

2 Corinthians

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Translation

2 Cor. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy, a brother, to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:

2 Cor. 1:2 Grace to you and prosperity from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions, and God of all encouragement,

2 Cor. 1:4 Who keeps on encouraging us during all our outside pressures [trials and tribulations], so that we might be able to encourage those who are under any category of outside pressure, by the encouragement with which we ourselves have received repeated encouragement from God,

2 Cor. 1:5 For to the degree that the sufferings from Christ abound in us, in the same way our encouragement [from the reservoir of Bible doctrine in our soul] may also abound through Christ.

2 Cor. 1:6 As a matter of fact, when we receive outside pressure: it is for the sake of your encouragement and deliverance; when we receive encouragement: it is for the sake of your encouragement which is put into operation by patient endurance [resting in the Word of God by faith] through your sufferings, which we have also endured.

2 Cor. 1:7 Moreover, our basis of hope for you is well-grounded, knowing that when you [mature believers only] are sharers of the sufferings, in the same way also the encouragement.

2 Cor. 1:8 For we do not want you, brethren, to be ignorant concerning the outside pressure [mob violence] which happened to us in Asia, since in this case, we were tested to extreme limits above and beyond our ability, to the extent that we even despaired to keep on living.

2 Cor. 1:9 As a matter of fact, we ourselves had the sentence of death in our possession; moreover, we did not rely on ourselves, but upon God Who raises the dead,

2 Cor. 1:10 Who delivered us from terrible death in the past and keeps on delivering, upon Whom we have confidence that He will deliver even more [on future occasions],

2 Cor. 1:11 as you join in and help us, namely by means of your prayer for us, so that the gift of divine grace, by frequent opportunities among us, may receive thanks from many on our behalf.

2 Cor. 1:12 for our object of esprit-de-corps [corporate boasting], the witness on behalf of our conscience, rests on this: that with single-minded devotion and pure motives before God, not by worldly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have been living in the world, and especially towards you.

2 Cor. 1:13 For we never write additional things [secretive, esoteric] to you than what you have repetitively learned [heard in the past on numerous occasions] and what you recognize [already have them categorized in their soul], and that I hope you will always recognize completely,

2 Cor. 1:14 Just as you have also come to know us well, to the degree that we are your object of esprit-de-corps, just as you also are our in the day of the Lord Jesus.

2 Cor. 1:15 Moreover, with this confidence I planned to return face-to-face to you on a prior occasion, so that you might obtain a second benefit [depending on whether they welcomed him or not],

2 Cor. 1:16 not only to pass through you on the way to Macedonia and to return to you from Macedonia [round trip], but also to be accompanied by you to Judea.

2 Cor. 1:17 So, having made this plan, did I, therefore, behave in a fickle manner? Or with reference to the things I had planned, was my planning according to the flesh, with the result that in my case, it could be: Yes indeed or certainly not?

2 Cor. 1:18 On the contrary, God is faithful, so that our word to you is never: yes and no.

2 Cor. 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was proclaimed to you by us, (by myself and Silvanus and Timothy), did not become yes or no, but became yes in Him.

2 Cor. 1:20 For all the promises of God are yes in Him [veracity and immutability of God]; for this reason, also, through Him comes the 'truly indeed' from us to the ultimate glory of God.

2 Cor. 1:21 Furthermore, He Who keeps on strengthening us [experiential sanctification] with you [those who are maturing] in Christ, and has annointed us [at the point of salvation] is God,

2 Cor. 1:22 Who has also sealed us [positional sanctification] and given the guarantee [indwelling] of the Spirit in our minds.

2 Cor. 1:23 Moreover, I appeal to God as a witness to my soul, that for the purpose of sparing you, I have not yet returned to Corinth,

2 Cor. 1:24 because we do not want to dictate the terms of your doctrinal lifestyle; on the contrary, we are fellow-workers with reference to your inner happiness, for you have repeatedly stood firm by means of doctrine.

2 Cor. 2:1 However, I myself decided this: that I would not return to you again with regret.

2 Cor. 2:2 For if I bring you grief, who then is the one who will cheer me up, but the same one who is grieved because of me?

2 Cor. 2:3 So I have written this very thing, so that when I arrived I would not receive grief from those whom I should receive warm greetings, reassured by all of you that my inner happiness continues to exist, belonging to all of you.

2 Cor. 2:4 For indeed, due to intense outside pressure and anxiety of mentality, I wrote to you with many tears, not so that you might become grieved, but so that you might come to know the virtue love which I have to a great degree towards you.

2 Cor. 2:5 Now if anyone is still distressed [due to Paul's corrective rebukes in a former letter], he is injuring, not me, but to a degree, all of you, so that I will not bring the issue up again.

2 Cor. 2:6 Punishment to this kind of person [the man caught in an incestuous affair] by the hands of the majority was sufficient,

2 Cor. 2:7 So accordingly, good judgment demands that you deal graciously with him all the more [since he repented and asked to be restored to fellowship] and speak words of encouragement, otherwise, in some way, such a person might be overwhelmed with unbearable grief.

2 Cor. 2:8 For this reason, I encourage you to prove your virtue love toward him;

2 Cor. 2:9 Indeed, I also wrote for this purpose, so that I might ascertain your character, whether you are obedient in all manner of things.

2 Cor. 2:10 Moreover, to whom you forgive anything, I also; for I also deal graciously, whenever I have forgiven something on your behalf before Christ,

2 Cor. 2:11 So we might not be taken advantage of by satan, for we are not ignorant of his methods.

2 Cor. 2:12 Furthermore, when I arrived at Troy with the good news about Christ, a door also being opened to me by the Lord,

2 Cor. 2:13 I had no relief in my spirit due to not finding Titus my brother, so after saying goodbye to them, I departed for Macedonia.

2 Cor. 2:14 However, thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumph in Christ and brings to life the fragrant scent of His consideration for us in every geographical location,

2 Cor. 2:15 For we [ministers of the gospel then and now] are a fragrant aroma of Christ to God, among those who are being delivered and among those who are perishing;

2 Cor. 2:16 On the one hand, one is a foul odor from the dying unto death [unbelievers]; on the other hand, one is a fragrant scent from the living unto life [believers]. And who is sufficient for these things?

2 Cor. 2:17 For we are not like the majority who peddle the Word of God for profit, but rather as those with pure motives, and not only this but also as from God, we communicate by means of Christ in the sight of God.

2 Cor. 3:1 Should we ourselves [Paul and his colleagues] begin once more to recommend ourselves? Or do we not need to have, like others [certain false teachers], letters of recommendation to you or letters from you?

2 Cor. 3:2 You are the embodiment of our letter, which was written by our minds, having been recognized and repeatedly studied and exegeted by all manner of men,

2 Cor. 3:3 which reveals that you are the embodiment of a letter of Christ which was prepared under our authority, not written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets, but on the human tablets of the mind.

2 Cor. 3:4 Moreover, we keep on having such confidence face-to-face with God through Christ,

2 Cor. 3:5 Not that we ourselves are competent to think anything as if out from ourselves, but rather our competency is out from God,

2 Cor. 3:6 Who also made us capable ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter [the law], but of the Spirit, for the letter always kills, but the Spirit always makes alive.

2 Cor. 3:7 But if the ministry of death [the law] by means of alphabetical letters engraved on stones [Mosaic law], appeared with glory, (so that the sons of Israel were not able to fix their eyes on the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance), which was abolished [the legal dispensation is over],

2 Cor. 3:8 How is it not possible for the ministry of the Spirit to be much more glorious?

2 Cor. 3:9 For if the ministry of condemnation [the law] revealed the glory, much more, even to a great degree, the ministry of righteousness superabounds with glory.

2 Cor. 3:10 For even that [the law] which became glorious was not exalted to the same degree, because of the glory [of the Spirit] which surpasses.

2 Cor. 3:11 For if that which was abolished [the law] was with glory, much more, to a greater degree, that which endures [the Spirit] in the sphere of glory.

2 Cor. 3:12 Having, therefore, such confidence, we exhibit a great degree of boldness,

2 Cor. 3:13 And not like Moses putting a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel could not fix their eyes on the goal of that which was abolished.

2 Cor. 3:14 On the contrary, their minds were made stubborn [supernatural hardening]. For up to this very day, the same veil remains when reading the old covenant [they do not find Jesus Christ in the OT], not being unveiled because it [the ministry of the law] was annulled in Christ.

2 Cor. 3:15 As a matter of fact, up to this very day, whenever Moses is read, a veil exists upon their mind;

2 Cor. 3:16 But whenever it [Israel] changes its mind toward the Lord, the veil is removed from around the head.

2 Cor. 3:17 So then, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty [freedom from the law].

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all, who are ourselves able to see as in a mirror the glory of the Lord without the blindness imposed by the veil over the face, are transformed according to the same image from one degree of glory to another degree of glory [experiential sanctification], as from the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Cor. 4:1 Therefore, since we have this ministry [of the New Testament], inasmuch as we have received mercy, we are not discouraged,

2 Cor. 4:2 but have renounced hidden things [such as gnosticism or mysticism] related to shameful deeds, not walking deceitfully, nor distorting the Word of God [mixing it with anthropocentric philosophies or psychologies], but proving ourselves by bringing the truth to light face-to-face with each classification of conscience of men before God.

2 Cor. 4:3 So then, if our gospel is being (kept) hidden, it is being (kept) hidden among those who are perishing,

2 Cor. 4:4 Concerning whom the god [satan] over this age [world order] has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving ones, so that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should not dawn on them.

2 Cor. 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ, and ourselves your bondslaves because of Jesus.

2 Cor. 4:6 Because it is the God, Who commanded that light shall shine forth out of darkness, Who has given light into our minds for the purpose of illuminating the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 4:7 Moreover, we have this treasure in earthen vessels [human bodies], so that the surpassing quality of the beyond our ability power [divine omnipotence] is always made possible by God [His sovereignty], and never out from us [our will is not the deciding factor],

2 Cor. 4:8 Although we are repeatedly subjected to every category of outside pressure, nevertheless, we are not crushed; although we are repeatedly at a total loss as to what we should do next, nevertheless, we are not in a state of despair;

2 Cor. 4:9 Being persecuted, but not being abandoned, being knocked down, but not being destroyed,

2 Cor. 4:10 Always bearing in our mortal life the constant danger of spiritual death experienced by Jesus, so that the life characterized by Jesus might also be revealed in our seat of daily life [experiential sanctification].

2 Cor. 4:11 Moreover, we who continually live under the constant danger of death because of Jesus are frequently delivered, so that the life characterized by Jesus might in addition be revealed in our mortal life here on earth [experiential sanctification].

2 Cor. 4:12 Therefore, the constant danger of death operates among us, but life [operates] in you.

2 Cor. 4:13 Moreover, since we have the same Spirit of faith, (according to what was written in the past and stands written: "I believed, therefore I have spoken"), we also believe, therefore we also make it a practice to speak,

2 Cor. 4:14 Knowing that He Who resurrected the Lord Jesus shall also, together with Jesus, resurrect us and present us together with you.

2 Cor. 4:15 Indeed, all kinds of things [are supplied] for your benefit, so that the grace which multiplied through many because of thanksgiving might super-abound to the glory of God.

2 Cor. 4:16 Therefore, we are not discouraged. But if our outer man is in a state of progressive decay, nevertheless, our inner man is being progressively renewed day by day [experiential sanctification].

2 Cor. 4:17 For the momentary, insignificant pressure that corresponds with our extreme circumstances [testing] is preparing for us a far more surpassing eternal fullness of glory,

2 Cor. 4:18 If we do not make it a habit to focus on things which can be observed against us, but rather things which cannot be observed. For the things which can be observed are temporary, but the things which cannot be observed are eternal.

2 Cor. 5:1 For we know beyond any shadow of a doubt that when our earthly home, that is tent, is dissolved, we will receive a structure from God [resurrection body], a home not made by hands, eternal, in the heavens,

2 Cor. 5:2 For indeed, in this we keep on groaning, longing to put on our home which is out from heaven.

2 Cor. 5:3 Moreover, if we have indeed clothed ourselves [put on our white garments: experiential sanctification], we shall not be found naked [in a resurrection body without clothing].

2 Cor. 5:4 For indeed, we who are still living in this tent, being weighed down by this burden, continue to groan, in spite of which we do not wish ourselves to be unclothed as a result, but rather clothed as a result, so that mortal life might be swallowed up by glorious life.

2 Cor. 5:5 Furthermore, He Who prepared this very thing for us is God, Who also gave to us the down payment of the Spirit.

2 Cor. 5:6 Therefore, while maintaining confidence at all times, and knowing that while we are at home in our physical body, we are living abroad away from the Lord,

2 Cor. 5:7 We keep on conducting our life by means of doctrine, not by means of outward appearances;

2 Cor. 5:8 But we are confident and will be all the more pleased to be away from our physical body and to be present face-to-face with the Lord.

2 Cor. 5:9 Therefore, we ourselves also keep on making it our goal, whether we are present in our home or absent from our home, to be a delight to Him.

2 Cor. 5:10 Why? Because we all will be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, in order that each person may receive back things [rewards and decorations] according to what was practiced through the physical body, whether valuable [gold, silver, precious stones] or worthless [wood, hay, stubble].

2 Cor. 5:11 Therefore, since we experience profound respect for the Lord, we continue to reassure men, even though we have been completely exposed to God, and as a result I also confidently hope to be completely exposed before your conscience.

2 Cor. 5:12 Again, we are not commending ourselves to you, but rather giving you an opportunity for boasting on our behalf, so that you may have more than enough reasons for the sake of those [certain false teachers] who continually boast about themselves by means of an outward show and not by means of the mentality of the soul.

2 Cor. 5:13 Indeed, if we were radical, enthusiastic ministers, it was to God; if we are reasonable, prudent ministers, it is for you.

2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ encircles and motivates us, because we have determined this: that One died for every category of mankind [Jews & Gentiles, male & female, slave & free, rich & poor] , therefore every category of mankind died.

2 Cor. 5:15 Furthermore, He died as a substitute for every category of mankind [Jews & Gentiles, male & female, slave & free, rich & poor], so that they who are still alive should no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who died as a substitute for them and was subsequently resurrected.

2 Cor. 5:16 So that from now on, in no respect do we evaluate a person according to human norms and standards; even if we knew Christ according to human norms and standards, nevertheless now we no longer know Him in this manner.

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; former things passed away, then suddenly new things came into existence;

2 Cor. 5:18 Moreover, all manner of things [spiritual blessings] are from the God Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and Who has given to us the ministry which leads to this reconciliation,

2 Cor. 5:19 How that God was in Christ when He reconciled the world to Himself, not crediting to their account their trespasses, and placing in us the doctrine of reconciliation,

2 Cor. 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, so that God may issue His divine summons through us; we keep on exhorting on behalf of Christ: "Be reconciled to God."

2 Cor. 5:21 He Who never experienced sin bore sin as a substitute for us, with the result that we will become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Cor. 6:1 Therefore, since we are co-workers, we also ask that you do not receive the grace of God in vain [don't be saved by grace and then attempt to grow by keeping the law],

2 Cor. 6:2 For He said: "I listened to you on a particular occasion, and I helped you during the time of deliverance." Suddenly, at this very moment, the time is ripe; suddenly, at this very moment, it is a day for salvation.

2 Cor. 6:3 Do not give offence in any way, so that the ministry may not be faulted,

2 Cor. 6:4 But in all respects continually demonstrating ourselves as God's ministers, with great perseverance during outside pressures, during distress, during difficulties,

2 Cor. 6:5 During beatings, during imprisonment, during mob violence, during hard labor, during sleeplessness, during starvation,

2 Cor. 6:6 By means of pureness, by means of technical knowledge, by means of grace orientation, by means of a relaxed mental attitude, by means of the Holy Spirit, by means of bonified virtue love,

2 Cor. 6:7 By means of the Word of Truth, by means of God's inherent power, through the weapons of righteousness characterized by the offensive right hand and characterized by the defensive left hand,

2 Cor. 6:8 Through a time of praise or a time of humiliation, through a time of slander or a time of good report, while considered deceitful or considered honest,

2 Cor. 6:9 When being repeatedly disregarded or while being completely understood, when repeatedly facing death or even while we are still alive, when we are being disciplined, but not being put to death,

2 Cor. 6:10 While distressed, but always full of inner happiness; while inferior, continually enriching many; while possessing nothing, but holding on to all kinds of things.

2 Cor. 6:11 Our speech is open and frank face-to-face with you, Corinthians; our minds have been opened wide;

2 Cor. 6:12 You are not being limited by us; instead, you are being limited by your emotions;

2 Cor. 6:13 Therefore, for the sake of responding in the same manner, on the grounds that I am speaking to children, start allowing yours [your minds] to also be opened wide.

2 Cor. 6:14 Stop the practice of being mismatched with unbelievers [believers marrying unbelievers], for what partnership can there be between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what mutual relationship can there be between light in the company of darkness?

2 Cor. 6:15 As a matter of fact, what common ground is there between Christ in the company with Belial? Or what commonality can there be between a believer in company with an unbeliever?

2 Cor. 6:16 Moreover, what agreement is there between the temple of God in company with idols? Indeed, you are a living temple of God, just as God said: "I will live in them and live among them, and I will be their God and they will be My people."

2 Cor. 6:17 "Therefore, come out from the middle of them and be separated," said the Lord, "and stop touching the unclean; then I will welcome you,"

2 Cor. 6:18 "and I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be sons and daughters unto Me," said the Lord Almighty.

2 Cor. 7:1 Therefore, since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every type of defilement against the flesh and human spirit, for the purpose of making continual progress with reference to the spiritual life with profound respect for God.

2 Cor. 7:2 Make room for us [Paul and his colleagues] in your hearts; we have harmed nobody, we have corrupted nobody, we have cheated nobody.

2 Cor. 7:3 I am not speaking for the purpose of condemnation, since I have repeatedly said in the past and will say yet again that you are in our hearts for the purpose of living together and eventually dying together.

2 Cor. 7:4 Great is my confidence concerning you, great is my boasting about you. I have been completely filled in the past and will continue to be filled with encouragement in the future; I am constantly being flooded with inner happiness under every type of outside pressure for our benefit.

2 Cor. 7:5 For indeed, when we finally arrived in Macedonia, our flesh had in no respect received relief, but continually experienced pressures in every category: fistfights on the outside, fears on the inside.

2 Cor. 7:6 But He Who keeps on encouraging those without confidence, our God, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus,

2 Cor. 7:7 And not only by his arrival, but also by the encouragement with which he had been encouraged concerning you, reporting to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that as a result I was more than ever full of inner happiness.

2 Cor. 7:8 For if I indeed grieved you with a letter, I am not sorry, although I began with regret, since I understand that that letter, if only for a moment, grieved you.

2 Cor. 7:9 At the present time I am full of inner happiness, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved to the point of turning from your sins, for you were grieved according to the purpose of God, so that you might in no way receive discipline from us.

2 Cor. 7:10 For grief that originates from the purpose of God always brings about a turning from one's sins, free from regret, with a result of spiritual deliverance, but grief from the world system always produces spiritual death.

2 Cor. 7:11 As a matter of fact, here is a perfect example. While you were being disciplined according to the purpose of God, how much diligent effort did it eventually produce in you? Certainly an eagerness to remedy the situation, and not only this but agony over the enormity of your sin, and not only this but respect for the administration of divine discipline, and not only this but a longing for the return of peace, and not only this but a zeal for producing fruit, and not only this but humble submission to divine judgment. In every conceivable way you proved yourselves to be uncontaminated with reference to the [incestuous] affair.

2 Cor. 7:12 Consequently, even though I wrote to you, I wrote not for the sake of the person who was guilty of causing harm, nor for the person who received harm, but for the sake of our diligent effort which has been made evident on your behalf in the presence of God.

2 Cor. 7:13 For this reason, we have been encouraged in the past and we will continue to be encouraged in the future. Moreover, in addition to this, we received all the more inner happiness due to our ever increasing abundance of encouragement corresponding to the inner happiness of Titus, because his human spirit was refreshed in the past and continues to be refreshed by all of you.

2 Cor. 7:14 For if I said something boastful to him concerning you, I have not been disappointed, not only because we communicated all categories of things in truth to you, but in the same manner, our boasting before Titus also came true.

2 Cor. 7:15 As a matter of fact, his affections for you are all the more abundant whenever he remembers the obedience of you all, how with profound respect and trembling you welcomed him.

2 Cor. 7:16 I am happy that I have confidence in you in every respect.

2 Cor. 8:1 Now we are going to disclose to you, brethren, the grace of God which was brought about in the past and continues to be bestowed among the assemblies of Macedonia,

2 Cor. 8:2 Since during a great test of outside pressure, the superabundance of their inner happiness (and to the same extent their extreme poverty) multiplied into a wealth of personal, singlehearted devotion [generous grace giving],

2 Cor. 8:3 For according to their ability, I will confirm, even beyond their ability, this was of their own accord,

2 Cor. 8:4 Imploring us most insistently concerning a grace gift, even a partnership with reference to a contribution for the saints,

2 Cor. 8:5 And not to the degree that we had anticipated, but first they entrusted themselves to the Lord, and then by means of God's will to us,

2 Cor. 8:6 With the result that we ourselves appealed to Titus, so that to the degree that he had begun beforehand, he might in the same way also bring to fruition among you this grace gift as well.

2 Cor. 8:7 Moreover, just as you continue to superabound in every manner: by faith-rest and by sharing the Word and by studying the Word and by every manner of diligent effort and by the virtue love from yourselves to us - superabound by this grace gift as well.

2 Cor. 8:8 I am not speaking by way of an authoritative command, but because of the diligence of others and my desire to demonstrate the genuineness of your virtue love.

2 Cor. 8:9 Now you are familiar with the grace orientation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although He was rich, for your benefit He became poor, so that by His extreme poverty you might become rich.

2 Cor. 8:10 Moreover, I will render an opinion in this matter: Indeed, this (grace orientation) was to your advantage, whoever not only began to exercise this (grace-oriented spiritual life), but was also willing to resume (the grace-oriented spiritual life) a year ago,

2 Cor. 8:11 And now may also complete (the grace-oriented spiritual life) that you started to do, so that just as your zeal to be willing began, in the same manner may you likewise complete the course in the days to come by means of what you currently possess.

2 Cor. 8:12 Therefore, assuming this eagerness still exists, it may be considered acceptable when according to standards, not when it is considered not according to standards.

2 Cor. 8:13 And certainly the purpose of financial relief for others is not to cause financial pressure upon you, nor by reason of a matter of equality.

2 Cor. 8:14 At the present time, your financial overflow may be for the purpose of their need, so that their financial overflow might likewise be for the purpose of your need someday, in order that there might be a mutually beneficial result,

2 Cor. 8:15 Just as it stands written: "He who greatly increased did not amass an excessive amount, and he who was in need did not endure an inadequate amount."

2 Cor. 8:16 But thanks be to God Who produced the same eagerness on your behalf in the mentality of Titus,

2 Cor. 8:17 Since on the one hand, he accepted the request, but on the other hand, quite eagerly placing himself at your disposal, he went face-to-face with you of his own accord.

2 Cor. 8:18 In addition, we sent along with him a fellow believer whose commendable teaching in the good news is recognized throughout all the assemblies,

2 Cor. 8:19 And not only this, but was also chosen by the assemblies as our traveling companion to accompany us with this grace contribution, which will be administered by us for the praise of the Lord Himself and our dedication,

2 Cor. 8:20 For the purpose of avoiding this: that no one should find fault with us with reference to this generous financial contribution which will be administered by us,

2 Cor. 8:21 For we always try to take care of things honestly, not only in the presence of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

2 Cor. 8:22 In addition, we sent along with them our brother, whom we have examined, tested and proved to be repeatedly diligent in many things, and now exceptionally diligent because of the enormous trust placed in him by you.

2 Cor. 8:23 Next regarding Titus: he is my partner and fellow-worker on your behalf; then our colleagues, messengers from the assemblies, reputable on behalf of Christ.

2 Cor. 8:24 Therefore, keep on giving an indication to them, evidence of your virtue love and of our boasting on your behalf face-to-face before the assemblies.

2 Cor. 9:1 Now indeed, concerning support for the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you,

2 Cor. 9:2 For I know quite well and have confidence in your positive motivation, which I continually take pride in and boast about you to the Macedonians, [since Achaia has been in the process of preparing themselves since last year], because your positive motivation stirred up many,

2 Cor. 9:3 However, I have dispatched fellow believers, so that our boasting about you might not be rendered void with reference to this incomplete matter, in order that, just as I stated previously, you might be making preparations;

2 Cor. 9:4 Otherwise, if Macedonians return with me and find you unprepared, we (I don't necessarily mean you) may be humiliated in this conviction.

2 Cor. 9:5 Therefore, I considered it necessary to urge my fellow believers (3-man collection team) that they might proceed ahead of me to you and prepare in advance your previously promised contribution, which might be prepared as though a voluntary gift and not as something one feels forced to give.

2 Cor. 9:6 However, this remains true: "He who makes it a habit to sow sparingly [reluctantly] shall also reap sparingly, but he who makes it a habit to sow bountifully [graciously] shall also reap bountifully."

2 Cor. 9:7 Each person should always decide according to the mentality of his soul, not reluctantly, nor under compulsion, for God loves a giver with a relaxed mental attitude.

2 Cor. 9:8 Moreover, God has the inherent power to make every grace gift superabound to your advantage, so that when you think self-sufficiently in all types of circumstances, you may continue to superabound in every category of intrinsically good work.

2 Cor. 9:9 Just as it stands written: "He was generous, he gave to the poor, his righteousness will abide during his age [lifetime]."

2 Cor. 9:10 "Likewise, He Who keeps on providing resources for the purpose of sowing and bread for the purpose of eating, shall continue to provide and multiply your resources, as well as increasing the harvest from your charity,"

2 Cor. 9:11 So that you will be enriched in every way as concerns each category of generosity, which keeps on accomplishing through us gratitude towards God,

2 Cor. 9:12 Because the support of this ministry is not only for the purpose of providing what is lacking by the saints, but also for the purpose of continuing to superabound with ever-increasing gratitudes toward God.

2 Cor. 9:13 Meanwhile they [the Jerusalem saints] are glorifying God, due to the evidence of this ministry, on the basis of obedience to your profession concerning the good news of Christ and the generosity related to your contribution to them and to all others,

2 Cor. 9:14 As they also, with prayers on your behalf, long for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

2 Cor. 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

2 Cor. 10:1 Now, I myself, Paul, encourage you by the genuine humility and grace orientation of Christ, who, on the one hand, when in your presence, seem meek and mild, but on the other hand, when I am absent, I am rather courageous towards you,

2 Cor. 10:2 But on the contrary, I am praying that when I was present, I did not act boldly with arrogant self-confidence, supposing myself to be presumptuously brave in the presence of some who consequently consider us as walking according to the flesh.

2 Cor. 10:3 For although we walk in an earthly body, we are not continually fighting a battle according to the norms and standards of the flesh,

2 Cor. 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not material, but powerful according to the norms and standards of God, for the purpose of tearing down fortresses [satanic strongholds], for the purpose of overthrowing false concepts [cosmic thinking]),

2 Cor. 10:5 And every classification of arrogant mental obstacle [human viewpoint panacea] contrary to the knowledge of God [divine viewpoint], that is, with the result that every category of thought process [intellectual rationale] is brought into strict obedience to Christ,

2 Cor. 10:6 As well as maintaining a state of mental preparation [disciplined doctrinal garrison in the soul] for the ultimate purpose of correcting every occasion of disobedience [immediate confession of sin and restoration to fellowship], as often as your obedience [desire to follow God's protocol plan] aspires to be brought to completion [attainment of spiritual maturity].

2 Cor. 10:7 You are in the habit of observing things [superficially] according to external appearance [subjectivity]. If anyone has convinced himself that he is continually living by means of Christ, let him consider this: that just as he is living by means of Christ, likewise, also are we.

2 Cor. 10:8 For though I could boast superiority over anyone on account of our authority, which the Lord delegated for the purpose of strengthening and not for the purpose of tearing you down, I shall not be put to shame [not ashamed of possessing or exercising my authority],

2 Cor. 10:9 So that I might not obtain a reputation [among those who are in human viewpoint subjectivity] on the grounds that I intimidate [rebuke] you by means of letters,

2 Cor. 10:10 Because on the one hand, his letters, they [Paul's critics] allege, are weighty [too much doctrine] and powerful [too harsh], but on the other hand, his bodily presence is weak and his speech is counted as nothing [contemptible].

2 Cor. 10:11 May this kind of person [critic of both the message and the man] consider this: perhaps it is possible that we are teaching through letters when we are absent [non face-to-face teaching], similar [consistent], as a matter of fact, to the overt expression of that activity when we are present [face-to-face teaching].

2 Cor. 10:12 For we are not so presumptuous [we wouldn't dare] as to classify [they are out of our class] or compare [our standards are inferior] ourselves with those [false teachers] who make it a practice to recommend themselves. As a matter of fact, these individuals who make it a practice to measure themselves by themselves and who make it a practice to compare themselves to themselves [mutual admiration society], are not collectively [as an elite group] intelligent [the entire group is without spiritual understanding].

2 Cor. 10:13 Now we ourselves will not boast beyond limits, but rather within the measure of the limits [of authority] that God assigned to us for a measure, extending even as far as you [including Corinth].

2 Cor. 10:14 For we did not ever extend ourselves beyond the limits of our authority when reaching out to you [in Corinth], (although we did reach out even as far as to you [Corinth] with the gospel of Christ),

2 Cor. 10:15 Not boasting beyond limits in the labors of others, but possessing confidence that your intake and application of doctrine will continue to increase, since it [doctrinal teaching] was extended to you within our limits with abundant results,

2 Cor. 10:16 For the purpose of spreading the good news to lands beyond you, not for the purpose of boasting on the work already done within the limits of another man.

2 Cor. 10:17 So then, he who is in the habit of boasting, let him make it a practice to boast in the Lord,

2 Cor. 10:18 For it is not the person who recommends himself that is approved, but always whom the Lord tests and approves.

2 Cor. 11:1 I hope you can tolerate me regarding something a little foolish, and not only this, but also please give patient attention to me.

2 Cor. 11:2 For I am deeply concerned for you with a profound Godly interest, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, hoping to present you an undefiled virgin to Christ,

2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear that in some way, as the serpent deceived Eve by means of his craftiness, your minds might become corrupted from single-hearted devotion (as well as purity) against Christ.

2 Cor. 11:4 For example, when a person [false teacher] arrives on the scene repeatedly preaching another of the same kind of Jesus [the same historical Jesus but with something added] whom we [Paul and his colleagues] have not preached, or you receive another of a different kind of spirit [the spirit of legalism rather than the spirit of grace] which you have not previously received or another of a different kind of good news [something in addition to and superior to what Paul taught] which you have not previously accepted, you always give kind [unwavering adoration] patient attention to him [the false teacher].

2 Cor. 11:5 For I conclude after an objective personal evaluation that I have not been in the past and am in no way now inferior to the highly-exalted apostles.

2 Cor. 11:6 As a matter of fact, even though I may be unskilled with reference to speech [inadequate verbal communication skills], I am not, however, [unskilled] with reference to information [doctrinal principles]; on the contrary, on every occasion we have made the truth known to you in every category of thing [comprehensive systematic theology].

2 Cor. 11:7 Have I even committed a sin by continuing to support myself under humble circumstances [making tents to pay his living expenses] so that you might be spiritually exalted, because I preached the good news of God to you without cost?

2 Cor. 11:8 I robbed other assemblies [mature believers] by receiving compensation for the purpose of ministering to you [carnal believers],

2 Cor. 11:9 And when I was present face-to-face with you and was in need of financial assistance, I was not a financial burden to anyone, (for fellow believers who came from Macedonia supplied me what I was lacking), and in every circumstance I have maintained myself at no financial cost to you, and [because of your immaturity in financial matters] I will continue to maintain myself.

2 Cor. 11:10 The truth from Christ keeps on residing in me, so that this boasting [in financial independence] shall not be silenced as it pertains to me in the regions of Achaia.

2 Cor. 11:11 For what reason? Because I no longer continue to extend virtue love towards you? God knows better!

2 Cor. 11:12 Moreover, what I am currently doing [supporting myself financially], I also plan to keep on doing, so that I might remove the occasion for those [false apostles] who are constantly desiring an opportunity [to receive money], so that while they are boasting [in their assumed status as apostles] they may also be found just as us [able to support themselves].

2 Cor. 11:13 Indeed, such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, who are constantly transforming themselves with clever disguises [masquerading] into apostles of Christ.

2 Cor. 11:14 And it's no wonder, since Satan himself is constantly transforming himself with clever disguises [masquerading] into an angel of light.

2 Cor. 11:15 It is no great accomplishment, therefore, if his [Satan's] ministers also make it a practice to transform themselves with clever disguises [masquerading] as ministers of righteousness [legalistic do-gooders], whose ultimate end [determined at the Great White Throne] shall be according to their production [burned].

2 Cor. 11:16 I say again, don't anyone suppose me to be a fool, but if this isn't possible, then please welcome me as a fool [just like I was a false apostle], so that I also may boast a little about something [even if all I can boast about is being a fool].

2 Cor. 11:17 What I am attempting to communicate [through the foolishness of sarcasm], I am not communicating against the norms and standards of the Lord [sanctified sarcasm is a legitimate teaching device], but rather on the grounds of the foolishness associated with this confident boasting.

2 Cor. 11:18 Since many [Judaizers] are making it a practice to boast according to the norms and standards of the flesh, I also will make it a practice to boast,

2 Cor. 11:19 For you [Corinthians] always gladly give patient attention to fools [every false teacher that comes through town], since you are so thoughtful and wise.

2 Cor. 11:20 For you [Corinthians] continue to give patient attention to anyone [false teacher], even if someone brings you into the slavery of legalism, even if someone exploits you, even if someone collects [financial maintenance] from you, even if someone behaves arrogantly, even if someone punches you in the face.

2 Cor. 11:21 I am speaking about mis-evaluation, under the pretext that we [Christians in general] have been and continually appear inept [without common sense or discernment]. However, when someone in this situation [a false teacher] appears to be courageous [an erroneous subjective evaluation], (I am speaking with foolishness, [tongue in cheek]), I myself am courageous [a correct objective evaluation].

2 Cor. 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

2 Cor. 11:23 Are they ministers of Christ? I will speak on behalf of myself [as compared to the false teachers] as though I'm out of my mind: in hardships, to a greater degree; in imprisonments, more often; in beatings, much more severe; in danger of death, quite frequently.

2 Cor. 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes, less one.

2 Cor. 11:25 I was beaten with wooden rods three times. I was stoned once. I was shipwrecked three times. I endured a night and a day in the open sea.

2 Cor. 11:26 On journeys often, in perils related to flooded rivers, in perils related to robbers, in perils from my own family, in perils from Gentiles, in perils in the inner city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren,

2 Cor. 11:27 In tiresome labor and hardships, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in involuntary deprivations often, in cold weather and without sufficient clothing,

2 Cor. 11:28 And in addition to those left-out [not on the list] things [that I just enumerated] is the pressure upon me that occurs daily: anxiety [apostolic care and concern] for all the assemblies.

2 Cor. 11:29 Who [false teacher] is occasionally weary, yet am I not constantly weary? Who [false teacher] is being occasionally doubted, yet am I not being constantly treated with inflamed, self-righteous indignation?

2 Cor. 11:30 Since it appears necessary to boast [an unfortunate custom in Corinth], I will make it a practice to boast about things related to my inability.

2 Cor. 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows for certain, (He Who is blessed unto the ages [forever]), that I am not lying.

2 Cor. 11:32 In Damascus, the governor of Aretus the king attempted to guard the city of the Damascenes for the purpose of arresting me,

2 Cor. 11:33 But by means of a window through the wall I was lowered in a rope-basket and escaped his hands.

2 Cor. 12:1 On the one hand, it is not necessary to boast for the purpose of gaining an advantage [over the false teachers], but on the other hand, I will on occasion experience visions and revelations from the Lord.

2 Cor. 12:2 I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I do not know or out of the body I do not know, God knows), such a person who was transported as far as the third heaven [abode of God].

2 Cor. 12:3 Again, I knew such a man, (whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows),

2 Cor. 12:4 That was transported into Paradise and heard words [doctrinal truths] too sacred for him to be able to communicate, concerning which it is not permitted [against divine policy] for a man to communicate.

2 Cor. 12:5 On behalf of such a person [someone else who has such an extraordinary experience] I will continue to rejoice, but on behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses.

2 Cor. 12:6 For if I choose to boast, I will not become a fool [like the false apostles], since I will always speak the truth; however, I am refraining [from boasting] so nobody may evaluate me as above [superior to] what he is able to see nor whatever he may hear from [about] me.

2 Cor. 12:7 Furthermore, with reference to the surpassing quality of revelations [what Paul learned in the third heaven], so that I might not become puffed up with pride, for this reason, a thorn against the flesh was inflicted upon me, a messenger of Satan, for the purpose of repeatedly tormenting me [when necessary], so that as a result I might not become puffed up with pride.

2 Cor. 12:8 I begged the Lord three times concerning this [thorn in the flesh: torment from the fallen angel], so that it might depart from me.

2 Cor. 12:9 But He replied: "My grace provision is always enough for you, for the power [delegated divine omnipotence] finds full strength with weakness [progressive phases of suffering]." All the more, therefore, will I boast in my weaknesses [progressive phases of suffering], so that as a result the [delegated divine omnipotent] power of Christ might rest upon me.

2 Cor. 12:10 Therefore, I remain content in weaknesses [progressive phases of suffering], during insults, in distress, during persecutions and calamities on behalf of Christ, for when I am weak [relying totally on divine grace resources], then I become strong [able to live a powerful Christian life].

2 Cor. 12:11 I have become a fool [by boasting]; you [Corinthians] compelled me. For I should have been commended by you, for in no respect [in absolutely nothing] am I inferior to those extra-special apostles, even if I am a nobody.

2 Cor. 12:12 Indeed, the miraculous signs of an apostle were produced among you with absolute patient endurance [evidence of Paul's supergrace life]: miraculous warning signs, and not only these but also wonderous predictions of coming events and powerful miracles.

2 Cor. 12:13 Why is it, then, that you are worse off, far beyond the other assemblies, if not because I myself was not a financial burden to you? Please forgive me for this injustice.

2 Cor. 12:14 Look! This is the third time I have prepared to return face-to-face to you; moreover, I will not be a financial burden. Indeed, I am not seeking financial support from you, but rather you [personally]. For children should not provide financial support for their parents, but rather parents for their children.

2 Cor. 12:15 However, I myself will gladly spend freely and be completely spent [exhaust myself] on behalf of your souls, even if while I am functioning with virtue love towards you, I receive less virtue love in return.

2 Cor. 12:16 Although this may be true [that I receive less virtue love than I give], I myself did not financially burden you, nor by being craftily at your disposal did I trap you by deceitful means.

2 Cor. 12:17 Concerning those [apostolic messengers] whom I sent face-to-face to you in the past, did I ever take advantage of you through them?

2 Cor. 12:18 I encouraged Titus [to ask for travel expenses] and even sent along with him a brother. Did Titus ever take advantage of you? Have we [Paul and Titus] not always walked by means of the same Spirit? And not in the same footsteps [following Christ]?

2 Cor. 12:19 All this time that you thought [presumed] we were defending ourselves to you, instead, beloved, we were communicating all manner of things [doctrinal categories] before God in Christ [as witnesses] for the purpose of strengthening you [building a doctrinal, edification structure in your soul].

2 Cor. 12:20 Indeed, I am seriously concerned [leery] that when I return, in some manner I may not find you in such condition [state of mind] as I would like, and I myself may not be found in such condition [state of mind] as you would like; for example: quarreling, jealousy, angry tempers, selfish ambitions, insults, gossiping, arrogance, mob violence,

2 Cor. 12:21 And not so my God can embarrass me once again [by having to assert my authority] when I return face-to-face to you, since I might start grieving all over again for many who previously sinned and have not yet changed their minds [no reversion recovery] as concerns improper sexual conduct [promiscuity], both immorality [prostitution] and indecency [incest] which they have practiced.

2 Cor. 13:1 I had hoped [genuine desire] to return face-to-face to you with reference to this third attempt. On the evidence of two or three witnesses [if you don't believe me, ask Titus, Timothy, and the unknown brother], each attempt may be confirmed.

2 Cor. 13:2 I said it before [in 1st Corinthians] and I am saying it again [in 2nd Corinthians], (as though I had successfully arrived [in Corinth] on the second attempt and have now departed), to

those [guilty individuals] who made it a practice to live a lifestyle of sin in the past and are continuing to do so to this day as well as all the rest [struggling, borderline individuals], that if I return again, I will not spare you.

2 Cor. 13:3 Since you are continually seeking proof [miraculous evidence] that Christ speaks in me, (Who is not weak [like Paul] towards you, but is powerful among you,

2 Cor. 13:4 For though He was crucified by reason of weakness [humanity], He nevertheless lives by the power of God [deity]. Indeed, though we are weak in Him [crucified with Him], nevertheless we shall live together with Him [share in His resurrection] by the power of God among you.

2 Cor. 13:5 Keep on examining yourselves as to whether you are in the sphere of doctrine [living daily by the Word of God]. Keep on confirming yourselves [honest evaluation of your spiritual status]. Don't you yourselves [each and every one of you individually] yet thoroughly understand that Jesus Christ is in you [indwelling of Christ], unless you are failing to meet the test [out of fellowship]?

2 Cor. 13:6 Now I hope that you will come to know that we [Paul and his colleagues] are not reversionists [disqualified from Christ's indwelling].

2 Cor. 13:7 Moreover, we [Paul & colleagues] pray face-to-face to God that you do nothing evil, not so that we may appear approved [having a reputation as good teachers], but so that you may keep on doing the honorable thing, though we ourselves [Paul & colleagues] might become reversionists.

2 Cor. 13:8 For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but rather in support of the truth.

2 Cor. 13:9 For we maintain inner happiness when we experience suffering [which is all the time], but you when you are spiritually strong [which infrequently occurs]. We also pray from time-to-time for your spiritual maturity [they can't mature spiritually without suffering for blessing].

2 Cor. 13:10 For this reason [concern for your spiritual welfare], I am writing while absent, so that when I am present, I will not have to use that opportunity for severity according to the authority which the Lord has given me for the purpose of building up [construction: providing doctrine for the building of an edification complex of the soul] and not tearing down [destruction: administering divine discipline to reversionistic believers].

2 Cor. 13:11 Finally, brethren, be full of inner happiness [attain supergrace status], keep on being motivated to attain spiritual maturity [building an edification complex], keep on being encouraged [by the doctrine resident in your soul], live in harmony [impersonal love] with one another, live in peace [relaxed mental attitude], and the God of virtue love and peace shall be with you.

2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another of the same kind [fellow believers] with respect [supergrace rapport] with a sacred kiss [handshake, salute].

2 Cor. 13:13 All the saints send respectful greetings to you.

2 Cor. 13:14 May grace [provision] from the Lord Jesus Christ and virtue love from God [the Father] and communion from the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Chapter 1

LWB 2 Cor. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy, a brother, to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:

KW 2 Cor. 1:1 Paul, an ambassador belonging to Christ Jesus through the desire of God, and Timothy our brother, to the local assembly of God, the one which is in Corinth, together with the saints, all of them, who are in the whole of Achaia.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The office of apostle ended 96 A.D. when the canon of Scripture was completed.

Timothy was a co-sender of the letter, but not a co-author.

All believers in Jesus Christ are saints, i.e. called-out ones of God.

Paul did not choose to become an apostle on his own initiative. God made him one by His sovereign, determining will.

The use of the word *thelema* (will) emphasizes the sovereignty and omnipotence of God in human affairs – in this case, the bestowing of a spiritual gift.

The word *ekklesia* (church) does not require an assembly of people in a given place. Christians are part of Christ's church whether they are alone or assembled, no matter where they are located geographically. In this case, they are located in Corinth and around an area in Southern Greece called Achaia.

The word *hagios* (saints) means separated unto God. All believers are saints. Believers are saints because of Who they are related to (Jesus Christ) not because of behavior, good deeds, or claims of holiness.

The use of the word *voluntas* introduces an unwarranted element of doubt, emphasizing God's wish or choice, rather than His sovereign will and design.

The use of the word *sanctus* introduces an unwarranted element of special attained holiness, rather than being separated by God unto Himself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The 2nd Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians contains more of admonition and reproof than most of his other epistles. It was designed in part to rectify evils still existing among them, and to vindicate the Apostle from injurious aspersions, thrown out against him by the false teachers. The Corinthian church was further impaired by being in a corrupt state, not yet prepared for receiving another visit from Paul. Paul had no rest in his mind until he learned through messengers of Titus the state of their affairs, for an anxiety of this kind originates in affection. He was constrained to write this letter by the unreasonableness of wicked persons. He gently reproves the Corinthians as being hindrances to themselves in the way of their reaping advantage. But lest he should, by pressing too severely their tender minds, dishearten or alienate them, he again assures them of his kind disposition towards them, and resuming his apology for severity, which he had left off in a manner abruptly, he brings it to a conclusion. It is for their sakes that he acts the fool in heralding his own praises, because they had given themselves up to ambitious men.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

“Paul wrote five letters to the church in Corinth. The first (previous to I Corinthians) is now lost, second is I Corinthians, third is a “severe letter” implied by 2 Cor. 2:3, 7:8,12, fourth could be 2 Corinthians 1-9, and lastly 2 Corinthians 10-13. There is also a possible interpolation – if the whole of 2:14-7:4 is omitted and in reading the letter we jump from 2:13 directly to 7:5, it still makes good sense.” (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“Paul, when he made his second visit to Corinth, became the object of a bitter personal attack mounted by some particular individual (the one who caused pain, 2:5; the one who did wrong, 7:12). The church as a whole did not provide the defence for its apostle one might have expected (2:3). Traditionally the offending individual has been identified as the incestuous person referred to in I Corinthians 5. Others have been content to leave aside the question of the offender’s actual identity, simply regarding him as an unknown person who, for some unknown reason, mounted a personal attack against Paul. However, it is possible at least to suggest a more positive identification: that the offending individual was none other than the incestuous person against whom Paul previously demanded disciplinary action, and that this person was now guilty of an additional offence.” (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“The occasion of this epistle was partly to excuse his not coming to them according to promise, and to vindicate himself from the charge of unfaithfulness, levity, and inconstancy on that account.” (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

“Corinth, being so strategically located, grew wealthy on the taxes levied on the movement of goods which it supervised and controlled. It was responsible for the organization of the biennial Isthmian Games. It also gained notoriety because of its worship of Aphrodite, boasting a thousand courtesans dedicated to the goddess. The city lay in ruins and was uninhabited for more than a hundred years until 44 BC, when Julius

Caesar ordered that it be rebuilt and freedmen were sent to occupy it.” (2 Corinthians, C. Kruse)

“The mention of Timothy as a cosender of the letter may be intended to reinstate this timid young man in the eyes of the Corinthians, possibly after his failure or limited success as Paul’s representative at Corinth.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

2 Cor. 1:1 Paul (Subj. Nom.), an apostle (Nom. Appos.) of Christ Jesus (Gen. Rel.) by the will (Abl. Means) of God (Abl. Source), and Timothy (Subj. Nom.) a brother (Nom. Appos.), to the assembly (Dat. Adv.) of God (Gen. Poss.) which (Dat. Ref.) is (είμι, PAPtc.DFS, Descriptive, Attributive) in Corinth (Loc. Place), together with all (Dat. Measure) the saints (Dat. Assoc.) who (Dat. Ref.) are (είμι, PAPtc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantial) throughout (Loc. Sph.; the entire area) Achaia (Loc. Place; southern Greece).

Greek Text

Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ, καὶ Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφός, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις πᾶσιν τοῖς οὔσιν ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ·

Latin Vulgate

Paulus apostolus Iesu Christi per voluntatem Dei et Timotheus frater ecclesiae Dei quae est Corinthi cum sanctis omnibus qui sunt in universa Achaia

LWB 2 Cor. 1:2 Grace to you and prosperity from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

KW 2 Cor. 1:2 Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:2 Grace *be* to you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In this traditional Pauline greeting, grace (from the sovereignty of God) refers to positional sanctification and prosperity (usually requires man’s volition) refers to experiential sanctification. Of all the options on how the salutation “grace and peace” translates, I chose the one by Thomas L. Constable under RELEVANT OPINIONS: God’s grace (positional) is the basis for and leads to man’s peace (experiential).

Peace often refers to having a relaxed mental attitude about life – events and people. *Prosperity* (financial, spiritual, sexual) often arrives in tandem with peace, but it rarely drops down from heaven upon you – effort is required.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul greets the Corinthians in a rather formulaic manner adapted from the ancient oriental letter form. He uses exactly the same greeting in other letters; therefore, we should probably not read too much into the wording for the particular situation in Corinth. At the beginning of the greeting, Paul innovatively uses the term “grace,” one of the fundamental tenets of his theology, which summarizes the whole salvific act of God accomplished in Christ for believers. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

Grace is favour, and peace its fruits. Grace includes all that is comprehended in the love of God as exercised towards sinners. All good, therefore, whether providential or spiritual, whether temporal or eternal, is comprehended in these terms: justification, adoption and sanctification, with all the benefits which either accompany or flow from them. (*Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

Charis (grace) echoes here the key-term in the greeting in Greek letters. But it is integrated into the two-membered oriental formula of greeting. Paul adopts the greeting of peace and supplements it by a greeting of grace. Paul’s salutation has been called a pre-Pauline liturgical formula. (TDNT, Vol. IX)

In what may have been a novel formulation, Paul combines the standard Greek and Jewish greetings and thus refers to both “grace” and “shalom”. Grace, “charis”, namely unmerited favor, and “shalom”, that is, wellbeing or rest, is given by both God the Father and Jesus. (*Conflict & Community in Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

Grace in this respect is connected with the imperative mood of the word *chairō* – to rejoice, a mode of greeting among Greeks. (Vine’s)

Grace is the God-given basis of all Christian life. (*New Bible Commentary*, Norman Hillyer)

Grace was what brought them together and what they needed to display mutually so that relational peace would be maintained. It was because of God’s grace alone that they were members of the body which existed in Christ Jesus. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, David K. Lowery) Grace was the common Greek salutation meaning “greetings” or “rejoice”. In Greek peace is equivalent to the Hebrew “shalom” meaning “favor,” “prosperity,” and “well-being”. It is

interesting that those two words of salutation always occur in this order in the New Testament. Theologically, God’s grace is the basis for and leads to man’s peace. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Thomas L. Constable)

2 Cor. 1:2 Grace (Subj. Nom.) to you (Dat. Adv.) and prosperity (Subj. Nom.; peace) from God (Abl. Source) our (Gen. Rel.) Father (Adv. Gen. Ref.), and (connective) the Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Source).

Greek Text

χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

gratia vobis et pax a Deo Patre nostro et Domino Iesu Christo

LWB 2 Cor. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions, and God of all encouragement,

KW 2 Cor. 1:3 Eulogized be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassionate mercies and a God of every consolation and encouragement,

KJV 2 Cor. 1:3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Blessedness is a state of spiritual happiness. God has it as one of His divine attributes. We can live in a state of spiritual happiness by consistently walking in the Spirit.

Compassion and mercy go hand-in-hand. Encouragement and comfort also go hand-in-hand. These are all part of God’s divine essence.

Wuest’s choice of the word “eulogized” is a transliteration.

Another use of the word paraclete (encouragement) is a function that Jesus Christ also provides for us – our defense attorney.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Gentile letters ‘remember’ characteristics of their recipients, but Jewish letters praise or thank God when evoking their recipient’s good traits.” (*New Testament Exegesis*, Werner Stenger)

2 Cor. 1:3 Blessed (Nom. Descr.) be the God (Subj. Nom.) and Father (Nom. Appos.) of our (Poss. Gen.) Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. Rel.), the Father (Nom. Appos.) of compassions (Abl. Source; mercy, many ways to show it), and God (Nom. Appos.) of all (Gen. Measure) encouragement (Abl. Source; comfort, part of His divine essence),

Greek Text

Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν καὶ θεὸς πάσης παρακληήσεως,

Latin Vulgate

benedictus Deus et Pater Domini nostri Iesu Christi
Pater misericordiarum et Deus totius consolationis

LWB 2 Cor. 1:4 **Who keeps on encouraging us during all our outside pressures, so that we might be able to encourage those who are under any category of outside pressure, by the encouragement with which we ourselves have received repeated encouragement from God,**

KW 2 Cor. 1:4 who consoles and encourages us in our every affliction and tribulation in order that we may be able to console and encourage those who are in any affliction or tribulation by means of the consolation and encouragement with which we ourselves are being consoled and encouraged by God.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Outside pressures are tribulations, trials, or troubles. If we pass outside pressure tests by utilizing the Bible doctrine in our soul, we might be able to help others pass the test.

The repeated encouragement Paul mentions in verse 4 means outside pressure was experienced beforehand on numerous occasions.

Outside pressure comes in many categories. One person's weakness is another person's strength. Encouragement in the Word should be a reciprocal activity.

Encouragement does not mean patting someone on the head and saying sweet nothings into their ear; that's human viewpoint. Psychological answers to the

problems that beset a Christian under pressure are counterproductive. Encouragement means bringing the Word of God to bear on a given pressure, utilizing its power to overcome the problem so it doesn't demoralize the believer; that's a divine viewpoint solution. Believers only grow "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" if they pass tests by utilizing Bible doctrine. Human viewpoint solutions are spiritual growth inhibitors.

The Iterative Present means God continues to encourage us day-after-day. He's always there when we need Him. He provides us with the tools (Bible doctrines) to endure outside pressures and emerge victoriously.

The phrase "so that" introduces a Purpose Clause, which means the reason God is always there for us (Christians who have been through outside pressures) is so we might be there for others who are not standing firm amidst their outside pressures. If we are able, we (believers with abundant doctrine in our souls) should pass-down the benefit of our experience (passing tests) to those who are struggling. And since God has provided us with repeated encouragement, we should be willing to provide repeated encouragement.

The Potential Subjunctive means we might be able to encourage someone while they are under outside pressure, but there is no guarantee of success. If neither party have any Bible doctrine in their soul due to persistent negative volition, there is little hope for success. Nor can a strong believer pass the test for another (weak) believer.

The Vulgate presents two different words (tribulation and pressure) while the Greek presents only one. Tribulation has an element of nobly passing a test, knowing that everyone receives an allotment of such things in life; *pressura* has an element of needing a prop or support in order to survive, feeling quite low and subdued during a test.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Outside pressures are opportunities to use spiritual problem-solving devices. Don't let the outside pressures of life become inside stress in the soul." (*Tapes & Publications*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

"The emphasis of chapters 1-7 is 'comfort in the midst of affliction' ... how to have an inner revitalization, an infusion of divine strength that would enable them to endure patiently the same type of trials (hardships) that confronted Paul." (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

"Paul can testify that on every occasion when he has been in tribulation, he has been so sustained and strengthened by the hand of God that he has been able not merely to endure it, but to derive blessings from it." (*Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 1:4 Who (Nom. Appos.; the Father) keeps on encouraging (παρακαλέω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) during all (Dat. Measure) our (Gen. Poss.) outside pressures (Dat. Adv.; tribulations, trials, troubles), so that (purpose) we might be able (δύναμαι, PMI1P, Descriptive, Potential; have the power) to encourage (παρακαλέω, PAInf., Tendential, Purpose/Result, Articular) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) who (Acc. Gen. Ref.) are under any category of (Loc. Sph.) outside pressure (Dat. Adv.), by the encouragement (Abl. Means) with which (Instr. Manner) we ourselves (Nom. Appos.) have received repeated encouragement (παρακαλέω, PPI1P, Iterative) from God (Abl. Source),

Greek Text

ὁ παρακαλῶν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ δύνασθαι ἡμᾶς παρακαλεῖν τοὺς ἐν πάσῃ θλίψει διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως ἧς παρακαλούμεθα αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ·

Latin Vulgate

qui consolatur nos in omni tribulatione nostra ut possimus et ipsi consolari eos qui in omni pressura sunt per exhortationem qua exhortamur et ipsi a Deo

LWB 2 Cor. 1:5 **For to the degree that the sufferings from Christ abound in us, in the same way our encouragement may also abound through Christ.**

KW 2 Cor. 1:5 Because even as the sufferings of Christ (for righteousness' sake endured in the opposition of sinners to His ministry on earth) overflow to us, thus our consolation and encouragement (given to others) overflow through Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Suffering from Christ is a gift to help spur maturing Christians to spiritual adulthood. The degree of overflow or increase (abound) of suffering presented to us depends on our ability to consistently pass spiritual momentum tests by utilizing the Word of God to solve our daily problems in life.

The amount of overflow or increase (abound) of encouragement that we may give to others from the reservoir of Bible doctrine in our souls is in proportion to our ability to handle suffering in whatever form it presents itself.

A believer who is enduring various types of suffering by applying the Word of God to his life is able to provide comfort and assistance to others, rather than dumping their own misery on a fellow struggling believer.

Jesus Christ is the source of beneficial suffering that comes our way. Without this sharing in His suffering, we cannot grow to spiritual maturity.

The Tential Present means that when suffering comes to our friends, we may (might) be able to offer encouragement to others through Christ. It is possible to assist them in passing their tests if we have first passed ours. This is a possibility, not a given.

The Adverb of Comparison means the amount of suffering that we endure by using God's Word as our problem-solving mechanism is proportional (comparative) to the amount of encouragement we are able to provide to fellow believers.

The idea of consoling someone in a time of need is a good practice, but the Christian concept of consolation (not inherent in the Latin *consolatio*) should employ the Word of God – not just a pat on the back, a cry on a shoulder, or a kind remark. Christian encouragement operates at a higher standard than ordinary human compassion.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“No suffering in life is too great for the plan of God. The Christian needs a thorough understanding of suffering to persevere under pressure and advance to spiritual maturity.”
(*Christian Suffering*, R.B. Thieme Jr.)

2 Cor. 1:5 **For** (explanatory) **to the degree that** (comparison) **the sufferings** (Subj. Nom.) **from Christ** (Abl. Source) **abound** (περισσεύω, PAI3S, Aoristic; overflow, increase) **in us** (Loc. Sph.), **in the same way** (comparison) **our** (Gen. Poss.) **encouragement** (Subj. Nom.; from the use of Bible doctrine) **may also** (adjunctive) **abound** (περισσεύω, PAI3S, Tential; overflow, increase) **through Christ** (Abl. Source).

Greek Text

ὅτι καθὼς περισσεύει τὰ παθήματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς, οὕτως διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ περισσεύει καὶ ἡ παράκλησις ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam sicut abundant passiones Christi in nobis ita et per Christum abundat consolatio nostra

LWB 2 Cor. 1:6 As a matter of fact, when we receive outside pressure: it is for the sake of your encouragement and deliverance; when we receive encouragement: it is for the sake of your encouragement which is put into operation by patient endurance through your sufferings, which we have also endured.

KW 2 Cor. 1:6 And if we are being hard pressed by reason of affliction, it is for the sake of your consolation, encouragement, deliverance, and preservation. If we are being consoled and encouraged, it is for the sake of your consolation and encouragement, which consolation and encouragement are operative in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also are suffering.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The question isn't IF but WHEN we receive outside pressure, since we all experience it.

The more you mature as a Christian, the more outside pressure comes your way. Some of it is directed towards us for our own benefit, while other pressure overflows to us for the benefit of other believers.

Deliverance in this verse is not God taking the pressure away when you think you can't take it anymore. Deliverance is patient endurance through the outside pressure, a major component of a believer's experiential sanctification.

Patient endurance is steadfastness in the face of unpleasant circumstances. This steadfastness comes from utilizing the Bible doctrine in your soul – resting in the Word of God by faith. It is not merely gutting it out or grinning and bearing it, which is human viewpoint.

Your patient endurance is tested when God keeps the pressure active upon you, not withdrawing it until you utilize the divine resources obtained from the Word. He keeps the pressure on in order to teach you how to live by the Word, solving your problems and enduring suffering with divine viewpoint.

God is not picking on the Corinthians. Paul and his immediate circle have also received outside pressures and have patiently endured them by resting in the Word of God by faith.

The Tendentia Present points to the possibility of receiving outside pressure and encouragement for the sake of others. Sometimes it is for oneself, sometimes it is for others. Also, sometimes the other believer is encouraged and sometimes he is not.

The Gnostic Present means the type of encouragement God desires us to have is ALWAYS put into operation by resting in the Word of God by faith through our sufferings. There is no other way to grow in grace and knowledge in His divine plan. As Paul learned later, praying for God to take the pressure away was not the divine solution God had in mind.

Approximately 25% of this verse was accidentally omitted by a copyist in the Textus Receptus and was later added in the margin at the wrong place using an arrow. This homoeoteleuton mentioned earlier played eye tricks on the copyist, caused a considerable loss of words, and resulted in a awkward or clumsy KJV translation.

To the English speaking world, the Latin word *tolerantia* (tolerate) has a survival in misery (holding out until the end) flavor, rather than patient endurance. There is no reward in holding out to the end without the Word of God circulating in your thought patterns.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“There is an oversight due to homoeoteleuton in the Textus Receptus. The Textus Receptus has no authority for their version of this verse – which is not used here.”
(*Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Bruce M. Metzger)

“*Homoeoteleuton* is a figure of speech applied to certain words which occur together and have a similar termination. A scribe, in copying a manuscript, would come to a certain word, and having already written it, he would sometimes carry his eye back, not to the word which he had just copied, but to the same or a similar word, or a word with the same termination occurring in the immediate context, and thus omit a few words or a whole sentence.” (*Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, E.W. Bullinger)

“Whether we be afflicted, it is for your good; or whether we be comforted, it is for your good.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 1:6 As a matter of fact (coord.), when (temporal) we receive outside pressure (θλίβω, PPI1P, Tendentia): it is (ellipsis) for the sake of (for their favor or benefit) your (Gen. Poss.) encouragement (Dat. Adv.) and deliverance (Dat. Adv.; patient endurance); when (temporal) we receive encouragement (παρακαλέω, PPI1P, Tendentia): it is (ellipsis) for the sake of (for your favor or benefit) your (Poss. Gen.) encouragement (Dat. Adv.) which is put into operation (ἐνεργέω, PMPTc.GFS, Gnostic, Attributive; accomplished, effectively produced) by patient endurance (Instr. Means; resting in the Word of God by faith) through your (Poss. Gen.) sufferings (Gen. Adv.), which (Adv. Gen.)

Ref.; outside pressures) **we** (Subj. Nom.) **have also** (adjunctive) **endured** (πάσχω, PAI1P, Historical).

Greek Text

είτε δὲ θλιβόμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως καὶ σωτηρίας· είτε παρακαλούμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως τῆς ἐνεργουμένης ἐν ὑπομονῇ τῶν αὐτῶν παθημάτων ὧν καὶ ἡμεῖς πάσχομεν.

Latin Vulgate

sive autem tribulamur pro vestra exhortatione et salute sive exhortamur pro vestra exhortatione quae operatur in tolerantia earundem passionum quas et nos patimur

LWB 2 Cor. 1:7 Moreover, our basis of hope for you is well-grounded, knowing that when you are sharers of the sufferings, in the same way also the encouragement.

KW 2 Cor. 1:7 And our hope for you is unshaken and constant, knowing that as you are joint-participants of the sufferings, thus also you shall be of the consolation and encouragement.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Only growing believers are sharers of the sufferings and the encouragement. Indifferent, backsliding believers are (or will be soon) under divine discipline.

The Gnostic Perfect means Paul has absolutely no doubts about the success of those Corinthian Christians who share in the sufferings – they will also share in the encouragement.

The Customary Present points to the fact that God intends for believers to grow by sharing in Christ's sufferings and encouragement.

One of the TRUE characteristics of Christian fellowship between believers is by being sharers of Christ's suffering and encouragement. Social life with other believers does NOT in itself constitute Christian fellowship.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The Corinthians’ response brought comfort to both themselves and Paul and reaffirmed Paul’s hope that God indeed had His hand on their lives.” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, David K. Lowery)

“Thus the fellowship of suffering between the apostle and the church becomes a fellowship of comfort, and both in rich measure ... The perseverance of the Corinthians in affliction, in which the consolation is at work, fills the apostle with sure hope for them.” (*TDNT*, Schmitz-Stahlin)

2 Cor. 1:7 Moreover (connective), our (Poss. Gen.) basis of hope (Subj. Nom.) for you (Gen. Adv.) is (ellipsis) well-grounded (Pred. Nom.; firm, reliable), knowing (οἶδα, Perf.APc.NMP, Gnostic, Modal; understanding) that (conj.) when (temporal) you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Customary) sharers (Pred. Nom.; participants, partners) of the sufferings (Gen. Adv.), in the same way (adv.) also (adjunctive) the encouragement (Gen. Adv.).

Greek Text

καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς ἡμῶν βεβαία ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, εἰδότες ὅτι ὡς κοινωνοὶ ἐστε τῶν παθημάτων, οὕτως καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως.

Latin Vulgate

et spes nostra firma pro vobis scientes quoniam sicut socii passionum estis sic eritis et consolationis

LWB 2 Cor. 1:8 For we do not want you, brethren, to be ignorant concerning the outside pressure which happened to us in Asia, since in this case, we were tested to extreme limits above and beyond our ability, to the extent that we even despaired to keep on living.

KW 2 Cor. 1:8 For we do not desire you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were weighed down beyond our power so that we despaired even of living.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The outside pressure Paul mentions is generally thought to be a serious case of mob violence. This was one of his good reasons for changing his itinerary – some

malecontents had insulted Paul behind his back, calling him fickle and untrustworthy because he hadn't shown up in Corinth yet as promised.

Paul and his companions were tested to the absolute extent of their mental and physical abilities. He uses a combination of words (hyperbole) in his attempt to relate to the Corinthians how difficult things have been in Asia.

Although Paul would never contemplate suicide, that is how serious their tests had been as of late. He was utterly at a loss as to what he should do or how he should survive.

The Customary Present means that Paul and his companions never want their brethren to be ignorant, and especially not concerning things that are happening to them as they travel and spread the Word.

The Optative Mood means it probably occurred to them all to find a way to escape, but in the end they chose not to. And not being able to escape, they found themselves helpless, completely (humanly speaking) at the mercy of their enemies.

The Durative Present points to their desire to keep on living, but wondering how it was possible to do so under their extreme circumstances.

Paul's use of hyperbole paints a gruesome and hopeless picture.

The use of *supra* (above, beyond) and *gravati* (great difficulty) in the Latin does well to show the extraordinary gravity of the situation in Asia. The Latin word *taederet* (tired) is softer than the Greek, pointing to a person being "tired or weary" of continual suffering, but not to the point of actually contemplating or facing death.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Paul had been so 'utterly, unbearably crushed' that he was forced to renounce all hope of survival. The rare word *exaporethenai* (despaired) implies the total unavailability of an exit (*poros*, "passage") from oppressive circumstances." (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelein)

"Paul reminds them of the very serious nature of his recent sufferings in proconsular Asia. He had been pressed out of measure (weighed down exceedingly like a beast of burden crushed beneath too heavy a load) and beyond his powers of endurance, so that he regarded death as a certainty." (*Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

"Paul acquired this death sentence (verdict) so that he would not trust in his own strength, but in God who raises the dead. He received a stay of execution." (*Conflict & Community in Corinth*, Ben Witherington III) Paul emphasizes this life experience to

illustrate his powerlessness apart from God and how he and the Corinthian believers must depend on Him. (D. Hunt)

2 Cor. 1:8 For (explanatory) we do not (neg. adv.) want (θέλω, PAI1P, Customary) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), brethren (Voc. Address), to be ignorant (ἀγνοέω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; fail to understand the significance of) concerning the outside pressure (Gen. Adv.) which happened to (γίνομαι, AMPtc.GFS, Constative, Attributive; came upon) us (Gen. Adv.) in Asia (Loc. Place), since (coord.) in this case (prep.; instance, example), we were tested (βαρέω, API1P, Constative; overcome, burdened) to extreme limits (Acc. Measure; surpassing the boundaries) above and beyond our (Poss. Gen.; *hyperbole*: beyond expression) ability (Acc. Spec.; power), to the extent that (superord.) we (Subj. Nom.) even (ascensive) despaired (ἐξαπορέομαι, Aopt.Inf., Constative, Inf. As Modifier, Deponent; utterly at a loss, at the end of one's rope, destitute of resources, renounced all hope) to keep on living (ζάω, PAInf., Durative, Inf. As Dir. Obj., Articular; idiomatic: without a way of escape, i.e. *contemplating suicide*, or completely perplexed, i.e. *not knowing how to go on*).

Greek Text

Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, ὅτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὑπὲρ δύναμιν ἐβαρήθημεν ὥστε ἐξαπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν·

Latin Vulgate

non enim volumus ignorare vos fratres de tribulatione nostra quae facta est in Asia quoniam supra modum gravati sumus supra virtutem ita ut taederet nos etiam vivere

LWB 2 Cor. 1:9 **As a matter of fact, we ourselves had the sentence of death in our possession; moreover, we did not rely on ourselves, but upon God Who raises the dead,**

KW 2 Cor. 1:9 But we ourselves have had the answer of death in ourselves and at this time still have that experience, in order that we should not be trusting in ourselves but in the God who raises the dead;

KJV 2 Cor. 1:9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul thought he was waiting for a death sentence from the civil magistrate.

Paul did not place his trust in any form of human viewpoint thinking such as psychology or philosophy. He placed his trust in God, relaxed in the Word by faith, and waited for the Father's divine intervention.

By thinking about God and His power of resurrection, Paul was applying divine viewpoint to his situation. He reasoned that if the death sentence was carried out, God could raise him up if it was in His divine plan and purpose to do so.

Paul used the Dramatic Perfect to emphasize the unbelievable finality of their close brush with death. It's as if he was thinking: "Imagine that! We, ambassadors of Jesus Christ, almost died while performing our evangelistic calling."

Paul uses the Intensive Perfect to emphasize that they didn't rely on themselves in the past, they aren't relying on themselves in the current circumstances, and they won't be relying on themselves in the future either. When all human means have been exhausted, the divine solution is to trust in the Lord – but only after human means have been exhausted.

The Dramatic Present points to the omnipotent, divine power required to resurrect the dead. Only God could do it.

