

**Ministry of The Holy Spirit**  
**Examine Yourselves**  
**2 Corinthians 12:14 – 13:14**

Last time...best pie ever – humble pie (albeit bittersweet)

Strip away Jesus Christ and the grace of God, all we can boast of is...our weaknesses,  
that the power of Christ may rest upon us

Being honest and humble as we face that truth, when we are weak we are strong,  
because God's strength is made perfect/complete in our weaknesses

Zech 4:6

This time...closing remarks, including a promise, a warning, and an exhortation...  
and a very timely application for all of us today

**2 Cor 12**

v14-15 The Apostle planted the church (2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary journey), was moved on by the  
Holy Spirit, returned to encourage them (3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary journey)...  
has moved on again

And intends to go back for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time to be with them in-person

In-person fellowship is far superior to distant fellowship, in space/time or  
by technology

Acts 2:42 they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,  
and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And when he comes again, he will be as the other 2 times – not dependent upon them for  
support; again he will take no offering from them

Why not?

1. Ch 11:12...to expose the frauds fleecing them and hunting them
2. he wants THEM, not their money
3. he is laying up treasure in heaven for them, not wanting them to lay up  
treasure on earth for him

Paul, with the heart of God and the mind of Christ, is very willing to

- spend all he has on them
- be spent of all that he is for them

Even though the more he gives, the less he gets in return

Such is the nature of God's (*agape*) love for us –

- willing to give all, even if nothing is given in return
- willing to do for the benefit of others, even at the expense of Self

Is this not the heart of

- a parent...and The Father?!
- a shepherd...and the Good Shepherd?!

What will a parent not do for his/her child/children?!

Even if v15 is the situation (at the moment)?

v16-19 Paul will not take financial support from this church...

- lest the selfless *agape* love of God (his motive) be misunderstood
- intent on exposing the frauds in their midst

That has been used by the false apostles to drive a wedge between this church and Paul  
But he taught them nonetheless...using decoys

Paul sent Titus and unnamed brethren to them with his 1<sup>st</sup> letter and the church received them just fine, without contention or challenge...or any financial support

Allowing Paul to say, "Gotcha!"

Titus did not ask for or expect financial support from them and they did not object

And Titus was like-minded with Paul, his partner in the ministry to the

Corinthians...so why challenge Paul or feel slighted by Paul?

Paul merely did as the Holy Spirit directed him, and that for their good/building up...  
governed by the Law of Love

He was not seeking the approval of men but the approval of God

v20-21 Laying the groundwork for a 3<sup>rd</sup> visit to Corinth, Paul does not want to come to town

- to find them still bearing the rotten fruit of the flesh...carnal vs spiritual
  - debates...contention
  - envyings...self-serving zeal
  - wraths...indignation toward each other in their divisions
  - strifes...fighting and arguing among themselves
  - backbitings...evil speaking of each other
  - whisperings...slander and gossip
  - swellings...thinking-more-highly-of-themselves-than-they-should  
haughtiness
  - tumults...confusion, the author of which is not God
- to have them find him having to "come down hard on them" again to rebuke their carnality...in-person vs by a letter

His heart's desire for his 3<sup>rd</sup> visit to Corinth is rooted in the love of God

- they desire him as he does them
- they loving each other, keeping the Royal Law (James 2:8)

## 2 Cor 13

v1-3 It is Paul desire to go to Corinth a 3<sup>rd</sup> time

Note: As I have divided the Word of God,  
NT chronology is not certain  
others would disagree with me  
I find no record of him making this visit  
After this letter is written, Acts 20-28

Nonetheless, he quotes Deut 19:15, using his visits as witnesses of their sin

One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

If he comes a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, the matter of their sin shall be even further established

And with the announcement of his desire to come again is a warning

He will, with meekness and gentleness but firmness and boldness, not “hold back”

He will rebuke them personally, correcting them and instructing them in  
righteousness

He will NOT compromise holiness or the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit

They are seeking proof that he speaks God-breathed words

They will get it!

The Truth spoken in love...

just as Jesus did

Nothing added to the Word of God and nothing taken from the Word of God...

just as Jesus did

No compromise with sin, no turning a blind eye to sin...

just as Jesus did

v4 Jesus

- was crucified by sinners through weakness  
(His humanity, made lower than the angels)
- lives by the power of God – Resurrection from the dead

Matt 22:29-32 Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor **the power of God**. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching **the resurrection of the dead**, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

And just as Jesus, Paul

- is weak, but in Christ...a sinner saved by grace thru faith
- will live with Christ in the resurrection of the living, the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection  
Rev 20:4-6 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

v5-6 With Paul's

- announcement of his desire to come again
- warning for when he does come again

is a "in the meantime" exhortation:

Examine yourselves...test/prove/scrutinize your hearts and lives in the  
Light of Jesus Christ

1 Cor 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

Take spiritual inventory

Compete with and compare to...Jesus Christ

Take a hard look at yourself in the mirror of the Word of God

Test the fruit of your own lives...the words of God are for me to examine myself

Heb 4:12 the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Be honest before God, be honest with yourself, and be not self-deceived  
(James 1:22 and John 15:14)

Ask the tough questions:

In your heart of hearts, am I a follower of Jesus Christ  
or am I a fraud to be rejected and castaway?

