



Lesson 30 – The Message Heeded

Based on 2 Corinthians

Paul had left Ephesus on his 3rd Missionary journey during which he hoped to visit once more the scenes of his former labors in Europe tarrying for a time at Troas.

1) What was on his mind?

2 Corinthians 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the _____ of all the churches.

Particularly of the church at Corinth, rested heavily on his heart. He had hoped to meet Titus at Troas and to learn from him how the words of counsel and reproof sent to the Corinthian brethren had been received.

2) Did he find him?

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 Furthermore, when I came to _____ to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not _____ my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

He therefore left Troas and crossed over to Macedonia, where, at Philippi he met Timothy.

3) What did he say about it later?

2 Corinthians 7:5-6 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no _____, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of _____;

4) What news did he bring?

2 Corinthians 7:7-8 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was _____ in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I _____ the more. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

This faithful messenger brought the cheering news that a wonderful change had taken place among the Corinthian believers. Many had accepted the instruction contained in Paul's letter and had repented of their sins. Their lives were no longer a reproach to Christianity but exerted a powerful influence in favor of practical godliness.

Filled with joy, the apostle sent another letter to the Corinthian believers, expressing his gladness of heart because of the good work wrought in them:

5) How did the Corinthians receive Paul's first letter?

2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye _____ after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have _____ yourselves to be clear in this matter.



6) How stressed was Paul at that time?

2 Corinthians 1:8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we _____ even of _____:

For some time, Paul had been carrying a burden of soul for the churches, a burden so heavy that he could scarcely endure it. False teachers had sought to destroy his influence among the believers and to urge their own doctrines in the place of gospel truth.

7) To Whom did he show appreciation first?

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be God, even the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our _____, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

8) What did Paul add to that?

2 Corinthians 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our _____ also aboundeth by Christ.

9) Paul made an interesting statement in his 2nd letter to Corinth, what was it?

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every _____. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are _____, and in them that perish:

It was the custom of the day for a general victorious in warfare to bring with him on his return a train of captives. On such occasions incense bearers were appointed, and as the army marched triumphantly home, the fragrant odor was to the captives appointed to die, a savor of death, showing that they were nearing the time of their execution; but to those of the prisoners who had found favor with their captors, and whose lives were to be spared, it was a savor of life, in that it showed them that their freedom was near.

10) What did Paul add to that?

2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the savour of _____ unto death; and to the other the savour of _____ unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

Like incense the fragrance of the gospel was to be diffused throughout the world. To those who should accept Christ, the message would be a savor of life unto life; but to those who should persist in unbelief, a savor of death unto death.

Paul desired to impress upon believers the solemn responsibility of the gospel ministry. Faithfulness in preaching the word, united with a pure, consistent life, can alone make the efforts of ministers acceptable to God and profitable to souls.

11) What did Paul ask the Corinthians about his 1st Epistle to them?

2 Corinthians 3:1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

There were those who had charged Paul with self-commendation in writing his former letter. The apostle now referred to this by asking the members of the church if they thus judged his motives.



The Corinthian believers, who had been led from the worship of idols to the faith of the gospel, were themselves all the recommendation that Paul needed. Their reception of the truth, and the reformation wrought in their lives, bore eloquent testimony to the faithfulness of his labors and to his authority to counsel, reprove, and exhort as a minister of Christ.

12) How did he refer to his brethren there?

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 Ye are our _____ written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with _____, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

The conversion of sinners and their sanctification through the truth is the strongest proof a minister can have that God has called him to the ministry. The evidence of his apostleship is written upon the hearts of those converted and is witnessed to by their renewed lives. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. A minister is greatly strengthened by these seals of his ministry.

13) How did Paul view his ministry?

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Not that we are _____ of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of _____; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament...

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we _____ not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's _____ in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are _____: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which _____ not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Corinthians 4:5-6 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of _____, hath shined in our _____, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

By God's abundant mercy he and his brethren had been sustained in difficulty, affliction, and danger. They had not modeled their faith and teaching to suit the desires of their hearers, nor kept back truths essential to salvation in order to make their teaching more attractive. They had presented the truth with simplicity and clearness, praying for the conviction and conversion of souls. And they had endeavored to bring their conduct into harmony with their teaching, that the truth presented might commend itself to every man's conscience.

14) How did he continue?

2 Corinthians 4:7-8 But we have this _____ in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of _____, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin. In loving ministry, they are to meet the sinful and the needy and lead them to the cross.

15) How difficult was life for Paul and the Early Disciples?

2 Corinthians 4:11-12 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our _____ flesh. So then death worketh in us, but _____ in you.



That which was working death in them was bringing spiritual life and health to the Corinthians, who by a belief in the truth were being made partakers of life eternal.

16) How was Paul constrained to speak?

2 Corinthians 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore _____;

Fully convinced of the reality of the truth entrusted to him, nothing could induce Paul to handle the word of God deceitfully or to conceal the convictions of his soul. He would not purchase wealth, honor, or pleasure by conformity to the opinions of the world. Though in constant danger of martyrdom for the faith that he had preached to the Corinthians, he was not intimidated, for he knew that He who had died and risen again would raise him from the grave and present him to the Father.

17) For whom did he work?

2 Corinthians 4:15-16 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the _____ of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is _____ day by day.

Paul felt the power of the enemy; but though his physical strength was declining, yet faithfully and unflinchingly he declared the gospel of Christ. Clad in the whole armor of God, this hero of the cross pressed forward in the conflict. His voice of cheer proclaimed him triumphant in the combat.

18) What did he declare?

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 For our light _____, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are _____.

19) How did Paul remind them of Jesus?

2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was _____, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his _____ might be rich.

You know the height from which He stooped, the depth of humiliation to which He descended. Having once entered upon the path of self-denial and sacrifice, he turned not aside until He had given His life. There was no rest for Him between the throne and the cross.

Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives.

20) What did the Apostle John write about God in his 1st Epistle?

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the _____ for our sins.

1 John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath _____ upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

In every true disciple this love, like sacred fire, burns on the altar of the heart. It was on the earth that the love of God was revealed through Christ. It is on the earth that His children are to reflect this love through blameless lives. Thus, sinners will be led to the cross to behold the Lamb of God.

Can you see lives depend on Godly People?

Would you like to be a blessing?

When is the time to stand and speak?