



COL. 2:15

IN THE TRAIN OF HIS TRIUMPH

CHAPTER STUDIES IN 2 CORINTHIANS

C.R. GOLSWORTHY



Raymond Golsworthy

Austin-Sparks, sent ministry workers to India as far back as the 1930's and 1940's. Prominent Honor Oak-ers in India at the time included **sC.R. Golsworthy** (who would later go on to work with brothers like Herald Hsu and other ex-WL associates), A.J. Flack, and **Lady Ogle. Golsworthy** and Flack, in particular, connected themselves to Singh's "indigenous" movement, and thus brought in the Honor Oak connection.

C.R. Golsworthy, 'A Missionary Love Story', p.21 The Golsworthys were held for 3 ½ years at Fukushima in Japan.

“ My father’s sister Joyce, a school teacher in India, and her husband **Raymond Golsworthy** have been taken prisoner on their honeymoon, and interned in Japan when their ship back to India was captured (12th May 1942).⁴ Dad writes, “My how thankful we can all be that definite news has come through about Joyce and Raymond. I do hope and pray that the way will open up for them to be released on an exchange basis. I am sure that diplomatic representation will be made if there is any hope at all so we will not give up hope.”
<http://mychinamystery.blogspot.com/2009/07/chapter-7-chungking-british-military.html>

Lady Daisy Ogle was the widow of an English Missionary in India during the time of the [British Raj](#). After her husband's death she continued in India, working in [The Nilgiris District](#). She is known to have had close links with [Honor Oak Christian Fellowship Centre](#) in London and along with her colleague Miss Sinclair, they worked closely with two of their staff in India: Alfred J. Flack and **Raymond Golsworthy** who were stationed at [Wellington](#).

IN THE TRAIN OF HIS TRIUMPH

(Studies in 2 Corinthians)

INTRODUCTION

"Acts" and "2 Corinthians" are corresponding books, yet with a difference. "Acts" tells us the *outside* story of God's missionary work; 2 Corinthians tells us the *inside* story, and both have their place and value. The picture in Acts is largely geographical, in 2 Corinthians it is deeply personal, and intensely spiritual.

In 2 Cor. 2:14. Paul sees himself as participating in a great victory-procession, "triumphing in Christ" in this *particular* sense. He is, in fact, one of Christ's conquered ones, chained to the chariot of victory, a willing captive, now, and helping to celebrate the Greatest Victory of all time. Moving on in such a fellowship with the Victor is inevitably costly; the chains are often heavy, and the shame, at times, unbearable, but the victory *must be celebrated "in every place", and the Name proclaimed. While the procession moves along, the "victory-incense" will be rising to the Father, and He will be saying, in Heaven, what He twice said from heaven, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased".*

The imagery Paul was using would have been well known to the Corinthian readers, (see our "Key Comment" on Ch. 2), and the parallel he was making would have been more than obvious to them. But, of course, there is a difference. In Paul's case, and ours, it is a matter of *high honor* to be chained to Christ's chariot; indeed, we have been captured by Him so that, in due time, we might reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12a, Phil. 3:12)! May God help us to make a full and glad surrender to this "Glorious Victor, Prince Divine", and then to "apprehend that *for which we have been apprehended*"!

In the pages that follow, we shall suggest outlines for the various chapters as we ourselves see them, and then give "Key Comments" on what appear to us to be the main emphases in each case, simply sharing what we feel the Lord has pressed upon our own hearts, and with the prayer that others may be blessed *through* the sharing.

We would strongly stress, however, that CLOSE AND CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF THE TEXT ITSELF WILL BE MOST ESSENTIAL as we study together, but, granted *that*, there could be lasting rewards both to individuals and to groups, and specially for those who desire to serve the Lord, and to be involved in "this ministry" (Ch. 4:1). May our Glorious Lord make us His captives, indeed, that we may become, to God, a "sweet savour of CHRIST", as we, also, celebrate His victory from place to place!

Chapter One "A GRATEFUL RETROSPECT"

I. THE OPENING GREETING 1-2

- 1) The Writers; Paul and Timothy; *je. a Collective ministry (Valuable Principle)*
- 2) The Receivers; the Church at Corinth, and all saints in Achaia. (it was for wide distribution)
- 3) The Wish; "Grace and Peace"; the source and effect of all blessing.

II. THE UPSURGE OF PRAISE 3-7 ("Blessed be God")

- 1) For the comforting ministry of God in recent sufferings v3
- 2) For the divine strategy behind that comforting ministry v4-7 (an "overplus" of comfort, making possible a "flow on" in ministry to others)

III. THE REVIEW OF THE TRIALS 8-11 (Note the sequence)

- 1) Bankruptcy and Resourcelessness v8
- 2) Belief for "Resurrection" v9
- 3) Blessed with Divine Deliverance v10
- 4) Bound together in Prayer Fellowship v11
(NB. God brings *everything* to the ground of "Resurrection"; see Ch. 4:10-12)

IV. THE TRANSPARENCY OF THE MINISTRY 12-14

A clear conscience, because of "godly sincerity", leading to much joy.

V. THE MATTER OF THE POSTPONED VISIT (to Corinth) 15-24

- 1) The sincerity of the plan, and the expected itinerary 15,16
- 2) The denial of a vacillating frame of mind 17-22 (Such would not be in keeping with our firm gospel and God's firm promises!)
- 3) The inference of an element of mercy 23, 24 (He wanted to spare them!)

In this chapter, we enter one of the best beloved regions in the Bible, and, even in the first few verses, there is so much that can help and enlighten us.

It is impressive that Paul again begins his letter with an outpouring of praise to the Lord. "Blessed be God", he says, "even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... and the God of all comfort" (v3). In those words, the banner that will float over the whole letter is unfurled, and the focus is set, *God will be praised*. And Paul is praising here from up to date experience; for he has proved again that God has been watching over his trials, and has had a positive and far reaching purpose in them, namely the blessing of countless others beside himself. Perhaps we, too, have to learn again that whatever *we* undertake for the Lord (even the writing of a letter!), we should launch out with fresh praises in our hearts to the Lord! We recall that it was the tribe of Judah that was appointed to lead Israel through the wilderness (Num. 2:9; 10:13,14), and "Judah" means "Praise"! And we remember, too, that, when Hezekiah moved into battle against his enemies, he "put the *singers* in front" (2 Chron. 20:21,22). Satan always trembles at the praises of God's people, praises that come from experience, and Christians who advance with a song can be assured of victories and spoils in God's good time.

