

***“Beware, False Teachers and Evil Workers,
The Apostle Paul Is Coming to Town!”***

Review:

- ***The Bountiful Supply of the Corinthians Is Encouraged***
- ***The Bountiful Supply of the Lord Is Emphasized Above All Others***
- ***The Bountiful Supply Upon Us Saints Is the Gracious Gift of Almighty God***

- ***The Bountiful Supply of the Corinthians Is Encouraged***
 - ***Last time we began by turning to Paul’s letter to the Philippians, chapter 1 and verses 18-21. We did that because there the apostle writes so powerfully and directly concerning the bountiful supply of the spirit of Christ. I will read it again now to introduce our study for today.***

Phil. 1:18-21

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

- ***“The supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” was the marvelous provision the Lord had instructed Paul (“for I know”, verse 19) about and it was that that he announced to the Philippian believers who were, it seems, entering into a period of severe persecution:***

- ***So Paul here writes of a gracious provision by Almighty God for his people which he himself has received and which has transformed his life while under great trials. The teaching here in the second Corinthian letter, as we saw last time, also identifies a “bountiful provision”, doesn’t it, which the Lord may provide his people:***

2 Cor. 9:1-2, 5-7

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

...

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a *matter of* bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so *let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful [Gk. "*hilarious*"] giver.

- *Again Paul reviews the situation he is addressing and exhorts the brethren in Corinth to be bountiful from the heart in their giving for the poor saints in Jerusalem. As laughter comes from deep in the heart and generates a joyful sound heard by those nearby, the apostle here remarks on how the Lord responds to our bountiful sharing of his provision with this one sentence in verse 7. Here the apostle summarizes his entire teaching on grace giving with these words: "for God loveth a cheerful giver", using a Greek word here that may also be translated "hilarious"!*

This fundamental principle of spiritual giving is declared so clearly here: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity ..."

- *It is therefore the divine balance that is so emphasized here in this section of this letter. The apostle underscores this here in this memorable verse 8 and following:*

2 Cor. 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

- *So, under grace, as the Lord bountifully works, much thanksgiving to God is multiplied through his working in us all as we enjoy his bountiful provision, but I must add, and testify accordingly.*
- ***The Bountiful Supply Upon Us Saints Is the Gracious Gift of Almighty God***
 - *Paul now finishes the section most blessedly and I will read it again to set the stage for our study in the next chapter today here in Second Corinthians. His words here in verses 12-15 are the*

capstone on this most excellent building God has created using his graciously provided “bountiful supply”:

2 Cor. 9:12-15

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

- *There is much in this verses as well, I believe, if we would see it. The pronouns identify the groups referred to. Paul has referred to the gifts and offering he had been and hopefully would collect from these Gentile assemblies for the purpose of benefiting the poor believers in Jerusalem (see 1 Cor. 16:3). But there was a lot more to the story as he explained elsewhere in the Romans 15.*
- *So the divine principle is made clear: Through both spiritual and physical means the Lord God accomplishes his plan of redemption and blessing and uses such dispensational changes as this as significant parts of his plan of the ages. 2 Cor. 9:14 states that in different but helpful language:*

2 Cor. 9:14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

- *This is a beautiful and encouraging summary of the entire teaching on grace giving. In the end the needs of the saints are met also with an exaltation of the glories of God’s abundant grace and his great gift of the grace of Christ operating in us all. Such blessings indeed!*

Our Outline for Today: “Beware, False Teachers and Evil Workers, The Apostle Paul Is Coming to Town!”

