. And contributions received in Thessalonica before his first visit to Corinth (#Ac 17:1; 18:1) are mentioned in #Php 4:16. Either to these or to gifts received after he left Macedonia, #Php 4:15 may refer. Perhaps Paul accepted the second contribution sent to him at Thessalonica in view of his needs in the missionary journey still before him. And, if so, he took pay from other churches in order to preach the Gospel at Corinth.

#2Co 11:9a is a second and more startling fact.

**Brought to want:** probably because his labors in the Gospel did not leave him sufficient time to earn a livelihood.

**Present with you;** recalls with almost tragic force Paul laboring among the Corinthians, how earnestly and successfully they knew well, and yet in want.

**Press-down-upon:** #2Co 12:13: a very rare word denoting to press upon so as to paralyze. Another hyperbole. They could not say that he laid paralyzing burdens upon them for his own maintenance. #2Co 11:9b states another fact which explains how Paul avoided burdening his readers.

**The brothers:** well known to the readers; perhaps Silas and Timothy. Cp. #Ac 18:5, "when they came from Macedonia, i.e. Silas and Timothy, Paul was being held fast by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ"; which seems to imply that when they came he was fully occupied with preaching.

**When they came etc.:** their coming put an end to his *want*.

**In everything;** includes demands for money and whatever else might seem to oppress them.

**And will keep;** lays emphasis on Paul's refusal to be burdensome, as being an expression of a deliberate and abiding purpose.

**#2Co 11:7-9** reveal an interesting trait of the inner apostolic life of Paul, a practical working out of his set purpose (**#1Co 9:12, 15ff**) to preach the Gospel without cost. At Corinth (**#Ac 18:3**) and at Thessalonica (**#2Th 3:7ff**) and at Ephesus (**#Ac 20:34**) he toiled at menial labor to support himself and his companions. And he did not give to the Gospel merely his spare time, after earning a livelihood; but spent to supply his bodily needs only the time not occupied by evangelical work. Consequently, although his weary toil was continued into the night, (**#2Th 3:8**), he was unable to keep himself from want: for he could not restrain (**#Ac 18:5**) his evangelical activity, and would not lay a burden upon his new converts. This last he refused to do lest he might hide the true nature of the Gospel under the appearance of worldly self-seeking. Yet he accepted with gratitude free gifts from a distance: for these he felt to be a meet expression of spiritual life.

Ver. 10.-12, Dwells upon, and explains the motive of, the deliberate purpose asserted in the last words of **#2Co 11:9**.

**Truth of Christ:** the exact correspondence of Christ's words with facts, past, present, or future. See under **#Ro 1:18**. Since Christ lives in Paul, (**#Ga 2:20**), this element of His character is found in Paul. To this he now appeals. Cp. **#2Co 11:18; #Ro 9:1**.

**That this boasting etc.:** an assertion which is a *truth of Christ* in Paul.

**This boasting:** viz. "I have kept myself . . . and will keep."

**In reference to me:** as in **#2Co 10:13, 15, 16; #Ga 6:4**; cp. **#Ro 4:2**: not quite the same as "my boasting." Others besides Paul might boast about his refusal to burden the church. The presence of opponents made it specially important that *in the regions of Achaia* this boasting should not be silenced. *Why?* interrupts the discourse as if to compel the readers to consider Paul's conduct and motive.

**Because I do not love you?** His refusal of money from the Corinthians while accepting it from the Macedonians might seem to be an act of contemptuous dislike. For we seldom refuse a gift from those we love.

**God knows:** before whom (**#2Co 11:11**) Paul's heart and apostolic work "are made manifest."

Ver. 12. Paul's real purpose in refusing to burden the Corinthians. To us it is obscure through our ignorance of the precise conduct of his opponents. The *occasion* (as in **#Ro 7:8**) they sought was probably an opportunity of boasting to Paul's disadvantage. And he was resolved so to act as to prevent this. It is easiest to suppose that these Jews who had come to Corinth boasted that they were

disinterested and unpaid benefactors of the Corinthians; and that they were seeking an opportunity to show that Paul was not such, and was therefore inferior to themselves. Had he accepted maintenance from the Corinthians, these men would have found the opportunity they sought.

**In the matter in which they boast:** in the boasted disinterestedness of their service for the Corinthians.

**As we are:** i.e. laboring for the Corinthians without pay. This seems to imply that while these opponents professed to be disinterested benefactors they were really serving their own selfish ends, and were secretly making, perhaps in some indirect way, their own profit. They were (**#2Co 11:13**) "guileful workmen." Paul refuses maintenance in order by his example to compel his opponents to forego these unworthy gains.

**May be found;** suggests a scrutiny to which their conduct (as well as Paul's) would be subjected. Paul refuses maintenance that thus they may be compelled to do the same, so that when their conduct is examined *they may be found* to be like him.

Notice the bitter irony of these last words. Paul's opponents boasted their disinterestedness, while making gain of the Corinthians; and eagerly watched him to detect self-enrichment, that they might boast of their own superiority. (These have been the tactics of demagogues in all ages.) But Paul resolved to refuse just recompense for real and great benefits, that thus by his example he may compel those who boasted their superiority to come up to his own level of working without pay, so that when his conduct and theirs are investigated they may be found to be as disinterested as he was. This interpretation is confirmed by the next verse.

Ver. 13.-15. Paul's purpose (**#2Co 11:12**) implies that his opponents are not what they professed to be. He now explains and justifies his purpose by a plain assertion that they are *false* and *guileful*.

**False-apostles:** like "false brethren," "false-prophets," **#2Co 11:26; #Ga 2:4; #1Jo 4:1; #2Pe 2:1**, etc. They claimed to be apostles, but were not.

**Workmen:** **#Php 3:2; #2Ti 2:15; #Mt 9:37; #Ac 19:25**. They were workers; but with hidden, selfish, and wicked motives.

**Fashioning themselves etc.:** more fully, "changing their exterior into that of apostles of Christ." They assumed the dignity of men formally sent by Christ and thus holding the first rank in the church. See under **#Ro 1:1**. The repetition of the word *apostle* suggests that they claimed this specific title. Yet this audacity excites *no wonder* in Paul. *For* their master *Satan* does the same.

**Angel of light:** same as "angel from heaven," **#Ga 1:8**. When visibly visiting earth they came clothed in the brightness of the world to which they belong. Satan's empire is darkness: **#Col 1:13**. But it is his habit to approach men in the garb of an angel from heaven. And at all times Evil is prone to assume the appearance of Good.

**His ministers:** doing, of their own free choice, his work. Cp. "his angels," #Mt 25:41; #Re 12:7. Such are all who deal in falsehood and guile: for unconsciously they are acting under his guidance and are working out his purposes. This fearful description implies that Paul's opponents, though church-members and professed followers and apostles of Jesus, were bad men, deliberately deceiving the Corinthian Christians. Therefore, since Evil ever assumes the garb of Good in order to ensnare men, it was *no wonder* that these men assumed a garb which was not their own.

**Ministers of righteousness:** as in #2Co 3:9. Cp. #Ro 6:19. These men put on a new garb, representing themselves *as* men laboring to make dominant among men conformity to the Law of God, and thus servants of the abstract principle of *Righteousness*.

**Whose end etc.]** Their guilt was so evident that a mere statement of a general principle announces their fate.

**According to their works:** #Ro 2:6.

**End:** #Ro 6:21f; #Php 3:19; #Heb 6:8; #1Pe 4:17: not simply the point at which something ceases, but the goal towards which it tends, and in which existing forces find their full outworking and the whole its consummation. Cp. #1Ti 1:5; #1Pe 1:9. Its cognate adjective is "mature" or "perfect." See under #1Co 2:6. These words imply that Paul had no expectation that all men will eventually be saved. For he is evidently thinking of bad works; and therefore of a bad *end*. But, if finally restored, the end of all men, and of these servants of Satan, would be endless happiness; in whose light the most terrible and prolonged bygone torments will, as endless and glorious ages roll by, dwindle into insignificance. Of these eternally happy ones Paul could not say (#Php 3:19) that their "end is destruction"; nor Christ, (#Mr 14:21,) "it were good for him, if that man had not been born." Certain passages which seem to imply an expectation of universal restoration will claim our attention elsewhere.

REVIEW. In beginning to portray his own conduct Paul is deeply conscious of the foolishness of speaking about oneself. He therefore begs for indulgence, on the ground of his special relation to his readers, and his fears about them prompted by their ready reception of false teaching. Their folly in this he shows (#2Co 11:5-12:18) by a long portrayal of himself. Whatever may be said about his modes of speech, he has given full proof of his knowledge. And, although reduced to want in their midst until relieved by contributions from Macedonia, he refused and will still refuse, all payment for his labors among the Corinthians. Yet he does this, not from want of love but because he is determined to put an end to the gains of some who profess to be disinterested and unpaid benefactors; that thus he may bring up to his own level, under the scrutiny to which both he and they are subject, those who claim to be his superiors. This implied charge he supports by saying that his opponents are deceivers, servants of the great deceiver, men whose real conduct will in the end have its due recompense.

About the deceivers here referred to, see further in the Review of DIV. III. under #2Co 13:10.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XVI.

#### PAUL'S TOILS, PERILS, AND HARDSHIPS.

#### CH. XI. 16-33.

Again I say, let not any one think me to be senseless. But at any rate if you do, even if as senseless, receive me, that I also may boast some little. What I speak, not according to the Lord do I speak, but as in senselessness, in this confidence of my boasting. Since many boast according to flesh, I also will boast. For gladly you bear with the senseless ones, being prudent. For you bear it if one enslaves you, if one eats you up, if one lays hold of you, if one lifts himself up, if in the face one strikes you. By way of dishonour I say how that we have become weak. But in whatever matter any one is daring, in senselessness I say it, daring am I also. Hebrews are they? And I am. Israelites are they? And I am. Seed of Abraham are they? And I am. Ministers of Christ are they? Wandering from my senses I speak, beyond this am I. In labours more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in beatings surpassingly, in deaths often. By the hand of Jews five times I received forty stripes save one: three times I was beaten with a rod: once I was stoned: three times I suffered shipwreck: a night and day I have spent in the deep. In journeys often: in dangers of rivers, dangers of robbers, dangers from my race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers in the sea, dangers among false-brothers. By labour and toil, in watchings often: in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Apart from the other things, there is for me my daily attention, my anxiety about all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is ensnared and I am not set on fire? If there is need to boast the things of my weakness I will boast of. God, the Father of the Lord Jesus, knows, He who is blessed for ever, that I do not lie. In Damascus, the ethnarch of Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes, to seize me: and through a window, in a basket I was let down through the wall, and I escaped their hands.

Ver. 16. A second apology, introducing a second specific matter of boasting and a second contrast to Paul's opponents.

**Again;** refers back to #2Co 11:1, which was practically an ironical disproof that his boasting is folly. This repetition reveals Paul's great reluctance to appear to speak foolishly, even though conscious of a noble motive. He is jealous about the impression he makes upon others. *But if* he fail to convince them that he is not foolish he still begs them to listen to him *even if as* to a *senseless* one.

**Receive,** or *accept:* as in #2Co 11:4. Same word in #2Co 6:1; 7:15; 8:17; #Ga 4:14; #Mt 10:14, 40f. Cp. #2Co 7:2. To accept Paul's pleading, is to accept him who pleads.

**I also may boast:** as others do. This supports the foregoing plea. It is developed in #2Co 11:18-20.

**Some little:** same words as in **#2Co 11:1**. Paul begs them to forgive, if they look upon his boasting as foolish, a momentary weakness, one shared by others whom they tolerate.

Ver. 17. A comment on "that I may boast."

**According to the Lord:** taking the Master as my pattern, and His will as my guide. So **#Ro 15:5; 8:27**. Paul wishes to throw off for a moment his apostolic dignity and say a few words which do not involve his Master's reputation; in condescension to the weakness of his readers, who could not see, as we all see now, that in all this boasting he was animated by pure loyalty to Christ.

**As in senselessness;** keeps before us the request of **#2Co 11:16b**.

**In this confidence** (same word as in **#2Co 9:4**) **of my boasting:** source of the foolishness of which he might seem to be guilty, and in some sense an excuse for it. He speaks as he does because he is sure that what he says is true.

Ver. 18. Another excuse for Paul's boasting, one already suggested in **#2Co 11:16**. However foolish boasting may be, Paul does but imitate his opponents.

**According to flesh:** **#2Co 5:16; #Ro 8:4:** from the point of view of the present bodily life. All such boasting looks at and exults in matters pertaining to bodily life, and looks at them under the influence of the appetites and needs of the body. It is the exact opposite of speaking "according to the Lord." Compare and contrast **#Ga 6:13**.

Ver. 19.-20. A justification of "I also will boast," viz. the ready forbearance and prudence of the Corinthian Christians.

**For gladly you bear with;** recalls "nobly you bear it" in **#2Co 11:4**.

**Prudent:** same word in **#1Co 4:10; 10:15; #Ro 11:25; #Lu 16:8; #Mt 25:2-9**. "It seems to belong to the prudent man to be able to take counsel well about the things good and profitable to him:" Aristotle, *Ethics* bk. vi. 5. 1. It is the exact opposite of *senseless*. Since Paul's readers are full of sense, it is easy for them to condescend to bear with others who have less sense than themselves. This bitterly sarcastic justification of his own boasting, Paul supports at once, in **#2Co 11:20**, by his readers' forbearance towards his opponents. Cp. **#2Co 11:4**, supporting **#2Co 11:3**.

**Enslaves you:** same word in same connection, **#Ga 2:4**. The opponents were robbing the Corinthian Christians of their Christian liberty and bringing them under bondage to the Law. Cp. **#Ga 5:1-12; #Ac 15:10**.

**Eats you up:** maintains himself at your expense. Cp. **#Mr 12:40; #Lu 15:30**.

**Lays-hold-of-you:** catches you as in a trap, or in the chase. Same word in same sense in **#2Co 12:16**.



**Lifts himself up**; as greater than, and claiming authority over, you.

**Strikes you in the face**: a daring description of violence and contempt. All this can be no other than a picture of the actual conduct of Paul's opponents at Corinth, conduct tolerated, at least formally, by the church. And it justifies fully the boasting which follows, which would in ordinary circumstance be foolish and unworthy of a servant of Christ. For, men accustomed to treatment like this cannot refuse to tolerate a little boasting from the apostle.

Ver. 21. Transition to Paul's actual boasting.

**By way of dishonour**: i.e. placing dishonor upon myself.

**I say**: habitually.

**We**: Paul and his colleagues, in contrast to the opponents.

**How that etc.**; looks upon this weakness not as objective fact but as Paul's subjective view of it. Objectively, they were both weak and strong according to the point of view.

**We have become weak**: by laying all our powers on the altar of Christ, and by going at His bidding into positions of helplessness. Cp. **#Php 3:8**. These words are inserted to make conspicuous the contrast which follows.

**Any one is daring**: (as in **#2Co 10:2**;) as the opponents were.

**I also**; keeps before us, as in **#2Co 11:16, 18**, the comparison of Paul and his opponents. In whatever matter they act fearlessly, disregarding consequences, Paul, though ever acknowledging his own weakness is equally fearless. They are not afraid to usurp authority over the Church of Christ: and Paul is not afraid to punish them.

Ver. 22. Now begins Paul's actual boasting, in face of his opponents. It is not an example of the daring of **#2Co 11:21**, but the ground of it. These adversaries claimed authority over Gentile believers because they were the ancient people of God. But in this Paul is their equal.

**Hebrews**: oldest name of the covenant people; **#Ge 14:13; 39:14, 17; #Ex 1:15f, 19; #De 15:12; #1Sa 4:6; #Jer 34:9, 14**; Judith 12:11. Probably equivalent to "immigrant," or "foreigner"; and used in the Old Testament chiefly to distinguish the sacred nation from others. In **#Ac 6:1** it distinguishes those who used the national language from those Jews who spoke Greek either always or usually. And this is probably the reference here and in the similar boasting of **#Php 3:5**. Cp. **#Joh 19:13, 17, 20; #Ac 22:2**.

**Israelites**: the favorite and sacred name, as given by God in the crisis of his life to the one ancestor claimed by the whole covenant people and by it only. Cp. **#Ro 9:4; 11:1; #Joh 1:48f; #Ac 2:22; 3:12; 5:35; 13:16; 21:28**.

**Seed of Abraham**; recalls the promises to Abraham. Same connection in **#Ro 11:1**. This verse implies that Paul's opponents at Corinth were Jews, priding themselves in the ancient language and customs of their nation, in the honor conferred upon it by God, and in the blessings promised to Abraham and his descendants. In **#Ga 6:12** we find similar opponents.

Ver. 23. **Ministers of Christ are they?** neither admits nor denies, but simply quotes, their boast. Contrast **#2Co 11:15**. Paul's reply to this boast is so startling that he introduces it with an apology, *forsaking my senses I speak*.

**Beyond this etc.:** i.e. I am something more than a minister of Christ. These words are senseless inasmuch as nothing is greater than to be a minister of Christ. They are justified by the contrast between the life portrayed in **#2Co 11:23-27** and that of these professed ministers of Christ. Paul's superiority is seen *in labours* to which (**#1Co 15:10**) he devotes himself more abundantly than they; *in prisons* in which with *more abundant* frequency he is confined, *in beatings* which fall upon him in a degree *surpassing* anything they suffer; *in the presence often of death* itself in various forms. In the last point Paul lays aside the language of comparison; perhaps as having in this matter no rival.

**In . . . in . . . in . . . in:** same sense as **#2Co 6:4-7**.

**Labours, prisons, beatings:** **#2Co 6:5; #Ac 16:23**.

**Deaths:** **#2Co 1:10; 4:11; 6:9; #Ro 8:36**. Notice the fourfold climax.

Ver. 24.-25. A simple enumeration in proof of the last two items of **#2Co 11:23**.

**By Jews:** in contrast probably to *beaten with a rod*, which in the one recorded case (**#Ac 16:22**) was by Gentiles.

**Five times:** all unknown to us.

**Forty stripes save one:** same number in Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. iv. 8. 21, 23. **#De 25:3** limits the number of stripes to forty. Notice that the Jews, even in cruelty and injustice to a servant of God, were scrupulously careful to obey in an insignificant detail the letter of the Law. Cp. **#Mt 23:23**.

**I was thrice beaten with a rod:** only one case (**#Ac 16:22**) recorded.

**Once I was stoned:** important coincidence in **#Ac 14:19**.

**Three times I suffered shipwreck:** all unknown.

**In the deep:** the sea, probably the raging sea; (same word in same sense, **#Ps 107:24**;) perhaps clinging to a portion of wreck.

Ver. 26.-27. Continued descriptive exposition of **#2Co 11:23**.

**Dangers . . . dangers:** suggested by *journeys*, which were then not only wearisome but perilous.

**Of rivers:** by crossing them, or through their overflow. The dangers of travel suggested other dangers.

**From my race:** #Ga 1:14; #Ac 7:19. Cp. #Ac 14:19; 17:5, 13; 20:19.

**From Gentiles:** cp. #Ac 16:19; 19:24ff.

**False brethren:** #Ga 2:4. Of this danger, the treason of Judas is an example.

**Labour and toil:** #1Th 2:9; #2Th 3:8. The double expression intensifies the idea.

**Watchings:** #2Co 6:5: and #1Th 2:9; #2Th 3:8 suggest that Paul refers to loss of sleep occasioned by menial toil for self-support.

**Hunger and thirst:** #De 28:48. It is so unlikely that voluntary religious fasts (of which we have no mention in Paul's writings) would be enumerated among the hardships mentioned here that, in spite of the apparent repetition, it is better to suppose that the *fastings often* were involuntary lack of food on journeys or through poverty. So #2Co 6:5. The frequent lack of food is thus parallel to the frequent loss of sleep, each plural term being closely related to two foregoing singulars. Paul lingers over his hunger and thirst, and says that it was frequent.

**Cold and nakedness;** completes the picture. Cp. #1Co 4:11.

Ver. 28. **Apart from the other things:** which Paul does not mention.

**My daily attention:** his eye ever fixed on the churches, watching their progress and perils. This attention was to him *anxiety*, and embraced *all the churches*, both those founded by himself and under his special care and those beyond his sphere of labor. In all Christians he took deep interest: and his anxious care for them was a heavier burden than the hardships enumerated above. This anxiety explains his prayers (#Ro 1:9; #Php 1:4; #Col 1:3; #1Th 1:2) for each church singly.

Ver. 29. Examples of this anxiety, and its effect upon Paul.

**Weak:** in faith and spiritual life, #1Co 8:9; #Ro 14:1.

**I am weak]** Weakness is practically a limitation of our action. Paul makes the weakness of these brethren a limitation of his own action. So #1Co 8:9-13; #Ro 15:1. For, his intense sympathy moves him to look at everything from their point of view, and to abstain from whatever will injure them. Thus their weakness, by limiting his action, is a real and felt weakness to him. Just so, in the weakness of her infant a mother feels herself to be weak.

**Ensnared:** entrapped, and injured in spiritual life; a frequent result of weakness. So #1Co 8:13.

**I:** emphatic, directing conspicuous attention to the effect upon Paul.

**Set-on-fire:** same word as "burn" in **#1Co 7:9**, denoting intense emotion; in this case, of sorrow. Cp. **#Lu 24:32**; 3 Macc. 4:2, **#Ps 39:4**; **#Jer 20:9**. Notice the climax. Paul sees a brother weak in spiritual life: and in his weakness the apostle's own power and liberty are limited. The brother falls into some snare of the enemy: and sorrow like a fire consumes the heart of Paul. And this of each case: *who is weak etc.?* This deep sympathy with all the brethren calls from him "daily attention," and gives rise to "anxiety about all the churches." That Paul's sympathy and anxiety embraced all churches everywhere and all persons and details within his observation, proves that it was inbreathed by God.

Ver. 30.-31. **If there is need etc.;** reveals again Paul's reluctance to speak about himself as he is here compelled to do.

**Weakness:** literally "absence of strength," denotes in a narrower sense "sickness" (as in **#Lu 13:11f**; **#Joh 5:3, 5**) as being an absence of bodily strength, and in a wider sense all kinds of human powerlessness.

**Things of my weakness:** occasioned by, and betraying, weakness. Cp. **#2Co 12:5, 9**.

**I will boast;** may refer either to his abiding resolve, or more likely to **#2Co 11:32, 33**, and especially to **#2Co 12:7-11**, and perhaps other matters present to his mind but afterwards passed over. If so, these words, though verbally suggested by "weak" in **#2Co 11:29**, yet have, as often in such cases, no special reference to it, but begin a new, though not different line of boasting.

**I lie not:** in declaring my purpose to *boast in the things pertaining to my weakness*. This purpose is from a human point of view so unlikely that in asserting it Paul appeals to Him who alone *knows* his motives.

**God, the Father of the Lord Jesus:** see **#2Co 1:3**; **#Ro 15:6**.

**He who is etc.:** i.e. God the Father: as demanded by the Greek construction.

**Blessed for ever:** see **#Ro 1:25**; **9:5**. While Paul thinks of God, and especially of *the Father of the Lord Jesus*, whose strength is manifested in his own weakness, he seems to hear from afar the song of praise which will go up for ever.

Ver. 32.-33. **In Damascus;** recalls the well-known beginning of Paul's Christian life.

**Ethnarch:** literally "national-chief." Same word in 1 Macc. 14:47; 15:1; Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. xiv. 7. 2, *Wars* bk. ii. 6. 3. It was evidently a provincial governor set by *Aretas* over the Syrian city of Damascus.

**Aretas:** king of Arabia Petraea, whose daughter Herod Antipas married and afterwards divorced. See Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. xviii. 5. 1.

**Was guarding:** a military term; also in #Ga 3:23; #Php 4:7; #1Pe 1:5. This implies that Damascus, which both earlier and later was under Roman rule, was at this time in the power of Aretas. For a very plausible explanation of this, see ch. iii. of Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*. It is certainly an interesting coincidence that whereas there exist Roman coins of Damascus both earlier and later there are none belonging to the time here referred to.

**Window:** same word in #Ac 20:9.

**Lowered through the wall:** same words in #Ac 9:25. We have here another witness of the correctness of the Book of Acts. The slight difference is easily explained by supposing that the Jews prompted and assisted the Ethnarch to watch for Paul. The abrupt transition from this incident suggests that it was designed to be the beginning of a series of proofs of Paul's "weaknesses," a series commencing at the very commencement of his Christian course; but broken off suddenly to make way for the more startling matter of #2Co 12:2-4. Paul's furtive mode of escape (in the darkness of night, #Ac 9:24) proves the extreme peril and helplessness of his position. By narrating this incident he was therefore "boasting in the things which belong to his weakness."

REVIEW. In passing to a second specific matter of boasting Paul betrays again his consciousness of the unseemliness of boasting; and, jealous for his readers' respect, begs that his boasting be not taken as a mark of foolishness. But, even if it is, he has still a claim to attention. In saying this, which may seem to be foolish, he is careful not to implicate the authority of his Master but to speak only in his own name. He has a claim to his readers' attention because from the lofty standpoint of their own wisdom they are accustomed to bear with foolishness and with unscrupulous self-assertion and violence. And, though Paul humbles himself by confession of weakness, he is if need be as bold as they. Equally with his opponents he can claim descent from the sacred people. And their claim to be ministers of Christ is surpassed by his own ministry, of which the credentials are written in hardships and perils of every kind and without number. And in addition to these he has a special burden, inasmuch as the spiritual weakness and fall of any who in any church bear the name of Christ is to him a personal weakness and a burning sorrow. The mention of weakness moves him to say that the things pertaining to his weakness shall be the only matter of the boasting which is forced upon him. He has matters of boasting so wonderful that before narrating them he appeals, as witness of his veracity, to Him who knows all things and whose praise will be sung for ever. He tells first a peril and escape at the very beginning of his Christian career, a kind of matriculation to him in the school of persecution, an escape not by the pomp of supernatural deliverance but by ordinary human instrumentality.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XVII.

#### PAUL'S RAPTURE TO PARADISE; AND THORN IN THE FLESH

##### CH. XII. 1-11.

To boast is needful. It is not indeed profitable: I will come, however, to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ fourteen years ago (whether in body I do not know, whether outside of the body I do not know: God knows) such a one caught up as far as the third heaven. And I know such a man, (whether in body or apart from the body I do not know: God knows,) that he was caught up into Paradise and heard utterances not to be uttered which it is not allowed to a man to speak. On behalf of such a one I shall boast. But on behalf of myself I shall not boast, except in my weaknesses. For, if I may wish to boast, I shall not be foolish, for I shall speak truth But I forbear; lest any one in reference to me reckon beyond what he sees me, or hears from me.

