

12/2/12

2Cor. 1:23-2:17

Paul the apostle wanted the Corinthians to know his love for them above everything else, particular in view of the slander and lies of the false teachers, so he move on to declare the reason why he did not come to them.

The chapter and verse divisions were made by man and are not inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were placed for the purpose of locating passages and at time the divisions are not the best, but for the most part they do a good job.

The break of chapter one and two of second Corinthians is one that I think can be improved.

1. The normal chapter division interrupts the thought for Paul not coming come again, as well as to divide it at verse two of chapter two.

2. I think that the better break is at verse twenty-three of chapter one, then the unit is intact, from verse twenty-three to verse four.

1:23-2:4 The explanation for not coming to Corinth.

1:23 The reason for Paul not going to Corinth.

1) Paul called God as his witness to the truth of his words against his very soul.

a) He was taking an oath, implying a curse upon himself, if he was not telling the truth, God alone knew his heart and motives.

b) These are found throughout the New Testament. Rom. 1:9; Gal. 1:20; Phil. 1:8; 1Thess. 2:5

2) Paul cared for them and wanted to spare them.

a) The word spare “pheidomai” means to abstain or forbear.

b) They were puffed up and did not want to come with a rod to discipline them again. 1Cor. 4:18, 21

c) They had believed the lies of the false teachers, “For *his* letters,” they say, “*are* weighty and powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.” 2Cor. 10:10

1:24 The accusation of Paul wanting to rule over the Corinthians.

1) Paul answered absolutely not the charges of desiring to have dominion over them.

a) The pronoun “we”, Paul, Silas and Timothy did not have the rule over their faith. 2Cor. 1:13

* The word dominion “kurieuo” means to have authority over or exercise lordship over someone.

- b) Their faith was personal and individual. Eph. 2:8-9
- c) Their faith meant freedom of their will to the leading of God, not man yet they were submitting to the false teachers. 2Cor. 11:19-21

2) Paul, Silas and Timothy were fellow workers for their joy.

- a) They followed the model of Christ.
- b) They were being spiritual parents for their joy, the first manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22
- c) Jesus rebuked the disciples for the last time for their desire to be great, rather than servants, as He washed their feet, for they were always discussing who was the greatest. Matt. 20:25-28, Jn. 13

* Teaching servant leadership. 2Thes. 3:11-13; Heb. 13:17; 1Pet. 5:1-4

3) They were trusting in faith on the basis of the work of Christ alone.

* To his own master he stands or falls; Yes, He shall hold him up: for God is able to make him stand. Rom. 14:4

2:1 The judgment of Paul to not visit Corinth for the third time.

- 1) The he would not go to them again in sorrow.
- 2) The sorrow is that of the Corinthians in this context.
- 3) The apostle had visited first at the establishing of the church. Acts 18
- 4) Then a second visit between his first letter and this second one we are studying.
- 5) The visit was not very memorable, in fact difficult and very painful to the Corinthians by his presence.

2:2 The Corinthians were his spiritual children.

- 1) He had confronted them and made them sorrowful.
 - * He was hoping they would not continue in their sinful condition.
- 2) He wanted them to repent, in order that they be his joy.
 - * “Open rebuke *is* better Than love carefully concealed. Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.” Prov. 27:5-6

2:3 The apostle Paul had written to them about all of this in his first letter.

- 1) He did not want to come in sorrow again, rather than joy. 1Cor. 4:14, 21; 2Cor. 13:20-21

- 2) He expressed his sure hope they would conclude he cared for them and their joy was Paul's joy. 2Cor. 7:8-9

2:4 The difficulty Paul had in writing the first letter to them.

- 1) The method of writing was three-fold.
 - a) Much afflictions, "thlipsis" means a pressing together resulting in distress, pressure and tribulation.
 - * The word is translated "tribulation" and "trouble". 2Cor. 1:4
 - b) Anguish "sunoche" of heart, meaning a holding together causing constricting.
 - * The idea being that of anxiety and despair seeing things getting worse with little hope!
 - c) Many tears, the result of the pain outward evidence of what was going on inside.
- 2) The motive and purpose for writing was not to grieve them, but to demonstrate his abundant love for them, as a loving father correcting his children.
 - a) Some believe that Paul is making reference to a letter called a "severe letter" that is lost, but there is no evidence, be it manuscript or external.
 - b) They attempt to say that chapters 10-13 is a part of that lost letter!

2:5-11 **The intercession for restoring a brother.**

2:5 The apostle Paul did not take the sin of this brother personally.

- 1) The sinner had caused pain to the Corinthians and the church.
- 2) The offense was not to be over exaggerated.
- 3) There are those who say this does not refer to the sinning brother sleeping with his step-mother, but rather to a person who had offended Paul during his painful second visit. 1Cor. 5
 - * But there is no evidence of this again!

2:6 The plea is to relieve the suffering of the sinning brother.

- 1) The context fit the young man who was asked to be turned over to Satan by Paul. 1Cor. 5:5
- 2) The punishment inflicted by the majority was sufficient for the man.
- 3) The majority were those who came to agree with Paul to ex-communicate him.
 - a) The corrective steps had paid off and brought about what the original intent, repentance in order for restoration, not mere castigation.
 - b) Church discipline is to follow the Scriptures. Matt. 18

* Binding and loosing is in reference to allowing and disallowing. Matt. 16:19; 18:18; Jn. 20:23

- c) The manner and responsibility of restoration is in gentleness. Gal. 6:1
- d) The goal is to hide a multitude of sins. Ja. 5:19-20

2:7-8 The apostle counsels them to forgive him and restore him into the fellowship of the church.