Will I be ashamed when Jesus comes again?

What is behind the façade of my life that the all-seeing God sees?

And Paul invites them to examine his life in the Light of Jesus Christ, and they will know that he is no reprobate

- v7-8 Paul says he has done the right thing and exhorts them to also do the right thing!  
And don't do it to please him, a man of like passions as they, but to please and honor the Lord Who purchased them with His blood!

Right and wrong, good and evil are not a matter of human opinion, they are the domain of God the Creator as revealed in His Word, the unchanging and absolute Truth

The battlefield is...the mind

The mind of unregenerate man vs the mind of Christ,

The carnal mind vs the Spirit of Christ,

Is 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Rom 8:5-8 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Because Matt 19:17 and Rom 7:18

Therefore, be transformed by the renewing of your mind with the unfailing Truth of God

- v9-10 Paul sees clearly his weaknesses...and in them the strength of God  
He "salutes" their strength and seeks their perfection...which will be furthered when they too clearly see their weaknesses and in them the strength of God

Therefore, as the servant of Christ, he writes these God-breathed words of rebuke, correction, and instruction in righteousness

If they blow off "Christ speaking in me" via these written words, Paul will speak them boldly face-to-face when he returns in-person...iron sharpening iron

These God-breathed words are for their edification, not for their destruction or condemnation

1 Cor 14:3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

(Do you need any of these? Get into God's Word!)

2 Cor 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Matt 20:28    Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Paul now “signs off”

v11-14   His closing words to this church aka “brethren”, family:

Farewell...be well

Be perfect...complete in Christ (John 3:30, Matt 16:24, James 4:10)

be of good comfort...in the midst of

- a wild and crazy world
- a crooked and perverse nation
- perverseness within the Church

be of one mind...the mind of Christ, like-minded, a House united and not divided

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

and the God of love...*agape*, others before Self, selfless

and peace...the peace of God and peace with God

shall be with you...before, behind, above, beneath, all around, and within

Greet one another with a holy kiss...John 13:34-35

All the saints salute you...you are loved!

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...John 1:17, “salt of the earth” and the  
“covenant of salt” that adds flavor and preserves

the love of God...1 John 4:8

and the communion of the Holy Ghost...partnership, fellowship

be with you all. Amen...so let it be

The Apostle Paul will now turn his attention to delivering the love gift of the Gentile churches to  
the persecuted church in Jerusalem

Next week we will resume Paul’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary journey in Acts 20

But what have we here in the closing remarks (Ch 12:14 – 13:14) of 2 Corinthians?

The servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, is

- telling the church that he will return (Lord willing)
- warning them about holiness before his return via a written word
- exhorting them to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith  
(that saves) lest they be ashamed when he returns

He does not know when he will return

They do not know when he will return

Does this sound familiar?!

## Looking at the Bigger Picture in Scripture

Jesus Christ has

- told His Church that He will return (John 14:1-3)
- warned us about holiness before His return via the written Word
- exhorted us to examine themselves to see if we are in the faith lest we be ashamed when He returns

He does not know when He will return (Matt 24:36, Jewish wedding)

We do not know when He will return

He does not want Ch 12:20-21

- to find His Church corrupted and carnal...worldly
- to deal with unrepented sin in His Church (2 Peter 3:9 instead), but Ch 13:2 and Ch 13:10 are certain
- He will not spare
- He has written of what He sees to His Church
  - Rev 2-3
  - taking issue with 5 of the 7, calling them to repent or face the consequences:
    - remove their candlestick
    - fight against them
    - cast into great tribulation
    - come upon them as a thief
    - vomit them
  - no rebuke for only the persecuted church and the small, weak, faithful church
- He will come using the sharpness of His Sword

With Jesus'

- announcement of His coming again
- warning for when He does come again

is a "in the meantime" exhortation:

Examine yourselves...test/prove/scrutinize your hearts and lives in the Light of the Living Word of God

MOST certainly, we are living in the last of the last days, times of the birth pangs before Jesus Christ's return

1. to the clouds for the remnant of His Bride
2. to earth to judge the world in righteousness

Deceptions abound...in the world and in the Church

Lawlessness and violence

Gross perversion and abomination are celebrated

Earthquakes are increasing in frequency and in divers places

Wars and rumors of wars

Relentless murdering His children (Ezk 18:4)...shedding innocent blood on a global scale

Relentless corrupting His children with gender confusion and shameless perversion

The social fabric of nations is unravelling – a grave spiritual disease called  
“Progressive”

embracing Woke and LGBTQ+ (with T taking the world by storm)...  
open rebellion against the Living God our Creator because there is  
no fear of the LORD GOD

Deut 28:28 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness,  
and astonishment of heart

has hardened hearts, seared consciences, and made minds reprobate

In the news just this week:

- Hyatt Regency Miami lost its liquor license after hosting "A Drag Queen Christmas" in December, which featured sexually explicit content with children present!
- New York Attorney General Letitia James announced her "Drag Story Hour" event will be held on Sunday and is open to children.
- A Massachusetts high school won a state indoor track and field championship last month with the help of a transgender girl i.e. a boy pretending to be a girl (there is a difference!!!)
- Churchill High School in Oregon pulled an assignment asking students to write a short story detailing a sexual fantasy following outrage from parents.
- A private Christian school in Vermont withdrew from the state basketball tournament after they refused to play against a team that has a transgender student. As a result, the school has now been banned from competition by the Vermont Principals' Association.
- A Minnesota elementary school music teacher said her goal was to confuse children about gender, i.e. the goal is not education but confusion
- An English teacher in Southern California, who provided kids with sexually explicit books, said that there was no difference between teaching about drag queens and teaching Shakespeare.
- In Canada, a pastor was arrested and charged for the second time within weeks after protesting drag queen story time for children at public libraries in Calgary, Alberta.
- In the UK, a 16 year old boy wore a red dress to his school's prom... and was cheered by classmates and teachers

The judgment of God is coming!



Mammon/money teetering

Matt 6:24

Bank failures...SVB, Credit Suisse imminently?

National currencies are failing...and Governments will fail when they do  
paving the way for the Antichrist and the Mark of the Beast  
(Central Bank Digital Currency)

Israel in crisis...from without AND from within

- the global spiritual disease of “Progressive” threatening to rip the nation apart
- growing tensions between Russia and Israel, particularly about Israeli strikes in Syria

Ezk 38 – 39 is coming like a freight train

Amir: The former head of Saudi intelligence, Turki al Faisal says this morning:  
"The US and Europe were not able to be an honest mediator and secure a deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran like the one that China helped secure."

Amir: Saudi military source: "Saudi soil will not be used for any military action against Iran in the future."

Amir: Russia's ambassador to the US: "An attack on a Russian plane in neutral territory would constitute a declaration of war. Are you on Capitol Hill ready to expose the US citizens to a nuclear attack?"

Amir: Anatoly Antonov: "A deliberate attack on Russian aircraft in neutral airspace is an open declaration of war against the largest nuclear power. An armed conflict between Russian and USA would be radically different from the proxy war USA is waging remotely against us in /Ukraine."

Ezk 39:6        I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles

Israel strike Iran's nuke facilities or not?

Russia/Iran attack Israel

USA respond?

Russia response to USA – nuke?

USA nuke Russia?

Israel awakening

Amir: Just got back from my weekly back treatment done by a God fearing Jew who knows me and my faith. As we talked about the current situation in Israel what he said was truly prophetic and amazing:

“I believe we are experiencing birth pangs. These are Messianic times. God is allowing Israel to be purged. Something good will eventually come out of the looming tribulation.”

Again, he isn't a believer in Jesus nor is he acquainted with the writings of the New Testament. Yet, he connects the dots between current events and

Old Testament prophecies and it is enough for him to draw an accurate conclusion!

So as we look around thru the lens of Scripture and we understand (1 Chron 12:32)...  
and groan, "How much longer, Lord?!"

Wrong question!

Right question: Am I ready for Jesus to return at ANY moment?

In the Light of Jesus Christ, let us (the Church) examine ourselves, whether we in the faith or not

- compromised  
the absolute and unchanging Word of God is not the Final Authority  
"sin" and "repentance" are dirty words that will offend people (Matt 10:34)  
correction and instruction in righteousness (feeding/tending the sheep) has given  
way to entertaining the goats
- corrupted  
false gospels, false teachers  
Prosperity Gospel...carnal and materialistic, spiritually bankrupt and poisonous  
Social Gospel..."Progressive" – Woke and LGBTQ+  
being "inclusive" by loving the sinner and accepting the sin...not love  
rather than loving the sinner by rebuking the sin...God's love  
  
sin of the Amorites (Lev 18, Lev 20, Deut 27:20-23, Rom 1:21-28)  
has hardened hearts, seared consciences, and made minds reprobate  
a grave spiritual disease
- distracted  
Soil #2 (Matt 13:20-21)  
Soil #3 (Matt 13:22)

What has Jesus said, whereby we can examine ourselves?

Matt 7:21-27

Matt 24:42-44

Matt 25:1-13

Matt 26:41

Rom 13:11-14 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

- Luke 21:28    And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.
- Luke 21:36    Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.
- Rev 22:12    And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.
- 1 John 2:28    And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.
- 1 Peter 4:17    For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

In the Light of Jesus Christ, let us (individually) examine ourselves

Take spiritual inventory

Compare with and compare to...Jesus Christ

Take a hard look at myself in the mirror of the Word of God

Test the fruit of my life

Be honest before God, be honest with myself and not self-deceived

Ask the tough questions:

In my heart of hearts, am I a follower of Jesus Christ or a fraud to be rejected and castaway?

Will I be ashamed when He comes again?

What is behind the façade of my life that the all-seeing God sees?

Lam 3:40-41    Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.  
Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

If you are not right with God – get right!

Faith in Jesus Christ is the only way

Confess, repent, and receive the gift of God (salvation) by faith

If you are right with God – stay right!

Matt 16:24

Finish well...the Church's time on earth is rapidly drawing to a close!!!