And by the superabundance of the revelations-for which cause, that I may not be beyond measure lifted up, there was given to me a stake for the flesh, an angel of Satan to strike me, that I may not be beyond measure lifted up. About this three times I besought the Lord, that it might depart from me. And he has said to me, Sufficient for thee is my grace: for the power is in weakness accomplished. Most gladly then I shall rather boast in my weakness, that there may encamp over me the power of Christ. For which cause I am well pleased with weaknesses, with wantonnesses, with necessities, with persecutions, with positions of helplessness, on behalf of Christ: for when I am weak then I am powerful. I have become foolish. It was you that compelled me. For, as to me, I ought by you to be recommended. For, nothing have I fallen short of the overmuch apostles; if I am even nothing.

Ver. 1. The narrative of Paul's first great peril seemed to be the beginning of a series of similar adventures. But the series is suddenly broken off by another expression of reluctance to speak about himself. He writes under necessity. This reveals again his deep consciousness of the folly of boasting.

**Needful:** in order to put his opponents to shame, and thus rescue the readers from their snares. Cp. #2Co 12:11; 11:30.

**Not profitable:** as a general principle; neither for him who speaks nor those who hear.

**I shall come, however:** though boasting is not profitable, I shall pass on to other matters of boasting.

**Revelation:** a lifting up of a veil to disclose something unknown before, either by an outward and conspicuous event, (#1Co 1:7; 3:13; #Ro 2:5; 8:18; #2Th 2:3-8,) or by the inward teaching of the

Spirit in His ordinary (#Php 3:15; #Eph 1:17) or extraordinary (#1Co 14:30; #Eph 3:5) operations. See under #Ro 1:17.

**Visions**, i.e. presentations of unseen realities in visible form: one class of *revelations*. Interesting coincidences in #Ac 26:19, compared with #Ga 1:16; #Lu 1:22; 24:23. Same words together in #Da 10:1.

**Of the Lord**: either as Himself revealed, #1Co 1:7; #1Pe 1:7, 13; 4:13; (#Ro 2:5; 8:19; 16:25,) or as Himself revealing, #Ga 1:12; #Re 1:1. The plural number suggests that here Paul refers to various kinds of *visions*, and (to use a wider word) to *revelations* in any mode, imparted by Christ.

Ver. 2.-4. An example of these.

**In Christ**; points to spiritual contact with Christ as the source of all that follows. While writing, Paul *knows a man* who, united to Christ, was fourteen years ago caught up to heaven. The introductory words "to boast is needful" prove that Paul refers here to himself. See under #2Co 12:5. That Paul speaks of himself in the third person, is akin to the ideal standpoint in time assumed in #Ro 4:24; 5:1; 7:14; 8:30; and betrays his vivid imagination.

**In body**: i.e. body and spirit together *caught up*.

**Outside of the body**: the spirit alone, leaving the body behind. The state of the body, in this case, Paul probably does not think of. It might be in sleep or trance. If so, since we cannot conceive the body to be inanimate, the suggestion of Lactantius (quoted by Meyer) may practically be near the truth: "the mind goes away; the soul remains."

**I do not know**: emphatic repetition, in contrast to *I know*. That Paul did not know whether his body as well as his spirit was caught up to heaven, shows how intensely supernatural was the event.

**God knows**: before whose hand and by whose power the rapture took place.

**Caught up**: carried away by a strong hand. Same word in #1Th 4:17; #Ac 8:39; #Re 12:5.

**As far as**; suggests distance.

**Third heaven**: cp. #Eph 4:10 "above the heavens"; #Heb 4:14. Lucian (lxxvii. 12) speaks in satire of "a Galilean who walked upon air to the third heaven." We cannot decide whether Paul thought of seven heavens, as the Jews did; who, however, distinguished them variously. The words suggest naturally the unseen world, beyond the place (#Mt 6:26; 16:2f; 24:30) of the birds and clouds and that (#Mt 24:29; #Mr 13:25) of the stars. In #2Co 12:3 Paul lingers upon his knowing the man but not knowing whether the rapture was in the body or without it, this however known clearly by God.

**Apart from**: rather more emphatic than *outside of*.

Ver. 4. **Paradise**: probably a Persian word, but found in Hebrew (A.V. "orchard") in Sol. Song **#So 4:13**; **#Ec 2:5**, (A.V. "forest") in **#Ne 2:8**; in the Greek LXX., **#Ge 2:8**, etc., **#Ge 13:10**; **#Nu 24:6**; **#Isa 51:3**, etc.; Sirach 24:30, 40:17, 27, Susanna 4, 7, etc.; in Josephus frequently, and in classic Greek. It denotes a park or pleasure ground, especially around a palace. So Xenophon, *Anabasis* bk. i. 2. 7: "there Cyrus had a palace and a great paradise, full of wild beasts which he hunted on horseback whenever he went to exercise himself and the horses. Through the middle of the paradise flows the river Meander." In **#Ge 13:10** the Jordan valley looks like "the paradise of God": and in chs. ii., iii. the "garden of Eden" is constantly rendered "paradise of pleasure." To this last, **#Re 2:7** evidently refers: and **#2Co 12:4** and **#Lu 23:43** suggest it. In **#Lu 23:43** it is evidently the pleasant place where the souls of the departed righteous wait for the resurrection. The associations of the words suggest that Christ by His entrance made the dark Sheol or Hades (Hebrew and Greek names for the place of the dead) into a place of delight. **#Re 2:7** (cp. **#Re 22:2**) refers to the place of final glory, which will surround the palace and throne of God. It is practically the same as the New Jerusalem which John saw coming down out of heaven from God; and which may therefore be supposed to be already existing in heaven. It is thus distinguished from the paradise into which at His death Christ entered. It is difficult to say whether Paul refers here to the happy place of the departed righteous, or to that more glorious place before the throne where we may conceive sinless spirits of other races already dwelling in glory and which will in the great day extend its boundaries to earth that it may be the final home of redeemed mankind. The word *paradise* may be either identical with or the higher part of, or higher than the "third heaven." This last supposition would imply that the rapture to Paradise was a further rapture beyond that to the third heaven. But of this there is no hint whatever. The word *paradise* was used by later Jewish writers for the present abode of the departed: and, that in this sense it was generally understood, is implied by Christ's use of it without further specification in **#Lu 23:43**. On the other hand **#Re 2:7** is an express allusion to **#Ge 2:9**. It is therefore perhaps better to understand by the word *paradise* here, where it is used without explanation and must therefore be understood in its more familiar sense, the present abode of the faithful dead. And, since those whose bodies are not yet rescued and who are waiting (**#Re 6:10**) for the completion of their number must be conceived to be in the lowest part of the celestial universe, *paradise* cannot in this verse be higher than, and must therefore be identical with, the third heaven. Paul lingers over, and thus lays stress upon, this remarkable event of his life. The word *paradise* expounds the "third heaven." He was carried not only above the sky and clouds but into the beautiful resting place of the departed servants of God.

**Not to be uttered**: not "unutterable," or the following prohibition would be needless. Same word used for sacred secrets in Herodotus bk. v. 83; and in bk. vi. 135, where the secret was divulged.

**Which it is not allowed etc.**; expounds and limits *not to be uttered*. *Man* may not speak it.

If our reckoning be correct (see Dissertation iii.) this rapture took place in A.D. 44, about the time of the death (**Ac 12:23**; Josephus, *Antiq.* bk. xix. 8. 2) of Herod Agrippa, and probably shortly before Paul's solemn separation (**#Ac 13:1f**) for the mission to foreign countries. Perhaps by this rapture God was preparing His servant for the new and perilous work now before him.

Ver. 5.-6. **Such a one** refers certainly to Paul himself: for, no other reason is suggested why this revelation should be to him a matter of boasting, and it is clearly implied in **#2Co 12:7**. Paul's



rapture was so utterly independent of his own effort and merit that the raptured person seemed to be some one other than himself. And the lapse of time made this conception more easy to him. Ourselves long ago seem to us other than our present selves. Thoughts about the man who fourteen years ago was caught up to Paradise fill Paul with an exultation he cannot forbear to express.

**On behalf of myself:** "so as to bring honour to myself, for something I have done or can do."

**Except in my weaknesses: #2Co 11:30:** an exception which seems to be a contradiction. An example is given in #2Co 12:9, 10.

**For if I wish etc;** gives weight and worth to Paul's refusal to boast, by saying that he might boast if he would.

**I shall not be foolish;** reveals again (cp. #2Co 11:16) Paul's deep sense of the folly of boasting and his jealous care to have the esteem of his readers. The folly of boasting is its usual untruthfulness. But Paul will *speak truth*.

**Reckon:** as in #1Co 4:1. He refrains from boasting because he does not wish his readers to form any estimate of him beyond what they actually see him to be; and, since so great a part of his activity was speech, beyond the worth of the words they hear from his lips. In this jealous care for the esteem of others, and in this refusal to acquire fame by talking about oneself, a fame always precarious, we shall do well to imitate the apostle.

Ver. 7. Continues the narrative of #2Co 12:4, which was interrupted by the comment of #2Co 12:5, 6. It recalls an affliction probably well known to the readers, and delineates its effect upon Paul.

**The revelations;** implies others besides the one just mentioned.

**Superabundance:** surpassing in grandeur or number those granted to others. These words are pushed prominently forward to connect the stake in the flesh with the rapture to Paradise.

**For which cause:** various reading: see Appendix B.

**That I be not beyond-measure-lifted-up:** kind foresight of God. That Paul felt himself exposed to this danger, warns us of the spiritual peril which always accompanies special gifts. None but a great and humble man could have made such confession.

**There was given to me;** probably by the Giver of all good. For it follows close after a divine and merciful purpose and before any mention of Satan. Cp. #Php 1:29.

**Stake:** any sharp piece of wood, artificial or natural; most frequently artificially sharpened, especially for military palisades; more rarely splinters; or (metaphorically, as here) in #Nu 33:55; #Eze 28:24; Sirach 43:19, a thorn. The evident severity of this affliction (proved by Paul's earnest

prayer), and the deliberate purpose of it, suggest perhaps the figure of a sharpened piece of wood driven intentionally into his body.

**For the flesh:** viz. to pierce it.

**Angel:** anglicized form of a Greek word for one who brings news or a message, constant equivalent (LXX.) for a Hebrew word denoting sometimes (#**Job 1:14**) one who brings news but usually one sent either (#**1Sa 11:3; 16:19; 2Sa 11:19**) with a message or (#**1Sa 19:11**) to do some work. Naturally the Greek word took up (cp. #**Lu 9:52; 7:24**) the full compass of the Hebrew word. The common use of it for heavenly beings sent to do for God all sorts of work on earth (#**Ac 12:7, 23**, etc.) suggested its use here for an affliction caused (and therefore sent) by Satan to do his malicious work.

**To strike me**, as if with a fist: business of the angel sent by Satan. Same word in #**1Co 4:11; Mt 26:67; 1Pe 2:20**. Notice the change of metaphor. That which, looking at its point of attack, viz. the body, and its obstructiveness and pain, is a stake driven into the flesh, is represented also as a personal combatant sent by Satan to strike at Paul from time to time severe blows. The repetition of *that I may not be lifted up* (see Appendix B) reveals Paul's deep consciousness of the merciful divine purpose which underlay the malicious satanic purpose of the affliction.

The word *flesh* suggests that this affliction was a bodily ailment. For, in a moral sense, to Paul the flesh with its desires (#**Ga 5:24**) was crucified. In #**Lu 13:16; Job 2:7** such ailments are attributed to Satan. Probably all forms of sickness, being directly or indirectly a result of sin, have the same source. The word *stake* suggests acute suffering and a hindrance to the apostle's work. This latter is confirmed by *in weakness*, #**2Co 12:9**. [The present subjunctive implies continuous or recurrent suffering.] The word *strike* suggests recurrent attacks. A humiliating malady is suggested by its divine purpose. The word *given* suggests that it was not inborn, or if inborn afterwards greatly aggravated. Paul's prayer implies that its removal was conceivable. It therefore cannot have been a memory of past sin. Christ's refusal implies that it was not sinful; and so does Paul's resolve to boast in it. These indications suggest severe and recurrent and painful bodily ailment, which Paul recognized as a work of Satan but also as a gift of the kind forethought of God, and which seemed to hinder his apostolic activity. Its mention here suggests, but does not quite prove, that it came soon after the rapture to Paradise. Certainly it was something calculated to counteract any lofty self-estimate which the rapture might create. The above is the oldest explanation of this verse. It was held probably by Irenaeus, bk. v. 3; and certainly by Tertullian, *On Modesty* ch. xiii.: "a pain as they say of ear or head." And it is given by most modern expositors. Purely inward temptations either sensual (Roman Catholic writers) or spiritual (Luther) would hardly have been matter of boasting; while the former contradicts #**1Co 7:7**, and the latter the word *flesh*. Outward persecutions (Greek fathers) would be hardly sufficiently personal.

The kind of bodily malady is a matter of mere conjecture. Possibly #**Ga 4:14**, "your temptation in my flesh" refers to a recurrence of it, detaining Paul in Galatia and thus leading to the founding of the churches there, and such as to test the loyalty of the Galatian converts. But of the nature of this sickness in Galatia we have no indication. An affection of the eyes, or epilepsy, are plausible guesses, but not much more. [To suggest the former in #**Ga 4:15**, a more emphatic pronoun would

be needed.] See the very good notes in Lightfoot's *Galatians*, and in vol. i., excursus x., of Farrar's *St. Paul*.

Ver. 8.-9a. **On behalf of this:** i.e. that I might be delivered from it.

**Three times:** definite and memorable prayers, perhaps at different attacks of the malady. The repetition reveals Paul's earnestness.

**The Lord:** Christ. Cp. #2Co 12:9, "power of Christ." Notice an express prayer to Christ.

**Depart from me]** it was therefore removable, either with or without a miracle.

**He has said** (or in idiomatic English *he said*) **to me:** after the third petition. [The Greek perfect notes the abiding effect of Christ's words. See *The Expositor*, First Series, vol. xi. pp. 198, 301.] Whether this was by special revelation or by the ordinary operation of the Holy Spirit casting divine light upon truth already received, we are not told.

**Sufficient for thee etc:** "My smile and My purpose to do thee good will afford everything needful for thy highest welfare even in spite of this great affliction." This implied refusal is at once justified by a great truth.

**The well-known power:** with which Christ makes His people strong (#Php 4:13) to do and to dare and to suffer.

**Weakness:** conspicuous contrast to power.

**Accomplished:** attains its full goal, works out its full results, and thus reveals its full grandeur. Same word in #Ro 2:27; #Ga 5:16; #Lu 12:50; 18:31; 22:37; #Joh 19:28, 30; cognate to *end* in #2Co 11:15; see note. *The power* of Christ manifests to the full its irresistible energy and attains its highest results by performing works of power with powerless instruments. For this reason Christ refused to remove the stake in the flesh which seemed to be to Paul an element of weakness. Cp. #2Co 4:7; 1:9. Notice that *the power* of Christ makes His *grace* sufficient for us. For He who smiles upon us is able to accomplish His kindly purpose.

Ver. 9b.-10. Paul's comment on the words of Christ.

**In my weaknesses:** of which the stake in the flesh was only one example. In these he *will boast*, rather than pray for their removal; and with joy. Then follows a purpose which in his boasting Paul cherishes, and which is to some extent attained by his boasting. He desires that like a *tent* there may be spread over him the power of Christ, guarding him on every side. Similar word in #Joh 1:14; #Re 7:15; 21:3; cognate to "tabernacle," #Heb 9:2ff. In view of this desire, his weaknesses can evoke only exultation: for they afford opportunities for the might of Christ to attain through him its noblest results, results proportionate to the confidence of his exultation. This illustrates #Ro 5:3. Boasting in our weaknesses is justified because it is virtually a boasting in the power of God.

**For which cause:** because the power of Christ will encamp over, and realize itself in him.

**Acts of wantonness (#Ro 1:30) etc.:** four outward circumstances in which Paul often felt his weakness. They mark a transition from the matter of the stake in the flesh. Acts of purposeless cruelty, repeated lack of the most needful things, the repeated pursuit of enemies, positions in which there seemed to be no way of escape, in all these Paul cheerfully acquiesced, because by revealing his own weakness they revealed the power of Christ.

**On behalf of Christ:** connected, not with the words immediately preceding, to which it would be a needless addition, but with *I am well pleased* to which it adds immense force. In all these things Paul acquiesces for Christ's sake, i.e. because in them Christ's power and glory will be revealed.

**For when etc.:** reason why Paul is *well-pleased in weaknesses*. In want and persecution Paul is absolutely *weak*; for his own powers can do nothing. But in these circumstances he finds that the power of Christ supplies all his need and shelters him from every foe: and therefore, because that power encamps over him, he is practically so *powerful* that nothing can hurt him. And this strength in weakness moves him to acquiesce in these various afflictions, for Christ's sake.

**When, then:** as in #1Co 15:28, conspicuous coincidence in time. *When* we are consciously *powerless* to work out by our own strength any good result, *then* do we rely simply and only on the infinite power of Christ, and are truly strong.

Ver. 11. At the end, as at the beginning, of § 17 Paul utters his deep sense of the foolishness of boasting. By not speaking in his favor as they *ought* to have done and by listening to his detractors, Paul's readers *compelled* him to speak about himself, which in itself is foolish, that thus he might rescue them from the guile of his opponents. For the good of others he condescends to say things which but for their motive would be unworthy of an intelligent man. Than this, no kind of self-denial is to sensible persons more difficult or more noble

**Recommend:** as in #2Co 3:1.

**For, nothing etc.:** #2Co 11:5: proof, from Paul's intrinsic worth as compared with his rivals, that his readers ought to have spoken in his defence.

**I am nothing:** although not less than others who claim to be much, yet, measured by a correct standard all that Paul has and is can do nothing to attain the well-being of himself or others, and is therefore of no intrinsic worth. And this is the last word of all human boasting. And it is Paul's last direct rebuke to his adversaries.

SECTION 17 is full of instruction and comfort. Not infrequently now special exaltation in the service of God is accompanied by a special drawback, a drawback which may sometimes be attributed to enemies, human or superhuman. Such drawbacks, from whatever immediate source, are given by the kind forethought of God, to counteract the danger which, as the case of the apostle emphatically and solemnly warns us, accompanies spiritual elevation. Nor need we lament the drawback. For Christ who smiles on us, will by His own power supply all that we need in order to

do His work on earth in perfect peace and exultant joy. For, His power will make us strong. And our weakness will make His strength more conspicuous. Consequently, as revealing Christ's power, the weakness which we cannot by our own efforts or prayers remove may well be to us matter of exultation and delight. Of such exultation we have in **#Ro 8:31-39** a splendid example.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XVIII.

#### PAUL'S CREDENTIALS TO, AND LOVE FOR, HIS READERS.

#### CH. XII. 12-18.

The signs indeed of the apostle were worked out among you in all perseverance, by signs and wonders and powers. For what is there in which you were made worse beyond the other churches? Except that I myself did not press upon you. As a favour forgive me this injustice.

Behold, this third time I am in readiness to come to you; and I will not press upon any one. For I do not seek yours but you. For the children ought not to lay up treasure for the parents, but the parents for the children. And for my part I most gladly will spend and will be spent out on behalf of your souls; if more abundantly loving you the less I be loved.

But, be it so, it was not I that burdened you, but, being crafty, with guile I laid hold of you. Any one of those whom I have sent to you, by him did I defraud you? I besought Titus and sent with him the brother. Did Titus at all defraud you? Was it not by the same Spirit that we walked? was it not in the same steps?

Section 18 supports the contrast of Paul and his rivals at the end of § 17 by pointing to his apostolic credentials, and then concludes his boasting by returning to the first specific matter of it, viz. his refusal to be maintained by the church. This last matter he supplements by rebutting the charge that, if not directly, yet indirectly, he had made gain of his readers.

Ver. 12. **Signs of the apostle:** visible proofs justly demanded from him who claims to be an ambassador-extraordinary of Christ.

**Were worked out:** more modest and more correct than "I worked." That they were evidently wrought by God, gave to them their validity *as signs of the apostle*. This is a definite assertion that Paul wrought miracles among his readers. An assertion so bold is in the last degree unlikely to be false. We shall not doubt it for a moment if we believe that Christ rose from the dead. See my *Romans*, Dissertation i. An important coincidence in **#Ac 15:12; #Ro 15:19**.

**Perseverance**, or *endurance*: see under **#Ro 2:7**. The miracles continued for some time and in face of obstacles.

**Signs and wonders and powers:** miracles, looked at in three aspects, as meaning something, as prodigies exciting attention, and as manifestations or power. See under **#Ro 15:19**: cp. **#Heb 2:4; #2Th 2:9**.

**Powers:** a very common term for miracles; #Mt 7:22; 11:20ff; #Mt 13:54, 58, etc.: cp. #Mt 14:2. For, our chief thought is the divine power therein manifested. These miracles proved that Paul "fell nothing short of the overmuch apostles." He thus puts them utterly to shame: for they had no such credentials to show. This decisive contrast is reserved to the last.

Ver. 13. Appeal to the readers, in proof of #2Co 12:12, that in miracles wrought among them no church surpassed them. They had therefore, within their own observation, abundant proof that in his credentials Paul did not "fall short of the over-much apostles." But while in this point equal to any church, Paul cannot forget that in another point they fell short of others, viz. in not contributing to his support. Although this arose from Paul's own refusal, it none the less put them in a worse position (cognate word in #1Co 6:7; #Ro 11:12) than *the other churches*: for his refusal was prompted by their liability to misunderstand his reception of payment. In bitter irony he represents his damage as his own doing; and in still more bitter irony begs for their forgiveness. Cp. #2Co 11:7.

**Press-down-upon:** #2Co 12:14: same rare word in #2Co 11:8, which by its rarity it recalls.

**I myself;** was no paralyzing load weighing you down.

This verse implies that, though at Thessalonica (#2Th 3:8f) and probably at Ephesus (#Ac 20:34) Paul preached without cost to his hearers, yet this was not his invariable rule; or, that the Corinthians had not, like (#2Co 11:8; #Php 4:16) the Philippians, sent him help while laboring elsewhere.

Ver. 14.-15. As in #2Co 11:9, Paul strengthens "I did not press down" by saying that he will continue the same course, thus showing that his refusal sprang from a settled resolve.

**This third time:** to pay a third visit. For it refers evidently to two occasions on which he did not burden them. An unfulfilled purpose to come a second time would be meaningless here. So #2Co 13:1f. Already twice he has labored among them without remuneration: and he is *in readiness to come a third time* and do the same.

**For I do not seek etc.:** an abiding general purpose, supporting the foregoing specific resolve.

**Seek you:** cp. #1Co 9:19; #Mt 18:15. His converts saved are the eternal enrichment which Paul seeks.

**For the children etc.:** modest admission that the foregoing principle of Paul's action is only his duty: and this sense of duty is given as a motive of his action. But while thus professedly giving up all claims on his readers, Paul really lays them under heaviest obligations, viz. those of children, if not to lay up treasure for, yet to obey and love and protect their parents. For by accepting a parent's obligation he reminds them that he is their Father in Christ. Cp. #1Co 4:14f. By renouncing all claim as matter of right he casts himself upon their gratitude and love.

Ver. 15. Paul's cheerful acceptance of the foregoing general principle as a guide of action.

**Will-be-spent-out:** will permit the complete consumption of all he has and is.

**On behalf of your souls:** i.e. to save their souls, to save them from eternal death; implying their peril. For this Paul does not hesitate to make the greatest conceivable sacrifice. **#2Co 12:15b** is a contingency (see Appendix B) which would make this great sacrifice needful to save their souls. For if their love is in inverse proportion to his love to them, their souls are in danger. The very ingratitude of his readers, (if they be ungrateful, which is left open to question,) will only spur him, by the spiritual peril it reveals, to more unsparing sacrifice to save them. Thus Paul concludes his long boast by words of love, the greatest we can conceive, a love not destroyed but moved to greater sacrifice by the unloving spirit of those loved. Such is the love revealed in God's gift of His Son for rebellious man.

Ver. 16.-18. Paul's last word in self-defence against a last insinuation of his enemies. To give definiteness to this insinuation, that he may expose it, Paul suggests it as his own thought. But the definiteness of his words makes it almost certain that they were taken from the lips of his opponents.

**Be it so: it was not I etc.:** an admission prefacing the insinuation.

**Laid-hold-of:** same word in same sense, **#2Co 11:20**. *Crafty* and *guile* suggest at once Paul's known opposite character. The meaning of **#2Co 12:16** is made clear by the sudden question of **#2Co 12:17**. It was insinuated that, though not himself receiving maintenance, Paul did practically the same thing by sending friends to be maintained at Corinth; and that for his design to enrich them his own refusal was but a guileful cloak. This insinuation, **#2Co 12:18** meets by stating what Paul actually did, and by appealing to his readers' knowledge of what his messengers did.

**I besought Titus:** begged him to go to Corinth. This refers, as **#2Co 12:17** implies, to an actual visit of Titus to Corinth some time before this letter was written, a visit made at Paul's request. On this visit Titus began, doubtless by Paul's suggestion, the collection for the poor at Jerusalem. So **#2Co 8:6**. And perhaps to this the insinuation refers. The similar words of **#2Co 8:6, 18** refer to the visit Titus was now about to make. See note under **#2Co 9:5**.

**The brother:** quite unknown to us.

**Did Titus etc.:** directly meets the insinuation, which was probably made indefinitely in the words perhaps of **#2Co 12:16**, by appealing to matter of fact.

The **same spirit, the same steps:** the One Holy Spirit (to whom the word *spirit* most frequently refers) guiding both men along the same path. Cp. **#1Co 12:4; #Ga 5:16; #Ro 8:4**. The same divine inward principle manifested itself in the same outward actions. This implies that Titus, like Paul, refused to be maintained by the Corinthians. And, in this fact, falls to the ground the insinuation that through Titus Paul enriched himself.