The use of the Latin word *responsum* (oracle, professional response, legal verdict) has led some commentators to believe an actual, courtroom sentence of death had been passed on Paul and his circle of friends and that God must have delivered them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"We experienced the feelings of those who have had the sentence of death pronounced upon them." (*How To Enjoy the Bible*, E.W. Bullinger)

It was not so much a verdict pronounced by some external authority, but rather a perception in the heart and mind of the apostle himself. It follows then that *apokrima* was probably not a sentence of death pronounced by some magistrate. It was more likely either the verdict passed by Paul's own mind perceiving the dire straits in which he found himself, or possibly the answer given by God to the apostle's prayer about this situation. (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

"When Paul looked back on the hours when he had stood at death's door, he knew that he had been allowed in the providence of God to go through that terrible experience, that he might be brought to a full recognition of his own utter helplessness and, abandoning all

self-confidence, learn to trust ... in God Who raises the dead.” (*Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 1:9 As a matter of fact (contrast), we ourselves (Subj. Nom.) had (έχω, Perf.A1P, Dramatic; possessed) the sentence (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of death (Adv. Gen. Ref.) in our possession (Loc. Sph.); moreover (conj.), we did not (neg. adv.) rely on (πίθω, Perf.Aptc.NMP, Intensive, Circumstantial; placed our trust in) ourselves (Dat. Disadv.), but (contrast) upon God (Dat. Adv.) Who (Dat. Ref.) raises (έγείρω, PAPtc.DMS, Dramatic, Substantial; resurrects) the dead (Acc. Dir. Obj.),

Greek Text

ἀλλὰ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου ἐσχήκαμεν, ἵνα μὴ πεποιθότες ὦμεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς·

Latin Vulgate

sed ipsi in nobis ipsis responsum mortis habuimus ut non simus fidentes in nobis sed in Deo qui suscitatur mortuos

LWB 2 Cor. 1:10 **Who delivered us from terrible death in the past and keeps on delivering, upon Whom we have confidence that He will deliver even more,**

KW 2 Cor. 1:10 Who delivered us out of so great a death and will deliver us, on whom we have placed our hope and right now still maintain that attitude of hope that also He will yet deliver us,

KJV 2 Cor. 1:10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

P46 papyrus fragment has the word ‘death’ in the plural, meaning from many occasions where he faced death.

The first instance of deliverance from death was from Paul’s current predicament, the short term future. The other instances of deliverance are for as long as they are alive, or the long term future. There are bound to be more perils that Paul and his associates will be delivered from.

Paul uses the Greek word *ruomai* in three different ways in this verse. The Dramatic Present draws attention to the miraculous nature of Paul’s deliverance from death. The

Progressive Future points to God's continuing deliverance in the short-term future, and the Predictive Future points to long-term deliverance.

The Intensive Perfect shows that Paul's confidence in the Lord did not fail in the past, is not failing now, and will not fail in the future.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul considered himself as good as dead. (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, A.T. Robertson)

The machination of Paul's enemies followed him wherever he went. He therefore says God had not only delivered, but that he continued to deliver him. He was still beset with danger. He was however confident for the future. He did, He does, He will deliver. The experience of past deliverances and mercies is the ground of present peace and of confidence for the future. (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 1:10 Who (Nom. Appos.) delivered (ρύομαι, AMI3S, Dramatic, Deponent; rescued) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from terrible (Desc. Gen.; dangerous, hazardous) death (Abl. Sep.) in the past and keeps on delivering (ρύομαι, FMI3S, Progressive), upon Whom (Acc. Gen. Ref.) we have confidence (ἐλπίζω, Perf.AI1P, Intensive; expectation) that (conj.; some textual issues) He will deliver (ρύομαι, FMI3S, Predictive) even more (Adv.; yet further, still),

Greek Text

ὃς ἐκ τηλικούτου θανάτου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς καὶ ρύσεται, εἰς ὃν ἠλπίκαμεν [ὅτι] καὶ ἔτι ρύσεται,

Latin Vulgate

qui de tantis periculis eripuit nos et eruet in quem speramus quoniam et adhuc eripiet

LWB 2 Cor. 1:11 as you join in and help us, namely by means of your prayer for us, so that the gift of divine grace, by frequent opportunities among us, may receive thanks from many on our behalf.

KW 2 Cor. 1:11 You also helping together on our behalf by your supplication, in order that thanksgiving may be given for the gracious mercy shown to us by reason of the many [who prayed for us].

KJV 2 Cor. 1:11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Joining in and helping by means of intercessory prayer is part of Christian teamwork in God's divine plan. Pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries can always use prayer.

This gift of divine grace is not related to justification, but is the ability to correctly apply the problem-solving devices in times of extreme duress. Paul is actually asking them to pray for more occasions to be tested so they may have more opportunities to apply the doctrine they have been learning. He wants to have continual face-to-face appearances of this gift of divine grace when he needs it.

The "thanks" Paul is referring to is coming from other grateful recipients that have successfully applied Bible doctrine during times of pressure. This is confirmation from listeners in other geographic areas, Paul's non-resident "church members", that what he has been teaching them is being applied correctly.

The Iterative Present means Paul wants them to join in and help by praying again and again, on a repeat basis, not just on this one occasion.

The Culminative Aorist means their prayers will bring thanks back to them in the end, a form of reciprocal blessing. Likewise, any other travelling ministers will thank them for their prayers as well.

The Potential Subjunctive in the Singular points the majority of the 'thanks' toward the gift of divine grace given by God. The potential is that they will pray often as he asks. The 'thanks' should come from Paul and his immediate followers, and other ministers on the front lines who have had similar gifts of divine grace to deliver them from harm.

The use of the Latin word 'persona' has led many to translate this section as 'many faces' or persons as opposed to many face-to-face occasions (opportunities, events) to experience this special gift of divine grace in action. The Greek word 'prosopon' is in the neuter, rather than the masculine, which lends additional support to opportunities rather than people.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul indirectly requests the Corinthians to pray for him in his ongoing apostolic ministry. The Corinthians' prayers function not only as entreaty on behalf of the apostle for deliverance from death, but also as a sign of solidarity with him in the face of opposition. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

Characteristic of the apostle was his concern not only for personal deliverance to be granted in answer to many prayers, but also that thanksgiving should be given to the One Who grants deliverance. (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

The prayers of the Corinthians were part of Paul's deliverance, a means ordained by God to fulfill His will among people. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, David K. Lowery)

Note, our trusting in God must not supercede the use of any proper and appointed means. (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

2 Cor. 1:11 as you join in and help (συνυπουργέω, PAPtc.GMP, Iterative, Temporal) us (Gen. Adv.), namely (ascensive) by means of your (Gen. Poss.) prayer (Instr. Means) for us (Gen. Adv.; as teachers), so that (result) the gift of divine grace (Subj. Nom.), by frequent (Gen. Spec.) opportunities (Abl. Means; face-to-face appearances, occasions) among us (Acc. Rel.), may receive thanks (εὐχαριστέω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential) from many (Gen. Spec.) on our behalf (Gen. Adv.).

Greek Text

συνυπουργούντων καὶ ὑμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῇ δεήσει, ἵνα ἐκ πολλῶν προσώπων τὸ εἰς ἡμᾶς χάρισμα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστηθῇ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

adiuvantibus et vobis in oratione pro nobis ut ex multis personis eius quae in nobis est donationis per multos gratiae agantur pro nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 1:12 for our object of esprit-de-corps, the witness on behalf of our conscience, rests on this: that with single-minded devotion and pure motives before God, not by worldly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have been living in the world, and especially towards you.

KW 2 Cor. 1:12 For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in the holiness, purity, and unsullied character of God, not in human wisdom but by God's grace we ordered our behavior in the world, and this was more abundantly evident to you.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his associates lived simply without double mindedness (single-minded devotion) to the Lord and everything they did in the function of their spiritual gifts was done with pure motives - as opposed to the craftiness and deception of the false teachers inhabiting Corinth.

Paul and his associates also walked by the grace of God in divine viewpoint utilizing the doctrine in their souls, rather than walking by worldly wisdom such as psychological or philosophical principles.

When Paul says they have been living in the world, he means they have been fulfilling their daily ministry (living) in regions beyond the geographical area surrounding Corinth (the world). When he says they have been living (fulfilling their daily ministry) especially (more than to anyone else) towards them, he means they have been dedicating a considerable amount of time rendering special attention to the Corinthians – even from afar.

While the human conscience is different for every individual, the Word of God engenders divine norms and standards into the conscience through the mind or intellect. Since Paul had more doctrine than anyone else on earth at that time, he could safely call on his own conscience as a witness to his sincerity and simplicity.

The Greek word for boasting, confidence, and pride is better translated in this group context as *esprit-de-corps*. Paul then lumps all the individual consciences of his associates into one corporate (team) conscience.

The Comparative Adverb translated “especially” means Paul and his associates have spent a much greater degree of time and effort on the Corinthians than on other congregations – primarily due to their carnal state. Spiritually immature believers require a lot more attention than spiritually mature ones.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some ancient manuscripts read ‘simplicity’ (haploteti) instead of ‘holiness’ (hagloteti). The evidence is finely balanced and it is difficult to choose between the alternatives. (*Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Bruce M. Metzger)

Because of the discrepancy between Paul’s written word and his actions, the Corinthians have become suspicious of Paul’s motives, accusing him of duplicity and double-mindedness, especially in regards to his travel plans. Therefore, before his third visit to Corinth can take place with confidence, Paul needs to handle the accusations and clear up any misunderstandings, for he certainly does not want a repetition of the catastrophe that occurred during the painful second visit, which resulted in a Korah-like rebellion against Paul’s authority. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

Paul explains the ground of his boasting in the testimony of his conscience. He had been especially careful to act in an exemplary way when he was last with them. He wanted it to be abundantly clear that as a messenger of the gospel he renounced all worldly, doubtful methods. (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

There is a specific difference between moral virtues and spiritual graces in the conscience, although they are called by the same names. Simplicity, sincerity, long-suffering, when the fruits of the Spirit differ from the moral virtues designated by those terms, as many external things, though similar in appearance, often differ in the inward nature. A religious man and a moral man may be very much alike in the eyes of men, though the inward life of the latter is human, and that of the former is divine. Paul was not guided by worldly wisdom, but by the grace of God. (*2 Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 1:12 for (explanatory) our (Poss. Gen.) object of *esprit-de-corps* (Subj. Nom.; confidence, pride), the witness (Subj. Nom.; proof, testimony) on behalf of our (Gen. Poss.) conscience (Gen. Adv.; norms & standards), rests (εἰμί, ΠΑΙ3S, Customary; exists) on this (Dat. Ind. Obj.): that (conj.) with single-minded devotion (Instr. Manner; simplicity) and (connective) pure motives (Instr. Manner) before God (Gen. Rel.), not (contrast) by worldly (Instr. Manner; flesh as opposed to Spirit) wisdom (Instr. Means), but (contrast) by the grace (Instr. Means) of God (Abl. Source), we have been living (ἀναστρέφω, ΑΠΙ1P, Constatative) in the world (Loc. Sph.), and (continuative) especially (Adv. Comparison; to a greater degree) towards you (Acc. Adv.).

Greek Text

Ἡ γὰρ καύχησις ἡμῶν αὕτη ἐστίν, τὸ μαρτύριον τῆς συνειδήσεως ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἐν ἀπλότητι καὶ εἰλικρινείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, [καὶ] οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ σαρκικῇ ἀλλ' ἐν χάριτι θεοῦ, ἀνεστράφημεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, περισσοτέρως δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

nam gloria nostra haec est testimonium conscientiae nostrae quod in simplicitate et sinceritate Dei et non in sapientia carnali sed in gratia Dei conversati sumus in mundo abundantius autem ad vos

LWB 2 Cor. 1:13 For we never write additional things to you than what you have repetitively learned and what you recognize, and that I hope you will always recognize completely,

KW 2 Cor. 1:13 For, no other things are we writing to you but those things which you are reading or even acknowledge to be what they really are, and which I hope you will acknowledge to the end,

KJV 2 Cor. 1:13 For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has not taught the Corinthians any esoteric or secretive things – that is what the false teachers in Corinth have been doing. Nor has Paul taught them any novel things, but has merely repeated what he already taught them once before in his earlier epistles.

The Corinthians should recognize that what Paul is teaching they have heard from him before. And if they paid attention to him the first time, they should now be approaching a full knowledge of these doctrines - meaning they should have learned them so well that they could apply them to daily life.

Paul hopes they can now tell the difference between what is truth and what is heresy. This full knowledge should be everything he has taught them from beginning to end. In order to attain to this state of full knowledge, they will have to be persistent in learning doctrine.

The Gnostic Present means “always,” but when combined with a negative adverb, it means “never”. Paul never writes superfluous or unnecessary things to the Corinthians.

The Historical Present means they have heard Paul’s teaching before, and on more than one occasion. The Dramatic Present places emphasis on recognizing and learning his teachings to a great degree – a full knowledge of them embedded in their minds.

The Customary Present points to the obvious fact that any good teacher hopes his students will recognize and remember his teachings well. Combined with a Gnostic Future, that means Paul hopes they will always remember these doctrines – long term memory, recall, and application.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul’s conversations are as become the gospel of Christ and are clear of that hypocrisy and deceit his adversaries would insinuate. (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

The apostle insists that his letter-writing has the same mark of sincerity as the rest of his conduct. He writes nothing but what his readers can read and understand. There are no innuendos or reservations. (*Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

Evidently, the Corinthians charge Paul with having a hidden agenda in his letters: He writes one thing and does another. Paul categorically denies this charge, claiming that his true motives are transparent for all to read and understand. He reckons that a majority has favorably received the “tearful letter” and is now more or less reconciled to him, and that a minority is still unrepentant and hostile toward him. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

2 Cor. 1:13 **For** (explanatory) **we never** (neg. adv.) **write** (γράφω, PAI1P, Gnostic) **additional** (superfluous, unnecessary) **things** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **to you** (Dat. Disadv.) **than** (contrast) **what** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you have repetitively learned** (ἀναγινώσκω, PAI2P, Historical) **and** (connective) **what** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you recognize** (ἐπιγινώσκω, PAI2P, Dramatic; full knowledge), **and** (continuative) **that** (conj.; which you read in private or public worship) **I hope** (ἐλπίζω, PAI1S, Customary) **you will always recognize** (ἐπιγινώσκω, FMI2P, Gnostic) **completely** (Gen. Spec.; thoroughly),

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ ἄλλα γράφομεν ὑμῖν ἀλλ' ἢ ἃ ἀναγινώσκετε ἢ καὶ ἐπιγινώσκετε· ἐλπίζω δὲ ὅτι ἕως τέλους ἐπιγινώσεσθε,

Latin Vulgate

non enim alia scribimus vobis quam quae legistis et cognoscitis spero autem quod usque in finem cognoscetis

LWB 2 Cor. 1:14 **Just as you have also come to know us well, to the degree that we are your object of esprit-de-corps, just as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

KW 2 Cor. 1:14 As also certain ones of you acknowledged us for what we really are, that we are even as that in which you glory, and you are that in which we glory in the day of our Lord Jesus.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is complementing them on their team spirit, their mutual *esprit-de-corps*.

The day of the Lord will be at the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ - where rewards are dispensed, not punishment for sin.

The Ingressive Aorist means they have ‘come to know’ Paul and his associates quite well (epi) as they meet him and read his correspondence.

Meros can be translated in a number of ways when used as a Genitive of Measure: in part, a share, a portion, to a degree. I’m amenable to the option that translates “they knew him in part and would hopefully come to know him even better”. But I like the element of degree better.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What Paul envisions is that at the day of the Lord he and they will be able to stand up and testify on each other’s behalf to the Lord about how good each has been to and for the other. (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

Paul felt the Corinthians must acknowledge him ‘in part’. And he hoped that this provisional assent would one day grow into their wholehearted acceptance (understand fully) and endorsement. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, David K. Lowery)

2 Cor. 1:14 Just as (comparative) you have also (adjunctive) come to know (ἐπιγινώσκω, AAI2P, Ingressive) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) well (full knowledge), to the degree (Gen. Measure) that (conj.) we are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) your (Gen. Poss.) object of esprit de corps (Pred. Nom.), just as (comparative) you (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) are (ellipsis) ours (Gen. Rel.) in the day (Loc. Time) of the (our in some manuscripts) Lord Jesus (Gen. Poss.).

Greek Text

καθὼς καὶ ἐπέγνωτε ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ μέρους, ὅτι καύχημα ὑμῶν ἐσμεν καθάπερ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου [ἡμῶν] Ἰησοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

sicut et cognovistis nos ex parte quia gloria vestra sumus sicut et vos nostra in die Domini nostri Iesu Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 1:15 Moreover, with this confidence I planned to return face-to-face to you on a prior occasion, so that you might obtain a second benefit,

KW 2 Cor. 1:15 And having become fully persuaded of this I, after mature consideration, desired to come to you first, in order that you may be having a second bestowment of grace [by reason of my second visit to you],

KJV 2 Cor. 1:15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has confidence in their *esprit-de-corps*. But he nevertheless explains that although he didn't make it to Corinth as planned, it was not due to lack of desire on his part, but God had other plans for him at that time. Also, it was not his intention to communicate to them again by letter; it was his desire to meet them face-to-face.

The second benefit (gracious gift) to the Corinthians was a 2nd opportunity to receive face-to-face teaching from the apostle, as well as the relaxed social life afterwards. Any time Paul showed up to teach someone face-to-face, they could be assured of being blessed by his association. Apostles, like pastors and teachers today, are gracious gifts from the Lord – although they are often not treated that way.

The Instrumental of Manner means Paul was not planning to return to Corinth as if facing combative enemies, but with confidence in their mutual *esprit-de-corps*. There has been considerable conflict between Paul and some of the Corinthians, but he was putting this negative part of history behind him.

The Descriptive Imperfect tense means Paul had intended on being there, but his plans just didn't work out. The Middle Voice means he himself had made these plans, but in the end, it was not his plans that ruled, but God's.

The Potential Subjunctive points to the possibility that the Corinthians might have obtained a 2nd blessing from Paul, but that possibility would have depended upon their welcoming him with open arms. Paul could have shown up in Corinth and some of them would not welcome him due to the corrective letter he sent to them previously.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The much discussed expression ‘so that you might benefit twice’ probably refers not to the apostle’s second visit to Corinth in relation to the founding visit, but rather to the two stopovers he planned to make in Corinth in accordance with his revised travel plans. In that case, the Corinthians would have had a double benefit (or rather, “gift”) because Paul would have made Corinth both the starting and the finishing point of his collection for Jerusalem in the region, and the Corinthians would have had two opportunities to contribute to it. The “grace gift” could have meant another collection for Jerusalem, so that the Corinthians could outgive the Macedonians who have given sacrificially.” (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

“The apostle here vindicates himself from the imputation of levity and inconstancy, in that he did not hold his purpose of coming to them at Corinth. His adversaries there sought all occasions to blemish his character, and reflect upon his conduct; and, it

seemed, they took hold of this handle to reproach his person and discredit his ministry. Paul also has no false humility, in that he does not hesitate to state that the design was for them to receive a second benefit, that is, a further advantage by his ministry.”

(*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

“With four infinitive phrases joined by “kai”, Paul says he planned (a) to come to Corinth first, (b) to go through Corinth to Macedonia, (c) to return to Corinth from Macedonia, and (d) to be sent by the Corinthians to Judea. His explanation was apparently necessary because, on the one hand, the second part of his plan had not been carried out. As for the meaning of “charis”, it is generally accepted as something to be received by the Corinthians as a result of Paul’s being present with them twice on this proposed journey rather than once. It is variously translated as “benefit”, “blessing”, “opportunity of spiritual profit”. There is another possible interpretation of this passage. What Paul is saying is not that they will receive “charis” twice because of his presence, but that they will experience it twice as they help him along the way. The emphasis here is not on the Corinthian reception of such grace per se, but on their experiencing it by service toward others (in this case Paul and his companions). So Paul uses “charis” to describe the visits, not because of what they are to receive by Paul’s presence, but because of how God’s grace is going to be working through them.” (*To What End Exegesis?* Gordon D. Fee)

2 Cor. 1:15 Moreover (continuative), with this (Dat. Ref.) confidence (Instr. Manner) I planned (βούλομαι, Imperf.MIIS, Descriptive, Deponent; intended) to return (έρχομαι, AAIInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) face-to-face to you (Acc. Adv.) on a prior occasion (Adv. Time; previously), so that (purpose) you might obtain (έχω, AASubj.2P, Constative, Potential; entertain) a second (numeral) benefit (Acc. Dir. Obj.; gracious gift: be blessed by association twice),

Greek Text

Καὶ ταύτη τῇ πεποιθήσει ἐβουλόμην πρότερον πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν, ἵνα δευτέραν χάριν σχῆτε,

Latin Vulgate

et hac confidentia volui prius venire ad vos ut secundam gratiam haberetis

LWB 2 Cor. 1:16 not only to pass through you on the way to Macedonia and to return to you from Macedonia, but also to be accompanied by you to Judea.

KW 2 Cor. 1:16 And to go through you [your city] into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you and be sent on my way to Judea with the travel requisites for the journey.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Corinth was to be ‘grand central station’ for Paul’s missionary outreach. He also hoped some Corinthians would assist him in bringing his collections for the poor in Judea to them. If he had his way, he didn’t want to travel alone.

The two infinitives related to Paul’s travels to Macedonia and back had the Purpose of using Corinth as his point of departure and return. The infinitive used to solicit companions to take collections to Judea, was the ultimate purpose or Result, the Culmination of this missionary journey.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“It was for weighty reasons that Paul had altered his purpose.” (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

As a matter of fact, “he had planned on making two visits instead of the one he originally promised in 1 Corinthians 16:5-7.” (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“A double visit was the initial plan and this in turn led to a charge that he was not keeping his promises.” (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

2 Cor. 1:16 not only (connective) to pass through (διέρχομαι, AAInf., Constative, Purpose, Deponent) you (Gen. Adv.) on the way to Macedonia (Acc. Place) and (connective) to return (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Constative, Purpose, Deponent) to you (Acc. Adv.) from Macedonia (Gen. Place), but also (continuative) to be accompanied (προπέμπω, APInf., Culminative, Purpose/Result) by you (Gen. Accompaniment) to Judea (Acc. Place).

Greek Text

καὶ δι’ ὑμῶν διελθεῖν εἰς Μακεδονίαν καὶ πάλιν ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν.

Latin Vulgate

et per vos transire in Macedoniam et iterum a Macedonia venire ad vos et a vobis deduci in Iudaeam

LWB 2 Cor. 1:17 So, having made this plan, did I, therefore, behave in a fickle manner? Or with reference to the things I had planned, was my planning according to the flesh, with the result that in my case, it could be: Yes indeed or certainly not?

KW 2 Cor. 1:17 Therefore, having this desire, under these circumstances I did not exhibit fickleness of mind, did I? Or, the things which I purpose, do I purpose them in a merely human capacity, that there should be with me the yes, yes [today] and the no, no [tomorrow]?

KJV 2 Cor. 1:17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By telling them previously that he planned to travel from Corinth, was Paul trying to make the most out of a possible opportunity? Was Paul indeed vascillating? In spite of his antagonists and other false teachers who accused him of such, he was not. Also, modifications to his previous itinerary does not constitute capricious vascillation or fickleness. Ultimately, his travel plans were in the hands of the Lord.

Paul's second line of defense was that they were his plans, meaning Paul as a human being. His travel plans may or may not happen (unknown outcome) depending on God's overruling plan. Therefore, Paul was not breaking his word.

Paul's use of the Tendential Present in a Circumstantial Participle means his plans, originating from himself as a man, are always subordinate (tendential) to the Lord's plans. The Historical Present tense means Paul made his plans at a point in time in the past and the circumstances surrounding those earlier plans changed. Paul is not omniscient, so he obviously cannot be faulted by not seeing the changes ahead.

Paul also denies by using two double particles (one positive and one negative) that he was being wishy-washy about his plans – saying “Maybe Yes or Maybe No”. These ‘doubles’ are a substitute for an oath formula. The Vulgate even uses the Latin word “carnem” (someone who mangles what he is doing, an offensively stupid person), which Paul is also denying.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“He declares that he had been on his guard against rashness, misdirected confidence, and presumption.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, J. Calvin)

“Paul's questions [rhetorical] are meant to evoke from his readers an emphatic denial that their apostle would act in such a way.” (*2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“Paul’s point in this verse and following is that his itinerary is not up to him but up to the Lord.” (*Meaning and Truth in 2 Corinthians*, F. Young, D. Ford) He is under God’s authority and so must do what God leads him to do.

“Good men should be careful to preserve the reputation of sincerity and constancy; they should not resolve but upon mature deliberation, and they will not change their resolves but for weighty reasons.” (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

“Was it, moreover, Paul’s usual practice to plan according to the flesh, i.e. as an ordinary man of the world guided by trivial or purely selfish considerations, so that he could say ‘Yes, Yes’ and then follow it almost at once with ‘No, No’? Paul is probably quoting what was being said about him at Corinth.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 1:17 So (superordinate), having made this (Acc. Gen. Ref.) plan (βούλομαι, PMptc.NMS, Tendentia, Circumstantial, Deponent), did (interrogative expecting a negative answer) I, therefore (conj.), behave (χράομαι, AMI1S, Constative, Deponent) in a fickle manner (Dat. Manner; vascillate)? Or (coordinating) with reference to the things (Acc. Gen. Ref.; travel plans) I had planned (βουλεύομαι, PMI1S, Historical, Deponent), was my planning (βουλεύομαι, PMI1S, Historical, Deponent, Interrogative) according to the flesh (Adv. Acc.), with the result that (resultant) in my case (Instr. Manner), it (the final decision) could be (εἰμί, PASubj.3S, Tendentia, Potential): Yes indeed (double positive particles) or (contrast) certainly not (double negative particles)?

Greek Text

τοῦτο οὖν βουλόμενος μήτι ἄρα τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ ἐχρησάμην; ἢ ἂν βουλεύομαι κατὰ σάρκα βουλεύομαι, ἵνα ἦ παρ’ ἐμοὶ τὸ Ναὶ ναὶ καὶ τὸ Οὐ οὐ;

Latin Vulgate

cum hoc ergo voluisssem numquid levitate usus sum aut quae cogito secundum carnem cogito ut sit apud me est et non

LWB 2 Cor. 1:18 On the contrary, God is faithful, so that our word to you is never: yes and no.

KW 2 Cor. 1:18 But as God is faithful, our word to you is not a yes and a no.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul isn't the unstable one – the Corinthians are being unstable by getting upset at Paul's not returning on their timetable.

When God is behind their word, there will be no vascillation, since He is immutable. So in this case, there are no double particles, only single ones.

Paul uses the Gnostic Present to show that his word is never vascillating – combination of 'always' with the negative "ouk" means 'never' – when God's faithfulness is on the line.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“That is, ‘My preaching, or the doctrine which I preached, was not inconsistent and contradictory. I did not preach first one thing and then another.’ This sudden transition from the question as to his veracity as a man to his consistency as a preacher, shows two things: first that his enemies had brought both charges against him, founding the latter on the former; and secondly, that Paul was much more concerned for the gospel than for his own reputation. They might accuse him, if they pleased, of breaking his word; but when they charged him with denying Christ, that was a very different affair. He therefore drops the first charge and turns abruptly to the second. ‘Whatever you may think of my veracity as a man, as God is true, my preaching was not yea and nay,’ i.e. unworthy of confidence.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 1:18 On the contrary (neg. adv.), God (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) faithful (Pred. Nom.; true), so that (result) our (Poss. Gen.) word (Subj. Nom.) to you (Acc. Adv.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Gnostic) never (neg. adv.): yes (positive particle) and (connective) no (negative particle).

Greek Text

πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ὁ λόγος ἡμῶν ὁ πρὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἔστιν Ναὶ καὶ Οὐ.

Latin Vulgate

fidelis autem Deus quia sermo noster qui fit apud vos non est in illo est et non

LWB 2 Cor. 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was proclaimed to you by us, [by myself and Silvanus and Timothy], did not become yes or no, but became yes in Him.

KW 2 Cor. 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who among you was proclaimed by us, through me and Silvanus and Timothy, did not become yes and no, but in Him yes has become yes and remains so.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The deity of Christ was preached by the humanity of men. And when the object of the preaching is the deity of Christ, they can speak with absolute dogmatic certainty.

The Intensive Perfect phrase “became yes in Him” affirms the deity of Christ; the Culminative Aorist emphasizes the absolute affirmation of His deity as well.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The apostle using those words, “yea and nay”, conforms to the language of the Jews, his countrymen, who to magnify their doctors and Rabbins, and to raise their credit, say such things of them.” (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

“Yes represents the Greek and Amen the Hebrew form of affirmation. Paul characteristically brings together the two languages. The clear preaching of Christ and the hearty acceptance of that message are alike to the glory of God.” (*Revised New Bible Commentary - 2 Corinthians*, Guthrie/Motyer)

“ Their own faith and salvation are the tangible evidence that Paul’s preaching did not vascillate in either its intention or its outcome. The message that Paul preached to the Corinthians was unequivocally confirmed (Yes) to them in Christ: God revealed the message to Paul; Paul preached it; the Corinthians received it; and now they have it in Christ. The message was never retracted or amended (No) in any way.” (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

2 Cor. 1:19 **For** (explanatory) **the Son** (Subj. Nom.) **of God** (Abl. Source), **Jesus Christ** (Nom. Appos.), **Who** (Nom. Appos.) **was proclaimed** (κηρύσσω, APPTc.NMS, Constative, Substantival; preached) **to you** (Dat. Adv.) **by us** (Abl. Means), [**by myself** (Abl. Means) **and** (connective) **Silvanus** (Abl. Means) **and** (connective) **Timothy** (Abl. Means)], **did not** (neg. adv.) **become** (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent) **yes** (pos. particle) **or** (contrast: uncertainty) **no** (neg. particle), **but** (contrast) **became** (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Intensive, Deponent) **yes** (pos. particle) **in Him** (Loc. Sph.; the Father).

Greek Text

ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ γὰρ υἱὸς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν δι' ἡμῶν κηρυχθεὶς, δι' ἐμοῦ καὶ Σιλουανοῦ καὶ Τιμοθέου, οὐκ ἐγένετο Ναὶ καὶ Οὐ ἄλλὰ Ναὶ ἐν αὐτῷ γέγονεν.

Latin Vulgate

Dei enim Filius Iesus Christus qui in vobis per nos praedicatus est per me et Silvanum et Timotheum non fuit est et non sed est in illo fuit

LWB 2 Cor. 1:20 For all the promises of God are yes in Him; for this reason, also, through Him comes the ‘truly indeed’ from us to the ultimate glory of God.

KW 2 Cor. 1:20 For as many promises as are the promises of God have become in Him yes and are a yes at present. Wherefore also through Him is the Amen to the glory of God through us.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because of His veracity and immutability, all the promises of God will occur with absolute certainty. And because we have confidence in His immutability, we have absolute confidence (truly indeed, amen, positive affirmation) in His Word. Our absolute confidence in His Word returns to Him when we conclude our prayers or otherwise agree with Him on a matter, bringing Him ultimate glory – coming full circle.

The transliteration “amen” has lost some of its meaning and had others attributed to it over the years. As a confident, positive affirmation, I resorted to the translation “truly indeed”.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“With his consistency confirmed here, was it likely that Paul would act in a worldly manner in relatively trivial affairs? How could they distrust the apostle who himself had taught them to affirm the trustworthiness of God by repeating the “Amen”? This is a potent *a fortiori* argument.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

“Paul is emphatic that all the promises of God made in earlier days to patriarchs and prophets found their fulfillment in Christ.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“Bad men are false; good men are fickle; but God is true, neither fickle nor false. (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

2 Cor. 1:20 For (explanatory) all (pronoun: "as many") the promises (Subj. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.) are (ellipsis) yes (pos. particle) in Him (Loc. Sph.); for this reason (superord), also (adjunctive), through Him (Abl. Source) comes (ellipsis) the "truly indeed" (pos. particle) from us (Abl. Source) to the ultimate glory (Adv. Acc.) of God (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

ὅσαι γὰρ ἐπαγγελίαι θεοῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ τὸ Ναί· διὸ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ τὸ Ἀμήν τῷ θεῷ πρὸς δόξαν δι' ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

quotquot enim promissiones Dei sunt in illo est ideo et per ipsum amen Deo ad gloriam nostram

LWB 2 Cor. 1:21 Furthermore, He Who keeps on strengthening us with you in Christ, and has anointed us is God,

KW 2 Cor. 1:21 Now, He who is constantly confirming us more firmly in our position in and union with Christ [in conforming us to His likeness] and who anointed us is God,

KJV 2 Cor. 1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The initial strengthening of Paul, his companions, the Corinthians and all other believers is delivered as one of the benefits of the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation. For those that love God, this strengthening continues throughout life. So in this verse, the 'anointing' is the one-time experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, i.e. positional truth. The 'continuous strengthening' occurs to those who remain in fellowship with Him, being continually filled by the Holy Spirit, i.e. experiential truth.

The word 'anointing' has taken on heretical baggage over the years by misguided, emotion-based Christians. The 'anointing' is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Father strengthens us in Christ and provided us with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Strengthening does not happen automatically, without any positive volition on the part of the believer. Miracles may occasionally happen on behalf of a believer, but we do not live in a dispensation of miracles. We live in a dispensation of using our own positive volition to take in (learn), metabolize, and apply Bible doctrine in our lives.

The Iterative Present points to the continued strengthening provided to all believers. Other verses point to this strengthening as a matter of degree – with maturing believers receiving a larger portion than carnal believers.

The Culminative Aorist emphasizes the one-time (continuing throughout a lifetime) indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation. Believers cannot lose their salvation, nor can they lose the Spirit's indwelling. They do, however, lose the filling of the Spirit everytime they commit a sin, and automatically regain the filling of the Spirit when they confess this sin to the Father through Jesus Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“God ‘annoints’ all believers, consecrating them to the service of Christ. He ‘sets His seal’ upon them, marking them out from the rest of mankind as those who really belong to Him and are eternally the objects of His loving care. And He gives them ‘in their hearts’, i.e. in the innermost recesses of their being, His Spirit as an earnest of further and greater blessings to come.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 1:21 Furthermore (continuative), He (Subj. Nom.) Who keeps on strengthening (βεβαιώω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; establishing) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with you (Dat. Accompaniment) in Christ (Loc. Sph.), and (continuative) has annointed (χρίω, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Circumstantial) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) is (ellipsis) God (Pred. Nom.; the Father),

Greek Text

ὁ δὲ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς σὺν ὑμῖν εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ χρίσας ἡμᾶς θεός,

Latin Vulgate

qui autem confirmat nos vobiscum in Christum et qui unxit nos Deus

LWB 2 Cor. 1:22 Who has also sealed us and given the guarantee of the Spirit in our minds.

KW 2 Cor. 1:22 Who also placed His seal upon us and gave us the token payment guaranteeing the payment in full of our salvation, which token payment is the Spirit in our hearts.

KJV 2 Cor. 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The seal of the Holy Spirit, which is irrevocable, is the guarantee of our salvation, i.e. our positional sanctification and our eternal security.

The ‘guarantee’ is God’s pledge or down payment on our future, i.e. our future glorification salvation. This concept was known in the business world as caution money deposited by a purchaser in pledge of future full payment.

The Lord has His brand on us – His seal of ownership.

The Culminative Aorist tenses point to the finality of our sealing in God’s plan and our irrevocable indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The Greek word ‘kardia’ does not refer to our heart as an internal organ. It is a technical term for the “right lobe of the brain” or the seat of our soul, intellect, and spiritual life.

The Latin word ‘cordibus’ means “soul, mind or person”. It’s use for the concept of the “heart” as the seat of our emotions came primarily from poets.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Two things stand out in this verse: (1) the Holy Spirit has sealed us, and (2) the Holy Spirit is the pledge. The ancient practice of using seals is behind the figurative use of the word here. A seal was a mark of protection and ownership. The Greek word ‘sphragizo’ is used of a stone being fastened with a seal to prevent its being moved from a position. In fact, this was apparently the earliest method of distinguishing one’s property. The seal was engraved with a design or mark distinctive to the owner. The seal of ownership or protection was often made in soft wax with a signet ring. An impression was left on the wax signifying the owner of the thing sealed. When the Holy Spirit seals us, He presses the signet ring of our heavenly Father on our hearts of wax and leaves the mark of ownership. We belong to Him. He certifies this by His unchangeable purpose to protect and own us to the day of redemption. We are forever protected from wrath. We cannot lose our salvation any more than we can break the seal. We would have to have greater power to lose salvation than the Holy Spirit has to keep us saved. God, so to speak, has legally bound Himself to our eternal security. A down payment implies that God has legally and morally obligated himself to bring His children to heaven. A down payment was a statement of one’s honor, one’s word. When God makes a down payment, He has obligated Himself morally and legally to make the final payment as well. If one person who was born again in Christ ever fails to enter into heaven when he dies, then God has broken His pledge. His word of honor has been voided. No human conditions are mentioned. This, like other aspects of security, is a work of God and depends upon Him alone. If our eternal security depends on anything in us, it is certain that it is not secure. However, the Scriptures teach that our final entrance into heaven is guaranteed by the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Since it depends on an infinite Person,

Who is faithful and true, it is inconceivable that the salvation of any child of God could ever be lost.” (*Reign of the Servant Kings*, Joseph Dillow)

“The sealing ministry of the Spirit is another mark of our royalty; it is a device in our spiritual coat of arms. No one was sealed by the Holy Spirit prior to the Church Age, and the sealings which occur after the Church is removed ... The grace transaction which occurred when we believed in Christ is guaranteed by our sealing. We are eternally saved, members of the royal family forever. We are also signified as belonging to God. As his mark of ownership, the seal declares our positional sanctification, our permanent union with Christ.” (2 *Corinthians*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

“The veracity of God, the mediation of Christ, and the operation of the Spirit, are all engaged that the promises shall be sure to all the seed, and the accomplishment of them shall be to the glory of God for the glory of His rich and sovereign grace, and never-failing truth and faithfulness.” (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

“The ‘kardia’ or heart is the innermost part of man ... the seat of mental or spiritual powers and capacities. [Man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart.] The heart is the seat of rational functions ... given by God .. and is often used for those with understanding, far-reaching insight, treasures of knowledge, thoughts, artistic sense, and attentiveness. From the heart comes planning and volition, inner impulses, direction, religious and moral conduct, and the seat of intellectual life. It is referred to as the seat of the will, the seat of the power of thought, and the focus of man’s being and activity as a spiritual personality. It is also used as the main organ of psychic and spiritual life, the place in man at which God bears witness to Himself, the source of all the forces and functions of soul and spirit, and the source of resolves. It is rarely used in Scripture to represent the physical organ we know as the heart.” (*Kittel’s TDNT*, Vol. III, Johannes Behm)

2 Cor. 1:22 Who (Nom. Appos.; the Father) has also (adjunctive) sealed (σφραγίζω, AMPtc.NMS, Culminative, Substantival) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (continuative) given (δίδωμι, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Substantival) the guarantee (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the Spirit (Adv. Gen. Ref.; indwelling) in our (Poss. Gen.) minds (Loc. Sph.; right lobe of the soul).

Greek Text

καὶ σφραγισάμενος ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

et qui signavit nos et dedit pignus Spiritus in cordibus nostris

LWB 2 Cor. 1:23 Moreover, I appeal to God as a witness to my soul, that for the purpose of sparing you, I have not yet returned to Corinth,

KW 2 Cor. 1:23 Moreover, as for myself, I call God as a witness against my soul [if I am speaking falsely] that to spare you, I did not come over as yet to Corinth,

KJV 2 Cor. 1:23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul refrained from going to Corinth because he anticipated another antagonistic confrontation and another round of chastising.

Some translators have rendered the phrase “to my soul” as “against my life” with the understanding that Paul was putting his life on the line by ‘swearing an oath’ on God as a witness against him if he is lying to them.

The Dramatic Present means Paul was near the end of his defense on his itinerary and didn’t know what else to do to convince them but to call on God as his witness.

The Pictorial Present paints a vivid picture of Paul avoiding an unpleasant circumstance where nobody would want to see him – mainly, that he might be returning to Corinth to ‘crack the whip’ again. And since he wished to avoid a confrontation at this time, the Purpose or Cause for his travel changes is to postpone his return until a later date.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The apostle asserts with great solemnity that it was not caprice, cowardice, or any selfish consideration which led him to change his plans about visiting Corinth. He had acted solely in the interests of the Corinthians.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“Paul was deferring his visit in order to give them additional time to correct their abuses before he came.” (*Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“Authoritarian dominion is often the manner of false apostles and the kingdom they serve, but it was not the way of Christ nor of those who stand in His stead. Paul was reluctant to wield his authority over them, that is, domineeringly taking advantage of the fact that they came to faith in Christ through his ministry. Dictatorial means can produce compliance, but not the obedience that comes from the faith which he sought.” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, David K. Lowery)

2 Cor. 1:23 Moreover (continuative), I (Subj. Nom.) appeal to (ἐπικαλέω, PM11S, Dramatic; call upon) God (Acc. Dir.)

Obj.) as a witness (Adv. Acc.) to (against) my (Acc. Poss.) soul (Acc. Gen. Ref.), that (conj.) for the purpose of sparing (φείδομαι, PMPTc.NMS, Pictorial, Purpose/Causal, Deponent) you (Gen. Adv.), I have not (neg. adv.) yet (temporal) returned (έρχομαι, AAI1S, Constativc, Deponent) to Corinth (Acc. Place),

Greek Text

Ἐγὼ δὲ μάρτυρα τὸν θεὸν ἐπικαλοῦμαι ἐπὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν, ὅτι φειδόμενος ὑμῶν οὐκέτι ἦλθον εἰς Κόρινθον.

Latin Vulgate

ego autem testem Deum invoco in animam meam quod parcens vobis non veni ultra Corinthum

LWB 2 Cor. 1:24 because we do not want to dictate the terms of your doctrinal lifestyle; on the contrary, we are fellow-workers with reference to your inner happiness, for you have repeatedly stood firm by means of doctrine.

KW 2 Cor. 1:24 not that we have lordship over your faith, but that we are co-workers in producing your joy; for by faith you stand.

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

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is not relinquishing his authority to instruct them on how to live the Christian life, but he does not want them to think he is a spiritual tyrant either. Many false teachers are adding legal stipulations to the Corinthians' attempt to walk by the Spirit. Paul provides them with doctrinal principles to live by, not legalistic precepts. Rather than tell them what to do and not to do at every turn, he wants them to understand the principles and to apply them to daily life on their own.

The Christian way of life requires continual learning, metabolizing, and application of Bible doctrine. This is better called a Christian's "doctrinal lifestyle", rather than "walk of faith", because the word "faith" often has a connotation that is empty of the Word and thought (thinking) in general. The Greek word for "faith" and "doctrine" are the same.

Paul portrays himself and his companions as "fellow-workers" with the Corinthians, pointing to the partnership (teamwork) they have in the process of growing to spiritual maturity. There is also an element of "learning together" in Paul's concept, because unlike false teachers who claim to have reached the pinnacle of spiritual growth, Paul is learning and growing himself, alongside the Corinthians.

God wants every believer to grow in grace and knowledge of the Truth, which will automatically bring inner happiness as a reward. “Sharing the happiness of God” is the supreme goal of the Christian life. There is an absolutely precise, correct protocol (path) for getting to this state of inner happiness outlined in Scripture; all human attempts to substitute or add to this divine protocol will result in failure to reach the goal.

The Corinthians did not “stand firm” in their Christian walk by the assistance of false teachers, i.e. the self-appointed spiritual dictators in their midst. They have not grown to their current status in their walk by feelings, or human panaceas (philosophies or psychologies), but by means of doctrine. Doctrine (the Word of God, Truth) is the only means to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Corinthians who have stood firm are understood as being the ones who (a) took Paul’s prior chastisement seriously, (b) corrected their internal disputes, and (c) are now back with the divine program.

It is Customary for false teachers, particularly legalists, to lord it over new believers, telling them (ruling over them) how to live their daily life. Paul is not going to make this his customary practice, as he states by Contrasting himself and his companions (“on the contrary”) from the spiritual dictators who are trying to corrupt the Corinthians with legalism and false discipleship demands.

Paul uses the Iterative to communicate to the Corinthians that he knows they have made some progress in the Christian way of life, in spite of many problems among them. He uses the Perfect tense to point out that they already have everything they need to accomplish the goal, so they don’t need a spiritual dictator.

The Latin Vulgate has some excellent vocabulary in this verse as far as painting a picture of the participants. The word “dominor” paints an excellent picture of the false teachers who are attempting to rule (bear down with dominating power) the Corinthians.

The Latin word “adiutor” makes Paul and his companions “assistants, helpers and support persons” of the Corinthians, even ‘confederates’ to a large degree, because they are all (Paul, his companions, the Corinthians, and all other Christians) involved in divine protocol together.

The Latin word “gaudium” means inner happiness, delight, joy, and pleasure. When used to represent fellowship with God, it points to the enjoyment of His company.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The preservation of our joy in God *takes work*. It is a fight. The Bible is our kindling.”
(*Desiring God*, John Piper)

“Paul does not mean that he is a tyrant dictating to them in matters of conscience, and determined that they should be in all things subservient to his will. They share equally with him the liberty of the children of God, a liberty subject only to the control of the Holy Spirit. He is their minister and their friend, not a despotic hierarch. No one can grow under the pressure of human compulsion, for the urge to grow comes from the Spirit of God.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“Paul had authority as an apostle over disciplinary matters, but not in matters of faith. As to the latter, he and they were equally under subjection to the revelation of God. If the inspired apostles recognized not only their subjection of the Word of God, but also the right of the people to judge whether their teachings were in accordance with the Supreme standard, it is most evident that no church authority can make anything contrary to Scripture obligatory on believers, and that the ultimate right to decide whether ecclesiastical decisions are in accordance with the Word of God, rests with the people. In other words, Paul recognizes, even in reference to himself, the right of private judgment. He allowed any man to pronounce him *anathema*, if he did not preach the gospel as it had been revealed and authenticated to the church.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 1:24 because (causal) we do not (neg. adv.) want to dictate the terms of (κυριεύω, PAI1P, Customary) your (Poss. Gen.) doctrinal lifestyle (Obj. Gen.); on the contrary (contrast), we are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) fellow-workers (Pred. Nom.) with reference to your (Poss. Gen.) inner happiness (Adv. Gen. Ref.), for (explanatory) you have repeatedly stood firm (ἵστημι, Perf.AI2P, Iterative) by means of doctrine (Instr. Means).

Greek Text

οὐχ ὅτι κυριεύομεν ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως ἀλλὰ συνεργοί ἐσμεν τῆς χαρᾶς ὑμῶν· τῇ γὰρ πίστει ἐστήκατε.

Latin Vulgate

non quia dominamur fidei vestrae sed adiutores sumus gaudii vestri nam fide stetit

Chapter 2

LWB 2 Cor. 2:1 However, I myself decided this: that I would not return to you again with regret.

KW 2 Cor. 2:1 But I decided this in my own interest and for my own sake, not to come again to you in grief.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:1 But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul made this decision apart from any other assistance, meaning he was not coerced by his companions or influenced by the pressure being applied on him by false accusations. He analyzed both sides of the equation and came to a firm decision to postpone the trip for a more opportune time. He chose to defer his coming until the situation in Corinth took a turn for the better.

The use of the word “palin” or ‘again’ has led to much speculation on how many times Paul visited Corinth and how many times he wrote them letters.

The two Culminative Aorist tenses means Paul thought his options through and made a final decision - and that decision was that he was not ready to return to Corinth at that time.

Both the Greek and Latin words for ‘regret’ point to Paul’s mournfulness, sorrow, sadness, and grief . He did not enjoy having to chew them out; he preferred to come with happiness and spread that inner joy with them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was not only sparing them a painful visit, but also himself, so he postponed his trip to Corinth. (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 2:1 However (contrast), I myself (Instr. Manner) decided (κρίνω, AAIS, Culminative, Pluperfect tense?) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.): that (conj.) I would not (neg. adv.) return (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent, Articular) to you (Acc. Disadv.) again (temporal) with regret (Instr. Manner; pain, reluctance).

Greek Text

ἔκρινα γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ τοῦτο τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν.

Latin Vulgate

statui autem hoc ipse apud me ne iterum in tristitia venirem ad vos

LWB 2 Cor. 2:2 For if I bring you grief, who then is the one who will cheer me up, but the same one who is grieved because of me?

KW 2 Cor. 2:2 For, as for myself, if, as is the case, I cause you grief, who then is he who makes me joyful except the one who was made to grieve by me?

KJV 2 Cor. 2:2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By grief, Paul is referring to the severe correction (in the form of needed discipline) that he brought to this assembly the last time he was in town. If he has to bring discipline to them again, then who will be of a mind to cheer him up? After all, Paul has been under pressure ‘near death’, so he could use some cheering up. There is small likelihood that people who are under his correction are going to provide this for him.

The best way for Christians to cheer each other up is by cultivating the inner happiness that comes from maximum doctrine in the soul. Then when they are together, the inner happiness that comes from their ‘saturated souls’ will provide true spiritual rapport.

The “one” that Paul is referring to is a representative one, who could be anybody in the Corinthian assembly that received Paul’s rebuke.

The protasis of a 1st class condition means Paul is assuming that he would have to bring corrective discipline to them again, since he has heard reports that things are still questionable among some Corinthians.

Paul uses the Pictorial Present (twice) to paint a vivid picture in their minds of how the discipline would be given and received – grief on both sides.

The Futuristic Present means Paul is looking forward to being with them, because he could use some cheering up from his fellow believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“To inflict needless pain on the Corinthians at that time would have effectively dried up the only source of his own happiness.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

“The thought underlying the passage is that the apostle’s joy is bound up with the spiritual prosperity of the Church. As the helper of their joy he would receive joy through their faith and obedience. So long as their moral condition compelled him to come, bringing rebuke and pain, they could not be a source of joy to him.” (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Vincent)

“Paul’s argument is: When I make you sorry, it is that you may repent, and so gladden me; my change of purpose was not prompted by the desire of giving pain, but on the contrary, by my fear that, if I visited you as I had intended, you would sadden me. I should have had to grieve, and be grieved by those who are the source of my purest joy.”
(2 Corinthians, J.H. Bernard)

2 Cor. 2:2 **For** (explanatory) **if** (protasis, 1st class, assumes it is true) **I** (Subj. Nom.) **bring you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **grief** (λυπέω, PA11S, Pictorial; distress), **who** (interrogative) **then** (temporal) **is the one** (Subj. Nom.) **who will cheer me** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; rejoice) **up** (εὐφραίνω, PAptc.NMS, Futuristic, Substantival), **but** (neg. adv.) **the same** (“if indeed the same”) **one** (Nom. Appos.) **who is grieved** (λυπέω, PPptc.NMS, Pictorial, Substantival; sad, gloomy) **because of** (causal) **me** (Abl. Source; my correction)?

Greek Text

εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼ λυπῶ ὑμᾶς, καὶ τίς ὁ εὐφραίνων με εἰ μὴ ὁ λυπούμενος ἐξ ἐμοῦ;

Latin Vulgate

si enim ego contristo vos et quis est qui me laetificet nisi qui contristatur ex me

LWB 2 Cor. 2:3 So I have written this very thing, so that when I arrived I would not receive grief from those whom I should receive warm greetings, reassured by all of you that my inner happiness continues to exist, belonging to all of you.

KW 2 Cor. 2:3 And I wrote this very thing, lest, when I came, I should have grief from those whom it was a necessity in the nature of the case to be making to rejoice, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of all of you,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When Paul does return, his wish is that they should be in fellowship (filled with the Spirit) and full of doctrine (divine viewpoint) so there is spiritual rapport. His worst case scenario is that they will still be living in carnality and he will have to administer another strong dose of discipline.

The Culminative Aorist used in a Temporal Participle means Paul's return to Corinth is the end goal of his past and current letter writing to them. The Potential Subjunctive means Paul realizes that they could still go either way – either get their act together and share in his happiness, or continue to live in carnality and receive additional rebukes.

The Voluntative aspect means Paul should be receiving warm greetings from them, but this is entirely up to them. The Imperfect tense means he probably has received warm greetings from some of them already (by letter or verbal report), but that there are still others who hold animosity against him.

By using the Consummative Perfect, Paul is telling them that his ultimate goal is to return to Corinth and find them in a state of spiritual growth, so that (a) they are conciliated with him, (b) he is completely persuaded that their progress in the spiritual life is continuing, and (c) he may then depart with absolute confidence that they will keep on growing in grace and knowledge.

The Durative Present points to Paul's hope that his inner happiness and their inner happiness will be present and continue to flourish, creating a bond of spiritual esprit de corps. He also Specifies (both Accusative and Genitive) that he wants this rapport to be shared by all of them, including his opponents, not just a few close friends.

The Latin word 'oportet' points to their providing Paul with warm greetings as an opportunity. Not only would there be mutual blessings from such an arrangement, but warmly treating a messenger of God (an apostle in this case) will bring rewards. Also present in the use of this word is the fact that this mutual inner happiness is appropriate, necessary, and becoming (honorable) to those who share God's grace and mercies.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Love delights to cause and contemplate joy in others. Love is what exists between people when they find their joy in each other's joy. When our hearts [mentality, right lobe of the soul] are filled with joy [inner happiness] in the grace of God, we not only want to cause the joy of others, but also to contemplate it when it exists in others.” (*The Pleasures of God*, J. Piper)

“Paul in saying that he wished all causes of painful collision might be removed out of the way before he went to Corinth, did not isolate himself from the people, as though concerned only for his own peace of mind, but was satisfied that what made him happy would make them happy. My joy will be the joy of you all. This does not mean merely that it would give them pleasure to see him happy, but also that obedience on their part, and the consequent purity and prosperity of the church, were as necessary to their happiness as to his. Paul says he had this confidence in them all, although it is abundantly evident that there were men among them who were his bitter opponents. He speaks of the majority.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“Paul was confident that, when the Corinthians read this, they would understand that by coming to them in their rebellious state he would have experienced only sorrow at the hands of those who knew, all of them, in their heart of hearts that they ought to be making him happy and sharing in his happiness.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 2:3 So (continuative) I have written (γράφω, AAI1S, Epistolary) this very (Acc. Gen. Ref.) thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.; letter), so that (explanatory) when I arrived (έρχομαι, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent; idiom: upon my arrival) I would not (neg. adv.) receive (έχω, AASubj.1S, Constative, Potential) grief (Acc. Dir. Obj.; sorrow) from those whom (Abl. Source, Gen. Rel.) I (Subj. Nom.) should (δει, Imperf.AI3S, Voluntative; unrealized) receive (ellipsis) warm greetings (Acc. Dir. Obj.; joy), reassured (πείθω, Perf.Aptc.NMS, Consummative, Attributive) by all (Acc. Spec.) of you (Acc. Gen. Ref.) that (result, coord.) my (Poss. Gen.) inner happiness (Subj. Nom.; joy, warm greetings) continues to exist (είμι, PAI3S, Durative; is likewise present), belonging to (owned by) all (Gen. Spec.) of you (Poss. Gen.; *esprit de corps*).

Greek Text

καὶ ἔγραψα τοῦτο αὐτὸ, ἵνα μὴ ἔλθων λύπην σχῶ ἀφ’ ὧν ἔδει με χαίρειν, πεποιθῶς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἡ ἐμὴ χαρὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐστίν.

Latin Vulgate

et hoc ipsum scripsi ut non cum venero tristitiam super tristitiam habeam de quibus oportuerat me gaudere confidens in omnibus vobis quia meum gaudium omnium vestrum est

LWB 2 Cor. 2:4 For indeed, due to intense outside pressure and anxiety of mentality, I wrote to you with many tears, not so that you might become grieved, but so that you might come to know the virtue love which I have to a great degree towards you.

KW 2 Cor. 2:4 for out of a source of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not in order that you may be made to grieve, but in order that you may come to know experientially the sacrificial love which I have so abundantly for you.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul isn't telling them about his pressure (his leadership responsibility requires him to correct a negative situation) and anxiety (his mind is in turmoil) to make them grieve at the prospect of his crying, i.e. not to arouse sentimental regret or another form of emotionalism. He's writing them about his struggle so they might better understand how much he truly cares for their wellbeing.

When Paul wrote his prior letter, he wrote it under several Attendant Circumstances: outside pressures, mental anxiety, and tears. None of these would have been present had it not been for the virtue love he had for them.

The Ingressive Aorist tense means Paul wants them to start realizing how much he cares for them. The Durative Present reiterates to them how seriously long-term his love is, attested already by his patience and compassion for them through tough times.

The Potential Subjunctive points to the possibility that they might be grieved by his tears, but the Negative Adverb disavows his intent to arouse that emotion in them.

The use of the word 'agape' points to Paul's love for the Corinthians as coming from his own integrity (as the subject) and not them as the object. This love is grounded in his spiritual character, his Christian virtue, and his relaxed mental attitude.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“To write that letter had been no easy out for the apostle. On the contrary, he had not been able to bring himself to the task without much mental anguish and distress; and he was constantly in tears when he wrote it. He knew that his words would hurt; but he denies that his primary object in writing was to wound his readers. He was not trying vindictively to pay off old scores! Rather was he concerned that, painful though the letter had to be, the spirit in which it was written should speak to them of his heart-felt affection. He had a very special love for the Corinthians.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“Paul shows his love for them, not by glossing over a bad situation, but by confronting it and demanding (again) that the Corinthians take action. It takes real love to confront a difficult situation rather than side-stepping it.” (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“He adds tears – which, in a man that is brave and magnanimous are a token of intense grief. Hence we see, from what emotions of mind pious and holy admonitions and reproofs must of necessity proceed. For there are many noisy reprovers, who, by declaiming, or rather, fulminating against vices, display a surprising ardour of zeal, while in the mean time they are at ease in their mind, so that it might seem as if they exercised their throat and sides by way of sport. It is, however, the part of a pious pastor, to weep within himself, before he calls upon others to weep: to feel tortured in silent musings,

before he shows any token of displeasure; and to keep within his own breast more grief, than he causes to others.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

2 Cor. 2:4 For indeed (subord.), due to intense (Gen. Spec.; much) outside pressure (Gen. Atten. Circum.) and (connective) anxiety (Gen. Atten. Circum.; pain, affliction) of mentality (Adv. Gen. Ref.; right lobe of the soul), I wrote (γράφω, AAI1S, Epistolary) to you (Dat. Adv.) with many (Gen. Spec.) tears (Gen. Atten. Circum.), not (neg. adv.) so that (purpose) you might become grieved (λυπέω, APSubj.2P, Culminative, Potential), but (contrast) so that (result) you might come to know (γινώσκω, AASubj.2P, Ingressive, Potential) the virtue love (Acc. Dir. Obj.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) I have (ἔχω, PAI1S, Durative) to a great degree (Adv. Degree; abundantly) towards you (Acc. Benefit).

Greek Text

ἐκ γὰρ πολλῆς θλίψεως καὶ συνοχῆς καρδίας ἔγραψα ὑμῖν διὰ πολλῶν δακρῶν, οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γινώτε ἢν ἔχω περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

nam ex multa tribulatione et angustia cordis scripsi vobis per multas lacrimas non ut contristemini sed ut sciatis quam caritatem habeo abundantius in vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 2:5 Now if anyone is still distressed, he is injuring, not me, but to a degree, all of you, so that I will not bring the issue up again.

KW 2 Cor. 2:5 Now, if, as is the case, anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but to some extent he has caused grief to you all, in order that I may not be exerting too much pressure upon you all.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows that some of the recipients of his former corrective action are still stinging from his rebukes. By being hypersensitive to Paul’s corrective rebukes, instead of having a relaxed mental attitude, they are harming themselves, not Paul. He has already put the subject behind him; they should do the same.

As far as Paul is concerned, the case is closed. God has forgiven the believer, even though the Corinthians had not. Paul says he will not bring the issue up again, adding more grief to what he already has, because that would unnecessarily grieve that person beyond what is necessary for the situation to be remedied.

Depending on how much effort the Corinthians are exerting to impose continuing distress on the offending brother, they are harming themselves (by holding mental attitude sins) and others by malicious gossip and verbal judgment (by sins of the tongue). They are also harming themselves and others by encouraging others to hold a grudge against Paul for bringing the disciplinary action in the first place.

Some commentators do not think the “anyone” was the man caught in an incestuous affair, but rather to another unnamed person who had insulted Paul behind his back, i.e. perhaps a stranger, or a false apostle, or a malecontent in their midst. I think the overall context of verses 5-11 is against this possible viewpoint.

The protasis of a 1st class condition means Paul knows for certain that some of the Corinthians are still distressed. The Intensive Perfect means this is no short-term condition; the issue has completely taken them over and they can’t seem to drop it and start moving forward in God’s plan again.

The Iterative Perfect means these Corinthians who refuse to relax and resume forward movement in God’s plan again are injuring themselves over-and-over again. And depending on the Degree in which they refuse to “let go,” they are bringing Disadvantage (discipline from being out of fellowship) upon their friends.

The Futuristic Present means Paul will not bring the topic up again. The Potential Subjunctive means if they will “let go” of the issue, he won’t have to mention it again.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Paul’s severe letter proved to be effective in that the Corinthians did take strong disciplinary action against the offender. Having heard of the action taken, Paul was both relieved and concerned. His concern now was that Satan might gain the advantage if the offender were to be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow, so he urged his readers to turn and reaffirm their love to the offender.” (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“The apostle’s heart was overflowing with the tenderest feelings towards his Corinthian brethren, and he was evidently solicitous to heal the salutary wounds inflicted by his former letter.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“The apostle treats concerning the incestuous person who had been excommunicated, which seems to be one principal cause of his writing this epistle. He tells them that the crime of that person had grieved him in part; and that he was grieved also with a part of them, who, notwithstanding this scandal had been found among them, were puffed up and

had not mourned. However, he was unwilling to lay too heavy a charge upon the whole church, especially seeing they had cleared themselves in that matter by observing the directions he had formerly given them. He tells them that the punishment which had been inflicted upon this offender was sufficient.” (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

“The offender has been sufficiently punished. The apostle acquiesces in their remission of the penalty against the incestuous person, whose name was suppressed with a rare delicacy of feeling by Paul.” (*2 Corinthians*, J.H. Bernard)

2 Cor. 2:5 Now (transitional) if (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes it is true) anyone (Subj. Nom.) is still distressed (λυπέω, Perf.AI3S, Intensive), he is injuring (λυπέω, Perf.AI3S, Iterative), not (neg. adv.) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.), but (contrast) to a degree (Gen. Spec.), all (Acc. Spec.) of you (Acc. Disadv.), so that (purpose) I will not (neg. adv.) bring the issue up again (ἐπιβαρέω, PASubj.1S, Futuristic, Potential; overly exaggerate).

Greek Text

Εἰ δέ τις λελύπηκεν, οὐκ ἐμὲ λελύπηκεν, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ μέρους, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιβαρῶ, πάντας ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

si quis autem contristavit non me contristavit sed ex parte ut non onerem omnes vos

LWB 2 Cor. 2:6 Punishment to this kind of person by the hands of the majority was sufficient,

KW 2 Cor. 2:6 Sufficient to such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is referring to the excommunication (public censure) of the person caught in an incestuous relationship. He had recommended that remedial discipline (as opposed to cruel domineering) be applied by the Corinthians, many of whom were that person’s concerned friends, i.e. members of his home assembly. Paul’s recommendation worked, because the offending person confessed and ceased that behavior. Paul now recommends that they discontinue the public disciplinary process.

It is quite likely that the sentence of excommunication was not carried out, because the *threat of excommunication* was enough in itself to bring the sinner to repentance. It is also possible that it was carried out, had its profound affect upon the penitent believer, and was now being rescinded at Paul's request.

The use of the word "pleion" (Greek) or "pluribus" (Latin) suggests there was a minority element who did not agree with Paul's prescribed discipline.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was writing to a fractured congregation in Corinth. Not all, but only the majority, supported Paul's advice to discipline the brother in question. Apparently a minority had come to reject Paul's authority, probably under the false apostles in verse 13. (*Conflict & Community in Corinth*, B. Witherington III)

Suffering is designed to awaken believers to their reversionism and spurs them back to Bible doctrine and complete recovery, as was the case with the believer in Corinth. But progress under punishment is slow and painful. How much better to learn the easy way – to learn doctrine and to live the spiritual life! (*2 Corinthians*, R.B. Thieme)

2 Cor. 2:6 Punishment (Subj. Nom.; censure, reproof) to this kind of person (Dat. Adv.; to the individual in question) by the hands of the majority (Abl. Source; main body) was (ellipsis) sufficient (Pred. Nom.; satisfactory, adequate),

Greek Text

ἰκανὸν τῷ τοιοῦτῳ ἡ ἐπιτιμία αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων,

Latin Vulgate

sufficit illi qui eiusmodi est obiurgatio haec quae fit a pluribus

LWB 2 Cor. 2:7 So accordingly, good judgment demands that you deal graciously with him all the more and speak words of encouragement, otherwise, in some way, such a person might be overwhelmed with unbearable grief.

KW 2 Cor. 2:7 So that on the contrary you should rather graciously grant forgiveness and encourage and strengthen him lest, possibly, such a person may be swallowed up with his excessive grief.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul recommended this change of policy because the person in question immediately repented and stopped his sinful activity. Since the offender was so quick to respond to public discipline, Paul is quick to recommend getting things back to a relaxed state, assisting the penitent person (by applying doctrinal principles) if necessary.

It would be easy for a person who has been publicly disciplined before all his friends and family to be consumed by grief. Unnecessary sorrow through the refusal of a pardon can make it nigh unto impossible for a believer to get back into fellowship. Forgiveness is extremely important for both parties – for the one who has a prior sin hanging over head, and for the person(s) who was wronged. No one should be irrevocably condemned if they are penitent.

Since this person repented and changed his behavior pattern, forgiveness by the Corinthians was in order. If the person had repented, but continued with the sinful behavior pattern, the doctrine of separation (mental or physical) should have gone into effect. In this case, the excommunication would probably have resumed. The purpose is not to seek revenge for a wrong done, but to correct the sinful behavior.

The words of encouragement Paul had in mind were to restore the person in question to a relaxed, confident and assured emotional state. It is comparable to a pep talk or a rally speech given by a military commander to his troops, except these words should contain Biblical truth, i.e., not just an emotional foray like you might hear in a football locker room (guys) or a coffee shop or aerobics class (girls).

The 1st Culminative Aorist combined with a Resultant Infinitive means “after” the believer in question has repented and changed his incestuous behavior pattern, the Corinthians should be grace-oriented towards him. The 2nd instance instructs them to likewise have a ‘relaxed mental attitude’ towards him and to assist him in regaining his own ‘relaxed mental attitude’ as well.

The Dramatic Aorist combined with a Potential Subjunctive points to the distinct possibility of this person’s grief escalating to an excessive, unbearable “point of no return.” Since he has put his best foot forward, the Corinthians should restore him to their community of believers and not try to inflict further discipline upon him.

The Indefinite Adverb of Occasion points to an outside possibility that there might be some Corinthians who carry a grudge (domineering) and who would like to see this person suffer more (cruelty). It refers to this possibility *indirectly* by assuming the person is highly susceptible to any possible sleight that might crush his grieving soul.

The Latin word ‘consolor’ means to lighten one’s load or to relieve one’s mental anguish. In Christian protocol, this isn’t merely a pat on the back or a warm embrace; the Word of God must be used (applied) to assist the person in getting on the right track.

The Latin word ‘absorbeo’ carries the same dramatic picture of being devoured or engulfed by unbearable grief as the Greek word.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“If such sorrow lasts too long or is felt too acutely, it may have a crushing rather than a remedial effect, and perhaps drive the victim into isolation and despair.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“Undue severity is to be avoided as well as undue leniency. The character which Paul here exhibits reflects the image of our heavenly Father. His word is filled with denunciations against impenitent sinners, and at the same time with assurances of unbounded pity and tenderness towards the penitent. He never breaks the bruised reed or quenches the smoking flax.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“The Greek word often translated ‘comfort’ comes from a physician’s call to a patient to visit his consulting room. It is also used of a person in authority taking a request and delivering proposals to solve an issue; in this case it is quite close to exhortation ... commonly used as encouragement for soldiers. It often contains rational considerations which show the futility and even harmful nature of grief ... repeating the teachings of wisdom from memory ... and even goes as far as providing diversions like riddles and stories as a solace for terrible vexation. It includes sayings which heal the soul ... because true comfort of the soul comes from God alone.” (*TDNT*, Schmitz-Stahlin)

2 Cor. 2:7 So accordingly (superord.), good judgment demands that (Acc. Gen. Ref.; adverbial idiom) you deal graciously with (χαρίζομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Result, Deponent) him (Acc. Adv.) all the more (Adv. Comparison - omitted in some manuscripts) and (continuative) speak words of encouragement (παρακαλέω, AAInf., Constativative, Result; relaxed mental attitude), otherwise (neg. adv.), in some way (indefinite adv. occasion), such a person (Subj. Nom.) might be overwhelmed (καταπίνω, APSubj.3S, Dramatic, Potential; swallowed up) with unbearable (Dat. Measure; excessive) grief (Dat. Disadv.).

Greek Text

ὥστε τοῦναντίον μᾶλλον ὑμᾶς χαρίσασθαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι, μή πως τῇ περισσοτέρῃ λύπῃ καταποθῆ ὁ τοιοῦτος.

Latin Vulgate

ita ut e contra magis donetis et consolemini ne forte abundantiori tristitia absorbeatur qui eiusmodi est

LWB 2 Cor. 2:8 For this reason, I encourage you to prove your virtue love toward him;

KW 2 Cor. 2:8 Wherefore, I beg of you, please, that you confirm publicly and solemnly by a judicial decision your love for him.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The reason Paul “changed his tune” towards this believer is because the goal of Christian discipline is not simply retributive, but also remedial. And the best way to prove to a believer who has changed his *modus operandi* for the better is to convince him that he is back in good standing.

The law of *judicial equity* would suggest that since the sentence of excommunication was a public act, the “welcoming back” to their assembly should also be a public act.