The verses on God's sure purpose *behind* our sufferings are also very important and enlightening. We suffer *unto* discovery, discovery of God's "ever present help" (Psa. 46:1), and then *unto* ministry, i.e. the passing on to others of the *overflow* of help which we ourselves have received from the Lord. God's heart is great, and we may be sure that, in every situation, He is reaching out for the blessing of *many*, and then the thanksgivings of many (vil). Whatever may be your present trial, and mine, it can, and should, provoke fresh trust in the God of Resurrection, thus bringing deliverance to ourselves, and leading on to a ministry to others. At such times, we can even ask ourselves *who* are those whom God has in mind to enrich through our situation! It is thus we move into the *greatness* of God's heart and the *greatness* of His purposes.

Chapter Two "REVIEWS AND RESOLUTIONS"

I. THE REVIEW OF THE CORINTHIAN SITUATION -14

The Desire for a happy and peaceful relationship v, 1, 2
The anguish behind the earlier letter v3,4

II. THE ADVICE CONCERNING THE REPENTANT BROTHER 5-11

Lift the Discipline; forgive and comfort him (Cp. Hab. 3:2; Jn. 1:14) v7
Lest Satan get an advantage vil (NB. the Cosmic Background).

III. THE ANXIETY ABOUT TITUS 12-13

Not found at Troas. (NB. The humble interdependence of Paul; Cp. 1 Cor. 12:21)

IV. THE PAGEANTRY OF EVANGELISM 14-16

The Chained Captives, displaying and heralding the Victor's Triumph v14
The Rising Incense, and the differing effects v15,16

V. THE ESSENCE OF THE MINISTRY v17 (see Marg.)

A Pure Presentation of CHRIST. (Thus easily distinguishable from the false.)

To us, the outstanding passage in this chapter is the one dealing with what we called "The Pageantry of Evangelism" (vss. 14-16). It is a picture which could be set behind this whole epistle and, indeed, behind the whole story of Apostolic journeying and church planting as told to us in Acts. Paul views himself and his companions as chained to the victory chariot of Christ, and simply being taken from place to place to celebrate Christ's glorious victory over all His foes. As the Roman General would have his captives chained to his chariot, and, amidst all the rising incense, go with him from place to place within the city to display to all the citizens the fact that he was indeed the Victor, so does Christ have His "captured ones" (like Paul and his companions, willing "captives" in their case) move with Him from place to place to herald His FAR GREATER VICTORY over all the powers of darkness! What a privilege we, too, may have, as His "apprehended ones"(Phil. 3:12), to share in the worldwide proclamation of that Victory!

The mention of the incense, too, completes the picture. To those who would oppose this Victor, it would be like a "smell of death" (See Living Bible), but to those who are on His side, it would be like a "Life giving perfume". So, indeed, with the carriers of God's Gospel; their very presence in any place, (and the message they carry) spells doom to those who will not yield to God's Great Victor, whilst those who humbly accept Him, and yield to Him, are thereby quickened and made alive! Best of all, and over all, the whole "Gospel Procession" brings *to God* a sweet fragrance of His Christ (v15), as He sees His conquering Son proclaimed and honored everywhere.

The question then comes to us, wherever we may be, are we truly *captured* by Christ, in view of all He is and **all He has** done? And are we going forth with His gospel howsoever we are able, and celebrating His Victory everywhere? Thus may we, too, become "unto God a sweet savor of Christ".

Chapter Three "THE GLORIOUS MINISTRY"

I. PAUL'S ABUNDANT COMMENDATION 1-3

Not letters but lives; Christ "written" in human hearts by the Holy Spirit! This is the best recommendation we can have.

II. PAUL'S DIVINE SUFFICIENCY 4-5 (Answering Ch. 2:16)

A God who is "All sufficient" at all times. (See Ch. 9:8; also "ElShaddal", Gen. 17:1)

III. PAUL'S TRANSCENDENT MESSAGE 6-11

Surpassing "the Law" because:

- 1) Not "letter", but "spirit" v6
- 2) Not killing, but quickening v6
- 3) Not bringing condemnation, but imparting RIGHTEOUSNESS (in Christ). v9
- 4) Not "passing away", but REMAINING v11 (also v13)
- 5) Not only "glorious" v7, 9, 10, 11; but ALL GLORIOUS, "excelling in glory" v8, 9, 10, 11.

IV. PAUL'S RESULTANT BOLDNESS 12-13

Nothing to fear, because his message cannot fade!

V. PAUL'S RECURRING PROBLEM 14-16 (A blinded, or "veiled", Israel)

Ever when they read "Moses" the veil is STILL there. v14,15.

Only removes when they "turn to the Lord" v16

VI. PAUL'S PERSONAL "LIBERATION" (by the Holy Spirit) 17,18

From darkness to Light; from bondage to "liberty". v17

From glory to GLORY; through "beholding *His* glory" v18

In this chapter, the Apostle moves right into the main theme of this epistle, and introduces the matter of the glorious message and ministry that have been entrusted to him. He tells us plainly what the message is, something that far surpasses what was entrusted to Moses; and also wherein lies his enablement for proclaiming it (v5), "our sufficiency is of God".