- 1) To forgive him was in view of his repentance receiving comfort by the body. vs. 7a
- 2) To inflict further pain that is unnecessary would be to cause him to be swallowed up with too much sorrow. vs. 7b
- 3) To reaffirm him in love would be to welcome him back in the church. vs. 8
* As Jesus forgave us, we are to forgive others, if they repent. Matt. 6-14-15; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-14

2:9 The other reason Paul had written to them.

- 1) To put them to the test whether they would obey in all things, particular in the handling of the young man.
 - a) The word for obedient “hupokouo” means to hear under, to give ear!

b) The word for test “dokine”, is used for the testing of metals and coins as genuine or not.

- 2) The true repentance described. 2Cor. 7:9-12

2:10 The agreement of Paul with the forgiveness of the Corinthians.

- 1) He would agree with there forgiveness and hold no grudge.
- 2) He forgave the person for the benefit of the church as if Christ were present.
- 3) Paul was saying that they were healthy enough spiritually to deal with the issue!

2:11 The downside of not restoring a repentant brother or sister.

- 1) The believer plays into Satan’s wiles.
 - * The word advantage “;leonekteo”, means to seek to get more, to outwit, cheat or overreach over the church or individuals, either by inflicting more discipline then necessary and crush him or to provoke him to anger, leading to bitterness.
- 2) The believer is not to be ignorant to the strategies of Satan.
 - a) The word devices “noema”, denotes schemes and thoughts, that which is thought out

- b) It is used five times in the letter. 2Cor. 3:14; 4:4; 10:5, 11:3
* Three times it is translated minds, once thought
- c) The apostle uses it in Philipians, “Keep hearts and *minds* through Jesus Christ.” Phil. 4:7
- 3) The weapons are not carnal but spiritual bringing into captivity the imaginations against knowledge of God. 2Cor. 10:4-5
 - a) Wiles or strategies. Eph. 6:11
 - b) Warfare is spiritual. Eph. 6:12

2:12-17 The proclamation of the minister’s triumph.

2:12-13 The apostle Paul had left Ephesus and headed for Troas.

- 1) He went to preach the gospel.
- 2) The Lord had opened up a door or opportunity. Acts 14:27; 1Cor. 16:9; Col. 4:3
- 3) He had no rest in his spirit, due to the fact that Titus had not met him there as planned.
- 4) He took leave to Macedonia.
- 5) He met Titus there and rejoiced. 2Cor. 7:5-8; 13-16
- 6) Some believe this is a great digression from verse fourteen to chapter seven, verse four.

- 7) I don’t see a digression. but the context reveals Paul’s intent to show that despite the difficulty and uncertainty, God leads his ministers into triumph without exception. 2Cor. 2:14

2:14 The thanks of Paul to God for their constant triumphs as ministers.

- 1) The triumph in view is the Roman procession of a triumphant emperor or general being honored for his conquest as he paraded the spoils of war.
 - a) Some of the captives would be at the front, who would be spared.
 - b) The most fit of the worriers would be at the end, being humiliated and ridiculed before the crowd, these would be slain at the end. Col. 2:15
- 2) Paul takes this picture and transfers it to the ministers of Christ.
 - a) First thing to note is that His ministers always triumph, despite circumstances such as his near-death experience, Troas or Macedonia.
 - b) Second, how they triumph is in Christ.
 - c) Third is the reason they are triumphant in Christ, they are preaching the gospel, manifesting the fragrance of His knowledge, in every place. Rom. 1:16;17

- d) The ministers of Christ are the soldiers of God's army serving the Captain of their salvation, Jesus.

2:15-16 The true ministers of God described are those preaching the gospel.

- 1) The ministers of Jesus are the fragrance of Christ among those being saved, as well as those perishing. vs. 15
 - a) They are not triumphant, if people are saved, but even if they reject the gospel.
 - b) They are triumphant because they preach the gospel, giving all a chance to respond and be saved.
- 2) To those perishing, they were an aroma of death leading to death, eternal separation from God, having rejected the Gospel. vs. 16a
- 3) To those being saved, they were an aroma of life leading to life, to live with Jesus eternally by receiving the Gospel. vs. 16b
- 4) The apostle asks who is sufficient for these things, in verse 15, the preaching of the Gospel to affect the eternal destiny of men and women? vs. 16c
 - a) The answer is God. 2Cor. 3:5-6
 - b) God is competent to judge sinners eternal destiny by their response to the gospel preached by ministers, who are a fragrant aroma to God.

2:17 The ones who merchandised the Gospel.

- 1) Paul, Silas and Timothy were not as so many others peddling the word of God.
 - a) The word peddling "kapeleontes" comes from hucksters.
 - b) They peddled cheap wares, haggled about the price, cheated knowing they were not coming back, watering down wine and often placed the best fruit on the top to deceive!
 - * They merchandised God's word for gain!
- 2) Paul and others were sincere without hypocrisy. 2Cor. 1:12
- 3) They spoke from God, not self. 1Cor. 2:2
- 4) They spoke in the sight of God. 2Cor. 4:2, 12:19
- 5) They spoke in Christ 2Cor. 1:14, 19