PAUL'S BOASTING, **#2Co 11:1-12:18**, or §§ 15-18, is now complete. It was forced upon him by the boast (**#2Co 10:12; 11:18**) of certain Jewish (**#2Co 11:22**) opponents at Corinth, who are kept in view (**#2Co 11:5, 12, 18ff; 12:11**) throughout; and by the submission to them (**#2Co 11:4, 19**) of the Corinthian Christians. It is prefaced by a broad Old Testament principle which ought to rule all human boasting. Paul's deep consciousness of the unseemliness of boasting and his reluctance to this



boasting are betrayed by apologies and explanations both at the beginning of the whole and at each transition from one to another of its four specific matters. These are, his refusal to be maintained by the church, **#2Co 11:7-12**; his hardships and perils, **#2Co 11:23-33**; his rapture to Paradise and counterbalancing affliction, **#2Co 12:1-10**; his divine credentials, **#2Co 12:12, 13**. At the beginning of his boast Paul justifies it by his peculiar relation to his readers and by their readiness to be led away. After claiming to be at least equal to his opponents, he claims to have given full proof of his knowledge. In contrast to the deceitful pretensions of others he has labored without cost to his readers and will continue to do so. Like his opponents, he can claim Jewish descent; and he surpasses them in the hardships and perils of his service for Christ. He has been so completely under supernatural influence that he knows not whether with or without his body he was caught up to Paradise: and he is not ashamed to speak of his terrible bodily affliction, and to glory in it as an occasion for a manifestation of the power of Christ. Not only in other churches but in equal measure at Corinth his apostolic authority has been confirmed by miraculous works. He concludes his boasting by recalling for a moment the first specific point of it, which he uses as a stepping stone to an expression of parental love for his readers, a love which even ingratitude does but kindle into an intenser glow of self-sacrifice. The same topic also suggests an insinuation of his foes, which vanishes in a moment before an appeal to simple matter of fact.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XIX.

#### *UNLESS THE OFFENDERS REPENT, PAUL WILL RELUCTANTLY GIVE THEM SEVERE PROOF OF HIS AUTHORITY*

CHS. XII. 19-XIII. 10.

For a long time you are thinking that to you we are making reply. Before God, in Christ, we speak. But all things, beloved ones, are on behalf of your edification. For I fear lest in any way, when I come, not such as I wish I find you, and I be found by you such as you do not wish, lest in any way there be strife, jealousy, outbursts of fury, factions, evil-speakings, whisperings, self-inflations, disorders; lest again when I have come my God will humble me with regard to you and I bewail many of those who sinned-before and have not repented, about the uncleanness and fornication and wantonness which they practiced. This third time I am coming to you. "At the mouth of two witnesses and of three every word shall stand." (#De 19:15) I have said before and I say beforehand, as when present the second time and absent now, to those who have before sinned and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare. Since a proof you seek of Him who speaks in me, even Christ, who towards you is not weak but is strong in you. For indeed He was crucified through weakness, but He lives through the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him, through the power of God, towards you.

Try yourselves whether you are in faith: prove yourselves. Or, do not understand yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? Except perhaps you are reprobates. But I hope that you will know that we are not reprobates. But we pray to God that you do nothing bad; not that we may be seen to be approved, but that you may do the good and we be as unapproved. For we cannot do anything against the truth but on behalf of the truth. For we rejoice when we are weak but you are strong. This we also pray, your full equipment. Because of this, these things while absent I write, that when present I may not act severely, according to the authority which the Lord gave to me, for building up and not for pulling down.

Paul's boasting is now complete. He therefore returns to the matter which prompted it, viz. the misconduct of some whom he has already (#2Co 10:2) threatened to punish. He writes fearing that there are evils at Corinth which will make his visit painful to him, #2Co 12:19-21: if the sinners do not repent he will give them severe proof of his authority, #2Co 13:1-4: but he begs them to prevent this by self-examination and well doing, #2Co 13:5-10.

Ver. 19. **For-a-long-time**: viz. while listening to Paul's boasting, #2Co 11:1-12:18.

**Making reply**: anglicized into "apology": same word in #Ro 2:15; #Ac 26:1, 2, 24; #1Co 9:3; #2Co 7:11.

**We**: as in #2Co 10:2-11: suggested perhaps by Paul's defence (#2Co 12:18) of Titus.

**To you:** emphatic: "your approval being my aim."

**Before God, in Christ, we speak:** #2Co 2:17: in the presence of God, and prompted by spiritual contact with *Christ* as the encompassing element of Paul's life. Cp. #Ro 9:1.

**All things:** all he says and does, including the foregoing boast.

**On behalf of your edification:** to help forward your spiritual development. Notice the triple reference of Paul's words, before God, in Christ, for the spiritual growth of men. So #2Co 5:13f. These three are ever united.

Ver. 20.-21. Explanation of the kind of "edification" Paul has in view in his self-defence. He has magnified his authority and has threatened to punish, to lead some guilty ones to repentance, lest he find them, and they him, other than he and they wish.

**In any way:** as in #2Co 11:3.

**When I come:** on the visit proposed in #2Co 9:4; #1Co 16:2ff.

**Be found by you:** literally *to you*, as in #Ro 7:10, denoting the influence upon them of this discovery.

**Lest. . . lest . . . lest;** expounds in full Paul's *fear*. The second *lest* introduces two classes of sins which Paul fears that he will *find* but does not *wish* to find at Corinth.

**Strife, jealousy, outbursts of fury, factions:** same words in same order in #Ga 5:20. See under #1Co 3:3; #Ro 2:8.

**Evil-speakings, whisperings:** #Ro 1:29. Their place here reveals the evil of them.

**Self-inflations:** special failing of the Corinthian Christians: cognate to "puffed up," #1Co 4:6, 18f.

**Disorders:** #2Co 6:5; #1Co 14:33.

Ver. 21. **Will humble]** Nothing brings a Christian teacher into the dust so much as the defection of those whom he has looked on as fruits of his labor and as his crown of rejoicing. This humiliation Paul now fears.

**Again:** i.e. will again humble. Its conspicuous position allows no other connection. Thus understood it has almost tragic force. For it implies (cp. #2Co 2:1) that on a previous visit Paul had already been thus humbled. And, remembering that time, he now fears that it *will* be so *again*.

**My God:** as in (#1Co 1:4,) #Ro 1:8. It is a reverent acknowledgment that even the feared humiliation, though caused by man's unfaithfulness, will be from God, i.e. taken up into His plan to

work out His purposes of mercy for Paul. *In regard of you, or in reference to you.* Contrast #2Co 3:4; #Ro 4:2.

**I shall bewail:** sorrow for the guilty will accompany Paul's own humiliation.

**Before-sinned:** probably *before* Paul's second visit, to which the word *again* refers. So "before-sinned" in #2Co 13:2. This does not necessarily imply that before Paul's second visit they had committed the gross sins mentioned immediately afterwards, but simply that they had committed *sin*. He fears that he shall find that the sins he reprov'd long ago (#2Co 13:2) had developed into these aggravated forms.

**And have not repented:** at the time of Paul's expected visit, of which he is now speaking. Not all but *many of those who had before sinned* were, Paul fears, guilty of the gross sins mentioned below.

**About the uncleanness etc.;** may go with repented, but has more force as giving the specific matter of Paul's sorrow about these unrepentant ones.

**Uncleanness:** general sensuality.

**Fornication:** a specific form of it, viz. intercourse with harlots.

**Wantonness:** insolent casting aside of all restraint. Same three words together in #Ga 5:20.

**Which they have practised;** gives vividness to, and lingers over, the picture.

#2Co 12:21 forms with #2Co 12:20 a climax, touching what Paul fears he will find when he comes to Corinth. He has written for his readers' good (#2Co 12:19) strong words, because he fears there are at Corinth the evils enumerated in #2Co 12:20. He also remembers those who before his last visit had committed sins, and who have not yet repented. And he now writes fearing lest, touching *many* of these, he will find and will have to mourn over their gross sensuality and reckless insolence, sins far more terrible than those of #2Co 12:20. To find this at Corinth, will fill him with sorrow and smite him down to the very dust. Cp. #2Co 2:3. Therefore, seeking their edification, (#2Co 12:19,) he has defended his own apostolic authority, which Jewish strangers have taught them to despise; that thus he may with more force reprove those who have sinned. He hopes thus to save himself from pain and humiliation. And the pain and humiliation which he dreads reveal the greatness of the sins he reprov's.

Ver. 1.-2. Paul has already (#2Co 12:20b, 21) told his readers what sort of men he expects, but does not wish, to find them. He will now tell them what sort of man they will find him.

**This third time;** implies clearly that he has twice before been at Corinth. For the first *coming* was an actual visit. And Paul refers now to what will happen, not on his way towards Corinth, but after his arrival. With this he could not compare a never-completed second journey. So #2Co 12:14. He evidently wishes to recall, in view of a third visit, his conduct on two earlier visits.

**I am coming:** written from Macedonia on the way from Ephesus to Corinth. Cp. #1Co 16:5.

**At the mouth etc.:** word for word from #De 19:15. When Paul comes, a church court will be held: and every charge will be judged, according to the Mosaic Law, on the evidence of *two witnesses and*, where available, *of three*. A similar quotation with the same purpose in #Mt 18:16. There is no indication whatever that, as some have suggested, Paul's journeys were the *witnesses*; or that this word has here any but its common meaning of one who has seen and can testify.

Ver. 2. **Said-before;** contrasts with his previous words on his second visit Paul's present words by letter: *say-before*; contrasts his present words with their approaching fulfillment. Paul's words by letter *now when absent* correspond with his words of mouth *when present the second time*, i.e. on his bygone second visit.

**To those who before-sinned:** i.e. *before* his second visit, as in #2Co 12:21. But his present words by letter apply of course to any who sinned subsequently. *Before*, reminds us that some had sinned long ago.

**And to all the rest:** all the church-members, by way of warning. The tone of uncertainty, *if I come again*, when Paul was actually on his way to Corinth, suggests that he here quotes his own words on the second visit. He would then speak naturally of his next visit as coming *again*. Notice the emphatic prominence (cp. #2Co 2:1; 12:21) of this word.

**I will not spare;** is more than exclusion from the church, and suggests bodily punishment similar to that of #1Co 5:5; #Ac 5:5; 13:11. The miraculous powers in the apostolic church made more inexcusable the case of those who by open sin set at nought such powers. And now this dread power is ready to fall in supernatural punishment on those who are continuing to treat it with contempt.

Of this INTERMEDIATE VISIT of Paul to Corinth, we have no express mention. But without it the conspicuous and emphatic word *again* in #2Co 2:1 and #2Co 12:21, and this third time in #2Co 12:14 and #2Co 13:1, are practically meaningless; whereas with it they have almost tragic force; and xiii. 2 would otherwise be uncouth. No doubt is cast on it by absence of reference to it in the Book of Acts. For, how much of Paul's career is not mentioned there, #2Co 11:23-26 proves. That no reference is made to it in the First Epistle, is more remarkable; especially as on this unmentioned visit Paul found at Corinth the sins which in that epistle he severely condemns. (This objection is well put in Baur's *Apostle Paul* pt. ii. ch. 2.) Certainly the visit cannot have been later than the First extant Epistle: or the explanation in #2Co 2:3f about that epistle would be needless. But if it took place some time before the lost letter was written, the fact that by this letter Paul had given the Corinthians a later expression of his mind about sensuality might account for his silence about the visit: whereas his thoughts, while writing this second extant letter, about his approaching visit to Corinth would naturally and sadly recall his last visit. It is much easier to suppose this than to reconcile the passages referred to above with the supposition that Paul had visited Corinth only once. Opportunities of going there would be frequent during his three years' (#Ac 19:10; 20:31) sojourn at Ephesus: and his anxiety about the church at Corinth would be a constant motive for such a journey. It has been suggested that the unmentioned visit was a return to Corinth after a temporary absence during Paul's eighteen months' residence there. But the lapse of time between his departure

from Corinth narrated in **#Ac 18:18** and the writing of this epistle, which included three years at Ephesus, makes the other supposition more likely. The whole subject is well discussed in Conybeare's *St. Paul*, ch. xv. Dr. Farrar (*Life of St. Paul* vol. ii. p. 118) silently agrees with Baur in rejecting an intermediate journey.

The silence of the Book of Acts, and the indications in this epistle, suggest that the visit was short. To Paul it was (**#2Co 2:1; 12:21**) painful and humiliating. But, instead of punishing at once those whom he then found guilty of gross sin, he threatened that, if they did not repent, he would do so at his next visit. And he now fears that; with similar sorrow and humiliation, he shall be compelled to fulfill his threat.

Ver. 3.-4. **Since you seek a proof:** reason why he "will not spare." By punishing he will prove, to those who doubt it, his apostolic authority.

**Proof of Him etc.:** probably (cp. **#2Co 9:13**) proof afforded by Christ. But such proof is also proof that Christ speaks in Paul.

**Not weak but powerful:** and therefore able to give the proof sought.

**Towards you:** as influencing from without.

**Among you:** as working in the midst of *you*. A climax: Of Christ's *power* towards and *among* the Corinthians, Paul has already given full proof, viz. (**#2Co 12:12**) the miracles wrought in their midst and (**#2Co 3:2**) the spiritual effects of the Gospel in their hearts. He will now add the more terrible proof of special punishment.

Ver. 4. Proof of the (**#2Co 13:4a**) power of Christ (**#2Co 13:4b**) in Paul, in view of admitted human weakness. The crucifixion of Christ was a result of His human weakness. This involves, as does **#2Co 8:9**, the mystery of the Incarnation. And the dread reality of these words must not be set aside. We are here told expressly that Christ was crucified because He had not power to save Himself. Yet He is unchangeably divine, and had dwelt from eternity in infinite power. We must therefore conceive the Eternal Son as willingly taking upon Himself at His incarnation, in a mode to us inconceivable but divine, for a time and for our salvation, real human weakness; and as being in His dying moments forsaken (**#Mt 27:46**) by God, and powerless in the hands of His enemies. The ridicule of the Jews, (**#Mt 27:42**) "others He saved: Himself He cannot save," was solemn truth. So in the garden (**#Mt 26:53**) the only way of deliverance which Christ mentions is prayer to His Father for angelic assistance. Thus "in all things He was made like His brothers": **#Heb 2:17**.

**But He lives:** upon the throne.

**By the power of God:** "who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory," **#1Pe 1:21**. The resurrection of Christ is ever attributed to the Father's power: **#2Co 4:14; #1Co 15:15; #Ro 4:24; 6:4; 8:11**, etc. He who was so weak that He could not save Himself from the cross now lives by the outstretched arm of God. And the *power* thus manifested is proof that (**#2Co 13:3**) Christ is "powerful" in His Church to save and to punish. For the power of the Father abides in those whom

it rescues; even, we may reverently suppose, in the Risen God-Man. (Cp. #Joh 5:26; 6:57; #Col 1:19.) Therefore the power of God which raised Christ is proof that Christ has power to inflict punishment in His Church.

Verse 4b. Expounds "speaks in me": as #2Co 13:4a expounds "who is not weak." It shows how Christ's life by the power of God bears upon Paul and his readers.

**Weak in Him:** helpless amid peril, as Christ was and because the Spirit of Christ moves Paul to similar self-devotion for the salvation of men.

**We shall live,** on earth rescued from imminent peril *by the power of God* so as to minister *for you*. And, just as Christ's rescue from death by the power of God is a proof of His present power towards and among His professed servants so Paul's frequent and almost miraculous deliverance from impending death, from perils endured for Christ's sake, proves that in him the power of God is enabling him to exercise apostolic authority. Compare and contrast #2Co 4:7ff and 10:1ff. Guilty men may well fear both Him who was raised from the dead and His servant who, even within the jaws of death protected by the arm of God, continues and will continue to live.

Ver. 5. Direct appeal, coming with great force after the solemn words of #2Co 12:20-13:4.

**Try, or tempt:** put to the test, with good or bad intention. Same word in #1Co 7:5; 10:9, 13; #Mt 4:1; 16:1; #Heb 11:17; #Jas 1:13; #Mt 4:3; #1Th 3:5: cognate to "temptation," #1Co 10:13; #Ga 4:14; #1Ti 6:9, etc.

**In faith:** i.e. having belief of the gospel promise of eternal life as the element of life. [The article presents this as a well-known and therefore definite object of thought.] Cp. "stand in the faith," #1Co 16:13; "continue in faith," #1Ti 2:15; "live in the faith," #Ga 2:20. Paul has in mind men guilty of open sin. But such cannot (see under #Ro 10:9) believe the Gospel. He therefore urges his readers generally to search their hearts whether they are continuing in faith; that thus the guilty ones may find that they have lost the condition of salvation and no longer belong to Christ, and may by this discovery be led to repentance.

**Prove:** a nobler word than *try*, only used of a trial with good intent: "find out, by testing, your own genuineness." So #2Co 8:8; #1Co 3:13; 11:28; 16:3. The addition of it here suggests a hope that the trial will be satisfactory. These words are very emphatic. "*Yourselves*, test ye: *yourselves* prove ye."

**Or do you not etc.:** alternative appeal, which ought to supersede those going before. For, Christ in them is a proof that they are in faith. "Is it needful to make the examination? do you not read your own hearts and find there marks of the presence of Christ?"

**Christ Jesus in you:** by His Spirit giving victory over sin, prompting filial confidence in God, and reproducing the whole mind of Christ. Cp. #Ro 8:9ff; #Eph 3:17. This is a result of *faith*; and a proof that it is not vain.

**Except perhaps etc.:** adds force to this question by stating the only alternative.

**Reprobate**, or *disapproved*: rejected after trial. Same word in #1Co 9:27; #Ro 1:28; #2Ti 3:8; #Tit 1:16; #Heb 6:8.

Ver. 6. A severe but disguised warning, in view of the foregoing alternative.

**We**: emphatic transition from the readers to Paul and his colleagues. Whether or not the Corinthians test themselves, their conduct will put to the proof Paul's apostolic faithfulness. In this trial he will not fail. And he hopes that they will know this. That he refers to proof given by inflicting punishment, #2Co 13:7 shows.

**Reprobate**: as in #2Co 13:5, one who fails in trial: chosen in order to contrast Paul's faithfulness with the faithlessness of some at Corinth. It also suggests that his faithfulness will compel him to punish. It is, like #2Co 13:3, a severe warning to those who question his authority.

**I hope**: #2Co 5:11. He desires that, in case of obstinacy, they may have, and may recognize, the proof.

Ver. 7.-9. A disinterested prayer for the readers, appropriately concluding the warning.

**Pray to God**: formal transition from the presence of men to the presence of God. Cp. #2Co 5:13.

**May be seen to be approved**: as is every teacher by the excellence of his pupils. Paul's prayer that they *do nothing bad* is not prompted, as it might easily be, by a selfish wish to gain approval through their goodness, but simply by a desire that they may do what is good. And their well-doing will deprive Paul of a proof of his apostolic authority, viz. that afforded by the punishment he would inflict. In this case, he will not be reprobate i.e. one who has failed in trial; but, as destitute of the proof afforded by inflicting supernatural punishment, he may speak of himself comparatively *as unapproved*: same word as *reprobate*, #2Co 13:5. (Similarly unscrupulous rulers have sometimes wished for a weak rebellion as an occasion for showing their power to crush it.) Paul thus reminds his readers that his prayer for their good behavior is not self-seeking, but self-denial. For their continued obstinacy would magnify his power.

Ver. 8.-9a. The foregoing unselfish prayer traced to a necessity of Paul's nature.

**We cannot**: because it would be contrary to our inmost disposition.

**The truth**: the word of God, which corresponds always with absolute reality. See under #Ro 1:18. It is designed to mold men's conduct in correspondence with God's will, that thus they may "do the truth." Consequently, to lead men into sin, is to act *against the truth*. This, to Paul's renewed nature, was impossible. His powers like those of Christ, *can* be put forth only *on behalf of the truth*.

**For we rejoice etc.**: reason of this impossibility.

**We, you**: each emphatic.



**Strong:** capable of spiritual activity and endurance. Cp. #Ro 15:1.

**Weak:** not spiritual weakness, which could not be a joy to Paul or help others to be strong. It is, as in #2Co 13:4, human incapacity for doing anything great. The spiritual strength of his readers was a joy to Paul: and this joy was not lessened by the fact that, in order to impart to them this strength, Paul himself went into positions of weakness. And this was with him an abiding principle. For the objects which give us joy determine our whole character. And this joy of Paul kept him back from doing anything to hinder the truth from molding his readers' conduct; and compelled him to put forth his powers *on behalf of the truth*. Consequently, since for their strength he was willing to be weak, he cannot wish them to persevere in sin that thus he may have an opportunity of showing his apostolic power. For this would run counter to his very heart, which rejoices in their spiritual strength. #2Co 13:7-9a are full of terrible warning. So completely are the unfaithful ones in Paul's power that selfish motives would suggest a wish that they would continue obstinate. Consequently, desire for their repentance is pure self-sacrificing love for them.

Ver. 9b. Leads us back to the starting point in #2Co 13:7.

**Also pray:** as well as rejoice when you are strong.

**Your full equipment:** in apposition to *this*. Paul prays that his readers be strong; or, what is practically the same, that they be fully equipped. Cognate word in #1Co 1:10. See note. He prays that they be thoroughly furnished with all gifts of the spiritual life, fitting them to do the work and fight the battles of God. For the fallen ones, this implied complete restoration. That of these Paul here thinks chiefly, is proved by foregoing and following warnings.

Ver. 10. Concludes DIV. III., by giving its purpose, with a solemn warning; and by restating a principle of clemency which has been kept in mind throughout. It is thus an epitome of the whole.

**Because of this:** "because I rejoice in and pray for your spiritual strength and complete restoration." This prompts him to write to them *while absent*. For the same reason (#2Co 1:23-2:4) Paul changed his purpose of coming to Corinth direct from Ephesus, and wrote his First Epistle. This implies that the reformation (#2Co 7:11) wrought by the First Epistle was not a complete one. Even after its good results Paul finds it needful to add the severe words of DIV. III. of the Second Epistle.

**That when present etc.;** develops because of this, in view of the readers' present state.

**Severely:** by inflicting punishment. Cognate word in #Ro 11:22.

**The authority which etc.:** almost word for word as in #2Co 10:8. Even if Paul act severely, he will act *according* to his divinely-given *authority*. But he remembers that the purpose of this authority is not to *pull down* but to *build up* the church. Therefore, if he is obliged to pull down he will do so as little as possible. And these are his last words to the refractory church-members.

**Building up,** or *edification*; takes hold of #2Co 12:19, marking the completion of § 19 there begun.

REVIEW. Throughout his long boasting, in §§ 15-18 or **#2Co 11:1-12:18**, Paul has been appealing, in self-defence, to his readers. He now tells them, with the dignity of a true servant of God, that their approval has not been the aim of this self-defence. He has spoken before God, resting in and united to Christ. Not the approval, but the spiritual good, of his readers has been his aim. His fear about them prompts him to write, lest when he comes the gross and unrepented sins of some of them humble him into the very dust. His readers know him well. Already he has been with them twice. When he comes again he will fulfill his threat, and punish those who by sufficient witnesses are proved to be guilty. Those who call in question his apostolic authority will then have the proof they profess to seek. Just as Christ, though powerless to save Himself even from the cross, yet reigns now by the power of God, so they will find Paul, though apparently a poor weak man, but weak for Christ's sake, yet armed with divine power. He bids them put themselves to the test whether they continue believing and whether Christ still dwells in them: else they are already rejected as unfaithful. They will soon find that Paul is not unfaithful. He prays for them with disinterested love. For their obstinacy will magnify his apostolic authority. But this he does not desire: for he cannot but wish for their highest good. He therefore writes these severe words, that thus he may be spared from severe actions, remembering that severity is not the purpose of the authority with which he has been invested by Christ.

DIVISION III. opens to us a terrible view of the church of Corinth in Paul's day. As we look from our modern standpoint into the confusion which reigned then and there and into the strange mixture of diverse and mutually opposing elements, we distinguish two groups of opponents to Paul, each one with marked characteristics. One of these comes into view gradually, assuming greater definiteness as we watch it, until at last the features of its leaders are clearly seen. The second group startles us by its sudden appearance in distinct and dark colors. The former group was Jewish; the latter, probably Gentile. Doubtless both came under Paul's warning at the outset of DIV. III. (**#2Co 10:2**) to those who reckoned him *as walking according to flesh*. For, both they who openly disputed his authority and they who set it at nought by open sin looked upon the apostle as acting from merely human motives and as armed only with human powers.

Paul's Jewish opponents were professed Christians: for they boasted (**#2Co 10:7; 11:23**) that they belonged to Christ. *He that comes* (**#2Co 11:4**) suggests that they were not inhabitants of Corinth, but arrivals from elsewhere. They claimed (**#2Co 11:5, 13; 12:11**) the highest rank in the Church, viz. to be *apostles of Christ*. Doubtless it was they who needed (**#2Co 3:1**) commendatory letters. They professed to be disinterested friends (**#2Co 11:12**) of the Corinthians: but their claim was (**#2Co 11:13**) falsehood and guile. For they were bad men, doing Satan's work, and on the way to perdition. they (**#2Co 11:20**) *ate up* the Corinthian church and *caught* it unawares: they tried to bring it into bondage to the Mosaic Law, or rather to themselves: and treated it with insolence. They openly charged the apostle with being bold only at a distance, and powerless when present; and insinuated (**#2Co 12:16**) that he had guilefully made others his instruments for plundering the Corinthians. Yet even these men were listened to and tolerated (**#2Co 11:19**) in the church which owed its existence to the long toil and the dauntless courage of Paul. In **#Ga 2:4** we find similar men in the birthplace of Christianity.

The second group of adversaries was guilty of gross sensuality. Such men, Paul was humiliated at finding (**#2Co 12:21; 13:2**) even on his unrecorded second visit. He forbore to punish them, but

threatened to do so when he should come again if they were still unrepentant. This sensuality seems (**#1Co 5:9**) to have prompted his lost letter. A very aggravated case of it, which Paul could not tolerate even while absent, he deals with (**#1Co 5:1ff**) in his first extant letter. And the general unfaithfulness was his chief reason (**#2Co 1:23**) for writing that letter instead of coming, as he first intended, direct from Ephesus to Corinth. Although the letter moved the church generally to repentance, it failed to reach some of the worst cases of sensuality. And Paul wrote the severe threatenings of DIV. III. of this Second Epistle to avoid, if possible, severe discipline, painful both to them and to him, when he comes to see them.