The Apostle speaks much about his earnest endeavors to help his own nation, and it reminds us of his familiar word to the Romans, telling of his deep yearnings over Israel (Rom. 9:13; 10:1), and his *longings* for their salvation. Certainly he had something far more to give them than Moses ever had. While the law had its own "glories", heralding, forever, the fearful *holiness* of God, the gospel that Paul carried "excelled in glory" (v9). And so it is today. "Moses" continues to show us our *sins*, but the Gospel evermore shows us our *Saviour*. The Law "slays" us, but the glorious Gospel of Christ lifts us from the dead (Eph. 2:16). The message of Moses invariably condemns, but those who receive "the Gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1:16) are "justified by faith, and have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1). The glory on Moses was a *fading* glory, but the glory of the Gospel is an *unfading* one, the more it is proclaimed the more glorious it appears; it is the "everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14:6; see also Isa. 60:19,20). It is interesting to note that the "vail" placed over Moses' face was there to hide, NOT the glory, but the *FADING of the glory* which they could not steadfastly look upon (2 Cor. 3:7).

But the actual conveying of the message of the Gospel is always a battle, not least with "Israel," as explained by Paul in this chapter, and in the chapter that follows. Indeed, *all* faces are veiled, and *all* minds blinded, blinded by God's great enemy (2 Cor. 4:4). Thank God, the Light we carry is *all penetrating*, and, as in Gen. 1, can "overcome" all kinds of chaos and darkness (See also Jn. 1:5). So had it been in the case of the Apostle Paul himself. Never was one more "blinded" than he, the very "light" that was in him was darkness, so how great the darkness (Math. 6:23)! But, on the Damascus road, he saw the Light, and the Light *saw* Him through and through, and Paul was temporarily blinded by the glory of it. So the battle with darkness *can* be won, and is *being* won, but it is a battle all the same, as Paul explains in our chapter.

We should ever thank God for the in shining Law, which serves to show us our sins, but, far more, for the "super shining Gospel", which provides the answer, revealing the Saviour, and bringing us into glorious Newness of Life.

Chapter Four "MORE ABOUT THE MINISTRY"

I. THE ESSENTIALS FOR THE MINISTRY 1-2

- 1) God's Commissioning Grace (mercy) (Cp Eph. 3:8)

2) Transparent holiness of life v2 (A great "renunciation; a resultant manifestation")

THIS enables us to press on "without fainting" (also v16)

II. THE RESISTANCE AGAINST THE MINISTRY 3-4

A Satanic blinding of the mind; countering the entrance of the Gospel Light. (See also Eph. 4:18)

III. THE THEME OF THE MINISTRY 5-6

Not *ourselves* (beware!), but our Lord. (The Person from Whose face shines out the very glory of God.

Cp Math. 17:2; Rev. 1:16b; Jn. 1:14 etc)

IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF THE MINISTRY 7-12

Personal *experience* of the resurrection we talk about, even in physical ways. v79. The Light shines out through broken vessels; typified in Jud. 7:16, 20.

Thus, the Life flows out as we share Christ's death and experience His sufferings. v10-12. So, we *display* "resurrection" as well as declaring it!

V. THE CONFIDENCE OF THE MINISTRY 13-14

Believing and speaking. (Cp Lk. 1:1) A ring of *authority* in the servants of the King.

VI. THE MOTIVE OF THE MINISTRY 15

- 1) For *your* sake, the blessing of the Corinthians.
- 2) For God's glory, because of the resultant praises. This is the true ultimate.

VII. THE REWARD FOR THE MINISTRY 16-18

An eternal "weight of **glory**"; contrasting with the passing "lightness" of the suffering.

The ministry of the gospel is set forth in this chapter under a twofold figure; the sending out of Light (6-9) and the flowing out of Life (10-12).

There can be little doubt that the O.T. incident of Gideon and the torches was prominent in Paul's mind when he spoke of the breaking of the earthen vessels and the going forth of the light. The incident (Jud. 7) was related to victory over the Midianites, but Paul uses the illustration in connection with the sending out of the light of the Gospel amongst Satan blinded men (v4). Three points of similarity are easily discernable :

- 1) The need of *earthen* vessels, *that can be easily broken* (This is God's need!)
- 2) The need of having the True Light (torches) *inside* those vessels. (v6)
- 3) The need of the *breaking* of the vessels, if the Light is to shine out. We might stress, also, the *multiplied* value when God has His *collective* "300" who can act *together* in this process of accepted brokenness as they blow the trumpet of the Gospel, and the terrifying effect this oneness has on the enemy (Jud. 7:22)!

The other figure employed is that of the flowing forth of the Life (vss 10-12), reminding us, surely, of our Lord's gracious promise in Jn. 7:38, "out of him shall flow rivers of Living Water". To start with, God's people are "containers" of Christ's resurrection Life (Cp Jn. 4:14). But that Life, evidently, is to flow *forth* in Life giving *ministry*, and the principle is shown to be the same as that regarding the Light. As the breaking of the vessel was necessary for the sending out of the Light, so an inward sharing of Christ's *death is essential for, and basic to, the going forth of His Life. As Paul puts it, we must "bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (v10)*. This could be in terms of actual physical sufferings as we carry forth the Gospel, or some unyielding "thorn in the flesh" (eh. 12:7), or in some *other* way, but all this would provide the opportunity and occasion for the *release* and operation of the resurrection Life of Christ; it would be the essential background for it. As he puts it in Ch. 6:9, it is a matter of a constant "dying, and behold we LIVE"! In this way, those who are in "this ministry" are giving out Life as well as Light, and other souls are being "touched" by The Life and spiritually quickened (v12).

We can only thank God for the breaking of the earthen vessel, and for the seventies and costliness of our task, for it is *then* that the Light gets out and the Life is released. *That is the Testimony, and that is the Ministry!*

Chapter Five "MOMENTOUS MEDITATIONS"

I. MEDITATIONS ON THE RESURRECTION BODY 1-8

A New "House" to live in (1,2) and a New "Robe" to wear (3,4).

Both made by God (vi, v5) and both eagerly anticipated (v2, v4).

The "exchange" will constitute a final "swallowing up" of the whole tragedy of death v4. See also Isa. 25:8; 2 Tim. 1:10.