The Dramatic Present shows Paul’s intensity in *pleading* with the Corinthians to encourage the disciplined believer in their midst. This is Paul’s 2nd request for them to be gracious and encouraging to this believer.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“God placed three believers – Hymenaeus, Alexander, and the incestuous Corinthian – in the intensive and dying stages of discipline as a final warning to straighten up or die miserably. Suffering is designed to awaken believers to their reversionism and spurs them back to Bible doctrine and complete recovery, as was the case with the believer in Corinth. But progress under punishment is slow and painful. How much better to learn the easy way – to learn doctrine and to live the spiritual life.” (*Christian Suffering*, R.B. Thieme)

“The apostle is understood to call upon them by a formal act to reinstate the offender in the communion of the church, to assure him of their love, so that he might not have to infer it merely from their treatment of him.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“There is no inconsistency in first ‘binding’ and then ‘loosing’; if your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

2 Cor. 2:8 For this reason (causal), I encourage (παρακαλέω, PA11S, Dramatic) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to prove (κυρόω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; assure,

confirm) your (ellipsis) virtue love (Acc. Dir. Obj.) toward
him (Acc. Rel.);

Greek Text

διὸ παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς κυρῶσαι εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην·

Latin Vulgate

propter quod obsecro vos ut confirmetis in illum
caritatem

LWB 2 Cor. 2:9 Indeed, I also wrote for this purpose, so that I might ascertain your character, whether you are obedient in all manner of things.

KW 2 Cor. 2:9 For with this end in view I wrote in order that I may come to know by experience your approved character, this approval based upon the fact that you met the specifications laid down, whether you are those who are obedient in all things.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What Paul meant by “ascertaining their character” was to prove their integrity by testing them. There are all kinds (different types) of character tests, which in the Christian way of life, all require application of different doctrines from the Word of God to pass. This was not the *only* reason he wrote this letter, but it was *one* of the reasons, shown by his use of the adjunctive “also.”

The Epistolary Aorist is the standard verb form for writing a letter. The Ingressive Aorist means Paul didn’t yet know whether they would be obedient to his excellent advice, but he intended on finding out from how they behaved towards the forgiven offender. The Potential Subjunctive means he hoped to find out by this test, but there was always the possibility that another one might be needed.

By using the Customary Present, Paul is reminding them that mature Christians have no problem following the recommendations of an apostle. That type of obedience is not only Customary and honorable, but also shows good sense. The phrase “all manner of things” is more General Reference than Specification; Paul isn’t trying to control everything in their life (specific precepts), but is imparting wisdom (general principles) for them to live by on many fronts.

The Latin word “experimentum” translates well into the English – Paul was conducting an ‘experiment’ to test their obedience.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The NIV translates verse 9b “to see if you would stand the test”. A more literal translation would be “in order that I might know your character.” Paul was subjecting the Corinthians’ character to examination and approval, by seeing whether they would comply with his directive to punish the offender (which they did) and bring him back into fellowship and thereby reaffirm Paul’s apostolic authority.” (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

“What Paul expected was not obedience to him personally, but obedience to the gospel and its implications. It is significant that throughout his letters Paul consistently bases his ethical demands on the first principles of the gospel, not upon his personal authority. It is to the gospel and its implications that believers must be obedient.” (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“Obedience to legitimate authority is one of the fruits and evidences of Christian sincerity. A rebellious, self-willed, disobedient spirit is a strong indication of an unsanctified heart.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 2:9 Indeed (subordinate), I also (adjunctive) wrote (γράφω, AAI1S, Epistolary) for this purpose (Acc. Purpose), so that (subord.) I might ascertain (γινώσκω, AASubj.1S, Ingressive, Potential; learn) your (Poss. Gen.) character (Acc. Dir. Obj.), whether (interrogative) you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Customary) obedient (Pred. Nom.) in all manner of things (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

Greek Text

εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ἔγραψα, ἵνα γινῶ τὴν δοκιμὴν ὑμῶν, εἰ εἰς πάντα ὑπήκοοί ἐστε.

Latin Vulgate

ideo enim et scripsi ut cognoscam experimentum vestrum
an in omnibus oboedientes sitis

LWB 2 Cor. 2:10 Moreover, to whom you forgive anything, I also; for I also deal graciously, whenever I have forgiven something on your behalf before Christ,

KW 2 Cor. 2:10 Now, to whom you forgive anything, I also forgive, for also that which I myself have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, for your sakes I have forgiven it in the presence of Christ,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says he is willing to join with the Corinthians in forgiving the offender. And since he has forgiven them of other things, for their general welfare, it only makes sense that they reciprocate to the offender.

“Dealing graciously” with someone is a near synonym for “forgiveness”. This same Greek word occurs three times in this sentence, but the flow makes more sense to elaborate (place emphasis) on the ‘gracious aspect’ of forgiveness in the second instance. In other words, it is only appropriate for the Corinthians to be gracious and forgive the person who has offended them, because on many occasions Paul has graciously forgiven them, even before Christ in prayer.

The Customary Present portrays forgiveness as a standard for the Christian way of life when the offending person has made amends, and perhaps even when the offending person has not made amends.

The Dramatic Perfect means it was quite remarkable for Paul to be able to forgive the Corinthians for some of the things they said against him in the past. It would have been easy to take it personally and turn his back on them. When he thought things through, however, he realized it was God’s protocol to forgive them, as attested by the Consummative Perfect tense.

The use of the phrase ‘before Christ’ is an idiom used to express both sincerity and “undisguised rectitude” (Calvin), as well as to elevate the level of seriousness when contemplating the general topic of forgiveness. After all, we were forgiven by Him when we were dead in trespasses and sins, so what right do we have to be unforgiving? It does not mean being in the physical (bodily) presence of Christ, Who is in heaven at the right hand of the Father.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“The significance of the words ‘for your sakes’ is that forgiveness is necessary for the welfare of the Corinthian church, whose apostle he has been called to be.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

“There is no question that Paul had something to forgive, as the general thrust of 2:5-11 and 7:8-13 reveals. Paul also stresses that he had forgiven the offense ‘for your sake’. This may show that the apostle realized his own forgiveness was needed before the Corinthians themselves would feel free to effect reconciliation with the offender. His forgiveness then would be for their sake in that it opened the way for this reconciliation

and thereby the restoration of a sense of well-being in the church.” (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

“Paul’s phrase ‘before Christ’ may be to incline them to mercy. After all, no man can be severe in his judgment who feels that the mild eyes of Christ are fixed upon him.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 2:10 Moreover (continuative), to whom (Dat. Adv.) you forgive (χαρίζομαι, PMI2P, Customary, Deponent) anything (Acc. Dir. Obj.), I also (adj. Pronoun); for (explanatory) I (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) deal graciously (χαρίζομαι, Perf.MInf., Dramatic, Temporal, Deponent; forgive), whenever (temporal) I have forgiven (χαρίζομαι, Perf.MI1S, Comsummative, Deponent) something (Acc. Dir. Obj.) on your behalf (Acc. Adv.) before (face-to-face in prayer or conversation with) Christ (Obj. Gen.),

Greek Text

ὧ δέ τι χαρίζεσθε, κἀγώ· καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ὃ κεχάρισμαι, εἴ τι κεχάρισμαι, δι’ ὑμᾶς ἐν προσώπῳ Χριστοῦ,

Latin Vulgate

cui autem aliquid donatis et ego nam et ego quod donavi si quid donavi propter vos in persona Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 2:11 So we might not be taken advantage of by satan, for we are not ignorant of his methods.

KW 2 Cor. 2:11 In order that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his purposes.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Greek word used “to be taken advantage of” comes from boxing language, in which you have been counter-punched into a corner or wall where there is no escape. It was also a gambling term in which you were outwitted by an accomplished gambler or cheated by a crooked (con) artist.

Satan’s methods are elaborate plots and designs filled with cunning stratagems on how to capture your mind and emotions. He has just the correct crafty contrivances to snare and

enslave you. They are quite artful in their schema and his machinations are secret to nearly everyone around you. He's had milleniums to practice and hone his skills.

The Culminative Aorist tense combined with a Potential Subjunctive points to the distinct possibility that we may be duped (tricked) by satan now and again. But in the end, if we have adequate doctrinal resources in our soul and the ability to apply them to life, the Holy Spirit will assist us in victory over satan's stratagems.

The Customary Present means most believers (and all unbelievers) are completely ignorant of satan's plans and methodology. Paul, however, has previously taught the Corinthians about these things, so they cannot plead ignorance.

The Latin word 'circumvado' means to attack on every side, to overwhelm with superior force, and to terrorize. This describes the overt spiritual warfare we are involved in every day, whether we realize it or not.

The Latin word 'cogitatio' means deliberate, imaginative, well thought out plans for continuing the war. Not every attack is overt; some of satan's attacks on us are subtle diversions and distractions from the Christian way of life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Satan gets an advantage on the church, when church discipline is brought into neglect and contempt, or turned into tyranny, or when he can draw off any person from a church, or keep him out of it." (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

"Satan wants to use God, trying to force Him to discipline believers so severely that they will be distracted from doctrine. In all of Christian history, you will never find an assembly going from apostasy to Bible doctrine – always from Bible doctrine to apostasy." (*Christian Suffering*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

"Satan is a personal being. He exerts great influence over the minds of men. Although finite, and therefore, not ubiquitous, he is nevertheless represented as operating on the minds of men generally, and not merely on those in any one place. His powers of intelligence and agency therefore must be great beyond our conceptions. No individual and no community can ever be sure that his is not plotting their destruction."
(*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 2:11 so (explanatory) we might not (neg. adv.) be taken advantage of (πλεονεκτέω, APSubj.1P, Culminative, Potential) by satan (Gen. Agency), for (explanatory) we are not (neg. adv.) ignorant of (ἀγνοέω, PAI1P, Customary) his (Poss. Gen.) methods (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

ἵνα μὴ πλεονεκτηθῶμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ· οὐ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὰ νοήματα ἀγνοοῦμεν.

Latin Vulgate

ut non circumveniamur a Satana non enim ignoramus cogitationes eius

LWB 2 Cor. 2:12 Furthermore, when I arrived at Troy with the good news about Christ, a door also being opened to me by the Lord,

KW 2 Cor. 2:12 Now, having come to Troas for the purpose of preaching the good news of the Christ, and a door having been opened for me by the Lord,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Troas is old English for ancient Troy, a port of embarkation for Macedonia. God's geographical will for Paul was in Troy, not Corinth. The Lord had opened a door there (an opening to administer the gospel with absolute certainty of results) for Paul. He didn't mind being in Troy, though, because he planned to meet Titus there; unfortunately for Paul, Titus didn't make it to Troy.

The Culminative Aorist means Troy was the next destination in Paul's travel itinerary, not just a stopping off place for supplies. Accompanying him (a figurative expression) was the gospel, which he was able to administer by going through a divinely opened door (metaphor) provided by the Lord.

The Intensive Perfect tense points to the supernatural means that provided this open door. The Genitive Absolute points to its being opened for a purpose that would absolutely (no doubt) come to fruition. Paul didn't have to wonder if he would have evangelistic success in Troy.

The Adjunctive "also" (or an Ascensive "even") could be used to preface the parenthetical "a door being opened to me by the Lord". It's possible that Paul was sarcastically saying: "By the way ... God opened this door for me, I didn't choose it myself." The Passive voice emphasizes that he didn't open the door to Troy himself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"This whole epistle is an itinerary." (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Vincent)

“Paul did not wish to come to Corinth until he had learned the state of their affairs, until he had first had a conversation with Titus. He afterwards learned from the report brought him by Titus (but they didn’t meet in Troy) that matters were at that time not yet ripe for his coming to them.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

“A door is shut, when no prospect of usefulness is held out. Now as, on the door being shut, it becomes us to enter upon a new course, rather than by farther efforts to weary ourselves to no purpose by useless labor. But this door was opened, the evidence of a divine call.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

2 Cor. 2:12 Furthermore (continuative), when (temporal) I arrived (ἔρχομαι, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent) at Troy (Acc. Place) with the good news (Acc. Accompaniment) about Christ (Adv. Gen. Ref.), a door (Obj. Gen.; way of access) also (adjunctive) being opened (ἀνοίγω, Perf.PPtc.GFS, Intensive, Circumstantial, Genitive Absolute) to me (Dat. Adv.) by the Lord (Instr. Agency),

Greek Text

Ἐλθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν Τρωάδα εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θύρας μοι ἀνεωγμένης ἐν κυρίῳ,

Latin Vulgate

cum venissem autem Troadem propter evangelium Christi et ostium mihi apertum esset in Domino

LWB 2 Cor. 2:13 I had no relief in my spirit due to not finding Titus my brother, so after saying goodbye to them, I departed for Macedonia.

KW 2 Cor. 2:13 I have had no relaxation in my spirit because I did not find Titus, my brother, but having bidden them farewell, I went off to Macedonia.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul was full of mental attitude sins (fear, restlessness, anxiety) concerning Titus. He was so overcome with worry, that he was unable to find refreshment in Troy. What he needed was some R&R from all his travels, a chance to release some mental pressure and recover his relaxed mental attitude. Instead, he ignored God’s geographical will and left Troy to chase after Titus in Macedonia.

The Dramatic Preterit Perfect accentuates the strain of anxiety Paul is experiencing due to the inability to rest and relax while in Troy.

The Constative Aorist means that at that point in time Paul had not been able to locate Titus. The rare Instrumental Infinitive (almost causal) means his inability to find Titus was the cause for his restlessness while in Troy.

The Constative Aorist points to the moment when Paul said ‘goodbye’ to the Trojans. The Temporal Participle means he didn’t leave until after saying ‘goodbye’, i.e. he didn’t slip out in the night and leave his friends in Troy wondering what had happened.

The Culminative Aorist means after all these things had occurred, he finally left town.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Paul was concerned for the safety of Titus in travel, particularly if he was carrying the completed Corinthian collection.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

“Paul expected to meet Titus in Troy, and to learn from him the state of things in Corinth, and especially the effect produced by his former letter. It seems that he regarded this as a turning point in the history of that church. If they submitted to his authority and corrected the abuses which he had pointed out ... then he had hopes of their stability in faith and progress in holiness. But if they refused to regard his injunctions, and persisted in the course on which they had entered, then he foresaw their speedy destruction. So much was at stake that he could not endure the state of suspense which he was in.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“While he had an open door in Troy to preach the gospel, he could not sit still to do that work but decided to go to Macedonia and find Titus as he was returning from Corinth. The situation worried Paul so much that he left a good opportunity to evangelize to find out what was happening.” (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

2 Cor. 2:13 **I had** (ἔχω, Perf.AIIS, Dramatic, Preterit) **no** (neg. adv.) **relief** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; self-abandonment) **in my** (Poss. Gen.) **spirit** (Loc. Sph.; mind, human spirit) **due to** (causal) **not** (neg. adv.) **finding** (εὕρισκω, AAIInf., Constative, Instr. Inf., Articular) **Titus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **my** (Gen. Rel.) **brother** (Acc. Appos.), **so** (adversative) **after saying goodbye** (ἀποτάσσω, AMPtc.NMS, Constative, Temporal; bid farewell) **to them** (Dat. Ind. Obj.), **I departed** (ἐξέρχομαι, AAIIS, Culminative, Deponent; “got the hell out of Troas”) **for Macedonia** (Acc. Preference).

Greek Text

οὐκ ἔσχηκα ἀνεσιν τῷ πνεύματί μου τῷ μὴ εὐρεῖν με Τίτον τὸν ἀδελφόν μου, ἀλλὰ ἀποταξάμενος αὐτοῖς ἐξῆλθον εἰς Μακεδονίαν.

Latin Vulgate

non habui requiem spiritui meo eo quod non invenerim Titum fratrem meum sed valefaciens eis profectus sum in Macedoniam

LWB 2 Cor. 2:14 However, thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumph in Christ and brings to life the fragrant scent of His consideration for us in every geographical location.

KW 2 Cor. 2:14 Now, thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in the Christ and makes known the aroma of the experiential knowledge of himself through us in every place,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of his anxiety and failure to completely capitalize on the opened door in Troy, Paul was victorious through Christ Jesus. He used the ‘grace provision’ provided by God called “confession,” in which he confessed his sins privately to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ by means of the Holy Spirit. The use of this grace provision led to his ultimate triumph. Paul’s phrase ‘leads us in triumph’ is the same phrase used when a victorious general (leading his prisoners) paraded through the packed streets of Rome.

The Father leads us in triumph in Christ when we utilize His divine protocol for restoration to fellowship – private confession of sins, otherwise called the “rebound technique” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.). When we confess our sins to Him, He restores us to a state of fellowship in which He can bless us once again. He gave us this divine protocol because of His thoughtful care and concern for us. Christians who are in fellowship with the Lord are a fragrant scent to the Lord; Christians who are out of fellowship stink to the 3rd heaven!

When Paul left Troy to search for Titus in Macedonia, he ignored God’s geographical will for his life at that time. But since he confessed his worry and anxiety as sin, God blessed his trip to Macedonia anyway. That’s grace.

There is no verb in the first part of this sentence (ellipsis), so one (“be”) has to be supplied from the context. “Thanks be to God” is used since the context appears to be

both thanksgiving for deliverance and thanksgiving for allowing Paul to be victorious in spite of his leaving Troy so soon.

The two Iterative Present tenses means He leads us in triumph and brings thoughtful consideration to us every single time we utilize His grace provision. His immutability and veracity demand it. As long as we are staying in fellowship with Him, we are being led on this triumphant walk every day! The word “always” implies continuous action throughout our life, when the condition (confession) is met.

Some translators believe “scent” and “knowledge” are in Apposition, “so that the knowledge of Christ is symbolized as an odour communicating its nature and efficacy through the apostle’s work” (Vincent). I believe “scent” is the Direct Object with “consideration” being a further description of that scent as General Reference. That places the nature of God’s “fragrant scent of consideration” upon every believer who walks in fellowship, not just Paul. Vincent doesn’t address why the phrase “for us” is in the Greek if this odour refers only to Paul. John Gill says the “us” refers only to ministers of the gospel, but I see no reason for such a narrow distinction.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Not all the details of this picture are to be pressed. The apostles, as well as Christians in general, may be either exultant soldiers who share in the benefits of Christ’s victory or willing captives who count it a privilege to be part of God’s triumph. The metaphor is certainly suggestive: Christ undertook a battle not rightly His; we share in a triumph not rightly ours.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

“Knowledge (consideration) here, as so often elsewhere in Scripture, means not merely intellectual cognition, but spiritual apprehension and recognition.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 2:14 However (contrast), thanks (Subj. Nom.; thanksgiving) be (ellipsis) to God (Dat. Adv.; the Father), Who (Dat. Ref.) always (adjectival; after we confess) leads us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in triumph (θριαμβεύω, PAPtc.DMS, Iterative, Substantival) in Christ (Loc. Sph.) and (continuative) brings to life (φανερῶω, PAPtc.DMS, Iterative, Substantival) the fragrant scent (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the sweet smell of victory) of His (Poss. Gen.) consideration (Adv. Gen. Ref.; thoughtfulness, knowledge) for us (Gen. Adv.) in every (Dat. Spec.) geographical location (Loc. Place.).

Greek Text

Τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις τῷ πάντοτε θριαμβεύοντι ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ τὴν ὁσμὴν τῆς γνώσεως αὐτοῦ φανεροῦντι δι’ ἡμῶν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ.

Latin Vulgate

Deo autem gratias qui semper triumphat nos in Christo Iesu et odorem notitiae suae manifestat per nos in omni loco

LWB 2 Cor. 2:15 For we are a fragrant aroma of Christ to God, among those who are being delivered and among those who are perishing;

KW 2 Cor. 2:15 Because a fragrance of Christ we are to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,

KJV 2 Cor. 2:15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The “we” who are described as “a fragrant aroma of Christ” would include the apostolic preachers of the Word of God in Paul’s day and ministers today, as well as all believers who have spread the Word of God throughout history up to this very moment. The “fragrant aroma” is not our perfume or deoderant, but the fragrance of the Word of Christ that we speak everywhere we go.

Paul is dividing his listeners into two mutually exclusive groups. The question is, are these two groups positional (one group believers, the other group unbelievers) or experiential (one group growing believers awaiting divine blessing, the other group carnal believers awaiting divine discipline). The reference to “those who are being delivered” and “those who are perishing” is either positional or experiential, but doubtfully both. If this is a positional reference, then “those who are being delivered” are believers and “those who are perishing” are unbelievers. If this is an experiential reference, then “those who are being delivered” are believers who have confessed their sins and are being brought through life’s trying experiences, and “those who are perishing” are carnal Christians who are a disgrace to Christ and a curse to everyone around them.

The Present Participles favor the experiential interpretation of this verse. In addition to verb tense, please keep in mind that when the word “salvation” occurs in the English versions, it means "deliverance from hell" about 40% of the time. The other 60% comprises “deliverance from troubles” or “patient endurance”, an aspect of experiential sanctification. The word “perish” should also be carefully examined. When you see the word “perish” in the English versions, it does not always mean “going to hell”. It is also used for a person who has “lost his usefulness” or has “lost his reward” at the judgment seat of Christ. It also means “to be shattered, deeply hurt, or crushed.” Context has to decide whether these words are to be used positionally or experientially.

“Those who are being delivered” (Descriptive Present) are receiving this deliverance (Passive Voice) from a divine source; this is Advantageous (Dative) to them. “Those who are perishing” (Descriptive Present) are perishing because of themselves (Middle Voice); this is Disadvantageous (Dative) to them. Take note of this contrast, because it continues in the next verse. As mentioned before, I favor the experiential interpretation of this verse.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“It is not merely a sweet odor *produced* by Christ, but Christ Himself is the savour which exhales in their character and work.” (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Vincent)

“Notice the parallel thought where Paul likens the gospel to a fragrance or an aroma of Christ. To those being saved it is an aroma of life; to those perishing, an aroma of death. The gospel, or aroma, is the same! The difference is in those smelling the fragrance and not in the fragrance itself.” (J. Piper)

“We ourselves in so far as we realize and manifest our membership of Christ are, in fact, that aroma. The influence of the lives of believers is sweet and penetrative, like that of incense. From this verse comes the phrase “the odour of sanctity” – “among them that are being saved and among them that are perishing.” It is difficult to understand why the American Committee of Revisers objected to this (experiential) rendering, and translated “are saved ... perish”. The force of the Present Participles ought not to be overlooked; men in this world (believers) are either in the way of life or the way of death. Volition involves the possibility alike of falling away from a state of grace, or of repentance from a state of sin.” (*2 Corinthians*, J.H. Bernard)

“It is certain, however, that this commendation (being an aroma of Christ) is applicable to all the ministers of the gospel, because wherever there is a pure and unvarnished proclamation of the gospel, there will be found there the influence of that odor of which Paul speaks here. At the same time, there is no doubt, that he speaks particularly of himself, and those that were like him. The odor itself is grateful to God – that by which the elect are refreshed unto salvation, and that from which the wicked receive a deadly shock. Whatever it may be, it is never preached in vain, but has invariably an effect, either for life, or for death.” (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

“Syntactically, verse 15 is ambiguous so that several translations are possible.” (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelein)

2 Cor. 2:15 **For** (explanatory) **we** (believers only) **are** (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) **a fragrant aroma** (Pred. Nom.) **of Christ** (Gen. Poss.; belonging to Him) **to God** (Dat. Adv.; the Father), **among those** (Dat. Adv.; on the one hand) **who are being delivered** (σώζω, PPtc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantial) **and** (connective) **among those** (Dat. Disadv.; on the other

hand) **who are perishing** (ἀπόλλυμι, PMPtc.DMP, Descriptive, Substantival);

Greek Text

ὅτι Χριστοῦ εὐωδία ἐσμέν τῷ θεῷ ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις,

Latin Vulgate

quia Christi bonus odor sumus Deo in his qui salvi fiunt et in his qui pereunt

LWB 2 Cor. 2:16 On the one hand, one is a foul odor from the dying unto death; on the other hand, one is a fragrant scent from the living unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

KW 2 Cor. 2:16 To the one, an odor proceeding from death resulting in death, and to the other, an aroma proceeding from life resulting in life. And who is sufficient for these things?

KJV 2 Cor. 2:16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This verse is also seen as positional or experiential, depending on one's theological framework. If it is seen as positional, the "dying unto death" are the non-elect (unbelievers) who do not heed the gospel; the "living unto life" are the elect (believers) who have been saved. If it is seen as experiential, the "dying unto death" are martyrs that were about to be executed for preaching the gospel; the "living unto life" are those who are preaching the gospel and like Paul, have not reached their appointed time to die.

This is an elliptical phrase in which all verbs must be supplied by the translator according to context. The "men ... de" Paul uses is a classic debater's technique for providing a contrast: "one the one hand ... on the other hand". The word for "aroma" is the same in the Greek, but due to the stark contrast between the two listening groups, it must be translated "odor" for the negative and "fragrance" for the positive.

When you think about it from man's perspective, preaching the gospel is an awesome responsibility, since the consequences for the listener are so profound. Without the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the guaranteed success of the message (regardless of how it is accepted), who would undertake such a task?

There is also a possibility that these verses are experiential, meaning the Word of God is able to transform the inner life of the believer who heeds God's plan (from the living

unto life) or is able to haunt and eventually bring divine discipline upon the believer who ignores the Word (from the dying unto death) after salvation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“It is then not a savour of death or of life, but a savour arising from death, and a savour arising from life. To the one class Christ is dead and yields only a savour of death; to the other, he is alive, and yields a savour of life. Christ and His gospel, and therefore His ministers, are to believers the source of life, and to unbelievers the source of death. The word of God is quick and powerful either to save or to destroy.” (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

“The figure is carried out with reference to the different effects of the Gospel, as preached by the apostles, upon different persons. The divine fragrance itself may have, to Christ’s enemies, the effect of a deadly odor.” (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Vincent)

“Christ’s coming, His life, and His proclamation of truth would result in the salvation of some, but also result in the hardening of others.” (*God Forgives Sinners*, W.E. Best)

“Paul’s answer is not fully expressed, but the sequence of thought is this: “it might be thought that no one is sufficient for such a task; and yet we are, for we are not as the many,” etc; an answer which he is careful to explain and qualify in verse 5 of the next chapter, lest he should be accused of undue confidence.” (*2 Corinthians*, J.H. Bernard)
“Confession of personal incapacity is thus accompanied by confession of God as the basis of all personal capacity.” (TDNT Vol. 3, Karl Rengstorf)

“Living” or “dying” is also seen as a walk as such, not only in the fact that it rests on the prior gift of justification, but also in the fact that it is not self-enclosed as individual life. Life (or death) propagates itself in the word of preaching, i.e. the believer does not have “life” for himself alone in the inwardness of his spiritual life, but stands in the history established by the act of salvation, in which this “life” is for those who obey.” (*TDNT Vol. 2*, Rudolph Bultmann)

“The Gospel preached by Christ’s faithful ministers is the means of quickening souls, and giving them spiritual life (positional truth), and of supporting and maintaining that life and of nourishing them up unto eternal life (experiential), and so becomes “the savour of life” spiritual, “unto life” eternal.” (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

“The words of the Torah are an elixir of life for Israel and a deadly poison to the nations of the world. The Word of God is both life-giving perfume and a death-dealing drug, just as the Torah had a beneficial effect upon those who received and obeyed it and a lethal effect upon those who rejected it.” (*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelain)

2 Cor. 2:16 On the one hand (contrast, coord. conj.), one (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) a foul odor (Pred. Nom.) from the dying (Subj. Gen.) unto death (Adv. Acc.); on the other hand (contrast, coord. conj.), one (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) a fragrant scent (Pred. Nom.) from the living (Subj. Gen.) unto life (Adv. Acc.). And (continuative) who (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) sufficient (Pred. Nom.; equal to, fit, prepared, responsible, adequate) for these things (Dat. Ind. Obj.)?

Greek Text

οἷς μὲν ὁσμὴ ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον, οἷς δὲ ὁσμὴ ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν. καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ἰκανός;

Latin Vulgate

aliis quidem odor mortis in mortem aliis autem odor vitae in vitam et ad haec quis tam idoneus

LWB 2 Cor. 2:17 For we are not like the majority who peddle the Word of God for profit, but rather as those with pure motives, and not only this but also as from God, we communicate by means of Christ in the sight of God.

KW 2 Cor. 2:17 For we are not as the many who are adulterating the word of God, but as of an unadulterated, unsullied purity of character, but as from God we are speaking in the sight of God in Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 2:17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The “we” refers to Paul and his colleagues who were expounding Bible doctrine accurately. Like today, that is a minority position, because the majority of ministers do not study the Word properly, do not learn and use the scholastic exegesis tools, and have learned slick ways to corrupt the Bible so as to make a living off the unsuspecting. Paul calls these ministers “hucksters”, men who peddle (make illegitimate money) from their position of authority in the church.

The Descriptive Present adds non-complementary details about these ministers, comparing them (in the Greek) to wine-dealers who, after they have made a sale, mix water with their wine in order to make a larger profit. A minister that fits this comparison would be one that knows a little truth, but mixes considerable error with it in order to

gouge their listener's wallets, i.e. the "name it and claim it" holyroller, charismatic, prosperity teachers (heretics) that we hear so often on radio and television.

Paul contrasts himself (and his colleagues) by reminding the Corinthians of his personal integrity, as well as his divine commission from God. Evidently, most of the false teachers were self-appointed and self-annointed as well, not having a reputation of honesty or integrity among legitimate ministers of the Word. Paul also uses the Customary Present to contrast the legitimate, minority ministers of the Word of God who teach by means of Christ in the sight of God, as opposed to the majority who have their own program, i.e. they preach a Gospel of a different kind.

The Latin Vulgate uses the excellent word "adultero" to describe what the false teachers are doing: they are committing spiritual adultery, taking the pure Word of God and commingling it with a forged, counterfeit, corrupted version of their own making. And since they are primarily doing this for fame and fortune, that makes them prostitutes.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Mixing the Word with such foreign elements as civil religion, current philosophies, schools of psychology, political affiliations, and personal predilections is to take the powerful Word of God and to make it ineffective, weak, and despised in the eyes of our contemporaries. (*Toward An Exegetical Theology*, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.)

Paul is sending them a letter so they can get acquainted again – sanctified sarcasm. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul is using a piece of forensic rhetoric called the "propositio", in which the statement is to be proved true or false by the arguments that follow in the discourse. He has been charged by the false teachers as not being an apostle, because he refuses to accept patronage, all the while secretly bilking money from the Corinthians through his appeal for the collection for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. His behavior shows him to be a dishonest schemer, as opposed to those who are currently in Corinth and are only accepting support and who have legitimate letters of reference. Paul is also combatting the charge that he failed to make good on his own promises, and is therefore inconsistent, if not a liar. Then he is accused of taking money out of the collection plate while publicly making a show of refusing support. Paul, therefore, in order to defend himself, delivers a "synkrisis" or comparison of himself, along with his motives and actions, with those who truly are hucksters and profiteers, the false apostles. "Probatio" and "refutatio" are thus pursued together throughout. (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

Paul refuses to take money for his teaching, not only because he has a different pedagogical model in mind, but also because he believes that there is something about the character of the gospel that requires that it be offered free of charge to the unbelieving world. Paul sought to avoid accepting patronage in Corinth because it would commit him to the wrong sort of reciprocity, bind him to a particular location, and place him in a

socially inferior position that would make it very difficult to him to “be all things” to people of varying social status. To accept a gift involved one in “an inescapable train of obligations,” but to refuse a gift was no easier, for one then incurred the burden of enmity. Paul was trying to force the Corinthians to rethink social relationships in the light of Christ. He wants them to see him as their benefactor, not as their client. The Philippians understood, but some Corinthians did not, that the giving and receiving between Paul and his converts had to be on a basis (gracious gift, benevolence) that did not turn him into someone’s client.” (*Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relations with the Corinthians*, P. Marshall)

2 Cor. 2:17 For (explanatory) we are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) like (comparative) the majority (Subj. Nom.; many, great swarms) who peddle (make merchandise of) the Word (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Poss. Gen.) for profit (καπηλεύω, PAptc.NMP, Descriptive, Substantival; tavern-keeper, low-life merchant), but rather (contrast) as (comparative) those (ellipsis) with pure motives (Abl. Means; integrity, faithfulness), and not only this but also (adding emphasis to the contrast) as (comparative) from God (Abl. Source; divine commission, not self-appointed), we communicate (λαλέω, PAI1P, Customary) by means of Christ (Abl. Means, in fellowship; “in Christ”: Loc. Sph.) in the sight of God (Gen. Presence; the Father).

Greek Text

οὐ γάρ ἐσμεν ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐξ εἰλικρινείας, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν.

Latin Vulgate

non enim sumus sicut plurimi adulterantes verbum Dei sed ex sinceritate sed sicut ex Deo coram Deo in Christo loquimur

Chapter 3

LWB 2 Cor. 3:1 Should we ourselves begin once more to recommend ourselves? Or do we not need to have, like others, letters of recommendation to you or letters from you?

KW 2 Cor. 3:1 Are we beginning again to be commending ourselves? Or, we do not need, as some, commendatory letters to you or commendatory letters from you, do we?

KJV 2 Cor. 3:1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's sanctified sarcasm is so strong in these questions! Paul asks them (taunts them really) if he and his colleagues, who were responsible for the Corinthians even being Christians, should introduce themselves all over again, as if they were strangers who had never met. He uses the Customary Present tense, because such an introduction would be the customary thing to do. Then he barbs it by using the Iterative Present, asking the Corinthians whether they should reintroduce themselves every time they write or visit Corinth!

Since the false teachers had forged letters from either Paul or "highly exalted members" of the Jerusalem church, Paul asks if maybe he should bring letters (forged as well) to assure them who his is. Since Paul is the supposed author of some of the forged recommendation letters, and the others allegedly come from Jerusalem where they (including Peter) had already deferred Corinth to Paul, just who should recommend him to them? The letters "to you" would be from believers in other cities, while the letters "from you" would be introductions from believers within Corinth itself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is absurd that anyone should require Paul to bring such letters to the Corinthian church when he was its founding apostle. Thus Paul's question expects an emphatic 'No' as an answer. (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

Jewish opponents armed with such letters had gone to Corinth to discredit him. (*Revised New Bible Commentary - 2 Corinthians*, Guthrie/Motyer) The false teachers had exalted themselves at Paul's expense. So when he compares his ministry to that of the opponents and looks at the expectations of some of the Corinthians, he resorts to parody, irony, and sarcasm, using an anti-Sophistic approach and boasting in weakness, suffering, humiliation, his inadequate rhetorical skills, and the like. (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

Paul cannot entertain for a moment the thought that the Corinthians were so forgetful of his ministry as to need a further testimony to his own credentials. (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker) They would have to deny their own faith and pneumatic experience. They had received the Spirit through Paul's apostolic ministry! (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

2 Cor. 3:1 Should we ourselves (like strangers) begin (ἀρχω, PMiIP, Customary, Interrogative) once more (adj.; yet again) to recommend (συνίστημι, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.)? Or (coord.) do we not

(neg. adv.) need to have (χρήζω, PAIIP, Dramatic, Interrogative), like (comparative) others (Adv. Gen. Ref.; false teachers), letters of recommendation (Obj. Gen.) to you (Acc. Gen. Ref.) or (coord.) letters (Obj. Gen.; personal) from you (Abl. Source)?

Greek Text

Ἀρχόμεθα πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνειν; ἢ μὴ χρῆζομεν ὡς τινες συστατικῶν ἐπιστολῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἢ ἐξ ὑμῶν;

Latin Vulgate

incipimus iterum nosmet ipsos commendare aut numquid egemus sicut quidam commendaticiiis epistulis ad vos aut ex vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 3:2 You are the embodiment of our letter, which was written by our minds, having been recognized and repeatedly studied and exegeted by all manner of men,

KW 2 Cor. 3:2 As for you, you are our letter which has been permanently engraved in our hearts, and which is being known and read by all men.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By using the Descriptive Present tense, Paul tells the Corinthian believers (in a clever metaphor) that they themselves are the embodiment of his recommendation letter, his credentials to the unbelieving world. In the same breath, this letter that they embody was put into writing by Paul under (Intensive Perfect) intense pressures, and is now called *First Corinthians*.

The use of ‘kardia’ in the Greek does not refer to the physical human heart, but represents the right lobe of the human soul, in this case, the mentality of Paul and his colleagues (primarily Timothy and Silvanus). A lot of serious thought was put into that letter.

The Historical Present means that Paul’s letter called 1st Corinthians was recognized as being authentic, both as to his authorship (genuineness) and eventually its canonicity. Due to this recognition, the Iterative Present points to the continual studying and translating of Paul’s letter into many languages around the world. In Paul’s day, this meant men throughout the entire Roman Empire took great interest in his letter.

The Greek word “anaginosko” doesn’t mean men just read it casually like they would a newspaper. Every word was studied, down to the level of minutia, and then it was read publicly, in the same manner that law courts recite a legal case or a political assembly reads an amendment to a bill. What was written was of immense importance to all people concerned, so great pains were taken to get it translated and read correctly.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The very existence of the Corinthian church testified to the effectiveness and authenticity of Paul’s ministry. They were his letter of recommendation. (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

Paul’s letter (epistle) presents different faces in rapid succession. The letter (1) relates to the apostle’s own consciousness, (2) relates to the Corinthians themselves, and (3) relates to others outside of the Corinthian church. (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Marvin Vincent)

The Corinthians themselves are authentic testimony to Paul’s work, for their astounding transformation is known everywhere. Each Christian in that profligate city is a letter from Christ ... written not with ink, which was washable and the tool of men, but with the life-giving Spirit. The authentic Gospel, as preached by Paul, inscribed the new covenant not on tables of stone, as in the case of the old covenant, but on tablets that are human hearts that are reachable only by divine action. (*Revised New Bible Commentary - 2 Corinthians*, Guthrie/Motyer)

The knowledge of God is said to be “written on the heart” when the knowledge of it is inward and not merely outward. Any thing of which a man is certain, or of which he has a conviction founded upon his inward experience, may be said to be written on his heart. It was a letter which Paul could neither misunderstand nor be ignorant of. (*Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 3:2 You (Subj. Nom.) are the embodiment of (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive; legitimacy) our (Poss. Gen.) letter (Pred. Nom.), which was written (ἐγγράφω, Perf.PPTc.NFS, Intensive, Attributive) by our (Poss. Gen.) minds (Instr. Means; mentality), having been recognized (γινώσκω, PPPTc.NFS, Historical, Circumstantial; genuine, not counterfeit) and (connective) repeatedly studied and exegeted (ἀναγινώσκω, PPPTc.NFS, Iterative, Circumstantial) by all manner (Gen. Spec.) of men (Abl. Agency),

Greek Text

ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἡμῶν ὑμεῖς ἐστε, ἐγγεγραμμένη ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, γινωσκομένη καὶ ἀναγινωσκομένη ὑπὸ πάντων ἀνθρώπων,

Latin Vulgate

epistula nostra vos estis scripta in cordibus nostris
quae scitur et legitur ab omnibus hominibus

LWB 2 Cor. 3:3 which reveals that you are the embodiment of a letter of Christ which was prepared under our authority, not written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets, but on the human tablets of the mind.

KW 2 Cor. 3:3 You are those who are openly shown to be a letter which exhibits Christ, this letter having been ministered by us, not having been written with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets that are human hearts.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All this study and translation of 1st Corinthians reveals (Dramatic Present) to the readers and listeners that the Corinthians are indeed the embodiment of a letter dictated by Christ through the Holy Spirit to Paul. This is a reference primarily to the Corinthians, acting as test cases (subjects) for others, but all believers in a sense are “personal letters” of Christ.

The Ingressive Aorist points to Paul’s initial evangelizing of the Corinthians in times past, as well as his subsequent teaching to them through his first letter. Both Attributive Participles point to the Corinthian church as examples, as well as Paul’s actual letter. Paul and the other apostles were given the authority to write letters which would eventually become our canon of Scripture.

The Dramatic Perfect takes us back to when the Mosaic Law was written, but the Corinthians are not under the authority of the law, but under the Spirit of the living God. Their letter is not the commandments written on stone and delivered by Moses to the Israelites, but one that is written on their very minds (hearts). The tablets of stone showed veiled glory, while the Corinthians show an unveiled glory.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul sees the Corinthians as a “living letter” dictated by Christ, but “enscribed” by Paul through the apostolic ministry of gospel proclamation. A scribe works using pen and ink, but an apostle ministers in the power of the Spirit. Paul and his co-workers are ministers of the new covenant. By the grace of God, the results effected (by the Corinthians) became letters authenticating and commending the very ministry by which they were produced. (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

The work of regeneration and sanctification is always represented in the Scripture as a much higher manifestation of divine power and grace than any mere external miracle. To this the apostle evidently refers to show that the evidence of his mission was of a higher character than that of Moses, and that his ministry was far more exalted and glorious. (*Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

The apostle conceives of himself as his Master's amanuensis ... not writing with ink on a papyrus roll, but the mystical imprint of the Divine Spirit in their hearts. (*2 Corinthians*, J.H. Bernard) So the ultimate proof of Paul's genuineness was to be found not in written characters, but in human characters. So Paul delivers a powerful rebuttal to his opponents. His commendatory letter had been written before theirs; it was indelible, it was widely circulated, not confidential or unpublished; its author was Christ, not a partisan group within the Jerusalem church. (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

The Genitive case as regards the letter could be "written by Christ" if in the Subjective, or "written about Christ" if in the Objective, or "belonging to Christ" if in the Possessive. (*Word Meanings in the New Testament*, Ralph Earle)

2 Cor. 3:3 which reveals (φανερῶ, PPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Attributive; proof positive) that (coord.) you are the embodiment of (εἰμί, PAI2P, Descriptive) a letter (Pred. Nom.; epistle) of Christ (Subj. Gen.) which was prepared (διακονέω, APPTc.NFS, Ingressive, Attributive; ministered) under our authority (Abl. Agency; including Timothy and Titus), not (neg. adv.) written (ἐγγράφω, Perf.PPTc.NFS, Dramatic, Modal) with ink (Instr. Manner), but (contrast) with the Spirit (Instr. Means) of the living (ζάω, PAPtc.GMS, Descriptive, Attributive) God (Gen. Rel.), not (neg. adv.) on stone (Dat. Descr.) tablets (Dat. Ind. Obj.), but (contrast) on the human (Dat. Descr.; fleshy) tablets (Dat. Ind. Obj.) of the mind (Dat. Ref.; right lobe of the soul).

Greek Text

φανερούμενοι ὅτι ἐστὲ ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ διακοινηθεῖσα ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ἐγγεγραμμένη οὐ μέλανι ἀλλὰ πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος, οὐκ ἐν πλαξίν λιθίναις ἀλλ' ἐν πλαξίν καρδίαις σαρκίναίς.

Latin Vulgate

manifestati quoniam epistula estis Christi ministrata a nobis et scripta non atramento sed Spiritu Dei vivi non in tabulis lapideis sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus

LWB 2 Cor. 3:4 Moreover, we keep on having such confidence face-to-face with God through Christ,

KW 2 Cor. 3:4 And such confidence are we having through the Christ towards God.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the Iterative Present means they repeatedly have this confidence. It's not a one-shot deal and then it's over for good. Nor is it solely a matter of personal initiative; the Holy Spirit takes an active role. If your knowledge of Bible doctrine continues to grow, you will have this same confidence, because the Word is the Mind of Christ.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This confidence in the divinity and glory of his mission, and in his sufficiency for the apostleship, he had from Christ and in the presence of God. It was a confidence so strong (and yet so humble) that it did not quail even under the eye of God; much less therefore under the scrutiny of the bleared eyes of his opponents. This confidence he had through Christ. It was not self-confidence. It was not the consciousness of superior excellence, but a conviction of the Truth of the Gospel and of the reality of that vocation he had received from Christ. It was not a conclusion from his inward and outward experience, it was one of the forms in which the Spirit of God which was in him manifested itself. (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

2 Cor. 3:4 Moreover (coord.), we keep on having (ἔχω, PAI1P, Iterative) such (Acc. Comparison; similar) confidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.) face-to-face with God (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the Father) through Christ (Gen. Agency),

Greek Text

Πεποίθησιν δὲ τοιαύτην ἔχομεν διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

Latin Vulgate

fiduciam autem talem habemus per Christum ad Deum

LWB 2 Cor. 3:5 Not that we ourselves are competent to think anything as if out from ourselves, but rather our competency is out from God,

KW 2 Cor. 3:5 Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to evaluate anything, this evaluation originating from ourselves, but our sufficiency has its source in God,

KJV 2 Cor. 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul rightly denies any accusation that he is self-sufficient, even to the point of saying that nothing whatsoever originates from himself, but always from God as the Source. Those who reject Paul's teaching, therefore, are not rejecting Paul as a person, nor are they rejecting some philosophy that he dreamed up, rather they are rejecting Christ and His Word.

Paul's use of the Greek word "logizomai" points to "thinking" by strict logical rules, i.e. not sloppy thinking. It is the typical term for the non-emotional philosopher seeking suprapersonal knowledge, the essence of objectivity. Personal and emotional overtones are alien to the Greek. It's also used for charging one's account in the financial sense. Paul is countering any accusations against himself by disavowing his ability to even "think" of such a plan as God's no matter how trained his mind was nor the amount of objective effort he put into it. He is also indirectly placing his arrogant opponents in the same category of inability.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What made the apostle so confident about his ministry, in spite of all the difficulties, misunderstandings and trials that it involved, was the certainty that on his own initiative and by the light of his own unaided intellect, he could never have devised or comprehended anything so good or so gracious as the gospel. It was God, and God alone, who had revealed His Son in him, Who had illuminated his understanding so that he could comprehend the truth as it is in Jesus, and Who had sent him forth to proclaim Christ to the Gentiles. By God's grace, and by nothing else, he was what he was. (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

All our sufficiency is of God, to Him therefore are owing all the praise and glory of that good which is done, and from Him we must receive grace and strength to do more. This is true concerning ministers and all Christians; the best are no more than what the grace of God makes them. Our hands are not sufficient for us, but our sufficiency is of God; and His grace is sufficient for us, to furnish us for every good word and work. (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

It is less to "think" than to "will." So how foolish a part do those act, who arrogate to themselves a right "will," when Paul does not leave them so much as the power of "thinking" correctly. (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

2 Cor. 3:5 Not (neg. adv.) that (coord.) we ourselves (Gen. Source) are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) competent (Pred. Nom. ;

qualified, adequate) to think (λογίζομαι, AMInf., Constativ, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) anything (Acc. Dir. Obj.; whatsoever) as if (subord.) out (originating) from ourselves (Gen. Source), but rather (contrast) our (Poss. Gen.) competency (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) out from God (Gen. Source),

Greek Text

οὐχ ὅτι ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἱκανοί ἐσμεν λογίσασθαί τι ὡς ἐξ ἑαυτῶν, ἀλλ' ἡ ἱκανότης ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ,

Latin Vulgate

non quod sufficientes simus cogitare aliquid a nobis quasi ex nobis sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est

LWB 2 Cor. 3:6 Who also made us capable ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter always kills, but the Spirit always makes alive.

KW 2 Cor. 3:6 Who also made us sufficient as those who minister a testament, new in quality, not of the letter [of the law] but of the Spirit, for the letter [of the law] kills, but the Spirit makes alive.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul was primarily referring to himself and his colleagues when he said “us” and “ministers,” but he had a secondary reference in mind for all believers who are in fellowship and are growing in grace and knowledge. The Greek word “diakonos” means “table waiter” (one who serves others) and is not one of the words used for pastor, teacher, or evangelist. Any time a believer shares the Word of God with someone, he is ministering in this fashion. However, “ikano” requires this ministering to be qualified (filled with the Spirit) and with ability (knowledge of what is being discussed).

The covenant mentioned by the Greek word “kainos” means new in quality (superior to the law), not new in time. The use of the two Gnostic Present tenses means the letter of the law always (without exception) kills, while the Spirit always (without exception) makes alive. Which ministry would you want to be under, a ministry of death, or a ministry of life? There is no excuse for preaching legalism under any circumstances.

The letter of the law “killed” in the Old Testament both physically (i.e. at Sinai) and spiritually (i.e. wilderness wanderings). The law says “do this and live,” but does not impart any ability to do so, therefore no man has ever kept the law flawlessly. The law

pronounces the sentence of death upon everyone who does not keep it flawlessly. On the other hand, the Spirit, in conjunction with the Gospel, brings life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The children of Israel were redeemed and delivered out of Egypt and He gave to them their rule of life which should govern them in their land. These particular rules were never addressed to any other people than Israel, and these rules addressed to Israel made their appeal to the “natural man”. They ceased to be in effect, as the required rule of life, after the death of Christ. (*He That Is Spiritual*, L.S. Chafer)

Men do not enhance the true unity of Scripture by attempting to fuse two contrary principles into one system. These Scriptures should not be slighted, as they too often are, by those who would impose the law system upon the heavenly people. (*Tradition and Testament*, C. Feinberg)

The attempt to fulfill God’s righteousness apart from divine enablement was shortsighted and dangerous. Those who did so found that the letter kills. But those who trust in Christ find that the Spirit gives life. (*BKC 2 Corinthians*, David K. Lowery)

The new covenant requires ministers qualified by God’s Spirit. (*Revised New Bible Commentary - 2 Corinthians*, Guthrie/Motyer) The fact that God had chosen men revitalized by His Spirit to be the ministers of the gospel was wholly in keeping with the truth that it was a new (better) covenant that they were called upon to proclaim. That new covenant, inaugurated by Christ on Calvary, laid upon mankind the obligation not of trying to observe a list of rules and regulations external to themselves, but of accepting the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as the sole means by which, as sinners, they could be reconciled to God, and of submitting to the guidance of the life-giving Spirit of Christ. A spiritual covenant needs Spirit-filled men as its ministers, for only so can they be “able ministers.” (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

It needs to be stressed that when Paul contrasts the written code which kills and the Spirit Who gives life, no downgrading of the role of Scripture in Christian life and ministry is involved. The written code which kills refers to the law of Moses used improperly as a means to establish one’s righteousness before God. Scripture, and in particular the gospel it enshrines, is the PRIMARY instrument by which the Holy Spirit mediates life to God’s people. (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

The physical and national aspects of the New Covenant which pertain to Israel have not been appropriated to the church. Those are yet to be fulfilled in the Millennium. The church today shares in the soteriological aspects of that covenant, established by Christ for all believers. (*BKC 2 Corinthians*, David K. Lowery)

The philosophy begun by Origen, that by “the letter” we ought to understand the grammatical and genuine meaning of Scripture, or the literal sense (as he called it), and

that by “the Spirit” is meant the allegorical meaning, which is commonly reckoned to be the spiritual meaning. Nothing is further from Paul’s intention ... it is a pernicious error to draw out allegories that aren’t there. The audacity of this reckless playing with the sacred Word of God is injurious, even the source of many evils. (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, John Calvin)

2 Cor. 3:6 Who (Subj. Nom.) also (adjunctive) made us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) capable (ικανόω, AAI3S, Constative; qualified, ability, effective) ministers (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of a (anarthrous) new (Gen. Spec.) covenant (Obj. Gen.), not (neg. adv.) of the letter (Adv. Gen. Ref.; legalism, Mosaic Law), but (contrast) of the Spirit (Adv. Gen. Ref.), for (explanatory) the letter (Subj. Nom.; legalism, Mosaic law) always kills (ἀποκτείνω, PAI3S, Gnostic), but (contrast) the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) makes alive (ζωοποιέω, PAI3S, Gnostic; quickens, gives life).

Greek Text

ὃς καὶ ἰκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης, οὐ γράμματος ἀλλὰ πνεύματος· τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτείνει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ.

Latin Vulgate

qui et idoneos nos fecit ministros novi testamenti non litterae sed Spiritus littera enim occidit Spiritus autem vivificat

LWB 2 Cor. 3:7 But if the ministry of death by means of alphabetical letters engraved on stones, appeared with glory, [so that the sons of Israel were not able to fix their eyes on the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance], which was abolished,

KW 2 Cor. 3:7 Now, since the ministration of death which has been engraved by means of letters on stones was surrounded with glory so that the sons of Israel were not able to fix their gaze upon the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which glory was of a transient nature,

KJV 2 Cor. 3:7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts with a rhetorical question that is true – the law ministered death, even though at one time it was delivered by Moses from God with attendant glory. The Dramatic

Perfect tense points to the unique method it was carved on stones – by the finger of God. The Dramatic Aorist tense tells us that these stones appeared with great splendour due to their divine origin.

The Dramatic Aorist tense combined with the Historical Present tense tell us that during this great historical moment, no one in the entire nation of Israel was able to lift his head to see the face of Moses. The glory reflected on Moses' face from being in the presence of God was more than their human eyesight could bear.

Even though this glory was manifest at the bringing of the law, the law still functioned as a minister of death. The Historical Present tense points to the law being rendered ineffective. It functioned as a transitory minister which had built-in, intended (designed) obsolescence. The dispensation of the law was cancelled, because its purpose was fulfilled in Christ. The Latin word “evado” means the law was left behind, evacuated as a rule of life in God's plan.

Some translators (like myself) place a parenthesis in this verse around the glory reflected on Moses' face. This reinforces other verses that emphasize the abolishment of the law as a way of life. Other translators leave the parenthesis out, believing the glory that is being abolished is the temporary glory on Moses' face. It is quite possible that both are true, since both the law itself and the temporary glory on the face of its human deliverer, faded away in God's divine plan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It was the design and effect of the law to kill. This is true, so far as the work of salvation is concerned, of the law in all its forms, whether the moral law as revealed in the Scriptures, or as written in the heart, or as the Mosaic law. In all these forms it was designed to bring men to the knowledge of sin and helplessness; to produce a sense of guilt and misery, and a longing for redemption, and thus be a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. This was a necessary office, and therefore glorious. But how can that compare with the gospel? (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

This section begins the first of three comparisons between the ministry of Moses and Paul. The argument here, as in the other two comparisons, is from the lesser to the greater (a fortiori). Paul assumes that both his own ministry and the ministry of Moses have in common the glory that attends (or attended) them. For the apostle, there is nothing inherently wrong with the law. The difference between the two ministries is their respective effects (antithetical typology): Moses' ministry of the written law resulted in death, whereas Paul's ministry of the Spirit gives life. It was Moses' mediation of the glory of God on his face that brought with it the judgment of God upon a rebellious people. In sum, if Moses' ministry of the Sinaitic covenant that consequently brought death came in glory, so that Israel could not endure it but had to have it repeatedly veiled,

how much more does Paul's ministry of the Spirit exist in glory, since it brings life and unveiled, constant mediation of God's glory. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

2 Cor. 3:7 But (adversative) if (protasis 1st class condition, "and it's true") the ministry (Subj. Nom.; dispensation) of death (Subj. Gen.), by means of alphabetical letters (Instr. Means; Hebrew) engraved (έντυπώ, Perf.PPtc.NFS, Dramatic, Modal) on stones (Dat. Ind. Obj.), appeared (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Dramatic, Deponent) with glory (Instr. Manner; brilliance), [so that (result) the sons (Subj. Nom.) of Israel (Gen. Place) were not (neg. adv.) able (δύναμαι, PMinf., Historical, Result, Deponent) to fix their eyes on (άτενίζ, AAIInf., Dramatic, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) the face (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of Moses (Poss. Gen.) because (causal) of the glory (brilliance) of his (Poss. Gen.) countenance (Obj. Gen.; appearance)], which (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the law as the minister of death) was abolished (καταργέω, PPtc.AFS, Historical, Attributive),

Greek Text

Εἰ δὲ ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν γράμμασιν ἐντετυπωμένη λίθοις ἐγενήθη ἐν δόξῃ, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι ἀτενίσει τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον Μωϋσέως διὰ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ τὴν καταργουμένην,

Latin Vulgate

quod si ministratio mortis litteris deformata in lapidibus fuit in gloria ita ut non possent intendere filii Israhel in faciem Mosi propter gloriam vultus eius quae evacuatur

LWB 2 Cor. 3:8 How is it not possible for the ministry of the Spirit to be much more glorious?

KW 2 Cor. 3:8 How shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be surrounded with glory?

KJV 2 Cor. 3:8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Gnostic Future tense means the ministry of the Spirit will always be more glorious than the ministry of the law. The dispensation of the Spirit is in a greater sphere of splendour than the earlier dispensation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Dispensation of the Hypostatic Union stands as a line of demarcation between Israel and the Church. Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law on one hand and set the precedent for Church Age protocol on the other. This division is confirmed by numerous passages which state that the Mosaic Law does not define the Christian's way of life. (*The Divine Outline of History*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Old Testament dispensation was the ministration of death, whereas that of the New Testament is the ministration of life. The law discovered sin, and the wrath and curse of God. This showed us a God above us and a God against us; but the gospel discovers grace, and Emmanuel, God with us. Upon this account the gospel is more glorious than the law; and yet that had a glory in it, witness the shining of Moses' face when he came down from the mount with the tables in his hand, that reflected rays of brightness upon his countenance. The law was the ministration of condemnation, for that condemned and cursed every one who continued not in all things written therein to do them; but the gospel is the ministration of righteousness: therein the righteousness of God by faith is revealed. This shows us that the just shall live by his faith. This reveals the grace and mercy of God through Jesus Christ, for obtaining the remission of sins and eternal life. The gospel, therefore, so much exceeds in glory that in a manner it eclipses the glory of the legal dispensation. (*Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Matthew Henry)

2 Cor. 3:8 How (adv. interrogative) is it not (neg. adv.) possible for the ministry (Subj. Nom.; dispensation) of the Spirit (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the Gospel) to be (εἰμί, FMI3S, Gnostic) much more (Adv. Comparison; all the more) glorious (Instr. Manner. Loc. Sph.)?

Greek Text

πῶς οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἡ διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος ἔσται ἐν δόξῃ;

Latin Vulgate

quomodo non magis ministratio Spiritus erit in gloria

LWB 2 Cor. 3:9 For if the ministry of condemnation revealed the glory, much more, even to a great degree, the ministry of righteousness superabounds with glory.

KW 2 Cor. 3:9 For in view of the fact that the ministration of condemnation was glorious, by so much more will the ministration of righteousness superabound in the sphere of the glorious.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The ministry of the law revealed the presence of God in a past dispensation, but the ministry of righteousness reveals the super-glory presence of God during the Church Age. This comparison between the law and righteousness is shown as a stark contrast by Paul's use of one superlative description of the ministry of righteousness upon another. This ministry of righteousness is "entered into" by the filling of the Spirit. The Gnostic Present points to righteousness always being superior to condemnation (damnation in the Latin). It is also important to note that righteousness NEVER comes from the ministry of the law; condemnation comes from the law. Righteousness comes from Christ, through the ministry of the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle elaborates the contrast which he has already drawn between the two covenants. The greater glory of the new covenant is to be seen, he says, in the superior function it was instituted to discharge. Under the old covenant man was convicted as a sinner and left helpless in his sin; under the new he is put *in the right* with God, the demands of the law having been satisfied in Him Who inaugurated it. So great is this qualitative difference between condemnation and righteousness (or acquittal), that the splendour of the old covenant is far outshone by the glory of the new – so much so that by comparison it scarcely appears to be glorious at all. Finally, the permanence of the new dispensation, standing out in contrast to the temporary character of the old, gives it an abiding glory. (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 3:9 **For** (inferential) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it was") **the ministry** (Subj. Nom.) **of condemnation** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; by the law) **revealed** (ellipsis) **the glory** (Pred. Nom.), **much more** (Adv. Comparison), **even to a greater degree** (Dat. Measure), **the ministry** (Subj. Nom.) **of righteousness** (Adv. Gen. Ref.) **superabounds** (περισσεύω, PAI3S, Gnostic) **with glory** (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

εἰ γὰρ τῆ διακονίᾳ τῆς κατακρίσεως δόξα, πολλῶ μᾶλλον περισσεύει ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης δόξῃ.

Latin Vulgate

nam si ministratio damnationis gloria est multo magis abundat ministerium iustitiae in gloria

LWB 2 Cor. 3:10 **For even that which became glorious was not exalted to the same degree, because of the glory which surpasses.**

KW 2 Cor. 3:10 For even that which has been made glorious [the ministration of death] has not [really] been made glorious in this respect, namely, on account of the glory [of the ministration of righteousness], which glory superabounds.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's reference to "that which became glorious" is a reference to the law as it revealed the presence of God. Even though the Dramatic Perfect tense points to the ministration of condemnation as being quite glorious, it pales in comparison to the glory of righteousness. The Intensive Perfect tense points to the superiority of the exaltation of the Spirit's work as opposed to the law. The Dative of Comparison combined with Measure elaborates on the degree in which the Spirit exceeds the law.

The glory of the ministration of righteousness is realized positionally by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the point of belief in Jesus Christ. This glory continues experientially when a believer is filled with the Spirit. The Gnostic Present tense means the glory of righteousness by the Spirit always (without exception) superabounds (exceeds by a tremendous magnitude) that of condemnation by the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The law, and the dispensation it ministers, though glorious in itself, ceased to be glorious in the presence of the gospel, as the moon loses its brightness in the presence of the sun. (*Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge) So pronounced is the contrast between the two economies or dispensations that what once was rightly considered resplendent now appears scarcely resplendent at all. (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin)

The glory on the face of Moses was temporary, though real, and passed away, a type of the dimming of the glory of the old dispensation by the brightness of the new. The moon makes a dim light after the sun rises. Christ as the Sun of righteousness has thrown Moses in the shade. (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 3: 10 **For** (explanatory) **even** (ascensive) **that** (Subj. Nom.; the law) **which became glorious** (δοξάζω, Perf.PPtc.NNS, Dramatic Attributive) **was not** (neg. adv.) **exalted** (δοξάζω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; glorified) **to the same** (Dat. Comparison) **degree** (Dat. Measure; as the glory of the Spirit), **because of** (Gen. Cause) **the glory** (Obj. Gen.) **which surpasses** (ὑπερβάλλω, PAPtc.GFS, Gnostic, Attributive).

Greek Text

καὶ γὰρ οὐ δεδοξασται τὸ δεδοξασμένον ἐν τούτῳ τῷ μέρει εἵνεκεν τῆς ὑπερβαλλούσης δόξης.

Latin Vulgate

nam nec glorificatum est quod claruit in hac parte propter excellentem gloriam

LWB 2 Cor. 3:11 For if that which was abolished was with glory, much more, to a greater degree, that which endures in the sphere of glory.

KW 2 Cor. 3:11 For, since that which is passing away was with glory, by so much more that which remains is within the sphere of glory.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Historical Present tense places the abolishment of the law in perspective. It has a minor application for the unbeliever, convicting him of sin (because its standard is unattainable by human effort) and leading him to the solution, Jesus Christ. It is unemployed by Church Age believers, because it was never given to them in the first place (it was given to the nation Israel) and because they walk and live by grace instead of the law.

The Durative Present tense points to the continuing, abiding ministry of the Spirit. It remains (lives) in the Locative Sphere of glory. The superlatives are again “piled high” to show the infinite superiority of the ministry of grace over the law. The law never saved anyone; we were saved by grace. The law never provided spiritual growth; only a life lived by grace leads to spiritual growth. The ministry of the Spirit is not only surpassing, but is also abiding.

Paul uses different prepositions in this verse to distinguish law and grace. The law was “with” a transient form of glory, but grace abides permanently “in the sphere of” glory. The law is past, grace is present. There were obviously problems concerning this issue in Corinth, probably from false teachers who were teaching some form of legalism. Since the law was given to Israel, the problem was more difficult for Jewish believers who had a difficult time understanding that the law was fulfilled in Christ and was now nullified as a way of life for them. To this day, blindness still hangs over the minds of Jews as regards the law.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul does not imply that the law itself was fading away, but that it was the ministry of the law that was fading away. The law as the expression of the will of God for human conduct is still valid. In fact Paul says the purpose of God in bringing in the new covenant of the Spirit was precisely that the righteous demands of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk by the Spirit (Rom. 8:4). However, the time of the ministry of the law has come to an end. (C. Kruse) The permanence of the new dispensation, standing out in contrast to the temporary character of the old, gives it an abiding glory. (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

That the binding authority of the law ceased on the introduction of the gospel, is a doctrine which the apostle had to sustain against the Judaizing tendency of the early Christians, on many occasions. To this point the epistles to the Galatians and to the Hebrews are principally directed. (*Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Charles Hodge)

The law that is done away with is not merely the ceremonial law, or the judicial law, but the whole ministry of Moses, and particularly the law of the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments. (*Exposition on 2 Corinthians*, John Gill)

2 Cor. 3:11 **For** (explanatory) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it was") **that** (Subj. Nom.; ministry of the law) **which was abolished** (καταργέω, PPtc.NNS, Historical, Attributive; nullified) **was** (ellipsis) **with glory** (Descr. Gen.; exhibited the presence of God), **much more** (Adv. Comparison), **to a greater degree** (Dat. Measure), **that** (Subj. Nom.; ministry of the Holy Spirit) **which endures** (μένω, PAPtc.NNS, Durative, Attributive; keeps on abiding) **in the sphere of glory** (Loc. Sph.).

Greek Text

εἰ γὰρ τὸ καταργούμενον διὰ δόξης, πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὸ μένον ἐν δόξῃ.

Latin Vulgate

si enim quod evacuatur per gloriam est multo magis quod manet in gloria est

LWB 2 Cor. 3:12 **Having, therefore, such confidence, we exhibit a great degree of boldness,**

KW 2 Cor. 3:12 Having therefore such a hope, we use great freedom and boldness of speech,.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The word “hope” that is found in many English versions is a terrible translation of the Greek word “elpis.” “Confidence” is the best translation of this word. The Customary Present tense means that it is “a given” that believers who are walking by the ministry of the Spirit and are growing in grace will have confidence in what they know and believe. One of the purposes of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to produce the character of Christ in believers, a character that is sound, rational, full of Truth, relaxed, and not overcome by emotional instability or distracted by ecstatic experiences. The more a believer knows of Christ, the more courageous and confident he becomes.

As a corollary to this *internal* confidence, represented by the *priesthood* function of the believer, the *ambassadorship* of the believer is also important. Another Customary Present tense portrays the exhibition of this confidence to others, quietly by your daily life, or perhaps in a witnessing, preaching or teaching function. Nobody wants to listen to a weak, vascillating believer who is uncertain about what they believe or why. We tend to listen better to those who have learned well, studied hard, and have something important to say. Moreover, a person with this background will possess internal confidence that will automatically translate into a great degree of boldness.

Many well-meaning, but misguided individuals, are initially repulsed by a Christian who has this internal confidence from years of walking by the Spirit and studying the Word of God. Perhaps they have seen too many Hollywood productions where the pastor or evangelist are bungling idiots, flaky showmen, con-artists, or Casper Milktoasts. Under this scenario, a Christian is allowed (only in situations in which *they* deem acceptable) a modicum of boldness or frankness, but not if they become “too doctrinaire.” Legalistic types in particular, do not like to hear *doctrines of grace* expounded, as opposed to the rules and traditions they have chosen to live by. Paul is diametrically opposed to this viewpoint. By using a superlative in the Dative of Measure, he says “we employ a great degree of boldness,” not the “tiny pinch” the world deems acceptable. Because of the world’s misconceptions about what a Christian should be (cookie-cutter personality traits) and how he should act (strict Hollywood guidelines), it takes a great deal of courage to teach spirituality by grace; the world, including Christian circles, is full of antagonistic legalism.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul could be bold because he ministered under the provisions of a permanent covenant, whereas Moses lacked boldness because the covenant under which he ministered, and its splendour, were fading away. (C. Kruse)

There is nothing hesitant about Paul’s preaching. On the contrary, he uses boldness of speech. He is both courageous and outspoken. Confident of the reality of God’s dealings with him, and certain of his divine mission, he can face fellow-men without any fear of the consequences. (R.V.G. Tasker) We are not afraid of men or devils. We are not

terrified by menaces, stripes, imprisonment, and death itself. We speak out all our mind, which is the mind of Christ. We declare the whole counsel of God, hide and conceal nothing that may be profitable to the churches. We are not to be awed by the terror, or drawn by the flatteries of men to cover the Truth. We speak it out plainly, clearly, with all evidence and perspicuity. (J. Calvin)

Paul therefore says that in his case it was the result of his firm conviction of his divine mission and of the Truth and glory of the gospel which he preached, that he proclaimed it fully, intelligibly, and without regard to consequences. If Paul's experience of the Truth and excellence of the gospel led him to declare it without reserve, a similar experience will produce a similar openness and boldness in other ministers of the gospel. This indeed is one of the glories of Christianity. It is characteristic of error to practise reserve and to seek concealment. The gospel is not preached with openness by this type of Christian, so that all may understand it. The people are kept in ignorance. They are told from some pulpits that they need not know; that faith without knowledge, a blind confidence in rites which they do not understand, is all-sufficient. But if a man has the conviction that the gospel is of God, that it is unspeakably glorious, adapted to all and needed by all in order to salvation, then the Word will be preached openly and without reserve. (C. Hodge)

There is a new liberty towards God, which dispels fear and leads to freedom in the divine presence of a most intimate kind. This intimacy results in service to God that is quite free in character. It also leads to a new freedom towards others, which includes freedom from the fear of others' judgments as well as from one's own attempts to manipulate them. This also includes the freedom in the communication of one's thoughts and the opening up of one's life. It also entails a more liberated attitude to the created things of this world. Since there is nothing in existence that is in principle out of bounds – "All things are yours," Paul insists, and, "To the pure all things are pure" – this opens up a freer, nonidolatrous use of possessions. (*Paul's Idea of Community*, R. Banks)

2 Cor. 3:12 **Having** (ἔχω, PAPtc.NSP, Customary, Circumstantial), **therefore** (superordinate conj.), **such** (correlative) **confidence** (Adv. Acc.; courage), **we exhibit** (χράομαι, PMIIP, Customary, Deponent; make use of, employ) **a great degree of** (Dat. Measure) **boldness** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; frankness),

Greek Text

Ἔχοντες οὖν τοιαύτην ἐλπίδα πολλῇ παρρησίᾳ χρώμεθα

Latin Vulgate

habentes igitur talem spem multa fiducia utimur

LWB 2 Cor. 3:13 And not like Moses putting a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel could not fix their eyes on the goal of that which was abolished.

KW 2 Cor. 3:13 And not even as Moses put a covering over his face to the end that the sons of Israel should not fix their gaze upon the termination of that which is passing away.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Imperfect tense means the best Moses could do was to put a veil over his face, but in the end, it still did not completely do the job. The glory that shone on his face from being in the presence of the Lord still pierced through the veil, because after all, the reflected glory of God cannot be contained by a mere veil.