Paul’s Ministry to the Corinthians Was:

- ***Bold, but Intending To Be Never Carnal and Always Spiritual***
- ***Authoritative, and Powerful, Whether in Letters or Deed***
- ***Proven by a Fruitfulness That Could Only Have Been of the Lord***

Paul's Ministry to the Corinthians Was:

I. Bold, but Intending To Be Never Carnal and Always Spiritual:

- *Now in the next chapter we read of the challenges Paul faced regarding the Corinthian church. And, as we shall see, these challenges are ours as well.*

[READ] 2 Cor. 10:1-6

1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you:

2 But I beseech *you*, that I may not [*need to be*] be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

- *Verse 1: The stage is set here. It was Christ in Paul that he manifested in ministry. So Christ's meekness and gentleness and as we see in other verses, through his weakness the strength of the Lord was being manifested to all.*
- *Verses 2-5: Here the spiritual dynamic operating in the believer living under the abundance of grace is highlighted so well. Living Christ in a world of many challenges is what Paul faced with the Corinthians and it is also what we face day by day and hour by hour. Boldness in this context requires that balance that only the Lord's abundant grace can provide, with truth and the knowledge of God manifested above all. These words are so applicable to all of us, aren't they?*
- *Verse 6: But, Paul writes here, the working of Almighty God MUST address both obedience and disobedience. The challenges of his ministry in Corinth in the past, in the present through this letter and others, and in the future will be met, he writes. That is his sacred promise. I wonder what the response of the false teachers there in the assembly was to the reading of these words.*

- *So, the apostle's ministry to the Corinthians was in weakness made strong through Christ in him working out that bountiful supply only he can provide. That is his testimony as he enters the more critical part of this letter.*
- *Some later references are helpful for our understanding:*

[READ] 2 Cor. 12:9-10

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- *Weakness brings necessarily vulnerabilities the enemy can easily take advantage of. Paul suffered from those challenges daily and boasts of them here. Amen. In the end, the virtue of this would be demonstrated, he was confident.*

[READ] 2 Cor. 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

- *These words are part of the apostle's summary statement near the end of this letter upon which so very much rested. The apostle was confident that his authority would be well proven in fact in due time for all to see and how that was to be accomplished is outlined here. The first verses in the chapter set the context: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you..."*
- *Let the false teachers beware for the Lord will avenge their disobedience but all according to the riches of his grace and his bountiful supply, praise God. For we are all "weak in him" and "shall live by the power of God." Amen.*

Paul's Ministry to the Corinthians Was:

II. Authoritative, and Powerful, Whether in Letters or Deed:

[READ] 2 Cor. 10:7-11

7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters [*alone*].

10 For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present.

- *The Corinthians are exhorted to consider not “appearances” but the spiritual authority revealed already in his ministry toward them in Corinth. These letters of the apostle demonstrate the same authority revealed before in person and that will be revealed again, in person, and face to face soon but now necessarily through letters.*
- *The apostle’s ministry to the Corinthians would be, he asserts with great assurance, well proven, not only to them, but also to his adversaries when he would he hoped and prayed, be present in the flesh.*

Paul’s Ministry to the Corinthians Was:

III. Proven by a Fruitfulness That Could Only Have Been of the Lord:

[READ] 2 Cor. 10:12

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

[READ] 2 Cor. 10:13-16

13 But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ:

15 Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours [***as in effect the false teachers themselves were doing***]; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

[READ] 2 Cor. 10:17-18

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

- ***Superficial comparisons can never reveal the essence of what God has and will work through his ministry, but the true proofs are everywhere displayed for all to see, to those who can see. The Corinthians were his final proof of that and it is to them he is writing this letter.***

Paul's ministry HAD BORN FRUIT even including the Corinthian believers themselves.

- ***Paul was glorifying in the Lord and his work and not in man's, as the false teachers were. May all see and know the work of the Lord as it truly is and may the Lord be glorified AND those he commends. Amen.***

Application / Conclusions:

Grace was working in Corinth and throughout the Gentile world wherever the gospel had been preached.

But many had not yet fully received it ... gifts and offering promised but not collected, unholy living, and false teachers still were there corrupting the work of God But Paul was coming to town —take note!!

2 Cor. 10:1-2

1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

- ***Paul both begins this critical section and ends the letter with such words as these, speaks loudly regarding his confidence in the work of God in and through him.***

- *But, of course, as he reminds us all in the twelfth chapter, the realm of grace is where God works in this dispensation.*

2 Cor. 12:9-10

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- *And then he continues the theme in later verses and in chapter 13 as well:*

2 Cor. 12:19-21

19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but *we do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21 *And* lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

2 Cor. 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.