II. MEDITATIONS ON THE COMING JUDGMENTSEAT OF CHRIST 9-13

We shall all be "made manifest" before it; and recompensed accordingly v10. The prospect generates a new diligence of service v9, 11; (The same passion to please Him as will later be shown when we have our glorified bodies v9)

III. MEDITATIONS ON THE MEANING OF THE CROSS 14-15

Substitution implies *representation*, so "all died", in God's reckoning. v14

We now have a New Life, which operates in a *new direction v15 (ie Not unto ourselves, but unto Christ)*

IV. MEDITATIONS ON THE NEW CREATION LIFE 16-17 (Life in the corporate Christ).

1) It necessitates new appraisals of our brethren v16

We become oblivious to the old earthly measurements and considerations, for all that has "died" (v14)

We can *only* view them, now, as parts of the corporate Christ as we are!

2) It assures us of total renewal in every realm v17

In our new position (in Christ) we inherit a "New Everything"; new citizenship, new resources, new relationships, new prospects, new destiny; all is New!

V. MEDITATIONS ON THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY 18-21

(To the World)

1) Offering a new reconciliation to God, by Jesus Christ. v18-20

2) Offering a new standing of *righteousness before God. In Christ. v21.*

This' chapter reminds us of Psa. 77:12 where the Psalmist says he will meditate on all God's works; likewise of 1 Tim. 4:15 where *we* are enjoined to do the same. Paul opens up some of God's deepest mysteries in this chapter, all directly relevant to the need of the Corinthians, and also to *our* needs today. The matters dealt with are, in a sense, very varied, but once again, Christ Himself is the centre and the key. We read of:

1) Christ's plans for the future 1-13

2) Christ's accomplishment at Calvary 14, 15

3) Christ's present expression of Himself in the Life and Ministry of His church 16-21

The 14th verse can be an "eyeopener" for us all, stating so plainly that, from God's point of view, all sinners died (See RV particularly) when their Saviour died, for He was their Representative. It was like the removing of a whole marred creation (Cp Jer. 18:4), and it made way for the emerging of that New Creation, in Christ, which God has *always* had in view, namely A NEW CORPORATE HUMANITY UNDER THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST. It is so wonderful that we can now stand with God and reckon as He reckons, viewing ourselves as personally involved in that Great Calvary Event, all the "old" terminated in Christ's dying, and something gloriously "new" emerging in His resurrection. It is humble FAITH that brings all this into daily enjoyment; "I *believe I was* crucified; that I *am* raised; and, right now, I *am a part of a Glorious New Creation in Christ my Blessed Lord*".

And, as the passage goes on to show, I also see *all my brethren* as equally involved in this transition, so that I do not view them, now, "according to the flesh" (v16), ie what they *were* in Adam, for that, too, has been crucified and put away. I simply see them, and treat them, as parts of a New Heavenly Man; not "Jews" or "Gentiles" any longer, but simply the incorporate "members" of the Risen Christ! In more modern parlance, we could say we have become oblivious to their *natural* "biodata", and we relate to them, now, on an entirely new basis.

Blessed meditations, indeed, but how we need to ask God to "open our eyes that we may *behold* these 'wondrous things' out of Thy law" (Psa. 119:18).

Chapter Six "THE PLEADINGS OF APOSTOLIC LOVE"

(See vi, "We beseech you", v11, "O ye Corinthians")

I. A PLEA FOR RESPONSIVENESS OF HEART 1-3

To the Divine offer of Salvation, and to the call for holiness, lest the ministry be discredited.

II. A PLEA FOR FELLOWSHIP IN THE MINISTRY 4-10

(This section is not only autobiographical; it is invitational, "approving *ourselves*" So Paul wanted the hearts of the Corinthians to be with *him* in his varied experiences).

Note the authenticating marks of a true ministry:

1) Patience in sufferings 4,5 (See also Ch. 12:12)

- 2) Transparency of character 6, 7 (For it is a warfare, and righteousness is our armor v7, c /p Eph. 6:14)
- 3) The element of Mystery 810 (We are the "paradoxical community" in many ways!)

III. A PLEA FOR ENLARGED AFFECTIONS 11-13

("Bowels"= "affections" v12)

Something that would correspond with, and reciprocate, the true love of the Apostles.

Not interpreting apostolic faithfulness as indicating lack of love.

Also see Berkeley translation: "O Corinthians, you are not hedge din by us, but only cramped in your own affections" So, "Be ye also enlarged" v13 (Remember Bunyan's Mr. Greatheart!)

IV. A PLEA FOR THE SEPARATED LIFE 14-18

No worldly "alliances" or "partnerships" (Eg Marriage, Business, etc.) v14-16 (The point is made that God's testimony cannot mix with the world; Christ cannot be linked with "unrighteousness" (14a); "darkness" (14b); "Belial" (15a); "infidelity" (15b) or "idolatry" (16a)

This separation is essential to a true enjoyment of the Divine Indwelling (viG). And it paves the way for an unspeakable "family relationship" with *Almighty* God (vi7, 18)!

As suggested in our outline, the message of this chapter can be viewed as a fourfold call from the Apostle to the Corinthians. Basically, it is one call for *an appropriate and seemly response* to all that has been set before them in the preceding chapters, particularly the closing verses of Ch. 5. It would be a response which:

- 1) Humbly accepts the gracious offer of Salvation (1-3)
- 2) Embraces whatever sufferings are involved in *having a share* in the giving out of God's message (4-10)
- 3) Bestows warm and appropriate affection on those who have lovingly served us in the things of God (11-13)
- 4) Wholeheartedly refuses involvement in that "world system" which operates around us, and which is incompatible with the the true "testimony of Christ". (14-18).

It is all closely parallel with the call of Rom. 12:1,2; and when we have responded, it is only a "reasonable service"! To take *any* lesser position would be quite illogical.

It is hardly believable that anyone could receive such grace of God *in vain* (vi), but Paul had to "beseech" the Corinthians not to follow such a tragic course. The horror of the possibility is accentuated when we look back to Ch. 5:21, and see what, precisely, is this "grace of God" which is being offered to us, namely:

1) The Sinless One Himself actually "made sin for us".