The Constative Aorist tense points to the fact that many of those in Israel nevertheless treated the law as a means of salvation, rather than the grace of God. They fixed their eyes on it as the ultimate end rather than as a means to the ultimate end of salvation.

The Historical Present tense states emphatically that the ministry of the law was cancelled when the ministry of the Spirit began. So those believers (or unbelievers) who make an issue out of the law today are living under the wrong economy and are applying nullified legal precepts to life when they should be applying spiritual principles by means of the Spirit under the economy of grace.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The reason Moses veiled his face was to conceal the end of the fading splendour from the Israelites. Paul saw in the fading brightness a symbol of the transitory character of the old covenant. (C. Kruse) Paul's comparison is between the ministry of Moses, interrupted by intervals of concealment, and the gospel ministry, which is marked by frank and full proclamation. (Vincent) Christ Himself was the end or fulfillment of the old dispensation or economy. (R.V.G. Tasker)

Moses did use concealment and practiced reserve. This is no impeachment of his personal character, but of the nature of his office. The truth concerning man's redemption was not "in other ages made known unto the sons of man as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." It was not consistent with the nature of the ministry of Moses to use openness in communicating the doctrines of redemption, which it is the glory of the Christian ministry to be permitted to employ. He was sent to speak in parables and in types, to set forth truth in the form of significant rites and ceremonies. He put a veil over the glory, not to hide it entirely from view, but to obscure its brightness. The people saw the light, but only occasionally and imperfectly. (C. Hodge)

The point here is that the Israelites are blind to the fact that the Law has had its day, that it has been annulled. They are oblivious to the end of the annulled covenant. (B. Witherington, III) After the incident with the golden calf, Moses continually placed a veil over his face, so that the obstinate Israelites might not gaze into “the consequence,” the judgment, of that which was being rendered ineffective by the veil, that is, the Sinaitic covenant itself. (James Scott) Far from duplicity, Moses’ merciful intention was to keep Israel from being judged by the glory on his face, which was the end/goal of that glory in response to the hardened nature of the people. In contrast to Moses, Paul proclaims the gospel with boldness because he knows that the glory of God that is now revealed through his ministry need not be veiled, since by means of the Spirit of the new covenant, it produces life rather than judgment and death. (S. Hafemann)

2 Cor. 3:13 And (continuative) not (neg. adv.; antithesis) like (comparative) Moses (Subj. Nom.) putting (τίθημι, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive; placing) a veil (Acc. Dir. Obj.; covering) over his (Poss. Gen.) face (Acc. Gen. Ref.) so that (subjective purpose) the sons (Subj. Nom.) of Israel (Gen. Place) could not (neg. adv.) fix their eyes (ἀτενίζω, AAInf., Constative, Purpose, Articular) on the goal (Acc. Dir. Obj.; end, ultimate aim) of that (Adv. Gen. Ref.; ministry of the law) which was abolished (καταργέω, PPPtc.GNS, Historical, Attributive; nullified).

Greek Text

καὶ οὐ καθάπερ Μωϋσῆς ἐτίθει κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀτενίσαι τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸ τέλος τοῦ καταργουμένου.

Latin Vulgate

et non sicut Moses ponebat velamen super faciem suam ut non intenderent filii Israhel in faciem eius quod evacuatur

LWB 2 Cor. 3:14 **On the contrary, their minds were made stubborn. For up to this very day, the same veil remains when reading the old covenant, not being unveiled because it was annulled in Christ.**

KW 2 Cor. 3:14 But their minds were hardened, for to this very day the same covering remains at the reading of the testament whose usefulness is over, it not being revealed that it [the covering] is being done away in Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Dramatic Aorist tense points to the divine (supernatural) hardening of the Israelite's minds. The Passive Voice declares that they did not harden their minds first, and then God responded; they passively received this hardening from God as part of His sovereign and often incomprehensible plan. They were made stubborn, their minds were petrified, by God.

The veil that remains today is referred to in other verses as “scar tissue of the soul.” “Originally this hardening came from a word representing a kind of marble, which later came to mean, in medical writers, a hardening of the tissues ... and hence we have ‘to petrify’ or ‘to become insensible or obtuse’, used of insensibility of the organs of vision.” (J.H. Bernard) “This is a late verb from ‘poros’ meaning hard skin, to cover with thick skin (callus) or to petrify.” (A.T. Robertson) “Poros” medically meant the hardened swelling of the bone, also jelly thickening out of the bone, through which the parts of a broken bone are knit together again, which eventually meant to make dull or insensitive, either physically or mentally.” (TDNT) In verses addressed to believers, this scar tissue is increased by the individual's own negative volition. In verses addressed to unbelievers, this scar tissue is increased by the sovereignty of God.

In this verse, the “hardening” is determined by God. There are opposing theological schools behind the concept of “hardening” in Scripture: whether God in His sovereignty does the hardening or whether man hardens himself. Both sides of the debate tend to ignore the other's proof texts. The best rule of application is to allow the Voice of the verb (in conjunction with the Noun that is performing or receiving the action) to make the distinction: In this verse, “their minds” is the Subject and the verb is in the Passive Voice, meaning their minds RECEIVED the action. If the verb was in the Active Voice, the Israelites would be involved in the process of hardening (or assisting in the hardening process of) someone else; if it was in the Middle Voice, the Israelites would be hardening their own minds; if it's in the Passive Voice, like here, God in His sovereignty is doing the hardening. Then you can proceed to debate which came first, the chicken or the egg!

The Durative Present tense points to the continued existence of the veil for hundreds of years. Every time the Old Testament is read and Jesus Christ is not found, the veil over an unbeliever is in place. Every time the Old Testament is read and a believer thinks keeping the law is the Christian way of life, the veil is also in place. Customarily you would think the veil would eventually be lifted, but the Customary Present with a negative adverb means not in this case. Why? The Historical Present tense states that the ministry of the law was unequivocally annulled in Christ a long time ago.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A veil was thrown over the truth as first revealed by Moses, and that same veil is there still. The Israelites of Paul's day understood their Scriptures as little as their fathers did. They remained satisfied with the external, ritual and ceremonial, without penetrating to

what was beneath, or asking the real import of the types and shadows of the old economy. (C. Hodge)

Although the Jewish teachers of Paul's time had the advantage of possessing in the law the very "embodiment of truth and knowledge", a "veil exists over their minds obscuring its real significance" from them. They undoubtedly "have a zeal for God" but "it is not enlightened," for they are too preoccupied with the "letter" of the law at the expense of its "spirit". (R. Banks)

The apostle has already implied that it was part of the divine dispensation that the ancient Israelites should not see the temporary character of the old dispensation. God had in fact dulled their understanding. "Their minds were blinded" means in effect that God had blinded them. (R.V.G. Tasker) It is only through Christ that the veil over people's minds is removed. When people become believers in Christ, they experience at the same time the removal of the veil of ignorance and unbelief which previously prevented them from understanding the true meaning of the Old Testament, i.e. its witness to Jesus Christ and the end of the old covenant which His coming brought about. (C. Kruse)

Moses' laudable attempt was however, unsuccessful; instead of recognizing the significance of the fading glory, the Israelites became dulled in their powers of perception. Paul finds evidence of this spiritual insensitivity in the fact that down to his own day, when the old covenant was read in the synagogue or the Torah studied, the ability of the Jews to recognize the impermanence of the Mosaic order was impaired. A "veil" covered their hearts comparable to the veil that covered Moses' face. This veil remained unlifted in the case of the unbelieving Jew, because only as he came to be "in Christ" was the veil set aside. (F.E. Gaebelin)

This confirms the sense given of the foregoing verse, and shows, that not the Israelites only in Moses' time, but the Jews in the times of the Gospel, had their minds so blinded, that they could not behold the glory of the Gospel, nor Christ the end of the law. This veil can only be removed by Christ, by His Spirit and grace, and through the light of the Gospel of Christ, shining into the heart; and so dispel that blindness and ignorance which is in the understanding, whereby the books of the Old Testament are understood, and appear to agree exactly with the Gospel of Christ, in the books of the New Testament. (J. Calvin)

In John 12:40 God is expressly called the author of hardening. Other passages, even though they are imprecise, must be understood in the light of this. The hardening by God is also a self-hardening of the unbeliever who does not obey God. Though in this mystery man cannot escape the sovereignty of the divine action, this does not absolve him from personal responsibility. The admonition against hardening oneself applies even when the situation is hopeless from man's standpoint. The possibility and ineluctability of human responsibility are enclosed in God's dealings. In Romans 9-11 Paul neither softened nor explained this prophetic message of hardening; he simply repeated and underlined it.

Connected with the fact that hardening by God is also the self-hardening of unbelievers is the exposition of 2 Corinthians 3:14. (TDNT, V, 1025-1028)

2 Cor. 3:14 On the contrary (adversative), their (Poss. Gen.; Israel's) minds (Subj. Nom.; thoughts) were made stubborn (πωροώ, API3S, Dramatic; hardened). For (explanatory) up to (prep.) this very day (Gen. Extent of Time), the same (Descr. Nom.) veil (Subj. Nom.) remains (μένω, PAI3S, Durative) when reading (Dat. Disadv.) the old (Descr. Gen.; former) covenant (Obj. Gen.), not (neg. adv.) being unveiled (ἀνακαλύπτω, PPpTc.NNS, Customary, Circumstantial; uncovered) because (causal) it (the ministry of the law) was annulled (καταργέω, PPI3S, Historical) in Christ (Loc. Sph.).

Greek Text

ἀλλὰ ἐπωρώθη τὰ νοήματα αὐτῶν. ἄχρι γὰρ τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναγνώσει τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης μένει, μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον ὅτι ἐν Χριστῷ καταργεῖται.

Latin Vulgate

sed obtusi sunt sensus eorum usque in hodiernum enim diem id ipsum velamen in lectione veteris testamenti manet non revelatum quoniam in Christo evacuatur

LWB 2 Cor. 3:15 As a matter of fact, up to this very day, whenever Moses is read, a veil exists upon their mind;

KW 2 Cor. 3:15 But even today, whenever Moses is being read, a covering lies upon their heart.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

When Paul says “up to this very day” he is referring to 57 A.D. when he wrote this letter. There is no hint that this veil has been removed, so it still exists today. The Customary Present tense says it was the custom for Jews to read Moses in his day, and it is still the custom today in synagogues. The Durative Present tense points to the veil still existing upon the minds of Jewish readers in Paul’s day as well as now.

The Greek word ‘kardia’ does not refer to our heart as an internal organ. It is a technical term for the “right lobe of the brain” or the seat of our soul, intellect, and spiritual life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

As long as the veil, which is upon the heart of Israel, remains unlifted, so that they cannot discern in their ancient oracles the prophecies of the Lord Christ as they have been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, so long we may not expect to find among Jewish exegetes a clear and consistent elucidation of the Old Testament. (*Biblical Hermeneutics*, Milton Terry)

“The ‘kardia’ or heart is the innermost part of man ... the seat of mental or spiritual powers and capacities. [Man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart.] The heart is the seat of rational functions ... given by God .. and is often used for those with understanding, far-reaching insight, treasures of knowledge, thoughts, artistic sense, and attentiveness. From the heart comes planning and volition, inner impulses, direction, religious and moral conduct, and the seat of intellectual life. It is referred to as the seat of the will, the seat of the power of thought, and the focus of man’s being and activity as a spiritual personality. It is also used as the main organ of psychic and spiritual life, the place in man at which God bears witness to Himself, the source of all the forces and functions of soul and spirit, and the source of resolves. It is rarely used in Scripture to represent the physical organ we know as the heart.” (*Kittel’s TDNT*, Vol. III, Johannes Behm)

The revelation of Christ, even in the writings of the Old Testament, though obscure when compared with that contained in the writings of the apostles, was sufficiently clear to be understood if the Jews had only been in a right state of mind. The darkness was not so much in the Scriptures, as in their minds. (C. Hodge) The veil remains on their hearts, since it is not revealed to them that the Mosaic economy is done away in Christ. (Vincent)

The rejection of Christ by the Jews of necessity implies that the veil is still obscuring their spiritual vision. Few passages in the New Testament emphasize more strongly than this that the Old Testament Scriptures are only fully intelligible when Christ is seen to be their fulfillment. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 3:15 As a matter of fact (inferential), up to (prep.) this very day (Gen. Extent of Time), whenever (subordinate) Moses (Subj. Nom.) is read (ἀναγινώσκω, PPSbj.3S, Customary, Temporal), a veil (Subj. Nom.) exists (κείμαι, PMI3S, Durative; lies) upon their (Poss. Gen.; Jewish) minds (Acc. Disadv.; heart, mentality of the soul);

Greek Text

ἀλλ' ἕως σήμερον ἡνίκα ἂν ἀναγινώσκηται Μωϋσῆς, κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτῶν κείται·

Latin Vulgate

sed usque in hodiernum diem cum legitur Moses velamen
est positum super cor eorum

LWB 2 Cor. 3:16 But whenever it [Israel] changes its mind toward the Lord, the veil is removed from around the head.

KW 2 Cor. 3:16 However, whenever it [Israel] shall turn to the Lord, the covering is being taken away [by the one who turns to the Lord].

KJV 2 Cor. 3:16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Dramatic Aorist tense means that in spite of Israel's national blindness, whenever anyone turns from the law and focuses his attention on the Lord, Christ will remove the veil. There is always an election, a remnant, according to grace. The Customary Present tense points to the divine policy of removing the veil whenever an individual (or the national entity if that was possible) abandons the precepts of the law and seeks Christ.

The Greek word "epistrepho" means to cut loose (break free) the anchor (the law) and turn one's conceptual activity towards heaven (the Lord Jesus Christ). The word, then, represents conversion, which rests solely on God's grace, but is still the condition of return. "What is partly national piety becomes admonition and summons to individuals. All the obscurity of the OT Law is brightened for them when they are 'converted' to the Lord." (TDNT)

RELEVANT OPINIONS

After Moses descended the mount and after he had communicated God's message to the Israelites, he veiled his face so they would no longer have to look upon its brightness. However, when he went in before the Lord he removed the veil and replaced it again only when he came out to the people. Paul applied this to his Jewish contemporaries by saying that if any one of them turns to the Lord the veil over his mind will be removed. Normally when Paul uses the word *Lord* it refers to Christ. But here, where he is adapting the LXX reading of Exodus 34:34, the title must be understood to denote God. (C. Kruse)

Moses stands paradigmatically for any Israelite who returns to the Lord ... as well as the nation Israel if a process of repentance occurs whereby their hardened heart undergoes a fundamental change. Eventually, Paul expects that "all Israel will be saved," perhaps through a direct encounter with the resurrected Christ at the time of the Parousia. According to Isaiah, universal judgment would be followed by the reign of the Lord of Hosts on Mount Zion, when God would manifest His glory both before His elders and before all nations, thus reversing the veiling that took place in Exodus. (James Scott)

Whenever a Jew shall turn to the Lord, the Lord being the Christ, and sees in Him the fulfillment of the Mosaic law, the veil has been clearly dropped. For whenever any man or woman turns to Christ and confronts Him in direct personal encounter, it is a sign that everything that has hitherto interposed itself between the believer and his Saviour has now been removed. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 3:16 But (adversative) whenever (subordinate conj.) it (Israel) changes its mind (from the law) toward (ἐπιστρέφω, AASubj.3S, Dramatic, Temporal; focuses its attention on) the Lord (Acc. Gen. Ref.; God), the veil (Subj. Nom.) is removed from around the head (περιαίρω, PPI3S, Customary).

Greek Text

ήνικά δὲ ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς κύριον, περιαιρεῖται τὸ κάλυμμα.

Latin Vulgate

cum autem conversus fuerit ad Deum aufertur velamen

LWB 2 Cor. 3:17 So then, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

KW 2 Cor. 3:17 But the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Descriptive Presents says God is the Spirit, a reference to the deity of the Holy Spirit, but more than that. “Christ and the Spirit are one and the same ... not one and the same person, but one and the same being ... an identity of essence and power.” (C. Hodge) The other verbs are supplied by way of ellipsis, but the overall intent is to show that where the Spirit of the Lord resides, there is freedom from the law and therefore freedom to grow and mature as believers. The ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of the law are mutually exclusive, not only because they are like vinegar and water when mixed, but because the former has superseded and eliminated the function of the latter.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christ is the *pneuma* or life-giving spirit of the written Word, without which the latter is dead. As the body without the *pneuma* is dead (James 2:26), so the written Word without the *pneuma* is dead also. Christ is that *pneuma* or spirit. This is the whole argument of 2

Corinthians 3. (E.W. Bullinger) Certainly, the Holy Spirit is interchangeably called in the N.T. the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. (A.T. Robertson)

It must be recalled that in verse 16 “the Lord” refers to God, not Christ, and therefore the same words in verse 17 are to be understood in the same way. The thrust of the two verses then is that when people turn to God the veil over their minds is removed, and they realize that the time of the old covenant of the law has come to an end and that of the new covenant of the Spirit has begun. The expression “the Lord is the Spirit” is not a one-to-one identification, but rather a way of saying that under the new covenant the Lord is to *us* the Spirit. Under the new covenant, where the Spirit is the operative power, there is freedom. Under the Old covenant, where the law reigns, there is bondage. (C. Kruse)

Paul is saying “Now when I say ‘Lord,’ I mean the Spirit.” That is, it is the Spirit of the Lord that unveils the human heart and lays it open to receive the truth and to gaze intently on the face of Christ. The Israelites must turn to the Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord, if they wish to change, for only the Spirit gives life and freedom. (B. Witherington, III)

Freedom for Paul consists of three main components: (Robert Banks)

(1) Independence

- From certain things, e.g., sin, the Law, death, and alien powers
- For certain things, e.g., righteousness, conformity to Jesus, and suffering
- Resulting in a personal and life-giving experience of liberty

(2) Dependence

- Upon Christ, Who terminated humanity’s enslavement through His death and resurrection
- Upon the Spirit, Who communicates Christ’s life and purpose as a received divine gift rather than innate possibility

(3) Interdependence

- With others, since liberty leads to service and can only be practically defined in relation to their needs
- With the world, since the universe itself will experience the liberty of transformation along with those who are Christ’s
- Giving liberty a social and cosmic, as well as a personal and theocentric, dimension

By turning unto Christ we become partakers of the Holy Spirit, the living and life-giving, because He and the Spirit are one, and Christ dwells in His people, redeeming them from the law and making them the children of God, by His Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord, as a designation of the Holy Spirit, shows that the Spirit stands in the same relation to the Son that He does to the Father. The liberty of which the apostle here speaks, must be that liberty which is consequent on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that is, which flows from the application to us of the redemption purchased by Christ. (C. Hodge)

Certainly, the Holy Spirit is interchangeably called in the New Testament the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9). Christ dwells in us by the Holy Spirit, but the language here in 2 Corinthians 3:17 should not be pressed unduly. Paul is not denying the personality of the Holy Spirit nor refuting the doctrine of the Trinity. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 3:17 So then (inferential), the Lord (Subj. Nom.; God) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive; represents, shares divine essence with) the Spirit (Pred. Nom.), and (continuative) where (subordinate conj.) the Spirit (Subj. Nom.) of the Lord (Poss. Gen.; God) is (ellipsis, verb supplied), there is (ellipsis) liberty (Pred. Nom.).

Greek Text

ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν· οὗ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου, ἐλευθερία.

Latin Vulgate

Dominus autem Spiritus est ubi autem Spiritus Domini
ibi libertas

LWB 2 Cor. 3:18 But we all, who are ourselves able to see as in a mirror the glory of the Lord without the blindness imposed by the veil over the face, are transformed according to the same image from one degree of glory to another degree of glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord.

KW 2 Cor. 3:18 Now, as for us, we all, with uncovered face, reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are having our outward expressions changed into the same image from one degree of glory to another according as this change of expression proceeds from the Lord, the Spirit, this outward expression coming from and being truly representative of our Lord.

KJV 2 Cor. 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In contrast to the sons of Israel, all believers (not just ministers of the Gospel) who are filled with the Spirit (Who gives spiritual perception) are able to see the reflected glory of the Lord without a veil. Is this some mystical experience that requires keeping the law or praying intensely to receive? Not hardly. But it does require the filling of the Spirit and studying the Word of God. Bible doctrine functions as a mirror in the soul and enables us to see the glory of the Lord. Does the Lord come to us in person like He did to Moses? Not unless you have a mental problem or are doing drugs. That is why we are able to see Him in a mirror, because the Word of God is the mirror of His Mind, Who He is. The

Customary Present tense says we will be able to see Him in all His glory if we follow the precise protocol of being filled with the Spirit and studying the Word. The Intensive Perfect tense tells us that since the dawn of the Church Age, we have had the means to see His glory without a veil ... that this means still exists today ... and that it will continue to be true in the future.

The Dramatic Present tense tells us that if we fulfill the requirements of protocol and are able to see His glory without a veil, we will be passively transformed (metamorphosis) into an image just like Christ. Since Jesus Christ indwells us, we can become a reflection of His glory, the unique quality of character that He possesses. Does this happen automatically, dropping down out of heaven into our soul? No. Does it happen once at salvation and then it's over? No. It is a continuous process of experiential sanctification, progressing from one degree (level or stage) to another. The first degree of glory is the initial indwelling Shekinah presence of God (Jesus Christ) which then manifests itself to an increasing degree as the Church Age believer follows the protocol plan of God and grows in grace and knowledge.

Paul uses a Comparative Adverb to show us that this transformation from one degree of glory to another is "like" (as from) the Spirit of the Lord. What this means is that Jesus followed this same protocol when He was on earth. He executed the same plan of protocol by the power of the Spirit that He is asking us to do now. He is our example, our prototype, showing us how it is to be done. The formula or prescription for this transformation is not left to us to ascertain by deductive or inductive reasoning. It was not left to us to obtain by mysterious means or by fervent prayer. It is not obtained by leaving the world and living in caves. We are to walk by the power of the Spirit and study the Word of God which acts as our mirror to see Christ. If you are a Christian and you wonder why we're here and what our purpose is on earth ... this is it.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To behold His glory with open face, with a face which has been, and which remains unveiled, is to be delivered at salvation to a state in which darkness arising from alienation, ignorance, misconception and prejudice has been dissipated, so that we can see clearly. We are delivered from the law, we are made free, we are introduced into the presence of the Lord, and enabled to behold His glory. (C. Hodge)

The indwelling of Jesus Christ as the Shekinah Glory is a guarantee of the believer's security, spiritual riches, and sanctified position (Gal. 2:20) that make attainable the purpose of the spiritual life. That purpose is the glorification of God in our bodies (1 Cor. 6:20). But for the reversionist the indwelling of Christ has no effect. The reversionist is incapable of reflecting the virtue and integrity of the indwelling Shekinah Glory. While the indwelling Shekinah is invisible, His reflected glory is seen through the Church Age believer who advances to supergrace. (R.B. Thieme)

A spiritual person is one who experiences the divine purpose and plan in his daily life through the power of the indwelling Spirit. The *character* of that life will be the out-lived Christ. The *cause* of that life will be the unhindered indwelling Spirit. (L.S. Chafer) The Christian goes on increasing *from one degree* to another, as his knowledge of the Lord increases. Neither is the glory superficial, but inward, the work of *the Spirit*, here described explicitly as *the Lord*, i.e. Yahweh Himself. (Guthrie, Motyer)

The continuous and progressive transformation by which believers are *changed from one degree of glory to another* is taking place in their lives so that they approximate more and more to the likeness of God expressed so perfectly in the life of Jesus Christ. (C. Kruse) This aspect of the work of God for the believer is *progressive* in some of its aspects, and is quite in contrast to the *positional* sanctification which is “once for all”. It is accomplished by the power of God through the Spirit and through the Word. (L.S. Chafer) This expression indicates progression from one stage of glory to another. (C. Hodge)

We must keep in mind the difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of Christ (Rom. 8:10). The Spirit’s indwelling is to prepare our bodies as temples; Christ resides in our bodies to *manifest His glory* in our lives. In us Christ provides encouragement (John 14:18-21), motivation (Eph. 3:17), and confidence (Col. 1:27). (R.B. Thieme) This is the same word (transformed) translated *transfigured* in the record of Jesus’ transfiguration. Paul also uses this word in Romans 12:2 when discussing the transformation that takes place as believers renew their mind with the Word of God. When believers study and apply God’s Word, progressive change takes place. Believers are transformed into the same image of Christ. If the Corinthians desired to become Christlike, they would need to look intently at God’s Word. As believers do this, they go *from glory to glory*, that is, from one degree of glory to another. They experience an ever-growing glory. (D. Hunt)

The Spirit’s activity is the major characteristic of the new covenant and the transformation of believers is wholly attributable to His work in their lives. (C. Kruse) The Spirit *indwells* the body so Christ may take up royal residence there, while the *filling* of the Spirit enables the believer to reflect the glory of the resident Christ. (R.B. Thieme) The verb ‘metamorphoumetha’ is in the Present tense, indicating the continuous nature of the change, while the words “from one degree of glory to another” stress its progressive nature. (C. Kruse) As believers manifest the fruit (not works) of the Spirit, they are progressively being transformed into His likeness. This is the goal of the Christian’s walk. (D. Lowery)

Paul seems intent on showing that, through Christ, access to God’s presence has now been granted to all believers, who, without fear of death, are free to gaze upon and to be transformed by the revelation of God’s presence, that is, the glory of God. (*Paul, the Temple, and the Presence of God*, Renwick) What the Christian sees is not the immediate, beautiful vision of the glory of the Lord, which is only enjoyed in heaven, but that manifestation of His glory which is made in His Word and by His Spirit, Whose

office it is to glorify Christ by revealing Him to us. (C. Hodge) The believer cannot do without the Word and the Spirit. Word without Spirit leads not merely to legalism but to a deafening effect on hearer and reader. Spirit without Word brings a form of life, but no concrete criteria as to how life ought to be lived. Both are needed in the Christian's life. (*Echoes of Scripture in Paul*, R.B. Hays, 1998, Yale University Press)

Paul stresses the need for individuals to progress towards maturity on a number of occasions. He views it as an ever closer approximation to the "likeness" of God, so that there is an increasing reflection of God's attitudes, concerns, and activities. Paul also describes Christian maturity as a possession of the "mind" of Christ and bearing in one's "person" the marks of Jesus ... as a "clothing oneself" with Christ, allowing Christ to be "formed" within, and as a "transformation" into His glory. It is essentially an attaining of all to "the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature adulthood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" as in Ephesians 4:13. Paul discusses this not only in passages that specifically mention the need for "progress" or "growth" but also, more obliquely, in metaphors drawn from athletic contests and military life. The key word for this process for Paul is "faith" or Bible doctrine. Exertion of one's own willpower through energetic attempts at moral or spiritual reform, scrupulous observance of personal or corporate religious rituals, or involvement in various pious or mystical exercises cannot achieve this. "Faith comes through hearing, and hearing comes through the presentation of the message about Christ." Because the association between faith and knowledge is so close, Paul can even speak of his converts having "learned" Christ. So it is through faith alone that the process of becoming a Christian begins, and it is knowledge about Christ that alone makes this process possible. Knowledge of His Word plays the crucial role. (Robert Banks)

2 Cor. 3:18 **But** (contrast) **we** (Subj. Nom.; believers) **all** (Nom. Measure), **who are ourselves able to see as in a mirror** (κατοπτρίζω, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Substantival; glass, reflective brass mirror) **the glory** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of the Lord** (Poss. Gen.) **without the blindness imposed by the veil** (ἀνακαλύπτω, Perf.PPTc.DNS, Intensive, Circumstantial) **over the face** (Instr. Manner; with unveiled face), **are transformed** (μεταμορφόω, PPI1P, Dramatic) **according to the same** (Acc. Spec.) **image** (Adv. Acc.) **from one degree of glory** (Prep. Acc.) **to another degree of glory** (Acc. Degree), **as from** (comparative; like) **the Spirit** (Abl. Source) **of the Lord** (Poss. Gen., Abl. Appos.).

Greek Text

ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες ἀνακαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος.

Latin Vulgate

nos vero omnes revelata facie gloriam Domini
speculantes in eandem imaginem transformamur a
claritate in claritatem tamquam a Domini Spiritu

Chapter 4

LWB 2 Cor. 4:1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, inasmuch as we have received mercy, we are not discouraged,

KW 2 Cor. 4:1 Because of this, having this ministry [of the New Testament] even as we were made the objects of mercy [in its bestowal], we do not lose courage,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the Customary Present tense means all believers have a ministry, as both priests and ambassadors, otherwise known as full-time Christian service. We have this ministry because at the point of salvation, as the Constative Aorist tense portrays, we received mercy or divine grace in action. We received this mercy because we are His elect. By way of divine passing over, the non-elect did not receive mercy. And because we received His mercy in times past, the Customary Present tense combined with a Negative Adverb says we are not discouraged because we will continue to receive His mercy. If we don't continue to receive His mercy, we are probably under divine discipline, which is not the customary *modus vivendi* of the Christian way of life.

We should never consider giving up the Christian way of life, no matter how hard it seems, no matter how despondent we might feel. Everyone gets tired at times, but we keep on plugging because the Holy Spirit empowers us to do so. An attitude of giving up is tantamount to *emotional revolt of the soul*, which builds sinful *scar tissue* on the mind. Where does such an attitude come from? The Latin word "deficio," where we get our English word "deficit," means to run out of supplies, to be overwhelmed, or exhausted. If we exhibit these characteristics on a consistent basis, something in our life needs changing. Perhaps we are pursuing a ministry that God does not support. Perhaps we are pursuing a ministry that God does support, but we are living in carnality and are therefore operating without divine resources. Perhaps we are in a phase of divine discipline (negative) or a phase of suffering for Christ's sake (positive). It's good to take mental inventory, if for no other reason than to make sure we are in fellowship with God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some Christians, not willing to plug away at God's protocol plan to receive +H (Plus H), become disillusioned with the Christian Way of Life, end up chasing after the details of life, and end up with -H (Minus H). +H is sharing the happiness of God; -H is a counterfeit, human substitute for sharing the happiness of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

"We have received mercy" refers to the decisive, eschatological salvation of God, as opposed to "God hardens whom He will." Hardening constitutes one as a "vessel of wrath" as opposed to a "vessel of mercy." (*The Justification of God*, John Piper)

Although Paul's proclamation of the gospel is not being met with open arms by his people Israel, neither Paul nor his gospel is really to blame. This obduracy fits into a historical pattern of hard-heartedness and rebellion. For his part, Paul focuses on presenting the gospel and conducting himself with candor and honesty. (James M. Scott)

2 Cor. 4:1 **Therefore** (transitional), **since we have** (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Circumstantial) **this** (Acc. Spec.) **ministry** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **inasmuch as** (subordinate conj.) **we have received mercy** (ἐλέεω, APIIP, Constativ; the non-elect did not receive mercy), **we are not** (neg. adv.) **discouraged** (ἐγκακέω, PAIIP, Customary; tired, faint),

Greek Text

Διὰ τοῦτο, ἔχοντες τὴν διακονίαν ταύτην καθὼς ἠλεήθημεν, οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν

Latin Vulgate

ideo habentes hanc ministrationem iuxta quod misericordiam consecuti sumus non deficimus

LWB 2 Cor. 4:2 but have renounced hidden things related to shameful deeds, not walking deceitfully, nor distorting the Word of God, but proving ourselves by bringing the truth to light face-to-face with each classification of conscience of men before God.

KW 2 Cor. 4:2 but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not ordering the manner of our lives in the sphere of craftiness, nor even adulterating the word of God [by an admixture of error], but by means of an open declaration of the truth commending ourselves to every variety of the conscience of men in the sight of God.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul and his companions understood the seriousness of the truth of the Gospel. The Constative Aorist tense means they renounced all secretive things, such as gnosticism or mysticism, a long time ago. Some of the shameful deeds that Paul met with, and we see them almost every day ourselves, is the use of gimmicks, Madison Avenue marketing strategies, and other dishonest methods of evangelism. Prolonged living in carnality is also a shameless deed, because it applies layer upon layer of scar tissue to a person's soul and hinders their evangelism.

A believer who has profound reverence for God and His Word will not customarily walk (order his life) in a deceitful manner, using trickery or craftiness to empty people's pockets or to build an empire. Believers with profound respect for the Word of God do not customarily distort the Word of God by mixing it with human viewpoint thinking, such as psychology, sociology, or philosophy. Divine viewpoint from Bible doctrine and human viewpoint from any number of anthropocentric panaceas are mutually exclusive.

A believer who has profound reverence for God and His Word will customarily prove himself and the legitimacy of his ministry by revealing the truth, i.e. Gospel doctrine and Bible doctrine in general. He will reveal the truth face-to-face with the conscience of men, not in secret meetings; his ministry will be open before men and God. A sound believer will also renounce, like the superb Latin word "occulta" portrays, any association with demonic teachings. Nearly all New Age mystical practices and philosophies are learned in secret, and their teachings are always presented as "important additions" or "keys to unlocking the Bible" that can't be found in the Bible itself.

The Latin word "adultero" is used by Paul a second time in this letter to point out how deceitful a false teacher can be. They take a legitimate passage from Scripture, for example, and they mingle some homegrown or borrowed heresy of their own in addition to the Word of God. This is spiritual adultery - corrupt, false, and always illegitimate.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's methods, he insists, are always open and above-board. Not for him are the subtleties of the unscrupulous politician or the subterfuges of the ingratiating salesman! He does not walk in craftiness. He does not dilute its severity to make himself popular with his hearers, nor does he confound it with human philosophies or psychologies, but proclaims it for what in fact it is, the Truth. (R.V.G. Tasker)

Paul declares 'craftiness' and 'sophistry' to be unworthy of Christ's servants. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 4:2 but (contrast) have renounced (ἀπέλιπον, AMIIP, Constative) hidden (Acc. Gen. Ref.; secret, underhanded) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.) related to shameful deeds (Adv. Gen. Ref.; dishonesty), not (neg. adv.) walking (περιπατέω, PAPTc.NMP, Customary, Modal) deceitfully (Instr. Manner),

nor (neg. adv.) distorting (δολόω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Modal; corrupting) the Word (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Poss. Gen.), but (contrast) proving (συνίστημι, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Modal; recommending) ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.; reflexive) by bringing to light (Instr. Means; revealing) the truth (Obj. Gen.; Gospel doctrine) face-to-face with (Prep. Acc.) each classification (Acc. Spec.; type) of conscience (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of men (Poss. Gen.) before God (Gen. Adv.).

Greek Text

ἀλλὰ ἀπειπάμεθα τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνῃς, μὴ περιπατοῦντες ἐν πανουργίᾳ μηδὲ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας συνιστάνοντες ἑαυτοὺς πρὸς πᾶσαν συνείδησιν ἀνθρώπων ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

sed abdicamus occulta dedecoris non ambulantes in astutia neque adulterantes verbum Dei sed in manifestatione veritatis commendantes nosmet ipsos ad omnem conscientiam hominum coram Deo

LWB 2 Cor. 4:3 So then, if our gospel is being (kept) hidden, it is being (kept) hidden among those who are perishing,

KW 2 Cor. 4:3 But if also, as is the case, our gospel has been covered, in the case of those who are perishing it has been covered,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The protasis of a 1st class condition means: “Yes, it is true that our gospel is being (kept) hidden.” Whom is it being (kept) hidden from? Is it hidden from those who are ‘less than brilliant’ individuals, so that only the brightest can understand it? No. Is it hidden from everyone except those who have the good sense to search deeply for its secret meaning? No. Is it hidden from everyone except those who are ‘sending positive volition signals’ to heaven asking that it be rendered less obscure? No. We are all dead in trespasses and sins, totally unable to do any of these things. All these options would require the Active or Middle Voice. The Passive Voice means they are receiving the action of the verb without lifting a finger or exercising their volition in the slightest – God is keeping it hidden from them.

The Customary Present tense reminds us that there is always a remnant according to the election of grace. This “hiding of the gospel” is nothing new. It has always (in all dispensations) been hidden from everyone except the elect. We can’t tell who they are by looking at them, so we preach the gospel to everyone indiscriminately. God knows ‘them that are His’ and will open the message to them according to His timing. The Dative of Disadvantage spells out the fact that it is indeed a disadvantage to be among those who cannot understand the Gospel because it has been hidden. The Intensive Perfect tense encompasses the past, present and future of these lost individuals - meaning the Gospel was hidden in the past, it is hidden now, and it will remain hidden in the future - from those whom God wants to keep it hidden. He will even use Satan as a tool to keep it hidden; there is no tug-of-war between God and Satan going on over the souls of men. The Passive Voice also points out that Paul and other communicators aren’t the ones who are keeping the Gospel hidden. They are doing their job of victorious proclamation with honor and clarity. It is God Himself Who is keeping the Gospel hidden.

The Dramatic Present tense means they are perishing as of this very moment, and that is no small matter. The Passive Voice means their status as lost individuals is God’s omnipotent decision, not man’s. They were lost at birth due to the imputation of Adam’s sin; they are currently lost because “they do not have ears to hear;” and they will remain lost forever because they are not among His elect. There is not a hint that they can do anything about it, nor would they if they could. God does not deal in hypotheticals. He has a plan, that plan includes and excludes certain individuals, and it will certainly come to pass just like He wants it. Not only that, but His plan is being worked out in agreement with ALL His divine attributes – not just sovereignty, omnipotence, and justice – but also righteousness, love, veracity and others. So before you say “That’s not fair, man should have the final decision!” ... you’d better consider Whom you are blaspheming by taking upon yourself the prerogatives of deity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul tells us that the gospel is veiled in them that are perishing. Unless there is a divine miracle, men do not perceive its relevance. It is not a piece of human wisdom. It does not appeal to the natural man. It is not ‘after man’. It includes the message of judgment, and this never attracts man. But, like it or not, there is and can be but one gospel. Since God has given it, any man-made alternative is false and must be rejected. The gospel is effective because the Spirit of God is in it, and not because of any human effort whatever. (*The Cross in the New Testament*, Leon Morris)

Today, Satan is the sovereign of the world, and he rules through the policy which he naturally calls “good” but which God calls “evil.” Evil is the sum total of Satan’s genius; it is the thinking of Satan as opposed to the mind of Christ, Bible doctrine. Satan sponsors many different, even antithetical, ideas and false systems of thought by which he seeks to gain control of the human soul and hence of the entire human race. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Opponents raise the objection that Paul's Gospel is covered, "kalupto", i.e., that the message lacks the perspicuous force of true divine revelation and that the one who proclaims it lacks the simple candour of a true divine messenger. Paul ironically accepts this and makes a humorous application. His Gospel is certainly hidden for unbelievers who are on the way to destruction. The god of this aeon, Satan, has blinded their eyes so that they cannot see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ. (TDNT)

Cleverly substituting religion for the Truth of the Word of God, the devil blinds unbelievers to the Gospel and distracts believers from the Christian way of life. By opposing Bible doctrine and sponsoring rebellion against divinely established law and order, Satan attempts to fulfill his purpose of making himself "like the Most High". To this end he encourages revolt against God, but never against himself. (*Anti-Semitism*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

All mankind are in a lost and perishing condition through sin, though some will not be lost eternally, whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and who by the Spirit are brought savingly to believe in Christ. But there are others, that will be lost forever, and to these the Gospel is hid, and they are such, who are left to the native blindness of their minds, and are given up to a reprobate mind, to judicial darkness, and are suffered to be under the influence of the prince of darkness. (John Gill)

2 Cor. 4:3 So then (inferential), if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") our (Poss. Gen.) gospel (Subj. Nom.) is (είμι, PAI3S, Customary) being kept hidden (καλύπτω, Perf.PPtc.NSN, Intensive, Periphrastic, Circumstantial; veiled), it is (είμι, PAI3S, Customary) being kept hidden (καλύπτω, Perf.PPtc.NSN, Intensive, Periphrastic, Circumstantial; veiled) among those (Dat. Disadv.) who (the non-elect) are perishing (απόλλυμι, PPtc.NNS, Dramatic, Substantival),

Greek Text

εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον,

Latin Vulgate

quod si etiam opertum est evangelium nostrum in his qui pereunt est opertum

LWB 2 Cor. 4:4 Concerning whom the god over this age [world order] has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving ones, so that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should not dawn on them.

KW 2 Cor. 4:4 In whom the god of this age blinded the minds of the unbelievers to the end that the light of the good news of the glory of the Christ Who is the derived image of God should not dawn upon them,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Satan is the god over this age or world order, whom God uses as His “monkey” to do His will through whatever deeds are deemed necessary. In this case, satan is used to obscure the Gospel to the best of his ability by blinding the minds of unbelievers so they will not believe the Gospel. The Durative Imperfect tense means satan is still working his ‘black magic’ today; he never gives up. The Imperfect tense, though, reiterates that he has limited success; he effectively blinds those whom God wants to remain in darkness, but he always loses those whom God chose in eternity past to believe.

Satan does not have the attribute of omniscience, so like us, he has no idea who God’s elect are. If he did, he wouldn’t bother with them until they became believers; then he would have them continually harrassed so they make no progress in the spiritual life. Since he doesn’t know who the elect are, he has no choice but to expend useless energy and demonic resources to prevent their regeneration (being born again) by launching an indiscriminate attack on the thoughts of all unbelievers.

The Descriptive Present tense says Jesus Christ is the image of God the Father. The Culminative Aorist tense means those whom satan effectively blinds will not comprehend the Gospel and will not believe in Jesus Christ. The blending of Purpose and Result in the Infinitive means this is one of satan’s primary goals or purposes; when his blinding is effective, their continued unbelief unto death is his Intended Result.

In case you’ve ever wondered why unbelievers in previous ages were called “infidels,” the Latin word “infidelis,” meaning faithless, was the origination of this usage. A considerable amount of linguistic baggage has been attached to the simple meaning of “not believing” over the years, so that it also contains a derogatory character statement, i.e., individuals who are not to be trusted, treacherous, unsafe, and perfidious.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These unbelievers are not as “free” as they would like to think , but are “in bondage” to baser inclinations, moral obligations, and alien forces. They are also misled and manipulated by Satan. These largely shape their characters and dominate their lives. (Robert Banks) Such passages as this do not state that unbelievers cannot understand the meaning of the text, but rather they will reject the implications of it. The Holy Spirit

deals in this latter realm, enabling readers to separate truth from falsehood and to apply the Word properly to their lives. (*The Hermeneutical Spiral*, Grant R. Osborne)

Paul and Peter in many verses assert that behind Satan, God was guiding all things. Behind Satan's limited freedom to act is the hand of a sovereign God guiding all things for the good of His people. (*The Pleasures of God*, John Piper) Calling Satan the "god of this world" does not mean that he is in control of the world, for God is in control, and He has given all authority to Christ, but it does convey the idea that he is in control of this evil world, the world in so far as it is ethically separated from God. Satan is superhuman, but not divine; has great power, but is not omnipotent; wields influence on a large but restricted scale, and is destined to be cast into the bottomless pit. (*Systematic Theology*, Louis Berkof)

Satan attacks and counterfeits every facet of God's plan in order to blind unbelievers to the Gospel and believers to Bible doctrine. For instance, the imputation of soul life in human life is opposed by the highly speculative hypothesis of evolution and by the philosophy of materialism. The imputation of Adam's original sin is attacked by the mistaken notion of the inherent dignity of man and its corollary doctrine of noble human equality. Eternal salvation is obscured by various psychological systems, including the idea that improved environment is the solution to life's problems. Of course, the Gospel is a favorite target for satanic attacks, since he has a false gospel of his own. Bible doctrine is opposed through myriad distractions or rejection of the communicator's authority. Hope is debilitated into uncertainty. Salvation by grace is attacked by many systems of salvation by works. (*The Integrity of God*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The unregenerate, then, are unconscious of their position in the arms of Satan, and blind in their thoughts toward the Gospel of mercy and grace – their only hope for time or eternity. Satan, like a fond mother, is bending over those in his arms, breathing into their minds the quieting balm of a "universal fatherhood of God" and a "universal brotherhood of man," suggesting their worthiness before God on the ground of their own moral character and physical generation. He is feeding their tendency to imitate the true faith by great humanitarian undertakings and schemes for the reformation of individuals and the betterment of the social order. God's necessary requirements of regeneration are carefully set aside, and the blinded souls go on without hope. How important, as a preparation for salvation, is the illuminating work of the Spirit in conviction, by which He lifts the veil and opens the mind to a new vision of the redemption and glory that is in Christ! Without this God-given vision there can be no understanding of the way of life, nor any intelligent decision for Christ. (*Satan: His Motive and Methods*, L.S. Chafer)

The Bible condemns religion (Jer. 8:8-12; Matt. 23). Contrary to popular opinion, religion is NOT synonymous with faith in Christ, relationship with the Lord, or devotion to God. As an ingenious counterfeit of the truth, religion is one of the devil's trump cards. Religion emphasizes what man does to earn the approbation of God, as opposed to what God in grace does for man. When God's grace is removed, the Gospel is obscured. Victims of religion are either lulled into complacency concerning their eternal future or

their hope for an eternal future is used to enslave them in the legalistic rituals and traditions of man. The Gospel frees man to serve the living God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

We do go on seeing more and more of God the Father as we abide in Christ and continue our fellowship with Him. But it is profoundly important to see that recognizing Jesus for Who He really is involves a simultaneous recognition that He is the image of God the Father and that His glory is the glory of God the Father. (John Piper)

In each place where Satan is mentioned in this letter he is seen to be actively seeking to hinder the work of God. However, it must be remembered that Satan can carry out such a function only with divine permission, and the blindness of mind which he is allowed to impose can at any time be penetrated by a blaze of light if God so wills. This, of course, was Paul's own experience. In his blindness he persecuted God's church until such time as it pleased God to reveal His Son to him. (C. Kruse) The blindness precedes the unbelief and is the cause of it ... not the other way around. (C. Hodge) Scripture teaches that Satan blinds men, not merely with God's permission, but even by His command, that he may execute his vengeance. (J. Calvin)

Satan is called the god of this world because of the power which he exercises over the men of the world, and because of the servile obedience which they render to him. They are taken captive by him at his will. It is not necessary in order that men should serve Satan, and even they should know that such a being exists. It is enough that he actually controls them, and that they fulfill his purposes as implicitly as the good fulfill the will of God. Not to serve God, is to serve Satan. There is no help for it. If Jehovah be not our God, Satan is. He is therefore called the prince of this world. (C. Hodge)

When a believer thinks only with his left lobe (nous), his thinking is corrupted (noema) and he becomes subjective. Their darkened thinking aptly describes the "blackout of doctrine in the soul." As Bible doctrine is excluded from the thought process, the mentality of the soul is thrown open to apostate doctrine, false criteria, perverted norms and standards. This massive breakdown in the spiritual life is described by the phrase "excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance." The believer whose thinking has become darkened will inevitably be "alienated" from God. Satan then has his victory. (*Reversionism*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This Greek word "noema" is used five times to describe that part of man which sin blinds and corrupts and which the grace of Christ redeems. It refers to the damaging effect of the fall upon man's intellectual capabilities. (*Death and the Afterlife*, Robert A. Morey)

2 Cor. 4:4 Concerning whom (Dat. Disadv.; unbelievers) the god (Subj. Nom.; satan) over this (Dat. Spec.) age (Gen. Ruling Over; world order, organized system) has blinded (τυφλώ, Imperf.AI3S, Durative) the thoughts (Acc. Dir. Obj.; minds) of the unbelieving ones (Gen. Poss.), so that (purpose/result) the illumination (Acc. Dir. Obj.; revelation, act of enlightening) of the gospel (Obj. Gen.;

good news) of the glory (Adv. Gen. Ref.) of Christ (Poss. Gen.), Who (Nom. Appos.; as the Son) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) the image (Pred. Nom.) of God (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the Father), should/will not (neg. adv.) dawn on them (αὐγάζω, AAInf., Culminative, Articular, Purpose/Result).

Greek Text

ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

in quibus deus huius saeculi excaecavit mentes infidelium ut non fulgeat inluminatio evangelii gloriae Christi qui est imago Dei

LWB 2 Cor. 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but the Lord Jesus Christ, and ourselves your bondslaves because of Jesus.

KW 2 Cor. 4:5 For we do not proclaim ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord; but we proclaim ourselves as you slaves for the sake of Jesus,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his contrast between himself and his colleagues from the false teachers in Corinth. The Customary Present tense is used to depict the false teachers spending considerable time talking about themselves and setting themselves up as rulers over the ‘common folk’. In other words, they “make an issue out of themselves.” By contrast, Paul says we don’t talk about ourselves, but rather Christ. Our speech is plain and simple, rather than grandiose, eloquent, and full of flattery. For Paul, the important thing is the message, not the man.

Instead of making himself out to be a ruler over the people, Paul considered himself a slave because of his ministry from Christ. This doesn’t mean he let people “walk all over him” as if he was a personal servant, but he presented the gospel and taught Christian living as if he was a childtrainer – a position in Greek and Roman households that was commonly held by slaves, educated captives from countries who had been conquered in battle.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The business of a preacher is to draw attention not to himself, but to Christ; to proclaim the crucified and risen Jesus as the Messiah in Whom God's purposes, expressed in the Old Testament, are fulfilled; as the Saviour Who liberates men from the guilt and power of sin; and as the Lord Who demands the total allegiance and obedience of every believer. (R.V.G. Tasker)

The great end of Paul's preaching was to bring men to receive and acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and as the supreme Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. To make the end of preaching the inculcation of virtue, to render men honest, sober, benevolent and faithful, is part and parcel of that wisdom of the world that is foolishness with God. It is attempting to raise fruit without trees. (C. Hodge)

The Pauline phrase "dia Jesou" (because of Jesus) is illustrated by "dia ton Kurion" (because of the Lord) in a Berlin Museum papyrus letter which Deissmann thinks curiously illumines the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15. In the modern Greek "gia" (dia) this notion of aim or purpose with the accusative is the usual one. A common idiom in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Greek is the use of "dia to" and the infinitive in the sense of "hina." It is practically equivalent in the N.T. to "hoti" and the indicative and is frequent. (A.T. Robertson) He ends up translating it "because of Jesus" just like I did, but not without going in many directions first! I knew you'd want to know this tidbit of information.

2 Cor. 4:5 **For** (explanatory) **we** (unlike the false teachers) **do not** (neg. adv.) **preach** (κηρύσσω, PAI1P, Customary) **ourselves** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; it's the message not the man), **but** (contrast) **the Lord Jesus Christ** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **and** (continuative) **ourselves** (Acc. Appos.) **your** (Gen. Rel.) **bondslaves** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; as opposed to rulers) **because of Jesus** (Causal Acc.).

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτοὺς κηρύσσομεν ἀλλὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ δούλους ὑμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν.

Latin Vulgate

non enim nosmet ipsos praedicamus sed Iesum Christum
Dominum nos autem servos vestros per Iesum

LWB 2 Cor. 4:6 Because *it is* the God, Who commanded that light shall shine forth out of darkness, Who has given light into our minds for the purpose of illuminating the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

KW 2 Cor. 4:6 Because the God Who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, shined in our hearts, resulting in an illumination being given of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates objections from those who don't like the doctrine of unconditional election. The flesh (old sin nature) hates the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and engages in elaborate efforts to undo God's control over the creation and its inhabitants. So does Paul back-off from his former statements and acquiesce to those who think man has the final say? No. Does Paul change his theology and say that what really happens is man's volition is the ultimate cause of salvation, as well as his ability to understand or not understand the Gospel message? No. Paul reiterates the truth of the absolute sovereignty of God in determining who is illuminated and who is not. The same power that called light out of darkness at creation calls light into the mind of believers (out of spiritual darkness) so they are capable of believing the Gospel.

The Culminative Aorist tense points to God speaking the words of ultimate authority. The Active Voice says He commanded light to shine forth out of darkness. Nobody was present during the Genesis creation to give Him advice. Nobody was asked for their opinion. In the same manner, nobody was present in eternity past to give Him advice as to who should become Christians and who should not. The Culminative Aorist tense and the Active Voice combine once again to state definitively that God did it all. If man had any part in it whatsoever, the Passive Voice would have been used. The flesh hates God's declaration of man's inability to contribute in some way to salvation, but God is sovereign in His disposal of spiritual (mental) illumination leading to regeneration in spite of man's colossal arrogance to the contrary. If you insist that your decision to chose Christ was the determining factor in your salvation, you are blaspheming the very God Who gave you the light of spiritual illumination in the first place. Shame on you!

The Imperative Future tense means God commanded the light to shine forth out of darkness and there was not even a remote chance that the light wouldn't shine forth! As believers, we receive the light of spiritual illumination which leads to regeneration in exactly the same manner. There is not even a remote chance that one of God's elect might not receive the light of illumination. To even postulate such a ludicrous possibility is to deny His veracity, sovereignty, and omnipotence.

The glory of God "in the face of" Christ is a parallel to the glory of God reflected "on the face of" Moses. However, the glory reflected on Moses' face was temporary, while the glory in the face of Christ will exist forever.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The eye of the soul is blind until God shines into it. It is God, not the eye, Who gives the light of the knowledge of His glory. Until God moves in the will, the will is impotent towards spiritual good. Yet God does not bend the will by force. The will is drawn in such a way that it follows without resistance as if impelled by an inner necessity. (*The Sovereignty of Grace*, Arthur Custance) Regeneration consists in the implanting of the principle of the new spiritual life in man, in a radical change of the governing disposition of the soul, which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gives birth to a life that moves in a Godward direction. In principle, this change affects the whole man: the intellect, the will, and the feelings or emotions. (Louis Berkof)

God touched the blind eyes of self-love and gave her an irresistible view of His own glory in the face of Christ. He did not kill self-love; he supernaturally and profoundly transformed it into a spiritual hunger for the glory of God. (John Piper) Darkness originally brooded over chaos, until God said, "Let there be light." So spiritual darkness broods over the minds of men, until God shines (inward illumination) into their hearts.

Since men are blinded to the worth of Christ, a miracle is needed in order for them to come to see and believe. Paul compares this miracle with the first day of creation when God said, "Let there be light." It is in fact a new creation, or a new birth. Those who are called have their eyes opened by the sovereign, creative power of God so that they no longer see the cross as foolishness, but as the power and the wisdom of God. The effectual call is the miracle of having our blindness removed. (John Piper) The cognate noun "photismos" (illumination) is used twice with reference to conversion, in verses 4 and 6. (*Still Sovereign*, Thomas R. Schreiner, Bruce A. Ware)

The pleasure of God in His Son is pleasure in Himself. Since the Son is the image of God and the radiance of God and the form of God, equal with God, and indeed is God, therefore God's delight in the Son is delight in Himself. The original, the primal, the deepest, the foundational joy of God is the joy He has in His own perfections as He sees them reflected in the glory of His Son. From all eternity God had beheld the panorama of His own perfections in the face of His Son. All that He is He sees reflected fully and perfectly in the countenance of His Son. And in this He rejoices with infinite joy. (John Piper)

2 Cor. 4:6 Because (causal; "for") it is (ellipsis) the God (Subj. Nom.), Who (Nom. Appos.) commanded that (εἶπον, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Substantival; spoke with ultimate authority) light (Subj. Nom.) shall shine forth (λάμπω, FAI3S, Imperative) out of darkness (Abl. Separation; from the Genesis creation narrative), Who (Nom. Appos.) has given light (λάμπω, AAI3S, Culminative; spiritual illumination) into our minds (Loc. Sph.; heart: right lobe of the soul) for the purpose of illuminating (Adv. Acc.; bringing to

life) the knowledge (Obj. Gen.; leading to conversion) of the glory (Adv. Gen. Ref.) of God (Poss. Gen.) in the face (Loc. Place) of Jesus Christ (Poss. Gen.).

Greek Text

ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν, Ἐκ σκοτῶν φῶς λάμψει, ὃς ἔλαμψεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam Deus qui dixit de tenebris lucem splendescere qui inluxit in cordibus nostris ad inlumptionem scientiae claritatis Dei in facie Christi Iesu

LWB 2 Cor. 4:7 Moreover, we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing quality of the beyond our ability power is always made possible by God, and never out from us,

KW 2 Cor. 4:7 But we have this treasure [the reflection of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ] in earthenware containers, in order that the super-excellence of the power might be from God as a source and not from us.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Static Present tense means we possess this treasure, this gift of illuminating light leading to regeneration, in our physical (as opposed to heavenly) bodies. It isn't something we wait to receive once we obtain our resurrection bodies in heaven. We have it here and now, in the sphere (Locative) of our human existence on earth.

In order to further squelch any notion that we did something to accomplish salvation, Paul uses a unique descriptive word for the divine enablement that provides regeneration. He calls this power “the surpassing quality of the beyond our ability” power. This places the gift of illuminating light completely outside the possibility of man's volition and squarely in the hands of divine sovereignty and omnipotence.

The Gnostic Present tense means this illuminating light is always (without exception) provided by God. He is the only possible agent, and we are the beneficiaries. The Result or Subjunctive Mood used in a Final Clause points to this entire process as being the ultimate plan of God from eternity past. The result is certain and final, there are no contingencies; nothing we can do (or not do) will change the outcome. Then Paul puts the nail in the coffin of man's supposed freewill by the Negative Adverb meaning “never” –

this treasure, this light of illumination, this super-abundant power, this source of regeneration always comes from God as the source and NEVER from man.

God found man dead in trespasses and sins, unable to do anything on his own behalf without the power of the Holy Spirit. Dead men are totally unable to believe without this divine illumination. Man did not find God; it was man who was lost and unable to comprehend the Gospel, not God. Regeneration, therefore, is determined by divine choice and fiat, not by man's capricious and powerless will. The idea that man has the power to decide whether he goes to heaven or hell was an anthropocentric philosophy found in parts of ancient Greece, especially among atheistic scholars and akin to many pagan religions and superstitions, but it is not found in Scripture.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The effectual work of the Holy Spirit issuing in salvation becomes manifest on the basis of the proclaimed gospel, and nothing else. Paul consistently points to the content of the gospel as the divine power that issues in salvation. Various stimuli may prompt a thousand different motivations to draw forth responses, but only one message places sinners at the mercy of God, induces them to worship God in the Spirit, gives them no confidence in the flesh, and lifts them to glory only in Christ Jesus. No other message can save, though other messages may evoke human confidence and activity. The message of conditional election (heresy) does not produce proper worship, for it rests God's activity upon man's response and thus magnifies the flesh. The message of free will cannot properly answer the question "What make you to differ from another?" for the answer ultimately must be that "I made myself to differ." The message of general atonement cannot say, "If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him," for the conclusion is tentative and depends finally on man and not on the completed work of Christ. The message of apostasy cannot say, "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who will also do it", for His doing it depends in the final analysis on the human will. Although some may be saved in the midst of such erroneous preaching, through the truth that often clings to the misperceptions, evangelism in its truest form will always point the sinner only to the cross of Christ, the grace of God, and the exceeding greatness of the power of the Spirit. Anyone who points the sinner inward to make him dependent finally on his own will departs from the gospel at that point. Therefore, all methods that focus on human abilities or the desires of natural man betray the gospel. Such methods cannot be justified as Biblical evangelism. Falling into this error are many contemporary quick-gospel presentations and most uses of the public invitation or altar-call. (*By His Grace and For His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life*, Thomas J. Nettles)

Spiritual blessings are also said to be in the Divine treasures. (E.W. Bullinger) This is akin to blessings being "held in escrow" as taught by Robert B. Thieme, Jr.

The words "tou Theo" are a rare case of the Ablatival Genitive, an element of grammar credited to Julius Caesar. It is translated as source, origin, or departure. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 4:7 Moreover (continuative; "as a matter of fact"), we have (ἔχω, PAIIP, Static; possess) this (Acc. Spec.) treasure (Acc. Dir. Obj.; an abundance of rich truths) in earthen (Dat. Spec.; as opposed to heavenly; cheap pottery lamps of little intrinsic value) vessels (Loc. Sph.; physical bodies; jars of clay), so that (result) the surpassing quality of the beyond our ability (Descr. Nom.; preeminence) power (Subj. Gen.) is always (Gnomic: no exceptions) made possible (εἰμί, PASubj.3S, Gnomic, Result, Final Clause; exists, occurs) by God (Ablatival Gen. Source), and (continuing the contrast) never (neg. adv.) out from us (Abl. Means, Source),

Greek Text

Ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν·

Latin Vulgate

habemus autem thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus ut sublimitas sit virtutis Dei et non ex nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 4:8 **Although we are repeatedly subjected to every category of outside pressure, nevertheless, we are not crushed; although we are repeatedly at a total loss as to what we should do next, nevertheless, we are not in a state of despair;**

KW 2 Cor. 4:8 We are being hard pressed from every side, but we are not hemmed in. We are bewildered, not knowing which way to turn, but not utterly destitute of possible measures or resources.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

You name the problem, and Paul (and his associates) was placed under that type of pressure to test his spiritual progress. He fought the fight and came out victorious. He was boxed into the corner on many occasions, but came out swinging. He was without effective human means to solve many of his problems, but never without divine solutions for the issue at hand.

God enables Paul to persevere in the midst of many outside pressures. He does not always perform a miracle and deliver Paul from the pressure, but often allows Paul (with

doctrine and the Holy Spirit) to engage in gladiatorial or military combat against the pressure. Paul is providentially protected, but he is not left without responsibility for his means of passing the tests.

This is the beginning of four pairs of antithetical participles – each begins as a Concessive participle (the word “although” highlights the outside pressure) and ends as a Complementary participle, meaning they correctly applied Biblical doctrine and passed the test – not allowing the outside pressure to become inside stress in the soul. “The radical significance of ‘pressure’ must be retained here.” (*2 Corinthians*, Alfred Plummer)

“En panti” could mean ‘in every place,’ but ‘in every category’ seems to fit the context better. “Aporeo” and “ex-aporeomai” in the Greek (perplexed but not totally perplexed) contain puns of both sound and content.

The Iterative Present means the outside pressure is applied to them on numerous occasions. The Gnomonic Present means they used the appropriate doctrinal resource and always passed the test. The Passive Voice means they received this pressure, they didn’t necessarily go out and bring it upon themselves!

The Gnomonic Present tense in a Complementary Participle means Paul has been in many tight squeezes (cramped, in a tough spot) where he was near the point of succumbing to outside pressure. But to his credit in utilizing divine problem-solving devices, he was able to consistently win the day. Paul uses the Iterative Present tense in a Concessive Participle to tell us that on many occasions he was in inner turmoil, not knowing what to do next in a given situation. We are going to be in many similar situations, where we are left totally helpless, relying on the Holy Spirit to use the doctrine resident in our souls to show us the solution. If we continue to build a systematic, doctrinal framework in our soul, the Gnomonic Present tense tells us that we will always pass the test without being overcome by fear and worry. The Complementary Participle means passing these tests will be to our credit, just like Paul, with the certainty that a reward will also be won.

I like the Latin word ‘anguste’ which refers to a boxer who has been pushed into close quarters by a superior opponent. [In Hsing-I Kung Fu boxing, there are a host of applications where you move your body into the space occupied by the opponent, forcing him elsewhere. That’s close quarters!] In Paul’s example, he managed to slip out of the confining space with God’s assistance.

I also like the sudden, vicious quality of the attack expressed by the Latin word “aporiamur”, which has an element of ‘assailing’ in it. [In Shaolin Yen Ching boxing, there are applications where you chase your opponent down by repeatedly striking him in sensitive areas without mercy. That’s an accurate portrayal of assailing someone.] In Paul’s example, he was knocked down repeatedly, but he wasn’t knocked out.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul now contrasts the humiliating circumstances in which he often finds himself as a minister of the gospel, with the divine power which redeems them and makes them occasions for further manifestations of God's glory. Never, it seems, are his enemies allowed to do their worst. (*Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, R.V.G. Tasker)

Since the power of God is at work in his life, Paul can withstand persecution without being destroyed. (*NIBC 2 Corinthians*, James M. Scott)

Here is the beginning of four paradoxical statements. These reflect the vulnerability of Paul and his co-workers on the one hand and the power of God which sustains them on the other. (*New Tyndale 2 Corinthians*, Colin Kruse)

The present tenses, and always (Gnomic), speak of Paul's incessant experience. The end of man's resources is not the end of God's. More than any other Christian, Paul demonstrated that human extremity was the best position in which to prove divine power. (*NBC 2 Corinthians*, Norman Hillyer)

Paul gives a catalog of trials that he has gone through that demonstrate both his frailty and his resilience and composure. (*Conflict & Community at Corinth*, Ben Witherington III)

The metaphors employed here evoked the Roman arena imagery to describe the demands of the ministry, contrasting human helplessness on one hand with divine enablement on the other. (*BKC 2 Corinthians*, David K. Lowery)

2 Cor. 4:8 Although we are repeatedly subjected to every category (Dat. Measure, Ind. Obj.) of outside (external pressure) pressure (θλίβω, PPtC.NMP, Iterative, Concessive; troubled, squeezed like a grape), nevertheless (adversative), we are not (neg. adv.) crushed (στενοχωρέω, PPtC.NMP, Gnomic, Complementary; overcome by stress in the soul, cramped); although we are repeatedly at a total loss (internal pressure) as to what we should do next (ἀπορέω, PMPtC.NMP, Iterative, Concessive; unable to find a way out), nevertheless (adversative), we are not (neg. adv.) in a state of despair (ἐξαπορέομαι, PMPtC.NMP, Gnomic, Complementary, Deponent; forsaken);

Greek Text

ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι, ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι,

Latin Vulgate

in omnibus tribulationem patimur sed non angustiamur
aporiamur sed non destituimur

LWB 2 Cor. 4:9 Being persecuted, but not being abandoned, being knocked down, but not being destroyed,

KW 2 Cor. 4:9 We are being persecuted, but not left in the lurch, not abandoned, not let down. We are being knocked down, but not destroyed,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All of these participles are in the Passive Voice, meaning these things were happening to Paul and his colleagues without cause. The actions of “persecuting” and “knocking down” are in the Dramatic Present Tense, because of their unjustified, punitive nature. Their survival of both punitive actions are in the Customary Present tense, which when combined with the Negative Adverbs, means the average person would be deserted and possibly killed – but because of God’s protective shield, Paul and company were not.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “destroyed” (apollumi) does not mean “to annihilate” or “to pass into nonexistence” as is clear from the rabbinic meaning of the word, the lexicographical significance of the word, and the way the word is used in the New Testament. There isn’t a single instance in the New Testament where “apollumi” means annihilation in the strict meaning of the word. (Robert A. Morey)

Verses 8 and 9 are an example of “mesodiplosis” or middle repetition, the repetition of the same word or words in the middle of successive sentences. (E.W. Bullinger)

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed;
We are perplexed, but not in despair;
Persecuted, but not forsaken;
Cast down, but not destroyed.”

Paul compares himself to a combatant, first hardly pressed, then hemmed in, then pursued, then actually cast down, but not killed. This was not an occasional experience, but his life was like that of Christ, an uninterrupted succession of indignities and suffering. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 4:9 Being persecuted (διώκω, PPpTc.NMP, Dramatic, Circumstantial; driven away, chased down), **but** (adversative)

not (neg. adv.) **being abandoned** (ἐγκαταλείπω, PPpTc.NPM, Customary, Circumstantial; neglected, deserted), **being knocked down** (καταβάλλω, PPpTc.NMP, Dramatic, Circumstantial; clobbered, body-slammed, stoned), **but** (adversative) **not** (neg. adv.) **being destroyed** (ἀπόλλυμι, PPpTc.NMP, Customary, Circumstantial; killed, struck unconscious),

Greek Text

διωκόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι, καταβαλλόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι,

Latin Vulgate

persecutionem patimur sed non derelinquimur deicimur
sed non perimus

LWB 2 Cor. 4:10 Always bearing in our mortal life the constant danger of spiritual death experienced by Jesus, so that the life characterized by Jesus might also be revealed in our seat of daily life.

KW 2 Cor. 4:10 Always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus in order that the life of Jesus might be clearly and openly shown in our body,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Customary Present tense means it is true of all Christians that they bear the constant danger of living in a state of spiritual death in this life. The Purpose of “bearing-up” under such circumstances is that by living under divine protocol, we have the capability of bearing His life in our body as well. The Potential Subjunctive mood, however, points out that His life is not automatically revealed in us; we have to make conscious, daily decisions to be filled with the Spirit and the Word in order for this to occur.

Jesus faced constant threats and temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil. By utilizing divine protocol, He succeeded in passing every test put before Him. He remained, therefore, in sinless perfection, and did not experience spiritual death until the Cross. Although we are born spiritually dead, due to the imputation of Adam’s sin, we can follow divine protocol just like Jesus did, and succeed in passing test after test.

Our mortal life or physical existence is closely related to the experience and suffering of Jesus in His humanity. Suffering will come to us because of our relationship with Him. There is nothing we must do for this to occur; we will suffer like He suffered. However, the life or spiritual existence that Jesus lived in His humanity is not a guarantee. We

could be beaten down and destroyed in this life if we do not live by His principles. The purpose for being related to Him, and for bearing His suffering, however, is to live the same quality of spiritual life that He lived. His spiritual existence should permeate our everyday life - our entire character, personality and being. That's quite a challenge, wouldn't you say?

The translation of the Greek word "soma" as 'body' is an extremely simplistic (and obscure) rendering of a more elaborate concept of sharing in the sufferings of Christ and living a victorious life. "Soma" is also translated as person, individuality, personality, or a life lived on earth. In this verse the life is lived internally; in the next verse, the life is also lived externally.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul says, in effect, our body is constantly exposed to the same putting to death which Jesus suffered. The daily liability to a violent death is something which we carry about with us. This parallel with Christ's death is offset by the parallel with Christ's triumph – life through resurrection. The purpose of this "daily dying" is to set forth the resurrection-life through Christ in us. (Vincent)

2 Cor. 4:10 Always (Adverb; at all times) bearing (περιφέρω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Circumstantial; carrying here and there) in our (Poss. Gen.) mortal life (Loc. Sph.) the constant danger of spiritual death (Adv. Acc.; suffering) experienced by (related to) Jesus (Gen. Rel.; His humanity), so that (Purpose) the life (Subj. Nom.; spiritual existence) characterized by Jesus (Descr. Gen.) might also (ascensive) be revealed (φανερώω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential) in our (Poss. Gen.) seat of daily life (Loc. Sph.; we represent Him as ambassadors).