Paul declared that these disorders at Corinth would, if continued evoke a proof of his apostolic authority. They have done so, in a way beyond his thought and to us most valuable. For Paul's reproof of these disorders is an infallible mark of the genuineness of the Epistles before us. That against the Corinthian church we find charges of sensuality far more terrible than anything else we have from his pen, accords with the world-wide infamy of the city whose temple to the goddess of lust had once been served by a thousand impure priestesses. And certainly no forger personating the apostle after his death would venture to write thus about the early days of a church which in the second century was well known and important. The severity of these Epistles proves that they came from the only man who would have dared to write thus.

In dealing with these serious disorders Paul begins with an implied threat of punishment, which he supports by appealing to the supernatural results which his gospel has already produced in the hearts of his readers. And then, since his authority had been openly questioned by his Jewish opponents, he boldly contrasts himself with them. This leads to his long boasting, of which I have given a summary under **#2Co 12:18**. And this is followed by an explanation of his purpose in writing to them these bold words, an explanation full of warning and of disinterested love.

## II CORINTHIANS

### SECTION XX.

#### FAREWELL.

#### CH. XIII. 11-13.

**As to the rest, brothers, rejoice, be fully equipped, receive exhortation, mind the same thing, be at peace. And the God of love and of peace will be with you: Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the participation of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you.**

Ver. 11.-12. Concluding and cheerful words, the more welcome after severe reproof.

**As to the rest:** suggesting much else which Paul would like to say. In spite of many defects he still recognizes them as *brethren* in Christ.

**Rejoice:** #Php 3:1; 4:4: eight times in this sad epistle. All children of God we may bid *rejoice*, whatever be their circumstances: for all have abundant reason for joy.

**Be-fully-equipped**, or *restored*: more fully "undergo from day to day restoration or equipment." [The present imperative seems to imply that only gradually are the depraving inward effects of sin removed and we fitted for the work of God.] It recalls the same word in #2Co 13:9; #1Co 1:10. While bidding them rejoice Paul cannot forget their great deficiencies, which must be removed before their joy can be full.

**Exhortation**; includes the ideas of encouragement and comfort. See under #Ro 12:1. "Yield to my entreaty to be fully restored, an entreaty full of encouragement and comfort."

**Mind the same thing:** a restoration which (#1Co 1:10) had been greatly needed. Cp. #Php 2:2; #Ro 12:16; 15:5.

**Be-at-peace:** same word in #Ro 12:18. It is a pleasant result of being of the same mind.

**God of love and peace:** of whose nature love and peace are essential elements, and from whom they flow forth to His people's hearts. *Love* is put first, as being itself the inmost essence of God and the source of *peace*. If we obey Paul's exhortation to peace, the Eternal Fountain of *peace*, and of *love* the source of peace, will dwell with us. Cp. #Ro 15:33; #1Th 5:23; #1Jo 4:7-13; #Joh 14:23.

**Greet etc:** as in #1Co 16:20; #Ro 16:16.

Ver. 13. Parting benediction, the most full in the New Testament, embracing conspicuously each Person of the Trinity.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: #2Co 8:9; 12:9:** put first because Christ's favor towards men is the immediate source of all blessing, and the channel through which flows our salvation which has its ultimate source in *the love of God*. These last words trace up the channel to its source.

**Participation of the Holy Spirit:** cp. #1Co 10:16: partnership with others in possessing the Holy Spirit. This is the inward result of *the grace of Christ and the love of God*, and the means through which they become practically known to us and thus abide *with us*. Cp. #Ro 5:5; #1Co 2:12.

**Participation;** reminds us that *the Holy Spirit* is the common possession of all the children of God, uniting all in one. What others have, Paul desires his readers to share.

**All of you:** emphatic, including those now unrepentant. The smile which ever beams from the face of Christ the eternal love which fills the heart of God, and the Holy Spirit who fills the hearts of the children of God with consciousness of His eternal love, are to be our companions along the pilgrimage of life. And, if so, the sunshine of Christ's smile, the unchanging love of God, and the guidance and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, will make our path, be it ever so rough, a path of peace and joy.

REVIEW OF THE EPISTLE. We notice at once that the matter of chs. viii., ix., viz. the collection for Jerusalem, is quite different from the rest of the Epistle, which is almost entirely apologetic. The Epistle thus falls into the three broadly marked divisions which I have adopted, and which may be called, the First Apology, the Collection, the Second Apology. The matter of the collection was inserted between the Apologies probably because Paul preferred to pass to it at once while full of the joy with which he concludes the First Apology, rather than after the warnings and threatenings and sorrow of the Second. The Apologies differ in that the First is general, addressed to the whole church, while the Second is directed against certain gross offenders, many of them of long standing, and against certain foreign and deceitful opponents. Each of the Apologies contains a long boast, which is its kernel. And the difference just mentioned between DIV. I. and DIV. III. is seen in that the earlier boasting (#2Co 2:14-6:10) sets forth chiefly the grandeur of the office faithfully filled by Paul and his colleagues; whereas the second boasting (#2Co 11:1-12:18) sets forth, with evident reluctance, Paul's own personal conduct and hardships and claims, and this in direct contrast to specific opponents.

This Epistle was evidently prompted by (#2Co 7:6ff) the arrival of Titus and by the tidings he brought about the church at Corinth, tidings on the whole, but not altogether, very good. The earlier severe letter, which Paul wrote (#2Co 2:4) in tears and afterwards (#2Co 7:8) regretted having written, had produced most excellent results. The whole church (#2Co 7:11) was moved to repentance for tolerating the gross criminal, and to an outburst of loyalty to the apostle. But there was still (#2Co 12:21) among some church-members gross sin, which Paul feared would make his visit to Corinth humiliating to himself and painful to his readers: and there were false and boastful men who, though deliberate and probably professed enemies of the Apostle, yet had influence in the church. And the collection for Jerusalem was not making satisfactory progress. Paul must therefore write again; to express his joy at their repentance, to urge forward the collection, and if possible by warnings from a distance to bring the impenitent ones to repentance, so as to prevent the severity

which he still fears he will be compelled to use when he arrives. And, now that he is sure of the repentance of the more part, he can tell them the reason of the postponement of his visit.

Paul writes under the influence of recent deadly peril. But to this he refers only in a song of exultant gratitude. Coming next to his change of plan, he appeals to his own straightforwardness; and then gives the reason of the change. He bids the Corinthian Christians receive back the now-repentant sinner condemned in the earlier letter. In glowing language he depicts the grandeur of the apostolic ministry. Then, preparing beforehand as usual a way to DIV. III., he urges his readers to separate themselves from all sin; and concludes DIV. I. by an outburst of joy at the tidings about the Corinthians which Titus has brought. This joy suitably prepares the way to the collection for the poor believers at Jerusalem. This he urges them, for their honor among the churches, to have ready in abundance when he arrives. And he concludes his reference to it by pointing out its great and good spiritual results.

Paul comes now to the most painful matter of his letter, reserved to the last. He quietly threatens punishment to some whose names he forbears to mention; and after doing so refuses to compare himself with his boastful and deceitful opponents. He then sets forth in contrast to them his own disinterested labors, his many hardships, and his wonderful revelations. As a counterpart to these last he mentions a severe personal affliction, and Christ's promise in the midst of it. He appeals to his miraculous credentials, and strengthens his appeal by an expression of tender love for his readers; and concludes his long self-defence by rebutting an insinuation about his colleagues. From the vantage thus gained, he speaks again, rather by way of suggestion than of direct threatening, about the punishment he fears he shall be compelled to inflict; and begs his readers to make needless by self-examination this proof of his apostolic authority. He concludes his letter with a cheering salutation and a beautiful benediction.

This epistle preserves for us an episode in the life of Paul otherwise unrecorded, viz. a visit to Corinth, probably during his three years' sojourn at Ephesus. It was to him (**#2Co 2:1; 12:21**) a painful and humiliating visit. For he found in the church men guilty of gross sensuality. He contented himself with warning them to repent, and threatening punishment at his next visit in case of continued sin. We are not surprised to find that some time after this visit he wrote (**#1Co 5:9ff**) a letter of warning against sensuality, and against intercourse with professed Christians who were guilty of it. At the time of this letter he intended probably (**#2Co 1:15**) to go direct from Ephesus to Corinth, and then to Macedonia, and then back to Corinth. He changed his plan (**#2Co 1:23**) because of bad tidings about the state of the church; for above all things he wished to avoid another painful visit to his beloved but unfaithful children. Instead therefore of coming at once, he wrote, in the spring of the year in which he left Ephesus, his First Epistle: and a few months later, with the purposes expounded above, he wrote the Second Epistle, which we now reluctantly close.

More than any other, this Epistle reveals to us the heart of the Apostle, the kind of life he lived, and the sort of people with whom he had to do. The hand which writes it trembles with fear, a fear which reveals the heroism of the man who in spite of it goes forward without a moment's hesitation along his path of peril. We feel the tender love which prompts forbearance towards unfaithful ones, and fills his eyes with tears while he writes the condemnation of an outrageous offender and makes him afterwards regret the letter he has written, but which did not prevent him from writing it. Now

love has its joys as well as its sorrows: and Paul's joy at the good news brought by Titus has no bounds. Yet., in spite of his intense love and deep sympathy, he is still resolved to punish those who continue obstinate. Upon these, though with a sad heart, his strong hand will fall. We have also in this Epistle the darkest picture extant of the continual and deadly peril of the apostle. That his life is prolonged, is little less than a constant miracle. Once it seemed to him that there was no way of escape: and the hero, saved so often before from imminent peril, prepared to die. The Epistle reveals also the irregular life of many of those lately gathered out of heathenism, and the gross sin of some who nevertheless continued to be members of the church; and the unscrupulous and deceitful hostility to Paul of others who had influence in the church. In short, we have here a picture, in most vivid colors, of an Apostle and his converts.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DISSERTATION I

#### *THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS COMPARED WITH THOSE TO THE CORINTHIANS*

1. In a former volume I endeavored to show that the Epistle to the Romans is a logical and orderly development of five great doctrines assumed by Paul without proof but with perfect confidence; that he accepted them because they were proclaimed by Christ, because Christ claimed to be the Son of God, and because as Paul believed Christ rose from the dead. With this analysis we now hasten to compare the Epistles to the Corinthians.

Each of these fundamental doctrines, and no other broad general principles, we shall find assumed with equal confidence in the Epistles now before us as matters universally believed in the early churches even by Paul's enemies: and we shall find them brought to bear on the many and various details discussed in the First Epistle, and on the very delicate personal matters of the Second Epistle. This various application of these great principles to practical life will enable us better to grasp them in their full compass, and will also reveal even more than does the Epistle to the Romans how closely they were inwoven into the mind and thought of Paul. But, inasmuch as the same doctrines are assumed in every book of the New Testament, (a proof how confidently they were accepted by the entire early church,) these great foundation stones of gospel teaching are not in themselves proof that the Epistles to the Corinthians were from the author of the Epistle to the Romans. Careful comparison, however, will reveal in this last Epistle a mode of stating, and a development of, these great fundamentals which is found only in the epistles which bear the name of Paul; and will reveal, in both Epistles to the Corinthians, the same mode of statement, and further developments which are the true complement of the developments already noted in the Epistle to the Romans. These further developments, on the lines already marked out, would be an irresistible proof, if such were needed, that the three Epistles are a product of one mind.

This superabundant evidence will be still further conformed by the picture of the emotional and moral and spiritual nature of their writer presented in these Epistles, a picture much fuller and containing lines not noticed before, but nevertheless an harmonious and almost necessary complement of the self-delineation given in the Epistle to the Romans.

In our comparison, the total difference of tone and feeling between each of these epistles and the two others, a difference corresponding to the total difference of Paul's surroundings and aims while writing will greatly aid us. For it will throw into strong relief the one mind and one heart which thinks and beats in every page of each epistle.

2. In letters not treating of abstract doctrine and written to men already familiar with Paul's teaching, the great fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith has naturally a place less conspicuous than in the formal exposition given in the Epistle to the Romans. But, that *they who believe* are those whom God is pleased *to save by the gospel proclamation*, is expressly asserted in **#1Co 1:21**; a verse wonderfully in harmony with the main argument of the Epistle to the Romans, and revealing by its



early place in the Epistle how prominent in the mind of Paul was the thought it embodies. Of **#Ro 1:16; #1Co 1:18, 24** are emphatic restatements. That the Gospel is a divine summons, a doctrine conspicuous in **#Ro 8:28, 30; 9:24**, finds echo immediately after the doctrine of salvation by faith in **#1Co 1:24, 26**. The doctrine of election, which like the gospel *call* is a corollary of salvation by faith, finds not only echo but development in **#1Co 1:27, 28**; verses implying that the objects of salvation were chosen by God to be His instruments, and asserting that they were selected with the further purpose of putting to shame the pride of man. This development of the doctrine of election deserves careful study. That faith is designed to save us from our sins, is implied in **#1Co 15:2, 14, 17**. And, that it is the source of Christian stability and of fortitude in face of danger, is implied in **#2Co 1:24; 4:13; 5:7**: cp. **#2Co 4:18**.

The word *justified* in **#1Co 6:11** is, in spite of its peculiar sense, a close harmony with **#Ro 5:9; 6:7**: for, only in **#Lu 18:14** and the epistles of Paul do we read of justification as already received. The word *reconciled* in **#2Co 5:18-20** recalls **#Ro 5:1, 10, 11**.

3. That our salvation comes through the death of Christ, a doctrine asserted and expounded in **#Ro 3:24-26**, is the only conceivable explanation of the importance given throughout these epistles to the death of Christ. *The cross of Christ* (**#1Co 1:17**) must not be *made an empty thing for the word of the cross is a power of God*. *Christ crucified* (**#1Co 1:23**) Paul preaches; and desires (**#1Co 2:2**) to know nothing else. That *Christ has been sacrificed*, as *our Passover*, (**#1Co 5:7**), links His death with the Mosaic sacrifices: and we remember that the innocent paschal lamb, by dying, saved the firstborn from death. Christ died for the finally lost: for (**#1Co 8:11**: cp. **#Ro 14:15**) there is danger lest *a brother for whom Christ died, perish*. Unless salvation comes to us through the death of Christ I can conceive no meaning in **#1Co 10:16**, *partnership in the blood of Christ*: nor can we explain **#1Co 11:25**, *the New Covenant in My blood*, and the importance given to the Lord's Supper. The *price* with which we *were bought* can be no other (**#Mt 20:28**) than the blood of Christ, in whom (**#Ro 3:24**) there is redemption. The repetition in **#1Co 6:20; 7:23** suggests that these words were a common phrase of Paul, if not of the early church. As in **#Ro 4:25** so in **#1Co 15:3**, Christ's death is placed in special relation to *our sins*. In **#2Co 5:15** we have a most important development of the doctrine before us, a combination of Doctrines 2 and 3, (see under **#Ro 8:39**), viz. that Christ died not only to save us from the due penalty of our sins but to create in us a life altogether new. This is stated to be a purpose of the death of Christ; because only so far as we now live for Christ do we now, and shall we for ever, enjoy the benefits purchased for us by His death.

In **#1Co 15:22** we have the rudiments of the argument developed in **#Ro 5:12-19**.

4. The deeply significant phrases *in Christ, in the Lord*, found by us first at the foot of the cross in **#Ro 3:24**, and in **#Ro 6:11, 23**, etc. are found in the epistles before us in various connections in **#1Co 1:2, 4f; #1Co 1:30; 3:1; 4:10, 15-17; 7:22, 39; 9:1f; #1Co 11:11; 15:18, 22, 31, 58; 16:19, 24; #2Co 2:12, 14, 17; 3:14; 5:17, 19; 12:2, 19**. This phrase receives an elucidation, useful though very imperfect, from its counterpart in **#1Co 15:22**, *in Adam*.

That God designs us to live by union with Christ a life altogether new, a life of which Christ is Himself the one aim (cp. **#Ro 6:10f**) and that for this end God gave Christ to die, is expressly asserted in **#2Co 5:13-17**. The purity from all defilement which this devotion to Christ involves,

Paul (**#2Co 7:1**) bids us claim. The intimacy of the believer's union with Christ, in virtue of which Christ lives and speaks and acts in him, is wonderfully set forth in the teaching of **#1Co 12:12-27** that the church is the body of Christ; of which teaching, peculiar to Paul, we have the rudiments in **#Ro 12:4-6**. A practical application of this teaching is given in **#1Co 6:15**; followed in **#1Co 6:17** by an important explanatory addition. Upon the subjective holiness which ought to be the aim of the people of God, light is cast by **#1Co 7:34**, *that she may be holy in her body and in her spirit*; and by the parallel in **#1Co 7:32** *how he may please the Lord*. The phrase "sanctification in Christ," which under **#Ro 8:39** I used as a concise statement of Doctrine 3, has an exact counterpart in **#1Co 1:2**, *sanctified in Christ Jesus*.

5. The fifth fundamental doctrine of the Epistle to the Romans viz. that the Holy Spirit is the agent of our sanctification, is not only implied and asserted again and again in the epistles before us but receives there important development. Paul expects his readers to know (**#1Co 3:16; 6:19**: cp. **#2Co 6:16**) that the Holy Spirit dwells in all believers, and therefore presumably in all church members; and that His presence makes their bodies to be the *temple of God*. Apart from the Holy Spirit we cannot (**#1Co 12:3**) even look up to Jesus and call Him, Master. The Spirit is the element in which (**#1Co 12:13**) the baptized ones were united into the one *body of Christ*. For, the oneness of every living body is derived from the one animating spirit which moves harmoniously its various and variously endowed members. Indeed, this far-reaching and significant analogy, so dear to Paul but unknown to the other writers of the New Testament, is but a logical development of the great doctrine that in all believers the Holy Spirit dwells, reproducing in them the life of Christ to be their life.

Not only have the Apostles (**#1Co 2:10-3:1**) received the Spirit of God as a source of higher intelligence, but church-members are also expected to be *spiritual men*. *The earnest of the Spirit* in **#2Co 1:22** is practically the same as the *firstfruit of the Spirit* in **#Ro 8:23**. In complete harmony with **#Ro 8:2-27**, Paul declares himself (**#2Co 3:6**) to be a *minister of the Spirit*. Consequently, to turn (**#2Co 3:17**) *to the Lord* is to turn to *the Spirit*. In harmony with **#Ro 12:3**, *to each one God has allotted a measure of faith*, the abiding faith of the servants of God is attributed (**#2Co 4:13**) to *the Spirit of faith*. A close coincidence with **#Ro 15:19** is found in **#2Co 12:12**. That the Spirit allots His gifts (**#1Co 12:11**) *according as He pleases*, and that He is placed in **#1Co 12:5f** and in **#2Co 13:14** beside *the Lord Jesus Christ and God*, both these being Persons, suggests or implies that the Spirit of God is a Divine Person, distinct from the Father and the Son.

6. Thus all the five great doctrines assumed without proof and made foundation stones of argument in the Epistle to the Romans are assumed with equal confidence in the Epistles to the Corinthians. The frequent appearance of these doctrines, in various forms and variously developed, in practical details and even in outbursts of emotion, reveals their deep root in the mind of Paul. The confidence with which he assumes them, as matters needing no proof and not open to question, proves that they were universally accepted both by Paul's faithful converts and his bitter and unscrupulous enemies. And the modes of stating these doctrines and the logical development and practical application in the Epistles to the Corinthians of the subordinate doctrines found in rudiment in the Epistle to the Romans, of all which the above is a very imperfect exposition, will be to the careful student a proof excluding all doubt, even if it stood alone, that all three epistles are an outflow of one profound mind.

7. As in the Epistle to the Romans so in those now before us, Paul bows with humble reverence in the presence of One whom he counts it an honor to call his Lord. Whatever we there learned about Paul's conception of Jesus is also found and is supplemented here.

Paul calls himself (**#1Co 4:15**) the father of the Corinthian church in contrast to others who were only tutors. But the infinite difference between the relation to the church of himself and of Christ provokes (**#1Co 1:13**) the indignant question *Paul, was he crucified for you?* All the apostles (**#1Co 3:22f**) belong to the church: but the church belongs to Christ. Even Paul's guileful enemies make it their boast (**#2Co 10:7; 11:23**) that they are Christ's ministers. The unique relation of Christ to the church is seen in Paul's desire (**#2Co 11:2**) to present to Him the church as a spotless bride; and in the teaching (**#1Co 12:12ff**) that the church is the body of Christ. Of every man (**#1Co 11:3**) He is head. He is the one foundation beside which no other can be laid. For Him, exist even (**#1Co 6:13**) the bodies of His people. The unique relation of Adam to the race which sprang from him reveals the unique position of Him who though Son of Man is yet called (**#1Co 15:45**) *the Last Adam*. And He died (**#2Co 5:15**) that He might be the aim of His people's life.

Although removed from sight, Christ is still present in His Church putting forth His *power* (**#2Co 12:9**) to help and to (**#1Co 5:4; 11:32**) inflict punishment. From Him (**#2Co 13:10**) Paul received his apostolic authority. Upon His will (**#1Co 4:19**) hang the uncertainties of the future. In **#1Co 4:5**, as in **#Ro 2:16**, Paul looks forward to the day when Christ will come to make known the secrets of men's hearts and to allot to each his due praise. In that day, *the day of the Lord*, (**#1Co 1:8; 5:5; #2Co 1:14**), all men will appear (**#2Co 5:10**) before *the judgment-seat of Christ*. Even under the Old Covenant He was the real source (**#1Co 10:4**) of the refreshment miraculously given to Israel in the wilderness. All this marks the absolutely unique relation of Christ to men, and raises Him absolutely above the whole human race.

As in **#Ro 1:7**, repeated in **#1Co 1:3; #2Co 1:2**, the name of *Christ*; and that of *the Holy Spirit* are placed beside the name of *God* in **#1Co 12:4ff; #2Co 13:13**.

The most important addition to our knowledge of the Son of God afforded by the Epistles to the Corinthians as compared with that to the Romans is the fuller teaching about the subordination of the Son to the Father. That He is Mediator between God and men, they holding a relation to Him in some points similar to His own relation to God, is very prominent. We belong (**#1Co 3:23**) to Christ, and Christ to God. Of every man (**#1Co 11:3**) Christ is the head; and of Christ God is head. In all these passages the simple name *God* distinguishes the Father from *Christ*. Even in His final glory (**#1Co 15:28**) and for ever *the Son* will bow to *God*. In **#1Co 8:6**, as distinguished from the One Lord, *the Father* is the *One God* as in **#Ro 5:1, 8, 10, 11**, etc., the Father is ever supreme, operating through the Son and reconciling men to Himself. That the Son, while possessing to the full the attributes of deity, but possessing them (**#Joh 5:26; 6:57**) as derived from the Father, bows to the Father in absolute and eternal and essential subordination, a teaching most conspicuous both with Paul and with John, is the only conceivable basis of the Unity of the Divine Trinity.

8. As in **#Ro 1:4; 4:25**, etc., so in 1 and 2 Corinthians Paul assumes with full confidence that God raised Christ from the dead. This he announced (**#1Co 15:4**) as part of his Gospel on his first visit to Corinth. And upon it rests (**#1Co 15:17f**) all Christian hope. Paul's list of witnesses suggests that

he had carefully interrogated those who had seen the risen Saviour. Christ both died and rose, **#2Co 5:15**. And, as in **#Ro 6:4**, etc., so in **#1Co 6:14; #2Co 4:14**, He was raised by God. Therefore (**#2Co 13:4**) the life which the *Crucified One* lives is by the power of God. This was not doubted by any church-party at Corinth. And Paul's silence implies that it was not questioned even by his bitter opponents, and that even the immoral men (**#1Co 15:33f**) whose bold denial of the resurrection involved logically a denial that Christ had risen did not venture to contradict this universal belief of the church. Thus even the dissensions at Corinth attest the firm and universal belief among Christians that Christ rose from the dead.

The great significance of this universal belief, I have in my *Romans*, Dissertation i. 10, endeavored to expound.

9. Naturally the doctrines so firmly held by Paul clothed themselves in appropriate and often recurring phrases, which everywhere reveal his hand in contrast to other writers of the New Testament.

As examples we note **#1Co 1:1, 2, 9, 24, 26**: *called apostle, called saints, etc.* The deeply significant words *in Christ* have been already mentioned. Compare and contrast **#1Jo 2:6, 24, 28**. Verbatim repetitions of **#Ro 1:7** are **#1Co 1:3; #2Co 1:2**. Each epistle, after a salutation, bursts into praise to God. The word *always* in **#1Co 1:4** recalls *how ceaselessly* in **#Ro 1:9**. The words *grace, grace given, gift-of-grace*, are conspicuous links binding together the three epistles. The contrast of *Jew and Greek* (**#Ro 1:16; 2:9, 10; 3:9; 10:12**) meets us in **#1Co 1:22ff**. The word *exult* or *boast* (**#Ro 2:17, 23; 3:27; 4:2; 5:2, 3, 11; 15:17**) is a conspicuous feature of the Epistles to the Corinthians. The phrase *I do not wish you to be ignorant* binds together **#Ro 1:13; #1Co 10:1; 12:1; #2Co 1:8**; while the word *ignorant* is very frequent. All these examples meet us at once on the threshold of the Epistles; and might be indefinitely multiplied. A careful study of the three epistles, and this only, will reveal the oneness of expression, an evident outflow of one mind, which pervades each epistle. This will be the more conspicuous if we compare any epistle which does not bear the name of Paul.

Intermingled with familiar words and phrases, we find in the Epistle to the Corinthians others quite new to us but full of meaning. Such are *sanctified in Christ*, **#1Co 1:2**; *Day of the Lord*, **#1Co 1:8; 5:5; #2Co 1:14**; *being-saved or perishing*, **#1Co 1:18; #2Co 2:15; 4:3**. The contrast in **#2Co 3:6** of Old and New Covenants in complete harmony with Paul's quotation in **#1Co 11:25** of Christ's words at the Last Supper, is an important theological element not found in Romans. This variety amid similarity proves that the epistles are no mere copies one from another, but living originals from one hand. Their likeness is that, not of a photograph, but of children whose faces reveal their common parentage.

10. Each member of this family of epistles has very marked features of its own. The differences are as conspicuous as the general similarity. The Epistle to the Romans is eminently theological and philosophical. Great truths are arranged in their natural order, without reference to any special application; and are theologically developed. Then follows a general application. The First Epistle to the Corinthians is intensely matter of fact. A long list of subjects is taken up in order, one by one, and discussed calmly. The Second Epistle is throughout a torrent of emotion.