2) The very "Righteousness of God" being offered to us as a gift (Cp Rom. 5:17)

Can such grace be "received in vain"; can it be despised? Evidently it *can*, and it behoves us all to take warning! We might also ask, "And what of the amazing offer at the *end* of our *present* chapter (v18)? Can that, too, be despised? Can even *that* grace be" received in vain" The Lord God Almighty offers to "receive us" (v17), to "be a Father unto us" (v18a), and to make us His "partner sons" and "partner daughters" now and in the ages to come (18b). God ever spare us from receiving *such* grace of God in vain! Surely we can only say, "Love so amazing, so Divine, *shall have* my soul, my life, my all».

Chapter Seven "GREAT GAINS THROUGH COSTLY FAITHFULNESS" (Beginning with 2 more "Pleas")

I. A PLEA FOR INCREASING HOLINESS 'vi Let us note the following points:

- 1) It is addressed to "dearly beloved ones"; this strengthens the plea.
- 2) Paul includes *himself* amongst them; *each of us* needs this "sanctification".
- 3) It is to touch *every* issue in *every* realm. Cp 1 Thesa. 5:23 "Sanctified wholly".
- 4) It will finally show itself in more *reverence* to God vi.

II. A PLEA FOR MORE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND TRUST 2-4

You are in OUR hearts; you are OUR "glorying" v3, 4.

So, "receive us' too; open to us, too! v2

III. A TESTIMONY CONCERNING TITUS 5-7

He lifted the load when the pressures were greatest v5, 6

Specially by his encouraging report from Corinth. v7

IV. A REVIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE BENEFITS FROM THE EARLIER LETTER (1 Cor.) 8-13

- 1) It caused sorrow at the beginning v8
- 2) This led on to repentance and cleansing ("cleared", through the Blood) 9 lia
- 3) This made possible a *fresh* inward zeal lib (This is normal after true cleansing)
- 4) All this served to remove delusions as to Paul's care for them vi2

5) It finally brought refreshing to Paul and Titus and others. v13

V. A FINAL EXPRESSION OF JOY 14-16 Because

- 1) The confidence of Paul in the Corinthians now vindicated y 14
- 2) The affections of Titus made to "abound" v15
- 3) A new settledness prevailing v16

The outstanding section in this chapter is that which deals with the final encouraging outcome of the serious moral breakdown referred to in Paul's earlier letter (1 Cor. 5). Paul had also touched on this in 2 Cor. 2:5-11, but now he speaks more fully of the victory God had gained.

Paul's own feelings in the matter are summarized in the phrases "*I did repent*" (v8), and "*I now rejoice*" (v9). It evidently hurt Paul deeply that his original letter had caused them sorrow; evidence, surely, of a true and deep *involvement with them* in a common concern and responsibility. Where *they* suffered (even though it had been for their *own* failures!), Paul suffered *with* them; now that the situation is resolved and corrected, Paul rejoices with them.

This matter of life *in the Body*, *feeling* together, *sorrowing* together, and *rejoicing* together, penetrates into very deep areas of experience, and all of us have much to learn in this regard.

We note that the "sorrow" which had come to the Corinthians when they were faced with the situation, turned out to be "sorrow unto repentance" (9), and "sorrow after a godly manner" (9), or, as v10 puts it, a "godly sorrow which works repentance unto salvation". This is said to be very different from the "sorrow of the world (10b) which only leads to remorse and death, for the very reason that it does *not* lead to repentance. Judas, no doubt, is the clearest example of this; a change of *mind* which did *not* lead to a change of *heart* and life (Math. 27:35). O that the Lord might give us the right *kind* of sorrow whenever *we* have failed! The fruits of the "better sorrow" are beautifully exemplified for us in v11, and thank God, we too can be "cleared" through the Blood of the Cross, 1 Jn. 1:9.

The rebuke which Paul had earlier sent to them had evidently proved salutary, and, as a result, there was joy and rejoicing for them all. It is so necessary that we allow God's truth to convict us, and bring us to sorrow, but it is *equally necessary*, when so convicted, that we take those right steps onward to repentance and salvation, and a God honoring "clearing of ourselves" through the ever available cleansing of the Precious Blood.

Chapter Eight "PRACTICAL LOVE AMONGS THE CHURCHES"

I. THE EXEMPLARY GENEROSITY OF THE MACEDONIAN CHURCHES 1-5

- 1) They gave at a time of great suffering and poverty v2
- 2) They gave in a spirit of abundant joy v2
- 3) They were not pressurised by others v3
- 4) They gave themselves first; *then* their gifts v5
- 5) The very heart to give was a "GRACE" bestowed on them by God v1

II. AN APPEAL FOR A SIMILAR SPIRIT AT CORINTH 6-15

- 1) An actuating of their earlier resolutions 6-8 (See v10, 11)
- 2) Provoked by a knowledge of CHRIST'S accepted poverty 9
- 3) NOT to be a *burden*, but at least indicating a reasonable *sharing* with others, an "equality" 10-15

III. NOTICE CONCERNING THE SOON ARRIVAL OF TITUS AND HIS COMPANIONS 16-24

- 1) They are a trustworthy trio 16-21
 - Titus; God's care in his heart v16
 - The "brother" who is the highly esteemed evangelist v18 (chosen by the churches for the task v19)
 - The "brother" *often* proved diligent in *many* things v22 (As Onesiphorus. 2 Tim. 1:18) (What a happy team, but we do not even have their names!)
- 2) They carry the highest possible commendations v23
"The messengers of the churches, *and* the GLORY OF CHRIST"!
- 3) They deserve, a warm and loving welcome; give it to them! v24

This chapter and the following one could be regarded as comprising the BUSINESS SECTION of the Epistle, but it is certainly *God's* business, and we would all do well to follow the counsels it brings in this regard. We certainly need "Macedonian givers" today who will give lavishly and joyfully, yet careful, first, to give *their own selves* to the Lord, and to His people (v5). We note, too, the clear emphasis that, in these matters, everything was being handled on a collective basis, avoiding possible criticisms, and thereby protecting the names of the individuals concerned. A helpful chapter for us all, indeed!