Greek Text

πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ.

Latin Vulgate

semper mortificationem Iesu in corpore nostro circumferentes ut et vita Iesu in corporibus nostris manifestetur

LWB 2 Cor. 4:11 Moreover, we who continually live under the constant danger of death because of Jesus are frequently delivered, so that the life characterized by Jesus might in addition be revealed in our mortal life here on earth.

KW 2 Cor. 4:11 For, as for us, we who are living are perpetually being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake in order that the life of Jesus might be clearly and openly shown in our mortal body.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The “we” Paul is referring to here are himself, his colleagues, and other Christians who are functioning in one manner or another as ambassadors of Christ to unbelievers. This is a primary reference to evangelists and missionaries who travel to unknown (and often dangerous) places to preach the Gospel. The Iterative Present tense means they encounter hazardous duty from time to time, even to the point of being close to physical death. They happily engage in this dangerous duty because they love ministering His Gospel. And because of their dedication, the Iterative Present tense says they are frequently delivered from hopeless situations.

Why does a person happily engage in such hazardous duty for Christ? There is a double-portion, or reward, for those who engage in hazardous duty. The Adverb of Degree points to something “in addition” to what other believers receive in the prior verse. The Greek words for “body” and “flesh” are not the same in verses 10-11. The life characterized by Christ in verse 10 is related to His *inner* spiritual life, which we may all share. The life characterized by His *external* ministry to others, however, is shared only by those who are engaged in an external ministry. In other words, the life in verse 10 is expressed *inwardly* by all believers who follow the protocol plan of God; the life in verse 11 is for those engaged in *outward* ministry to others, in addition to what they also express by their inward life in verse 10.

The Potential Subjunctive mood means it is up to each evangelist and missionary to live the life characterized by Christ both internally and externally in order to receive a double-portion of rewards and to express a double-portion to others. It is possible, of course, to be an evangelist or a missionary outwardly (performing the function), but to be living in carnality or reversionism inwardly. In this scenario of “going through the motions,” one or both rewards could be lost. It’s not enough to “talk the talk” you also have to “walk the walk.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To live for Jesus' sake involved the readiness to suffer physically and mentally for His sake; it meant being hated for His sake; and it carried with it the liability of being put to death for His sake. But the fact that the suffering did not overwhelm him, that the world's hatred did not overcome him, and that the martyrdom that seemed always so inevitable and so imminent had so far been postponed, was in itself evidence that a supernatural power, the life of Jesus, was being made manifest in his mortal flesh. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 4:11 **Moreover** (continuative), **we** (Subj. Nom.; evangelists and missionaries) **who continually** (Adv. Recurrence) **live** (ζάω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantival, Articular) **under the constant danger of death** (Adv. Acc.; physical) **because of Jesus** (Causal Acc.; due to spreading His Gospel) **are frequently delivered** (παραδίδωμι, PPI1P, Iterative), **so that** (Purpose) **the life** (Subj. Nom.) **characterized by Jesus** (Descr. Gen.) **might in addition** (Degree; double portion) **be revealed** (φανερῶω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential) **in our** (Poss. Gen.) **mortal** (Dat. Spec.; as opposed to heavenly) **life here on earth** (Loc. Sph.; external, outward side of life).

Greek Text

ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

semper enim nos qui vivimus in mortem tradimur propter Iesum ut et vita Iesu manifestetur in carne nostra mortali

LWB 2 Cor. 4:12 Therefore, the constant danger of death operates among us, but life [operates] in you.

KW 2 Cor. 4:12 So that death is operative in us but the life of Jesus might be clearly and openly shown in our mortal body.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

There are two Locative cases in this verse, one is external (Place) and the other is internal (Sphere). External danger exists among us, but internal life exists within us. The Customary Present tense tells us that the danger of physical death is a natural occurrence, part of the human equation that cannot be escaped. By ellipsis, the life of Christ exists (Customary) in us and by means of the Spirit, we can live it to its maximum potential.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The divine power manifested in the support of the apostle, and in rendering his labours so successful, was not primarily and principally for his benefit, but for the benefit of those to whom he preached. Therefore there is no propriety in understanding the apostle to here

represent the Corinthians as living at their ease while he was persecuted and afflicted. (C. Hodge) Physical death operates in him while spiritual life (paradox) works in them. (A.T. Robertson)

Paul apparently saw not only a causal but also a proportional relation between his “death” and the “life” of the Corinthian believers. The deeper his experience of the trials and sufferings of the apostolic life, the richer their experience of the joys and privileges of Christian existence. This rich theology of suffering was forged on the anvil of his own experience of “the sufferings of Christ.”

2 Cor. 4:12 Therefore (continuative), the constant danger of death (Subj. Nom.; physical) operates (ἐνεργέω, PMI3S, Customary) among us (Loc. Place; external), but (contrast) life (Subj. Nom.; spiritual) operates (ellipsis) in you (Loc. Sph.; internal).

Greek Text

ὥστε ὁ θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

ergo mors in nobis operatur vita autem in vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 4:13 Moreover, since we have the same Spirit of faith, (according to what was written in the past and stands written: “I believed, therefore I have spoken”), we also believe, therefore we also make it a practice to speak,

KW 2 Cor. 4:13 But we have the same Spirit of faith [as the Psalmist] according as it has been written and is at present on record, I believed, wherefore I spoke. And as for us, we are believing, wherefore also we are speaking,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Customary Present tense means it is common knowledge that the same Spirit that enabled OT believers to believe also enabled us to belief. And because of that dramatic occurrence in our life, it is Customary to want to communicate the Word to others on a frequent (Iterative) basis. One naturally proceeds to the other. Paul’s quote from the Psalms is his proof-text for such activity. He didn’t originate the idea of evangelism and talking about the Word to fellow believers; it was done hundreds of years ago, in this case by David.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The phrase “Spirit of faith” is not distinctly the Holy Spirit, nor, on the other hand, a human faculty or disposition, but a blending of the both; it is faith as a gift of the Spirit of God. (Vincent) By metonymy, Paul gives the name of the ‘spirit of faith’ to faith itself, because it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. (J. Calvin)

Faith is a mental and not a volitional thing. Evidence cannot produce belief, faith, except in an open mind to this evidence, and capable of responding to it. Good evidence can be refused because of the subjective nature or condition of the mind to which it is addressed. It should be easy to see that a sinful heart which is at enmity to God is incapable of the supreme act of trust in God. Arminians resist this conclusion, because they attribute higher abilities to the mind and will of the natural man than Scripture allows. They are therefore tempted to make faith an act of will instead of a response to testimony. The Biblical solution, however, is to admit that for the natural man faith is impossible and to attribute it to the gift of God. This gift is not communicated mechanically. Rather, it is given through the creation of a capacity for faith on the basis of the evidence submitted. It starts with illumination, softening of the heart, and a quickening of the will. This creation of capacity is called regeneration. The Biblical evidence that faith itself is a gift is impressive and has often been repeated. It comes not of one’s own strength or virtue but only to those who are chosen of God for its reception; hence, it is a gift. (J. Dillow)

2 Cor. 4:13 Moreover (inferential), since we (Paul and his colleagues) have (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Causal) the same (Acc. Spec.) Spirit (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of faith (Adv. Gen. Ref.), (according to (Adv. Comparison) what (Acc. Gen. Ref.) was written in the past and stands written (γράφω, Perf.PPtc.ANS, Descriptive, Attributive: by David in the Psalms): “I believed (πιστεύω, AAIS, Constative), therefore (inferential) I have spoken (λαλέω, AAIS, Culminative; communicate the Word)”, we (Subj. Nom.) also (ascensive) believe (πιστεύω, PAIP, Static), therefore (inferential) we also (ascensive) make it a practice to speak (λαλέω, PAIP, Iterative; communicate the Word),

Greek Text

ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, Ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν,

Latin Vulgate

habentes autem eundem spiritum fidei sicut scriptum est credidi propter quod locutus sum et nos credimus propter quod et loquimur

LWB 2 Cor. 4:14 Knowing that He Who resurrected the Lord Jesus shall also, together with Jesus, resurrect us and present us together with you.

KW 2 Cor. 4:14 knowing that He Who raised up the Lord Jesus shall also raise us with Jesus and shall present us with you,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Intensive Perfect tense means Paul knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that God both resurrected His Son and will also resurrect us. The resurrection is not a doctrine to be questioned, but is absolute truth. The Dramatic Aorist tense points to the omnipotent, previously unheard-of act of bodily resurrection. God the Father performed this feat in the past and He will perform it again in the future – on believers. He will gather together His elect and present them all on public display before Satan and his fallen angels as proof of His victory in the angelic conflict. All believers will be gathered and dedicated together, regardless of status: those who are alive at the time of the Rapture, those who died during the dispensation of Israel, those who died during the Church Age dispensation, those like Paul who labored in the Gospel, and those who believed but made no progress in the spiritual life – we'll all be together. Then all Christians who followed divine protocol while alive will be called as witnesses for the prosecution against Satan in the final stage of his trial. Their growth in grace and knowledge will provide the closing argument against Satan and his fallen angels.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They knew that Christ was raised, and that His resurrection was an earnest and assurance of theirs. And therefore their hope was firm, being well grounded, that He Who raised up Christ the Head will also raise up all His members. (M. Henry)

2 Cor. 4:14 knowing (οἶδα, Perf.Aptc.NMP, Intensive, Circumstantial) that (conj.) He (Subj. Nom.; the Father) Who resurrected (ἐγείρω, AAPtc.NMS, Dramatic, Substantial) the Lord (Complementary Acc.) Jesus (Acc. Dir. Obj.) shall also (ascensive), together with Jesus (Dat. Accompaniment), resurrect (ἐγείρω, FAI3S, Predictive) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul and his colleagues) and (continuative) present (παρίστημι, FAI3S, Predictive; public dedication) us (ellipsis) together with you (Dat. Accompaniment; believers from other dispensations).

Greek Text

εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

scientes quoniam qui suscitavit Iesum et nos cum Iesu suscitabit et constituet vobiscum

LWB 2 Cor. 4:15 Indeed, all kinds of things [are supplied] for your benefit, so that the grace which multiplied through many because of thanksgiving might super-abound to the glory of God.

KW 2 Cor. 4:15 For all things are for your sake in order that the grace having been multiplied through the intermediate agency of the many [in their prayers for me] may cause the thanksgiving to superabound, resulting in the glory of God.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Constativ Aorist tense states that grace is multiplied for believers when people pray for them. And if many people pray for someone, the Culminative Aorist says the end result might be (Potential Subjunctive mood) grace increased exponentially towards them to God's glory. God appreciates thanksgiving for the blessings He pours out on our behalf, and a prayer of thanks goes a long ways toward assuring more of the same.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The thought is on the line of verse 12, that the sufferings and risks of the apostles promote spiritual life in the Church. The grace of God, thus manifest in the apostles, shall be multiplied through the increasing number of those who share it, and shall thus make thanksgiving more abundant for the fruits of this grace as exhibited in the apostles and the Church. (Vincent)

Prayer made by one member of the community for another and especially suffering undergone by one member on behalf of another are just two examples of what is here in view. (Robert Banks)

2 Cor. 4:15 Indeed (Affirmative), all kinds of (Nom. Measure; categories, types) things (Subj. Nom.; blessings) are supplied (ellipsis) for your benefit (Acc. Rel.), so that (Result) the grace (Subj. Nom.) which multiplied (πλεονάζω, AAPtc.NFS, Constativ, Attributive; increased) through many (Gen. Agency) because of thanksgiving (Causal Acc.; orientation to grace through prayer) might super-

abound (περισσεύω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; increase exponentially) **to the glory** (Complementary Acc.) **of God** (Poss. Gen.).

Greek Text

τὰ γὰρ πάντα δι' ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσασα διὰ τῶν πλειόνων τὴν εὐχαριστίαν περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

omnia enim propter vos ut gratia abundans per multos gratiarum actione abundet in gloriam Dei

LWB 2 Cor. 4:16 Therefore, we are not discouraged. But if our outer man is in a state of progressive decay, nevertheless, our inner man is being progressively renewed day by day.

KW 2 Cor. 4:16 Wherefore, we are not losing courage. But and if, as is the case, our outward self is progressively decaying, yet our inward self is being changed into a new kind of life [fit for the new spiritual existence into which we have been ushered in salvation, and constantly being conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus] day by day.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By human standards, Paul and his colleagues could be discouraged with the fruit of their ministry. However, the Customary Present tense combined with a Negative Adverb says they are not fainthearted because of the super-abundance of grace they have received from God due to prayers from other Christians. Never underestimate the power of prayer for the ministry of a pastor, evangelist, or missionary.

The phrase “day by day” means if you aren’t learning Bible doctrine very single day of your life, then you aren’t following God’s protocol plan for your life. This is our number one purpose in life, our spiritual destiny, so you might as well get with the program.

The protasis of a 1st class condition means our outer man, our physical body, is definitely in a state of progressive (Iterative) decay. We have been “getting older” since the day we were born, so to speak. There is no escape from this malady we inherited from Adam. However, our inner man is being progressively renewed (Latin: renovated) to prepare us for life in eternity, so we have yet another reason not to be discouraged. If you focus on the external, each day brings you one step closer to physical death; if you focus on the internal, each day brings you one step closer to eternal life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle Paul knew nothing about the erroneous doctrine of “divine healing” that is propagated by religious shysters. Paul taught that the outward man is perishing but the inward man is renewed daily. (*The Saviour’s Definite Redemption*, W.E. Best) The decay of the outward man in the godless is a melancholy spectacle, for it is the decay of everything; in the Christian it does not touch the life which is hid with Christ in God, and which is in the soul itself a well of water springing up to life eternal. (2 Corinthians, Denney)

God preserves His people by renewing them in the inner man day by day, by quickening them according to His Word, by granting them fresh supplies of grace, and also by moving them to heed His warnings and respond to His exhortations. (*Eternal Security*, Arthur W. Pink)

Only in fellowship with God can the believer learn Bible doctrine or accurately apply spiritual truth. Spiritual growth comes from consistency, and as the believer grows, this consistency in executing God’s protocol plan becomes a stronger and stronger impetus in his life. Every day he learns and applies doctrine; his inner person is renewed day by day. His thinking is renovated according to the pattern of divine thinking in Bible doctrine. He gradually acquires the virtues of Christ. (*The Divine Outline of History*, R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul stresses the Spirit as the operative power behind spiritual growth and gifts. The sphere within which He works is the “inner being.” Only Paul uses the concept and it cannot be understood without a paradigmatic (concept study, involving the semantic field) comparison with such other Pauline terms as “nous” or “dianoia” (mind), “kardia” (heart), or “kainos anthropos” (new self). This new inner being is parallel with the “transformation of the mind” (nous) and “heart” (kardia) in other verses. (Grant R. Osborne)

2 Cor. 4:16 **Therefore** (explanatory; because of grace to the Nth degree), **we are not** (neg. adv) **discouraged** (ἐγκακέω, PAI1P, Customary; fainthearted, despondent). **But** (adversative) **if** (protasis, 1st class condition, “And it’s true”) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **outer** (Adv. Place, Adjectival; external) **man** (Subj. Nom.) **is in a state of progressive decay** (διαφθείρω, PPI3S, Iterative; wasting away), **nevertheless** (contrast), **our** (Poss. Gen.) **inner** (Adv. Place, Adjectival) **man** (ellipsis) **is being progressively renewed** (ἀνακαινίζω, PPI3S, Iterative; by learning Bible doctrine) **day by day** (Loc. Time, Hebraic idiom: by day and day).

Greek Text

Διὸ οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα.

Latin Vulgate

propter quod non deficimus sed licet is qui foris est
noster homo corrumpitur tamen is qui intus est
renovatur de die in diem

LWB 2 Cor. 4:17 For the momentary, insignificant pressure that corresponds with our extreme circumstances is preparing for us a far more surpassing eternal fullness of glory,

KW 2 Cor. 4:17 For our momentary light burden of affliction is working out for us more and more surpassingly an eternal, heavy weight of glory,

KJV 2 Cor. 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul draws a comparison in duration of time and quality between the pressure he is experiencing (momentary and insignificant) and the glory it will eventually produce in him (eternal and surpassing). The pressure he faces is in accordance with God's particular plan for his life and in Paul's case this means he faces extreme circumstances while preaching the Gospel, i.e. facing death on many occasions. Although we might not experience external pressures to the point of death, we are nevertheless called upon to suffer for Christ. We are to be comforted with the fact that our suffering for Christ's sake is but a 'drop in the bucket' in the greater scheme of things. It will not only be shortlived, but it actually has the purpose of preparing us for great glory in the future.

The Dramatic Present tense points to the divine means of turning the outward pressures in Paul's and our lives into the potential for great rewards in the future. If we are able to apply Bible doctrine as a problem-solving device (thinking rationale) when these pressures arise, not allowing them to turn into inner stress in the soul, an outstanding quality of eternal glory awaits us. When we use the Word of God to solve problems in our daily life, we are accruing future rewards. These rewards should not be balked at, because their quality far exceeds the pressure we lived through to obtain them; plus, the time we spent suffering is insignificant to the time we will spend in eternity enjoying our fullness (Latin: sublime) of glory.

I have been accused of exaggerating situations on occasion. My reply is always that I'm the king of hyperbole! In this verse, the phrases "far more surpassing" and "extreme circumstances" are both translations of the Greek word "hyperbole." If Paul can use them, why can't I?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is only by bringing these sufferings into comparison with eternal glory that they dwindled into insignificance. So also when the apostle says that his afflictions were for a moment, it is only when compared with eternity. They were not momentary so far as the present life was concerned. They lasted from his conversion to his martyrdom. His Christian life was a protracted dying. We are not to seek afflictions, but when God sends them we should rejoice in them as the divinely appointed means of securing for us an eternal weight of glory. (C. Hodge)

They weighed things aright in the balance, as it were, putting the heavenly glory in one scale and their earthly sufferings in the other; and, pondering things in their thoughts, they found afflictions to be light, and the glory of heaven to be a far more exceeding weight. (M. Henry)

Quite naturally Paul seems to speak of glory as though it were a substantial entity that could be progressively added to ... like an inheritance “stored up” in heaven. (F.E. Gaebelien)

2 Cor. 4:17 **For** (explanatory) **the momentary** (Adv. Time; of short duration), **insignificant** (Nom. Measure) **pressure** (Subj. Gen.; external) **that corresponds with** (Prep. Acc.) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **extreme circumstances** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; a peculiar classical idiom found in heathen literature) **is preparing** (κατεργάζομαι, PMI3S, Dramatic, Deponent; bringing about) **for us** (Dat. Adv.) **a far more surpassing** (Comparative Acc.; outstanding quality) **eternal** (Acc. Extent of Time; of infinite duration) **fullness** (Gen. Measure; opposite of insignificant) **of glory** (Gen. Adv.),

Greek Text

τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν,

Latin Vulgate

id enim quod in praesenti est momentaneum et leve tribulationis nostrae supra modum in sublimitatem aeternum gloriae pondus operatur nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 4:18 If we do not make it a habit to focus on things which can be observed against us, but rather things which cannot be observed. For the things which can be observed are temporary, but the things which cannot be observed are eternal.

KW 2 Cor. 4:18 While we are not contemplating the things that are seen but the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

KJV 2 Cor. 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The surpassing eternal glory (rewards in heaven) in the prior verse are not obtained without a condition or qualification. In order to receive them, the Iterative Present tense says we must not pay undue attention to our external pressures or circumstances. The Customary Present tense says it is natural for man to focus on things going on around him, i.e. the details of life, rather than on the Word of God. But the Christian is continually enjoined to “put on the mind of Christ,” Bible doctrine, and to focus on eternal matters. The Durative Present tense guarantees that the doctrine we learn on earth will always be in our soul and will never leave us; it will be with us in eternity. The Customary Present tense, however, explains that the pressures and adverse circumstances that go on around us are temporary and will eventually be forgotten.

If a believer spends most of his life focusing on external circumstances and non-Biblical solutions (human viewpoint), he will not receive the abundant rewards and surpassing glory that comes from studying the Word of God and applying its principles (divine viewpoint) to life. The Word of God is the Mind (thinking) of Christ. Neither the Word of God nor the Person of Christ will ever disappear. They will be with us always. So it is always preferable to follow God’s precise protocol (walking by the Spirit and living by the Word of God) rather than the world’s meager and grossly inferior substitutes (anthropocentric philosophies and psychologies).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Faith does not look at circumstances, at what is wrong with us or at how problems occur. Faith does not dwell on things as they “are,” but rather on things that “are not.” “The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” If we continually focus on what is wrong with us, we will slip back under the flesh and be slain by the law. Of course we do many things wrong. When we focus on the wrongs, though, we are no longer walking by faith, but by sight. Instead, have a heart to follow God, and the Spirit will dissolve your failures. (*The Lord’s Freedman*, Keith W. Lamb)

But this production of glory was by no means automatic. It was only as attention was focused on what was unseen that suffering led to glory. Also, Paul's afflictions were temporary, but his rewards eternal. (F.C. Gaebelein)

2 Cor. 4:18 If we do not (neg. adv.) make it a habit to focus on (σκοπέω, PAPtc.GMP, Iterative, Conditional, Genitive Absolute; pay attention to) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; external pressures) which can be observed (βλέπω, PPpTc.ANP, Customary, Attributive; details of life) against us (Obj. Gen.), but rather (contrast) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Bible doctrines) which cannot (neg. adv) be observed (βλέπω, PPpTc.ANP, Durative, Attributive). For (explanatory) the things (Subj. Nom.; external pressures, details of life) which can be observed (βλέπω, PPpTc.NNP, Customary, Attributive) are (ellipsis) temporary (Pred. Nom.), but (contrast) the things (Subj. Nom.; Bible doctrines) which cannot (neg. adv) be observed (βλέπω, PPpTc.NNP, Durative, Attributive) are (ellipsis) eternal (Pred. Nom.).

Greek Text

μη σκοπούντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μη βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μη βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

Latin Vulgate

non contemplantibus nobis quae videntur sed quae non videntur quae enim videntur temporalia sunt quae autem non videntur aeterna sunt

Chapter 5

LWB 2 Cor. 5:1 For we know beyond any shadow of a doubt that when our earthly home, that is tent, is dissolved, we will receive a structure from God, a home not made by hands, eternal, in the heavens,

KW 2 Cor. 5:1 For we know that if our house of this present life on earth be taken down, a building from God we have, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the Intensive Perfect tense emphasizes his absolute surety (not by human reasoning, but by divine revelation) of receiving an extra-terrestrial resurrection body to replace the physical, earthly (Latin: terrestrial) one his soul and spirit currently inhabits. The one he inhabits now is referred to as a tent, a temporary habitation until he gets his eternal one. The Culminative Aorist tense points to our physical body being dissolved at death or the Rapture. The Temporal Subjunctive mood means it is inevitably going to happen to us all. The Passive Voice means our physical body is in a state of being dissolved at this very moment, without any assistance on our part.

Once we leave our physical body, the Futuristic Present tense says we will receive a new structure to house our soul (if an unbeliever) and our soul and spirit (if a believer). Believers have both a soul and human spirit; unbelievers do not have a human spirit. This structure is known elsewhere as our resurrection body. Life in eternity requires a body that doesn't age, therefore believers and unbelievers alike will receive this new structure from God. Believers will receive a resurrection body fitted for glory; unbelievers will receive a resurrection body fitted for wrath. The believer's resurrection body will be able to display glorious rewards upon it throughout eternity; the unbeliever's resurrection body will be able to suffer torment without annihilation throughout eternity.

The Indicative mood, with a little help from the Present tense, hints that our resurrection body is ready and waiting for us right now, but until we die or meet the Lord in the air at the Rapture, we can't put it on yet. Since the nature of our new body is extra-terrestrial and eternal, it was not made out of the dust (Latin: manufactured by hand) like our current terrestrial body. One was designed for temporary life on earth, the other was designed for eternal life in heaven.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

What happens to Church Age believers who die prior to the Rapture? Remember that the believer's real self is his soul and human spirit. The body is simply a house or temporary residence for the real person. The departed Church Age believer's soul and human spirit, with eternal life intact, are united with an interim body (Luke 16:19-31) to dwell in heaven with the Lord. Each individual is fully conscious; indeed, no longer limited by a mortal body, his perceptive ability is enhanced. He is perfectly recognizable and perfectly happy – but as yet minus a resurrection body. At the Rapture, these billions of Church Age believers, called "the dead in Christ," will accompany the Lord from heaven to a rendezvous in space above the earth, where they will be joined by the living generation of believers. There they will receive their resurrection bodies. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul reminds the believers that they need not be unduly concerned about the dissolution of this body of humiliation because there is a new body awaiting them that is eternal in the heavens. (*Issues in Dispensationalism: The Imminent Return of the Lord*, Earl D. Radmacher, 1994, Moody Press) Paul seems to believe that believer's resurrection bodies are already prepared in heaven, in heavenly cold storage so to speak. (B. Witherington, III) The intermediate state is not directly taken into account. (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown)

A continued existence of both the righteous and the wicked is clearly taught. That the souls of believers survive, appears in this passage, and others make it quite evident that the same can be said of the souls of the wicked. (L. Berkof) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are living, and not in a dreamy state of semi-conscious existence. The soul of the believer does not cease to exist at death. It does not sink into a state of unconsciousness. It does not go into purgatory; but being made perfect in holiness, it does immediately pass into glory. As soon as it is absent from the body, it is present with the Lord. This is all that is revealed, and this is enough. (C. Hodge)

In the tabernacle in the wilderness, the wooden frame and curtains wore out in time; and when Israel dwelt in Canaan a fixed temple was substituted for it. The temple and the tabernacle in all essentials were one: there were the same ark, the same cloud of glory. Such is the relation between the “earthly” and the resurrection body. The Holy Spirit is enshrined in the believer’s body as in a sanctuary. As the ark went first in taking down the tabernacle, so the soul (which like the ark, is sprinkled with blood of atonement, and is the sacred deposit in the inmost shrine), in the dissolution of the body; next the coverings were removed, answering to the flesh; lastly, the framework and boards, answering to the bones, the last to give way. (*Bible Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, 2002, Hendrickson Publishers)

2 Cor. 5:1 For (explanatory) we know beyond any shadow of a doubt (οἶδα, Perf.A1IP, Intensive) that (conj.) when (protasis, 3rd class condition) our (Poss. Gen.) earthly (Descr. Nom.; terrestrial) home (Subj. Nom.; temporary physical body), that is tent (Gen. Appos.; tenement house), is dissolved (καταλύω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Temporal; destroyed, decayed, striking down a tent), we will receive (ἔχω, PAI1P, Futuristic) a structure (Acc. Dir. Obj.; resurrection body) from God (Abl. Source), a home (Acc. Appos.; permanent spiritual body) not made by hands (Adv. Acc.; supernatural character), eternal (Acc. Extent of Time), in the heavens (Loc. Sph.).

Greek Text

Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους καταλυθῆ, οἰκοδομην ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

Latin Vulgate

scimus enim quoniam si terrestris domus nostra huius habitationis dissolvatur quod aedificationem ex Deo habeamus domum non manufactam aeternam in caelis

LWB 2 Cor. 5:2 For indeed, in this we keep on groaning, longing to put on our home which is out from heaven.

KW 2 Cor. 5:2 For indeed, in this [tent] we are groaning, longing to be clothed in addition with our house which is from heaven,

KJV 2 Cor. 5:2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the Iterative Present tense means as long as we remain in our earthly tent, with its pain and suffering due to the curse on Adam's posterity, we continue to groan (sigh) under its imperfection. The Durative Present tense adds that under these Circumstances of living in a physical body, we never stop longing for our perfected resurrection body. We groan because we long. As we get closer to the dissolution of our terrestrial body at death, its imperfections cause us more and more grief and sorrow; these discomforts of old age only increase our desire to receive our resurrection body from heaven.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul expresses strong desire and anticipation that he shall receive this new body before death. Notice the figure in his statement, "earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven." The eternal garment is to be drawn over the temporal one, as one garment is drawn over another, and is to take its place. (E. Radmacher) To be naked spirits is not the height of human felicity. It is when risen, body and soul united, that the consummation of life is to be attained. (R. Govett)

The soul groans because it wants to live in a permanent house, not a temporary tent. The soul also wants to be unshackled from the old sin nature. The soul groans (sighs, ventilates on others, makes a troublesome noise) in this body when "things aren't right with you." These aren't physical maladies, but rather pressures on the soul: pressure on the self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, conscience, or old sin nature. For instance, pressure on your soul can start with self-consciousness. Self-consciousness can then enter into pride or self-pity. Your mentality can fill up with mental attitude sins. Your volition can corrupt itself by making decisions that aren't according to God's plan. Your emotions can malfunction by not having rapport with God. Your conscience then becomes defiled when your norms and standards are all mixed up; perhaps you pick up human viewpoint and the norms and standards of the environment instead of doctrine. Here is the whole function of psychology.

Psychology says: "What you are is determined by your heritage or environment. And if your environment is a certain way, you will be a certain way." Psychology spends a great deal of time relating various types of environment to various types of adult behavior

patterns. And when there is some kind of adult failure, some kind of psychosis, or an apparent psychosis, or a neurosis, or some mal-adjustment to life, then psychology says: "Let's go back into your childhood." And you become involved in a principle called "recall." Of course, some people have very poor memories and they can't recall much of anything, or they may just remember pleasant things. The psychologist has to get around this, so he calls this a "mental block." Then he says: "There are nasty little things that occurred down here, but you just don't want to remember them."

So he's very clever. And he begins to talk about the things you *can* remember, and tries to set up associations, and may even suggest to you things that really didn't happen. But he must relate your problem (as you present it to him) from something in your past. This whole process for a Christian is a high pile of ... malarkey. We have more trouble with Christians who try to say: "Well, I'm this and I'm that because I was dropped on my head in the delivery room, or my mother nagged me because of this or that." And it's a very neat little escape. Of course, all you have to do is have some explanation from the past. And what psychology has done is to take the heat off of you. Psychologists have said, in effect: "You don't have to be a mature person, taking responsibility for your own actions ... because you are a victim of something in your environment. And these environmental things are responsible. So why don't you just go out and be a nice little person now, and we'll give you a little therapy, and if something bad happens, don't worry about it. It's just because of your environment."

Now there's NOTHING like this in the Word of God. But there's a lot of this psychological living floating around today. Many believers who are short on Bible doctrine, and who have taken some psychology classes in college, often have a tendency to become a victim of this type of teaching. They'll have one foot in psychology and another foot in a few minor points of doctrine they picked up along the way, and it's a very confusing thing because now they have two sets of "norms and standards." And there will always be a conflict between these two sets of norms and standards.

But there isn't a conflict if you learn some doctrine. You will learn from doctrine that you have an old sin nature, and the old sin nature is responsible for a great deal of what is psychologically explained away by "the environment." And not only do you have an old sin nature, but when you are outside of the plan of God, you're going to function in certain detrimental ways. Of course, if you are into psychology, the plan of God will be completely ignored and the old sin nature will be completely ignored. And with the ignoring of these two things, psychology will sell you short on a set of norms and standards by which you will never correctly function, and never get anywhere in the Christian way of life.

This is just one type of groaning or pressure in the soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Believers groan under the burden of life ... a groaning of desire after the happiness of another life. (M. Henry) For what is it that keeps men so firmly bound in a misplaced attachment to this life, but their deceiving themselves with a false imagination – thinking

themselves happy in living here? On the other hand, it is not enough to be aware of the miseries of this life, if we have not at the same time in view the felicity and glory of the future life. (J. Calvin)

The Greek word “ependutes” was used for a fisherman’s linen blouse or upper garment. “Oiketerion” is old word used here of the spiritual body as the abode of the spirit. It is a mixed metaphor – putting on as garment the dwelling place. (A.T. Robertson) Or to have the heavenly body put on in addition, like an outer garment over our mortal flesh. (J.H. Bernard) In a not uncharacteristic manner Paul now changes the metaphor, though his thought remains the same. The shelter that awaits the Christian after death is pictured as a garment which can be put on over another garment. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 5:2 **For** (explanatory) **indeed** (ascensive), **in this** (Prep. Loc.; terrestrial body) **we keep on groaning** (στενάζω, PAIIP, Iterative; complain, grumble), **longing** (ἐπιποθέω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Circumstantial; desirous) **to put on** (ἐπενδύω, AMInf., Culminative, Result; to put on over as an outer garment, clothe ourselves) **our** (Poss. Gen.) **home** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; extra-terrestrial resurrection body) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **is** (ellipsis) **out from heaven** (Gen. Place).

Greek Text

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες,

Latin Vulgate

nam et in hoc ingemescimus habitationem nostram quae de caelo est superindui cupientes

LWB 2 Cor. 5:3 Moreover, if we have indeed clothed ourselves, we shall not be found naked.

KW 2 Cor. 5:3 Seeing that also, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked [a disembodied spirit].

KJV 2 Cor. 5:3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

A conditional particle with a Conditional Participle in the Aorist tense with a Middle Voice all combine to show that we as believers have responsibility for clothing ourselves. The sovereignty of God will give us our resurrection body, but without diligence in living the Christian way of life on earth, the Predictive Future tense says we will inhabit heaven with a naked resurrection body, i.e. without our “white garments” or “uniform of glory”

mentioned in Revelation 3:4-5. These garments are reserved for believers who “overcome” in this life, those who continue to grow in grace and knowledge and reach spiritual maturity.

I do not agree with the interpretation that “being naked” is being without a resurrection body in an intermediate state. Why? “It is hardly conceivable that Paul should have thought of the intervening state as one of dreadful nakedness.” (TDNT) There would, however, be a form of dread if you received a resurrection body, but one without a uniform of glory. “It thus seems that there is little place in this verse for any thought of the intervening state.” (TDNT) It also follows that “clothing ourselves” is putting on our “white garments,” as opposed to putting on our resurrection body. We receive our resurrection body without effort, free of charge so to speak. But we earn, and therefore clothe ourselves, when we obtain our garments and put them on. “Paul could hardly have described the intermediate state, which is one of fellowship with Christ, as nakedness.” (TDNT)

Many interpreters fail to properly handle the Middle Voice of the participle which should be translated “clothed ourselves.” They translate it in error as the Passive Voice “being clothed.” A believer does not “clothe himself” with a resurrection body; he received it passively from the Lord. So if we receive our resurrection bodies passively, what do we “clothe ourselves” with if not our white garments?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are a couple opinions on “nakedness” and “clothing ourselves” in this verse which have held merit over the years, but which I have problems with. If you don’t like my viewpoint, contrast it with the following and pick ‘em:

- Paul speaks of three states: the present condition in the tent-like frame, the intermediate state of nakedness, which he does not find desirable, and the future condition in which a further frame will have been put on, hopefully over the present one. For Paul fullness of life was unthinkable without a body, and thus life in heaven was for Paul not the ultimate desideratum by any means. (*Paul’s Dilemma in 2 Corinthians 5:1-10: A Catch 22?*, W.L. Craig, 1988, NTS)
- Paul’s point is that he longs to bypass the intermediate condition altogether and allow this mortality to be swallowed up by real life – life in the resurrection body. In short, he would rather live on earth till the resurrection. (*2 Corinthians*, F.W. Danker, 1989, Augsburg Press)

Paul is conjuring up the image of a public assembly, where typically a person of exceptional merit would be rewarded in public in the forum. Here the One seated on the bema or judgment seat is Christ. He will requite believers according to their deeds – either good or worthless. At that final public hearing, Paul’s ministry will be vindicated and shown to be authentic, as will the faith of the true believers in Corinth. (*Jesus, Paul, and the End of the World*, B. Witherington, III, 1992, Inter-Varsity Press)

These words are an inference from the saint's present clothing, to their future clothing; "seeing we are clothed", have not only put on the new man, and are clothed and adorned with the graces of the Spirit, but are arrayed with the best robe, the wedding garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness. (J. Gill) Having put on the robe of righteousness. (Olshausen)

Along the lines of what has been said, recall the fine white raiment with which the father has the prodigal son robed when he comes back home, a sign of being taken back into the father's house. The angel at the empty tomb of Christ also wore a white robe. The souls of martyrs when they enter into the short season of rest are wearing white robes. A host of the redeemed before the eschatological throne of the Lamb wear robes. (TDNT)

2 Cor. 5:3 Moreover (continuative) if we have indeed (conditional & enclitic particles) clothed ourselves (ἐνδύω, AMPTc.NMP, Culminative, Conditional), we shall not (neg. adv.) be found (εὕρισκω, FPIIP, Predictive) naked (Pred. Nom.; bare, exposed, in a naked resurrection body).

Greek Text

εἴ γε καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὕρεθησόμεθα.

Latin Vulgate

si tamen vestiti non nudi inveniamur

LWB 2 Cor. 5:4 For indeed, we who are still living in this tent, being weighed down by this burden, continue to groan, in spite of which we do not wish ourselves to be unclothed as a result, but rather clothed as a result, so that mortal life might be swallowed up by glorious life.

KW 2 Cor. 5:4 For indeed, we being in this tent, are groaning, being weighted down, because we do not desire to be unclothed [divested of our mortal body] but clothed upon [invested with our heavenly body], in order that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by the life.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Durative Present tense points to the fact that we are still living in our temporary, physical body on earth. Since none of us are exceptions to this fact, it is Customary for us to feel the weight of the curse in our body, especially in old age. The Iterative Present

tense displays the continuous groaning and sighing of those Christians who are trying to live a life honoring to the Lord, but who contend with weaknesses of the flesh which sometimes prohibit such success.

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that we must live a spiritual life in a material body, we do so because we not only look forward to receiving our resurrection body, but we would also like to receive white garments to clothe that body as an additional reward for a job well done. The Culminative Aorist tense in both cases points to this being a possible end result. The resurrection body is an absolute, guaranteed by the Lord Jesus Christ. The uniform of glory, however, has a condition attached – we must be spiritual overcomers in our earthly life. The Middle voice means our actions determine the end result upon ourselves. A life of carnality and reversionism means we will not end up putting on a uniform of glory; a life of grace and knowledge following God’s protocol plan for this dispensation means we will end up clothing ourselves with our uniform of glory.

The final result clause contrasts the temporary life of suffering in our terrestrial body under the curse with an eternal life of rewards and glory in an extra-terrestrial body. The former is a fact of our mortality, the latter is a qualitative possibility dependent upon our faithfulness to the Word in life and deed. The Culminative Aorist tense says this is our ultimate goal in life. The Potential Subjunctive mood says we may or may not succeed – it depends upon us. In other words, God is sovereign (we get a naked resurrection body) and man is responsible (we may or may not receive white garments and other rewards and decorations to clothe our resurrection body with).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Differing Opinion: Paul is referring to the intermediate state when he uses the metaphor of being “unclothed” or “naked”; soul was a well-known metaphor used by Plato and other Greek writers. It always referred to the disembodied state. It never had reference to resurrection. Second Corinthians 5:4-6 can only be interpreted as meaning that while in the body, we are absent from the immediate presence of Christ in heaven. But the moment we are absent from the body, we will be in the presence of the heavenly Christ. (Robert. A. Morey) There will be some spiritually unclothed before Christ. There will be some “ashamed before Him” at His coming. To such unclothed ones, the day will be one of sorrow: while to others there will be an eternal weight of glory. (R. Govett) We may speak of the heavenly home as a place, but we have to remind ourselves that it is rather a “state” here expressed by the image of heavenly vesture. (J.H. Bernard)

2 Cor. 5:4 **For** (explanatory) **indeed** (affirmatively conj.), **we** (Subj. Nom.) **who are still living** (εἰμί, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Substantival) **in this tent** (Loc. Sph.; our temporary, terrestrial body), **being weighed down by this burden** (βαρέω, PPpTc.NMP, Customary, Circumstantial), **continue to groan** (στενάζω, PAIIP, Iterative; sigh), **in spite of** (against) **which** (Dat. Disadv.; earthly handicap) **we do**

not (neg. adv.) wish ourselves (θέλω, PAI1P, Customary) to be unclothed as a result (ἐκδύω, AMInf., Culminative, Result; without our uniform of glory), but rather (contrast) clothed as a result (ἐπενδύω, AMInf., Culminative, Result; wearing our uniform of glory), so that (the final result in contrast) mortal life (Subj. Nom.; a temporary life of suffering in a terrestrial body under the curse) might be swallowed up (καταπίνω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; devoured, overwhelmed) by glorious life (Abl. Means, Qualitative; an eternal life of rewards and glory in an extra-terrestrial body).

Greek Text

καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκήνει στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς.

Latin Vulgate

nam et qui sumus in tabernaculo ingemescimus gravati eo quod nolumus expoliari sed supervestiri ut absorbeatur quod mortale est a vita

LWB 2 Cor. 5:5 Furthermore, He Who prepared this very thing for us is God, Who also gave to us the down payment of the Spirit.

KW 2 Cor. 5:5 Now, he who by His working in us made us fit for this very thing [the change from mortality to life] is God, He who gave us the Spirit as a token payment in kind, guaranteeing to us the rest of our salvation.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Two Culminative Aorist tenses point to two related benefits that God in mind for all believers. The first benefit was the miraculous change from a temporary, terrestrial body to an eternal, extra-terrestrial body. The second benefit was a guarantee or down payment on the first benefit – the indwelling Holy Spirit. This indwelling of the Spirit is His proof to us that He will fulfill the promise of providing us with an eternal resurrection body.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's use of the word "prepared" means God has had this end in view from the beginning. (D. Guthrie) God has appointed them unto that glory and immortality, which

they, as vessels of mercy, were prepared by Him from everlasting ... seeing He is God, and not man, Who has wrought them for this, either by His secret purposes and preparations of grace in eternity, or by His open works of creation and regeneration in time. There is no doubt but they shall certainly enjoy it, since His counsels are immutable, and He is a rock, and His work is perfect; whatever He begins He finishes, nor is He ever frustrated of His end. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 5:5 Furthermore (continuative), He (Subj. Nom.) Who prepared (κατεργάζομαι, AMPtc.NMS, Culminative, Substantival, Deponent; produced, wrought) this (Acc. Gen. Ref.) very (Acc. Spec.) thing (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the change from mortal life to glorious life) for us (Acc. Adv.) is (ellipsis) God (Pred. Nom.), Who (Nom. Appos.) also gave (δίδωμι, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Circumstantial) to us (Dat. Adv.) the down payment (Acc. Dir. Obj.; pledge, guarantee) of the Spirit (Obj. Gen.).

Greek Text

ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δοῦς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

Latin Vulgate

qui autem efficit nos in hoc ipsum Deus qui dedit nobis pignus Spiritus

LWB 2 Cor. 5:6 Therefore, while maintaining confidence at all times, and knowing that while we are at home in our physical body, we are living abroad away from the Lord,

KW 2 Cor. 5:6 Being therefore always confident, and knowing that while we are in our natural home [for this earthly existence] in our body, we are living abroad, absent from [that home in heaven] the Lord,

KJV 2 Cor. 5:6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Durative Present tense means that while we are on earth, living in our terrestrial home, we are to do our best to maintain confidence by being filled with the Spirit and growing in grace and knowledge. This is not something that we do once a week for an hour during a Sunday morning church service. It should be a daily habit, a practice we engage in at all times.

The Intensive Perfect tense confirms that we have always known in the past and we keep on knowing that we are living in a temporary, terrestrial body. The Gnostic Participle means we are always conscious of this truth. The pains and efforts we undertake to keep our earthly body healthy and in shape never stop reminding us of their temporary and constantly dissolving character.

The Gnostic Present tense also says we are reminded on a regular basis that we are residing in a foreign country. The pressures, suffering, and continual testing of our patience and confidence is a recurring sign that we are absent from our true home in heaven. The Latin “peregrinatio” says we struggle everyday to “survive in a land that by nature is totally alien to our true home.” We have to talk-the-talk and walk-a-walk in Satan's cosmic system in order to survive, knowing that as long as we are on earth, we are separated from our Lord and Master in heaven.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Because God has formed us for immortality and glory, and given us His Spirit as the earnest of it, we take heart, are of good courage, do not sink under our burdens, or despair of happiness, but are fully assured of enjoying what we are desirous of. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 5:6 **Therefore** (inferential), **while maintaining confidence** (θαρρέω, PAptc.NMP, Durative, Temporal; mentally alert during any situation) **at all times** (Adv. Time; daily), **and** (connective) **knowing** (οἶδα, Perf.Aptc.NMP, Intensive, Gnostic) **that** (conj.) **while we are at home** (ἐνδημέω, PAptc.NMP, Pictorial, Temporal; temporary home on earth, among his own people) **in our** (Dat. Poss.) **physical body** (Loc. Sph.), **we are continually living abroad** (ἐκδημέω, PAIIP, Iterative; sojourning abroad) **away from the Lord** (Abl. Separation),

Greek Text

Θαρροῦντες οὖν πάντοτε καὶ εἰδότες ὅτι ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου·

Latin Vulgate

audentes igitur semper et scientes quoniam dum sumus in corpore peregrinamur a Domino

LWB 2 Cor. 5:7 **We keep on conducting our life by means of doctrine, not by means of outward appearances;**

KW 2 Cor. 5:7 For through faith we are ordering our manner of life, not by something seen.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Iterative Present tense means we continually, repeatedly, daily organize our thinking and behavior by the Word of God. This Greek word for “walking” (Latin: ambulare) means living one day at a time, one step at a time. Do we walk day-by-day “onward through the fog,” hoping everything will turn out good in the end? Hopefully not. Do we raise our hands in the air, shout “Praise God,” and ignore His divine protocol? No. We are told to live our life by Bible doctrine, by learning and applying its principles to daily life. And when outward circumstances seem to be going against His Word and against us in particular, we don’t abandon the Word and follow worldly trends. We stick to the Word and move forward in the grace and knowledge of Him regardless of what we see going on around us.

The inferential and transitional “oun” varies with the context and at times it may be left untranslated. (Walter Bauer) I left it untranslated.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Pistis” (faith) is often used to represent the content of Christian faith, what Christians believe (doctrine), that which is self-evident for every Christian ... an inner unity ... the totality always in view ... the Christian message ... orthodox doctrine handed down by the Church ... the formal expression of Christianity ... the Word of God and how it is worked out in individual life ... the whole sphere of what is believed and the manner of life it engenders ... abiding in the Truth ... knowledge or teaching from the Father ... knowledge being a constituent element in faith ... pure gnosis with glory as its immediate object. (TDNT)

2 Cor. 5:7 **We keep on conducting our life** (περιπατέω, PAIIP, Iterative; walk) **by means of doctrine** (Abl. Means; inner resources, learning the Word of God and applying it to life), **not** (contrast) **by means of outward appearances** (Abl. Means; sight);

Greek Text

διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους·

Latin Vulgate

per fidem enim ambulamus et non per speciem

LWB 2 Cor. 5:8 **But we are confident and will be all the more pleased to be away from our physical body and to be present face-to-face with the Lord.**

KW 2 Cor. 5:8 Now, we are of good courage and well pleased rather to be away from our body as our home, and at home face to face with the Lord.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Descriptive Present tense points to their current state of confidence regarding their future with Christ. Paul and his colleagues are not worried about death or what comes afterwards. The Futuristic Present tense says they are looking forward (with great delight) to leaving their terrestrial bodies in lieu of receiving resurrection bodies. Life on earth can be a wonderful experience, but that does not diminish the desire to finally (Ingressive/Culminative Aorist) be away from this body of death in our temporary home and to be with the Lord in our resurrection body in our permanent home.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

While we are in this body we are absent from the Lord. That is why we so earnestly desire to be alive and remain till His coming, that we may be clothed upon with our house (spirit-body) which is from heaven. From 2 Corinthians 4:14 down to this verse, we are wholly occupied with the subject of “resurrection,” and a longing and desire not to die, or to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon with our heavenly and glorious resurrection body. (E.W. Bullinger) It is a state in which believers are truly alive and fully conscious, a state of rest and endless bliss. (L. Berkof)

Eternal life is God’s life, an attribute of His essence, the very life that He is. Imputed to us, it assures us a neverending relationship with Him. We have security in both time and eternity because of the imputation of eternal life. God’s life in us not only implies that we will live with Him forever, but it also guarantees that we will receive a resurrection body – minus the sin nature, minus human good and evil – when the royal family is completed at the Rapture of the Church. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Even if we must die before the Second Advent, we would say, we are content, for this absence from the body will be presence with Christ, though the glory of that Presence shall not be fully manifested until the Day of the Parousia. (J.H. Bernard) It is always possible for Paul to show confidence, because the Holy Spirit is always present with him. Despair is therefore an experience to which he does not submit; for to despair is to disown the Spirit. (R.V.G. Tasker)

Abraham departed without regret, full of days (Gen. 25:8). We do not read that Isaac was reluctant to die (Gen. 35:29). Jacob, with his last breath, declares that he is waiting for the salvation of the Lord (Gen. 49:18). David himself, too, dies peacefully, without any regrets (I Kings 2:10). (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 5:8 But (adversative) we are confident (θαρρέω, PAI1P, Descriptive; full of courage) and (connective) will be all the more (Adv. Comparison) pleased (εὐδοκέω, PAI1P, Futuristic; delighted, content) to be away from (ἐκδημέω, AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; our temporary home) our (Poss. Gen.) physical body (Abl. Separation) and (continuative) to be present (ἐνδημέω, AAInf., Ingressive or Culminative; our permanent home) face-to-face with the Lord (Prep. Acc.).

Greek Text

θαρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον.

Latin Vulgate

audemus autem et bonam voluntatem habemus magis peregrinari a corpore et praesentes esse ad Deum

LWB 2 Cor. 5:9 Therefore, we ourselves also keep on making it our goal, whether we are present in our home or absent from our home, to be a delight to Him.

KW 2 Cor. 5:9 Wherefore, we make it our aim, whether at home or living abroad, to be well pleasing to Him,

KJV 2 Cor. 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Iterative Present tense points to the goal of being a delight to the Lord as a continual process, a conscious activity that we should be engaging in everyday. The Middle Voice refers us to Paul and his colleagues; it is their foremost goal and we are to follow their example. The two subordinate conjunctions mean this spiritual ambition of pleasing the Lord is to continue regardless of geographical location. We will be pursuing this goal in heaven in our resurrection body, just like we should be pursuing this goal on earth in our physical body.

It is also possible to glean from the “at home” and “away from home” metaphors the prudence of applying this goal in life when we are in our own community and when we are travelling abroad. We are, after all, Christ’s ambassadors no matter where we happen to be located. The Static Present tenses tell us that this goal applies no matter what circumstance we find ourselves in.

The Durative Present tense of a “being” (modifier) verb says this goal won’t end while we are living on earth and won’t end when we get to heaven. As we grown in grace and knowledge, we share more of God’s inner happiness. The more we share in His happiness, the more He is delighted with us. It is a reciprocal, happy relationship.

2 Cor. 5:9 Therefore (inferential), we ourselves also (adjunctive) keep on making it our goal (φιλοτιμέομαι, PMI1P, Iterative, Deponent; aim, ambition, to act from love of honor), whether (subordinate) we are present in our home (ἐνδημέω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Conditional; inhabiting our resurrection body) or (subordinate) absent from our home (ἐκδημέω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Conditional; travelling abroad, inhabiting our terrestrial body), to be (εἶμι, PAInf., Durative, Inf. As Modifier) a delight (Pred. Nom.; pleasing, acceptable) to Him (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

Greek Text

διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι.

Latin Vulgate

et ideo contendimus sive absentes sive praesentes placere illi

LWB 2 Cor. 5:10 Why? Because we all will be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, in order that each person may receive back things according to what was practiced through the physical body, whether valuable or worthless.

KW 2 Cor. 5:10 For it is necessary in the nature of the case for all of us to be openly shown as to our true character before the judgment seat of Christ, in order that each one may receive [a recompense with respect to] the things which were practiced through the agency of our body, whether they were good or bad.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Culminative Aorist tense says every Christian will eventually stand before God at the judgment seat of Christ and his inner character (motivations) and deeds will be revealed publicly for what they were. This is an evaluation (Latin: tribunal) of what we did on earth for the purpose of rewards. All the things you think you are getting away with now will be brought forth for evaluation at this time. It is not to be confused with

the Great White Throne Judgment for unbelievers, which is the final presentation of their lives before entering eternal torment. Our eternal destiny was already decided when we believed in Christ, as planned in eternity past by God.

The Purpose and End Result of this evaluation is payback – eternal rewards for divine good and temporary embarrassment and shame for human good. Divine good is the category of deeds, internal and external, that you did while being filled with the Spirit. Human good is the category of deeds, internal and external, that you did while living in carnality or reversionism. The “things” we receive as final payment (rewards or shame) are the result of what we did (divine good or human good) with our down payment, i.e., the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was our down payment. If we are filled with the Spirit, what we do (inhale Bible doctrine and exhale application) is classified as divine good or valuable; if we are not filled with the Spirit, what we do is classified as human good or worthless.

The preposition with the Accusative says there is a standard of measurement – what good and bad we did during our life on earth. The eternal rewards or temporary shame are distributed according to what we did on a reciprocal (proportional distribution) basis. The Culminative Aorist tense says the sum total of our lives will be on display and will be evaluated according to divine standards. Jesus Christ will be the Evaluator.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There will be an appearance of all risen and changed saints before the Bema of Christ. The time of this appearance is “the Day of Christ” in the air, while it is the day of Antichrist on the earth. The place is the Bema of Christ from which rewards and prizes are given, not the Bench from which sentences or judgments are pronounced. The reason why we appear is to receive rewards for deeds done, service rendered, and works wrought. We appear there not to receive condemnation, but to have praise of God. The persons who will stand there will be there in all the glory and perfection of their resurrection bodies. (E.W. Bullinger)

We shall not be judged *en masse*, or in classes, but one by one, in accordance with individual merit. (A. Plummer) Concerning the word “bad,” it is to be observed that Paul did not use the usual word for bad (*kakos* or *poneros*), either of which would signify that which is ethically or morally evil, but rather the word, which according to Trench means: “evil under another aspect, not so much that either of active or passive malignity, but that rather of its good-for-nothingness, the impossibility of any true gain ever coming forth from it ... the notion of worthlessness is the central notion.” Thus the judgment is not to determine what is ethically good or evil, but rather that which is acceptable and that which is worthless. (*Things To Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology*, J. Dwight Pentecost, 1981, Zondervan Publishing) This is parallel to R.B. Thieme, Jr.’s concept of divine good (rewards) versus human good (wood, hay, stubble).

By the time you reach the Judgment Seat of Christ (in fact, as soon as you die), it will be too late to do anything about your evaluation. There is no way to sway the Judge, no way to obscure the facts. Your efficiency report will cover the period of time between your salvation and your departure from the earth. The time to learn doctrine is NOW. If you did not grow up spiritually and thus did not permit God to bless you in time, your evaluation will be very simple: “worthless.” The zero imputed to divine righteousness in time will be parlayed into a zero imputed to your resurrection body in eternity. The only other possible efficiency report is “well done, good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:21). This is the fulfillment of God’s plan for your life. According to this report, the blessings that were imputed to God’s righteousness in time will be converted into utterly fantastic blessings and rewards which will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ forever. The criterion for eternal rewards will not be what you produced, but your attitude toward doctrine. There will be wide variations in the eternal rewards and blessing imputed to believers based on their response to Bible doctrine, the mind of Christ in time. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) If your love for the Lord is not based on Bible doctrine, it is phony. (ibid)

I have known people who were fearful at the thought of coming before the Judgment Seat of Christ to have their lives tested in this way. But why should we be afraid? Should we not rather rejoice at the thought that all the garbage of our daily living will be utterly consumed, leaving us only with what the Lord Himself has been able to realize of his own nature and Person in our individual lives? That will indeed be a day of great salvation! The wonderfully reassuring thing here is that even if a man’s total life work as a child of God should turn out to have been built of dead things such as wood, hay, or stubble, so that his building is wholly consumed by the flames, yet he himself is safe. He himself is beyond destruction even though all else of his own doing should prove to be perishable. (A. Custance)

If we are obedient, then God promises to bless us. The content of our obedience varies with the blessing to be received. If the blessing is final deliverance from hell, then the only “obedience” or “work” is that of believing. If, on the other hand, the blessing is a richer spiritual life or reward in the future, the work is faithful perseverance. The final consequence of protracted carnality is forfeiture of reward and stinging rebuke when the King returns to establish His rule. No tragedy could be greater than for the Christian, saved by grace and given unlimited possibilities, to forfeit all of this and fail to participate in the future reign of the servant kings. The loss of reward at the judgment seat of Christ is often referred to, but rarely specifically defined. That there are negative consequences at the judgment seat of Christ is usually glossed over, and then a somewhat nebulous reference to crowns is alluded to in popular presentations. But there are negative consequences. We are told in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 of a burning of the believer’s dead works. The works of the unfaithful believer (the produce of the field) will be “burned.” There is no reference to hell here, but rather to the burning up of the believer’s life work at the judgment seat of Christ. Even though the fire consumes his house of wood, hay, and stubble, yet this carnal Christian will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. (J. Dillow)

2 Cor. 5:10 Why (subordinate, interrogative)? Because we (Subj. Nom.) all (Acc. Spec.) will be made manifest (φανερῶω, APInf., Culminative, Causal; our character revealed for what it is) before the judgment (evaluation) seat (Gen. Place) of Christ (Poss. Gen.), in order that (purpose/result) each person (Subj. Nom.; individual) may receive back (κομίζω, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Telic; debt paid, reciprocity) things (Complementary or Noncomplementary Acc.; rewards or shame) according to (Acc. Standard; in proportion to) what (Obj. Gen.; good or bad) was practiced (πράσσω, AAI3S, Culminative; the life each individual lived) through the physical body (Prep. Abl.; during his earthly existence), whether (subordinate) valuable (Adj.; beneficial, divine good) or (contrast) worthless (Adj.; bad, evil, excrement, human good).

Greek Text

τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομισθῆται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον.

Latin Vulgate

omnes enim nos manifestari oportet ante tribunal Christi ut referat unusquisque propria corporis prout gessit sive bonum sive malum

LWB 2 Cor. 5:11 Therefore, since we experience profound respect for the Lord, we continue to reassure men, even though we have been completely exposed to God, and as a result I also confidently hope to be completely exposed before your conscience.

KW 2 Cor. 5:11 Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we are persuading men [of our sincerity and integrity], but to God we have been openly shown [as to our character], and I am hoping that we have been openly shown to be what we are in your consciences.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Intensive Perfect tense is Paul's way of saying that he and his colleagues began their Christian walk having profound respect for the Lord and that profound respect continues to this very moment. And because they have this profound respect for the Lord, the Iterative Present tense says they keep on making efforts to reassure men about their moral

character. Everywhere they go they have to prove themselves all over again. Because there are so many false prophets around, they have no choice but to open themselves up to criticism and hope people will eventually see their honest motives and true character.

When Paul was struck blind on the road by the vision of Christ, you could say he was “in terror” of the Lord. After all, Paul had documents in his hand that he was taking to legal authorities that would have certain Christians jailed or executed. But after he believed, and as he grew in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, this initial terror became anxiety and apprehension (when he was out of fellowship and anticipating divine discipline) during his early walk, and eventually awe and respect when he reached spiritual maturity. In the same manner, the only time we should “fear” the Lord is when we have been living in carnality or reversionism and are awaiting divine discipline. As long as we are filled with the Spirit and following divine protocol, that “fear” should instead be profound respect, admiration, and veneration for Him.

The Intensive Perfect tense makes it plain that our thoughts and motivations are constantly and completely exposed to God. What man cannot see, the internal and invisible facets of our personality and behavior, is completely revealed to Him. As a result of their being exposed to God, Paul hopes (even expects) the Corinthians will also look deep and know that he is without any hidden agendas or deep secrets. He has nothing to hide from them. He is doing His job unto the Lord, and hopes they will become increasingly aware of his honesty and integrity as they grow under his ministry.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Expressions containing words of the “phobos” group always describe a reaction to man’s encounter with force. The scale of reactions ranges from spontaneous terror and anxiety to honour and respect, which already presupposes mastery of the experience through reflection. Hence evaluation of the reaction of fear is closely bound up with the understanding of one’s own existence. It also offers access to the religious self-understanding of specific individuals and groups. (TDNT)

If He wished, God might by sheer force lift up His elect to heaven and likewise by sheer force thrust the non-elect down to hell. But He does nothing of the kind. Foreordination is not compulsion, nor does certainty preclude freedom. No one was ever converted to Christianity by force. Every true convert turns willingly, his willingness, to be sure, being a gift of God, bestowed in the new birth. God deals with man as rational and moral creatures, as free agents. Therefore He reasons and pleads with the unsaved through the gospel. And in the case of the elect He applies the gospel to their hearts in a saving way through the Holy Spirit. Let no one suppose that God’s sovereign decree concerns only ends, to the exclusion of means. It cannot be said too emphatically that God has foreordained “all” that comes to pass. “All” embraces means as well as ends. God did not merely decree that a certain sinner would inherit eternal life, but He decreed that that sinner would receive eternal life through faith in Christ and that he would obtain faith in Christ through the gospel. (*God Centered Evangelism*, R.B. Kuiper)

The fear of the Lord of which Paul speaks of here is the dread of standing before the judgment seat of Christ with a wasted life that is not due a reward. The judgment, distinguishing as it does that which is good and bad, again is primarily occupied with the question of reward, not of punishment. As creatures of grace, sins are forgiven, but rewards are distributed on the basis of effective testimony for Christ. (*The Millennial Kingdom: A Basic Text in Premillennial Theology*, John F. Walvoord, 1978, Zondervan Publishing House)

To regard “peithomen” as a “persuading” of the truths of Christianity is to depart from the context. (J.H. Bernard) None are more bold in arrogating everything to themselves, than those who have nothing. Let, therefore, the man who would have credit given him, bring forward such works as may afford confirmation to his statements. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 5:11 Therefore (inferential), since we experience (οἶδα, Perf.APtc.NMP, Intensive, Causal; know, understand, have insight into) profound respect (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fear, awe, reverence, veneration) for the Lord (Obj. Gen.), we continue to reassure (πείθω, PAIIP, Iterative; conciliate, convince) men (Acc. Dir. Obj.; as to our character), even though (contrast) we have been completely exposed (φανερῶ, Perf.PIIP, Intensive; revealed, made manifest) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.), and (connective) as a result (Result Inf.; of our being exposed to God) I also (adjunctive) confidently hope (ἐλπίζω, PAIIS, Static; expect) to be completely exposed (φανερῶ, Perf.PInf., Intensive, Result) before your (Poss. Gen.; the Corinthian’s) conscience (Dat. Adv.; moral consciousness, awareness).

Greek Text

Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν, θεῶ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα· ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι.

Latin Vulgate

scientes ergo timorem Domini hominibus suademus Deo autem manifesti sumus spero autem et in conscientiis vestris manifestos nos esse

LWB 2 Cor. 5:12 Again, we are not commending ourselves to you, but rather giving you an opportunity for boasting on our behalf, so that you may have more than enough reasons for the sake of those who continually boast about themselves by means of an outward show and not by means of the mentality of the soul.

KW 2 Cor. 5:12 We are not again commending ourselves to you, but [are writing these things] as giving you a base of operations from which to glory about us, in order that you may be having this matter of glorying with which to answer those who are glorying in outward appearance and not in the heart [the inner man].

KJV 2 Cor. 5:12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Customary Present tense combined with a Negative Adverb means it was common *modus operandi* for false teachers to “toot their own horn,” bragging and recommending themselves to others. But the Customary thing for Paul and his colleagues was to remain silent and give their students (congregations) a chance to do that (as a substitute) for them. If the Corinthians were truly learning Paul’s doctrine and were growing in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, there would be strong *esprit de corps* between them, and the Corinthians would be zealous to share their new-found lives due to the apostle’s doctrine with friends and acquaintances.

By not boasting about themselves every time they properly exercised their teaching ministry, the apostle’s lives (as well as the Corinthian’s lives) customarily provided more than enough proof on its own. In other words, the resultant life of both the teachers and students would provide more than adequate examples of a successful ministry. The spiritual life is a mental and therefore interior life, not one comprised of mere works and external deeds. The Iterative Present tense paints a picture of the false teachers as continually drawing attention upon the external things they did to impress others, rather than on the quality of their theological thinking. Rather than living a life of bonified spiritual momentum in the protocol plan of God, the false teachers paraded their works and deeds before men in order to obtain their applause (approval ratings) and financial support.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The false ones, Paul suggests, boast in matters of form or outward appearance and not matters of substance or matters of the heart that really count. This was in fact a typical complaint against the Sophists – they were all show and no substance. They paid special attention to their clothing, appearance, delivery and to the sound of their voices. Cynic preachers were not expected to be concerned about such things, and Stoics showed no special interest in such matters either. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul is fully aware of his opponents and their unwholesome influence in the Corinthian community. They are led by sight and not by faith; they present a powerless message that encourages an achievement-centered ministry. What Paul is giving the members of the Corinthian church is verbal ammunition to oppose these false apostles. He writes, “that

you may have something to answer those who boast about what is observable, not about what is in the heart.” The boasting of Paul’s opponents rings hollow, for their message touches only the externals. In their conduct, they exemplify the opposite of what God told Samuel: “The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (I Samuel 16:7). They boasted of possessing various externals and mocked Paul for lacking them. (*2 Corinthians*, Simon Kistemaker, 1997, Baker Books)

2 Cor. 5:12 Again (adjectival), we are not (neg. adv.) commending (συνίστημι, PAI1P, Customary) ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to you (Dat. Ind. Obj.), but rather (contrast) giving (δίδωμι, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Circumstantial) you (Dat. Adv.) an opportunity (Acc. Dir. Obj.; base of operations) for boasting (Adv. Gen.; *esprit de corps*) on our behalf (Gen. Substitution), so that (purpose) you may have (έχω, PASubj.2P, Customary, Potential) more than enough reasons (Comparative Acc.; abundant proof) for the sake of those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) who continually boast about themselves (καυχάομαι, PMPtc.AMP, Iterative, Substantival, Deponent; brag about) by means of an outward show (Instr. Means; superficial appearances) and (connective) not (neg. adv.) by means of the mentality of the soul (Instr. Means; bonified spiritual momentum).

Greek Text

οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν ἀλλὰ ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ καυχωμένους καὶ μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ.

Latin Vulgate

non iterum nos commendamus vobis sed occasionem damus vobis gloriandi pro nobis ut habeatis ad eos qui in facie gloriantur et non in corde

LWB 2 Cor. 5:13 **Indeed, if we were radical, enthusiastic ministers, it was to God; if we are reasonable, prudent ministers, it is for you.**

KW 2 Cor. 5:13 For, whether we were out of our mind, it was with respect to God; whether we are of sober mind, it was with respect to you.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses two subordinate conjunctions to contrast the function of ministering the gospel according to generally accepted standards and beyond generally accepted standards. The Constative Aorist tense points to many times in the past when Paul and his colleagues were so astounded and astonished by God's revelation that they were almost ecstatically transported "out from" themselves. The range of the Greek word "existemi" ranges from a minimum of merely going beyond acceptable, societal standards to a maximum of being out of one's senses, perhaps even a temporary break in consciousness. Paul says that whenever his extraordinary behavior occurred, it was genuinely expressed to God, and not intended to make a show before men. By contrast, Paul uses the Customary Present tense to describe the sensible, temperate behavior he and his colleagues now exhibit before men, especially towards the Corinthians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is involved in controversy with opponents who attacked him personally and his claim to be an apostle. They maintained that he was lacking in visible spiritual qualities which would authenticate his claim to be an apostle, e.g. ecstatic phenomena. (Colin Brown)

Probably the opponents were complaining either that Paul was insane or more likely that he, unlike they, did not have ecstatic visions to boast about. Paul affirms that his ecstatic experiences, which would appear to an outsider as some sort of *mania*, were between himself and God. To the Corinthians he had always engaged in reasonable discourse. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul assumes as true the charge that he was crazy (if I was crazy) for the sake of argument. (A.T. Robertson) Jesus was accused of being mad because of His unflagging zeal in ministry and because His teaching offended His hearers. This latter reason underlay the charge of madness that Festus made against Paul (Acts 26:22-24), which charge, of course, Paul rejected: "I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth." (C. Kruse)

2 Cor. 5:13 Indeed (explanatory), if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") we were radical, enthusiastic ministers (ἐξίστημι, AAI1P, Constative; out of one's mind), it was (ellipsis) to God (Dat. Ind. Obj.); if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") we are reasonable, prudent ministers (σωφρονέω, PAI1P, Customary; keep one's head, in our right minds), it is (ellipsis) for you (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

είτε γὰρ ἐξέστημεν, θεῶ· είτε σωφρονούμεν, ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

sive enim mente excedimus Deo sive sobrii sumus vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ encircles and motivates us, because we have determined this: that One died for every category of mankind, therefore every category of mankind died.

KW 2 Cor. 5:14 For the love which Christ has [for me] presses on me from all sides, holding me to one end and prohibiting me from considering any other, wrapping itself around me in tenderness, giving me an impelling motive, having brought me to this conclusion, namely, that One died on behalf of all, therefore all died,

KJV 2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The reason Paul and his colleagues continue to minister to others, whether it be within or beyond the boundaries of acceptable societal behavior, is because the love of Christ controls them. The Dramatic Present tense says His love surrounds them and impels them to preach. This is the ever-present and abiding experience of all like the apostle. Why does His love motivate them to continue preaching in the face of danger? The Constative Aorist tense points to knowledge or consideration that they all share: Christ died as a substitute for His people. His people constitute every possible category or type of individual – Jew and Gentile, male and female, free and slave, rich and poor, domestic and foreign. Paul came to his conclusions on this matter soon after his conversion.