These differences correspond exactly to the circumstances in which each letter was written. To the Roman Christians, whom he had never seen, Paul gives a connected outline of his general teaching. The First Epistle to the Corinthians is a reply to questions about certain matters of detail, and was written to men about whom Paul knew much and had lately received special information. The Second Epistle was written under great emotion caused by deadly peril and by unexpected rescue from it, strangely intermingled with emotions roused by news good and bad just received about the much-loved readers.

11. This diversity of circumstances, impressed so deeply on every page of each epistle, reveals more fully even than the similarity of phrase the oneness of their origin. For it gives us a deeper and clearer view of the underlying principles of the mind and moral life of the great Apostle. We know him better now than when we rose from our study of the Epistle to the Romans, because we have seen him dealing with other matters and amid totally different surroundings. We have thus seen another side of his character.

We notice as before the calm impartiality with which Paul looks at both sides of a question, and judges accordingly. This is as conspicuous in his advice about marriage and idol-sacrifices and the exercise of spiritual gifts as about the weaker brethren in Rom. 14. And in each of these cases he rises from a matter of detail to some broad principle involved therein; and, after discussing this principle in its general bearing, points out its bearing upon the matter in hand. This method occasions the apparent digressions so remarkable in all three epistles, which give to Paul's treatment of passing details abiding worth as examples of unchanging principles. This constant reference of details to broad principles, a mark never absent in human greatness, pervades and ennobles every chapter of each of these epistles.

The intense earnestness and the moral grandeur which in the Epistle to the Romans claimed our profound respect are equally present now. And the exultant joy which in **#Ro 8:31-39** burst into song at sight of the hardships and perils of the Christian life reaches its highest note in the epistle written by a hand still trembling for deadly peril from which a few weeks ago there seemed to be no escape.

Very conspicuous in the Epistle to the Romans is Paul's frequent reference to the Old Testament. Such references are less frequent in the epistles now before us, but not less conspicuous. There is no need now to prove by abundant quotations that the Gospel does not contradict the Old Covenant. But, by a remarkable coincidence, even when discussing ordinary topics of his own day Paul quotes the Old Testament expressly, or appropriates its words. The old phrases *according as it is written*, etc. are the more conspicuous because of their Gentile surroundings. So deeply woven in the mind of Paul is the comparison of the two Covenants that while showing the grandeur of the Gospel ministry he contrasts it with that of Moses; and warns converts from paganism against apostasy by a long series of references to the story of Israel in the wilderness. All this betrays the man who passed suddenly in mid-life from the Old Covenant to the New and reveals a mind steeped from childhood in Jewish thought.

12. The surroundings and history of Paul as reflected in these three letters are in complete accord. The collection for Jerusalem is a common matter binding all together. We do not wonder that writing from a church lately torn by dissension Paul warns (**#Ro 16:17**) the Roman Christians against those

who make dissensions. The terrible exposition in **#Ro 1:24ff** would be easily suggested by the sensuality at Corinth, even in the church, which caused Paul so much sorrow.

13. In the epistles now before us we not only trace the old familiar features of the Apostle but we notice others not seen before. In the Epistle to the Romans we saw Paul, and heard his kindly voice, only from a distance. We now see him close at hand, dealing with practical details of church life. So tender is his sympathy that the weakness and injury of others are to himself a weakness and a burning sorrow. Yet he writes words of severest condemnation and threatening; but writes them in tears, afterwards regrets them, and overflows with joy to find that his regrets were needless. In spite of the deep impression made upon him by recent peril just escaped, and without any human necessity, he plans fresh enterprises involving new and unknown perils. We find him toiling for a living, while preaching the Gospel: and, when the Gospel so occupies his time that he can no longer earn for himself a livelihood and is thus in actual want, he resolutely refuses to receive money from his converts at Corinth lest his motives should be misunderstood and the effect of the Gospel thereby lessened. Although the continued obstinacy of the impenitent will reveal the awful power with which he has been invested by Christ, Paul begs them to repent, that this his power may be unexercised and unknown. In short we have in the letters to Corinth as compared with that to Romans a nearer and fuller picture of the Apostle. But the new lines thus brought into view are in complete harmony with the noble outlines already seen. This harmonious development of so noble a portrait proves beyond possibility of doubt, not only that the three epistles are from the same pen, (and this increases immensely the difficulty of supposing that the epistles are forged,) but that the portrait is a reflection of real life. For, had not such excellence lived it could never have been conceived or portrayed. Nor could it have been portrayed by the skill of a mere literary artist.

14. To sum up. Our comparison of the three epistles has confirmed the correctness of our analysis which traced up the whole teaching of the Epistle to the Romans to a few great doctrines which Paul accepted with complete confidence from the lips of Christ, accepting in common with all His followers the authority of Christ because, as they all believed, He had risen from the dead. And, by showing us these great doctrines applied to details of practical life, our comparison of the epistles has given us a firmer grasp of them, both as abstract principles and as a moral and spiritual influence. Of the complete unanimity with which even in a disturbed church these all-important doctrines were accepted, the dissensions at Corinth are a clear proof.

The recurrence of familiar phrases and modes of stating these doctrines, and further developments of them on the lines already marked out in the Epistle to the Romans, assure us that the three epistles are from one author. And, that this one author is no other than the Great Apostle whose name they bear, is made quite certain by the harmoniously developed and evidently genuine self-portraiture which the epistles contain.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DISSERTATION II

#### *THE BOOK OF ACTS COMPARED WITH THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS AND TO THE ROMANS*

1. The Book of Acts was accepted before A.D. 200 by all churches everywhere without a shadow of doubt as a true narrative, as of equal authority with the Four Gospels and the Epistles of Paul, and as written together with the Third Gospel by Luke, the companion of Paul.

"The Scripture of the Acts of the Apostles" is enumerated by Eusebius (*Church History* bk. iii. 25) as having an unquestioned place in "the Scriptures of the New Covenant." So ch. 4: "Luke, being by birth from Antioch, by profession a physician, having been associated for the most part with Paul, and with the others having had no little intercourse, has left us proofs of the art of healing souls which he obtained from these men, in two God-inspired (same word as in **#2Ti 3:16**) books; the Gospel which he professes to have written as it was handed over to him by those who from the beginning became eye-witnesses and servants for the word, all whom he declares that from the beginning he has followed; and the Acts of the Apostles which he composed not from hearing but having observed with his own eyes." We have a short fragment, quoting **#Ac 1:16**, of Origen's homilies on the Book of Acts. The Book is also quoted, as is the Third Gospel, as Luke's, by Tertullian, e.g. *On Fasting* ch. x., and *Against Marcion* bk. iv. 5; by Clement of Alexandria, e.g. *Stromata* bk. v. 12; and (e.g. *On Heresies* bk. iii. 10, 14, 15) by Irenaeus. Both works are enumerated as by Luke the physician in the Fragment of Muratori.

That these anonymous writings were thus universally accepted before the close of the second century as by Luke, and that so far as we know no other author was anywhere suggested, is clear proof that they were current early in the century, and affords strong presumption that they came actually from the pen of Luke. For it is not easy to account otherwise for this universal tradition. The value of this argument is illustrated by the various opinions and doubts about the authorship of the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews. Its force is not weakened by the fact that many centuries later, as we learn from the Questions of Photius who however himself accepted Luke as the author, the Book of Acts was by some attributed to Clement, by others to Barnabas, and by others to Luke. For, when the lapse of time had weakened the force of early tradition, the mere absence of the author's name sufficiently accounts for this diversity of opinion.

That the Book of Acts was written by a companion of Paul is strongly confirmed by the use of the first person in **#Ac 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16**. (This was observed by Irenaeus: see quotation above.) For this unobtrusive indication of the writer's presence is in the last degree unlikely to be the work of a deceiver. That no mention of the Epistles of Paul is found in the Book of Acts, is absolute proof of its very early date. For after Paul's death his letters became too famous to be omitted in a narrative of his life. Whereas while he was living they would seem less important.

2. The position of the epistles before us in the narrative of the Book of Acts, we shall now consider. The references to the collection for Jerusalem prove (see note under **#2Co 9:15**, and my

*Romans*, Introd. iv. 3) that in order of time the epistles stand 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians, Romans. But, when writing to Rome, (cp. **#Ro 1:13ff**; **#Ro 15:22ff**) Paul had not been there. Consequently, these epistles, written while Paul was free, were earlier than his arrest at Jerusalem. This places them not later (**#Ro 15:25**) than the arrival at Jerusalem mentioned in **#Ac 21:17**. Paul's reference to two earlier visits to Corinth implies that the two Epistles to the Corinthians were written later than his first arrival at Corinth, narrated in **#Ac 18:1**. Between **#Ac 18:1** and **#Ac 21:17** we must therefore seek for some reference to the events mentioned or alluded to in the epistles before us.

That 1 Corinthians was written from Ephesus some time before Whitsuntide, we infer from **#1Co 16:8**. And we find (Acts 19) Paul at Ephesus for (**#Ac 20:31**) some three years, intending (**#Ac 19:21**) to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and actually (**#Ac 20:1ff**; **Ac 21:17**) doing so, after spending three months in Achaia. On his return journey he passed (**#Ac 20:6**) from Europe to Asia soon after Easter, in company with the writer of the Book of Acts, who thus claims respect as an eye witness. Consequently, the three months spent in Greece, probably at Corinth the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, were in winter, doubtless the winter following the Whitsuntide mentioned in **#1Co 16:8**. A comparison of **#1Co 5:7**; **16:8** suggests that 1 Corinthians was written about Easter, and that the time of year prompted the reference to Christ as the sacrificed Passover. And this we may provisionally accept as the date of the First Epistle. We must therefore place it about the time referred to in **#Ac 19:21**.

That 2 Corinthians was written from Macedonia, some time after Paul's arrival from Troas and after his meeting there with Titus who brought news from Corinth, we infer securely from **#2Co 2:12f**; **#2Co 7:5f**. That Paul speaks of unrest even in Macedonia, suggests an interval between his arrival there and his meeting with Titus. And since this letter was evidently (**#2Co 1:3**; **2:14**; **7:6**) written under influence of the good news brought by Titus, and since the liberality of the Macedonians moved Paul (**#2Co 8:6, 17**) to urge Titus to go to Corinth to complete the collection there, which he was eager to do, we may perhaps infer that Paul wrote this Second Epistle soon after the arrival of Titus. Again, since (**#Ac 20:1**) Paul left Ephesus suddenly, immediately after the tumult, he probably did not fulfil his intention (**#1Co 16:8**) of remaining there until Pentecost. We may suppose then that between Easter and Whitsuntide he came to Troas, and almost at once (**#2Co 2:13**) went across to Macedonia; that soon after his arrival there Titus came with news from Corinth; and that soon afterwards, probably about mid-summer, Paul wrote his second extant letter to Corinth. Its composition would thus fall within the journeys and evangelical labors in Macedonia mentioned in **#Ac 20:2**, which occupied probably most of the summer. That Phillipi was the first important city of Macedonia to one coming from Troas, that Paul spent the next Passover there, and his great love for the Philippian church make probable the suggestion that this was the exact place of writing.

We have already (*Romans*, Introd. iv.) seen that the Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth near to the close of Paul's three months sojourn there mentioned in **#Ac 20:3**.

3. That these Epistles of Paul find for themselves so easily a place in the Book of Acts, where there is no express mention of them, testifies strongly to its historical trustworthiness. Other coincidences in narrative, circumstances, and personal characteristics, we shall now consider.



In agreement with **#1Co 4:15**, *I begat you*, we infer from **#Ac 18:1ff** that on his first visit Paul found no Christians at Corinth, and that therefore the founding of the church was his work. His evident (**#Ro 16:3**) affection and obligations to Aquila and Prisca accord with the statement in **#Ac 18:3** that on his first coming to Corinth he shared Aquila's toil in tent making. The persons who both at Rome and Ephesus (**#Ro 16:5**; **#1Co 16:19**) had Christian churches in their house were such as would welcome Apollos (**#Ac 18:26**) and teach him *more accurately the way of God*. They went with Paul (**#Ac 18:18f**) from Corinth to Ephesus: and there in **#1Co 16:19** we find them. Even the order of the names in **#Ro 16:3** *Prisca and Aquila*, (so **#2Ti 4:19**,) whatever be its cause, is a remarkable coincidence with **#Ac 18:18, 26**. That they left Rome, not for reasons of their own, but in obedience to an edict of the Emperor Claudius, removes all surprise that we find them again at Rome when Claudius was dead. That Silas and Timothy (**#Ac 18:5**) were with Paul during his first visit to Corinth, agrees exactly with Paul's own statement in **#2Co 1:19**. The description in **#Ac 19:22** of Timothy as one who ministered to Paul accords with the mission of Timothy in **#1Co 4:17; 16:10**. The Epistles reveal only a small Jewish element in the church at Corinth: and from **#Ac 18:6f** we learn that obstinate resistance compelled Paul to forsake the synagogue there. Since *Crispus* (**#Ac 18:8**) was *ruler of the synagogue*, and in turning to Christ was followed by his whole family, we wonder not that (**#1Co 1:14**) Paul made him an exception to his rule not personally to baptize his converts. The great number (**#Ac 18:8-11**) of Paul's converts at Corinth and his long sojourn there explain the deep anxiety for the welfare of the church which breathes throughout the Second Epistle and tore him away (**#2Co 2:12f**) from the promising opening for the Gospel at Troas. The Apollos faction at Corinth (**#1Co 1:12**, etc.) is explained by (**#Ac 18:24ff**) this fervent and scholarly teacher's arrival at Corinth and successful labor there in the glow of the deeper inspiration received from the teaching of Prisca and Aquila, during the interval between Paul's first and second visits. We find Apollos at Ephesus both in **#Ac 18:24** and later in **#1Co 16:12**. The great opening (**#1Co 16:9**) for usefulness and the many opponents at Ephesus are fully portrayed in **#Ac 19:10-20, 24-29**. The determined hostility of Demetrius removes all surprise that before Paul left Ephesus he was in deadly peril; although the exact nature of the peril is unknown to us. The sending of Timothy in **#1Co 4:17** (cp. **#1Co 16:10**) is probably that mentioned in **#Ac 19:22**. And Paul's thoughts then (**#Ac 19:21**) about Rome accord with his statement in **#Ro 1:13** that he had frequently purposed to go there. We have already seen that Paul's allusions in his letters to his journey from Ephesus to Corinth agree exactly with the short account of it given in **#Ac 20:1, 2**. And although the writer of the Book of Acts says nothing about the collection for Jerusalem, yet by a most interesting and unexpected coincidence we have in **#Ac 24:17** a clear reference to it.

We find also important coincidences between the Book of Acts and Paul's Epistles in their delineation of his character and conduct. The affectionate and earnest address to the Ephesian elders in **#Ac 20:18-35** is a true counterpart of 2 Corinthians. Even the *many tears* (**#2Co 2:4**) amid which he wrote to the Corinthians from Ephesus were mingled (**#Ac 20:19, 31**) with his work there. The fear about enemies at Jerusalem which breathes in his request in **#Ro 15:31** (cp. **#2Th 3:2**) finds utterance again in **#Ac 20:23**, and received dark confirmation in **#Ac 21:11**. Paul's constant habit (**#Ac 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:2, 10; 18:4, 19**) of preaching Christ first in the synagogue is a practical comment on **#Ro 1:16; 2:9, 10**, *to the Jew first and then to the Greek*. In **#Ac 16:3; 21:26** we see him becoming (**#1Co 9:20**) *To the Jews as a Jew*. We wonder not that the man who recognized (**#Ro 2:27**) the superiority in God's sight of sincere Gentiles to faithless Jews gained the evident respect (**#Ac 19:31**) of the Gentile Asiarchs at Ephesus. In close agreement with **#1Co 9:12-18; #2Co**

**11:8-12; 12:14, 16** (cp. **#2Th 3:8**) we learn from **#Ac 20:31** that also at Ephesus Paul toiled to maintain himself and his companions: and **#Ac 18:3** tells us his trade. The escape in a basket (**#2Co 11:33**) and the one stoning (**#2Co 11:25**) are recorded in **#Ac 9:25; 14:19**.

The theological teaching of these Epistles as compared with that of the Book of Acts and with the teaching of Christ as recorded in the Gospels will be discussed in another volume.

4. The complete independence of the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul is as remarkable as their innumerable coincidences. The former work contains no reference to these all-important epistles, even while narrating the events amid which they were written; nor directly to the collection for Jerusalem, which occupies so prominent a place in them. This proves that the Book of Acts was written before the Epistles became famous. That they were not copied one from the other, receives minute but very conclusive testimony in the longer spelling of the name Priscilla and the shorter name Silas in the Book of Acts as compared with Prisca and Silvanus in the Epistles of Paul.

5. Taken in connection with this evident independence of origin, the various coincidences noted above confirm strongly, if confirmation were needed, the proof already given that the epistles before us came from the pen of Paul. For only by supposing that the actions and purposes alluded to in the epistles were real, and that they came to the knowledge of the writer of the Book of Acts, can we account for these various and minute and evidently undesigned coincidences. Just as in the stereoscope two pictures combine to show in relief the one object therein portrayed, so the double picture of Paul presented by his own letters and by the Book of Acts produces at once an irresistible conviction that we have before us a reflection of real life.

These coincidences bear testimony, not only to the genuineness of the Epistles, but to the truthfulness of the Book of Acts. They thus confirm the writer's claim (see p. 494) to have been in part an eyewitness of the events recorded.

These confirmatory proofs would not be invalidated by small contradictions, even were such detected. For errors about matters of fact, and especially about small details which do not come under their own observation, are easily accounted for even in reliable witnesses by the imperfection of all human observation and research. But frequently the concurrence of witnesses who singly are utterly unreliable produces complete conviction of the truth of that which they narrate; because not otherwise can their concurrence be explained. Of this, our courts of law afford daily examples. Consequently, in weighing up coincidences and apparent contradictions we cannot set one against the other. We must accept the hypothesis which best accounts for the whole case. And, when only one explanation of the facts is conceivable, we are compelled to accept this as true. Of the documentary facts now before us the only conceivable explanation is that these letters are genuine, and that when they were written the church at Corinth actually presented the features therein reflected.

It is right to say that the liability to error of all human writers, especially in details, forbids us to accept the foregoing argument as full proof that the Book of Acts is absolutely correct in all it narrates. It was confidently accepted in the second century as a true narrative, and from the pen of

Luke. But the question of its trustworthiness as a whole is beyond the scope of the present volume. I have referred to it chiefly as bearing upon the epistles now before us.

6. Our proof of the genuineness of the Epistles to the Romans and to the Corinthians is now complete. We found that each of these epistles was accepted with perfect confidence in the latter part of the second century as a genuine work of Paul, in places so far apart as Gaul and Carthage and Egypt, and by sure inference in Rome and Greece. And we found 1 Corinthians accepted as genuine by the churches of Rome and Corinth during the life of many who were born long before Paul died at Rome. The contents of each letter taken singly were such as no forger could or would dare to write. Consequently, had any one of these letters even stood alone, we should have accepted it with perfect confidence as a work of the great Apostle. But we found proof that the three Epistles were from the same mind and the same pen; and we felt that the triple fraud involved in the supposition that any one of them was spurious was immeasurably removed from the limits of possibility. Moreover, the deep underlying harmony of the three Epistles, amid much difference, was an additional mark of genuineness. And lastly, we found an independent witness bringing his own credentials from the early church, and bearing testimony which convinced us that the events alluded to in the Epistles had come within his own knowledge and that he had been associated with the professed author of these epistles. Evidence so complete and superabundant is not only sufficient to banish all doubt and has actually done so throughout all the ages of Christianity, but cannot be produced, I believe, for the genuineness of any other ancient documents. To doubt such evidence is to surrender all historical certainty. If these epistles be not genuine we have no sure knowledge about the ancient world.

The bearing of the foregoing argument upon the truth of the Gospel preached by Paul, and upon the reality of the Resurrection of Christ, is developed in my *Romans*, Dissertation i. To the great argument there developed the present argument is subordinate.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DISSERTATION III

#### *THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE THREE EPISTLES*

1. Already we have obtained, by comparing these Epistles with each other and with the Book of Acts, several notes of time. These we will not recount, and supplement by other notes of time in the Book of Acts. Some of these last we shall be able to connect with events having a known place in secular history. And this will enable us to fix, within narrow limits and with some confidence, the date in the Christian era of these Epistles and of some of the events therein alluded to.

2. We have seen that nearly at the close of a three years' sojourn at Ephesus, in the spring and probably about Easter, Paul wrote his first extant letter to the Corinthians; that soon afterwards arose the tumult; that immediately after this Paul went from Ephesus to Troas and almost at once crossed over to Macedonia, and that from Macedonia and perhaps from Philippi, about midsummer, he wrote his second letter to Corinth. A few months later, probably about November, Paul arrived at Corinth, where he stayed three months. Instead of going as he intended (**#Ac 20:3**) direct from Corinth to Jerusalem, he returned through Macedonia, arriving at Philippi (**#Ac 20:6**) probably just before the Passover. After this festival he crossed over to Troas, and then went on to Jerusalem. His purpose was (**#Ac 20:16**) to arrive there in time for the great gathering at Pentecost. And, that he lingered a week at Tyre, instead of pursuing his way to Jerusalem by land suggests, but in our ignorance of details is very far from proving, that he arrived in Syria in time to accomplish his purpose. In any case he must have arrived at Jerusalem before midsummer. Within a fortnight (**#Ac 24:11**) of his arrival he was brought back to Caesarea and stood before Felix. Shortly afterwards (**#Ac 24:24**) he gave his famous discourse before Felix and Drusilla. After two years, which included probably Paul's frequent (**#Ac 24:26**) interviews with Felix, this latter was replaced as governor by Festus. Within probably little more than a fortnight of this (**#Ac 25:1, 6**) Paul appealed to Caesar: the hearing before Agrippa (**#Ac 25:13**) followed shortly: and probably within two months of the arrival of Festus as governor Paul started on his journey to Rome. For, the fast which was already past (**#Ac 27:9**) when the ship was near Crete must have been that (**#Le 16:29; 23:27**) of the great day of atonement, at the end of September: and some time (**#Ac 27:9**) before this, i.e. during the summer, Paul began his journey. (Thus the two full years of **#Ac 24:27** bring us to the most likely time of year for Festus to arrive in Judea: for the sea was impassable during winter.) Paul's ship, after drifting (**#Ac 27:27**) fourteen days, was wrecked on the island of Malta; where he stayed (**#Ac 28:11**) three months. He then went in a few days to Puteoli, and on to Rome, where we must suppose that he arrived early in the year.

To sum up our notes of time, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in spring: the spring following he was on his way, after three months at Corinth, to Jerusalem, where before midsummer he was made prisoner and sent to Caesarea. Two years afterwards, also in summer, Felix was superseded by Festus: and Paul soon afterwards started for Rome; where he arrived early the next year. If, therefore, from secular history we can fix the date of any one of these events, the dates of all will thereby be fixed.

3. Our chief aids in searching for links connecting the story of Paul with general history are the *Annals* of Tacitus, which gives year by year the chief events of the Roman empire; and the contemporary narratives of Josephus.

4. Josephus says (*Antiquities* bk. xx. 8. 9) that Felix, after his recall, was followed to Rome, and accused, there, by the leading Jews of Caesarea; and would certainly have been punished but for his brother Pallas whom Nero then held in honor. From Tacitus (*Annals* bk. xiv. 65) we learn that Pallas died in A.D. 62, as was believed poisoned by Nero: and the order of the narrative suggests that this was not later than midsummer. Therefore, if these notes of time be correct, the summer of Felix's recall was not later than A.D. 61. That it was still earlier, has been suggested, on the ground that long before his death Pallas must have lost his influence over Nero. But Nero's waywardness forbids this inference.

Again, after narrating the recall of Felix, Josephus says that through the influence of Burrus two prominent Syrians of Caesarea gained from Nero a letter placing the Jewish residents there under disadvantage; and then goes on to speak of the arrival of Festus. But at the beginning (*Annals* xiv. 51) of his narrative of A.D. 62 Tacitus records the death of Burrus. That Josephus says that Burrus was tutor and Greek secretary to Nero, by no means implies, as Lewin suggests in *Fasti Sacri* p. 320, that he was a different man from Burrus whom Josephus calls in *Antiq.* xx. 8. 2 "general of the armies": for the description in 8. 9 was added to explain the influence over Nero which enabled Burrus to obtain the letter to Caesarea: and certainly (Tacitus, *Annals* xii. 42) Burrus the tutor of Nero was a soldier.

Once more. Josephus says (*Wars* bk. vi.5. 3) that during the feast of tabernacles at the end of September, and seven years and five months before the siege of Jerusalem, and during the rule of Albinus who (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) succeeded Festus, a peasant began to denounce woe to Jerusalem. Now the siege of Jerusalem began (*Wars* v. 3. 1, 2, vi. 9. 3; Tacitus, *Histories* bk. v. 10) at the Passover of A.D. 70. Consequently, late in September A.D. 62 Albinus must have been governor and Festus already dead. And, since (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) Nero did not send Albinus to Judea as governor till he heard that Festus was dead, the summer in which Paul stood before Festus could not have been later than A.D. 61. The concurrence of these three notes of time is fair proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 61: and, if so, Paul was arrested not later than A.D. 59.

5. From **#Ac 21:38** we learn that some time before Paul's arrest an Egyptian made a sedition and led out into the wilderness some 4000 men. This incident is narrated by Josephus (*Wars* ii. 13. 5) as occurring in the time of Felix, after (13. 2) Nero had made him governor of Judea. Now Nero began to reign in A.D. 54. Consequently, the revolt of the Egyptian was later than this. Yet it was evidently some time before Paul's arrest. This must therefore have been some years later than A.D. 54. Again, when Paul stood before Felix, the latter had (**#Ac 24:10**) for *many years* been *judge to the Jewish nation*. Now Felix was appointed governor when (*Antiq.* xx. 7. 1) Claudius had reigned twelve years, i.e. in A.D. 53. These two notes of time make it unlikely that Paul's arrest was earlier than the summer of A.D. 57.