No one would question that the mountain peak of this chapter is v9; the great example of Christ Himself in all such matters. Perhaps we could be permitted, here, to present a simple outline of the contents of that glorious verse.

1) The Wealth that Christ enjoyed "He was rich". We read in Psa. 50:10 that "the cattle upon a thousand hills" are His; and, of course, He owns the whole vast universe which He Himself created, John 1:3. These, however, would surely be among the *least* of His assets. What is all that compared with the infinite *love* of His Father, to say nothing of the *adoration* of the angels and archangels? Yes, He was rich, indeed.

2) The poverty that Christ accepted "He became poor". Perhaps we could outline this as follows:

No cradle; "laid in a manger" (Lk 2:7)

No cottage; "the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Math. 8:20)

No coins; "cast an hook; thou shalt find a piece of money" (Math. 17:27)

No clothes; "they parted My garments among them" (Math. 27:35)

YET, No complaints; "Father forgive them, they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34)

3) The Purpose behind the act ". that we be RICH". This, surely, would mean *spiritual* riches, as enjoyed, for instance, by the suffering believers at Smyrna, to whom Christ could say, "but thou art RICH" (Rev. 2:9). Our minds also run to verses like Eph. 1:3, "Blessed with ALL spiritual riches... in Christ" and also 2 Cor. 6:10, ". . . as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, YET POSSESSING ALL THINGS". This is WHY the Great Lord of Heaven became poor! Is that gracious purpose being realized in us today? Are *we* enjoying *our* riches in the Lord?

Chapter Nine "MORE ABOUT THE OFFERINGS"

I. THE APOSTLE'S CONFIDENCE 1-2 (in the Corinthians)

A reputation for past generosity. their zeal has been an example to many.

II. THE PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENT 3-5

An "advance party" to get everything ready. (The "Trustworthy Trio" of Ch. 8)

III. THE NUMEROUS INCENTIVES 6-14 (for sacrificial giving)

1) There shall be a proportionate "reaping" v6

2) God's special love will be released upon you v7 (as "cheerful givers")

3) You yourselves will be abundantly enriched with everything v 8-11 a

4) God will receive more praises, from many grateful ones. v11b-13

5) More prayers will go up for you from those you have helped v14

IV. THE CROWNING EJACULATION 15

Thanks to God for the Greatest Gift of ALL! the inexpressible Gift (RSV). He gave His Son for us at the Cross; He now gives His Son to us from the glory!

This chapter continues what we called the "Business Section" of the letter, but once more contains revelations of the highest spiritual order. Who has not been challenged by v7, or comforted by v8, or even conquered by v15, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift"?

As for v7 the Greek word for "cheerful" is "hilarious", meaning, literally, that God loves "hilarious" givers! What a beautiful indication of the spirit in which God would have us pass on to others what He has first bestowed on us!

As for v8, what a comfort indeed in any situation; *all* grace, *all* sufficiency, in *all* things, *unto all* good works!

God's "cheerful givers" can certainly be assured of God's abundant provision for *them* in any situation. The thought is reechoed in Phil. 4:19, "My God shall supply all *your* need *according to* His riches in glory by Christ Jesus". But we need to see that, in that case also, the promise was made to "cheerful givers"; in other words, v18 is the particular *background* for the promise of v19, a point not always realized by those who would claim the well known promise! (See Phil. 4:18, 19).

We need to note also, in connection with v8, that God "abounds towards us SO THAT, in turn, we might "abound" towards others; that is the way He would have us *use* that "all sufficiency" which He bestows! The same thought appears in vi0, where it emphasizes, first, that God gives "seed for sowers"; ie it has to be *passed on*, not held to ourselves. This, surely, is the very nature of God, working itself into us, a nature that always GIVES. That is "godliness"!

Then, regarding v15, (the "Unspeakable Gift"), we would point out that there is a deeper meaning here which is not always recognized. Christ, of course, was "given" to us from Heaven to be our Saviour, sent by God to Bethlehem and Calvary to pay the price for our Salvation. But now, in another sense, and as the Risen Lord, He has been "given" to us. Ephesians one tells us that Christ was raised and glorified, and seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places, AND FROM THAT VERY GLORY, He was GIVEN to the church which is His Body; "given", we may say, in all His immeasurable fulness, to be the very Life and Resource, of His trusting and subject members (See Eph. 1:22, 23). In all respects, then, we can say "Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift".

Chapter Ten "CORRECTIVES FOR THE CRITICS"

I. DUE WARNINGS OF THE CONTEMPLATED VISIT 1-6

(Given in meekness and gentleness vi)

Bringing spiritual weapons, not carnal ones v4

Taking captive all rebellious and proud thoughts v5

II. EXPLANATIONS OF PREVIOUS LENIENCY 7-9

Appearances of weakness are not to be interpreted as feebleness v7, 9

Apostolic authority still operates v8 (but only to edify; not destroy See l3: iO)

III. THE FOLLY OF "WISHFUL THINKING" 10-12

"Paul's power is only in his letters, not his presence". They will soon prove otherwise! At present, however, it would be unwise to compare ourselves with others.

IV. PAUL'S ALLOCATED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CORINTH

1316 It was within his province; he has parental concern for the church he founded. It will *become* a steppingstone to regions beyond. v15, 16.

V. WISE CONCLUDING COMMENTS 17-18

We must glory in the Lord alone v17

Time will tell where God's commendation lies v18

Certain obscurities and problems in this chapter will clarify when we follow the outline and see the sequence of the text as Paul unfolds it. Viewed as a whole, the chapter shows that God's true servant is, indeed, a "battler". In the midst of rebel men (it could be rebel "Christians") he has to show himself as "strong in the things of the Lord", strengthened with might by God's Spirit (Eph. 3:16). God's servant, however, *always battles for edification*, and not for destruction (v8). But, even so, strong words, and a strong stand, are needful in *some* situations. Yet, all the time, there lies behind all, the very "meekness and gentleness of Christ" (vi), making the "battler" an insoluble enigma to those who would oppose him.