The Dramatic Aorist tense points to the unique and spectacular nature of Christ's deaths on the cross. First He died spiritually ("It is finished"), then He died physically ("dismissed His spirit"). The Culminative Aorist tense maintains that those whom He died for, His sheep (the elect), died in Him. Christ, as the Last Adam, was their federal (legal, representative) head on the Cross, just as Adam, the first man, was their federal head in the garden.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In His finished work Christ did something once-and-for-all respecting the power of sin and it is in virtue of this victory which He secured that the power of sin is broken in all those who are united to Him. Not only is Christ regarded as having died for the believer, but the believer is represented as having died in Christ and as having been raised up with Him to newness of life. This is the result of the union with Christ. For by this union Christ is not only united to those who have been given to Him, but they are united with Him. Hence not only did Christ die for them, but they died in Him and rose with Him. It is this fact of having died with Christ in the efficacy of His death and of having risen with

Him in the power of His resurrection that ensures for all the people of God deliverance from the dominion of sin. It is this fact of having died and risen with Christ, viewed as an implication of the death and resurrection of Christ once-and-for-all accomplished, that provides the basis of the sanctifying process. And it is constantly pleaded as the urge and incentive to sanctification in the practice of the believer. (*Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, John Murray)

During the Incarnation Jesus Christ displayed impeccable spirituality, faith-rest, grace and doctrinal orientation, fulfillment of His destiny, virtue love, and the happiness of God. Now, armed with the same power and assets, your mental attitude can reflect His divine problem-solving perspective. The continuous circulation of metabolized Bible doctrine in your soul's stream of consciousness produces a concentration on the Lord that transcends all experiences of living or dying. Motivated by the person of Jesus Christ Who dwells in you, instead of the fear that inexorably intrudes on your daily life, you find blessing, encouragement, and strength from the inventory of doctrine in your soul. When Bible doctrine becomes your first priority, you ultimately arrive at spiritual self-esteem, personal love for God, the happiness of God, and occupation with Christ. This is the pinnacle of the spiritual life Paul refers to in the first phrase of this verse. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The indwelling Spirit not only constrains the new nature by considerations drawn from the love of Christ, but He also restrains the old nature by a sense of God's majesty. He often drops an awe on the believer's heart, which holds him back from running into that excess of riot unto which his lusts would carry him. The Spirit makes the soul to realize that God is not to be trifled with, and delivers from wickedly presuming upon His mercy. (*The Holy Spirit*, Arthur W. Pink, 1970, Baker Book House)

Christ died twice on the cross: first spiritually, then physically. His spiritual death paid the penalty for sin. His physical death indicated that His redemptive work in the First Advent was complete. When our Lord's work was complete, He shouted "It is finished!" Salvation was accomplished, and He was free to die physically. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) He did not die for all creatures, nor for all rational creatures, nor for all apostate creatures. The "all" is of necessity limited by what the Scriptures teach of the design of His death. It is so obvious that the death of Christ was designed to save those for whom it was offered. His death involved, or secured, their death. This was its design and effect, and, therefore, this clause limits the extent of the word "all" in the preceding clause. Christ died for the all who died when He died. The Scriptures teach that the relation between Christ and His people is analogous to that between Adam and his posterity. The apostasy of Adam was the apostasy of all united to him; the work of Christ was the work of all united to Him. In the one, all died; in the other, all are made alive. As the sin of Adam was legally and effectively the sin of his race, so the death of Christ was legally and effectively the death of His people. This doctrine underlies the whole scheme of redemption. Christ's death was the death of His people. (C. Hodge)

Is the genitive “of love” subjective, objective, or possessive? Since we cannot be sure which, we can use all three for a sermon outline: (1) Christ’s love for me compels me to crucial commitment, (2) My love for Christ compels me to complete consecration, (3) Christ’s love in me compels me to compassionate service. (R. Earle) The One died for “the all” so “the all” died when He did, all the spiritual death possible “for those for whom Christ died.” This is Paul’s gospel, clear-cut, our hope today. (A.T. Robertson) Christ “died for all,” i.e. for the innumerable company of those who would enjoy the benefits of His redemption. What the apostle is dealing with here is something antecedent to Christian experience, something by which all such experience is to be generated and which is, therefore, in no sense identical with it. (R.V.G. Tasker)

The persons for whom Christ died are all; not every individual of mankind, but all His people, all His sheep, all the members of His church, or all the sons He, as the great Captain of salvation, brings to glory. Therefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption, for it should be observed that it does not say that Christ died for “all men”, but for “all”; and so, agreeably to the Scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned. Moreover, in the latter part of the text it is said, that those for whom Christ died, for them He rose again; He died for no more, nor for others, than those for whom He rose again. Now those for whom He rose again, He rose for their justification; wherefore, if Christ rose for the justification of all men, all would be justified, or the end of Christ’s resurrection would not be answered; but all men are not, nor will they be justified, some will be condemned. Hence it follows, that Christ did not rise from the dead for all men, and consequently did not die for all men. Besides, the “all” for whom Christ died, died with Him, and through His death are dead both to the law and sin; and He died for them, that they might live, not to themselves, but to Him, neither of which are true of all the individuals of mankind: to which may be added, that the context explains the all of such who are in Christ, are new creatures, are reconciled to God, whose trespasses are not imputed to them, for whom Christ was made sin, and who are made the righteousness of God in Him, which cannot be said of all men. Christ died as the head and representative of His people. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 5:14 **For** (explanatory) **the love** (Subj. Nom.) **of Christ** (Subj. Gen.) **encircles and motivates** (συνέχω, PAI3S, Dramatic; hems in, controls, impels, holds him together) **us** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **because we have determined** (κρίνω, AAPtc.AMP, Constative, Causal; considered) **this** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; logical conclusion): **that** (conj.) **One** (Subj. Nom.; Jesus Christ) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic) **as a substitute for** (in place of) **every category of mankind** (Obj. Gen.), **therefore** (inferential) **every category of mankind** (Subj. Nom.) **died** (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3P, Culminative);

Greek Text

ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον·

Latin Vulgate

caritas enim Christi urget nos aestimantes hoc quoniam si unus pro omnibus mortuus est ergo omnes mortui sunt

LWB 2 Cor. 5:15 Furthermore, He died as a substitute for every category of mankind, so that they who are still alive should no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who died as a substitute for them and was subsequently resurrected.

KW 2 Cor. 5:15 And that he also died on behalf of all in order that those who are living no longer are living for themselves but for the One who died on their behalf and instead of them, and was raised.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Dramatic Aorist tense again portrays the unique and specacular nature of His death as a substitute for His people, but this time a purpose for His death is added. The Durative Present tense categorizes those of His sheep who are still living on earth, and says they should stop living solely for themselves. The Iterative Present tense means they have been making it a practice (habit) to live in arrogant preoccupation with themselves, and the Negative Adverb says it is time for this lifestyle to stop. Unbelievers may constantly live like that, but Christians have a higher calling in life. The Dramatic Aorist tense is used again to portray His death, but His subsequent (Temporal) resurrection is now added. His substitutional death on the cross purchased our positional status in heaven, but His resurrection life makes it possible for us to live His experiential life on earth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

All for whom Christ died also died in Christ. All who died in Christ rose again with Christ. This rising again with Christ is a rising to newness of life after the likeness of Christ's resurrection. To die with Christ is, therefore, to die to sin and to rise with Him to the life of new obedience, to live not to ourselves, but to Him Who died for us and rose again. The inference is inevitable that those for whom Christ died are those and those only who die to sin and live to righteousness. Now it is a plain fact that not all die to sin and live to righteousness. Hence we cannot say that all men distributively died with Christ. And neither can we say that Christ died for all men, for the simple reason that all for whom Christ died also died in Christ. If we cannot say that Christ died for all men, neither can we say that the atonement is universal – it is the death of Christ for men that

specifically constitutes the atonement. The conclusion is apparent – the death of Christ in its specific character as atonement was for those and those only who are in due time the partakers of that new life of which Christ’s resurrection is the pledge and pattern. This is another reminder that the death and resurrection of Christ are inseparable. Those for whom Christ died are those for whom He rose again and His heavenly saving activity is of equal extent with His once-for-all redemptive accomplishments. (J. Murray)

On two occasions in this text Paul says that Christ “died for all.” But that this expression is not to be understood as distributively universal can be shown by the terms of the passage itself when interpreted in the light of Paul’s teaching. We have found already that according to Paul’s teaching all for whom Christ died also died in Christ. And elsewhere he makes it perfectly plain that those who died in Christ rose again with Him. The analogy of Paul’s teaching in Romans 6:4-8 must be applied to this verse. Hence those referred to as “those who live” must have the same extent as those embraced in the preceding clause, “He died for all.” And since “those who live” do not embrace the whole human race, neither can the “all” referred to in the clause, “He died for all” embrace the entire human family. Here again the death and resurrection of Christ are conjoined and the analogy of Paul’s teaching in similar contexts is to the effect that those who are the beneficiaries of Christ’s death are also of His resurrection and therefore of His resurrection life. In terms of Paul’s teaching then and, specifically, in terms of the import of this passage we cannot interpret the “for all” as distributively universal. (J. Murray)

You may say, “Well, if I am dead in Christ and sin is no longer imputed to me or not reckoned to me, what is my responsibility?” Paul just told you. If Jesus died for you, then you must live to and for Him. What is your commitment to be? It is not to the deeds of righteousness, but to Him. He will look after all the deeds of righteousness when the believer is fully surrendered to Him. (K. Lamb)

Of His death two consequences are now mentioned: (a) one objective and inevitable, quite independent of our faith and obedience, (b) another subjective and conditional. (J.H. Bernard)

The death of all who died points to the death that Christ, as both their representative and substitute, experienced for all His people. The Greek literally says “the all” or “these all” to specify a particular group. All who have died metaphorically at the cross died with Him, for Christ and His people are one body. On the cross of Calvary, Christ Jesus delivered the deathblow to death and set His people free from the bondage of sin. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 5:15 Furthermore (continuative), He died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAI3S, Dramatic) as a substitute for (in place of) every category of mankind (Gen. Adv.; “these all”), so that (purpose) they (Subj. Nom.; His sheep) who are still alive (ζάω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Substantival) should no longer (neg. adv.) live (ζάω, PASubj.3P, Iterative, Potential;

order their behavior) for themselves (Dat. Disadv.), but (contrast) for Him (Dat. Adv.; Jesus Christ) who died (ἀποθνήσκω, AAPtc.DMS, Dramatic, Substantival) as a substitute for (in place of) them (Gen. Substitution) and (connective) was subsequently resurrected (ἐγείρω, APpTc.DMS, Dramatic, Temporal).

Greek Text

καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι.

Latin Vulgate

et pro omnibus mortuus est ut et qui vivunt iam non sibi vivant sed ei qui pro ipsis mortuus est et resurrexit

LWB 2 Cor. 5:16 So that from now on, in no respect do we evaluate a person according to human norms and standards; even if we knew Christ according to human norms and standards, nevertheless now we no longer know *Him in this manner*.

KW 2 Cor. 5:16 So that, as for us, from this particular time onward, not even one individual do we know as judged upon the basis of human standards. Even though we [Paul in his unsaved state] have known Christ as judged by human standards, yet now no longer do we know Him as such.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Intensive Perfect tense points to Paul's previous evaluation of people purely by external appearances – how they were dressed, whether they had money or not, what type of career they engaged in. But now that he is a Christian, he sees people from a spiritual point of view – their position in or out of Christ, what they have learned about Him, whether they apply doctrine to their daily life. Human standards of recognition and evaluation have been completely superceded by divine standards of recognition and evaluation.

A second Intensive Perfect tense combined with a concessive conjunction points to Paul's assessment of Christ before he became a Christian. Paul originally thought His appearance as a man, His station in life as a carpenter, and His Messianic claims to be ludicrous. He saw nothing in Jesus' external circumstances that commanded respect. Paul

was even zealous in persecuting the followers of Jesus wherever he found them. But after he became a Christian, he came to know Jesus as God according to divine standards.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul refers to his knowledge of Christ before his conversion, a hearsay knowledge, confined to reports of His personal appearance, His deeds, His relations to the Jews, His alleged crime and punishment. When the glorified Christ first spoke to him out of heaven, he asked, “Who art thou?” (Vincent)

When one is converted, one ought to give up such superficial criteria for judging people. Here again is evidence that the Corinthians were inadequately socialized converts. They still evaluated things by the criteria they had imbibed from the rhetoric-infatuated culture in Roman Corinth. Christians should no longer be evaluating Christ (or fellow believers) by worldly or external standards. (B. Witherington, III)

What did Paul mean when he said that he knew Christ “according to the flesh” (kata sarka)? Almost certainly he is alluding to some time previous to his conversion ... At that time he knew Christ as an heretical and turbulent teacher, who was justly condemned by the Sanhedrin and crucified by the Romans. But now he knows Him in a new way. (R. Earle) Paul had before his conversion known Christ “kata sarka,” according to the standards of the men at his time, the Sanhedrin and other Jewish leaders. He had led the persecution against Jesus till Jesus challenged and stopped him. That event turned Paul clean round and he no longer knows Christ in the old way “kata sarka.” (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 5:16 so that (superordinate) from now on (Temporal), in no respect (neg. adv.) do we (Subj. Nom.) evaluate a person (οἶδα, Perf.AI1P, Intensive; pay respect, acknowledge someone) according to human norms and standards (Adv. Acc.; fleshy way of looking, outward appearance, station in life); even (ascensive) if (concessive; though) we knew (γινώσκω, Perf.AI1P, Intensive) Christ (Acc. Dir. Obj.) according to human norms and standards (Adv. Acc.; His external circumstances), nevertheless (contrast) now (temporal; that we are Christians) we no longer (neg. adv.) know (γινώσκω, PAI1P, Gnostic) Him in that manner (ellipsis; we recognize Him as the true Messiah, even God).

Greek Text

Ὅστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν.

Latin Vulgate

itaque nos ex hoc neminem novimus secundum carnem et si cognovimus secundum carnem Christum sed nunc iam non novimus

LWB 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; former things passed away, then suddenly new things came into existence;

KW 2 Cor. 5:17 So that, assuming that anyone is in Christ, he is a creation new in quality. The antiquated, out-of-date things [which do not belong to the new life in Christ Jesus] have passed away. Behold, all things have become new in quality.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The 1st class conditional clause states affirmatively that anyone who is in Christ is now a new creation, i.e. spiritual species. The Culminative Aorist tense states that the former life (without Christ) has now ended, and the Dramatic Perfect tense says a new life (in Christ) has dramatically sprung into existence. This is Paul's way of expressing the new birth. Life without Christ was hollow, meaningless and without purpose; life in Christ is full, meaningful and with divine purpose.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God founded the Jews as a new racial species. In contrast, the Church is a new spiritual species. Regenerate Jews are God's chosen people and nation, while the Church includes believers of every race and nationality. In this verse the Greek word "kainos" does not mean "new" as in recent, current, or new in time, like a new coat that replaces an old one of the same type. "Kainos" means new in kind, new in species, describing something remarkable that has never existed before – a totally unprecedented relationship with God. The new spiritual species is the royal family of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Regeneration is such a radical, pervasive, and efficacious transformation that it immediately registers itself in the conscious activity of the person concerned in the exercises of faith and repentance and new obedience. Regeneration is at the basis of all change in heart and life. It is a stupendous change because it is God's recreative act. A cheap and tawdry evangelism has tended to rob the gospel which it proclaims of that invincible power which is the glory of the gospel of sovereign grace. (J. Murray)

God makes of the redeemed person a new creation. He does not merely patch up the old spirit, the old soul and the old body, as if the collapsing house were just being buttressed up and given a new coat of paint. Rather He creates a new spirit which is His Own Spirit within the individual, a new soul (known as the new man) and a new body. That body is on the same order as the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today we are saved as Christians, but we are also in the process of salvation which means that the present

matters. Moreover, we have an eye on the future, for it is only at the future moment of the resurrection that the redemption begun in this life will be complete and we will stand perfected before our great God and Savior, even Jesus Christ. (*The Sovereign God*, James M. Boice, 1978, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship)

In reality, with no fanfare or emotional folderol, God the Holy Spirit places each Church Age believer into union with Christ at the moment of salvation. This is an actual, as opposed to a ritual, identification; we become bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the permanent identification that distinguishes Christianity from religion. Christianity is our relationship with God by virtue of being in union with the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Religion is always some system of futile human attempts to gain the approbation of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

In His work of illumination, conviction, conversion, and sanctification, the Spirit uses the Word as the means thereto, but in His initial work of “quickening” He employs no means, operating immediately or directly upon the soul. First there is a new creation, and then the “new creature” is stirred into exercise. Faith and all other graces are wrought in us by the Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word, but not so with the principle of life and grace from which these graces proceed. The Word is used by Him afterwards to call into exercise the life then communicated. (A.W. Pink)

One of the results of the baptism of the Holy Spirit at salvation is the creation of a new spiritual species, the royal family of God. The purpose of creating this new spiritual species is to enable the Church Age believer to utilize divine power, which is made available in three categories: (1) The omnipotence of God the Father related to our portfolio of invisible spiritual assets, (2) the omnipotence of God the Son related to perpetuating human history by an invisible impact, and (3) the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit related to life in the sphere of power. Never before in human history has so much divine power been made available to so many believers as in the Church Age. The utilization of this divine omnipotence by the believer is the basis for invisible impact during the Church Age. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

In due time, the elect will reach the place where the old will to unrighteousness has died and there will thenceforth be freedom only to righteousness even as at the present time man by nature has freedom only to unrighteousness. The creation of this new potential is a sovereign act of God’s grace. It is not derived out of the old will, as though the old will were by some process purified in part. But it effectively breaks the bondage of the individual to the old will by creating an antagonist to it. The new life introduces a new kind of motivation, new desires, new goals, new aspirations. The old desires, goals, and aspirations are now challenged. The will to righteousness is not derived by some corrective process within the old will which gives it powers that it did not have before. The will to righteousness is identified with the creation of the new man in Christ Jesus. (A. Custance)

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore (inferential), if (protasis, 1st class condition, "assumes it is true") anyone (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) in Christ (Loc. Sph.), he is (ellipsis) a new (Descr. Nom., Qualitative) creation (Pred. Nom.; spiritual species); former (Descr. Nom.; old, archaic, temporary, transient) things (Subj. Nom.) passed away (παρέρχομαι, AAI3S, Culminative, Deponent; disappeared), then suddenly (particle; at the moment of regeneration) new things (Subj. Nom., Qualitative; permanent, eternal) came into existence (γίνομαι, Perf.AI3S, Dramatic, Deponent);

Greek Text

ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά·

Latin Vulgate

si qua ergo in Christo nova creatura vetera transierunt
ecce facta sunt nova

LWB 2 Cor. 5:18 Moreover, all manner of things *are* from the God Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and Who has given to us the ministry which leads to this reconciliation,

KW 2 Cor. 5:18 But the aforementioned all things are from God as a source, the One who reconciled us to himself through the intermediate agency of Christ and gave to us the ministry whose work is that of proclaiming the message of this reconciliation,

KJV 2 Cor. 5:18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God the Father is the source of all manner (categories, types) of spiritual things. The Dramatic Aorist tense says He reconciled us (as hopeless sinners) to Himself through the intermediate agency of His Son Jesus Christ. The Aorist tense also points to past time – God reconciled us to Himself in the past; it was already accomplished by Christ on the cross, requiring nothing on our part. The Culminative Aorist says the Father also gave the spiritual gifts of evangelist, pastor, teacher, and in Paul’s case apostle, so that men might hear the gospel and be reconciled to God. This ministry of reconciliation is given not only to officials of the church (those with communication gifts), but to all Christians by way of witnessing.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christian reconciliation has two sides – objective and subjective. God must be reconciled to man, and man must be reconciled to God. (1) The satisfaction of God’s holy law is objective reconciliation. It is a reconciliation by which God has reconciled man to Himself. God has laid aside His holy anger against sin and the sinner and has received the redeemed sinner into His favor. Objective reconciliation secures every person for whom Christ died. Man has no more part in his objective reconciliation than in his faith or his justification. He is only the recipient of reconciliation. (2) Subjective reconciliation is the operation of the Holy Spirit in removing the sinner’s enmity against God. It is subordinate to objective reconciliation. Objective reconciliation makes subjective reconciliation a reality. Mere subjective reconciliation would be psychological, and all would be based on feeling. Assurance comes not from feeling, but from knowing that God’s nature has been satisfied and that He looks with favor on the redeemed. (W.E. Best)

It is not our enmity against God that comes to the forefront in the reconciliation, but God’s alienation from us. This alienation on the part of God arises indeed from our sin; it is our sin that evokes this reaction of His holiness. (J. Murray) God is the prime-mover in the work of reconciliation, through Christ as the medium. (Vincent) The great plan of salvation by which all creation is to be redeemed is God’s, and He it is Who through Christ reconciled us to Himself. There is no hint that Christ is the gracious one Who must overcome unwillingness on God’s part to be reconciled with sinful humanity. It is God Himself Who initiates and effects the reconciliation through Christ. What is stressed in the current passage is the amazing grace of God revealed when He Himself took the initiative in Christ to remove the obstacle to reconciliation existing on His part. It is important to note that in one sense reconciliation has been accomplished already. God through Christ has already reconciled (aorist participle) us to Himself. (C. Kruse)

The message of reconciliation has been committed to God’s people. Power is not in the message itself. Power is in the message only as it is brought to the heart of an individual by the Holy Spirit. Messengers are entrusted servants of Christ, and we are willing to endure all things for the elect’s sake that the elect might experience subjective reconciliation when a work of grace has been wrought in their hearts. The “all things” in this verse includes imparting, outworking, and completing of objective reconciliation. Reconciliation is greatly misunderstood, often presented as a reconciliation which of itself reconciles no one, but which is the basis for the reconciliation of any and all who will believe. The idea that there is a reconciliation which of itself reconciles no one is erroneous. That is like saying the redemptive work of Jesus Christ did not really redeem anyone. No one is reconciled when he believes. Every chosen person was reconciled to God when Jesus Christ died at Calvary, and his reconciliation, which was objective before the Father at Calvary, guarantees his subjective reconciliation in time. (*Justification Before God*, W.E. Best, 1992, WEBBMT)

Paul does not speak here of creation generally, but of the grace of regeneration, which God confers peculiarly upon His elect, and he affirms it is of God – not on the ground of his being the Creator and Artificer of heaven and earth, but inasmuch as He is the new

Creator of the Church, by fashioning His people anew, according to His Own image. Thus all flesh is abased, and believers are admonished that they must now live to God. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 5:18 Moreover (continuative), all manner of (Descr. Nom.) things (Subj. Nom.; spiritual) are (ellipsis) from the God (Gen. Source; the Father) Who has reconciled (καταλλάσσω, AAPtc.GMS, Dramatic, Substantival) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to Himself (Dat. Adv.) through Christ (Abl. Intermediate Agency), and (continuative) Who has given (δίδωμι, AAPtc.GMS, Culminative, Substantival) to us (Dat. Adv.) the ministry (Acc. Dir. Obj.; proclamation of what God has done) which leads to this reconciliation (Adv. Gen. Ref.),

Greek Text

τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς,

Latin Vulgate

omnia autem ex Deo qui reconciliavit nos sibi per Christum et dedit nobis ministerium reconciliationis

LWB 2 Cor. 5:19 How that God was in Christ when He reconciled the world to Himself, not crediting to their account their trespasses, and placing in us the doctrine of reconciliation,

KW 2 Cor. 5:19 Namely, that absolute deity in Christ was reconciling the world [of sinners] to himself, not putting down on the liability side of their ledger their trespasses, and lodged in us the story of the reconciliation.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Descriptive Imperfect tense states that God the Father was present in Christ (or God in the Person of Christ) during the Historical process of reconciliation. This statement is a proof of both federal headship and the deity of Christ. God the Father indwelt His Son during when reconciliation was in progress. The Greek word “kosmos” (world) represents the children of God what were scattered abroad, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation. It does not mean every person who has ever lived on earth, or everyone would go to heaven. There would be no reason to keep them out if all their trespasses and sins (including the sin of unbelief) were wiped clean.

“Kosmos” has many uses and meanings, the usual meaning being “many of mankind” as opposed to “all of mankind.” With the use of a concordance, it is readily observed that “kosmos” (world) is never used by Paul or the other writers to mean all mankind generically in a salvation context. It is used of all mankind universally in a context of sin and judgment, but never in a salvation context. Even in the case of John, “kosmos” is used differently at least 21 out of 23 times elsewhere in his epistle. In some cases, the use of “kosmos” to mean “whole world” is absolutely impossible. The burden of proof rests upon those who interpret “kosmos” as “whole world” in a redemptive context. (*The Death of Death in the Death of Christ, Volume 10*, John Owen, 1978, Banner of Truth Trust)

The Historical Present tense says God did not credit our trespasses and sins to His divine ledger. The Complementary Participle attributes this magnanimous gesture to the glory of God. The use of the Constativ Aorist tense means He also divinely bestowed the doctrine of reconciliation in us, so that we might share our witness of the Truth with others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Reconciliation is represented as a work of God. It begins with God and it is accomplished by Him. Reconciliation is a work that does not, as such, draw within its scope human action. As accomplishment it does not enlist, nor is it dependent upon, the activity of men. Reconciliation is a finished work. It is not being continuously wrought by God; it is something accomplished in the past. God is not only the sole agent but also the agent of action already perfected. The vicarious sinbearing of Christ brought the reconciliation into being. Reconciliation has its affinities with the non-imputation of trespasses rather than with any subjective operation. Any transformation which occurs in us is the effect in us of that which is proclaimed to have been accomplished by God. The change in our hearts and minds presupposes the reconciliation. The reconciliation of which the Scripture speaks, as accomplished by the death of Christ, contemplates, therefore, the relation of God to us. It presupposes a relation of alienation and it effects a relation of favour and peace. This new relation is constituted by the removal of the ground for the alienation – sin and guilt. The removal is wrought in the vicarious work of Christ, when He took upon Himself the sin and guilt, the condemnation and the curse of those on whose behalf He died. This is the epitome of divine grace and love. It is God’s own provision and it is His accomplishment. God Himself in His own Son has removed the ground of offence and we receive the reconciliation. Believe that the message is one of fact and enter into the joy and blessing of what God has wrought. Receive the reconciliation. (J. Murray)

It is concluded that II Peter 2:1, I John 2:2, and II Corinthians 5:19 provide no theological basis for supporting an indefinite atonement, especially when they are fairly examined by consistent principles of biblical interpretation. The so-called “universalistic” term “world” is restricted by context to God’s elect who will come to

saving faith in time. For those who believe in total depravity (i.e., the total inability of man to savingly please God out of innate ability), it should be obvious from other verses that the “world” refers to the elect as “the spiritual seed of Abraham ... the seed of the woman ... who are none other than the children of God that were scattered abroad.” In the context of every passage where Christ is spoken of as dying for the “world,” or “all,” or “every,” there is contextual evidence for asserting that the universal terms are NOT to be understood as absolute for all mankind. Rather it can be scripturally demonstrated that, in these passages which use the universal terms, the object is to indicate merely that those for whom Christ died are not confined to any one nation, class, or description of men, - the world, or the whole world, evidently meaning mankind at large, Gentiles as well as Jews, - a truth which it was then peculiarly necessary to enforce, and to bring out in the fullest and strongest terms, in consequence of the abuse made of the selection of the Jews as God’s peculiar people. (*Historical Theology: Volume II*, William Cunningham, 1960, Banner of Truth Trust)

God saw Him as our sin. The brazen serpent, not the Lamb, symbolizes sin. The Lamb shed blood, which cleansed from all sin. His death, and our justification through His death, was provided for you and me. The blood flowed out of the Lamb, not out of the serpent. Yet Jesus became the serpent, the substitution for sin. God visited death and judgment on Him to deliver you and me from condemnation. (Keith Lamb) The so-called universal expression “world” and “all” means not restricted to Jews (the circumcised) but includes Gentiles (the uncircumcised). It hardly applies to the created order, as the trespasses involved are those of humanity, and it is difficult to see it applying extensively to every individual human being, because elsewhere (Rom. 1:18-32, 2:5-11, Eph. 5:3-6, Col. 3:5-6) Paul clearly implies that the sins of unbelievers are and shall be counted against them. (C. Kruse)

The Scripture speaks of reconciliation, a term which implies that those who were estranged are actually brought back into a relationship of friendship and fellowship. What kind of reconciliation where estrangement continues to exist and is even sealed for eternity? (*The Case for Definite Atonement*, Roger Nicole, 1967, Evangelical Society) An indefinite atonement as pleaded for by some in the interests of the freeness of the gospel call, is one of the most self-contradictory and self-negating devices that can be imagined. (*The Atonement*, Hugh Martin, 1871, Mack Publishing Company) Paul is not espousing universalism; rather, he is saying that God’s love extends to both Jews and Gentiles [and other categories of men] worldwide. (S. Kistemaker)

Soteric or saving reconciliation has special reference to reconciling mankind in their lost estate, not with reconciliation in its world-wide non-rational creation aspect which includes the compulsive submission of all enemies of Christ and the removal of the curse upon the whole creation. Soteric reconciliation is a twofold change in the relationship between God and man as wrought objectively through the death of Christ, which results in God’s relationship toward His people being changed from enmity to love and blessing, and as wrought subjectively in His people by divine bestowal, which results in man’s relationship toward God being changed from enmity to love when the word of

reconciliation is genuinely received. The end result of Christ's accomplished and applied soteric reconciliation is that peace is made between both God and man. (*Definite Atonement*, Gary D. Long, 1977, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company)

It has been argued that the universalist (and a person who believes in an indefinite or unlimited atonement) is guilty of a false analogy in patterning God after himself, equating divine love with human love and deducing from the consideration that he himself would not sentence any human being, no matter how perverse, to eternal suffering that neither is God capable of such retribution. That objection, too, is unanswerable. Again, the universalist has been charged with rationalism, not in every instance in the sense that he completely rejects Scripture as God's self-revelation, but at least in the sense that he interprets the Word of God rationalistically. That he does that very thing permits of no doubt, for in the interest of what he regards as logical consistency he stresses certain teachings of Scripture concerning the nature of God (His love) to the detriment, and even denial, of other equally clear teachings (sovereignty, omnipotence) of Scripture on the same subject. And it may well be remarked here that precisely that type of rationalism (that man's will has the final say) has in the course of history become the fruitful mother of a veritable host of heresies. (R.B. Kuiper)

There is a big difference between sin and trespass. You can commit a sin and not know it. Sin is simply coming short of the glory of God. The word trespass, however, means to proceed beyond a known line, to violate a known regulation or stipulation. It means to disobey a commandment willfully. So God did not even impute to you what you did when you knew you ought not do it. That is good news! (K. Lamb) The world means not all the individuals of mankind, for these are not all in Christ, nor all reconciled to God, multitudes dying in enmity to Him, nor all interested in the blessing of non-imputation of sin. Each of these is said of the world: but the elect of God, who are chosen in Christ, whose peace Christ is, whose sins are not imputed to them, and against whom no charge of any avail can be laid, and particularly the people of God among the Gentiles are here designed, who are frequently called "the world" in Scripture – being the world which God loved, for whose sins Christ is the propitiation, and of the reconciling of which mention is particularly made. (J. Gill)

What the universalists fail to observe is that biblical words should be interpreted in terms of how they are used. Once it is admitted that the words "all" and "world" are used in passages where they cannot mean all of humanity, the simplistic assumption of the universalist must be rejected. We must stress the importance of hermeneutics at this point. A word must not be arbitrarily defined. Its meaning must be established on the basis of its usage by the biblical authors. The universalist pours his own meaning into the biblical words "world" and "all." Whenever the Bible says that Christ died for "all" or for "the world," the universalist will insist that these verses teach that Christ actually, completely redeemed or saved every sinner everywhere in all generations, including those in hell at the time Christ died. But to decide what these words mean without checking Scripture is to pour his own meaning into them. When we examine how the Bible uses the words "all" and "world," we find that these words hardly ever refer to

every sinner who ever lived. There are too many places where the words cannot mean this by any stretch of the imagination. (Luke 2:2, John 1:10, John 7:4, John 15:18, John 17:9, 1 John 2:15, 1 John 5:19). These verses should prove beyond any shadow of a doubt that no one has the right to assume that “world” means every sinner who ever lived. (Robert A. Morey)

The meaning of the term “world” in 2 Corinthians 5:19 is revealed in the phrase which immediately follows, namely, that God was in Christ “not imputing their (the world’s) trespasses unto them.” The point should be obvious. The phrase “not imputing their trespasses unto them” definitely means that the “world” (whoever they are) has not its (their) sins imputed to them. But it is evident from Scripture that many of mankind DO have their sins imputed to them; otherwise, none would or could be condemned by God for their sins. Then, does this not require that “world” must be interpreted restrictively in this verse? Does not the context speak of an effectual reconciliation, that it is to “them” who have not their sins imputed? Are not the “them” of verse 19 the same ones for whom Christ was made sin, the same ones who become “the righteousness of God in Him” in verse 21? Therefore, does not “world” in verse 19 speak of those upon whom soteric or saving reconciliation is being bestowed in due season; that is, those who are and who will be a new creation in Christ? Indeed, soteric reconciliation is absolute, not relative, in extent. (G. Long)

A great many of the universalistic passages, instead of teaching that Christ died for each and every individual, set forth the truth, which is so exceedingly prominent in the New Testament, that salvation is for Gentiles as well as Jews. For us who live in the 20th century after Christ, it is difficult, if not impossible, to grasp the novelty of that truth for the Jews of the 1st century of the Christian era. It impressed them as being exceedingly radical. So deeply was the fact that God showed His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel, and that He dealt thus with no other nation or peoples ingrained into the very fibre of the Jewish soul, that it rebelled violently against the notion that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken down and that peace was to be preached to them that were afar off as well as to them that were nigh (Ephesians 2:14,17). The Jews that day were almost totally blind to what appears to us to be, and really is, the plain and emphatic teaching of the Old Testament: that the national church would one day blossom forth into a universal church. In spite of the fact that the Master had on numerous occasions commanded the disciples to be His witnesses to the utmost parts of the earth, it required a vision and a voice from heaven to convince the apostle Peter of the propriety of preaching the gospel to a Roman. Small wonder that the emphasis of universalism is nothing short of tremendous. (*For Whom Did Christ Die? A Study of the Divine Design of the Atonement*, R.B. Kuiper)

If those who hold to a universal soteric reconciliation in a generic sense persist in reading the text John 3:16 (and 2 Corinthians 5:19) thus [absolutely, make] “the world” mean each and every man that lives on the earth ... what .. does it declare that the love of God has done for them? Just open a way of salvation before men, give them an opportunity to save themselves ... Is this, then, the measure of the immeasurable love of God – that He

barely opens a pathway to salvation before sinful men, and stops right there; does nothing further for them – leaving it to their own unassisted initiation whether they will walk in it or not? This is surely not the meaning of the text. (*Biblical and Theological Studies*, Benjamin Warfield, 1975, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company)

God's reconciling action in Christ holds out an effectual work of reconciliation. Now, this must be either an absolute reconciliation or a conditionate. If absolute, what are not all actually and absolutely reconciled, pardoned, justified? If conditionate, then, First, How can a conditionate reconciliation be reconciled with that which is actual? Secondly, Why is no condition here mentioned? Thirdly, What is that condition? Is it faith and believing? Then the sense of the words must be either, - first, "God was in Christ, reconciling a believing world unto Himself," of which there is no need, for believers are reconciled; or secondly, "God was in Christ reconciling an unbelieving world unto Himself, upon condition that it do believe"; that is, upon condition that it be not unbelieving; that is, that it be reconciled. Is this the mind of the Holy Spirit? Fourthly, If this reconciliation of the world consist (as it does) in a non-imputation of sin, the this is either of all their sins, or only of some sins. If of some only, then Christ saves only from some sins. If of all, then of unbelief also, or it is no sin; then all the men in the world must needs be saved, as whose unbelief is pardoned. The world here, then, is only the world of blessed, pardoned believers, who [will become] "the righteousness of God in Christ." (J. Owen)

This reconciliation must be considered, either as intentional or actual, and taken either way it cannot be thought to extend to every individual person in the world. If it is to be understood intentionally, that God intended the reconciliation of the world to Himself by Christ, and drew the scheme of it in Him, His intentions cannot be frustrated, His counsel shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure. A scheme so wisely laid by Him in His Son, cannot come to nothing, or only in part be executed, and yet this must be the case, if it was His design to reconcile every member of mankind to Himself, since a large number of them are never reconciled to Him. And if the words are to be understood of an actual reconciliation of the world unto God by Christ, which sense agrees with the preceding verse, then it is out of all question, that the word "world" cannot be taken in so large a sense as to take in every man and woman in the world, since it is certain that there are many who are not reconciled to God, who die in their sins, whose peace is not made with Him, nor are they reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ. And should it be admitted that the ministry of reconciliation is here designed, which is not an offer of reconciliation to the world, but a proclamation or declaration of peace and reconciliation made by the death of Christ, this is not sent to all men. Multitudes were dead before the word of reconciliation was committed to the apostles, and since there have been great numbers who have never so much as heard of it, and even in the time of the apostles it did not reach to everyone then living. There was a scheme of reconciliation drawn in the counsels of God before the world began, and an actual reconciliation by the death of Christ, which is published in the Gospel, which these words contain the sum and substance of, and this reconciliation, as before, is said to be "unto Himself", to His offended justice, and for the

glory of His perfection, and the reconciling of them together in the affair of salvation. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 5:19 Seeing that (relative pronoun & superordinate conj.; because) God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) was (εἰμί, Imperf.AI3S, Descriptive) in Christ (Loc. Sph.; federal headship) when He reconciled (καταλλάσσω, PAptc.NMS, Historical, Temporal) the world (Acc. Dir. Obj.; "the children of God that were scattered abroad" ... "out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation") to Himself (Dat. Adv.), not (neg. adv.) crediting to their (Dat. Poss.) account (λογίζομαι, PMptc.NMS, Historical, Complementary, Deponent) their (Gen. Poss.) trespasses (Acc. Dir. Obj.; deliberate transgression), and (connective) placing (τίθημι, AMptc.NMS, Constative, Predicative; appointing, divine bestowal) in us (Loc. Sph.) the doctrine (Acc. Dir. Obj.; word) of reconciliation (Adv. Gen. Ref.).

Greek Text

ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam quidem Deus erat in Christo mundum reconcilians sibi non reputans illis delicta ipsorum et posuit in nobis verbum reconciliationis

LWB 2 Cor. 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, so that God may issue His divine summons through us; we keep on exhorting on behalf of Christ: "Be reconciled to God."

KW 2 Cor. 5:20 Therefore, on behalf of Christ and in His place we are acting as ambassadors, as though God were saying, I beg of you, please, through us as His intermediate agents. We beg you in Christ's stead, Be reconciled at once to God.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Descriptive Present tense says we are ambassadors, representatives of Christ on earth. Since He is in heaven, we are His communicative agents on earth. Paul's use of the Customary Present tense means God makes it a practice to issue His mandates through

human instruments. In the past, He did it through Moses, the High Priest, and prophets. The Telic Participle makes our ambassadorship part of His divine purpose.

The Iterative Present tense says we continually witness to others, explaining the gospel (which includes the doctrine of reconciliation) to the best of our ability. Jesus Christ was our substitute on the cross, and now that He is absent from the earth, we are His substitute as communicators of His Word. In this case, the Dramatic Aorist tense summarizes the Command from heaven: “Be reconciled to God.” It is not an invitation for men to believe on Christ, it is a DEMAND that they resolve any issues they have with God (anger, fear, frustration) and be reconciled to Him! God is already reconciled to us; His anthropopathic expression of anger against us because of sin has been quelled. So now it behooves us as Christians to quit being angry, afraid, or frustrated with Him – for whatever reason – so our spiritual life may begin or resume where it left off.

Please note again: This is not a verse on God’s reconciliation of believers to Himself. That was already accomplished on the cross, free of charge, by the Lord Jesus Christ. Positional reconciliation, if you wish, has been accomplished. This verse is parallel to a Shepherd calling His sheep; they already know His voice, but they are rebelling against it. It is experiential, and requires the believer to confess any sin (be reconciled) that is hindering His relationship with God. There are many reasons that a believer can spout as an excuse for being angry with God and not following His protocol plan. For instance, you can be angry with Him for the loss of a loved one, for being poor instead of rich, for leading you to an occupation that you are now tired of, for hooking you up with your current spouse (now whose fault is that?), for not allowing you to have children, for giving you a birth defect, for allowing you to survive a terrible accident, for allowing a disease to rack your body, etc. As ambassadors for Christ, we are called to witness to unbelievers, but we are also called to reconcile ourselves to God, i.e. confess sin and restore our fellowship with Him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God appoints the royal ambassador to be His representative on earth. God supplies all the logistical grace necessary to perpetuate the believer’s physical and spiritual life in the devil’s world. The royal ambassador operates according to the written mystery doctrines of the New Testament. The ambassador of Jesus Christ has his citizenship in heaven. The royal ambassador lives to glorify Christ and personally benefits not by following his own agenda, but through fulfilling his royal warrant. The believer does not regard the negative volition of mankind as a personal insult, but continues to faithfully represent Christ regardless of insulting treatment by others. As spiritual ambassadors, we serve as emissaries of the King of kings and Lord of lords Who is now absent from the earth. All Church Age believers are automatically in “full-time Christian service.” No decision or dedication later in our Christian lives adds anything to our original divine appointment. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Satisfaction, ransom, and redemption are all one-way streets. **Reconciliation is a two-way street.** Paul pleads as an ambassador of Christ, “be ye reconciled to God.” God is not angry with you anymore, and **it is now time for you to stop being angry with Him.** On what basis can you stop being angry with God? What made you angry with Him in the first place? The source is actually fear, which was the product of sin. Fear breeds hatred, and hatred breeds anger. What happened to the sin that bred the fear? It has been put away and the old man crucified. You do not have any reason to fear the wrath of God anymore. God, through Jesus on the cross, reconciled Himself to His people even though they do not, in so many cases, want to be reconciled with Him. He has formed an intimate relationship within you from which you cannot escape. It is pressing and motivating you. (K. Lamb)

The Corinthians are appealed to as already reconciled persons (since God’s deed is final and complete) who at the same time need to keep open channels along which God’s grace may continue to flow. Their disaffection with the apostle has set up a blockage which Paul is concerned to remove. Hence the call to be reconciled, to be open to the activity of the Spirit Who seeks to fashion the image of Christ in increasing clarity in their lives. (2 *Corinthians*, Ralph P. Martin, 1988, Word Biblical Themes) Get reconciled to God and do it now. (A.T. Robertson)

Previously, we were at enmity against Him, hating His sovereignty, His strictness, His severity; but now we perceive the surpassing beauty of His every attribute and are in love with His whole person and character. No greater change than this can be conceived of. This great change causes us to diligently seek daily supplies of grace from Him. (A.W. Pink) Paul fears that his converts are in danger of apostasy. This necessarily presupposes that they were to some degree alienated from God and Paul. Apostasy is not merely backsliding, nor is it something that happens by accident. It is willful rebellion against God. Paul says they should be reconciled, bearing in mind what Christ has done for them. (B. Witherington, III)

We are responsible to present the gospel to unbelievers, but our ambassadorship goes beyond that. Witnessing, giving testimonies, serving in the local church, working in evangelistic meetings, in foreign missions, or in Christian service organizations – all this, if properly motivated, can be part of the spiritual ambassador’s function. The believer’s royal ambassadorship encompasses all the visible virtues produced by the application of doctrine. It also encompasses invisible virtues, such as virtue-morality, courage, and impersonal love. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The atonement was intended to propitiate God and to reconcile Him to the sinner. This is undoubtedly the primary idea, but does not imply that we can not also speak of sinners being reconciled to God. Scripture does this here. When we speak of the sinner as being reconciled, this must be understood as something that is secondary. The reconciled God justifies the sinner who accepts the reconciliation, and so operates in his heart by the Holy Spirit, that the sinner also lays aside his wicked alienation from God, and thus enters into the fruits of the perfect atonement of Christ. Since the objective atonement by

Christ is an accomplished fact, and it is now the duty of the ambassadors of Christ to induce sinners to accept the atonement and to terminate their hostility to God, it is no wonder that the secondary and subjective side of the reconciliation is somewhat prominent in Scripture. (L. Berkof)

The command to be reconciled to God is addressed to those who have been objectively reconciled. A person has no part in objective reconciliation, but he does have a part in understanding subjective reconciliation. Reconciliation comes as an act of understanding. By a person's act of faith, he apprehends the message and accepts it. But there is a continual reconciliation work going on. Every time a Christian sins, his fellowship with God is broken. He has offended God; hence, he must be reconciled. Conclusively, this ministry of reconciliation continues throughout our lives on earth. (W.E. Best)

2 Cor. 5:20 Therefore (inferential), we are ambassadors (πρεσβεύω, PAI1P, Descriptive) on behalf of Christ (Abl. Agency), so that (subordinate) God (Subj. Nom.) may issue His divine summons (παρακαλέω, PAPlc.GMS, Customary, Telic; legal term, appeal) through us (Abl. Intermediate Agency); we keep on exhorting (δέομαι, PMI1P, Iterative, Deponent; implore, request) on behalf of Christ (Gen. Substitution): Be reconciled (καταλλάσσω, APImp.2P, Dramatic, Command) to God (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν·
δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.

Latin Vulgate

pro Christo ergo legationem fungimur tamquam Deo
exhortante per nos obsecramus pro Christo
reconciliamini Deo

LWB 2 Cor. 5:21 He Who never experienced sin bore sin as a substitute for us, with the result that we will become the righteousness of God in Him.

KW 2 Cor. 5:21 He Who did not know sin in an experiential way, on behalf of us and instead of us, was made [the representative of] sin, in order that, as for us, we might become a righteousness of God in Him.

KJV 2 Cor. 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Gnostic Aorist tense portrays Christ in His impeccability. He never experienced sin, i.e. sinless perfection. However, as our substitute, the Dramatic Aorist tense points to His excruciating act of bearing our sins on the cross. The Futuristic Aorist tense points to the appointed time in the future (different moment for each of us) when each of us will believe in Christ and the righteousness of God will be imputed to us because of our relationship to Him. This is a Result Clause, which means the end was known in eternity past and the final result will happen just like He planned. There is no element of contingency in God's work of reconciliation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If the assertion be made that the design of God and of Christ was evidently conditional, contingent on the faith and obedience of man, attention should be called to the fact that the Bible clearly teaches that Christ by His death purchased faith, repentance, and all the other effects of the work of the Holy Spirit, for His people. Consequently there are no conditions of which the fulfillment is dependent on. The atonement secures the fulfillment of the conditions that must be met, in order to obtain salvation. (L. Berkof)

The incarnation explains Christ's sinlessness. The crucifixion was on behalf of all the elect. Jesus Christ paid for all the sins of all the elect of all time. Hence, His death was also retroactive to include the Old Testament saints. God was in Christ doing the legal work at Calvary. The Holy Spirit applies what Jesus Christ accomplished, and He is in the elect doing the practical work. (W.E. Best)

2 Cor. 5:21 He (Subj. Acc.; Jesus Christ) Who never (neg. particle) experienced (γινώσκω, AAPtc.AMS, Gnostic, Substantival) sin (Acc. Dir. Obj.; impeccability) bore (ποιέω, AAI3S, Dramatic) sin (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as a substitute for us (Gen. Substitution), with the result that (result) we (Subj. Nom.) will become (γίνομαι, AMSubj.1P, Futuristic, Result, Deponent; at our appointed time) the righteousness (Pred. Nom.) of God (Abl. Source; by imputation) in Him (Loc. Sph.; Jesus Christ).

Greek Text

τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

Latin Vulgate

eum qui non noverat peccatum pro nobis peccatum fecit ut nos efficeremur iustitia Dei in ipso

Chapter 6

LWB 2 Cor. 6:1 Therefore, since we are co-workers, we also ask that you do not receive the grace of God in vain,

KW 2 Cor. 6:1 Moreover also, we, working together with God, beg of you not to receive the grace of God without any salutary results,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's use of the Descriptive Present tense points to every believer being a co-worker by communicating the gospel. And as might be expected, since Paul is writing this letter primarily to the Corinthians, he customarily requests each one of them to receive the grace of God (Culminative Aorist tense) with definite results. Every one of them is a priest and an ambassador. Every one of them is a personal representative of Jesus Christ. It would be to their disadvantage to receive these "grace ministries" and to never use them. It would also be tragic to be saved by grace, and then to attempt to grow by keeping the law – a heresy that Paul addresses thoroughly in Galatians. These misguided efforts yield no return, no growth, no forward momentum whatsoever.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"With Him" is implied in the compounded Greek "soun." That it refers to God, not to the fellow Christians, is evident from the parallel in 1 Corinthians 3:9, "laborers together with God," and because the act of exhortation or entreaty in which the fellowship is exhibited is ascribed to God in chapter 5:20. (Vincent) The expression "working together with him" translates from one Greek word. The word "Him" is rightly provided in the translation, indicating that it is God with whom Paul works. Although the party with whom Paul works could conceivably be understood as one or more of his colleagues, the context here supports God as our coworker. (C. Kruse)

Perhaps some of the Corinthians still clung to the belief that they could achieve their own salvation; and to harbour any such delusion is to receive the grace of God "in vain." Paul therefore beseeches them to welcome the good news upon which alone their salvation depends. (R.V.G. Tasker) Paul urged the Corinthians not to spurn that grace by turning to Judaistic legalism. To do so would be "to receive God's grace in vain." (D. Lowery)

Here ministers are taught that it is not enough merely to propound doctrine. They must labour that those who hear it should also accept it, and not once but continually. (J. Calvin) "Kenos" (vain) are empty hopes, hopes that are not built on a solid foundation ... no inner substance or kernal of truth ... labor that yields no return. (Trench) To receive

God's grace "in vain" means to live for oneself to the point of that eternal rewards are forfeited. (D. Hunt)

2 Cor. 6:1 Therefore (inferential), since we (all believers) are co-workers (συνεργέω, PAPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Temporal; joint-producers: human communicators), we also (ascensive) ask (παρακαλέω, PAIP, Customary; exhort, request) that you (Acc. Disadv.; Corinthians) do not (neg. adv.) receive (δέχομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Result, Deponent) the grace (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Abl. Source) in vain (Acc.; without result, yields no return),

Greek Text

Συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ
δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς·

Latin Vulgate

adiuvantes autem et exhortamur ne in vacuum gratiam Dei
recipiatis

LWB 2 Cor. 6:2 For He said: "I listened to you on a particular occasion, and I helped you during the time of deliverance." Suddenly, at this very moment, the time is ripe; suddenly, at this very moment, *it is a day for salvation.*

KW 2 Cor. 6:2 For He says, In an epochal, strategic season, propitious in character, I hearkened to you, and in a day of salvation I ran to your cry and brought you aid. Behold, now is a propitious, epochal season, behold, now is a day of salvation.

KJV 2 Cor. 6:2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Historical Present tense to recall a quote from Isaiah 49:8 testifying to a prior day of deliverance for Israel. The Constative Aorist tense says God listened to their cry for help. The Dative of Specification points to this particular instance, this unique occasion, in which the event transpired. The Culminative Aorist tense points to the final occasion when God helped them, an appointed moment in history.

As a parallel to the verse and situation in Isaiah, it is now time for individuals to again be delivered, i.e. saved by grace. The temporal particles point to the present moment. Why wait another minute to be saved? The time is ripe (Latin: acceptable), this very minute. Don't let the moment pass by. It has appeared suddenly (right now!) in time, at this very

moment in history, but it can suddenly disappear and the opportunity be lost. By way of application, Paul connects Isaiah (in Israel) to himself (in Corinth) to us in the United States.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “day” as used in Scripture is not necessarily a time word, but may be used for the events which fall within any period. Paul uses it here as the “day of salvation.” (J.D. Pentecost) The words are addressed to the servant of Jehovah, promising to invest him with spiritual power, that he may be a light to Israel and to others. Paul, taking the words in their messianic sense, urges that now is the time when God thus dispenses His favor to Christ, and through Him to men. (Vincent) It is a period of grace giving men the opportunity to respond to God’s message through Christ. (N. Hillyer)

2 Cor. 6:2 For (explanatory) He said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; in Isaiah 49:8,9): “I listened (ἐπακούω, AAI1S, Constativ) to you (Obj. Gen.; Israel) on a particular (Dat. Spec.; acceptable) occasion (Loc. Time; during the seige of Sennacherib), and (continuative) I helped (βοηθέω, AAI1S, Culminative; give aid in a time of need) you (Dat. Adv.) during the time (Loc. Time; time of fulfillment) of deliverance (Adv. Gen. Ref.; from the Assyrian invasion).” Suddenly (emphatic particle), at this very moment (temporal; in Corinth), the time (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) ripe (Pred. Nom.; acceptable opportunity); suddenly (emphatic particle), at this very moment (temporal), it is (ellipsis) a day (Pred. Nom.) for salvation (Adv. Gen. Ref.; spiritual deliverance).

Greek Text

λέγει γάρ, Καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι. ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας.

Latin Vulgate

ait enim tempore accepto exaudivi te et in die salutis adiuviavi te ecce nunc tempus acceptabile ecce nunc dies salutis

LWB 2 Cor. 6:3 Do not give offence in any way, so that the ministry may not be faulted,

KW 2 Cor. 6:3 We are giving no occasion of stumbling to anyone in order that our ministering service may not be found with blot or blemish and thus be censured,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a rare Imperatival Participle to command all believers to never insult or offend anyone in any way. If someone you are witnessing to does not have ears to hear, leave him alone, don't badger or insult him. The Gnostic Present tense combined with the negative adverb says "never" do this. Keep a relaxed mental attitude instead. Why? The last thing a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ should do is to bring reproach upon the gospel because of bad behavior. The Culminative Aorist tense with the Potential Subjunctive mood recognizes the distinct possibility of this happening. The solution is to continue walking in the Spirit and exercise inner restraint through faith rest. The Latin word "vituperatio" points to the possibility of retaliation from an angry person if we offend them by being pushy. It isn't so much that they will say disparaging things against us personally, but rather we don't want the gospel to be censured (bad-mouthed) because of something stupid on our part.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek word "momaomai" represents an unbeliever who is badmouthing the gospel because of a legitimate complaint against a believer. The Corinthian believers are being criticised by unbelievers because the believers are critical and full of mental attitude sins. The believers of Corinth who are supposed to be witnessing are "turning off" unbelievers by their legalism and hypocrisy. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There are people who will be glad of an excuse not to listen to the gospel, or to take it seriously, and they will look for such an excuse in the conduct of its ministers. (Denney) However, as far as Paul was concerned, the effect of the message was not marred by the character of the man who gave it. (R.V.G. Tasker) The apostle had great difficulty to behave prudently and inoffensively towards the Jews and Gentiles, for many of both sorts watched for his halting, and sought occasion to blame him and his ministry, or his conversation. (M. Henry)

A pastor is always first a minister of the Word and then a servant of the Lord to his people. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 6:3 Do not (neg. adv.) give (δίδωμι, PAPtc.NMP, Gnostic, Imperatival; render) offense (Acc. Dir. Obj.; insult or injure unbelievers) in any way (Prep. Loc., Manner), so that (purpose/result) the ministry (Subj. Nom.; of the gospel) may not (neg. adv.) be faulted (μωμάομαι, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent; blamed),

Greek Text

μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία,

Latin Vulgate

nemini dantes ullam offensionem ut non vituperetur ministerium

LWB 2 Cor. 6:4 But in all respects continually demonstrating ourselves as God's ministers, with great perseverance during outside pressures, during distress, during difficulties,

KW 2 Cor. 6:4 But in all things recommending ourselves as God's ministering servants should do: in much patience under trials, bearing up and not losing heart or courage; in afflictions, in calamity and straits, in distressing situations,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Iterative Present tense to emphasize the continuous action of living a life (Latin: exhibiting) that befits a minister of the gospel. This spiritual life is to be lived no matter what befalls us, for if we follow divine protocol, we can be assured that adversity will come our direction. The Modal Participle combines with an Instrumental of Means to show us the way to survive and triumph over these adversities: by exercising great perseverance (Latin: patience), otherwise known as faith-rest. Regardless of the conflict, we should never give up. We must always walk by the mandates of the Word and with grace orientation by means of the Spirit.

The first three things we should persevere through are listed by the use of the Locative of Time (during) or Sphere (in the sphere of) depending on your preference. In either case, we are to persevere during outside pressures (Latin: tribulations) that constantly threaten to become inside stress in our soul; we are to persevere whenever trouble (Latin: unavoidable conflict) comes our direction; and we are to persevere during difficult (Latin: dangerous) and trying times. For Paul, these were the occupational hazards of being an apostle.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul gives a marvelous summary of his argument about the dignity and glory of ministers of Christ. Each word carries a story that can be filled in from Paul's own life as a preacher with an echo in that of us all. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 6:4 **but** (contrast) **in all respects** (Loc. Sph.; in all types of things) **continually demonstrating** (συνίστημι, PApTc.NMP, Iterative, Modal; proving, recommending)

ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as (comparative) God's (Gen. Rel.) ministers (Pred. Nom.; includes personal evangelism), with great (Dat. Measure) perseverance (Instr. Means; endurance, faith-rest) during outside pressures (Loc. Time; mental pressure from distressing situations in life), during distress (Loc. Time; torture, bullying), during difficulties (Loc. Time; danger, anguish, excruciating pain),

Greek Text

ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ συνίσταντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις,

Latin Vulgate

sed in omnibus exhibeamus nosmet ipsos sicut Dei ministros in multa patientia in tribulationibus in necessitatibus in angustiis

LWB 2 Cor. 6:5 During beatings, during imprisonment, during mob violence, during hard labor, during sleeplessness, during starvation,

KW 2 Cor. 6:5 In stripes inflicted by a beating with rods, in imprisonments, in the midst of political instability, in labors to the point of exhaustion, in sleeplessness at night, in hunger,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his list of external pressures that we should persevere through if they happen upon us. Again, they can be seen as Locative of Time (during) or Sphere (in the sphere of) occurrences. Some Latin equivalents are wounds, incarceration, sedition or other civil disturbances, fatigue and toil, keeping watch as a sentinel, and extreme fasting.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Akatastatias” in the Greek might mean “inward disorder,” rather than “external tumult,” but the latter meaning best suits the context here. “Agrupnias” means nights rendered wakeful by anxiety or press of work. (J.H. Bernard)

2 Cor. 6:5 During beatings (Loc. Time; violence), during imprisonment (Loc. Time; unfair deprivation), during mob violence (Loc. Time; insurrection, riots, political

instability), during hard labor (Loc. Time; being pestered or nagged to the point of exhaustion), during sleeplessness (Loc. Time), during starvation (Loc. Time; intense hunger, deprived of the basic necessities of life),

Greek Text

ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις,

Latin Vulgate

in plagis in carceribus in seditionibus in laboribus in vigiliis in ieiuniis

LWB 2 Cor. 6:6 By means of pureness, by means of technical knowledge, by means of grace orientation, by means of a relaxed mental attitude, by means of the Holy Spirit, by means of bonified virtue love,

KW 2 Cor. 6:6 In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering patience under ill treatment, in kindness marked by gentleness and graciousness, in the Holy Spirit, in a love devoid of hypocrisy,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul changes step from nine types of suffering to nine things we utilize to persevere through this suffering with, as seen by the Latin equivalents of purity, technical knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, walking by the Spirit, and abiding in the sphere of true (not pretend or fictitious) virtue love.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Kindness” in this verse is the opposite of a harsh, crabbed, and brutal temper. (A.W. Pink)

2 Cor. 6:6 By means of pureness (Inst. Means; confession: citing or naming sins to God), by means of technical knowledge (Instr. Means; categorical Bible doctrine in the soul), by means of grace orientation (Instr. Means; longsuffering), by means of a relaxed mental attitude (Instr. Means; kindness), by means of the Holy Spirit (Instr. Means), by means of bonified (Dat. Descr.; genuine, without hypocrisy) virtue love (Instr. Means),

Greek Text

ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ,
ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ,

Latin Vulgate

in castitate in scientia in longanimitate in suavitate
in Spiritu Sancto in caritate non ficta

LWB 2 Cor. 6:7 By means of the Word of Truth, by means of God's inherent power, through the weapons of righteousness characterized by the offensive right hand and characterized by the defensive left hand,

KW 2 Cor. 6:7 In the Word of Truth, in God's power, by means of the weapons of the righteousness [offensive weapons] on the right hand and [defensive weapons] on the left,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to list the tools which a believer should use in order to persevere in this world. He must use the Word of God (line-upon-line, precept-upon-percept), He must maintain fellowship with the Lord and therefore walk in His power, and he may use two categories of weapons related to righteousness: offensive and defensive. The offensive weapons in Paul's day were swords and spears wielded by the right hand, while the defensive weapons were shields and nets carried in the left hand. It doesn't occur to most people that righteousness can be a spiritual weapon. The Vulgate calls these weapons of righteousness the "arm of justice."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The function of the sphere of delegated divine power (divine dynasphere) and the attainment of spiritual autonomy give the believer excellence, quality, and class as a royal ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. With spiritual autonomy the royal ambassador can surmount "endurance, afflictions, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, sleeplessness, and hunger" if and when such testings occur (2 Cor. 6:4-5). Whether in prosperous or adverse circumstances (2 Cor. 6:8), his love, loyalty, and happiness are related to the Lord Whom he represents. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

In verses 7-10 Paul has redefined what it means to be a sage in the light of Christ and His cross, but the Corinthians apparently have failed to understand the model, the motive, or the meaning of this. (B. Witherington, III) The panoply of weapons reminds one of the 6th

chapter of Ephesians. The believer has the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 6:7 By means of the Word (Instr. Means; verse-by-verse) of Truth (Adv. Gen. Ref.), by means of God's (Poss. Gen.) inherent power (Instr. Means; delegated omnipotence), through the weapons (Abl. Means) of righteousness (Adv. Gen. Ref.; the armor of vindication) characterized by the offensive right hand (Descr. Gen.; attack) and (connective) characterized by the defensive left hand (Descr. Gen.; block or parry),

Greek Text

ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν,

Latin Vulgate

in verbo veritatis in virtute Dei per arma iustitiae a dextris et sinistris

LWB 2 Cor. 6:8 **Through a time of praise or a time of humiliation, through a time of slander or a time of good report, while considered deceitful or considered honest,**

KW 2 Cor. 6:8 By glory and dishonor, by slanderous report and good report, as those who are dissiminating deceit and yet true,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts some of the good and bad circumstances he has faced by using a series of contrast conjunctions combined with periods of time. In the Greek, there is a paranomasia (dusphemias and euphemias) often translated as “bad report and good report.” Following his vocabulary as seen in the Latin Vulgate, Paul contrasts public applause with obscurity, rumours of ill repute with fame, and ignorance of the truth with veracity. He perseveres in His walk with God and His ministry regardless of the situation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Second Corinthians 6:8-10 contains a series of beautiful antitheses or contrasts. In verses 4 and 5 we have a seven-fold “passive experience” portrayed by patience, afflictions, necessities, distresses, stripes, imprisonments, and tumults. In verses 5 and 6 we have a seven-fold “self-denial” portrayed by labours, watchings, fastings, pureness, knowledge,

longsuffering, and kindness. In verses 6 and 8 we have a seven-fold means “to endure” portrayed by the Holy Spirit, love unfeigned, the Word of Truth, the power of God, the armour of righteousness, honor and dishonour, and evil report and good report. In verses 8-10, we have a seven-fold “result” in the following “antithesis:” deceivers, and yet true; unknown, yet well-known; dying, yet living; chastened, yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet enriching others; having nothing, yet possessing all things. (E.W. Bullinger)

We must expect to meet with many alterations of our circumstances and conditions in this world, and it will be a great evidence of our integrity if we preserve a right temper of mind, and duly behave ourselves under them all. (M. Henry)

“By evil report and good report” refers to both our persons and our doctrine. Some speak well of it, receive it and embrace it; others blaspheme it, and have it in the utmost abhorrence. We are charged with the vilest of crimes, and our doctrines loaded with the most absurd and wicked consequences, and both branded in the most infamous manner by one set of men. And by others both our persons and principles are cleared and vindicated from all such aspersions, and are highly commended and applauded. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 6:8 through a time of praise (Adv. Gen. Time; glory) or (contrast) a time of humiliation (Adv. Gen. Time; dishonor), through a time of slander (Adv. Gen. Time; insult, condemnation) or (contrast) a time of good report (Adv. Gen. Time; commendation), while (Temporal) considered deceitful (Adv. Gen. Time; misunderstood) or (contrast) considered honest (Adv. Gen. Time),

Greek Text

διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς,

Latin Vulgate

per gloriam et ignobilitatem per infamiam et bonam famam ut seductores et veraces sicut qui ignoti et cogniti

LWB 2 Cor. 6:9 When being repeatedly disregarded or while being completely understood, when repeatedly facing death or even while we are still alive, when we are being disciplined, but not being put to death,

KW 2 Cor. 6:9 As being a non-entity, obscure, without proper credentials and yet fully recognized, as dying and behold we are living, as chastened yet not put to death,

KJV 2 Cor. 6:9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to present some of the circumstances he has persevered through by using temporal (or comparative) particles and Circumstantial Participles. On numerous occasions (Iterative Present) nobody believed what he was talking about, and on other occasions everyone knew exactly (Gnomic Present) what he was teaching. On numerous occasions (Iterative Present) he faced death, but at the present moment, he is (Pictorial Present) still alive. He is occasionally (Pictorial Present: ouch!) disciplined (Latin: castigated) by God as the divine child-trainer for his own benefit, but he has not been severely (Dramatic Present) disciplined (Latin: fatal) by God to the point of physical death. As long as he is alive, his ministry continues. As long as he is alive, God still has a plan for his life.

Some of the Greek words used by Paul are quite interesting. The word used for “being repeatedly disregarded” is related to our English word “agnostic” or someone who doesn’t believe what he is hearing. The Greek word for “being completely understood” means the person has a full, complete understanding of what is being taught due to considerable repetition. The Greek word for “repeatedly facing death” is a word that does not encompass actual physical death (sort of like our phrase “being scared to death”) while the Greek word for the death that God could administer (sin unto death) but didn’t in Paul’s case, is the word for actual physical death. The Greek word for “being still alive” is the root of our English word for “zoology,” meaning Paul still had his life force intact. The Greek word for “being disciplined” is the word used to represent the function of an educated slave who was chosen to teach and train a Roman citizen’s children.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Many of Paul’s contemporaries no doubt dismissed him by saying, “We have never heard of him.” He was a person, they felt, whom they could safely ignore. On the other hand, there were a few, upon whose minds his message had left an indelible impression; to them he was well known. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 6:9 When (temporal) being repeatedly disregarded (ἀγνοέω, PPptc.NMP, Iterative, Circumstantial) or (contrast) being completely understood (ἐπιγινώσκω, PPptc.NMP, Gnomic, Circumstantial), when (temporal) repeatedly facing death (ἀποθνήσκω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Circumstantial) or (contrast) even while (particle; behold) we are still alive (ζάω, PAIIP, Static; the state between living and dying), when (temporal) we are being disciplined (παιδεύω, PPptc.NMP, Pictorial, Circumstantial; suffering for blessing), but (contrast) not (neg. adv.) being put to death (θανατώω,

PPPtC.NMP, Dramatic, Circumstantial; turned back from the sin unto death),

Greek Text

ὡς ἀγνοούμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν,
ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι,

Latin Vulgate

quasi morientes et ecce vivimus ut castigati et non mortificati

LWB 2 Cor. 6:10 While distressed, but always full of inner happiness; while inferior, continually enriching many; while possessing nothing, but holding on to all kinds of things.

KW 2 Cor. 6:10 As sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many wealthy, as having not even one thing, yet possessing all things.

KJV 2 Cor. 6:10 As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to show how he perseveres with a string of Circumstantial participles and contrast conjunctions. When he finds himself in distressing (Latin: melancholy) situations, he nevertheless perseveres with an inner happiness that does not quit (Durative Present). When he thinks himself a failure in life (Latin: needy) with no money and no friends, he is nevertheless still engaged (Iterative Present) in helping others live a better life. When he finds himself without funds and everything he owns in this world can be carried in a knapsack (Latin: a worthless fellow with nothing going for him), he grabs hold of the important things in life (Latin: masters Bible doctrine) and won't let go of them (Durative Present). If you haven't guessed by now, Paul is describing *divine viewpoint* to the Corinthians, with examples along the way.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The other “marriage” in my life (with Bethlehem Baptist Church) has been a mingling of heartache and happiness. Can so much devastation and so much delight coexist in one community and one soul? It can. The apostle Paul spoke a deep pastoral reality when he said that he was “sorrowful yet always rejoicing” in this verse. There is a joy without which pastors cannot profit their people. Mercifully, God has preserved it for sixteen years, and the truth of this book has been His means. (J. Piper)

2 Cor. 6:10 While (temporal) distressed (λυπέω, PPPtc.NMP, Pictorial, Circumstantial; grieving, being sorrowful), but (contrast) always (adverbial; constantly) full of inner happiness (χαίρω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Circumstantial), while (temporal) inferior (Pred. Nom.; feeling small, poor), but (contrast) continually enriching (πλουτίζω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Circumstantial) many (Acc. Adv.), while (temporal) possessing (έχω, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Circumstantial) nothing (Acc. Dir. Obj.; loss of the details of life), but (contrast) holding on to (κατέχω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Circumstantial; fully possessing) all kinds of things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; maximum Bible doctrine).

Greek Text

ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

Latin Vulgate

quasi tristes semper autem gaudentes sicut egentes multos autem locupletantes tamquam nihil habentes et omnia possidentes

LWB 2 Cor. 6:11 Our speech is open and frank face-to-face with you, Corinthians; our minds have been opened wide;

KW 2 Cor. 6:11 Our mouth stands open to you [we speak freely to you, we keep nothing back]. O Corinthians, our heart is broadened and enlarged [widened in its sympathy towards you].

KJV 2 Cor. 6:11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Descriptive Perfect tense to tell the Corinthians that his (and his colleagues) communication of Bible doctrine to them has been completely open and frank on all topics. He is hiding nothing and has left nothing out. He then uses the Intensive Perfect tense to elaborate, going beyond his speech and actually into the doctrinal thoughts of his mind. Everything that he has learned from the Lord has been placed at their disposal. His mind is opened wide (Latin: dilated) for them to discern all that he knows.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The words derive from the Greek translation of Psalm 119:32, “For you enlarge my understanding.” The Septuagint wording relates to knowledge and insight ... having

nothing to do with openheartedness, even though Paul has been quite frank with his readers. Nor does it refer to magnanimity, in spite of Paul's noble and forgiving spirit. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 6:11 Our (Poss. Gen.) speech (Subj. Nom.; communication of Bible doctrine) is open and frank (ἀνοιγω, Perf.AI3S, Descriptive) face-to-face with you (Acc. Adv.), Corinthians (Vocative Address); our (Poss. Gen.) minds (Subj. Nom.; intentions) have been opened wide (πλατύνω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; increased breadth of understanding, maximum doctrinal content);

Greek Text

Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Κορίνθιοι, ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτυνται·

Latin Vulgate

os nostrum patet ad vos o Corinthii cor nostrum dilatatum est

LWB 2 Cor. 6:12 You are not being limited by us; instead, you are being limited by your emotions;

KW 2 Cor. 6:12 You are not compressed nor narrowed down in us [you have ample space in our heart; we hold you within a great love], but you are compressed and narrowed down in your affections [you have tightened up in your affection for me].