6. Josephus tells us (*Life* § 1) that he was born in the first year of Caligula, i.e. in A.D. 37; and (§ 3) that in his 26th year (i.e. we may suppose in the summer of A.D. 63: for only in spring and

summer was seafaring safe) he went to Rome to obtain the release of some friends whom Felix while governor had sent there in bonds. His words imply or suggest that when he went to Rome Felix was no longer governor. Now it is not likely that this journey would be delayed beyond two years after Felix' recall. And, if not, he must have been recalled not earlier than A.D. 61. Certainly, this note of time makes it extremely unlikely that Felix was recalled earlier than the summer of A.D. 60. Moreover, in the dates of his own birth and his journey to Rome Josephus' own words claim our confidence.

7. Another note of time has been appealed to in proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 60. When Albinus arrived at Jerusalem in September 62, King Agrippa at once deposed (*Antiq.* xx. 9. 1) the high priest Annaus, after a priesthood of three months. He therefore became high priest in June. Now he was preceded by Joseph, whom Agrippa appointed when he heard of the success of the deputation sent to Rome with Festus' concurrence. Consequently, during spring at the latest news of this success must have reached Jerusalem. If so, it is almost certain that the deputation went to Rome the previous autumn: for in winter the sea was impassable. And, since Festus became governor about midsummer, to suppose that he became governor that year would leave but little time for the building of the Jewish wall to block out Agrippa's palace (xx. 8. 11) and for the contention which arose thereupon. This suggests therefore that Festus came not later than the preceding summer, i.e. in A.D. 60.

But Josephus gives no hint that either the palace of Agrippa or the Jewish wall was built after Festus' arrival; but only "about that time." The narrative leaves open the supposition that the wall was finished about the time of Festus' arrival; and that he at once took, with great vehemence, Agrippa's part in the quarrel about it. And if so, the deputation to Rome may have been sent soon afterwards and have arrived at Rome during the autumn: and news of its success may have reached Jerusalem, as we have seen it must have done, the following spring. Whether Festus was then alive, Josephus does not say. If he died not later than March, there would be abundant time for Nero to hear of his death and to send Albinus so as to arrive in Jerusalem in September. We also notice plain indications in both narratives of Josephus (*Antiq.* xx. 8. 10, and *Wars* ii. 14. 1) that the rule of Festus was very short. The only other event in it mentioned is an expedition against brigands; which may easily have taken place during the autumn after his arrival. Consequently, the foregoing notes of time do little or nothing to contradict the note afforded by Josephus' visit to Rome which suggests that Felix was recalled not earlier than A.D. 61.

The statement of Josephus that the success of the embassy was due to Poppaea, Nero's "wife," whom (Tacitus, *Annals* xiv. 60) he married in the spring of A.D. 62, cannot be relied upon to prove that we have no need to put Felix' recall earlier than A.D. 61: for, that she became his wife soon afterwards, would account for Josephus speaking of her as such.

The words to the *captain-of-the-pretorian-guard*, to which both Conybeare and Lewin appeal in proof that Felix was recalled not later than A.D. 60, are certainly spurious. Lewin's argument that A.D. 58 would give Paul more time to go from Philippi to Jerusalem between Easter and Pentecost is little better than trifling: for by his own showing A.D. 59 would give only one day less.

8. We found in art. 4 three indications that the recall of Felix and the arrest of Paul were not later than A.D. 61 and A.D. 59 respectively: and we have found no proof or reasonable presumption that these events were earlier than this. That they were not many years earlier, we found indications in art. 5. And in art. 6 we found a reliable note of time which made it almost inconceivable that Felix was recalled earlier than A.D. 60, and very unlikely that his recall was earlier than A.D. 61. Therefore, with such confidence as the scantiness and the liability to error, of our materials warrant, we may accept this latter date as the most likely. That Felix was recalled several years before the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and that Paul was arrested several years after the accession of Nero in A.D. 54, is open to no doubt whatever.

We may therefore suppose that Paul was at Ephesus, except occasional journeys, from A.D. 55, the year after Nero's accession, to the spring of A.D. 58; that at Ephesus about Easter he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, and soon afterwards went through Troas to Macedonia where about midsummer he wrote his Second Epistle, and arrived at Corinth about November; that early in A.D. 59 he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, and soon afterwards went to Philippi where he spent the Passover, and immediately afterwards started for Jerusalem where he arrived about Whitsuntide and was soon afterwards arrested and removed to Caesarea; that he remained there till the summer of A.D. 61, when, after appearing before Festus and Agrippa, he was sent towards Rome but was shipwrecked during the autumn on the island of Malta; and that he arrived in Rome early in A.D. 62, soon after the death of Burrus had weakened (Tacitus, *Annals* xiv. 52) the influence of Seneca and removed the only check to Nero's ferocity, and shortly before the Emperor's marriage with the malignant Jewish proselyte Poppaea and before the murder of his former wife Octavia.

9. The student will notice how much more liable to error are the historical data appealed to above in our search for the dates of these epistles than those which placed their genuineness beyond all possibility of doubt. That Paul actually wrote these three letters, is the only conceivable explanation of an innumerable multitude of indisputable facts. To deny it, would be to surrender all certitude about the events of the far past. But, in our search for the time when he wrote these letters, we have assumed the absolute correctness, even in details, of the Book of Acts and of the narratives of Josephus and Tacitus: and in our determination of the exact year of writing we have relied upon one note of time and upon what is at best only a strong probability. We notice, however, that our microscopic sifting of details has revealed several notes of agreement and not one clear discrepancy. It has thus in a remarkable manner confirmed the truthfulness and accuracy of the narratives we have used. Moreover, the time when these epistles were written is a matter of little practical importance: whereas, that they were actually written by Paul, is the foundation of the entire historic proof of Christianity. In each case in proportion to our need evidence has been preserved for us by the kind of forethought of God. Consequently, while various opinions have been current about the exact date of the epistles, their genuineness has been admitted in all ages by friends and enemies of all kinds.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DISSERTATION IV

#### *PAUL AND THE CHURCH AT CORINTH*

1. The historical results attained in this volume, I shall now weave into a consecutive narrative. This will supplement the narrative of the church at Corinth already given in Introd. v. Since I shall but arrange in order results of former researchers, it will for the more part be needless to give proofs. These will be easily found in their proper places.

2. Early in the reign of Nero we find (**#Ac 19:1-20**) Paul at Ephesus, the splendid capital of the Roman province of Asia and the chief seat of Asiatic idolatry, superstition, and sensuality. There he had great success. From Ephesus as a center the Gospel was proclaimed throughout the whole province. Asiatic superstition was overpowered by the most remarkable miracles recorded of Paul. The impression thus made was widened and deepened by confusion which befell some who tried to use the names of Jesus and of Paul as a magical incantation. The whole city felt the power of the name of Jesus. Some converts who had in secret continued the magical arts of their earlier days could no longer hide themselves, and both confessed their conduct and destroyed its costly instruments. And the Gospel continued to spread and to increase in power. Thus in the great capital of the Asiatic Greeks the might of God opened for the Gospel an abundant entrance.

3. But amid this success and the widening prospect of still greater success Paul could not forget the church he had founded in the capital of Achaia. The frequent communication between the cities enabled him to visit Corinth (see under **#2Co 13:2**) during his long sojourn at Ephesus. The visit seems to have been short: and it was certainly painful and humiliating to Paul. In many of the church-members, sensual passions, nourished by the heathenism of former days and for a time stunned we may believe by the force of Paul's teaching, had again revived, as lapse of time had lessened the influence of that teaching; and had burst forth into actual and outward and gross sins. Yet even these erring ones Paul treated with leniency. Instead of inflicting bodily punishment as he did upon Elymas, or even excluding them from the church, he merely reproved them and threatened severe punishment if when he came again he found similar unfaithfulness. And with a sad heart, doubtless, Paul returned to his toil at Ephesus.

Naturally, Paul's anxiety about the Corinthian Christians continued after his return. It found expression in a letter now lost urging them to have nothing to do with immoral men. Paul meant, with immoral church-members. It would seem that some of them misrepresented him as forbidding thereby all intercourse with heathens, who were notoriously immoral: an injunction evidently impracticable.

4. Another matter now occupied Paul's attention. He felt that he was approaching a turning point in his career. His work in the East was nearly complete. In all the great centers he had planted Christian churches. And even in the City of the Caesars the Gospel had made converts. But as yet, probably, the far West was untrodden by messengers of the cross. And Paul resolved to leave his



beloved converts in Greece and Asia and to carry to the distant province of Spain the good news of life.

But before he goes West Paul wishes to crown the edifice he has erected in the East.

It had been his constant effort to bind together the Jewish and Gentile elements of the Church of Christ. For he felt that upon their cohesion depended its highest welfare, if not its permanence. He was anxious that the Gentile Christians should not break away from the historic people of God: for converts reared in heathenism needed the stability derived by the better Jewish Christians (cp. **#2Ti 1:5**) from early godly training. The newly engrafted twigs needed sap from the old root. But Paul opposed strenuously (**#Ga 2:5**) such legal restrictions as would make the Christian Church only the latest and best of the Jewish sects. Of the earnestness of Paul's effort to unite these diverse elements in the Church we have indisputable proof in his long and frequent journeys to Jerusalem and his evident wish to work in connection with the Apostles of the Circumcision. And he now resolved to crown his work among the Gentile by promoting an act of generosity which would both reveal the genuineness of the work and endear the Gentile converts to the Christians in Judaea.

That these latter were very poor, we have various proof. During Paul's early labors at Antioch (**#Ac 11:27, 30**) he was a bearer of a collection made there for the Christians at Jerusalem. At the conference in Jerusalem, when Paul and Peter shook hands (**#Ga 2:10**) in recognition of their different spheres of apostolic work, Peter begged Paul not to forget, while laboring among the Gentiles, the poverty of his fellow-countrymen at home. The promise then eagerly made Paul resolved now to fulfil on a scale surpassing all expectation. He resolved to make a collection in various provinces for the Christian poor in and around the mother-city of Christianity.

By some means unknown to us Paul gave directions in this matter to the churches of Galatia. And, probably in the autumn before these epistles were written, he sent Titus and another to Corinth to promote a collection there. The Corinthians took it up eagerly, and began at once to make the collection.

5. Early the next year unfavorable news about the Corinthian church reached Paul at Ephesus. During the interval between his first short visit to Ephesus (**#Ac 18:19**) and his long sojourn there, an eloquent Alexandrian Jew called Apollos, deeply versed in Holy Scripture, formerly a disciple directly or indirectly of John the Baptist but lately brought at Ephesus into the full light of the Gospel by the teaching of Prisca and Aquila, glowing with the fervor of a new and richer spiritual life, arrived at Corinth bearing a commendatory letter from the Christians at Ephesus. His labors at Corinth were very successful. Believers were greatly helped: Jewish disputants were publicly silenced: and converts were added to the church. This good work was not without some bad results. The enthusiasm thus aroused provoked some to proclaim themselves, in opposition to those who hung on the lips of Apollos, the followers of the great founder of their church. The partisan spirit, once kindled, soon spread and became universal. The men who boasted of the name of Paul were confronted by a party which inscribed on its banner the name of Apollos. Devotion to human teachers recalled to Jewish converts the apostle to whom Christ had personally given the keys of the kingdom of heaven and who was by Paul's admission apostle of the circumcision. Retaining the Aramaic name used probably by Christ in His solemn commission, they called themselves followers

of Cephas. Others, condemning superciliously the prevalent sectarianism, formed themselves into a fourth sect; and claiming a monopoly of that great Name which belongs to all who believe the Gospel, called themselves, in a sense which they denied to others, the followers of Christ. Into these four sects the whole church divided itself; the last two being probably small. All this was made known to Paul by members of the family of Cloe.

Paul's earnest wish (**#1Co 16:12**) that Apollos should come to Corinth proves that the latter was absolutely free from the party-spirit which sheltered itself under his name.

Other evil reports reached Paul. One church-member had sunk below the level of the heathen by marrying his step-mother while her husband was still living. There were lawsuits between Christians in heathen courts of justice. And a general spirit of rapacity and sensuality was in the church. Some women had laid aside the appropriate headdress of their sex. The Lord's Supper was made an occasion of ostentation and revelry. Some church-members whose conduct proved the hollowness of their profession, denied boldly the possibility of dead men rising again. And some were evidently disaffected towards Paul; and thought in their silly conceit that he would not, because he dared not, visit Corinth again. All this sad news reached Paul, according to our reckoning, early in A.D. 58.

6. It had been Paul's purpose to go direct from Ephesus to Corinth, to go on to Macedonia and back to Corinth; and then to go, perhaps in company with those who took the collection, to Jerusalem. This purpose was known at Corinth. But the bad news moved Paul to modify it. To go to Corinth now, would compel him to act with severity: for he could not allow his former disregarded threats to remain unfulfilled. And remembrance of his former sad visit made him in the last degree reluctant to have another painful meeting with his beloved though unfaithful converts.

In order to spare both himself and them, Paul resolved to go first to Macedonia and then to Corinth; thus leaving time for improvement. And, early in A.D. 58, he sent Timothy, who was at least in the early part of his journey accompanied by Erastus, to go to Macedonia, and to Corinth. (It is not likely that "Erastus being the steward of the city" (**#Ro 16:23**) would be called (**#Ac 19:22**) "one of those who ministered to" Paul. He may easily have had two friends bearing this not uncommon name.) But, for reasons unknown to us, Paul did not expect Timothy to reach Corinth before his First Epistle, which was written after or about the same time as Timothy started; and was not sure that he would go there. That he did not then go to Corinth, is probable. But he was there with Paul during the following winter.

7. About this time, i.e. about Easter in A.D. 58, Paul was saddened by the arrival at Ephesus of three excellent men, one of them known to us as an early convert and a faithful servant of the Church and worker for Christ, bringing a letter from the Christians at Corinth. The letter asked advice about marriage, about food offered in sacrifice to idols, and about the exercise of spiritual gifts; and possibly about other matters. That the coming of these men gave rest to Paul's spirit, suggests that their account of the state of the church was less unfavorable than that he had previously received; and that they somewhat allayed his anxiety.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians was Paul's reply to this letter; and was designed to prepare the way for his own visit. Before he can answer their questions he must first deal with some of the evils

in the church. He then discusses the questions proposed to him, and deals with other evils in the church; and concludes with references to the collection, to the movements of himself and of Timothy, to Apollos, and to the messengers from Corinth. The bad state of the church made this letter a severe condemnation. But its strong rebukes came from a loving heart; and were mingled with tears. And needful and salutary as they were, the tenderness of Paul regretted that he had written them. The messengers from Corinth took the letter back with them, as an invaluable recompense for the toil and cost of their journey.

About the same time Paul requested Titus by message or letter, unless possibly he had returned to Paul at Ephesus, to visit Corinth and then to meet the apostle at Troas with news about the church and especially about the effect of the severe letter just written.

8. We are not surprised to find in this letter a casual reference to enemies at Ephesus. In a city which prided itself in being sacristan of the goddess Artemis many would have vested interests in idolatry, gaining we may suppose an abundant livelihood from the superstition of the worshippers. And the whole population would be more or less enriched thereby. Now we can well believe that the success of Paul would interfere perceptibly with these impure gains. For the devotion which enriched the idol-mongers would by the preaching of the truth be weakened in many who were not prepared to accept Christianity. Consequently, an outburst of fury, prompted and fanned by those most deeply interested and taken up by the mass of the inhabitants, would be at any time likely, and in proportion to the success of the Gospel. Such an outburst occurred a few weeks after the First Epistle was written; probably during the month of May, all which was held sacred as a great festival to the patron goddess of the city and was called after her Artemision. (This is asserted in a decree on a marble slab found at Ephesus: see Lewin's *Paul*. And it is an interesting coincidence of time.) By the urgent kindness of some of the officers presiding over the festival Paul was persuaded to hide himself from the fury of the excited mob. Probably he was thus saved from death. But the peril to which he was at that time exposed made a deep mark in the brave heart of the veteran apostle. Immediately after the tumult, and only a few weeks earlier than he had for some time intended, Paul left the City of Artemis in which he had labored so long and so successfully, and went to Troas.

9. Paul's purpose was to preach the Gospel at Troas; and he found a good opportunity for doing so. But he did not find there Titus, whom he impatiently expected with tidings about his beloved converts at Corinth, and especially about the effect of the severe rebukes of his letter to them. Conscious of the greater importance of preserving old converts than making new ones, Paul bids farewell to the Christians at Troas and crosses to Europe, and is soon we may suppose in the bosom of the church at Philippi. Even here at first, apparently, he did not find or hear of Titus. And his anxiety seemed to know no bounds. Around him were conflicts: within were fears. But soon after his arrival in Macedonia anxiety was changed to exultant joy by the arrival of his trusted companion Titus with good news about the effect of his letter, and especially by the good impression which the Corinthian Christians made on the mind of Titus. All anxiety about the wisdom of the severe letter was at once removed: sorrow suddenly gave place to joy: and that joy revealed to Paul the grandeur of the ministry which God had committed to him, a grandeur in no wise dimmed even by the hardships and deadly perils amid which it was performed.

The news brought by Titus proved that much still needed to be done and to be corrected at Corinth. The collection undertaken and begun so readily last year, as Paul boasted to the Macedonians, was now evidently lagging; and he cannot bear to think that his generous boasting might be found to be untrue. Moreover, many church-members whom on his last short and sad visit he had reproved were still unrepentant. And, tolerated and favored by the church, were Jewish emissaries, determined enemies of the apostle, bad men doing under guileful pretext the work of Satan. The liberality of the Macedonians Paul accepts as a divine suggestion that Titus go back at once to Corinth to complete the collection before the apostle's own arrival. And, to assist him in this, to reveal to the Corinthian Christians the true character of the deceivers in whom they trusted, and to give a last warning to the guilty ones and thus avoid if possible the sorrow of inflicting punishment, Paul wrote, and sent by the hands of Titus, about midsummer we may suppose, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. In writing it, Paul joins with himself Timothy, his colleague in founding the church; who was with him in Macedonia when Titus arrived from Corinth.

10. After writing this letter Paul spent some months in evangelical labors and journeys throughout Macedonia. In Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, the apostle's presence and counsel would strengthen and instruct many. About November, with feelings difficult to conceive and impossible to describe, Paul arrived at Corinth. He was the guest of his early convert Gaius; at whose house probably the church-meetings were held. From the intelligence brought to Macedonia by Titus and in part interwoven in the second Epistle, we infer with confidence that he would be welcomed by his children in Christ with enthusiastic devotion. The only direct record of this visit is in the Epistle to the Romans. From this we learn that early the next year the collection was complete. And the quiet thought which breathes throughout this epistle suggests that the storm of faction and insubordination in the church, and of consequent anxiety in the breast of Paul, had subsided into complete calm.

Early, perhaps in February, the next year, A.D. 59 according to our reckoning, Paul bid adieu, probably for the last time, except perhaps a passing visit after more than five years and near to the close of his life, to the church at Corinth about which he had thought and cared so much. This long separation was foreseen. For Paul had just said to the Romans (in remarkable agreement with **Ac 20:38**) that his work in the East was done, and that he was now to turn his steps towards the far West. And Paul's knowledge of the instability of the Corinthian Christians must have made this long farewell specially anxious and sad to him. Doubtless he found relief in commending them "to God and to the word of His grace." And with anxious thought about those he was leaving behind, with fears about the dangers awaiting him at Jerusalem, fears which he could neither dismiss nor hide, but which could not turn him back from a journey which he felt to be divinely directed, the great Apostle began his long and weary way, over land and sea, leaving behind him in every city of Greece and Macedonia and Asia Minor his weeping converts, towards the Father-land of his own beloved nation, and the Mother-City of Christianity, now become the citadel of his foes. And here for the present we too must bid farewell to illustrious teacher.

## II CORINTHIANS

### DISSERTATION V

#### *SUMMARY OF RESULTS*

1. Our study of the credentials of the Epistle to the Romans brought us by secure steps into the presence of the foremost of the Apostles of Christ. From his lips we heard the great foundation doctrines of the gospel, arranged and developed in logical order: and we found them to be a necessary supplement, or the only conceivable explanation, of the commands and promises of the covenants with Abraham and Moses. Paul's exposition and application of these doctrines revealed to us his familiar acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures, his wide and careful observation of men and things, his well-balanced judgment, and his firm grasp of broad principles. And we caught in some measure the absolute devotion with which Paul bowed humbly in the presence of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. Whatever we learned from the Epistle to the Romans, our study of the Epistles to the Corinthians has confirmed. It has given us innumerable and indisputable proofs that the three widely different epistles are from the same author. And comparison of them with others and with the Book of Acts has revealed the reality of the facts therein narrated or alluded to. Each of the great doctrines assumed in the Epistle to the Romans we found assumed in those to the Corinthians, and brought to bear on matters of practical life. And this various application of these doctrines gave us several important developments of them, which enabled us to grasp them more completely in their full compass; and revealed how firmly they had taken hold of, and how deeply they were inwrought into the mind of Paul. Lastly, the writer's portrait reflected in the Epistle to the Romans we saw reflected with equal clearness and much greater fullness in the Epistles to the Corinthians. We thus obtained a nearer view of the great Apostle.

3. This nearer view of Paul is one chief gain derived from the Epistles to the Corinthians. They bring us into the nearer presence of a man in whom the highest mental grandeur bows with unreserved devotion to Christ and burns with love to those for whom Christ died. Just rescued from what seemed to be certain death, the writer's hand trembles while he writes. But while trembling he goes forward to meet other perils already looming before him, and deliberately plans new enterprises involving new and unknown perils. His chief anxieties and sorrows are for those who are hasting to run. His highest joy is news of their repentance. And their ingratitude only strengthens his determination to spend and to be spent for them. Lifelong toil and hardship and peril are joyfully endured in order to serve Christ and save men. And in all this the unwearied toiler is unconscious of merit: for he knows that every sacrifice is God's gift to him, a forerunner of infinite reward. This picture is our noblest ideal of human excellence. And, as such, it is of priceless worth.

4. Another element of great value in the epistles before us is the picture here presented of an apostolic church, both in the character of its members and in its joint worship. But this picture is by no means an ideal of excellence. Indeed, it dispels rudely a pleasant dream that the early Christians were a pattern of purity and love. Transported to the midst we find, not love and order and maturity,

but spiritual childishness, a universal spirit of faction, blind self-conceit, resolute opposition to the great and loving Apostle, and gross sin.

Yet these imperfect Christians Paul recognizes as brethren in Christ, justified and sanctified, the living temple of God, and a living letter evidently written by Christ with the Spirit of God through the agency of Paul and therefore to him a source of thankfulness to God. This warns us to treat as worthless imperfect forms of Christianity; and not to shut out men, and still less churches, from the family of God because of imperfections or inconsistencies. Human nature is a strange mixture. Churches with bad men in their chief places have often contained true followers of Christ. And underlying much that is unchristlike there has often been genuine though infantile Christian life. There are both tares among the wheat and among many tares wheat which will be garnered in the eternal harvest.

This picture of an early church dissipates fears for the churches of today. Possibly Paul trembled when he thought how soon these children in the faith would be left orphans in a wicked and stormy world. Certainly, had we stood by his side and seen the feebleness of the soldiers of the cross and the divisions in their camp, and thought that to them alone must soon be committed the royal banner and all the interests of the kingdom of God on earth, we should have feared that the church itself would not long survive the departure of its founders. But the feeble Christianity of that day overspread the Roman Empire, overthrew the gods of Greece, and became the religion of the civilized world. In view of this triumph we cannot fear, as some seem to do, that the Christianity of our day will be ruined by the imperfections and disorders prevalent here or there. For underneath weakness, or even disease, in the body of Christ there breathes immortal life.

5. We have now studied the three longest epistles of Paul. All were written within a year; during his third missionary journey. There remains one other epistle written on the same journey-the Epistle to the Galatians. These four epistles are intimately connected, each supplementing the others. And their genuineness is proved by evidence indisputable; and such as cannot be brought for any other books of the Bible taken alone as we have taken these epistles. But, as we shall see, their genuineness involves the genuineness or trustworthiness of others. This Quadrilateral of St. Paul is thus the historical citadel of the Christian faith. On this as a base rests safely the historical defense of Christianity. And it contains within itself a full, though by no means exhaustive, exposition and development and application of the Gospel; with abundant proof that it came from the lips of Christ, that He claimed to be in a unique sense the Son of God, and that in proof of His claim God raised Him from the dead.

Within this impregnable and well-stored fortress, which our King and Saviour has built for our defense, we take secure refuge from the assaults of our foes; and from its gates go forth, armed with His might, to claim the victory which He has already won for us by His own struggle with and victory over the forces of evil in their most tremendous forms. TO GOD BE THANKS WHO GIVES TO US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

## II CORINTHIANS

### APPENDIX A

#### *THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT OF ROME TO THE CORINTHIANS*

1. Eusebius, in his *Church History* bk. iii. 15, 16, says: "In the twelfth year of the reign of Domitian, (A.D. 92,) Anencletus, having been bishop of the church of the Romans twelve years is succeeded by Clement; whom the Apostle, writing to the Philippians, declares to have been a fellow-worker of his own, saying "with Clement also and my other fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life." Of this Clement, then, one acknowledged epistle is current, great and wonderful, which he composed as from the church of the Romans to that of the Corinthians, a dissension at that time having arisen at Corinth. That also in very many churches this has been commonly used for a long time and to our day, we know."

Origen, in his commentary on John, vol. vi. 36, refers to ch. 55 of the epistle of "the faithful Clement to whom witness is borne by Paul saying *with Clement and my other fellow-workers etc.*"

Eusebius says (bk. vi. 13) that Clement of Alexandria used in his *Stromata* "even testimonies from the contradicted Scriptures, viz. the so-called Wisdom of Solomon, and that of Jesus son of Sirach, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that of Barnabas, of Clement, and of Jude." And in Clement's *Stromata*, bk. i. 7, after a quotation of #Ps 118:20, we read: "Clement in the epistle to the Corinthians says, setting forth the excellences of those approved in the church, *Let one be faithful etc.*" verbatim from ch. 48. Also *Stromata* iv. 17. "In the epistle to the Corinthians the apostle Clement says," with long quotations from, and references to, ch. 1 and chs. 9-12 of the epistle before us. So *Stromata* v. 12 quotes ch. 20. But in bk. vi. 8 part of a quotation from ch. 48 is, probably by oversight, attributed to Barnabas. and the rest to "Clement in the Epistle to the Corinthians."

Similarly Irenaeus (quoted by Eusebius v. 6) in bk. iii. 3. 3: "After Anencletus, in the third place from the apostles the episcopate (of Rome) is allotted to Clement, who also saw the blessed apostles and was associated with them. . . . Under this Clement then, no small dissension having arisen among the brethren at Corinth, the church at Rome wrote a most excellent letter to the Corinthians leading them to peace."