God's warriors use spiritual weapons, and not carnal ones; they believe in prayer and faith and the Holy Spirit, and ceaselessly they give out the Word of God; spiritual weapons indeed! And, because of this, they pull down Satan's strongholds in men's minds (v4), and penetrate the otherwise impregnable. Men's proud arguments can never withstand *such* weapons; at the time appointed they go down like the walls of Jericho. Such proud thoughts *are, in fact, "taken captive" (v5), and chained to the Victor's chariot (recall Ch. 2:14); thus they only enhance* the great victory of the Lord.

All is finally sealed and covered in v18 where Paul declares that, in spite of all he has said, it is still not he that commendeth *himself* that is approved (far be it from Paul to do that!) but "whom the Lord commendeth". We are reminded of a similar statement made by Christ Himself in Jn. 8:50, "I seek not mine own glory: there is One that seeketh". He referred, of course, to His Father who, from all eternity, has been *dedicated to the glorifying of His Son. What a relaxation for Christ to be able to leave the whole matter of His reputation and honor in those great and solo ving hands! And so may it be with us; we need not be busy about our own honor. God has plans for this also! Praise His Name!*

In conclusion, could we be allowed a comment on a tremendous principle which Paul touches on in vs 12-14? Paul evidently knew the *areas* where his authority was to operate, and he realized God's sovereign "boundaries" in that matter, and willingly submitted.

What havoc is caused in spiritual things when proud and forceful people fail to realize their allocated "province", and intrude into what God has never given them! Food for thought, indeed!

Chapter Eleven "THE HIDDEN BATTLES OF GOD'S APOSTLE"

(Battles against "apostles of Judaism"; standard enemies of the Gospel Truth)

I. AN APPEAL FOR A PATIENT HEARING 1-4 (on three grounds)

1)The Ambition is Commendable vi, 2. (A Worthy Bride for Christ!)

2)The Anxiety is Understandable v3. (Even unfallen Eve was deceived!)

3) You have been patient with others, where it was far from justified. v4

II SOME FACTS ABOUT PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP 5-11

- 1) It manifested a God-given Knowledge v5, 6
- 2) It operated without charge v7li (as is still Paul's practice)

III AN EXPOSURE OF THE COUNTERFEIT "APOSTLES" 12-15

- 1) They have selfish aspirations to appear like Paul v12
- 2) They pose as "Angels of Light", as did Satan! v13i4
- 3) Their judgment is certain v15

IV. AN APOLOGY FOR THE "APPEARANCE OF BOASTING" 16-20

(so foreign to Paul's nature)

(Admittedly bearing the marks of "folly" but, in this case,

Divinely permitted)

You accept similar "follies" from other quarters; please accept mine!

V. SOME FACTS BEHIND PAUL'S APPARENT "BOASTING" 21-33

- 1) Paul's national identity. (A true Israelite himself; even though ministering mainly among Gentiles) v2i, 22
- 2) Paul's unparalleled record of suffering for the Gospel. v2333 (Right from the very beginning v32, 33)

This chapter shows us again that God's true servants have always been harassed and troubled by counterfeit and self-styled "messengers of God" or "purveyors of God's truth". In this case, Paul was doubtless referring to certain vigorous Judaisers, such as those we read of in passages like Acts 15:1, Gal. 2:4, 5 etc., and who seemed to have their own mysterious "strength", and to be set on robbing the early Christians of their newfound *liberty* in Christ (See Gal. 5:14). One of their main methods, evidently, was to seek to discredit or disparage the *true* servants of the Lord, and to call into question their God-given apostleship, thus laying on them extra burdens almost impossible to bear. We find ourselves asking why, at this stage in his letter, did Paul feel in any way obligated to explain these matters to his loved Corinthians. We can only say that, urged by the Holy Spirit, Paul *did* go to this trouble, and we marvel at the humility and patience of Christ which he manifested *by* so doing. It was contrary to his own inclination, to so much as *appear* to vindicate himself, but he did so for Christ's sake, and evidently with Divine sanction and approval.

We would suggest that *one* of Paul's motivations in such a matter is revealed in v2 where he speaks of his ambition to secure a pure and beautiful church which he could present to the Lord in, and for, the ages that are to come. This was why he could welcome such indignities, and pour out his patient reasonings. It was for the Lord's sake, and that the heavenly Bridegroom might get that "Church" referred to in Eph. 5:27, and **finally revealed and "presented"** in the closing chapters of our Bible.

Surely, too, it was with all this in view that Paul could endure all the *other* sufferings and privations he was permitted to mention in vss. 23-28, for instance. Even in our day, it often *seems* that the deep sufferings of God's servants are not being adequately compensated, but we know, in fact, they *shall be* at God's appointed time, not least at that coming "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:79). O Lord, speed on that Wonderful Day!

Chapter Twelve "SPENDING AND BEING SPENT"

I. PAUL'S EXPERIENCE OF INWARD "RAPTURE" 1-10

(Reluctantly told v1)

- 1) The time; 14 yrs. previously v2
- 2) The experience; "caught up" v2, 4; and hearing unrepeatable words v4
- 3) The consequent need; self-discipline, and a "thorn in the flesh" from God v69a
- 4) The end result; a glorying in weaknesses because of a New Strength given by God 9b. 10

II. PAUL'S AUTHENTICATED APOSTLESHIP 11-13 (at Corinth)

Manifested in his Patience and Mighty deeds (Note the order!)

Also in the absence of any mercenary ambitions or expectations

III. PAUL'S CONTEMPLATED VISIT 14-16

He will not be a burden to them; giving to them, not taking *from them, a true parent.* 14

He will spend and *be spent* for them; whatever may be the response v15

He will be ready to face *other* invented criticisms if needs be. v16

IV. PAUL'S LIKEMINDED COMPANIONS 17-19

Rendering the same honorary service; seeking only *edification* of others

V. PAUL'S LINGERING FEAR 20-21 (Relative to his expected visit)

Will he find them reactionary and quarrelsome? Will he find lack of repentance?