KJV 2 Cor. 6:12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Pictorial Present tense with a negative adverb to deny that he or his colleagues are limiting the Corinthians' ability to grow spiritually. On the contrary, Paul is teaching them doctrine. This is most likely an answer to a false accusation offered by the false teachers to draw the Corinthians away from Paul's influence. In true gnostic fashion, they have set themselves up as superior to Paul, having something in addition to Paul to give to the people that Paul isn't giving them, i.e. laws, miracles, good feelings, or mystical experiences. Paul says that isn't their problem. The reason why they aren't making great strides in their spiritual walk is that they are being held back (Dramatic Present) by their own emotions.

Now here's a perfect example of why a committee effort (such as the KJV translation) just doesn't cut the mustard. If you read nothing but the KJV, you probably think the Corinthians have a case of intestinal flu, or maybe some of them are contemplating hari-

kari. No, the Greek word “splanchna” represents the emotions. Rather than thinking Bible doctrine, the Corinthians are choosing to emote instead. They have allowed their emotional pattern to take control of their intellect and are therefore stumbling in the spiritual life. They are, in fact, their own worst enemies. The emotions should always respond to the intellect, not vice versa.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Corrupted emotion is always the result of the sin nature’s refluxing in one of three areas: the area of weakness, which produces personal sins; the lust pattern which produces trends toward legalism or antinomianism; or the area of strength, which produces human good. Although designed to respond to doctrine in the right lobe, emotion can respond to mental attitude sins of jealousy, pride, guilt, bitterness, vindictiveness, implacability. Emotional revolt is tantamount to the emotion fornicating with the sin nature and with Satan’s policy of good and evil. The true function of the emotion as responder is reversed. Once emotion assumes the role of aggressor, it becomes a tool of the sin nature. Why are so many believers unable to apply doctrine even though they may take it in regularly? Emotional revolt! Even though the believer may have metabolized and accumulated much doctrine, when emotions take over, the process of taking in the Word is short-circuited and doctrine in the soul is neutralized. Doctrine cannot flow into the stream of consciousness. The believer has no ability to concentrate on doctrine or to assimilate into his thinking the concepts of divine viewpoint. This was the case of the Corinthians who, although they had the benefit of personal instruction from the Apostle Paul, resisted doctrine and suffered from spiritual impotence. Believers who are controlled by their emotion or use it as the criteria for the Christian life are disoriented, reversionistic, and apostate. They are not living according to God’s plan for their lives. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Greek word “splanchna” signifies intestines, which for the ancients were the seat of affections. (S. Kistemaker) Since strong emotion frequently affects the lower parts of the body from the solar plexus downwards, the “bowels” is the term used where we today, in equally popular terms, would speak of the heart. The NT seizes upon this commonsense term to describe the centre of the emotions. (J.S. White, Colin Brown)

It is the Corinthians themselves who have created difficulties for Paul and let themselves be driven into opposition to him. Nevertheless, Paul is still ready to receive them with all their worries and suspicions, their complaints and accusations ... the apostle hopes they can overcome their own “narrowness of heart.” (TDNT)

2 Cor. 6:12 You are not (neg. adv.) being limited (στενοχωρέω, PPI2P, Pictorial; restricted, hindered) by us (Instr. Agency; Paul, Apollos, Timothy and Titus); instead (contrast; but rather), you are being limited (στενοχωρέω, PPI2P, Dramatic; restricted) by your (Poss. Gen.) emotions (Instr. Means; emotional pattern);

Greek Text

οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε ἐν ἡμῖν, στενοχωρεῖσθε δὲ ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ὑμῶν·

Latin Vulgate

non angustiamini in nobis angustiamini autem in
visceribus vestris

LWB 2 Cor. 6:13 Therefore, for the sake of responding in the same manner, on the grounds that I am speaking to children, start allowing yours [your minds] to also be opened wide.

KW 2 Cor. 6:13 Now, as a return in kind for my affections towards you, as to children I am speaking to you, you also be enlarged [make a large place in your heart for me].

KJV 2 Cor. 6:13 Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children) be ye also enlarged.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has invested a lot of time in the Corinthians, and he believes it is time for them to repay his investment in a proper manner. He isn't asking for monetary remuneration. What he wants in return is for them to do the same thing he and his colleagues are doing on a daily basis – allowing their minds to control their emotions so they may metabolize Bible doctrine. He asks for this response for the following reasons: (1) because they are spiritually related (Accusative Relationship) as members of the royal family of God, (2) because it is to their spiritual advantage to do so, (3) because they will be following in the exact footsteps (Accusative Specification) that Paul is following, (4) because Paul is speaking to them (Static Present) as their apostle and they are in need of his wisdom since they are still spiritually immature, and (5) because they are spiritual children, they should listen to Paul as “students without portfolio.” In other words, they should sit down, shut up, pay attention, and take good notes so they can review what he is teaching them later.

Paul uses the Ingressive Aorist tense to get the Corinthians to start doing something (begin immediately) that they have not been doing. As their apostle, he uses the Imperative of Command to order them to begin opening their minds to his teaching. He is not being an arrogant bully. He recognizes the authority God delegated to him over them because of their desperate need for the Word of Truth. Some of the Corinthians had refused Paul's authority and switched their allegiance to false teachers at their own peril. In times like these, being “sweet” won't get the job done. So Paul issues a command for them to start building a doctrinal framework in their souls.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle teaches that from a religious point of view the believer and unbeliever are opposites and have nothing in common. He strengthens his argument by quoting various texts from the Old Testament that express a similar theme: God's people are covenant people (Leviticus 26:12) who must separate themselves from the religious practices of unbelievers, must not touch any unclean thing (Isaiah 52:11), and must know that God is a Father to His spiritual sons and daughters (II Samuel 7:14). (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 6:13 Therefore (inferential), for the sake of responding (Acc. Relationship, Advantage; repaying, returning, by way of recompense) in the same manner (Acc. Spec.), on the grounds that (comparative) I am speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) to children (Dat. Adv.; spiritually immature, students without portfolio), start allowing yours (Poss. Nom.; minds from verse 11) to also (adjunctive) be opened wide (πλατύνω, APImp.2P, Ingressive, Command; start building a doctrinal structure in your soul).

Greek Text

τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν, ὡς τέκνοις λέγω, πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς.

Latin Vulgate

eandem autem habentes remunerationem tamquam filiis dico dilatamini et vos

LWB 2 Cor. 6:14 Stop the practice of being mismated with unbelievers, for what partnership can there be between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what mutual relationship can there be between light in the company of darkness?

KW 2 Cor. 6:14 Stop being joined as with a yoke to unbelievers in a common state or endeavor which latter are of a character different from and diametrically opposed to the state of a child of God and any endeavor in which he may properly engage, for what partnership does righteousness have with lawlessness? Or, what does light have in common with darkness?

KJV 2 Cor. 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul issues yet another command (Imperative Mood) to the Corinthians. He has heard that many of them have recently married (Iterative Present) unbelievers. Paul says: Stop

doing that! He then uses the Dramatic Present tense to tell them this isn't a small, insignificant matter. It has the potential to be a drastically, detrimental marriage relationship. As a believer, you are imbued with a new life in Christ which an unbeliever husband or wife does not have. As a believer, you have a completely different protocol to live by that an unbeliever spouse will not understand, and which they may in fact be hostile towards. The greatest privilege of your life as a believer is to serve God; if you marry an unbeliever and they remain an unbeliever for years (or their entire life), you will never be able to share this honor and glory with them. And the chances are great that they will hinder you in your spiritual walk at every turn.

Paul then contrasts the life of a believer with the imputed righteousness of Christ with an unbeliever that is still dead in trespasses and sins. Paul asks: How is it possible for two diametrically opposed, mutually exclusive spheres of life, to form a true partnership? The answer is: There won't be a partnership; you will be living your spiritual life alone, without the support and benefit of a believing spouse who understands the nature and purpose of your spiritual life. Paul continues by asking: What kind of spiritual participation can there be between a believer who is spiritually illuminated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit and an unbeliever who has a soul blackened by sin and completely oblivious to anything spiritual in Christ? The answer is: There can't be any such relationship between the two, because they live in completely different systems with completely different goals and characteristics.

There were many Christians in Corinth, just like today, who married an unbeliever with the thought in back of their mind that they would be able to evangelize their unbelieving spouse over the months or years. Paul issues a command to stop this nonsense. It is stupid and dangerous to your spiritual health. If you are unable to evangelize your unbelieving spouse the chances are greater that they will drag you down, rather than you pull them up. In other words, you could spend the rest of your life fighting an uphill battle just to follow God's protocol plan for your life. The same principle applies between believers who are growing in grace and knowledge and believers who are living in carnality and reversionism. If you have positive volition towards the Word of God and your believer spouse has little to no interest in God's plan for their life, your marriage will be like a racehorse and a jackass in tandem. Are you naïve enough to think the racehorse can make the jackass gallop? More likely, the jackass will cause the racehorse to slow to a trot, even tripping him up or causing him to stumble. The chances are greater that your disinterested, believing spouse will distract you from God's plan and encourage you to live with them in some form of carnality or reversionism. With the exception of believing in Christ, choosing your mate is the most important decision you will ever make in life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

“Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers” applies to marriage between a Christian and non-Christian, although the context is more general, referring to participation in pagan practices. (G. Osborne) The reference is general, covering all forms of intimacy with the heathen, and not limited to marriage or to idol-feasts. (Vincent) It is doubtful that Paul is

referring to marriages. Verse 16 suggests that Paul is referring here to spiritual profligacy in the form of attendance at idol feasts in pagan temples. How can Christians attend such feasts when they are God's temple, the place where God's presence dwells? Paul apparently believes that the Corinthians are in danger of becoming spiritually linked with the demonic forces resident in the temple. (B. Witherington, III)

Existing mixed marriages were not to be broken, though the Christian must not marry an unbeliever. (N. Hillyer) Marriage is certainly included, but other unions may be in mind. (A.T. Robertson) The most obvious application of such a prohibition would be to intermarriage with the heathen, which was continually forbidden to the chosen people, and this is probably the main thought here. But to indulge in any excessive familiarity of intercourse would be strongly deprecated. (J.H. Bernard)

The exhortation is general, and is not to be confined to partaking of heathen sacrifices, nor to intermarriage with the heathen, much less to association with the opponents of the apostle. It is intimate, voluntary association with the wicked that is forbidden. Incongruous elements cannot be thus united, and any attempt to combine them must destroy the character of one or the other. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 6:14 Stop (neg. adv.) the practice of being (γίνομαι, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command, Deponent) mismatched (ἑτεροζυγέω, PAPtc.NMP, Dramatic, Modal; detrimental marriage relationship) with unbelievers (Dat. Disadv.), for (explanatory) what (interrogative) partnership (Subj. Nom.) can there be (ellipsis) between righteousness (Dat. Assoc.; according to God's standard) and (contrast) lawlessness (Dat. Assoc.)? Or (coordinating) what (interrogative) mutual relationship (Subj. Nom.; spiritual participation) can there be (ellipsis) between light (Dat. Assoc.; spiritual illumination) in the company with (Prep. Acc.) darkness (Acc. Assoc.; blackout of the soul)?

Greek Text

Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις· τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀνομίας, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὸς πρὸς σκότος;

Latin Vulgate

nolite iugum ducere cum infidelibus quae enim participatio iustitiae cum iniquitate aut quae societas luci ad tenebras

LWB 2 Cor. 6:15 As a matter of fact, what common ground is there between Christ in the company with Belial? Or what commonality can there be between a believer in company with an unbeliever?

KW 2 Cor. 6:15 And what harmony does Christ have with Belial? Or, what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?

KJV 2 Cor. 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If the warning and explanatory examples in the prior verse weren't enough, Paul emphatically asks what possible grounds for spiritual agreement exist between Christ and Satan? They are, of course, enemies. And by comparison, believers are enemies of unbelievers, when it comes to the spiritual life. Believers live by Christ while unbelievers live by Satan; what possible agreement can these mutually exclusive persons have? As Paul continues: What share in a spiritual life can believers and unbelievers have together? The answer is: None whatsoever. They can have a physical life together, and to some extent a soul life together, but they cannot have a spiritual life together – and as a believer, that is the supreme purpose for your existence.

Belial is another name for Satan, an epithet drawn from intertestamental Jewish literature. In Hebrew the word means “worthlessness” or “wickedness.” The Septuagint translates it as “pest” or “impious fool.” It is also used to represent Belyar, lord of the forest – a synonym for Satan.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul offers an exposition on the church as a neo-levitical community patterned on Leviticus chapters 17-26 to drive home the real nature of the church as the temple of the Lord, consecrated for holy worship and the folly of the readers' ranging themselves on the side of the world, called unbelieving and set under the power of Satan (Belial) or idols. By a single stroke, using a series of Old Testament quotations and allusions (six in number), he establishes the holy destiny of the church at Corinth. So doing, he summons the disobedient members to respect their calling and leave the world's side in order to attach themselves resolutely to his gospel and apostleship. (R.P. Martin)

2 Cor. 6:15 As a matter of fact (emphatic), what (interrogative) common ground (Subj. Nom.; agreement) is there (ellipsis) between Christ (Gen. Assoc.) in the company with (Prep. Acc.) Belial (Acc. Assoc.; Satan, the devil)? Or (coordinating) what (interrogative) commonality (Subj. Nom.; share, portion) can there be (ellipsis) between a believer (Dat. Assoc.) in company with (Prep. Gen.) an unbeliever (Gen. Assoc.)?

Greek Text

τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερὶς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου;

Latin Vulgate

quae autem conventio Christi ad Belial aut quae pars
fideli cum infidele

LWB 2 Cor. 6:16 Moreover, what agreement is there between the temple of God in company with idols? Indeed, you are a living temple of God, just as God said: “I will live in them and live among them, and I will be their God and they will be My people.”

KW 2 Cor. 6:16 And what agreement does the inner sanctuary of God have with idols? For, as for us, we are an inner sanctuary of the living God, even as God said, I will dwell in them in fellowship with them as in a home and I will live my life in and through them. And I will be their God and they themselves will be my people.

KJV 2 Cor. 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his rather sarcastic line of questioning by asking what agreement there was between the temple of God and idols. The answer, of course, is none. Many individuals in the OT were killed by God because they tried to simultaneously worship Him and the idols of their spouse. Then Paul draws a comparison between the temple of God in the day of Israel, which was a building, with the future living temples of God which are believers. This change in policy or dispensation was predicted by God the Father centuries ago. Using the Futuristic Present tense, He told of a day when He would both indwell His people and walk amongst them. He also told of a day when He would become their God and they would become His people. Knowing these things, how could any believer possibly consider marrying an unbeliever? And how could any believer who is growing in grace and knowledge marry a carnal or reversionistic Christian?

The temple of God can also be contrasted with the temple of idols, using the phrase “the temple of” in the second instance as an ellipsis of repetition from the preceding clause.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Our bodies are indwelt by all three Members of the Trinity. God the Father indwells us for the glorification of His protocol plan which He designed in eternity past for each

Church Age believer. God the Holy Spirit indwells us to create a temple for the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah Glory, to be a downpayment of our royal inheritance, and to empower us in the execution of the Father's plan. God the Son indwells us as a sign or badge of the royal family, as a guarantee of the availability of divine power in time, as a guarantee of life after death in the presence of God forever, as the depository of special blessings for time and eternity, as motivation for continued momentum when facing categories of suffering for blessing, as the basis for assigning highest priority to relationship with God over relationships with people, and as the basis for the glorification of Christ in the unique life of the Church Age believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Sometimes several passages of the Old Testament are blended together, as in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, where use is made of Exodus 29:45, Leviticus 26:12, Isaiah 52:11, Jeremiah 31:1,9,33 and 32:38, Ezekiel 11:20, 36:28 and 37:27, and Zechariah 8:8. Sometimes the Old Testament passage is merely paraphrased, or the general sentiment or substance is given, while in other cases it is merely referred to or hinted at. (M. Terry) Plummer notes that at the beginning "I will dwell in them," is not in any of the OT verses. (A.T. Robertson)

The warnings of Paul relative to the kingdom of God do not remotely relate to being saved but to something else, namely, the conscious presence of God. The kingdom of God is heaven below. It is His life, a life which is manifested in men's hearts. Unless a person is born again, engendered with the life of God, he cannot enter into heaven below. But God's dwelling place is to be known and experienced in an immediate way. It is this wonderful way, namely, God's conscious presence, that we are called to inherit. God is a jealous God, however. There is not a single promise offered to the believer that the conscious presence of God may be inherited by a careless, frivolous, and worldly life. Not one. (R.T. Kendall)

In the Church Age, the body of each believer is a temple in which Jesus Christ, the Shekinah Glory, dwells. This change of residence of the Shekinah Glory indicates the transition between the Dispensation of the Hypostatic Union and the Dispensation of the Church. The indwelling of God the Son in the body of the Church Age believer is the escutcheon or badge of the royal family. The Shekinah Glory has fulfilled different purposes in God's plan for different dispensations. Under the ritual plan of God in Israel, the Shekinah Glory dwelt in the Tabernacle and Temple to be the focal point of worship in the nation. The Shekinah Glory resided "among" His people but not "in" them. The indwelling of the Shekinah Glory within individuals was a concept totally unknown to the Jews. Under the incarnation plan of God, the purpose of the Shekinah Glory in human body was to provide salvation. Jesus Christ came in the flesh to bear man's sins in His body on the cross. Under the protocol plan for the Church, the Shekinah Glory indwells every believer's body for the purpose of fellowship with the glorified Christ. As the Church Age believer advances to spiritual maturity, he glorifies Christ in his body. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Under the Christian dispensation, there is still a temple of God, but it consists of the whole company of Christian believers. This new temple retains the characteristics of the other tabernacle where God had been pleased to dwell. It is holy and dedicated, and must be kept a shrine fit for His presence. Paul does not hesitate therefore to apply words, first spoken with reference to God's presence with his people in the tabernacle in the wilderness, to His indwelling in the hearts of Christians. (R.V.G. Tasker)

The Spirit indwells to make the Christian's body a temple worthy of Christ, the Shekinah Glory. The believer himself is incapable of providing an acceptable dwelling place for Christ. The old sin nature inherited from fallen Adam contaminates the body throughout the believer's temporal life. Only the "washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit" make the "temple" fit for Christ to occupy. The existence of this inner sanctuary for Christ makes it possible for the believer to obey the command to "glorify God in your body." This command is fulfilled by the Holy Spirit. He executes the plan of the Father in the life of the positive believer, the believer who adheres to divine protocol. Two postsalvation ministries of the Spirit are involved: indwelling and filling. The Spirit indwells the body so Christ may take up royal residence there, while the filling of the Spirit enables the believer to reflect the glory of the resident Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 6:16 Moreover (continuative), what (interrogative) agreement (Subj. Nom.) is there (ellipsis) between the temple (Dat. Assoc.) of God (Poss. Gen.) in company with (Prep. Gen.) idols (Gen. Assoc.; the temple of idols)? Indeed (emphatic), you (Subj. Nom.) are (εἰμί, PA1P, Descriptive) a living (ζάω, PAPtc.GMP, Descriptive, Attributive) temple (Pred. Nom.) of God (Poss. Gen.), just as (subordinating) God (Subj. Nom.) said (εἶπον, AAI3S, Dramatic; in Leviticus 26:11-12 and Ezekiel 37:27): "I will live (ἐνοικέω, FAI1S, Predictive) in them (Loc. Sph.; indwelling of the Father) and (continuative) live among them (ἐμπεριπατέω, FAI1S, Predictive), and (continuative) I will be (εἰμί, FAI1S, Predictive) their (Gen. Rel.) God (Pred. Nom.) and (continuative) they will be (εἰμί, FAI3P, Predictive) My (Gen. Rel.) people (Pred. Nom.)."

Greek Text

τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.

Latin Vulgate

qui autem consensus templo Dei cum idolis vos enim estis templum Dei vivi sicut dicit Deus quoniam

inhabitabo in illis et inambulabo et ero illorum Deus
et ipsi erunt mihi populus

LWB 2 Cor. 6:17 "Therefore, come out from the middle of them and be separated," said the Lord, "and stop touching the unclean; then I will welcome you,"

KW 2 Cor. 6:17 Wherefore, come out at once from their midst and separate yourselves at once, says the Lord, and stop touching that which is unclean. And, as for myself, I will receive you kindly and treat you with favor.

KJV 2 Cor. 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul quotes yet another OT verse, in which Israel is ordered (Imperative of Command) to come out from among the heathen. God commands them to be separated from evildoers and to stop the habit of touching unclean things that they have become accustomed (Iterative Present tense) to do. If they will do these things, He promises (Predictive Future tense) to welcome them with open arms. Understood from the context is the fact that if they don't do these things, He will not accept them and will most likely send discipline their way.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They are to cleanse themselves from all physical and spiritual defilement, both of which they could have become involved in a pagan temple in Corinth. And they are to get on with progressive sanctification, perfecting their set-apart condition from such paganism, in the fear of the one true God. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul recognized that Christians could not isolate themselves from human society. Nevertheless, separation may mean loss of relatives, friends, and livelihood, and giving up apparently innocent involvements. But the holy God promises to dwell among His people, and there can be no compromise with anything contrary to His interests. (N. Hillyer)

We should not yoke ourselves in friendship and acquaintance with wicked men and unbelievers. Though we cannot wholly avoid seeing, and hearing, and being with such, yet we should never choose them for our bosom-friends. (M. Henry)

God has not separated Himself from His people, yet His sons and daughters repeatedly have turned away from Him and adopted the ways of the world. "I will receive you." The promise is stated in future terms to indicate that God's reception of His children depends on their obedience. The Old Testament prophets looked forward to the coming of the

Messiah, but the readers of Paul's epistle already lived in fellowship with Christ. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 6:17 "**Therefore** (superordinate), **come out** (ἐξέρχομαι, AAImp.2P, Constativ, Command, Deponent; depart) **from the middle** (Abl. Separation; midst) **of them** (Gen. Rel.) **and** (continuative) **be separated** (ἀφορίζω, APImp.2P, Constativ, Command)," **said** (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical) **the Lord** (Subj. Nom.; in Isaiah 52:11 and Ezekiel 20:34-35), "**and** (continuative) **stop** (neg. adv.) **touching** (ἄπτω, PMImp.2P, Iterative, Command) **the unclean** (Obj. Gen.; contaminated); **then** (temporal) **I will welcome** (εἰσδέχομαι, FMI1S, Predictive, Deponent; accept) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.),"

Greek Text

διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος, καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε· καὶ γὰρ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς

Latin Vulgate

propter quod exite de medio eorum et separamini dicit Dominus et inmundum ne tetigeritis

LWB 2 Cor. 6:18 "and I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be sons and daughters unto Me," said the Lord Almighty.

KW 2 Cor. 6:18 And I will be to you a Father. And as for you, you will be to me sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

KJV 2 Cor. 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Continuing his reflections on the OT, Paul quotes another verse in which God promises (Predictive Future tense) He will be a Father to them and they will be sons and daughters to Him. The Greek word "pantokrator" is then used to emphasize the divine sovereignty and omnipotence of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The primary reference of the text in verses 16-18 was to the exiles returning from Babylon, but again Paul makes an application of a text to the Corinthians who are being called to abandon compromise with paganism. What greater incentive could there be to

abandon all idolatrous practices than knowing there was a welcome from the Lord Almighty who will treat them as His children? (C. Kruse)

The title “Almighty” is awe-inspiring, because it reveals God as the omnipotent One to whom no one in either heaven or on earth can be compared. The Hebrew text of the Old Testament uses the word “Sabaoth,” which means “Lord of the Armies,” or “Lord of Hosts.” Martin Luther incorporated the term in his well-known hymn “A Mighty Fortress” in the line “Lord Sabaoth His name.” (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 6:18 “and (continuative) I will be (εἰμί, FMI1S, Predictive) a Father (Acc. Appos.) unto you (Dat. Adv.), and (continuative) you (Subj. Nom.) shall be (εἰμί, FMI2P, Predictive) sons (Acc. Appos.) and (connective) daughters (Acc. Appos.) unto Me (Dat. Adv.),” said (λέγω, PAI3S, Historical; in Ezekiel 20:34 and 2 Samuel 7:14) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) Almighty (Descr. Nom.; divine sovereignty and omnipotence).

Greek Text

καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.

Latin Vulgate

et ego recipiam vos et ero vobis in patrem et vos eritis mihi in filios et filias dicit Dominus omnipotens

Chapter 7

LWB 2 Cor. 7:1 Therefore, since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every type of defilement against the flesh and human spirit, for the purpose of making continual progress with reference to the spiritual life with profound respect for God.

KW 2 Cor. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves from all contamination which may defile the [human] spirit, progressively accomplishing holiness in the fear of the Lord.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sums up everything he was talking about in Chapter 6 and says since (Causal Participle) we have these promises from God, let's do what He asks so we can indeed be His sons and daughters. He uses the Volitive Subjunctive to tell us we have the choice to cleanse ourselves (confess our sins) or not; it's up to each one of us as to whether we obey God's commands or not. The Volitive also points out that Paul assumes they are not in fellowship at the time of his writing. Are we to cleanse ourselves of just one or two activities that defile us and feel like that's enough for this go-around? No. Paul asks us to eliminate every category of defilement we might be involved in, not just the ones that are comparatively easy to get rid of. There is no easy way out in this request.

Paul also elaborates on the types of defilement (street sewage) that we are to cleanse ourselves from. He classifies them as any that attack the flesh (our physical bodies) as well as our human spirit. In other words, some habitual sins we are involved in may be seen externally and appear to defile our bodies only, i.e. gluttony, sexual immorality. But we are also to take care of those that defile our human spirit, such as idolatry, mysticism, and the pursuit of anthropocentric theories that contradict Scripture, i.e. psychology, sociology, and philosophy. This latter category of sins may not defile the physical body, but they do irreparable harm to the human spirit.

What is the purpose of this cleansing from defilement? Paul says the purpose is to make continual (Iterative Present tense) progress in the spiritual life, also known as experiential sanctification. We are not supposed to become Christians and then remain stupefied until the day we die. God has a system of protocol that He wants us to live by so we might glorify Him and receive eternal rewards to boot.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Your spirit is sanctified because the Spirit of Christ dwells there. Your soul is being sanctified because of the renewing of your mind. Your body is sanctified because of the impending resurrection. Each of these three areas is in a different degree of sanctification, which is dictated by their proximity to the world. It is not a matter of less importance; rather, it is a matter of less proximity to Him who is absolutely holy. My spirit is sanctified from the defilement of this world; my soul is being sanctified from the defilement of this world, and my body will be sanctified from the defilement of this world. Another way to state it is to say this: "I am sanctified, positionally in spirit, practically in soul, and ultimately in body." If we are not set apart from the world, we will not walk in practical righteousness. So after we have been set apart by God for His use, we are responsible to continue in holiness. (K. Lamb)

While we are constantly dependent upon the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit, we must also take account of the fact that sanctification is a process that draws within its scope the conscious life of the believer. The sanctified are not passive or quiescent in this process. God's working in us is not suspended because we work, nor our working suspended because God works. Neither is the relation strictly one of co-operation as if God did His part and we did ours so that the conjunction of coordination of both

produced the required result. God works in us and we also work. But the relation is that because God works we work. Sanctification involves the concentration of thought, of interest, of heart, mind, will, and purpose upon the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and the engagement of our whole being with those means which God has instituted for the attainment of that destination. (J. Murray)

Regeneration is completed at once, for a man cannot be more or less regenerated; he is either dead or alive spiritually. Sanctification is a process, bringing about gradual changes, so that different grades may be distinguished in the resulting holiness. Hence we are admonished to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. (L. Berkof) There is a continual struggle, signified by the use of the present participle in “perfecting,” to bring to completeness a state of holiness ... a life-long task to be achieved. (R.V.G. Tasker) Personal sanctification demands persistent effort. (M. Henry)

Contrary to the opinion of most religionists, neither prayer nor music will prepare one for the message of God. Confession of sin in order to cleanse ourselves “from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in fear of God” enables Christians to worship. (W.E. Best) It is by yielding to the Spirit’s impulses, heeding His strivings, submitting ourselves unto His government, that any measure of success is granted to us in this most important work. The believer is not a cipher in this work. The gracious operations of the Spirit were never designed to be a substitute for the Christian’s discharge of his duty. True, His influence is indispensable, though it relaxes us not from our individual responsibility. (A.W. Pink) Sanctification can be perfected, that is, completed or matured. This is a maturing, growing holiness, an increased Christlikeness, a progressive sanctification – not sinless perfection. (D. Lowery)

The construction of “katharizo” with “apo” is to be interpreted in the light of the well-known idea, exemplified in the Mystery Inscription of Andania in the Peloponnesus in 93 B.C. (classic antiquity), that the touching of a corpse renders one ceremonially unclean. (*Contributions Chiefly From Papyri and Inscriptions*, Adolf Deissmann, 1901, Hendrickson) Paul’s word for man’s sanctification is “agiasmos,” the result of which process is here expressed by “agiasune,” which is also an attribute of God in the O.T. (R. Nicoll)

“These promises” refer to God’s assurances of His presence (6:16) and fellowship (6:17-18) to those who obey Him. This obedience requires purification, which here implies separation from everything that contaminates body and spirit and from every person who pollutes the truth. (D. Lowery) The promises of God are strong inducements to sanctification. (M. Henry)

2 Cor. 7:1 **Therefore** (inferential), **since we have** (ἐχῶ, PAPtc.NMP, Static, Causal) **these** (Acc. Spec.) **promises** (Acc, Dir. Obj.), **beloved** (Voc. Address; those in union with Jesus Christ), **let us cleanse** (καθαρίζω, AASubj.1P, Constative, Volitive/Hortatory; purify) **ourselves** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **from**

every type of (Gen. Spec.) defilement (Abl. Separation; spiritual iniquity) against the flesh (Obj. Gen.; physical body) and (connective) human spirit (Obj. Gen.), for the purpose of making continual progress (ἐπιτελέω, PAptc.NMP, Iterative, Purpose; performing our spiritual duty, bringing fully to completion) with reference to the spiritual life (Acc. Gen. Ref.; experiential sanctification, holiness) with profound respect (Instr. Manner) for God (Obj. Gen.).

Greek Text

ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

has igitur habentes promissiones carissimi mundemus nos ab omni inquinamento carnis et spiritus perficientes sanctificationem in timore Dei

LWB 2 Cor. 7:2 Make room for us in your hearts; we have harmed nobody, we have corrupted nobody, we have cheated nobody.

KW 2 Cor. 7:2 Make room in your hearts for us. We wronged no man. We corrupted no man. We took advantage of no man for the sake of gain.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses four Constative Aorist tenses to prove to the Corinthians that they have no reason to think bad of him or his colleagues. He pleads (Imperative of Entreaty) with the Corinthians to accept him and his colleagues in their minds and souls. Why shouldn't they? Paul has not wronged (treated in an unjust or evil manner) any of them. He has not led any of them astray, seducing and destroying their spiritual life. And finally, he has not taken financial advantage of them, since he supports himself by various manual labors.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The historical setting of Chapter 7 goes back to 6:11-13, which is one of the tenderest pieces in pastoral solicitude in the entire Pauline library. Paul does not acquiesce with the situation in Corinth, and appeals to these grieved children to quit their temporary aberration of hostility and come over to his side once more, as seen by his impassioned plea in 7:2-4 with its ringing tones of confidence and optimism. (R. Martin)

Paul may mean to say that he had corrupted no one's morals by his example or arts of seduction; or that he had corrupted no man's faith by his false teaching; or that he had ruined no man as to his estate. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 7:2 Make room for us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; welcome us with open arms) in your hearts (χωρέω, AAImp.2P, Constative, Entreaty; right lobe of the soul); we have harmed (ἀδικέω, AAIIp, Constative) nobody (Acc. Dir. Obj.), we have corrupted (φθείρω, AAIIp, Constative) nobody (Acc. Dir. Obj.), we have cheated (πλεονεκτέω, AAIIp, Constative; defrauded) nobody (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

Χωρήσατε ἡμᾶς· οὐδένα ἠδικήσαμεν, οὐδένα ἐφθείραμεν, οὐδένα ἐπλεονεκτήσαμεν.

Latin Vulgate

capite nos neminem laesimus neminem corrupimus neminem circumvenimus

LWB 2 Cor. 7:3 I am not speaking for the purpose of condemnation, since I have repeatedly said in the past and will say yet again that you are in our hearts for the purpose of living together and eventually dying together.

KW 2 Cor. 7:3 I am not saying this in the spirit of condemnation, for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:3 I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Static Present tense to assure the Corinthians that he isn't accusing them all of thinking these offensive things about him. He knows there are only a few bad apples, so to speak, amongst them who are stirring up trouble. Then he uses an Iterative Perfect tense to remind them that he has repeatedly told them that they are in his thoughts and that they are still in his thoughts to this very day. The Greek word "kardia" is used here to include Paul's (and his colleagues) heart, mind, and soul. As their apostle, it is customary for him to think this way about them. He is their spiritual father. He led them to Christ. He taught them how to live the Christian way of life.

Paul then mixes two infinitives to cover life and death. The Durative Present tense combined with a Purpose Infinitive is his way of saying they will live the entirety of their

Christian lives together, for this is God’s geographical purpose for bringing the Corinthians into his fold at this time of life. The Culminative Aorist tense combined with a Result Infinitive is his way of saying they will all grow old in the faith together, with the result that some day they will die in the faith together. Whether they are living or dying, they will be “together.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the papyri the expression “to live together and die together” is found where mutual friendship and loyalty are extolled. The idea is that those involved have a friendship that will be sustained throughout life and will keep them together even if death is involved. In his affirmation of friendship Paul reverses the order, i.e. not to live and die, but to die and live together, and this reflects a fundamental Christian outlook. It is by dying that we live; it is by suffering that we are prepared for glory. (C. Kruse)

He has always spoken freely to them and has not played his cards close to his chest, and he has spoken freely about them as well, boasting about them. It is part of Paul’s general rhetorical strategy to use plain speech, that is, language that is neither ornamental nor deceptive. (B. Witherington, III)

Notice that Paul switches from writing the first person plural “we” in verse 2 to the first person singular “I” in verses 3-4. He speaks openly, directly, and personally to the Corinthians to strengthen the bond he has with them. The interplay of pronouns in this verse is striking. The verse begins with the first person singular “I” and is followed by the pronouns “you” and “our” and concludes with “we.” (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 7:3 I am not (neg. adv) speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) for the purpose of (purpose) condemnation (Adv. Acc.), since (explanatory) I have repeatedly said in the past and will say yet again (προεῖπον, Perf.AI1S, Iterative) that (coordinate) you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Customary) in our (Poss. Gen.) hearts (Loc. Sph.; thoughts) for the purpose of (purpose) living together (συζάω, PAInf., Durative, Purpose) and (continuative) eventually dying together (συναποθνήσκω, AAInf., Culminative, Result).

Greek Text

πρὸς κατάκρισιν οὐ λέγω· προεῖρηκα γὰρ ὅτι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν ἐστε εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν.

Latin Vulgate

non ad condemnationem dico praedixi enim quod in cordibus nostris estis ad conmorendum et ad convivendum

LWB 2 Cor. 7:4 Great is my confidence concerning you, great is my boasting about you. I have been completely filled in the past and will continue to be filled with encouragement in the future; I am constantly being flooded with inner happiness under every type of outside pressure for our benefit.

KW 2 Cor. 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you. Great is my glorying on your behalf. I have been completely filled with the encouragement. I am being caused to superabound with joy in all our tribulation,

KJV 2 Cor. 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In elliptical form, Paul tells the Corinthians that he is both confident and proud of them. He believes he can trust them to do the right thing, and he is sure he will be able to continue boasting about their progress to others. In both cases, he adds the superlative “great” to further boost their morale.

Whether he is with them face-to-face or whether he is absent from them, he is nevertheless filled with encouragement. The Intensive Perfect tense says he has had this divine encouragement in the past and knows he will keep on having it in the future. He uses the Iterative Perfect tense to communicate to them his continual overdose of inner happiness. Every time he meets with an outside pressure, he is able to meet it with an overflow of this inner happiness. The Middle Voice emphasizes that Paul solves his problems on his own using Bible doctrine, not running around from one friend to another looking for someone else to help him out of his depression.

The Genitive of Advantage says he knows these various pressures (testings) are for his own benefit, and the same holds true for them. God sends every known category of pressure to his people for the purpose of testing them, to see if they have accumulated enough Bible doctrine in their soul to meet the situation and apply what they know successfully. Paul isn’t bragging about his ability to be happy in the midst of pressure. What he hopes to communicate is that they too can have this same inner happiness in the midst of their outside pressures in life. If they are able to pass the test, there will be a blessing (benefit) for them afterwards.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In light of the Corinthian accusations and disaffection, it is unlikely that Paul has complete confidence in this troubled church. However, Paul wants to end his defense on a positive note, with plenty of hope for the future. (J. Scott) He now demonstrates that he loves them by praising their change of attitude. (S. Kistemaker)

“Perisseuo” means to overflow. “Huperperisseuo” as used by Byzantine writers means to have a regular flood. (A.T. Robertson)

Paul is not here talking about “boldness of speech” but “confidence.” (R. Earle)

2 Cor. 7:4 Great (Pred. Nom.) is (ellipsis) my (Poss. Gen.) confidence (Subj. Nom.; assurance, trust) concerning you (Prep. Acc.), great (Pred. Nom.) is (ellipsis) my (Poss. Gen.) boasting (Subj. Nom.) about you (Prep. Acc.). I have been completely filled in the past and will continue to be filled with encouragement (Dat. Adv.) in the future (πληρόω, Perf.PIIS, Intensive); I am constantly flooded (ὑπερπερισεύω, PMIIS, Iterative; overflow, superabound) with inner happiness (Instr. Assoc.) under every type of (Dat. Spec.) outside pressure (Loc. Sph.; testing) for our benefit (Gen. Adv.; suffering for blessing).

Greek Text

πολλή μοι παρρησία πρὸς ὑμᾶς, πολλή μοι καύχησις ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν·
πεπλήρωμαι τῇ παρακλήσει, ὑπερπερισεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ
θλίψει ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

multa mihi fiducia est apud vos multa mihi gloriatio
pro vobis repletus sum consolatione superabundo gaudio
in omni tribulatione nostra

LWB 2 Cor. 7:5 For indeed, when we finally arrived in Macedonia, our flesh had in no respect received relief, but continually experienced pressures in every category: fistfights on the outside, fears on the inside.

KW 2 Cor. 7:5 For even after we came into Macedonia our frail humanity experienced no relaxing from the oppression and tension of tribulation, but I was having pressure brought to bear upon me from every side, on the outside, contentions [with adversaries], within, fears.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul used the Culminative Aorist tense to emphasize his “finally” arriving in Macedonia, meaning the journey there was quite arduous and tiresome. He was tired, having had no relaxation along the way, not even the least bit (Intensive Perfect) of rest. And if the

journey itself wasn't tiring enough, he was continually (Iterative Present) under pressure. Every category of affliction (pressure) you could imagine happened to Paul when he got there. He faced pressures from without (external) and from within (internal). If you follow the Greek (makai) there were battles (possibly attended by name-calling and insults) over opinions, most likely over doctrinal issues of one kind or another. If you follow the Latin (pugnatio) there were actual fistfights, physical combat over who was right or wrong. On the inside, regardless of whether the battles were physical or verbal, he was continually nagged with fears – if physical combat fears, then the fear of being beaten; if verbal combat fears, then the fear of being bested (humiliated) in a debate.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These must have been dark days for Paul. Not only had he suffered an attack from the outside, called “strife from without;” he also was faced with “fears from within.” We may identify the strife with the conflict endured at Ephesus, presumably with the Roman or Jewish authorities; and the fears were real fears engendered by the sad prospect that his investment in the lives of the Corinthians had gone for nothing. They were not immune from moral dangers present in the society around them. (R. Martin)

The use of the Perfect tense (exo) probably contemplates the result ... the speakers are not deliberately emphasizing an interval between the fact and the time of speaking. It is used exactly as that of an Aorist tense. (*An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, C.F.D. Moule, 1994, Cambridge University Press)

Paul spoke of his restlessness at Troas waiting for Titus to return with a situation report from Corinth. Now he resumes the narrative. He had crossed the Aegean into Macedonia to meet Titus. There an anxious Paul had to face additional troubles. (Guthrie) This letter appears to have been written in several stages. During his travels he intermittently penned his second epistle to the church in Corinth. Whenever he heard news from or about the Corinthians, Paul responded to it. At other times, lack of news is reflected in the epistle. The style is choppy, as if he was in a hurry, i.e. had no rest. (S. Kistemaker)

Some commentators suppose that by “fightings without” Paul is thinking of his conflicts with unbelievers, and that by “fears within” he is expressing his concern for his converts. (R.V.G. Tasker) From fightings with adversaries without and from fears for the Corinthian believers within. (R. Jamieson) Fights (machai) refer to arguments and quarrels that disturb the peace. (S. Kistemaker) The noun “mache” (related to the “machaira” sword) literally means “a fight.” In other places in the N.T. it is used in the plural for battles fought without actual weapons. It is not clear whether the “machai” Paul was exposed to here embraced physical threats. (R. Earle) The “machai” word group is frequently used for physical combat in the military sense. (TDNT) By “fightings” he means outward assaults, with which his enemies molested him. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 7:5 **For** (explanatory) **indeed** (affirmative), **when we** (accompanied by Timothy, Luke and Epaphroditus) **finally**

arrived (έρχομαι, AAPtc.GMP, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent, Gen. Absolute) in Macedonia (Loc. Place), our (Poss. Gen.) flesh (Subj. Nom.; body) had in no respect (adj.; none) received (έχω, Perf.AI3S, Intensive) relief (Acc. Dir. Obj.; rest, liberty, battle fatigue), but (contrast) continually experienced pressures (θλίβω, PPpTc.NMP, Iterative, Circumstantial; troubled, harrassed) in every category (Prep. Loc.): fistfights (Subj. Nom.; one battle after another) on the outside (adv.; externally), fears (Subj. Nom.) on the inside (adv.; internally).

Greek Text

Καὶ γὰρ ἐλθόντων ἡμῶν εἰς Μακεδονίαν οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἡ σὰρξ ἡμῶν ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι· ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι.

Latin Vulgate

nam et cum venissemus Macedoniam nullam requiem habuit caro nostra sed omnem tribulationem passi foris pugnae intus timores

LWB 2 Cor. 7:6 But He Who keeps on encouraging those without confidence, our God, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus,

KW 2 Cor. 7:6 Nevertheless, He Who encourages those who are downcast, encouraged us, our God, in the coming and personal presence of Titus,

KJV 2 Cor. 7:6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In spite of the pressures Paul experienced in Macedonia, the Constative Aorist tense says he was encouraged by God. Paul isn't necessarily special in receiving this encouragement, because he describes God with the Iterative Present tense, meaning he continually encourages those whose confidence fails and corrects those who allow negative circumstances to propel them into depression. In this case, Paul has been worrying that something might happen to Titus. He had a rough journey to make and was probably carrying a large sum of money on his person. Paul was worried about him and was doing all he could to cheer himself up whenever he thought about Titus. God knew this, however, and eventually comforted Paul by bringing Titus safely to him. Obviously Paul had a strong relationship with Titus, which among other spiritual gifts, had the gift of refreshment as far as Paul was concerned. Their mutual sharing of doctrine (theology) and the experiences encountered during ministry was one of the most refreshing occasions in Paul's life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When we pass various tests, our hearts are filled with happiness that enlivens our true personality. Sometimes God puts us to the test when He creates distances and withholds the means of communication. He places us before uncertainties, gives us periods of waiting, tests our patience, and makes us cope with discouragement. But at the very moment when everyone seems to have lost hope, God intervenes by removing the walls of separation and by providing the necessary information. God suddenly ends our periods of desperation and changes them into seasons of joy. He then fills our hearts with contentment and thankfulness toward Him. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 7:6 But (contrast) He (Subj. Nom.) Who keeps on encouraging (παρακαλέω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival) those (Acc. Dir. Obj.) without confidence (Adv. Acc.; downhearted, downcast, overcome by worry), our (Gen. Rel.) God (Subj. Nom.), encouraged (παρακαλέω, AAI3S, Constative) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by the arrival (Instr. Means; personal presence) of Titus (Subj. Gen.),

Greek Text

ἀλλ' ὁ παρακαλῶν τοὺς ταπεινοὺς παρεκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ Τίτου,

Latin Vulgate

sed qui consolatur humiles consolatus est nos Deus in adventu Titi

LWB 2 Cor. 7:7 And not only by his arrival, but also by the encouragement with which he had been encouraged concerning you, reporting to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that as a result I was more than ever full of inner happiness.

KW 2 Cor. 7:7 And not only in his coming and personal presence, but also by the encouragement with which he was encouraged over you, bringing back tidings to us of your longing [to see me], your mourning [at the rebuke I sent you], your zeal on my behalf, so that I rejoiced yet more;

KJV 2 Cor. 7:7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues by saying he was not only excited and relieved when Titus finally arrived, but he was comforted (Latin: solace) by the same comfort (Latin: consolation) that Titus received when he arrived in Corinth. Things had greatly improved in Corinth since Paul's last heard report about them. Their spiritual corrections and improvements, requested by Paul in a former letter, were adhered to. They had taken his advice seriously, which was a great comfort to both Titus and Paul.

As was customary when Paul crossed paths with his colleagues in the ministry of the gospel, Titus gave him a report on the status of the Corinthians. He told Paul that they longed to see him face-to-face again, which was good news because Paul thought the harshness of his former letter might make him *persona non grata* in Corinth. They had also heard of his afflictions and grieved for him; nobody wants a good friend, and especially their apostle, to encounter trouble. They were also ashamed for the trouble they had caused him, and were ready to set things right. They were also highly motivated to learn more from Paul (Latin: striving to emulate his life) and to make as much spiritual progress as possible.

As a result of Titus' detailed report on the Corinthians, Paul was ecstatic (Culminative Aorist tense) at the turn of events. The inner happiness he had mentioned earlier was now overflowing like never before. There was no greater experience for Paul as an apostle and teacher than to see his students succeed by growing in grace and knowledge in the midst of the world's pressures.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses strong emotional words here. "Longing" in a good sense means "earnest desires," while "zeal" means "fervent mind." (R. Earle)

2 Cor. 7:7 and (continuative) not (neg. adv.) only (adv.) by his (Adv. Gen. Ref.) arrival (Instr. Means), but (adversative) also (adjunctive) by the encouragement (Instr. Means; comfort) with which (Dat. Ref.) he had been encouraged (παρακαλέω, API3S, Constative) concerning you (Dat. Assoc.), reporting (ἀναγγέλλω, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Modal) to us (Dat. Adv.) your (Poss. Gen.) longing (Adv. Acc.; desire to see Paul), your (Poss. Gen.) mourning (Adv. Acc.; grieving for the trouble they have caused him), your (Poss. Gen.) zeal (Adv. Acc.; positive attitude towards his teaching) for me (Gen. Adv.; complete change of attitude towards him), so that as a result (result) I (Subj. Nom.) was more than ever (comparative) full of inner happiness (χαίρω, APInf., Culminative, Result; overjoyed).

Greek Text

οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῇ παρακλήσει ἣ παρεκλήθη ἐφ' ὑμῖν, ἀναγγέλλων ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἐπιπόθησιν, τὸν ὑμῶν ὀδυρμόν, τὸν ὑμῶν ζῆλον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ ὥστε με μᾶλλον χαρῆναι.

Latin Vulgate

non solum autem in adventu eius sed etiam in solacio quo consolatus est in vobis referens nobis vestrum desiderium vestrum fletum vestram aemulationem pro me ita ut magis gauderem

LWB 2 Cor. 7:8 For if I indeed grieved you with a letter, I am not sorry, although I began with regret, since I understand that that letter, if only for a moment, grieved you.

KW 2 Cor. 7:8 For though I caused you grief by my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it, for I see that the letter caused you to grieve, though but for a season;

KJV 2 Cor. 7:8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses “ei kai” three times in the Greek, a combination of subordinate and affirmative conjunctions, in three different and rather clever ways. First, it is used rhetorically to ask a question and then answer it affirmatively in the same breath, translated “if indeed.” Second, he used it to concede a little (back off slightly from his broad former statement) to the reader, translated “although.” Third, he used it to restate his first idea, but to indicate that the result was beneficial and temporary, translated “if only.” This is classic debater’s technique.

Paul knows (“if indeed”) he caused some grief (Constative Aorist) with his first letter to the Corinthians. They were in serious need of “chewing out” in virtually every area of Christian living, and Paul was the designated person (apostle) to do it. He used the Customary Present tense (negatively) to tell them that at this moment, after having considered his purpose for that letter and the beneficial results it produced, he was not sorry (Latin: penitent) for having written it. Under normal circumstances, a letter of that type would be customarily unpleasant to write, causing the reader much distress and probably alienating them from him.

He does admit to them (“although”), however, that when he first wrote it (Inceptive Imperfect tense) he had regrets. Like we ourselves do on occasion, he wondered whether he was being harsh or judgmental, and that perhaps he should tear the letter up rather than send it. The last thing he wanted to do was alienate the Corinthians, a community of people he preached the gospel to and saw the fruits of that labor. Paul’s first use of

“metamelomai” in the Greek (Latin: penitent) in the Present tense states that he was not in the least bit sorry for having written the letter. His second use of the same word in the Imperfect tense states that at first he was sorry for writing it, not so much because of its rebuking contents, but because he loved them and didn’t enjoy being the person responsible for having to write it. In other words, why did the unpleasant task have to fall in his lap; why couldn’t someone else be given this job?

But in his 3-point statement, he realized that his earlier letter would only (“if only”) sting for a short period of time. If the Corinthians understood his purpose for writing, to correct a series of spiritual malfunctions amongst them, they would accept it with genuine humility from a person who loved them dearly and wished only the best for them. The Constative Aorist tense states that Paul’s letter did indeed grieve them, but as he wished, they were only distressed for a short time. Then, as we know, they corrected the detrimental issues he mentioned in the letter and “got back on track” so to speak.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul’s letter had done its work and Paul saw in the report of Titus an occasion for fresh joy and satisfaction. The heavy weight on Paul’s pastoral heart had been lifted, and his spirit was free, as Titus met him with the excellent news that the Corinthian disaffection was over and their rebellion had been quelled. (R. Martin)

Any regrets the apostle may have once harboured had quickly faded into oblivion, because he now understood that the pain it had caused was not the kind of pain that would permanently rankle, but a pain that would leave a blessing behind it when it had done its remedial work. (R.V.G. Tasker) Paul is now glad that he made them sorry. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 7:8 **For** (explanatory) **if I indeed** (concessive & affirmative; surely) **grieved** (λυπέω, AAI1S, Constative; distressed) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **with a letter** (Instr. Means), **I am not** (neg. adv.) **sorry** (μεταμέλομαι, PMI1S, Customary, Deponent; remorse, regret), **although** (concessive & affirmative) **I began with regret** (μεταμέλομαι, Imperf.MI1S, Inceptive, Deponent), **since** (explanatory) **I understand** (βλέπω, PAI1S, Aoristic; perceive) **that** (coordinating) **that** (Nom. Spec.) **letter** (Subj. Nom.; 1st Corinthians), **if only** (concessive & affirmative) **for a moment** (Acc. Extent of Time; short indefinite period of time), **grieved** (λυπέω, AAI3S, Constative; distressed) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, οὐ μεταμέλομαι· εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, βλέπω [γὰρ] ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς,

Latin Vulgate

quoniam et si contristavi vos in epistula non me paenitet et si paeniteret videns quod epistula illa et si ad horam vos contristavit

LWB 2 Cor. 7:9 At the present time I am full of inner happiness, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved to the point of turning from your sins, for you were grieved according to the purpose of God, so that you might in no way receive discipline from us.

KW 2 Cor. 7:9 I now am rejoicing, not because you were made to grieve but because you were made to grieve resulting in your repentance, for you were made to grieve in accordance with the will of God, in order that in not even one thing would you sustain injury or damage by reason of us,

KJV 2 Cor. 7:9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is currently rejoicing, not because he knew the Corinthians were grieved (Constativ Aorist tense) and he wanted them to get spanked. That motivation would be equivalent to gloating, an arrogant, interlocking category of sins related to anger, hatred, and implacability. Grieving for no purpose or result would be an unhappy situation for Paul, not a happy one. He was happy to hear they were turning from the sins he discussed in his prior letter, which was exactly what he had hoped the letter would accomplish. Also, because Paul was not physically present in Corinth to administer church discipline, any suffering they might receive would come from God Himself, and not Paul.

In addition, since they took it upon themselves to remedy the sinful activities in their midst, Paul was relieved by not having to come there immediately and be “the bad guy” – i.e. to crack some heads. If they had ignored his letter, his personal presence in a negative situation might have happened (Potential Subjunctive mood). No apostle or pastor enjoys administering church discipline, least of all Paul. So he was especially happy to hear that his next visit to Corinth would be a friendly one rather than a parental one.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A man may be very sorry about his sin, but that brings no salvation. It may only result in death. Paul ascribes no particular merit to grieving over sin. A man may be very regretful

in the way we call remorse. This involves depth of grief, but no decisive break with sin, no determined putting away of sin. The repentant sinner is not only sorry about sin, but by the grace of God he does something about it. He makes a clean break with it. We may reflect that true repentance is such an uncomfortable experience that sinners naturally shun it. They will adopt all kinds of subterfuges to hide from themselves and from others their need of it, and they will engage in all manner of activities in substitution for it. (L. Morris)

Sorrow for wrong-doing, which leaves God out of account, is merely remorse, that melancholy compound of self-pity and self-disgust. So far from healing and uplifting, remorse depresses and embitters. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 7:9 At the present time (temporal; now) I am full of inner happiness (χαίρω, PAI1S, Descriptive), not (neg. adv.) because (causal) you were grieved (λυπέω, API2P, Constative), but (contrast) because (causal) you were grieved (λυπέω, API2P, Constative) to the point of turning from your sins (Adv. Acc.; changing your minds), for (explanatory) you were grieved (λυπέω, API2P, Constative) according to the purpose of God (Acc. Purpose; divine norms and standards), so that (result) you might in no way (Dat. Spec.) be disciplined (ζημιόω, APSubj.2P, Culminative, Potential; punished) by us (Abl. Source).

Greek Text

νῦν χαίρω, οὐχ ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε εἰς μετάνοιαν· ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν, ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

nunc gaudeo non quia contristati estis sed quia contristati estis ad paenitentiam contristati enim estis secundum Deum ut in nullo detrimentum patiamini ex nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 7:10 For grief that originates from the purpose of God always brings about a turning from one's sins, free from regret, with a result of spiritual deliverance, but grief from the world system always produces spiritual death.

KW 2 Cor. 7:10 For the grief which is according to the will of God achieves a repentance which leads to salvation, a repentance which has no regret. But the grief which is exercised by the world in its outworking results in death.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul elaborates on the topic of grief, contrasting divine discipline from God with punishment from the world. Divine discipline always (Gnomic Present tense) brings about repentance with a definite end result – spiritual deliverance. The whole purpose of discipline from the Lord is to encourage you to change your ways and get back in line with divine protocol. He will continue to apply just the right amount of pressure on just the right weaknesses in your life to “encourage” you to change your thoughts and behavior. When God does this, you can be sure the end results will occur.

When humans are not called upon to administer punishment, the repenting believer is disciplined in isolation by God and therefore has no regrets, neither for the desired outcome the Lord is working out in his life, nor animosity towards the human used to administer the discipline. When the world (satan’s system on earth) administers punishment, it is usually generic (laws of the land, jurisprudence) and restrictive (jail, prison, capital punishment) and has no capability of bringing any spiritual benefits. It may restrain the offender from committing the behavior again (if criminal), but it doesn’t impart spiritual growth. Behavioral change is not equivalent to spiritual growth; unbelievers can change their behavior, but still remain unbelievers.

The world also administers grief (punishment) to Christians that is not related to criminality. For instance, if you make poor investment decisions, and lose your life’s savings, the world administers the grief of poverty rather mercilessly. There is no escape from the consequences of bad decisions. If God administers the discipline in this example, he will know exactly “where to get you” to make sure you fully realize the errors of your way. Eventually, He will get you to repent and change the direction of your life for the better. The world, however, only takes your money away from you and leaves you in despair; and it’s always possible that you will do the same thing all over again.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is necessary to bear in mind that men may be sorry for entirely the wrong reasons. Sorrow is not always “godly” sorrow. It may be a remorse which is only a form of self-commiseration when it is discovered that things have not worked out as expected. This is not godly sorrow for sin, but disappointment over failure where one had anticipated success. Such forms of repentance accomplish nothing towards the reformation of character; they only bear witness to the crumbling of false hopes. (A. Custance)

The recovery of the carnal Christian requires that he repent. Elsewhere (1 John 1:9) this repentance is called confession. While some say that Christians do not need to confess, that God takes no notice of our sins because they are buried in the sea of forgetfulness, the Bible speaks otherwise. There are two kinds of forgiveness in the New Testament. One pertains to our eternal salvation (justification by faith), the other to our temporal fellowship with the Father. The forgiveness related to restoration of fellowship is parallel

in thought with the cleansing of the feet of the already bathed, regenerate man. The repentance here is the repentance of Christians in confessing their sin. A regenerate man can get into such a psychological and spiritual state that he is hardened; his perspective cannot be renewed and, as a result, he cannot confess his sin or repent. This is not a renewal to salvation from sin's penalty, hell, but a salvation from sin's power. The renewal is a restoration to the state of mind that feels regret and sorrow for sin. The salvation here is equivalent to sanctification, moral victory, deliverance from sin's power. The godly sorrow is a renewal that produces earnestness, eagerness to clear yourself, alarm over sin, and readiness to see justice done. When that state of mind is achieved, a man can repent, change his mind about sin, and confess it. (J. Dillow)

Paul contrasts godly grief with worldly grief. The difference between godly grief and worldly grief is that the first issues in repentance while the second ends with remorse. (C. Kruse) All sorrow, whether it be due to disappointment, affliction, bereavement, or sin, is deadly in its operation so long as it remains unsanctified. In itself sorrow has no healing power. Godly sorrow alone is remedial. (R.V.G. Tasker) The natural element of holiness is happiness; misery is the natural element of sin. They stand severally in the relation both of cause and effect. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 7:10 **For** (explanatory) **grief** (Subj. Nom.; divine discipline) **that** (Dat. Ref.) **originates from the purpose of God** (Acc. Purpose) **always brings about** (ἐργάζομαι, PMI3S, Gnostic, Deponent; operates under the auspices of) **a turning from one's sins** (Adv. Acc.; repentance), **free from regret** (Acc. Attendant Circumstances), **with a result of spiritual deliverance** (Acc. Result; experiential sanctification), **but** (adversative, contrast) **grief** (Subj. Nom.; punishment) **from the world system** (Abl. Source; satan's *cosmos diabolicus*) **always produces** (κατεργάζομαι, PMI3S, Gnostic, Deponent) **spiritual death** (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται.

Latin Vulgate

quae enim secundum Deum tristitia est paenitentiam in salutem stabilem operatur saeculi autem tristitia mortem operatur

LWB 2 Cor. 7:11 **As a matter of fact, here is a perfect example. While you were being disciplined according to the purpose of God, how much diligent effort did it eventually produce in you? Certainly an eagerness to remedy the situation, and not only this but agony over the enormity of your sin, and not only this but respect for**

the administration of divine discipline, and not only this but a longing for the return of peace, and not only this but a zeal for producing fruit, and not only this but humble submission to divine judgment. In every conceivable way you proved yourselves to be uncontaminated with reference to the affair.

KW 2 Cor. 7:11 For, look. This very same thing, this being made to grieve in accordance with God's will, to what extent it produced earnestness in you, yes, verbal defense of yourselves, in fact, indignation, yes, fear, in fact, longing, yes, zeal, in fact, the meting out of disciplinary punishment. In everything you showed yourselves to be immaculate in the aforementioned matter. [They had cleared themselves from the guilt of connivance with the case of incest by disciplining the guilty brother.]

KJV 2 Cor. 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In case they aren't getting his point, Paul has a perfect example drawn from their immediate past. He asks them just how much diligent effort they exerted to confess their sins and change their behavior (Constative Aorist tense) when divine discipline did its work upon them. The Dramatic Aorist tense says the discipline was indeed serious and was not related to a small, insignificant matter. Paul then lists the various things they actually did to begin taking responsibility for their actions. He uses a repetitive, copulative conjunction ("And not only this but also") to connect the various efforts they made to avoid God's further indictment upon them.

Paul uses a series of Greek words that ironically have both positive and negative connotations depending on context. The Corinthians, therefore, are able to apply both meanings of the word simultaneously – positive meanings related to discipline from God, and negative meanings related to punishment from the world. Note the contrasts:

| <u>Yielding to God's discipline</u> | <u>Reaction to the world's punishment</u> |
|--|--|
| Eager to remedy the situation (apology) | Eager to make excuses (implacability) |
| Agony over their sin (brokenhearted) | Self-righteous arrogance (indignation) |
| Respect for divine discipline (awestruck) | Fear of the consequences (avoidance) |
| Longing for peace (restored fellowship) | Longing for discipline to stop (irritation) |
| A zeal for producing fruit (motivation) | Envy for those not disciplined (jealousy) |
| Submission to divine justice (humility) | Seeks revenge on others (vindictiveness) |

The Corinthians immediately confessed their sin and remedied the matter surrounding incest in their assembly. All of their responses to God's divine discipline were positively motivated, as opposed to the reactions most people would have when the world administers punishment. In case he forgot something they did to assume responsibility for

their actions, Paul uses the Dramatic Aorist tense to portray them as exhibiting themselves (as if courtroom evidence) to be completely uncontaminated by the problem.

Is this how the world would react today to the discovery of an incestuous relationship in their midst? Most people would shake their head, including Christians, but few would think it a serious problem. After all, “we have known these individuals for years; they are quite popular by society’s standards.” You can almost hear arguments that the two persons in incest “weren’t harming anybody but themselves,” and that “we should be tolerant of different lifestyles even if they don’t agree with ours.” The world would attempt to escape responsibility by using “every conceivable means” available to their imaginations, while the Corinthians used “every conceivable means” (Instrumental Means) to ensure they remained uncontaminated by the matter at hand.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We have here the repetition of the words “and not only this but” to increase the effects and results of true godly sorrow for sin. This is an “anaphora” or repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses, thus adding weight and emphasis to statements and arguments by calling special attention to them. (E.W. Bullinger)

Instead of indifference there was an eagerness on their part to clear themselves of the guilt in which they were involved; indignation at the shame it had brought upon them; fear of the divine wrath to which they had become exposed; a vehement desire to see their apostle again; a zeal to promote his honour; and a readiness to mete out to the offender the punishment he deserved. (R.V.G. Tasker) Where the heart (mind) is changed, the life and actions will be changed, too. (M. Henry)

2 Cor. 7:11 As a matter of fact (explanatory conj. introducing an idiom), here is (particle) a perfect (Descr. Nom.; exact) example (Pred. Nom.; thing). While you were being disciplined (λυπέω, APInf., Dramatic, Contemporaneous Time, Articular; grieved) according to the purpose of God (Acc. Purpose), how much (interrogative) diligent effort (Acc. Dir. Obj.; immediately confessed their sins) did it eventually produce (κατεργάζομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; accomplish) in you (Loc. Sph.)? Certainly (affirmative) an eagerness to remedy the situation (Adv. Acc.; apology), and not only this but (ascensive) agony over the enormity of your sin (Adv. Acc.; contrite, brokenhearted, revised norms & standards), and not only this but (ascensive) profound respect for the administration of divine discipline (Adv. Acc.; awestruck by the enormity of their error), and not only this but (ascensive) longing for a return to peace (Adv. Acc.; restored fellowship), and not only this but (ascensive) a zeal for producing fruit (Adv. Acc.; positive

motivation), **and not only this but** (ascensive) **humble submission to divine judgment** (Adv. Acc.; genuine humility, divine viewpoint). **By every conceivable means** (Instr. Means) **you proved** (συνίστημι, AAI2P, Dramatic; exhibited) **yourselves** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **to be** (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) **uncontaminated** (Pred. Acc.; cleansed, pure) **with reference to the affair** (Dat. Ref.; the matter of incest in the church).

Greek Text

ἰδοὺ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι πόσῃν κατειργάσατο ὑμῖν σπουδῆν, ἀλλὰ ἀπολογίαν, ἀλλὰ ἀγανάκτησιν, ἀλλὰ φόβον, ἀλλὰ ἐπιπόθησιν, ἀλλὰ ζῆλον, ἀλλὰ ἐκδίκησιν. ἐν παντὶ συνεστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς ἀγνοῦς εἶναι τῷ πράγματι.

Latin Vulgate

ecce enim hoc ipsum secundum Deum contristari vos quantam in vobis operatur sollicitudinem sed defensionem sed indignationem sed timorem sed desiderium sed aemulationem sed vindictam in omnibus exhibuistis vos incontaminatos esse negotio

LWB 2 Cor. 7:12 Consequently, even though I wrote to you, *I wrote* not for the sake of the person who was guilty of causing harm, nor for the person who received harm, but for the sake of our diligent effort which has been made evident on your behalf in the presence of God.

KW 2 Cor. 7:12 Therefore also I wrote to you, not on account of the one who committed the wrong [the incestuous son] nor even on account of the one who was wronged [his father], but that your earnestness which was on our behalf might be openly shown among you in the sight of God.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Using the Epistolary Aorist tense, Paul says he wrote to the Corinthians because of his zeal for them, not because there was a man caught in incest who needed correction, nor because there were others that were caught up in his sin who were also injured by his illicit behavior. The Constative Aorist tense affirms that the man was indeed guilty of causing harm, and that there were indeed others who were harmed by his actions. But in

Paul's mind, these were secondary reasons. His primary reason for writing was for the Corinthians as a whole, for those he had led to the Lord on a previous visit to Corinth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In all probability Paul is speaking here about his rebuke to the church in 1 Corinthians 5:1-3 for allowing a case of incest to go unjudged ... which the Corinthians have now apparently dealt with as Paul desired. (Absolutely Free, Zane Hodges, 1989, Zondervan Publishing)

What is said in 1 Corinthians 5 is perfectly consistent with the assumption that the father of the offender (his son) was still alive. (C. Hodge)

Paul says that his letter was sent as a sort of test or trial balloon to see how the Corinthians would respond. He was testing their earnestness before God. (B. Witherington, III) Like the Corinthians, we must ever see our actions from a divine perspective. When believers perform their works and are aware of God's sacred presence, then their zeal is genuine, their attitude praiseworthy, and their unity secure. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 7:12 Consequently (inferential), even (ascensive) though (superordinate) I wrote (γράφω, AAIIS, Epistolary) to you (Dat. Adv.), I wrote (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) for the sake of (Improper prep.) the person (Gen. Adv.; the incestuous son) who was guilty of causing harm (ἀδικέω, AAPtc.GMS, Constative, Substantival), nor (neg. adv.) for the sake of (Improper prep.) the person (Gen. Adv.; his father) who received harm (ἀδικέω, APpTc.GMS, Constative, Substantival), but (contrast) for the sake of (Improper prep.) our (Gen. Poss.) diligent effort (Acc. Dir. Obj.; zeal) which has been made evident (φανερῶ, APInf., Constative, Result, Articular) on your (Poss. Gen.) behalf (Acc. Adv.) in the presence of God (Prep. Gen.).

Greek Text

ἄρα εἰ καὶ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, οὐχ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος ἀλλ' ἕνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

igitur et si scripsi vobis non propter eum qui fecit iniuriam nec propter eum qui passus est sed ad manifestandam sollicitudinem nostram quam pro vobis habemus ad vos coram Deo

LWB 2 Cor. 7:13 For this reason, we have been encouraged in the past and we will continue to be encouraged in the future. Moreover, in addition to this, we received all the more inner happiness due to our ever increasing abundance of encouragement corresponding to the inner happiness of Titus, because his human spirit was refreshed in the past and continues to be refreshed by all of you.

KW 2 Cor. 7:13 On this account we have been encouraged and comforted. And in addition to this encouragement and comfort of ours we rejoiced the more exceedingly at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you,

KJV 2 Cor. 7:13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts out by saying “for this reason,” because the true source of his encouragement (Intensive Perfect tense) was due to the Corinthians and their response to his letter, rather than to the isolated case of the man caught in incest. He uses a number of superlatives to show several levels of inner happiness he received related to this issue. His first “dose” of inner happiness came merely from the fact that he did what he thought he should do (write a corrective letter) because he cared for the wellbeing and spiritual growth of the Corinthians. If they had not received his letter with the proper motivation, he would have still retained this small level of encouragement. He received a second dose of inner happiness when he received his good report from Titus on how they had accepted his letter in the proper mental framework and did all they could to adhere to his advice. He then received a super-abundant amount of both encouragement and inner happiness when he heard that they treated his friend and colleague, Titus, with open arms. They had not behaved that way towards Timothy or himself in the past.