Of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, an earlier contemporary of Irenaeus, we read in Eusebius, *Church History* bk. iv. 23: "Moreover, of Dionysius a letter to the Romans also is current, appealing to the then bishop, Soter . . . In this, mention is made also of the letter of Clement to the Corinthians, making it clear that from the first by an ancient custom, it was read in the church. At any rate he says, *Today then we have kept the Lord's holy day, in which we have read your epistle, reading which we shall always be able to receive instruction, as also that formerly written to us by Clement.*"

Another contemporary reference in a lost work is noted by Eusebius, *Church History* bk. iv. 22: "Hegesippus, in the five memoirs which have come to us . . . after some things about the letter of Clement to the Corinthians, adds, *the church of the Corinthians continued in the right word till Primus was bishop at Corinth.*"

There is no reference, I believe, to Clement of Rome in Tertullian or in any early Western writer, except the few who understood Greek.

The above quotations, and some other quotations and references, prove that before A.D. 180 this epistle was confidently accepted in the East, and even by some in the West, as written by Clement, Bishop of Rome, who was assumed to be the companion of Paul. Whether this last assumption be correct, the commonness of the name, and a natural wish to connect this well-known letter with a man commended by Paul, leave room for doubt. But it is possible. And this assumption itself, and the early and wide-spread acceptance of the epistle, prove its very early date. This is confirmed by the reference in ch. 5 to Peter and Paul as belonging to "our own generation." and in ch. 44 to elders appointed by the apostles as possibly still living; and is made quite certain by the synonymous use of elder and bishop, and the absence of any hint of an episcopal order. Contrast with ch. 42 Ignatius *To the Trallians* ch. 3: "Let them reverence the deacons . . . and the bishop . . . and the elders. . . . Without these nothing is called a church." So *To Polycarp* ch. 6: "those who submit to the bishop, elders, deacons." All this supports the testimony quoted above that the epistle of Clement was written in the first century.

The absence from Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians of any reference to elders or deacons, even when dealing expressly with church discipline, confirms the proof already adduced that they were written long before even the early date just assigned, as the latest possible, to the letter of Clement.

That this venerable document was placed by the early church altogether below the Epistles of Paul and the four Gospels and the Book of Acts, is at once evident to all who study the writings of the Fathers. And I think that this judgment of the early church will be confirmed by a comparison of the Epistle of Clement with those of Paul.

The interesting work known as the 2nd Epistle of Clement is not a letter, but an ancient homily. Its authorship is quite unknown. The easiest supposition is that it was preserved at Corinth, and was thus associated with the Epistle of Clement.

2. In the Alexandrian MS., after the Book of Revelation, follow the Epistle of Clement, chs. 57. 6-63 being lost, and part of the so-called second epistle. No other copy was known until in A.D. 1875 there was published at Constantinople by Bryennios, Metropolitan of Serrae, a cursive manuscript found in a library at Constantinople and containing entire among other ancient writings both Epistles of Clement. The next year, among some MSS. purchased from Paris for the Library of the University of Cambridge was found a Syriac MS. of the New Testament containing, after the Epistle of Jude and before that to the Romans, the two Epistles of Clement. The heading of the former is "the Catholic Epistle of Clement the disciple of Peter the Apostle to the Church of the Corinthians:" and at the foot we read "Here ends the First Epistle of Clement, which was written by him to the Corinthians from Rome." The latter is called simply "the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians." The MS. bears a date corresponding to A.D. 1170.

A full account of both epistles and of the MSS. containing them, with an English translation, are found in Bishop Lightfoot's very excellent volume on *S. Clement of Rome*. There are also good



editions by Hilgenfeld and by Gebhardt. There is a cheap translation by the Religious Tract Society: but it is out of print.

3. The following extracts illustrate the matters discussed in the present work.

"The church of God which sojourns at Rome to the church of God which sojourns at Corinth, called ones sanctified in the will of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace from Almighty God through Jesus Christ be multiplied.

CH. I. Because of the sudden and repeated misfortunes and accidents which have happened (*or* which happen) to us, rather slowly we think that we have paid attention to the matters disputed among you, beloved ones, to the impure and unrighteous dissension, foreign and strange to the chosen ones of God, which a few persons, being rash and bold, have kindled to such a degree of folly as to cause your venerable and far-famed name, worthy of all men's love, to be greatly blasphemed. For who that has visited you has not proved your all-virtuous and firm faith? And has not wondered at your sober and forbearing piety in Christ? and has not proclaimed your magnificent disposition of hospitality? and has not pronounced blessed your mature and unfailing knowledge? For without respect of persons you did all things, and in the laws of God you went, submitting to your leaders and rendering the due honor to the older men among you. To young men you enjoined moderate and seemly thoughts. And to women you gave charge to perform all things in a blameless and seemly and pure conscience, loving as is meet their own husbands, and you taught them, being in the rule of submission, to do in a seemly way the affairs of the household, acting very discreetly.

CH. II. And all of you were lowly minded, in nothing boastful, submitting rather than claiming submission, more gladly giving than receiving, being content with the supplies of God. And paying attention you had His words carefully laid up in your hearts: and His sufferings were before your eyes. Thus peace deep and rich was given to all and insatiable longing for doing good: and a full pouring out of the Holy Spirit came upon all. Full of right purpose in good eagerness with pious confidence, you stretched out your hands to Almighty God beseeching Him to forgive if in anything you had unwillingly sinned. Conflict you had day and night on behalf of all the brotherhood that the number of His chosen ones may be in the way of salvation with fear and conscience. Secure and pure you were, not remembering evil one towards another. All dissension and all schism was abominable to you. At the transgressions of your neighbors you mourned: their shortcomings you judged to be your own. Without regret you were for all good-doing, ready for every good work. Adorned with the all-virtuous and honorable citizenship, you performed all things in fear of Him: the ordinances and the decrees of the lord were written on the tablets of your hearts.

CH. III. All glory and enlargement was given to you, and there was fulfilled the written word: *He ate and drank and was enlarged and was made fat and kicked, even the beloved one.* (#De 32:15.) Hence jealousy and envy, strife and dissension, persecution and confusion, war and captivity. In this way the men without honor were raised up against the honored men, the men without repute against the well-reputed, the imprudent against the prudent, the young men against the old ones. Because of this righteousness and peace removed far off, when each one forsook the fear of God and became dim-sighted in faith of Him, and does not go in the statutes of His ordinances and does not act as

citizen according to the desires of his bad heart, they have taken up unrighteous and ungodly jealousy, through which also death entered into the world.

CH. IV. For it is written thus: (**#Ge 4:3-8:**) *And it came to pass after some days, Cain brought from the fruits of the earth a sacrifice to God; and Abel also he brought from the firstborn of the sheep and from their fat parts. And God looked upon Abel and upon his gifts: but to Cain and to his sacrifices He did not pay attention. And Cain became very sorrowful: and his face fell. And God said to Cain, Why hast thou become all-sorrowful, and why has thy face fallen? Is it not, if thou do offer rightly? But if rightly thou do not divide, thou has sinned. Be quiet. Towards thee is his resort: and thou will rule him. and Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go through into the plain. And it came to pass when they were in the plain, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.* You see, brothers, jealousy and envy wrought out fratricide. Because of jealousy our father Jacob ran away from the face of Esau his brother. Jealousy caused Joseph to be persecuted even to death and to come even to slavery. Jealousy compelled Moses to fly from the face of Pharaoh king of Egypt when he heard from his fellow-tribesman, (**#Ex 2:14,**) *Who set thee as judge or magistrate over us? To make away with me dost thou wish, in the way which thou madest away yesterday with the Egyptian?* Because of jealousy Aaron and Miriam were lodged outside the camp. Jealousy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive into Hades, because they had raised dissension against the minister of God, Moses. Because of jealousy David was envied not only by the aliens, but also by Saul king of Israel was persecuted.

CH. V. But that we may cease from the ancient examples, let us come to those who nearest to us have become athletes. Let us take the noble examples of our generation. Because of jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars were persecuted, and even to death fought as athletes. Let us take before our eyes the good apostles. Peter, who because of unrighteous jealousy endured not one nor two but more labors; and in this way having borne testimony he went to the due place of glory. Because of jealousy and strife Paul exhibited a prize of endurance. Seven times having worn bonds, having been put to flight, having been stoned, having become herald both in the East and in the West, he obtained the noble renown of his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world and having come to the boundary of the West and having borne testimony before the rulers, in this way he was removed from the world and went into the holy place, having become a very great pattern of endurance."

CHS. IX.-XII. quote the examples of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot and Rahab, e.g. "Because of faith and hospitality Rahab the harlot was saved."

CH. XIII. "Let us be lowly-minded, then, brothers, having set aside all boasting and conceit and folly and displays of anger, and let us do that which is written. For the Holy Spirit says: (**#Jer 9:23f:**) *Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches; but he that boasts let him boast in the Lord, to seek out Him and to do judgment and righteousness.* Most of all remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which He spoke, teaching forbearance and longsuffering. For in this way He said: *Have mercy, that you may receive mercy. Forgive, that there may be forgiveness to you. As you do, thus it will be done to you. As you give, thus it will be given to you. As you judge, thus you will be judged. As you show kindness, thus, will kindness be shown to you. With what measure you measure, with it will measure be made for you.*

With this commandment and with these precepts let us make ourselves firm in order to walk in obedience to His holiness-befitting words, being lowly-minded. For the holy word says, *Upon whom shall I look, except upon him that is meek and quiet and trembles at my oracles?* (#Isa 66:2.)

CH. XIV. Just then and right it is, brothers, that we rather become obedient to God than follow those who with boasting and confusion are leaders in loathsome jealousy. No casual injury, but rather great danger, shall we suffer if recklessly we give ourselves over to the will of the men who launch out into strife and dissensions, in order to alienate us from that which is good. Let us act kindly one towards another according to the compassion and sweetness of Him that made us. For it is written, *Kind men shall be inhabitants of the earth: and innocent men shall be left upon it.* (#Pr 2:21; #Ps 37:9). . . .

CH. XV. Therefore let us be joined to those who with piety keep peace, and not to those who with hypocrisy wish for peace. For He says somewhere: *This people with the lips honors me; but their heart is far from me.* (#Isa 29:13.) And again . . .

CH. XVI. To lowly-minded ones belongs Christ, not to men who lift themselves up over the flock. The scepter of the greatness of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, did not come with noise of boasting nor of haughtiness, although able to do so, but lowly-minded, as the Holy Spirit spoke about Him. For He says, *Lord, who has believed etc.*" quoting verbatim the whole of Isa. 53.

CH. XXIV. "Let us consider, beloved ones, how the Master shows to us constantly the coming resurrection, a firstfruit of which He made the Lord Jesus, when He raised Him from the dead. Let us see, beloved ones, the resurrection which takes place according to season. Day and night declare to us resurrection. The night falls asleep; the day rises up: the day goes away; night comes on. Let us take the fruits. The sowing, how and in what way does it take place? *The sower went forth* (#Mt 13:3) and cast into the earth each of the seeds; which having fallen into the earth dry and naked are dissolved. Then out of the dissolution the greatness of the forethought of the Master raises them: and out of the one a larger number grow and bear fruit.

CH. XXV. Let us see the wonderful sign which takes place in the Eastern places, i.e. those about Arabia. For there is a bird called phoenix. This, being only-begotten, lives 500 years. And, having come now to dissolution for it to die, a coffin it makes for itself of frankincense and myrrh and the other spices, into which when the time is completed it enters and dies. But while the flesh rots a certain worm is begotten which being nourished from the moisture of the dead animal develops wings. Then having become noble it takes that coffin where are the bones of the before-existing one, and bearing these completes a course from the Arabian country as far as Egypt to the so-called Heliopolis; (City of the Sun;) and by day, while all are looking, having alighted upon the altar of the sun, puts them down, and having done this starts back. The priests then observe the records of the times, and find that it has come when the 500th year is completed.

CH. XXVI. A great and wonderful thing then do we think it to be if the Maker of all things shall make a resurrection of those who rightly have served Him in confidence of good faith, since even through a bird He shows to us the greatness of His promise? For He says somewhere: *And Thou wilt raise me up, and I will praise Thee.*"

CH. XXIX. . . . "*Behold the Lord takes for Himself a nation out of the midst of nations; (#De 4:34;)* just as a man takes the firstfruit of his thrashing-floor. And there shall go forth from that nation things holy of holies.

CH. XXX. Of a holy thing then being a portion, let us do all the things of the sanctification, (cp. #1Th 4:3;) let us fly from evil speakings. . . . Let us put on as clothing concord, being lowly-minded, self-controlled, from all whispering and evil-speaking far removing ourselves, by works being justified and not by words. . . . Our praise, let it be in God, and not from ourselves."

CH. XXXII. "Whoever may consider sincerely will recognize great things belonging to the gifts given by Him. For from Him are both priests and Levites, all who publicly-minister to the altar of God. From Him is the Lord Jesus, according to flesh, (cp. #Ro 9:5.) From Him, kings and rulers and leaders in the line of Judah. And his other tribes exist in no small glory, God having so promised: *Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven.* (#Ge 22:17.) All then were glorified and magnified not through themselves or their works or the righteous action which they worked out, but through His will. And we then, through His will in Christ Jesus having been called, not through ourselves are justified nor through our wisdom or understanding or piety or works which we have worked out in uprightness of heart, but through faith, through which all those from of old the Almighty God justified. To whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. XXXIV. "The good workman with boldness receives the bread of his work; but the slothful and careless dares not look eye to eye at his employer. Needful then it is that we be eager for doing good. For from Him are all things. For He says beforehand to us: *Behold the Lord, and His reward is before His face to give back to each according to His work.* (#Isa 40:10.) He urges us then, believing with all the heart upon Him, not to be idle nor careless for any good work. Our ground of boasting and our boldness, let it be in Him. Let us submit to His will. Let us consider the whole multitude of His angels, how standing by they minister to His will. For the Scripture says: *Myriad myriads stood by Him, and a thousand thousands ministered publicly to Him, and cried Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth. Full is all the creation of His glory.* (#Da 7:10; #Isa 6:3.) And we then in concord, having been brought together by our conscience, as from one mouth let us cry to Him constantly that we may become partakers of His great and glorious promises. For He says: (cp. #1Co 2:9:)*Eye has not seen and ear has not heard and upon man's heart there has not gone up how many things He has prepared for those who wait for Him.*"

CH. XXXVI. "This is the way, beloved ones, in which we found our salvation, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our offerings, the protector and helper of our weakness. Through Him we gaze into the heights of heaven. Through Him we behold reflected in a mirror (cp. #2Co 3:18) the blameless and most excellent visage of Him. Through Him were opened the eyes of our hearts. Through Him our void-of-understanding and darkened mind springs up into His wonderful light. Through Him the Master desired us to taste the immortal knowledge. Who, being an outshining of His greatness, is so much greater than angels by how much more excellent a name He has inherited. For it is written thus: *He who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.* (#Ps 104:4.) But of His Son the Master said: *Son of Mine art Thou, I this day have begotten Thee. Ask from Me, and I will give Thee nations as Thy inheritance and as Thy possession the ends of the earth.* (#Ps 2:7.) And again

He says to Him: *Sit at My right hand until I have put Thy enemies as footstool of Thy feet.* (#Ps 110:1.) Who then are the enemies? The bad ones and they who oppose His will.

CH. XXXVII. Let us serve as soldiers then, brothers, with all earnestness, in His blameless ordinances. Let us observe those who serve as soldiers to our rulers, how orderly, how submissively, how in subjection, they perform the things commanded. Not all are governors, nor leaders of a thousand, nor leaders of a hundred, nor leaders of fifty, nor so forth: but each in his own order performs the things commanded by the king and the rulers. The great ones apart from the small ones cannot be; nor the small ones apart from the great ones. A certain mixture there is in all: and therein is utility. Let us take our body. The head apart from the feet is nothing: so neither are the feet apart from the head. The least members of the body are necessary and useful to the whole body. Yes, all parts breathe together and with one submission act for the whole body to be in safety.

CH. XXXVIII. Let our whole body then be in safety (be saved) in Christ Jesus; and let each submit to his neighbor, according as also he was put, in the gift of His grace. Let the strong man take care of the weak one: and let the weak one respect the strong one. Let the rich man give supply to the poor man: and let the poor man give thanks to God that He has given to him one through whom his shortcoming may be supplied. Let the wise man show his wisdom not in words but in good works. Let the lowly-minded not bear witness to himself, but allow witness to be borne to him by another. Let him that is pure in the flesh not boast, knowing that it is another who supplies to him his self-control. Let us take account then, brothers, of what kind of material we were made, and what kind of persons and who we were when we entered into the world; out of what kind of grave and darkness He who formed and made us led us into His world, having before prepared His good actions before we were born. All these things then having from Him, we ought in all things to give thanks to Him; to whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. XL. "Clear to us then these things being, and we having looked down into the deep things of the divine knowledge, we ought to do all things in order, so many as the Master has commanded us to perform at set seasons. That the offerings and ministrations be performed (with care), and not be done at random or disorderly, He commanded; but at fixed seasons and times. And where and by what persons He wishes them to be done, Himself fixed by His most excellent will, in order that all things being done rightly in good pleasure they may be acceptable to His will. They then who are the appointed seasons perform their offerings are both acceptable and blessed. For following the enactments of the Master they do not miss their aim. For to the High Priest public-ministrations of his own are given: and for the priests a place of their own is ordained; and on Levites ministries of their own are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances.

CH. XLI. Each of you, brothers, in his own order let him give thanks to God, being in good conscience, not transgressing the appointed rule of his public ministration, in sobriety. Not everywhere, brothers, are there offered sacrifices, the perpetual one, or for vows, or for sin and trespass, but in Jerusalem alone. And there, moreover not in every place is it offered, but before the temple on the altar, the victim being offered having been inspected for blemish by the High Priest and the before said ministers. They then who contrary to the appropriate order of His will do anything have death as their penalty. You see, brothers, by how much we have been counted worthy of greater knowledge, so much the more are we exposed to danger.

CH. XLII. The Apostles announced to us good news from the Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. Christ then is from God; and the Apostles from Christ. Both came then in orderly manner by God's will. Having then received charges, and having been fully assured by means of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and having been confirmed by the word of God with full assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went forth announcing as good news that the kingdom of God is about to come. Preaching then in countries and cities, they appointed their firstfruits, having proved them by the Spirit, for bishops and deacons of those who were about to believe. And this is no new way. For long ago it had been written about bishops and deacons. For in this way somewhere the Scripture says: *I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith.* (#Isa 60:17.)

CH. XLIII. And what wonder if they who in Christ were entrusted from God with such a work appointed those before-mentioned? Since even the blessed *faithful servant in all the house*, (#Nu 12:7,) Moses, signified in the Sacred Books all the things ordained for him. Whom also the other prophets followed, bearing witness with him to the laws ordained by him. For he, when jealousy had arisen about the priesthood, and the tribes were in dissension what sort of tribe should be adorned with the glorious name, commanded the twelve chiefs of tribes to bring to him rods engraved with the name of each tribe:" expounding the story of Num. 17.

CH. XLIV. "And our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office. For this cause then, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the beforesaid ones; and afterwards they provided continuance in order that if they fall asleep other approved men may succeed to their public ministry. Those then who were appointed by them or afterwards by other men of repute, the whole church having been well pleased, and who have ministered blamelessly to the flock of Christ with lowly mind, quietly and modestly, witness being borne to them for a long time by all, these we think are being unjustly cast out of the ministry. For no small sin it will be to us if we cast out those who blamelessly and uprightly have offered the gifts of the bishop's office. Blessed are the elders who went before, who had their departure fruitful and mature: for they have no fear lest some one remove them from the firm place set for them. For we see that you have removed some men, after having behaved nobly, from the public ministry blamelessly honored by them.

CH. XLV. Be contentious, brothers and jealous about the things pertaining to salvation. You have looked into the Scriptures, those given by the Holy Spirit. . . .

CH. XLVI. . . . Let us be joined then to innocent and righteous men. These are chosen ones of God. Why are there strifes and passions and separations and divisions and war among you? Or have we not one God and one Christ and one Spirit of grace, that which was poured out upon us, and one calling in Christ? Why do we pull apart and tear apart the members of the body of Christ and are in dissension towards our own body and come to so great folly as to forget ourselves that we are members one of another? Remember the words of Jesus our Lord. For He said: *Woe to that man: good were it for him if he had not been born than that he ensnare one of my chosen ones: better were it for him that a millstone be hung about him and he be sunk into the sea than that he ensnare one of my little ones.* (#Mt 18:6; 26:24.) Your division has turned aside many: many it has cast into faintheartedness, many into doubt, all of us into sorrow. And your dissension is abiding.

CH. XLVII. Take up the Epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle. What at first did he write to you in the beginning of the Gospel? In truth in a spiritual way he wrote a letter to you about both himself and Cephas and Apollos, because of your having even then made parties. But that partisanship brought less sin to you. For you became partisans of testified apostles and of a man approved among them. But now consider who they are that have turned you aside and have lessened the dignity of your far-famed brotherly love. Shameful, beloved ones, and very shameful, and unworthy of behavior in Christ, that it is heard that the most firm and the ancient church of the Corinthians because of one or two persons is in dissension against the elders. And this report has reached not only to us but also to those differently disposed from us, so that even blasphemies are brought to the name of the Lord because of your foolishness; and to yourselves danger is being wrought.

CH. XLVIII. Let us take this away then quickly, and let us fall before the Master and weep, begging Him that looking with favor He may be reconciled to us and may restore us to the honored pure behavior of our brotherly love. For a gate of righteousness opened for life, is this, according as it is written: "*Open for me gates of righteousness. Let me, having entered by them, give praise to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord. Righteous men will go in by it. (#Ps 118:19.)*" Since then many gates are opened, this gate in righteousness is that in Christ, in which blessed are all who have entered and make their journey straight in uprightness and righteousness, performing all things without confusion. Let one be faithful, let him be able to speak forth knowledge, let him be wise in distinguishing words, let him be pure in works. For so much the more ought he to be lowly-minded as he seems to be greater, and to seek the common profit of all and not his own.

CH. XLIX. He who has love in Christ, let him do the commandments of Christ. The bond of the love of God, who can set forth? The greatness of His beauty, who is sufficient to speak forth? The height into which love leads up is unspeakable. Love joins us to God: love (cp. **#Jas 5:20**) *covers a multitude of sins*: love bears all things; is longsuffering in all things. Nothing coarse is there in love, nothing haughty. Love has no divisions: love makes no dissensions: love does all things in concord. In love have all the chosen ones of God attained to full growth. Apart from love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love the Master took us to Himself. Because of the love which He had towards us, His blood Jesus Christ our Lord gave on our behalf in the will of God, and His flesh on behalf of our flesh, and His soul on behalf of our souls.

CH. L. . . . *Happy are they whose breaches of law have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. He is a happy man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin, and there is not in his mouth guile. (#Ps 32:1, 2; cp. #Ro 4:7.)* This happiness was pronounced on those chosen by God through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom be the glory for the ages of the ages. Amen."

CH. LIII. "For you understand and understand well the Sacred Scriptures, beloved ones, and have looked down into the oracles of God. . . ."

CH. LIV. Who then among you is noble? Who is compassionate? Who is filled with love? Let him say, If because of me is dissension and strife and divisions, I retire, I go away wherever you wish, and I do the things commanded by the people. Only let the flock of Christ be at peace with the appointed elders. He who shall have done this will win for himself great honor in Christ: and every

place will receive him. *For the Lord's is the earth and the fullness of it.* (#Ps 24:1.) These things, they who live as citizens the citizenship of God which is not to be regretted have done and will do.

CH. LV. But, to bring also examples of Gentiles. Many kings and leaders, during some season of pestilence, taught by oracles, have given themselves up to death, that through their own blood they might rescue the citizens. Many have returned from their own cities that dissension might go no further. We understand that many among us have given themselves up into bonds that they might redeem others. Many have given themselves away for slavery and having received their price have fed others. Many women having been made strong by the grace of God have performed many manly things." (Then follow the examples of Judith and Esther.)

CH. LVII. "You then who made the foundation of the dissension submit yourselves to the elders, and be brought by instruction to repentance, having bent the knees of your heart. Learn to submit, having put away the boastful and haughty self-will of your tongue. For it is better for you to be found in the flock of Christ little and of good repute than while seeming to be superior to be cast out of His hope. For thus says the all-virtuous Wisdom: *Behold I will send forth to you a saying of my breath.*" . . . quoting #Pr 1:23-33.

CH. LVIII. "Let us then obey His all-holy and glorious Name, having fled from the threatenings before-spoken by Wisdom to those who disobey, that we may dwell in our tent trusting upon the most upright Name of His greatness. Accept our counsel, and you will have no causes of regret. For as God lives, and the Lord Jesus Christ lives, and the Holy Spirit, the faith and the hope of the elect ones, so he who in lowliness of mind with earnestness of kindness, without regret, has done the decrees and ordinances given by God, this man shall be enrolled and of repute among the number of those who are being saved through Jesus Christ, through whom there is to Him glory for the ages of the ages.

CH. LIX. But if some disobey the words spoken by Him through us, let them know that they entangle themselves in no small transgression and danger. But we will be innocent of this sin. And we will ask, earnestly making our prayer and supplication, that the Maker of all things may guard unbroken the number which has been numbered of His chosen ones in the whole world, through His beloved servant Jesus Christ, through whom He called us from darkness into light, from ignorance into understanding of the glory of His Name, to hope on Thy Name, the First Cause of all creation." . . . (Here follows to end of ch. lxi. a prayer of exceeding beauty.)

CH. LXII. "About the things which befit our religion, the things most profitable for virtuous life to those who wish piously and righteously to go in a straight path, we have sufficiently written by letter to you, brothers. For about faith and repentance and genuine love and self-control and soberness and endurance we have handled every point, calling to mind that you must needs be well-pleasing to the Almighty God uprightly in righteousness and truth and longsuffering, preserving concord without remembrance of evil in love and peace with earnestness of kindness; as also our fathers, mentioned conspicuously before, were well-pleasing, pondering with lowly mind the things pertaining to the Father and God and Creator, and to all men. And these things with so much more pleasure we called to your mind since we knew clearly that we were writing to men faithful and most highly reputed and who have looked into the oracles of the instruction of God.



