

## **Our Ministry of Reconciliation**

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

### **An Apostle's Defense**

#### **Background of 2 Corinthians**

- 1:12 ...in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves....
- 2:17 ...we are not like many...but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.
- 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves...but our adequacy is from God.
- 4:2 ...not...adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth...in the sight of God.
- 5:9 ...we also have as our ambition...to be pleasing Him.
- 6:3 ...giving no cause for offense...so that the ministry will not be discredited....
- 7:2 ...we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one.
- 8:20 ...taking precaution so that no one will discredit us....
- 10:7 ...let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so also are we.
- 11:5 For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.
- 12:11 ...in no respect was I inferior to the most eminent apostles....
- 13:6 But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test (of being in the faith).

Three Streams: 1. Exposition 2. Theology/Doctrine 3. Application

### **The answer to "...those who take pride in appearance and not in heart."**

2 Corinthians 5:12

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.

*Matthew 23:25-26*

...Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

*1 Samuel 16:7*

### **"...beside ourselves...for God...."**

2 Corinthians 5:13

While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad." But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth."

*Acts 26:24-25*

We are fools for Christ's sake....

*1 Corinthians 4:10*

When [Jesus] came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses." The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

*Mark 3:20-22*

“...for the love of Christ controls us...”

2 Corinthians 5:14

“...no longer live for themselves, but for Him....”

2 Corinthians 5:15

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

*Galatians 2:20*

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

**Our Pattern for Life**  
**2 Corinthians 5:11-15**

Verse	Theology/Doctrine	Application
11-15	Ecclesiology, Soteriology	
11	Eschatology (Bema)	<i>Please God</i> (ref to Bema; focus on God's opinion); <i>Serve Man</i> (Persuade; Proper pride by brethren -- 11-12)
12		
13		<i>Please God</i> (no holds barred); <i>Serve Man</i> (serving brethren)
14	Christology (the love of Christ); Substitution/Atonement (One died for all)	
15	Christology (Jesus' death & resurrection); Substitution/Atonement (He died for all); Sanctification (no longer live for themselves)	<i>Please God</i> (all for Him)

**Our Perspective/Position in Life**  
**2 Corinthians 5:16-17**

Verse	Theology/Doctrine	Application
16	Regeneration (from now on...); Christology (Christ according to the flesh)	<i>See Eternal Beings</i>
17	Regeneration (in Christ...new creation)	Have Eternal Perspective

**“...Him who knew no sin....”**

2 Corinthians 5:21

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

*Hebrews 4:15*

For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens....

*Hebrews 7:26*

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth....

*1 Peter 2:21-22*

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit....

*1 Peter 3:18*

You know that He appeared to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

*1 John 3:5*

**Our Proclamation of Life  
2 Corinthians 5:18-21**

Verse	Theology/Doctrine	Application
18	Reconciliation (reconciled us...ministry of reconciliation)	<i>Value the Ministry!</i>
19	Reconciliation (reconciling the world to Himself (NOT Universalism); Atonement/Grace (not counting their trespasses against them)	<i>Value the Ministry!</i>
20	Reconciliation (be reconciled to God)	<i>Do the Ministry!</i>
21	Substitution/Atonement (on our behalf); Imputation (Our sin/Christ's righteousness); Justification (become the righteousness of God)	<i>Do the Ministry!</i>

**Our Practice  
2 Corinthians 5:11-21**

As new creatures in Christ, we:

- Make it our aim to please God in everything;
- Serve our fellow man for the sake of the gospel;
- See others as God sees them – made for eternity;
- Live with an eternal perspective; and
- Fulfill the greatest ministry we can do – be Christ's Ambassadors of Reconciliation

To Ponder

- Who are we trying to please in life? What place does the fear of the Lord have in our lives? What place does gratitude to God for what He has done for us have in our lives? How do the answers to these questions play out in our daily living?
- What/whose perspective are we using as our grid? The world's? God's? How does this impact how we see and treat others, which includes those who are in Christ and those who are not in Christ?
- Do we have a proper perspective on the ministry God has given us here on earth? Do we see it in the elevated light that this passage conveys? What is holding us back from obeying God by fulfilling this ministry?