There are many things in this chapter that are difficult to understand, and, in some parts, there *seems* to be a strange mixture of conflicting elements, such as verse eleven and verse fifteen, for instance. Our limited minds *do* seek an explanation, and when the Lord graciously gives this, it can be both satisfying and deeply challenging.

Unquestionably, Paul was under Divine anointing as he wrote, and knowing certain unusual and sovereign Divine permissions in some of the expressions he used. On the surface, these may sound "foolish" indeed, and unbecoming; but, deeper down, and pervading all, there remains the unmistakable image of a man of God. To us, therefore, the chapter is a very strong call back to the word of Christ Himself in Jn. 7:24, "Judge not according to the *appearance*, but judge righteous judgment". Even in *these* areas, there are *some* "secret things" that belong to God alone (Deut. 29:29); and, actually, it is not *Paul's* character that is here under scrutiny; rather is it a test of our own "vision", and our own humility!

Wherever we tread in the things of God, and specially when it has a bearing on our attitudes to our brethren, it behoves us to tread very tenderly, "considering *ourselves* lest we also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

To us, the highlights of the chapter, and the *true* portrait of the writer, are found in such verses as:

v19 "We speak before God in Christ. . . we do all things, *dearly beloved*, for your edifying". What brotherly love, indeed; and what a commendable objective!

v14 "I seek not yours, but you". How different, indeed, from much that takes place in the realm of "Christian Work" today!

v15 "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved". We would point out, here, that it is one thing to "spend" for people, it is quite another to "*be* spent". The latter requires that I myself be totally *expendable*, with nothing left for myself or of myself! I am just His possession to be totally "used up" if needs be, and howsoever *He will!* Then again, we must do so "gladly", and even "*very* gladly" to use the *exact* expression. This, we say, is the real and inmost heart of the Apostle, and if we think there is something in this chapter that *seems* to be at variance, it must be we who are wrong. Here is a servant of God serving under Divine anointing, and, at the same time, using Divine "permissions" sovereignly allowed to him. Let us not judge another man's servant; to his own Master he stands or falls! (Rom. 14.4)

Chapter Thirteen "LOVE'S FINAL WORD"

I. THE FORTHCOMING VISIT TO CORINTH 1-4 (A third visit v1)

- 1) Representative of a Biblical Principle; 2 or 3 "witnesses" (Deut 19:15) vi
- 2) Could include some necessary seventies v2
- 3) Will be marked by a speaking of the Living Christ Himself, through Paul. v3, 4

II. THE NEED FOR HONEST SELF EXAMINATION 5-6

- 1) By the Corinthians; are they *really* believing? is Christ truly in them? v5
- 2) By the Apostles; are they genuine? v6

III. THE CALL FOR TRANSPARENT HOLINESS 7-9 (at Corinth)

- 1) For holiness sake; not just to enhance the *Apostle's* reputation. v7
- 2) This is the Invincible Way; cannot but win! v8
- 3) This will bring joy to the Apostles; a fulfilling of *their* wishes. v9

IV. THE ADVANTAGE OF A WRITTEN LETTER (This letter) 10

It could be easier for all concerned

V. THE FINAL FAREWELL AND BENEDECTION 11-14

Exhortations (four of them), and an accompanying promise v11

Greetings and salutations from all, to all. v12, 13

BENEDECTION; indicating Paul's deep longings for the Corinthians themselves. v14

Much of what we pointed out regarding Ch. 12 needs to be carried forward into this chapter also, but again our own personal humility, and deference to God's mysterious sovereignty, will be our safeguard.

In its essence, the chapter is a strong call to true Christian living and practical holiness (v7,11). And it is not by accident that such a chapter contains two clear references to the glorious fact of *the indwelling Christ*, for there alone is the *secret* of the kind of life the Apostle is calling for.

In v5 we have the clear statement that the proof that we *are* Christians at all lies in the fact that Christ actually and evidently lives within us. It reminds us of Col. 1:27, "Christ in you the Hope of Glory", and also of Rom. 8:9, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His".

The other reference (v3) has to do, rather, with Christian *ministry*, and the speaking out of God's Word. This equally, springs from the Indwelling Christ; it is nothing less, or other, than "CHRIST speaking *in* me". In other words, the *true* ministry is *not* what I do for Christ, but what Christ does *through* me, or what he speaks through me! We all need to realize that "the work of the Lord" is precisely *that*; it is the work OF THE LORD; we are only His tools, His instruments. This, however, is no less demanding, on the contrary, in fact. It presupposes a costly, fellowship with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection, and it implies a constant and practical availability to Him of all we have and are; our hands and feet and lips always ready for whatever task He assigns. The labour certainly is no less, but it is "striving according to His working which works in us mightily" (Col. 1:29)! (Needless to say, we do not have to *know* all this before we can be useful to the Lord, we simply speak "out of the abundance of our hearts", but we find out, afterwards, that Christ was that "abundance"!

This surely was true of *all* the ministry referred to in this letter; it was all an expression, and an outgoing of *Christ*; it was "labour IN THE LORD", and it was "not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58). All this adds new meaning to the familiar Benediction in the closing verses:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. AMEN" (2 Cor. 13:14).

To which we add our own "Amen"!

CONCLUSION

We would like to make a further brief reference to the thought that has governed us throughout these studies, "moving in the train of His triumph" (Ch. 2:14).

We all need to ask ourselves, "Have we *really* been 'taken captive' by the Lord?" Has His knowledge surpassing love *truly* conquered us? Are we *securely* fastened to His chariot? It is true that He sets us free from Satan's bondage, and from the law of sin and death, but He *then* captures us *for Himself*, and forthwith leads us out to celebrate His victory from place to place. This is the background secret of the kind of ministry portrayed in this epistle. It is the ministry of His mastered ones!

For ourselves we would say with the hymn writer:

"Make me a captive, Lord, And then I shall be free; Force me to render up my sword, And I shall conqueror be. I sink in life's alarms When by myself I stand; Imprison me within Thine arms And strong shall be my hand".

And what a *glorious* liberty, after all, that is!

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