CH. LXIII. It is right then, giving heed to such and so many examples, to submit the neck and to occupy the place of obedience, in order that having ceased from the vain dissension, apart from all blame we may attain to the goal set before us in truth. For joy and gladness you will afford us if becoming obedient to the things written by us through the Holy Spirit you break off the unlawful anger of your jealousy according to the entreaty which we have made with peace and concord in this epistle. And we have sent men faithful and sober, who from youth to age have conducted themselves blamelessly among us, who will be witnesses between you and us. And this we have done that you may know that all our thought both has been and is that you may quickly be at peace.

CH. LXIV. Finally, may the All-seeing God and the Master of the spirits and the Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through Him for a people specially His own, give to every soul which is called by His worthily-great and holy Name, faith, fear, peace, endurance, long-suffering, self-control, purity and soberness, for good pleasure to His Name through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, through whom to Him be glory and greatness, power, honor, both now and for all the ages of the ages. Amen.

CH. LXV. The men sent from us, Claudius, Ephebus and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus also, send back to us quickly they may announce to us the prayed for and longed for peace and concord that the more quickly also we may rejoice about your good state.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and with all men everywhere who have been called by God through him. Through whom to Him be glory, honor, power, and greatness, an eternal throne, from the ages and to the ages of the ages. Amen."

That this brotherly appeal was effectual, we infer from the quotations given above from Hegesippus and Dionysius. For a letter of correction thus treasured cannot have been in vain. The intercourse of churches revealed in the Epistle of Clement and the quotation from Dionysius is a beautiful feature of early Christian life.

## II CORINTHIANS

### APPENDIX B

#### DOUBTFUL VARIOUS READINGS

A few readings open to doubt or of special interest I shall now discuss. See pages 7-10. {*PREFACE* and *NOTES AND REPLIES*}

In **#1Co 1:28**, documentary evidence slightly favors, I think, the omission of *and* before *the things which are not*. This would make the following words a thoughtful and forceful comment on those preceding; a comment easily overlooked: whereas the insertion of the word *and* is easily accounted for. It is marked as doubtful by Westcott and the Revisers, and is omitted without note by the earlier Editors mentioned on p. 6. {*PREFACE*}

In **#1Co 2:1**, the Sinai, Alex., Ephraim MSS., and the Syriac and the very valuable Coptic (Egyptian) Versions, read *mystery*; the Vat. and most later MSS. and the Latin Versions read *testimony*. The Editors above-mentioned give *testimony* without note. But, following Griesbach, Westcott and Hort and the R.V. read *mystery*, with the other in the margin. Their choice is I think the better attested reading, and is confirmed by the teachings in § 4. In **#1Co 2:10**, Westcott prefers, and Tregelles and the R.V. give in the margin, the reading *for God etc.*, with the Vatican MS. and the two Egyptian Versions, but against all other uncials and versions. This preponderance of documentary evidence, I do not see reason to reject.

In **#1Co 7:34**, the best documents are in hopeless confusion: and it is quite uncertain whether the word *divided* is required by those following as their predicate, or must be joined to the words foregoing. In the latter case it would denote a divided mind: in the former, different circumstances. The confusion of the evidence and the variety of opinion of the Critical Editors are fairly reproduced in the Revisers margin. Their second note, which is the reading of Tregelles and of Westcott, should be (cp. **#1Co 7:11**) *the woman* (or wife) *without a husband*. This reading is the best attested; and, apart from the singular verb *is careful* following a plural subject, would give a good sense, whether we read simply (R.V. margin) *the virgin* or (with Lachmann) *the virgin without a husband*. The repetition would emphasize the fact that the maiden and the separated wife were alike in not having a husband. Practically, the A.V. is retained by the R.V. and Tischendorf. Fortunately, the differences are as unimportant as they are perplexing. Whether the division be in the heart of the married man or in the lot of womankind, the teaching is practically the same.

In **#1Co 8:7**, *conscience of the idol* was read probably by Tertullian in A.D. 200 and afterwards apparently universally in the West, and is found in the Syriac Version and in most later Greek MSS. But, in deference to the Sinai, Alex., Vat. MSS. and the Coptic Version the reading *accustomed intercourse with the idol* is accepted without note by all recent Editors and by the Revisers. The A.V. reading is interesting as casting light (cp. **#1Pe 2:19**) on the exact meaning of the word *conscience*; and as a probable error which became nearly universal both in the Eastern and Western churches. In **#1Co 8:8**, the order of clauses is quite uncertain and unimportant.

In **#1Co 9:22**, the word *as* (*weak*,) is in nearly all the Greek copies except the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS., and in the oldest versions except the Latin. It was apparently omitted by Origen, the earliest commentator. The insertion is so easily explained by the same word three times in **#1Co 9:20, 21** that the omission confirms the trustworthiness of the oldest copies. An interesting coincidence with the true reading is found in **#2Co 11:29**. In **#1Co 10:20**, the word *Gentiles* is omitted in some very early Greek and Latin copies; but is sufficiently attested.

In **#1Co 11:24**, the word *broken* is almost certainly spurious.

The parallel passage **#Lu 22:19b, #Lu 22:20**, Westcott and Hort in their Appendix confidently reject, following the Beza MS. (6th cent.) and a Latin copy of 4th cent. and in part the oldest (Cureton's) Syriac Version, and influenced by various marks of confusion in what are called Western documents. The omission is noted in the Revisers' margin. The verses are found in the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS., (the Ephraim MS. is lost from **#Lu 22:19**,) to which elsewhere especially when agreeing these Editors pay the highest respect, in some very ancient versions and in various other witnesses. The rejection of evidence so preponderant needs certainly a justification more complete than that given in Westcott's note. The variation is interesting chiefly as bearing upon the relation between the accounts of the Supper given by Luke and by Paul.

In **#1Co 11:29** the four earliest uncials and the Sahidic (Egyptian) Version omit *unworthily* and *of the Lord*; and are followed without note by R.V. and all recent editors. The insertion of these words became universal in Latin, Greek, and Syrian copies. But it is easily accounted for by the word *unworthily* in **#1Co 11:27** and the apparent baldness of the words *the body*. It is an interesting example of early and wide-spread error in our N.T. documents.

In **#1Co 13:3**, the Sinai, Vatican, Alex. MSS. and probably the Coptic Version, for *that I may be burned* read that *I may glory*. That this reading was in some copies of his day, Jerome says. But the other reading was certainly known in the third century, and became universal. The difference is only one letter of one word. This is an interesting case of the best MSS. contradicting almost all other documents. For greater definiteness *may glory* might have been changed to *may be burned*: whereas the opposite change is not easy to explain. And the general excellence of the oldest MSS. claims our respect. But confident decision seems to me impossible.

In **#1Co 14:18**, except Tregelles' margin, the reading *with a tongue* is confidently accepted by the earlier Editors; and is in Westcott's margin. Westcott's text, and the R.V. without note, on evidence perhaps slightly preponderant, read *with tongues*. In **#1Co 14:37**, Tischendorf omits *a command*. But the Revisers' reading is well attested by the oldest Greek MSS. and the Coptic Version. In **#1Co 14:38**, the reading *he is not known*, in the Sinai, Alex., and Clermont MSS. and read apparently by Origen, is very difficult to expound. The reading *let him be ignorant* is in the Vatican MS. and some early versions, and became universal in the Greek Church. With documentary evidence fairly divided, I retain, with R.V. text, the familiar reading.

In **#1Co 15:14**, as in **#1Co 7:15**, the variation *us* and *you* is unimportant. In **#1Co 15:49**, the reading *let us wear* is in all uncials except the Vatican MS., in most cursives, and in the best versions; and was read by Tertullian and by most of the Fathers. Documentary evidence so preponderant, I see

no reason to set aside. Its rejection by the Revisers merely shows that not two-thirds of them were prepared to accept the change. In **#1Co 15:51**, the Sinai and Ephraim MSS. read *all of us will sleep: but not all of us will be changed*. And Jerome says that this reading was in some Greek copies of his day. The Clermont MS. (Greek and Latin) and the Latin Vulgate read *all of us will rise: but not all etc*. The Vatican MS., followed by the Syriac and Coptic Versions and the later Greek copies, and by all Editors except Lachmann and the margin of Tregelles, give the reading of the A.V. which the R.V. retains without note. In **#1Co 15:54**, the evidence for *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption*, though preponderant I think, is not such as to exclude doubt.

**#2Co 1:6** is variously arranged both in the best ancient documents and in modern Critical Editions: but the variations are unimportant. In **#2Co 1:15**, the Vatican MS. reads *a second joy*, as do the text of Westcott and the margin of Tregelles. It may have been suggested by the rather difficult reading *grace*, which differs only in one letter, and is found in the other early, and in most later, documents. In **#2Co 1:22**, the Revisers omit with confidence, following the Sinai, Alex., Ephraim MSS. and apparently the Syriac and Coptic Versions, but against the Vat. and Clermont MSS. and the Latin Versions, a word of one letter given in all Critical Editions without note, except that Westcott puts it in brackets. But the omission affects the sense very slightly.

In **#2Co 2:1**, following the Vat. MS., two cursives, and the Coptic Version, but against the other Greek and Latin MSS., Westcott in his text and Tregelles and R.V. in their margins give *For I determined*. This would give a good sense, and one likely to be overlooked by a copyist. But in face of such preponderant documentary evidence we can only surmise that it may possibly be correct. Similarly, in **#2Co 2:7**, following the Vat. and Alex. MSS. and the Syriac Version but against the mass of documents, Westcott puts the word *rather* only in the margin, and Tregelles and R.V. mark it as doubtful.

In **#2Co 3:3**, following all Greek MSS. earlier than the 9th cent. and all the Critical Editors, (but not Tischendorf's 7th Edition,) the R.V. reads without an alternative *tables* that are *hearts of flesh*. All the oldest versions and most later Greek MSS. read *fleshen tables of the heart*. The same is found in existing copies or translations of Irenaeus, Origen, and other fathers. But these last have been so often conformed, by copyists and translators, to their own copies of Paul's Epistles that we cannot confidently accept their evidence. This is an interesting case of a simpler reading replacing one more difficult, and passing into all the earliest versions and into most later Greek copies. In **#2Co 3:9**, the reading *to the ministry* has, I think, preponderant documentary evidence. But all Editors are in doubt about it. And the variation is unimportant.

In **#2Co 8:7**, following the Vat. MS. and some of the best versions, but against nearly all other Greek MSS. early and late and the Latin Versions and the other Critical Editors, Westcott gives in his text *from us to you* instead of *from you to us*. The former reading speaks of Paul's love as an enrichment to the Corinthians: the latter is a courteous acknowledgment of their love to him, as an enrichment to themselves. Each reading gives a correct sense. Certain decision is impossible.

In **#2Co 11:3**, the addition *and the purity* is rejected by Tischendorf, but accepted with some doubts by Tregelles and Westcott, and without note by the Revisers. It is attested, sufficiently I think by the Sinai and Vat. MSS. and (but placed before *simplicity*) by the Clermont MS. The Syriac

Version, but no very early Greek MS., omits it. In **#2Co 11:4**, the Revisers omit without note one letter, on evidence hardly decisive. But the change is merely from *you would bear* to *you bear*.

In **#2Co 12:1**, there is much confusion in the best documents. The reading *I must needs glory* in the text of R.V. and Westcott, and without note in the earlier Critical Editions, is well attested. The marginal reading of Westcott and the Revisers, *Now to glory is not etc.*, is that of the Sinai and Clermont MSS. and the Coptic Version. It is suspicious as being easily derived from the other reading. The difference is only one letter. In **#2Co 12:7**, following the Sinai, Vat., Alex. MSS. and the Greek part of two almost identical Greek and Latin copies of the 9th century, and the Latin part of one of them, but against the Clermont MS. and nearly all later Greek MSS. and the Latin and Syriac Versions, the Revisers and all editors except Tischendorf insert without note the difficult word *wherefore*, in Greek only three letters, which disturbs seriously the even flow of the verse. But, for this reason, it might easily have been omitted in the later copies; and, as we actually find, in nearly all versions and in the existing translations of Irenaeus and Origen, being almost incapable of translation. It lays rough, and therefore conspicuous, emphasis on the cause of Paul's thorn in the flesh. The concluding repetition, *that I be not overmuch lifted up*, is omitted in the Sinai, Alex., and Clermont MSS. and in the Vulgate Version; but is in the Vatican MS. and later uncials and nearly all Greek cursives, and the Syriac and Coptic Versions. The documentary evidence seems to be slightly in favor of the words, and so the internal evidence. They are accented by all editors except Tregelles who puts them in his margin. Lachmann brackets them. This is one of the few doubtful passages not noticed by the Revisers. But it is of slight importance. In **#2Co 12:15**, following the Sinai and Alex. MSS. and the two Egyptian Versions, with Tischendorf and with Westcott's text, the Revisers omit without note one important letter given without note by Tregelles, and in Westcott's margin, and found in the Vatican and most later MSS. uncial and cursive, and in Latin and apparently Syriac Versions. How good a sense the rejected reading gives, but one very likely to be overlooked by a copyist, I have shown in my notes. Certainly it should have had a place at least in the Revisers' margin.

In **#2Co 13:4**, the Revisers and all Editors retain the reading *in Him*; but, except Tischendorf, who has no margin, all put *with Him* in the margin. This last reading is well attested; but might easily have been copied from the same word soon afterwards.

Besides the above are many other variations without any appreciable bearing on the sense of the Epistles, or indisputably spurious. To the student of Textual Criticism these last are of great interest, as casting light on the affinities and the value of our documents, and on the ways in which error has crept into them. Indeed, for these purposes passages not open to doubt are our chief guides. And of such variations the most trifling are important. But to discuss them, does not fall within the scope of the present work.

For English readers, a good account of various readings is given in Queen's Printers' Bible.

## II CORINTHIANS

### APPENDIX C

#### THE REVISED VERSION

1. That the Revised Version rests upon a text much purer than that underlying our Authorized Version, and that the corrections of the text are of considerable importance, I have in *Introd. iii.* already endeavored to prove. A few words now about the Revisers' rendering of their text into English.

2. Among others less conspicuous I notice as indisputable improvements **#1Co 1:18**, *them that are perishing and us which are being saved*, **#1Co 1:21**, *seeing that in the wisdom of God*; the article omitted before *Jews and Greeks* in **#1Co 1:22, 23**; in **#1Co 2:4**, *persuasive* instead of *enticing*; *knoweth* for *knew* in **#1Co 2:8**, noting an abiding fact; *through the fire* in **#1Co 3:15** instead of *by fire*; **#1Co 4:5**, *each man have his praise from God, already* in **#1Co 4:8**, more correct and more graphic than *now*; **#1Co 4:9**, *men doomed to death* instead of the unintelligible rendering *approved to death, imitators, for followers, of Paul* in **#1Co 4:16; 11:1; 5:9**, *in my epistle*, preserving Paul's definite reference; **#1Co 6:12**, *not all things are expedient*; the article omitted twice in **#1Co 6:15** before *members*; the clearer renderings in **#1Co 7:5**, *because of your incontinency*, and in **#1Co 7:6**, *by way of permission, not of commandment*; the more graphic form *sitting at meat*, in **#1Co 8:10; 9:7**, *what soldier ever serveth*, preserving the reference to the men composing an army; **#1Co 9:17**, *I have a stewardship entrusted to me*, a rendering which rescues the verse from utter obscurity; so **#1Co 9:25**, *every man that striveth in the games*; **#1Co 9:27**, *I buffet my body, with bruise* in the margin; **#1Co 11:26**, *proclaim the Lord's death*, reproducing well the force of the original; **#1Co 11:29**, *judgment for condemnation*, **#1Co 12:3, 9, 13**, *in the Holy Spirit*, recalling **#Ro 8:15; #Mt 22:43**; in **#1Co 13:1-13** *love* instead of *charity*; *mirror* instead of *glass* in **#1Co 13:12**; **#2Co 3:18**; **#1Co 14:16**, *the Amen*, suggesting the familiar response; **#1Co 15:45**, *life-giving* for *quickening*; **#1Co 16:22**, *Maran atha*, apart, and as two words.

In the Second Epistle I note **#2Co 1:12**, *we behaved ourselves for we had our conversation*; **#2Co 1:17**, *fickleness* for *lightness*; **#2Co 2:14**, *leadeth us in triumph*, a most important change; **#2Co 3:6**, *a new covenant*, (cp. **#1Co 11:25**,) recalling **#Jer 31:31**, and God's covenants with Abraham and Moses; **#2Co 3:7, 13**, *was passing away*; **#2Co 3:18** *unveiled face*, and **#2Co 4:3** *gospel veiled*, bringing to light an obscured, but very beautiful and important, train of thought; **#2Co 4:4**, *the gospel of the glory of Christ*; **#2Co 4:16**, *our outward man is decaying*; **#2Co 5:14**, *one died for all, therefore all died*, a most important correction; **#2Co 8:1**, *make known to you* instead of *do you to wit*; and, in **#2Co 12:10**, a comma after *distresses*, suggesting, as I believe, the correct exposition.

3. Some of the marginal notes are of great value. In **#1Co 2:6**, *full-grown and age* explain *perfect and world*: in **#1Co 2:14, 15; 4:3**, *examined* explains *judged*; and in **#1Co 3:9** *tilled land* explains *husbandry*. The note in **#1Co 3:16f; 6:19; #2Co 6:16** distinguishes, though not in the best way, two different and important words: and in **#1Co 10:16** *participation* in the margin sheds light on the meaning of *communion* in the text. In **#2Co 3:14**, the margin gives what is, I think, the right exposition. This case illustrates the use of the margin where the meaning of the original is open to

doubt. So **#2Co 11:3**; and **#2Co 11:5; 12:11**. Very useful are the explanatory notes to **#2Co 5:10, 17, 19; 7:2; 8:2; 12:15**. The note in **#2Co 8:23** casts light on the root meaning of the word usually rendered *apostle*.

The word *daughter* added in italics in **#1Co 7:36ff** makes the meaning quite clear: and the omission of the word *unknown* in italics (A.V.) in **#1Co 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27**, removes a misrepresentation which obscured greatly the nature of the mysterious gift of *tongues*.

4. Naturally, every one finds in the Revised Version renderings retained which he would like to see removed. In **#1Co 1:2**, the rendering given in these notes is not even recorded in the margin. In **#1Co 2:14; 15:44, 46**, the Revisers do not indicate the connection between the word soul and that rendered (A.V. and R.V.) *natural*, thus leaving Paul's argument in utter obscurity. In **#1Co 4:8**, the incorrect rendering *ye have reigned* is retained, merely omitting *as kings*, instead of *ye have become kings*. In **#Re 19:6**, we have another incorrect rendering of the same tense of the same word, *reigneth*. The aorist notes the beginning of the reign. So Kuehner, *Greek Gram.* § 386. 5. In **#2Co 2:2; 7:8f**, *sorry* corresponds to *sorrow*. But the ideas conveyed now by these words are very different. Much better is the rendering *sorrowful*, retained, with strange inconsistency, for the same Greek word in **#2Co 6:10; #Mt 19:22; 26:22, 37; #Joh 16:20**. In **#2Co 4:6** a mere schoolboy following the order of the Greek words would have avoided the Revisers' vapid rendering and have reproduced the exact force of Paul's picturesque words, *out of darkness light shall shine*. In **#2Co 5:16**, the word *him*, retained but now in italics, obscures the meaning of the verse. See note.

5. In a few cases I am compelled to believe that there are changes for the worse. Of these, the worst cases are **#1Co 3:16; 6:19; #2Co 6:16**, where the new rendering *a temple* implies as I think a serious theological error. See notes. In **#1Co 9:19**, the rendering *brought myself under bondage to all* is very ugly, and obscures the idea of work for others' good suggested by (A.V.) *servant to all*. This rendering retained, with the other in the margin, would have been much better.

6. The Revisers' treatment of the Greek aorist is not satisfactory. Although again and again compelled to render it, as I think with perfect accuracy, by the English perfect, yet in many other cases they have used for it the English preterite even where by doing so they have forced upon the "indefinite" Greek tense a definite reference quite foreign to it. In **#1Co 1:4, 5** we have (R.V.) *was given, were enriched*, as though Paul referred necessarily to some definite time; but in **#1Co 1:11** properly *it hath been signified*, in **#1Co 1:20** *hath not God made foolish*, and in **#1Co 2:16** *who hath known the mind of the Lord*. In **#1Co 4:8**, where the Greek has one perfect and two aorists, the R.V. suggests two perfects and one Aorist. The good rendering *already are ye filled* should have been followed by *already ye have become rich, apart from us ye have become kings*. But in **#1Co 5:7** we have a good change, *hath been sacrificed* for (A.V.) *is sacrificed*. In **#1Co 7:28**, the form *hast not sinned etc.*, which reproduces correctly the full sense of the aorist, is necessarily retained. So. **#1Co 12:18, 28**. In **#2Co 3:14** a definiteness not belonging to the aorist is imposed upon it by the rendering *were hardened*. Against this, the Revisers should have been guarded by their own rendering of **#2Co 4:2, 4**, *have renounced, hath blinded*. In **#2Co 5:13** the force of the aorist, *if we have become beside ourselves*, is missed both in text and margin. The full latitude of the tense is fortunately preserved in **#2Co 9:2**, *your zeal hath stirred up very many*.

7. A blemish of the Revised Version is the frequent but not uniform retention of the rendering of for two different Greek prepositions in addition to its proper use for the Greek genitive. Instead of *from him* we still read in **#1Co 8:6** *of whom are all things*; **#1Co 11:8, 12**, *the man is not of the woman*, **#1Co 15:47**, *the first man is of the earth*; **#2Co 5:18**, *all things are of God*. But with great gain the Revisers have changed *of* into *from* in **#1Co 7:7**, *his own gift from God*; **#2Co 2:16**, *savor from death . . . savor from life*; **#2Co 3:5**, *anything as from ourselves, our sufficiency is from God*; **#2Co 4:7**, *not from ourselves*; **#2Co 5:1**, *a building from God*; **#2Co 12:6**, *heareth from me*. Instead of *by*, which all Englishmen understand as denoting (so often in A.V. and R.V.) an agent, we still find in **#1Co 2:15** *judged of no man*; **#1Co 4:3**, *that I should be judged of you*; **#1Co 8:3**, *known of him*; **#1Co 11:32**, *chastened of the Lord*; **#2Co 1:4**, *comforted of God*; **#2Co 1:16**, *and of you to be set forward*; **#2Co 3:2**, *known and read of all men*; **#2Co 5:4**, *may be swallowed up of life*; **#2Co 12:11**, *commended of you*. Fortunately, but inconsistently, it is changed into *by* in **#1Co 2:12**, *given to us by God*; **#1Co 10:9f**, *perished by the serpents*; **#1Co 10:29**, *judged by another conscience*; **#1Co 14:24**, *reproved, judged, by all*; **#2Co 2:6**, *inflicted by the many*. In **#1Co 15:47**, perversely enough the A.V. *from heaven* is changed to *the second man is of heaven*.

Very bad is the retained rendering *unto* for εἰς when noting a purpose, and for the Greek dative of advantage: instead of the intelligible and accurate rendering *for* which is also often found both in A.V. and R.V. and might be used uniformly. We have still *unto our glory*, **#1Co 2:7**; *unto judgment*, **#1Co 11:34**; *unto God*, **#2Co 5:13**, and in **#2Co 5:15** *unto themselves, unto him who died*. In **#1Co 8:6**, neglecting the excellent marginal rendering of the A.V. *for him*, the R.V. gives the obscure jargon of *whom are all things, and we unto him*. In **#2Co 5:13**, the plain words *it is for your cause* are changed into the unmeaning form *it is unto you*. But in **#1Co 6:12** *all things are lawful unto me* is properly changed to *lawful for me*. And again and again both A.V. and R.V. use the rendering *for* in precisely the same connection: e.g. **#1Co 6:13**, *the body is not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*.

8. The Revised Version I have further discussed in *The Expositor* 2nd series vol. ii. pp. 92, 205, and vol. iii. p. 380. When all strictures have been made it still remains by far the best production of Holy Scripture in English which has yet been published. And the use of a second version different from that in common use is of great value as a means of distinguishing between the familiar form of words and their underlying sense.

9. With the Revised and Authorized Versions it is interesting to compare the Roman Catholic Version\* (\*Reprinted, with the Latin Vulgate in parallel columns, in very cheap but beautiful form by Messrs. Bagster and Sons.) published at Rheims in A.D. 1582, twenty-nine years before the Authorized Version. It must be admitted that, although translated from the Latin Vulgate, it rests upon a purer Greek text than does our Authorized Version. Of the sixty corrections of the Greek text noted above on pp. 7, 8 {Preface, Introduction} as accepted by the Revisers and all recent Editors, forty-one were already incorporated in the Rheims Version. To these others of some importance might be added. Whereas the readings inferior (e.g. **#1Co 15:51**: see p. 534) to the A.V. are few or unimportant. But the rendering into English follows the Latin so closely that it is frequently obscure and to our ears unpleasant, with very little of the classic diction of the Authorized Version. Not unfrequently, technical terms are left untranslated: e.g. **#1Co 5:7, 8**. *Purge the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are azymes. For our Pasche, Christ is immolated. Therefore let us feast,*



*not in the old leaven, nor in the leaven of malice and wickedness, but in the azymes of sincerity and verity.* But this is an unfair specimen of the translation as a whole. Here and there (e.g. **#1Co 12:9** *in* for *by* twice: so **#1Co 12:3**) our Revisers have with gain returned to its literal renderings. On the whole the Rheims Version, like our A.V. and Luther's German Version, is faithful; and with very few and doubtful exceptions, (e.g. perhaps **#1Co 11:24**, *this is my body which shall be delivered for you*,) as few as in the above Protestant versions, it bears no trace of ecclesiastical bias. Yet, while cheerfully admitting this, we cannot forget that to Protestantism directly or indirectly all the nations of the world owe the Bible freely circulated in their mother tongues. It is to their honor that from Protestants chiefly have come efforts to restore the Sacred Text to its original purity, and to elucidate its meaning; that in our day the three great Protestant nations are endeavoring to give to their peoples the most exact reproduction possible of that Text in their own languages; and that, eager to be corrected wherever error has crept into even our most cherished convictions, we joyfully submit all matters of difference to the arbitrament of the Book of God, and ever turn to its pages for that clearer light and fuller knowledge which day by day through His Written Word God gives and will give.