Paul used the Dramatic Aorist tense to assist his “pile up” of superlatives in communicating (beyond any shadow of a doubt) the almost ecstatic level of inner happiness he was experiencing due to the encouraging news he received about them. He also used the Intensive Perfect tense to describe the height and depth of refreshment they gave to Titus. Essentially, Paul is expressing his ever-growing happiness, from one level to another, due solely to their positive volition.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Perhaps the first major task Titus faced was to settle the problems in Corinth. Because Paul himself had been unsuccessful in Corinth, the achievement of Titus takes on impressive proportions. By God’s grace he had done more than Paul and Timothy combined. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 7:13 For this reason (Dat. Ind. Obj.; because his emphasis was on the Corinthians as a whole and not an isolated few), we have been encouraged in the past and we will continue to be encouraged in the future (παρακαλέω, Perf.PI1P, Intensive). Moreover (continuative), in addition to (Dat. Measure) this (Dat. Ind. Obj.; level of encouragement), we received all the more (Comparative Adv.) inner happiness (χαίρω, API1P, Dramatic) due to our (Poss. Gen.) ever increasing abundance of (Comparative Adv.; super) encouragement (Dat. Ind. Obj.) corresponding to (in proportion to, correlated with) the inner happiness (Dat. Ref.) of Titus (Poss. Gen.), because (causal) his (Poss. Gen.) human spirit (Subj. Nom.) was refreshed in the past and continues to be refreshed (ἀναπαύω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive) by all (Gen. Spec.) of you (Abl. Means).

Greek Text

διὰ τοῦτο παρακεκλήμεθα. Ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ παρακλήσει ἡμῶν περισσοτέρως μᾶλλον ἐχάρημεν ἐπὶ τῇ χαρᾷ Τίτου, ὅτι ἀναπέπαυται τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

ideo consolati sumus in consolatione autem nostra abundantius magis gavisi sumus super gaudium Titi quia refectus est spiritus eius ab omnibus vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 7:14 For if I said something boastful to him concerning you, I have not been disappointed, not only because we communicated all categories of things in truth to you, but in the same manner, our boasting before Titus also came true.

KW 2 Cor. 7:14 For if, as is the case, I have boasted to him about you, I was not caused any disappointment, but as all things in the sphere of truth we spoke to you, thus also our boasting before Titus turned out to be truth.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Dramatic Perfect tense to say he boasted about the Corinthians to Titus in the past, and he used the Culminative Aorist tense to conclude that in the end, his boasting about them was not in vain. He was not disappointed for two reasons. He was not disappointed because he had faithfully taught them (Constative Aorist tense) every

category of Bible doctrine he knew. And in the same manner, he was not disappointed because his boasting (although somewhat premature) about the Corinthians in the end (Culminative Aorist tense) happened to come true. In both cases, Paul was vindicated. Humanly speaking, the final score could have been different. The possibility existed for Paul to be so offended by the Corinthians as to abandon his faithfulness to his ministry (0-2), or for Paul to be faithful to his ministry but the Corinthians ignore him (1-1); but both parties were faithful (2-0).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The crucial role knowledge (truth) plays comes through in Paul's numerous descriptions of his apostolic work – essentially he imparts knowledge or declares truth wherever he goes. (R. Banks)

2 Cor. 7:14 For (inferential) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he did") I said something (Acc. Dir. Obj.) boastful (καυχάομαι, Perf.MI1S, Dramatic, Deponent) to him (Dat. Ind. Obj.; Titus) concerning you (Obj. Gen.), I have not (neg. adv.) been disappointed (καταισχύνω, API1S, Culminative), not only (neg. adv.) because (causal) we communicated (λαλέω, AAI1P, Constative) all categories of things (Acc. Spec.; Bible doctrines) in truth (Loc. Sph.; with right motives) to you (Dat. Adv.), but in the same manner (contrast & comparison), our (Poss. Gen.) boasting (Subj. Nom.) before Titus (Prep. Gen.) also (adjunctive) came (γίνομαι, AMI3S, Culminative, Deponent; happened to be) true (Pred. Nom.).

Greek Text

ὅτι εἴ τι αὐτῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κεκαύχημαι, οὐ καταισχύνην, ἀλλ' ὡς πάντα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐλαλήσαμεν ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν ἢ ἐπὶ Τίτου ἀλήθεια ἐγενήθη.

Latin Vulgate

et si quid apud illum de vobis gloriatus sum non sum confusus sed sicut omnia vobis in veritate locuti sumus ita et gloriatio nostra quae fuit ad Titum veritas facta est

LWB 2 Cor. 7:15 As a matter of fact, his affections for you are all the more abundant whenever he remembers the obedience of you all, how with profound respect and trembling you welcomed him.

KW 2 Cor. 7:15 And his heart is more abundantly toward you while he recalls to himself the obedience of you all, as with fear and trembling you received him.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:15 And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Corinthians actually “grew” on Titus after his arrival in Corinth. No matter where he happens to be ministering, whenever he recalls their treatment of him (Customary Present tense) his affections for them are renewed afresh. When he arrived in Corinth, they had profound respect for his spiritual authority. Titus was a person to be reckoned with. They were also quite afraid of the discipline he was going to inflict on them for their inaction in the incest affair. They may have pushed wimpy Timothy around, but they welcomed (Dramatic Aorist tense) Titus by obeying everything he told them to do. Titus had a commanding personality. Paul could always trust him to set things straight and get the job done.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The words “fear and trembling” are not the fear and trembling of alarm, but rather the apprehension of attempting to do the best one is able to accomplish. (S. Kistemaker) As sin occasions general grief, so repentance and reformation occasion general joy. (M. Henry)

2 Cor. 7:15 As a matter of fact (continative), his (Poss. Gen.) affections (Subj. Nom.; inner emotions) for you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) are (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive) all the more abundant (Comparative; pronounced, evident) whenever he remembers (ἀναμνησκω, PPpTc.GMS, Customary, Temporal; recalls) the obedience (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of you (Poss. Gen.) all (Gen. Spec.), how (introducing discourse) with profound respect (Gen. Attend. Circumstances; for his authority) and (connective) trembling (Gen. Attend. Circumstances; fear of discipline) you welcomed (δέχομαι, AMI2P, Dramatic, Deponent) him (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

καὶ τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐστὶν ἀναμνησκομένου τὴν πάντων ὑμῶν ὑπακοήν, ὡς μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἐδέξασθε αὐτόν.

Latin Vulgate

et viscera eius abundantius in vos sunt reminiscentis
omnium vestrum oboedientiam quomodo cum timore et
tremore excepistis eum

LWB 2 Cor. 7:16 I am happy that I have confidence in you in every respect.

KW 2 Cor. 7:16 I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you.

KJV 2 Cor. 7:16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Descriptive Present tense to tell the Corinthians how happy he is to be confident (Customary Present tense) in them. He adds to this reassuring thought by not limiting his confidence to just one instance, but in every respect. This is his way of returning encouragement to those who have given him so much encouragement.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was able to speak freely and boldly to them, reprove, admonish, and advise them,, and they took it all in good part, as he designed it. So now he can confidently speak in their favour, and boast in their love and obedience, which was found upon trial and by experience to be the truth. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 7:16 I am happy (χαίρω, PAI1S, Descriptive) that (introductory) I have confidence (θαρρέω, PAI1S, Customary) in you (Loc. Sph.) in every respect (Dat. Ref.).

Greek Text

χαίρω ὅτι ἐν παντὶ θαρρῶ ἐν ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

gaudeo quod in omnibus confido in vobis

Chapter 8

LWB 2 Cor. 8:1 Now we are going to disclose to you, brethren, the grace of God which was brought about in the past and continues to be bestowed among the assemblies of Macedonia,

KW 2 Cor. 8:1 Moreover, we make known to you, brethren, the grace of God which has been given among the churches of Macedonia,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul changes direction in his letter by using the transitional (temporal) particle “now.” He is going to tell them about the grace of God that has (Dramatic Perfect tense) been poured out upon many assemblies in the region of Macedonia. Wherever Paul goes, he tells everyone about the Corinthians; so now Paul is going to tell the Corinthians about the Macedonians.

Chapter 8 of Second Corinthians is full of anacoluthons. Where I have met anacoluthon in 2 Corinthians, especially in this chapter, I have noted them in parenthesis as an “ellipsis” and have completed the contextual sentence flow accordingly. See the relevant opinion on anacoluthons by A.T. Robertson for details.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

An anacoluthon is a more violent break in the connection of sentences than a parenthesis. This is merely the failure to complete a sentence as intended when it was begun. The completion does not follow grammatically from the beginning. The N.T. writers are not peculiar in this matter, since even in an artistic orator like Isocrates or an historian like Thucydides such grammatical blemishes, if they be so considered, are found. It is just in writers of the greatest mental activity and vehemence of spirit that we meet most instances of anacoluthon. Hence a man with the passion of Paul naturally breaks away from formal rules in the structure of the sentence when he is greatly stirred, as in Galatians and 2 Corinthians. Such violent changes in the sentence are common in conversation and public addresses. The dialogues of Plato have many examples. The anacoluthon may be therefore either intentional or unintentional. The writer may be led off by a fresh idea or by a parenthesis, or he may think of a better way of finishing his sentence, one that will be more effective. The very jolt that is given by the anacoluthon is often successful in making more emphasis. The attention is drawn anew to the sentence to see what is the matter. Types of anacoluthon are the suspended subject, the digression, the participle in anacoluthon, and the asyndeton due to the absence of conjunctions. (A.T. Robertson)

The liberality of the Macedonians was not of themselves, but of God’s grace bestowed on them, whereby they became instruments of “grace” to others. (R. Jamieson) By making God the implied agent for the giving of grace, Paul skillfully avoids arousing intense competition between the churches in Macedonia and in Corinth. Yet he stirs them to action. (S. Kistemaker)

Paul refers in the text to a plurality of Macedonian churches. Macedonia was the province through which the Via Egnatia ran, linking the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire with Rome itself. Two of the main cities that Paul visited, Philippi and

Thessalonica, were on this strategic road, and three of Paul's letters are addressed to churches that Paul founded in these cities. Very likely, therefore, these are the Macedonian churches to which Paul refers here. (J. Scott)

2 Cor. 8:1 Now (transitional) we are going to disclose (γνωρίζω, PAIIP, Static; make known) to you (Dat. Adv.), brethren (Voc. Address), the grace (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of God (Poss. Gen.) which was brought about in the past and continues to be bestowed (δίδωμι, Perf.PPtc.AFS, Dramatic, Attributive) among the assemblies (Loc. Place) of Macedonia (Gen. Place),

Greek Text

Γνωρίζομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δεδομένην ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Μακεδονίας,

Latin Vulgate

notam autem facimus vobis fratres gratiam Dei quae data est in ecclesiis Macedoniae

LWB 2 Cor. 8:2 Since during a great test of outside pressure, the superabundance of their inner happiness (and to the same extent their extreme poverty) multiplied into a wealth of personal, singlehearted devotion [generous grace giving],

KW 2 Cor. 8:2 That in the midst of a severe testing which was in the form of afflictions, the test being for the purpose of approving them in their reaction to trials, the superabundance of their joy and their poverty which went down to the depths, superabounded with the result of the plenitude of their liberality;

KJV 2 Cor. 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Macedonians went through a time of great testing in which outside pressure was brought upon them. During this time of pressure, they correctly applied the divine problem solving devices taught them by Paul, which produced a profound state of inner happiness in the midst of their pressure. And to top it off, their test was undergone while they were also in a state of poverty (Latin: paupers), not a state of plenty such as existed with the Corinthians. In other words, money wasn't the answer to their problems. They were happy though broke, and their ability to give to others in spite of their being poor was most honorable. Their happiness in the midst of pressure (what a paradox!) eventually (Culminative Aorist tense) multiplied into a wealth of sacrificial giving to less fortunate believers. Paul added an unusual use of a personal pronoun to point to the

“personal” devotion of each Macedonian, as opposed to a “corporate” view of devotion that might not have included the majority of citizens.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Lest we think that the gift of giving is the prerogative of the rich, let us put in perspective the setting here. Paul is using the Macedonian believers as an illustration of the grace of giving out of “deep poverty.” They were not a “rich man’s club;” they were poverty stricken believers in Christ. (Gifts of the Spirit, Ronald E. Baxter, 1983, Kregel Publications)

This collection was for the Christians at Jerusalem, who through war, famine, and persecution, had become poor. (M. Henry) The whole of Greece, except the Roman colonies of Patrae and Corinth, was in a dire condition of poverty and distress at this period. So the contribution of the Macedonian Christians was really comparable to the giving of the widow’s mite in Mark 12:44. (R. Nicoll)

For Paul, “joy” (inner happiness) is not just a happy mood; it is the saving gift from God, part of the new creation, and brought on through the Holy Spirit. (B. Witherington, III) Now for persons in prosperity, when all things go well with them, to be liberal in giving is no such great matter; but for persons in adversity, under trying dispensations of Providence, amidst many afflictive ones to communicate generously to the relief of others, is something very remarkable, and worthy of notice and imitation, which was the case with these churches. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 8:2 since (introductive) during a great (Dat. Measure) test (Loc. Time; trial) of outside pressure (Adv. Gen. Ref.), the superabundance (Subj. Nom.) of their (Poss. Gen.) inner happiness (Adv. Gen. Ref.) (and (connective) to the same extent (prep.) their (Poss. Gen.) extreme (Gen. Measure; deep) poverty (Subj. Nom.)) multiplied (περισσεύω, AAI3S, Culminative; superabounded) into a wealth (Acc. Measure) of personal (Poss. Gen.; individual), singlehearted devotion (Obj. Gen.; generous grace giving),

Greek Text

ὅτι ἐν πολλῇ δοκιμῇ θλίψεως ἢ περισσεΐα τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ κατὰ βάθους πτωχεία αὐτῶν ἐπέρισσευσεν εἰς τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτῶν·

Latin Vulgate

quod in multo experimento tribulationis abundantia gaudii ipsorum et altissima paupertas eorum abundavit in divitias simplicitatis eorum

LWB 2 Cor. 8:3 For according to *their* ability, I will confirm, even beyond *their* ability, *this was of their own accord*,

KW 2 Cor. 8:3 Because in the measure of their ability, I testify, and beyond their ability, voluntarily,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is highly elliptical in this verse, omitting all personal pronouns (their) and the last verb (this was); they must be supplied by the context to “smooth out” the translation into English. He uses the Futuristic Present tense not to point to the distant future, but to say: “If you think this account of the Macedonians sounds suspect, just ask me to verify it. I personally will testify that it is the truth. I was there, I saw it myself.” So if someone asks this question in the future, he will answer it accordingly.

The phrase “according to their ability” means they were motivated to learn God’s truth according to their own ability. The phrase “beyond their ability” points to the necessity of God the Holy Spirit assisting in this process of metabolizing doctrine. In any case, the initial desire (personal motivation) came from themselves (of their own accord), not “dropped down from heaven” upon their heads. They pursued their course of experiential sanctification voluntarily.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Grace giving can be summarized in six points: (1) no point system with God, (2) no gimmicks, (3) no human pressure, (4) no approbation lust, (5) based on your own free will in the privacy of your priesthood, and (6) sacrificially. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

“Beyond one’s means” is found in the context of a man’s complaint against his wife for whom he has provided beyond what his means really allowed. So Paul says of the Macedonians that they have contributed to the collection for the poor in a way that was over and above anything that could be expected, given their situation. (C. Kruse)

Paul commends this grace giving under high pressure collection because of the emergency. The Romans had lacerated Macedonia, so they were quite poor. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 8:3 **For** (explanatory) **according to their** (ellipsis) **ability** (Adv. Acc.; personal motivation), **I will confirm** (μαρτυρέω, PAI1S, Futuristic; testify), **even** (ascensive) **beyond** (contrary to) **their** (ellipsis) **ability** (Adv. Acc.; divine assistance provided), **this** (singlehearted devotion,

generous giving, course of action) **was** (ellipsis) **of their own accord** (Pred. Nom.; voluntarily, no coercion),

Greek Text

ὅτι κατὰ δύναμιν, μαρτυρῶ, καὶ παρὰ δύναμιν, ἀθθαίρετοι

Latin Vulgate

quia secundum virtutem testimonium illis reddo et supra virtutem voluntarii fuerunt

LWB 2 Cor. 8:4 Imploring us most insistently concerning a grace gift, even a partnership with reference to a contribution for the saints,

KW 2 Cor. 8:4 With much exhortation they begged us as a favor that they might participate in the ministry to the saints,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Dramatic Present tense to portray the Macedonians as literally begging him to allow them to give a gracious (monetary) gift to their fellow Christians in Jerusalem. There was no penny-pinching going on in Macedonia. He adds the superlative “great” or “plentiful” to point to their request as being all the more dramatic. Paul could hardly refuse such an insistent offer to render help. This was no so-called “tithing” effort either; it was a grace gift from grace oriented believers. The Macedonians did not want to be left out. They wanted to be partners in assisting fellow believers in Jerusalem. If Philippians 4:10,15,16 limit Paul’s support to the Philippians, we may replace his reference to the Macedonians to the assemblies around Philippi.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Liberation theology (socialism by another name) tries to effect in society by means of a committed struggle against domineering power (the redistribution of wealth) what has already been demonstrated in the primitive church and repeatedly throughout history. Christians have practiced a spontaneous generosity with relation to giving, however, not a forced political solution. Without struggle or coercion, Christians relinquished their possessions for the benefit of the poor and needy. The explanation for such unusual expressions of self-less love can be found only in the pouring out of the Spirit of God. It cannot be lost on the careful reader that the reality of the Holy Spirit and His power is scarcely to be found in the writings of liberation theologians or among the pronouncements of the World Council of Churches ... a socialist and communist organization. The motivation to give to a destitute member of the church is spiritual, the

love of God abiding in the Christian's heart, not a political activist organization intent on overthrowing the status quo. (Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization, D.A. Carson, 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Paul means that they earnestly besought him as a favor that they might have a share in ministering to the poor saints. (M. Vincent) Paul anticipates great creativity from and ascribes great significance to the endeavor of human wills. Corinthian zeal to participate in Paul's collection stirs up Macedonian eagerness to give, and their liberality becomes a spur to greater Corinthian generosity, all of which overflows in supplying human needs in places and in prompting many thanksgivings to God. (B. Ware)

The name "diakonoi" was always used in the general sense of servant, to designate those who were engaged in works of mercy and charity. In Acts 6 the seven men mentioned there were charged with the task of distributing properly the gifts that were brought for the "agapae," a ministry that is elsewhere (here) more particularly described by the word "diakonoi." (L. Berkof)

2 Cor. 8:4 imploring (δέομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Dramatic, Modal, Deponent; begging) us (Gen. Adv.) most (Gen. Measure; great) insistently (Abl. Means) concerning a grace gift (Acc. Gen. Ref.), even (ascensive) a partnership (Adv. Acc.) with reference to a contribution (Adv. Gen. Ref.; financial ministry) for the saints (Acc. Purpose),

Greek Text

μετὰ πολλῆς παρακλήσεως δεόμενοι ἡμῶν τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους,

Latin Vulgate

cum multa exhortatione obsecrantes nos gratiam et communicationem ministerii quod fit in sanctos

LWB 2 Cor. 8:5 **And not to the degree that we had anticipated, but first they entrusted themselves to the Lord, and then by means of God's will to us,**

KW 2 Cor. 8:5 **And not even as we expected but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us by the will of God,**

KJV 2 Cor. 8:5 **And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.**

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses an Adverb of Degree to add that the Macedonians gave them a grace gift for their fellow believers in Jerusalem that was far beyond what Paul had ever expected or hoped for. Why did they do this? They prayed to the Lord (Constative Aorist tense) for guidance in the matter, asking Him what they should do, and the amount the Lord led them to give was quite substantial. Only after consulting the Lord in prayer did they begin taking a collection, and only after consulting the Lord did they turn it over to the apostle for delivery to Jerusalem. They trusted God to tell them “how much,” and trusted Paul and his colleagues to deliver the sum to the appropriate recipients.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the Greek, “gave” is “edokan,” first aorist, indicative, active of “didomi,” meaning “to give;” the same word is used in Romans 12:8 for the “gift of giving.” There are many examples of the “gift of giving” in Scripture, defined as the special ability God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to contribute their material resources to the work of the Lord with liberality and cheerfulness. (Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow, C. Peter Wagner, 1979, Regal Books)

2 Cor. 8:5 and (continuative) not (neg. adv.) to the degree that (Adv. Degree) we had anticipated (ἐλπίζω, AAI1P, Constative; more than expected), but (adversative) first (ordinal; most important) they entrusted (δίδωμι, AAI3P, Constative; gave themselves to prayer) themselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to the Lord (Dat. Ind. Obj.; divine guidance), and then (continuative) by means of God’s (Poss. Gen.) will (Abl. Means; design, delegated authority) to us (Dat. Adv.),

Greek Text

καὶ οὐ καθὼς ἠλπίσαμεν ἀλλ’ ἑαυτοὺς ἔδωκαν πρῶτον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν
διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ

Latin Vulgate

et non sicut speravimus sed semet ipsos dederunt primum
Domino deinde nobis per voluntatem Dei

LWB 2 Cor. 8:6 With the result that we ourselves appealed to Titus, so that to the degree that he had begun beforehand, he might in the same way also bring to fruition among you this grace gift as well.

KW 2 Cor. 8:6 With the result that we exhorted Titus that, even as he made a beginning on a previous occasion, thus also he would complete in your this grace also.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul used the Dramatic Aorist tense to point out to the Corinthians the great lengths they went to to contact Titus and ask him, essentially, to perform the same type of miracle in Corinth with regards to collecting for the poor in Jerusalem as he did when he straightened out their corrupt affairs. I would imagine that Paul was reluctant to persuade Titus into asking such a carnal bunch of believers to donate a grace gift to their fellow believers in Jerusalem. But his success in Macedonia was so profound, and his report from Titus about the Corinthians so positive, that he did it anyway!

Paul used the Ingressive Aorist tense (blending and overlapping a final and consecutive clause) to confirm that Titus had started a good work in Corinth during his prior visit, and that it brought forth much fruit. The Corinthians cleaned up their act and set things straight. They obeyed Titus in every command and resumed their forward momentum in the spiritual life. Paul wants to subsequently “leverage” on the prior successes of Titus and have him complete (Culminative Aorist tense) the work he had previously begun there. Paul’s standard for measuring that completion would be the result that Titus persuaded the Corinthians to donate a substantial grace gift for their fellow believers in Jerusalem, just like the Macedonians did.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul’s calling on Titus is an instance of wisdom to use proper instruments in a work we desire to do well; and the work of charity will often succeed the best when the most proper persons are employed to solicit contributions and dispose of them. (M. Henry)

2 Cor. 8:6 With the result that (Result) we ourselves (Acc. Appos.; Paul and his travelling colleagues) appealed to (παρακαλέω, AAInf., Dramatic, Result, Articular; asked, contacted) Titus (Acc. Dir. Obj.), so that (Result) to the degree that (Adv. Degree) he had begun beforehand (προενάρχομαι, AMI3S, Ingressive, Deponent; getting such positive results from the Corinthians in so short a time), he might in the same way (Comp. Adv.) also (adjunctive) bring to fruition (ἐπιτελέω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; complete, set in motion) among you (Acc. Rel.) this (Acc. Spec.) grace gift (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as well (adjunctive).

Greek Text

εἰς τὸ παρακαλέσαι ἡμᾶς Τίτον, ἵνα καθὼς προειήρξατο οὕτως καὶ ἐπιτελέσῃ εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὴν χάριν ταύτην.

Latin Vulgate

ita ut rogaemus Titum ut quemadmodum coepit ita et perficiat in vos etiam gratiam istam

LWB 2 Cor. 8:7 Moreover, just as you continue to superabound in every manner: by faith-rest and by sharing the Word and by studying the Word and by every manner of diligent effort and by the virtue love from yourselves to us - superabound by this grace gift as well.

KW 2 Cor. 8:7 Moreover, even as in everything you superabound, in the realm of faith and a ready exposition [of the Word] and in knowledge, and in every earnestness, and in the divine and self-sacrificial love which, proceeding from you, has us as its object, in this grace [of giving] also be superabounding.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his complementary attitude toward the Corinthians by praising them for their continual progress (Durative Present tense) in the spiritual life. They are superabounding in many important areas of their spiritual walk. They are claiming the promises of God and maintaining a relaxed mental attitude (faith-rest), they are sharing the Word with others (functioning as Christ's ambassadors), they are studying the Word of God and learning from Paul (function of their priesthood), they are doing anything else that seems to be lacking among them in an eager (diligent) fashion, and they are exhibiting virtue love towards Paul and his companions.

After Paul lists the many accomplishments (reported to him by Titus) of the Corinthians since he last saw them, he then issues an Imperative of Command: superabound in the function of providing financial support to their fellow Christians in Jerusalem. It may be that he is pleading (Imperative of Entreaty) with them to accomplish this final act of grace orientation, rather than commanding them. In any case, he uses the Durative Present tense again to encourage them to continue their financial generosity on subsequent occasions. In other words, "You are doing great, more than I even expected, so keep up the good work!"

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When he would persuade the Corinthians to this good thing, he commends them for other good things that were found in them. Most people love to be complimented, especially when we ask a gift of them for ourselves or others; and it is a justice we owe to those in whom God's grace shines to give them their due commendation. (M. Henry)

The encouragement, collection, and transport of financial aid from the Gentile churches for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem was an important aspect of Paul's work. It had some similarities to the collection of the Temple tax. Both involved extensive itinerant activity, the creation of groups to oversee the collection and payment, and the acknowledgement of Jerusalem as a distinctive religious center. However, the Temple tax was compulsory, while Paul's collection was grace giving. (R. Banks)

“Sharing and studying Word” in both cases means doctrine, as it does in so many passages, especially in such cases as “word of truth,” “word of salvation,” “word of righteousness,” and “word of Christ.” The meaning, therefore, is either that they were enriched ... with doctrine and knowledge. “Logos” is the Christian truth as preached, “gnosis” that truth as apprehended or understood. In “diligence or earnestness” is meant a general term for the energy or vigour of their spiritual life, of which their love was one manifestation. (C. Hodge)

Yea, they abounded in the knowledge of doctrine, zeal for it, and thankfulness to God on account of it; inasmuch as they had a large measure of it, grew in it, were full of it, and were much in the exercise thereof. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 8:7 Moreover (continuative), just as (superordinate) you continue to superabound (περισσεύω, PAI2P, Durative; excel) in every manner (Loc. Sph.): by faith-rest (Instr. Means) and (connective) by sharing the Word (Instr. Means; ambassadorship function: teaching) and (connective) by studying the Word (Instr. Means; priesthood function: acquiring biblical knowledge) and (connective) by every manner of (Dat. Spec.) diligent effort (Instr. Means; eagerly doing whatever else needs to be done) and (connective) by the virtue love (Instr. Means) from yourselves (Abl. Source) to us (Dat. Adv.; Paul and his colleagues), continue to superabound (περισσεύω, PASubj.2P, Durative, Imperative Clause) by this (Dat. Spec.) grace gift (Instr. Means; financial contribution) as well (adjunctive).

Greek Text

ἀλλ' ὡς περ ἐν παντὶ περισσεύετε, πίστει καὶ λόγῳ καὶ γνώσει καὶ πάσῃ σπουδῇ καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ἀγάπῃ, ἵνα καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι περισσεύητε.

Latin Vulgate

sed sicut in omnibus abundatis fide et sermone et scientia et omni sollicitudine et caritate vestra in nos ut et in hac gratia abundetis

LWB 2 Cor. 8:8 I am not speaking by way of an authoritative command, but because of the diligence of others and my desire to demonstrate the genuineness of your virtue love.

KW 2 Cor. 8:8 I am not speaking by way of commandment, but through the instrumentality of others I am putting to the test the genuineness of your own love with the intent that it will meet my specifications and have my approval upon it.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Because Paul used an Imperative Clause in the previous verse, he wanted to make sure that his desire for them to be “gracious financial givers” was only a desire, not a command. As their apostle he had the legitimate authority to command such an act, but a command such as that would not only be beyond the scope of his ministry, but it would also then cease to be “grace giving.” He further explains that his motivation for asking them was because other assemblies have been so diligent in giving to his cause in Jerusalem. He didn’t want the Corinthians to be left out; they should be able to share in the fruits of his missionary journeys.

If the Corinthians were likewise diligent in donating funds for the believers in Jerusalem, they would share in the spiritual rewards that would surely come later. Paul also wanted a chance for them to prove their maturing spiritual status (Customary Present tense) to others, to themselves, and to himself. The best way for them to do that was by providing a generous donation to the believers in Jerusalem, not because he commands them to do so, but because the love in their souls for fellow believers was so profound. Paul would then be able to boast about the love and generosity of the Corinthians to other believers, and the Corinthians would have a reliable measuring stick to judge themselves by.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is seeking to extract from the Corinthians a fulfillment of their earlier pledge to assist him. In such a way they will be giving proof of the sincerity and reality of their loyalty to him and his apostolic authority. (R.P. Martin) The last phrase on this verse is an exceedingly classical construction of the substantival neuter of an adjective (genuineness) with genitive (virtue love) following, which we find in the New Testament, especially in Paul. We could render it “whatever is genuine in your faith.” (A. Deissmann)

Love, in this case, is not primarily an emotion, but rather solidarity that comes to expression in tangible deeds. (J. Scott) The real test of the genuineness of any inward affection is not so much the character of the feeling as it reveals itself in our

consciousness, as the course of action to which it leads. Many persons, if they judged themselves by their feelings, would regard themselves as truly compassionate; but a judgment founded on their acts would lead to the opposite conclusion. So many suppose they really love God because they are conscious of feelings which they dignify with that name; yet they do not love His Word or obey Him.

2 Cor. 8:8 I am not (neg. adv.) speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Static; communicating) by way of an authoritative command (Adv. Acc.; nor pressure or force), but (contrast) because of the diligence (Abl. Cause; eagerness) of others (Gen. Attend. Circumstances) and (connective) my desire (Gen. Attend. Circumstances) to demonstrate (δοκιμάζω, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Causal; prove, examine) the genuineness (Acc. Dir. Obj.; nothing superficial) of your (Poss. Gen.) virtue love (Adv. Gen. Ref.; relaxed mental attitude).

Greek Text

Οὐ κατ' ἐπιταγὴν λέγω ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἐτέρων σπουδῆς καὶ τὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγάπης γνήσιον δοκιμάζω.

Latin Vulgate

non quasi imperans dico sed per aliorum sollicitudinem etiam vestrae caritatis ingenitum bonum conprobans

LWB 2 Cor. 8:9 Now you are familiar with the grace orientation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although He was rich, for your benefit He became poor, so that by His extreme poverty you might become rich.

KW 2 Cor. 8:9 For you know by experience the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He being wealthy, for your sakes became poor, in order that, as for you, by means of his poverty you might be made wealthy.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul knows they are familiar with the grace of God through His Son Jesus Christ, but he reminds them that they know by using the Customary Present tense. It was pure grace for the Lord as deity (with spiritual riches beyond belief) to become (Ingressive Aorist tense) a man like us (setting aside his prerogatives of deity – the doctrine of kenosis). Nobody would argue that His relocation from heaven (riches) to earth (poverty) was a monumental event. His estate (deity) also changed (to humanity) from wealth to poverty, called by some theologians “the humiliation.” But there was a divine purpose behind it

all – so that in the end (Culminative Aorist tense), we might become rich (spiritually wealthy) both in time (supergrace status) and eternity (entering eternal life with a resurrection body with rewards and decorations).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

If the issue is whether Paul believed that Christ was “preexistent,” this verse says clearly that the Incarnation did involve a change of existence. (R.P. Martin) It was not the triune God but the second person of the Trinity that assumed human nature. For that reason, it is better to say that the Word became flesh than that God became man. The pre-existent Son of God assumes human nature and takes to Himself human flesh and blood, a miracle that passes our limited understanding. It clearly shows that the infinite can and does enter into finite relations, and that the supernatural can in some way enter the historical life of the world. (L. Berkof)

The scope of this verse, like Galatians 4:4, is from eternity past to eternity future. Paul is thinking of a former glory of Christ temporarily laid aside in order that He might accomplish our redemption. (God the Redeemer, J.M. Boice, 1978, InterVarsity Press)

The doctrine of kenosis takes its name from the Greek verb “kenoo” meaning “to deprive oneself of a rightful function, to debase oneself.” Kenosis explains how the supreme God of the universe condescended to become a man and suffer the humiliation of the Cross. In eternity past God the Son, Who is coequal and coeternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, voluntarily subordinated Himself to the plan of the Father. Complying with the Father’s plan for the Incarnation, Christ voluntarily deprived Himself of the independent exercise of His divine attributes from the virgin birth until His resurrection. At no time did Christ surrender any attribute of His divine essence or “empty Himself” of His deity, as alleged by a false doctrine of kenosis. God can never become less than God. He did not divest Himself of His deity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul teaches the pre-existence of Jesus Christ with the statement “though He was rich.” The riches of Christ point not to His earthly existence but to His pre-existent state. In His high-priestly prayer (John 17:5), Jesus asked His Father to glorify Him with the glory He had before the creation of the world. (S. Kistemaker)

The grace of the Father (2 Tim. 1:9) purposed salvation, the grace of the Son (2 Cor. 8:9) purchased salvation, and the grace of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8) applies salvation. Conclusively, salvation is purposed, purchased, and applied apart from the recipient’s assistance. (W.E. Best)

2 Cor. 8:9 **Now** (explanatory) **you are familiar with** (γινώσκω, PAI2P, Customary) **the grace orientation** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **of our** (Poss. Gen.) **Lord** (Gen. Rel.) **Jesus Christ** (Adv. Gen. Ref.), **that** (introducing) **although He was** (εἰμί, PAPtc.NMS, Concessive, Substantival) **rich** (Pred. Nom.; wealth of

deity), for your benefit (Acc. Adv.) He became poor (πτωχεύω, AAI3S, Ingressive; took the form of humanity with reproach, shame & death), so that (Purpose) by His (Dat. Poss.) extreme poverty (Instr. Means; death by crucifixion) you (Subj. Nom.) might become rich (πλουτέω, AASubj.2P, Culminative, Result; receive eternal life with all its benefits and blessings).

Greek Text

γινώσκετε γὰρ τὴν χάριν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν πλούσιος ὢν, ἵνα ὑμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσητε.

Latin Vulgate

scitis enim gratiam Domini nostri Iesu Christi quoniam propter vos egenus factus est cum esset dives ut illius inopia vos divites essetis

LWB 2 Cor. 8:10 Moreover, I will render an opinion in this matter: Indeed, this (grace orientation) was to your advantage, whoever not only began to exercise this (grace-oriented spiritual life), but was also willing to resume (the grace-oriented spiritual life) a year ago,

KW 2 Cor. 8:10 And in this I am giving my judgment, for this is profitable for you, being such that you were the first to make a beginning, not only to so do, but also to be desirous of doing a year ago.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, decides to give (Aoristic Present tense) his personal opinion on the topic of grace orientation. Even though it is his opinion, it ends up in Scripture, so it is obviously approved by the Lord for inclusion. Not only was the Lord's grace orientation beneficial to them when they first believed and became Christians, but the practice of living graciously (experiential sanctification) that He taught them was also to their benefit. It was certainly beneficial to those who began walking in grace (Ingressive Aorist) when Paul last met them face-to-face. And it was also beneficial to those who, after being hurt by Paul's corrective letter, decided at a point in time (Historical Present tense) to start their walk all over again (Ingressive Aorist tense) sometime during the prior year.

This latter group was hurt by the carnal activities in their assembly, and were probably hurt by Paul's disciplinary letter. Closing their eyes to the case of incest among them and

reacting negatively to Paul's letter likely plunged them out of fellowship for quite awhile. Once they were out of fellowship, divine discipline surely occurred. At some point, they tired of being disciplined, confessed their sins of negligence and anger, and were restored to fellowship. Once this was accomplished, they were able to resume their once enthusiastic life of grace orientation all over again – a fresh start, so to speak. Because Paul addresses these two groups of people with an indefinite pronoun (whoever), he knows there were some Corinthians who never learned to walk graciously, even when he was physically present among them. The indefinite pronouns also point to Paul's understanding that another group of people in Corinth have not confessed their sin and resumed the Christian way of life. The experiential category of grace orientation, as exemplified by Jesus Christ while on earth, has provided no advantage (profit) for these two groups of individuals.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

During the heat of the conflict between Paul and the Corinthians the preparations for the collection had come to a standstill. One wonders whether the severe famine that afflicted all Achaia in A.D. 51 (Tacitus) may have supplied a ready excuse for the Corinthian's change of heart about the collection. (J. Scott)

2 Cor. 8:10 Moreover (continuative), I will render (δίδωμι, PAIIS, Aoristic; give, venture) an opinion (Acc. Dir. Obj.; advice) in this matter (Prep. Loc.): Indeed (affirmative), this (Subj. Nom.; grace orientation) was to your (Dat. Poss., Adv.) advantage (συμφέρω, PAI3S, Aoristic; profit), whoever (Subj. Nom.) not (neg. adv.) only (adverb) began to exercise (ποιέω, AAInf., Ingressive, Antecedent Time, Articular) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.; grace-oriented spiritual life), but (contrast) was also (adjunctive) willing (θέλω, PAInf., Historical, Antecedent Time, Articular; enthusiastic) to resume (προενάρχομαι, AMI2P, Ingressive, Deponent; start the grace-oriented spiritual life over again) a year ago (Gen. Extent Time),

Greek Text

καὶ γνώμην ἐν τούτῳ δίδωμι· τοῦτο γὰρ ὑμῖν συμφέρει, οἵτινες οὐ μόνον τὸ ποιῆσαι ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ θέλειν προενήρξασθε ἀπὸ πέρυσι·

Latin Vulgate

et consilium in hoc do hoc enim vobis utile est qui non solum facere sed et velle coepistis ab anno priore

LWB 2 Cor. 8:11 And now may also complete (the grace-oriented spiritual life) that you started to do, so that just as your zeal to be willing began, in the same manner

may you likewise complete the course in the days to come by means of what you currently possess.

KW 2 Cor. 8:11 And now complete the doing also, in order that, according as there was the eagerness to be desirous, thus also there may be the completion in accordance with your ability;

KJV 2 Cor. 8:11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul ties-up the translation process with a string of fairly complicated Temporal Infinitives. A beginning Greek student, like the person who attempted to translate this in the King James Version, will inevitably stumble all over himself in the process. The KJV almost defies you to understand what is being said. Open your KJV and read verses 10-11 and tell me (honestly) that you know what Paul is talking about.

The key to the translation of these two verses is the translation of three different Temporal Infinitives: antecedent (prior), contemporaneous (currently), and subsequent (later) – or in our lingo – past, present and future. If these infinitives aren't properly translated, these verses will be nothing but a mess.

Paul first uses the Culminative Aorist tense to tell the positive Corinthians (he narrowed his audience to positive believers only in the prior verse) that they may complete the spiritual walk of grace that they started some time ago. He doesn't command them to do so, but uses the Imperative of Permission to give his consent to their desire to get their lives back on track with God's plan for their lives. He uses the Ingressive Aorist tense to point backwards in time to the days when they first started their life of grace orientation.

In what manner and with what tools are they to resume their grace-oriented spiritual walk? That's where a set of three temporal infinitives comes in. In the first instance, Paul acknowledges that in the beginning (antecedent) they were eager to live this gracious spiritual life. He also uses the Tential Present tense to say that he is assuming those in his audience have begun the spiritual walk – some of his listeners have perhaps never been grace-oriented. He then expresses the desire that they complete (Culminative Aorist tense) the walk they once began in the days to come (subsequent) with the same zeal that they had in the beginning (before they got caught up in the incestuous debacle and found themselves out of fellowship). How are they to get back on track? They are to remember all the doctrines Paul has taught them previously (recall) and use the ones they have learned and can apply now (contemporaneous) until he can make it back to Corinth and teach them additional problem-solving devices.

To sum up, Paul hopes that the Corinthians will confess any sin related to either the incestuous affair or the harsh letter that he previously sent to correct the situation. He

also wants them to grab hold of the eagerness, the zeal they once had to live the Christian life back in the days when they were first saved. He wants them to carry that initial zeal forward into the present, combine it with what applicable doctrine they can recall and apply, and make dramatic progress towards the final goal of spiritual maturity. Both the means to get there and the end result are tied-up in being grace-oriented, just like our Lord Jesus Christ was when He left heaven to become sin for us and die on the cross for our behalf. Somewhere during their progress in walking a grace-oriented spiritual life, he hopes they will become compassionate and eager to provide financial support to poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem. He is taking up a collection on their behalf, which will be delivered to them as soon as Paul is able to make the arrangements.

Part of the confusion with the translation of these verses is due to not seeing how Paul is cleverly combining several parallel thoughts. The following summarization may help you see what Paul is trying to communicate.

Past

- Jerusalem believers have been living in financial poverty
- Christ left His rich estate and became poverty for us on the cross
- Corinthians have been living in spiritual poverty

Present

- Jerusalem believers are assumed to be spiritually self-sustaining
- Christ was victorious on the cross and is once again rich
- Corinthians confess sin and resume their interrupted spiritual life

Future

- Jerusalem believers will escape financial poverty by receiving grace contributions
- Christ will inherit the heavens, the earth, and all other spiritual riches
- Corinthians will bring their grace-oriented spiritual walk to completion by providing financial support to the Jerusalem believers

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle was not desirous to urge them either beyond their inclination, or beyond their ability. What they gave, he wished them to give freely, and with due regard to their resources. (C. Hodge) Paul is not talking about communism or socialism here. He is appealing to the Corinthians to give, not requiring or ordering them to give. And he assumes that they have disposable income so that they will not go in debt while giving and so suffer. He is not envisioning a clearing house for all money. This is a special appeal for a special cause. Paul is also not urging tithing in this passage, nor is he talking about collection for the hungry in general. (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 8:11 and (continuative) now (temporal) may also (adjunctive) complete (ἐπιτελέω, AAImp.2P, Culminative, Permission; accomplish) that (Acc. Dir. Obj.; what) you

started to do (ποιέω, AAIInf., Ingressive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; walk with grace orientation), so that (Purpose) just as (comparative) your (Nom. Poss.) zeal (Subj. Nom.; eagerness) to be willing began (θέλω, PAInf., Tential, Antecedent Time: Prior), in the same manner (comparative; keeping that original zeal alive) may you likewise (adjunctive) complete the course in the days to come (ἐπιτελέω, AAIInf., Culminative, Subsequent Time: Future; complete the collection) by means of what (Abl. Means; Bible doctrine in your soul) you currently possess (ἔχω, PAInf., Customary, Contemporaneous Time: Now; according to your ability).

Greek Text

νυνὶ δὲ καὶ τὸ ποιῆσαι ἐπιτελέσατε, ὅπως καθάπερ ἡ προθυμία τοῦ θέλειν, οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἐπιτελέσαι ἐκ τοῦ ἔχειν.

Latin Vulgate

nunc vero et facto perficite ut quemadmodum promptus est animus voluntatis ita sit et perficiendi ex eo quod habetis

LWB 2 Cor. 8:12 Therefore, assuming this eagerness still exists, it may be considered acceptable when according to standards, not when it is considered not according to standards.

KW 2 Cor. 8:12 For, assuming that the eagerness is present, it is acceptable according to that which a person might have, not according to that which he does not have.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In the next couple of verses, Paul wants to make sure the motivation and the amount of financial contributions by the Corinthians is according to divine norms and standards. In this verse, he begins by assuming they are still (Durative Present tense) eager to help the Jerusalem believers financially. But he inserts a conditional particle to qualify any giving they may have in mind. Their giving may be acceptable (Potential Subjunctive mood) only if it meets divine qualifications. They must be in fellowship with the Lord, filled with the Spirit, in order for their giving to be considered divine good. If they are out of fellowship, fighting and quarrelling with each other, and merely trying to impress others with their donation, then their contributions would fall short of divine standards and be considered human good. Financial support motivated according to divine standards will

receive an eternal reward; financial support motivated according to human standards will be burned as wood, hay or stubble.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

From a different perspective, the final phrase of this verse could be an idiom meaning “in proportion to what one has.” (C.F.D. Moule) God judges not according to what a man has not the opportunity to do, but according to what he does when he has it, and what he would do if he had it. (R. Jamieson)

Provided a gift is willingly given, its acceptability is determined solely on the basis of what a person might possess, not on the basis of what he does not own. God assesses the value of a monetary gift not in terms of the actual amount given, but by comparing what is given with the total financial resources of the giver. No one is expected to give according to what he does not have. (F.E. Gaebelien)

2 Cor. 8:12 Therefore (inferential), assuming (protasis, 1st class condition, assumes it is true) this (Nom. Spec.) eagerness (Subj. Nom.; to help the Jerusalem believers financially) still exists (πρόκειμαι, PMI3S, Durative; is present), it may be considered (ἔχω, PASubj.3S, Descriptive, Potential) acceptable (Pred. Nom.) when (conditional) according to standards (Adv. Std.; divine good), not (neg. adv.) when (ellipsis) it is considered (ἔχω, PAI3S, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) according to standards (Adv. Std.; human good).

Greek Text

εἰ γὰρ ἡ προθυμία πρόκειται, καθὸ ἐὰν ἔχη εὐπρόσδεκτος, οὐ καθὸ οὐκ ἔχει.

Latin Vulgate

si enim voluntas prompta est secundum id quod habet accepta est non secundum quod non habet

LWB 2 Cor. 8:13 **And certainly the purpose of financial relief for others is not to cause financial pressure upon you, nor by reason of a matter of equality.**

KW 2 Cor. 8:13 For the collection [of money] is not being made in order that to others there might be relief from stress and strain and that pressure might be brought to bear upon you.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In verse 12 Paul covered the requirements for proper motivation when it comes to grace giving. Now he covers the amount of their proposed donation. The purpose of grace giving is not to give so much to others that you yourself come under financial pressure. God's purpose is not for you to relieve others (their advantage) if in the process you create havoc in your own house (disadvantage). In other passages, God commands all believers to be financially responsible with what He has provided to them. This not only includes paying your immediate bills, but also covers setting aside enough to retire on in old age so as not to become a burden on other believers.

And now hear this: God condemns any form of socialism, communism, or other welfare state system that man creates under the guise of "fair treatment" or "redistribution of wealth" to provide exact equality for the masses. These social philosophies are all satanically inspired. Paul emphatically states that the divine principles of grace giving have nothing to do with social philosophies disguised as "equality for all." Grace giving has divine motivational requirements (filling of the Spirit) and an amount donated from your excess – what we would today call "discretionary income." The amount you may decide to give to support the less fortunate is between you and God, nobody else. Any attempts to coerce you to give, or to require a percent of your income under the guise of tithing, violates the privacy of your priesthood and is unadulterated evil.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is not advocating that the rich divest themselves of all their possessions, that the poor be made rich by receiving gifts, and that economic equality be achieved. He is not interested in supporting people, be they fellow Christians, if they are unwilling to work. He himself labored with his own hands to meet his own needs and even those of others. He gave the Thessalonians (2 Thess 3:10) this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." God's kingdom has no room for drones, only for bees that gather nectar and produce honey. (S. Kistemaker) The Scripture inculcate on the poor the duty of self-support to the extent of their ability. (C. Hodge)

They are not to get into debt, and so need relief themselves. (Guthrie) Paul never suggests that the members of his communities have "all things in common," as did those at Qumran. The oneness of Christians in the gospel does not necessarily involve the pooling of all their material resources. The term "equality" does not mean divesting themselves of all their property so much as the sharing of their "abundance" and "prosperity" with those in want. Sharing should spring from a loving and generous heart. Paul did not call for the abolition of private property or for its transformation into joint ownership. And unlike the Essenes, Paul did not found communes as he moved through the ancient world. (R. Banks)

Christians are always called upon to give generously, but not normally so generously as unduly to impoverish themselves or those dependent on them, especially if by such

impoverishment all they are doing is to increase the ease of others beyond the demands of necessity. Charity must not be used for the encouragement either of laziness or luxury. (Tasker) Paul did not desire that the Corinthians should go beyond their ability in giving, for he had no wish that others should be enriched, and they impoverished. It is not obligatory on the rich to make themselves poor in order that the poor may be rich. (C. Hodge)

The words could be rendered, “for not that there may be ease, or relaxation to others, and to you affliction or straitness;” that is, his meaning was not that there should be such a contribution raised for these poor saints at Jerusalem, that they should live in ease and great abundance; whilst their benefactors, through an over abundant generosity to them, were straitened, and their families reduced to great difficulties; this was far from his intentions. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 8:13 And certainly (inferential) the purpose of (Purpose) financial relief (Subj. Nom.) for others (Dat. Adv.) is (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) to cause (continuing ellipsis) financial pressure (Subj. Nom.) upon you (Dat. Disadv.), nor (adversative) by reason of a matter of equality (Adv. Gen. Ref.; not due to a social philosophy of so-called *fair treatment*).

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ ἵνα ἄλλοις ἀνεσις, ὑμῖν θλίψις, ἀλλ’ ἐξ ἰσότητος·

Latin Vulgate

non enim ut aliis sit remissio vobis autem tribulatio
sed ex aequalitate

LWB 2 Cor. 8:14 **At the present time, your financial overflow may be for the purpose of their need, so that their financial overflow might likewise be for the purpose of your need someday, in order that there might be a mutually beneficial result,**

KW 2 Cor. 8:14 But, out of fairness to all, at the present season your superfluity may be a supply for that which they lack, in order that their superfluity may become a supply for your lack, so that there might be an equitable arrangement in this matter,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to distinguish the difference between grace giving and a political system of redistribution of wealth (by whatever name such philosophies masquerade from generation to generation). Grace giving is not a group of hard-working Christians supporting a group of lazy Christians by “enabling them to live on the dole.” Grace giving is helping others in need so that they may bounce back from their temporary economic difficulties and regain the financial high ground. If the Corinthians should fall on difficult times, the Jerusalem assemblies may be able to return the favor.

At the present time, Paul says the financial overflow that the Corinthians are experiencing might in fact be ordained by God (ultimate purpose) to help support the Jerusalem believers. Their grace giving at this time might (Potential Subjunctive mood) prove to be a benefit in the future, should they be found wanting and the Jerusalem believers be able to provide for the Corinthian’s financial difficulties. The Purpose for grace giving in both cases is to give the benefactors an opportunity to apply doctrine and show virtue love for their fellow brethren. The Result of grace giving in both cases is to render assistance to the recipients in a time of financial duress. Both purpose and result are mutually beneficial, especially when the relative circumstances are reversed.

The Latin Vulgate uses the word “supplementum” twice to show that the purpose of the grace giving is not to completely take over the financial responsibility for people who do not contribute for their own welfare. The purpose of grace giving is to supplement (reinforce) what the recipients were able to earn on their own, but which fell short of providing for their basic needs. To “supplement” means to complete what is lacking, not to enable falsified victims to live off the labor of others.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The poor have no right to depend on the benefactions of the rich because they are brethren. This same apostle says, “This we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.” (2 Thess. 3:10) Thus do the Scriptures avoid, on the one hand, the injustice and destructive evils of agrarian communism, by recognising the right of property and making all almsgiving optional; and on the other, the heartless disregard of the poor by inculcating the universal brotherhood of believers, and the consequent duty of each to contribute of his abundance to relieve the necessities of the poor. At the same time they inculcate on the poor the duty of self-support to the extent of their ability. They are commanded “with quietness to work, and to eat their own bread.” Could these principles be carried out, there would be among Christians neither idleness nor want. (C. Hodge)

Paul places the term “equality” in this *pericope* within the framework of reciprocity. He does not advocate undermining productivity. Instead he seeks to raise the quality of life through reciprocal activity of both the rich and poor. (S. Kistemaker) Paul is referring to reciprocity, not agrarianism, nor community of goods. This giving is voluntary. A man’s property is his own. It is in his own power to retain or to give away; and if he gives, it is his prerogative to decide whether it shall be much or little. (C. Hodge)

All that Paul meant was that there might be an equality both in givers and receivers, proportioned to their several circumstances and stations of life, or the different abilities of givers at different times. (J. Gill) He certainly does not mean, that they should be equal in condition and station, but by this term he expresses humanity, clemency, and kind treatment. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 8:14 At the present (temporal) time (Loc. Time), your (Poss. Gen.) financial overflow (Subj. Nom.; abundance) may be (ellipsis) for the purpose of their (Poss. Gen.) need (Acc. Purpose; scarcity), so that (Purpose) their (Poss. Gen.) financial overflow (Subj. Nom.; abundance) might likewise (adjunctive) be (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Futuristic, Potential, Deponent) for the purpose of your (Poss. Gen.) need (Acc. Purpose; scarcity) someday (Futuristic Aorist), in order that (Result) there might be (γίνομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) a mutually beneficial result (Pred. Nom.; balance),

Greek Text

ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ τὸ ὑμῶν περίσσευμα εἰς τὸ ἐκείνων ὑστέρημα, ἵνα καὶ τὸ ἐκείνων περίσσευμα γένηται εἰς τὸ ὑμῶν ὑστέρημα, ὅπως γένηται ἰσότης,

Latin Vulgate

in praesenti tempore vestra abundantia illorum inopiam suppleat ut et illorum abundantia vestrae inopiae sit supplementum ut fiat aequalitas sicut scriptum est

LWB 2 Cor. 8:15 Just as it stands written: “He who greatly increased did not *amass* an excessive amount, and he who was in need did not *endure* an inadequate amount.”

KW 2 Cor. 8:15 Even as it stands written, He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered the little, did not lack.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the standard Intensive Perfect tense to quote a verse from the Old Testament. Over the years, politically ignorant and arrogant people have twisted this verse on grace giving as a “proof-text” for their social agenda. Nevertheless, this verse teaches grace

giving from a spiritual life exemplified by love for fellow believers, not a Robin Hood political agenda of taking from the rich and giving to the poor. A believer who has great financial success in his endeavors (Dramatic Aorist tense) does not hoard his abundance while a known fellow believer is poverty stricken and could use his support to feed and clothe his family (whatever is lacking). The two Accusative of Measures (used as direct objects) point to detrimental extremes – one has an excess, the other is sorely lacking. Grace giving is a solution for both extremes, not confiscation of wealth or over-taxation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Manna was provided by God on every day except Saturday, which was the Sabbath. So unless they wanted to go hungry on Saturday, they had to gather an extra day's supply on Friday. Everyone gathered manna according to their capacity. Some tried to gather on Friday enough to cover several days, but do you know what happened? It stank and bred worms. Since manna is a type for Bible doctrine, and it was provided by God everyday, how often should we be studying the Word of God? Will going to church once-a-week on Sunday store enough doctrine to feed us? No. That once-a-week gathering will also stink and bred worms. We are supposed to eat (metabolize) the Word of God every day of our life. If we try to store it up on Sundays, it will not carry us forward more than one day. You will grow one day on your Sunday supply, and then starve your spirit and soul for the next six days. Don't be stupid; follow divine instructions. Daily manna (Bible doctrine) tasted great to those who had positive volition; daily manna (Bible doctrine) tasted foul or boring (without spice) to those with negative volition. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 8:15 Just as (comparative) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; related to gathering manna): "He (Subj. Nom.) who greatly increased (πλεονάζω, AAI3S, Dramatic; profited substantially, became rich) did not (neg. adv.) amass (ellipsis; hoard) an excessive amount (Acc. Measure; overabundance, superfluties), and (connective) he (Subj. Nom.) who was in need (ἐλαττονέω, AAI3S, Dramatic; poverty stricken) did not (neg. adv.) endure (ellipsis; suffer) an inadequate amount (Acc. Measure; lack)."

Greek Text

καθὼς γέγραπται, Ὁ τὸ πολὺ οὐκ ἐπλέονασεν, καὶ ὁ τὸ ὀλίγον οὐκ ἠλαττόνησεν.

Latin Vulgate

qui multum non abundavit et qui modicum non minoravit

LWB 2 Cor. 8:16 But thanks be to God Who produced the same eagerness on your behalf in the mentality of Titus,

KW 2 Cor. 8:16 But thanks be to God who is constantly putting into the heart of Titus the same earnest solicitude for you,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:16 But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Titus could have performed his ministerial duty without being personally connected to the Corinthians or caring for their welfare. But God placed (Constative Aorist tense) an earnest care and concern for them in Titus's soul. Paul thanks the Lord for this extra benefit. Because he cared so much for the Corinthians, he was thankful that the Lord placed that same concern inside Titus. It gave them both someone to share their ministry with, i.e., the victories and defeats along the way.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's persistent prayers of thanksgiving express all gratitude to God for every activity of faith, hope, and love that he knows his congregations have performed. The thanks are due to God because the attitude has come as a gift from God. (Bruce Ware) The apostle always recognizes God's hand in the lives of His people. God gave the Macedonians grace to give (verse 1) and he put in Titus's heart an eagerness to serve the Corinthians. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 8:16 But (adversative) thanks (Subj. Nom.; grace) be (ellipsis) to God (Dat. Adv.) Who produced (δίδωμι, AAPtc.DMS, Constative, Substantival, Articular) the same (Comp. Acc.) eagerness (Acc. Dir. Obj.; diligent zeal) on your behalf (Gen. Adv.) in the mentality (Loc. Sph.; heart) of Titus (Adv. Gen. Ref.),

Greek Text

Χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ τῷ δόντι τὴν αὐτὴν σπουδὴν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ
Τίτου,

Latin Vulgate

gratias autem Deo qui dedit eandem sollicitudinem pro
vobis in corde Titi

LWB 2 Cor. 8:17 Since on the one hand, he accepted the request, but on the other hand, quite eagerly placing himself at your disposal, he went face-to-face with you of his own accord.

KW 2 Cor. 8:17 Because he indeed embraced our exhortation, and being more than ordinarily earnest, of his own accord went to you.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Constative Aorist tense to explain to the Corinthians that Titus had accepted his request (challenge) to visit Corinth and straighten things out. However, even to Paul's surprise, Titus needed no coercing to visit them; he was quite eager (elative superlative) to go there, in spite of all the terrible things he had heard about them. Seizing the opportunity, he placed himself (Customary Present tense) at Paul's and their disposal, to do whatever was necessary. And not only that, but he departed for Corinth voluntarily, without Paul needing to exhort him about the matter. Titus had a great mental attitude towards the journey and the Corinthians, and nothing he had heard about their problems deterred him in the least.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He did not require to be urged to go, although in this, as in other matters, he was willing to do as I wished. (C. Hodge) There was no command in the "summons" from Paul, therefore no specifically religious note ... although Paul may have been subtly combining an ordinary address and an religious exhortation into one. When used in connection with a collection, Paul crosses the line into a liturgical matter. (TDNT) The particular "zeal" of Titus in the matter of the collection is a gift of God according to the previous verse. The same applies to the brother in verse 22 whose zeal is matched by the confidence in/of the Corinthians. (TDNT)

2 Cor. 8:17 since (explanatory) on the one hand (contrast), he accepted (δέχομαι, AMI3S, Constative, Deponent; welcomed the opportunity) the request (Acc. Dir. Obj.; summons, invite, challenge), but on the other hand (correlative), quite eagerly (Comparative Nom.; positive motivation) placing himself at your disposal (ὑπάρχω, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Modal), he went (ἐξέρχομαι, AAI3S, Constative, Deponent; moved toward the objective) face-to-face with you (Acc. Adv.) of his own accord (Nom. Manner; voluntarily, personal initiative).

Greek Text

ὅτι τὴν μὲν παράκλησιν ἐδέξατο, σπουδαιότερος δὲ ὑπάρχων ἀθάίρετος ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam exhortationem quidem suscepit sed cum sollicitior esset sua voluntate profectus est ad vos

LWB 2 Cor. 8:18 In addition, we sent along with him a fellow believer whose commendable teaching in the good news is recognized throughout all the assemblies,

KW 2 Cor. 8:18 And we sent together with him the brother whose praise in the [proclamation of the] good news is spread throughout all the assemblies,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sent an unnamed believer along with Titus to Corinth. Titus would apply any corrective measures necessary, as well as getting the organization and administration of the assemblies in-and-around Corinth in place. The unnamed believer would then hold classes in which he would teach them basic doctrinal principles as he has done in many other geographical locations. This believer has been praised for his efforts everywhere he has ministered, with the result that he was chosen by the people for this task. The principle is that a person who is faithful in studying the Word can be trusted by others in material matters. Paul may have added this comment as a preventative measure, in order to dissuade some Corinthians who were still having authority problems from causing trouble. In other words, Paul isn't sending a novice to teach them; he is sending a seasoned veteran.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Titus and Luke were Gentiles, Greeks, and physical brothers. The phrase “a fellow believer” can also be translated “his brother.” They went together, with a third man, on a special mission to Corinth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) This “brother” is probably Luke, who may be the brother of Titus according to a common Greek idiom where the article is used as “his.” But this idiom is not necessary ... as we may not know who he is. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 8:18 In addition (continuative), we sent along (συμπέμπω, AAI1P, Constative; dispatched) with him (Gen. Accompaniment; reference to Titus) a fellow believer (Acc. Dir. Obj.; possibly his brother Luke) whose (Adv. Gen. Ref.) commendable teaching (Subj. Nom.; praiseworthy efforts) in

the good news (Loc. Sph.; doctrine) is recognized (ellipsis)
throughout all (Gen. Spec.) the assemblies (Gen. Place),

Greek Text

συνεπέμψαμεν δὲ μετ' αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀδελφὸν οὗ ὁ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ
διὰ πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν,

Latin Vulgate

misimus etiam cum illo fratrem cuius laus est in
evangelio per omnes ecclesias

LWB 2 Cor. 8:19 And not only this, but was also chosen by the assemblies as our traveling companion to accompany us with this grace contribution, which will be administered by us for the praise of the Lord Himself and our dedication,

KW 2 Cor. 8:19 And not that only, but who was chosen by the assemblies as our travel companion in the matter of this grace [their financial contributions for the poor saints in Jerusalem] which is being administered by us [this arrangement whereby two are responsible for the distribution of the money] with a view to the glory of the same Lord and our eagerness,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only was this unnamed person known far-and-wide for his commendable teaching of the Word, but he was also chosen by the assemblies in that geographical area to be their representative on the journey to Jerusalem. Paul didn't want to be solely responsible for delivering the money to Jerusalem, because if something happened to him or the money along the way, those who donated the money could accuse him of foul play. So the assemblies appointed (voted by a show of hands) the most honest and trustworthy person they could find to accompany Paul on his journey and to carry the financial contribution on his person. The Futuristic Present tense points to the ultimate and eventual distribution of the funds to the needy in Jerusalem. And in case all this talk about money has their thinking sidetracked for the moment, Paul reminds them that the purpose of this grace gift was to glorify the Lord and at the same time to render a little praise (encouragement) to Paul and his new traveling companion for their dedication in delivering it to Jerusalem. Carrying a large donation across land and sea, both fraught with thieves and robbers, was no easy task.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek text shows that the term “appoint” means the raising of hands in a congregational meeting. They chose a man who was well known by his preaching of the gospel in their churches. He had the confidence of the churches to fulfill the task to which they appointed him. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 8:19 and (continuative) not (neg. adv.) only (adv.) this (ellipsis; known for his commendable teaching), but (adversative) was also (adjunctive) chosen (χειροτονέω, APPTc.NMS, Constative, Circumstantial; appointed by the majority of outstretched hands) by the assemblies (Abl. Source) as our (Gen. Rel.) traveling companion (Pred. Nom.) to accompany us (Dat. Accompaniment) with this (Dat. Spec.) grace contribution (Dat. Ind. Obj.; financial donation), which will be administered (διακονέω, PPPTc.DFS, Futuristic, Substantival; served) by us (Abl. Means; both Titus and this chosen representative) for the praise (Adv. Acc.) of the Lord (Obj. Gen.) Himself (Gen. Appos.) and (connective) our (Poss. Gen.) dedication (Acc. Dir. Obj.; willingness),

Greek Text

οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν συνέκοιμος ἡμῶν
σὺν τῇ χάριτι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένη ὑφ’ ἡμῶν πρὸς τὴν [αὐτοῦ] τοῦ
κυρίου δόξαν καὶ προθυμίαν ἡμῶν,

Latin Vulgate

non solum autem sed et ordinatus ab ecclesiis comes
peregrinationis nostrae in hac gratia quae ministratur
a nobis ad Domini gloriam et destinatam voluntatem
nostram

LWB 2 Cor. 8:20 For the purpose of avoiding this: that no one should find fault with us with reference to this generous financial contribution which will be administered by us,

KW 2 Cor. 8:20 Arranging this for ourselves lest anyone find fault with us in this great liberality which is being ministered by us.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul elaborates further on the reason for another person to travel with him carrying the money on his person. Whenever there are large sums of money involved, Paul prefers to

have a witness with him who can vouch to the contributors that no foul play is at hand. Paul had enemies who accused him of every category of impropriety imaginable. Therefore, when the sum of money was substantial, he tried to avoid (Customary Present tense) any situation that might give his enemies ammunition to use against him. As a result, he did not want anyone maligning him (Culminative Aorist tense) or calling him (Latin: vituperation) a thief. Also, both the Greek and Latin vocabulary describe this grace gift as a large, generous one. It is also possible to translate the Present tense as Gnostic (meaning we should “always” guard against questionable monetary activities when handling church funds) or Iterative (constantly guarding against improprieties).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

By getting delegates appointed by the churches to collect the money, Paul safeguards against giving Satan any excuse to prompt his enemies to attack him. (Guthrie) There is nothing which is more apt to lay one open to sinister imputations than the handling of public money. (J. Calvin)

“Stello” is a Greek naval metaphor, of shifting sail so as to avoid an enemy’s pursuit. (R. Nicoll) There is an allusion in these words to mariners, who, when sensible of danger, steer their course another way, in order to shun a rock and secure themselves. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 8:20 for the purpose of avoiding (στέλλω, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Purpose; guarding against) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.): that (assertion) no one (Subj. Nom.) should find fault with (μωμάομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Concessive, Deponent) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; our system) with reference to this (Dat. Spec.) generous financial contribution (Dat. Ref.) which will be administered (διακονέω, PPPTc.DFS, Futuristic, Attributive; collected from grace donors and distributed to the poor in Jerusalem) by us (Abl. Agency),

Greek Text

στελλόμενοι τοῦτο, μή τις ἡμᾶς μωμήσῃται ἐν τῇ ἀδρότητι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένη ὑφ’ ἡμῶν·

Latin Vulgate

devitantes hoc ne quis nos vituperet in hac plenitudine quae ministratur a nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 8:21 For we always try to take care of things honestly, not only in the presence of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

KW 2 Cor. 8:21 For we take forethought to provide things, in their external appearance as well as in their intrinsic value, honest not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men,

KJV 2 Cor. 8:21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul assures the Corinthians that he and his companions always (Gnomic Present tense) take care of the collection, transportation, and distribution of financial contributions in a completely honest and trustworthy manner. They of course do this in the presence of the Lord, but if that attestation seems easy for someone to make, he adds that they behave impeccably when being observed by men, i.e., in this case the accompanying traveler is there to observe and report back to Corinth after the grace gift has been delivered.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

With a change in the mood of the verb, Paul is citing the Septuagint version of Proverbs 3:4. Hardly any trace of this is found in the common version. Such quotations evidently show how much the minds of the New Testament writers were imbued with the sentiments and expressions of the Old Testament as exhibited in the Alexandrine version. (Milton Terry)

2 Cor. 8:21 For (explanatory) we always try to take care of things (προνοέω, ΠΑΙΠ, Gnomic; proper handling of and accounting for church funds) honestly (Complementary Acc.), not (neg. adv.) only (adv.) in the presence of the Lord (Prep. Gen.; invisible to others), but (adversative) also (adjunctive) in the sight of men (Prep. Gen.; visible to others).

Greek Text

προνοοῦμεν γὰρ καλὰ οὐ μόνον ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐνώπιον ἀνθρώπων.

Latin Vulgate

providemus enim bona non solum coram Deo sed etiam coram hominibus

LWB 2 Cor. 8:22 In addition, we sent along with them our brother, whom we have examined, tested and proved to be repeatedly diligent in many things, and now exceptionally diligent because of the enormous trust *placed in him* by you.

KW 2 Cor. 8:22 And we sent with them our brother whom we often proved to be earnest in many things, having put him to the test for that purpose, namely, to put our stamp of approval upon him, but now much more earnest by reason of his great confidence which he has in you.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

And if Paul's precautionary measures don't sound enough so far, he also sent one of his most trusted representatives with the delivery team. This unnamed person has been given positions of responsibility (Constative Aorist tense) on many occasions (over-and-over again) and has always proved to be diligent and efficient. And in their case, he is going to be all-the-more diligent because the Corinthians are placing their trust in him to do a good job even though they have never met him. They have honorably placed their trust in him, sight unseen, because of their trust in Paul's judgment - and he is taking his responsibility for the Corinthian's donation seriously. Without exception, the gift of administration, like pastor-teacher, is for men only (Greek: masculine, also translated "brother").

RELEVANT OPINIONS

"Dokimos" is a technical term which means "to test" or "to try" in an official capacity. It was used by Plato for proving and testing appointed state officials that were nominated for office. One who does not fulfill his pious duties while under observation is rejected by the council as unworthy. Of course, there is a religious and ethical emphasis in this verse. (TDNT) The basis of apostolic rejection of self-glorifying is not contradicted by passages in which Paul boasts of his or others work. When he boasts of the strength of a congregation or a person above others, this is not really self-glorifying, but is simply an expression of his confidence in them. (TDNT)

There is as much divine good in handling church finances honestly and invisibly (to others) by means of the spiritual gift of administration as there is in an evangelist giving a message to thousands of people who might be saved. They are both bonified and correct and we rejoice in them. Giving money with a grace attitude, collecting grace offerings with a grace attitude, and distributing these funds with a grace attitude all receive rewards. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 8:22 In addition (adjunctive), we sent along (συμπέμπω, AAIIP, Constative) with them (Dat. Accompaniment; Titus and their representative) our (Gen. Rel.) brother (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul's representative, delegate), whom (Acc. Gen. Ref.) we have examined, tested and proved

(δοκιμάζω, AAI1P, Constative) to be (εἰμί, PAPtc.AMS, Customary, Complementary) repeatedly (Dat. Measure; oftentimes) diligent (Compl. Acc.) in many things (Loc. Sph.), and (connective) now (temporal) exceptionally (Adv. Measure; all the more) diligent (Complementary Acc.) because of the enormous (Dat. Measure; because they have never met this person) trust (Instr. Cause; confidence) that (Def. Art.) has been placed in him (ellipsis) by you (Prep. Acc.).

Greek Text

συνεπέμψαμεν δὲ αὐτοῖς τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν ὃν ἐδοκιμάσαμεν ἐν πολλοῖς
πολλάκις σπουδαῖον ὄντα, νυνὶ δὲ πολὺ σπουδαιότερον πεποιθήσει πολλῇ
τῇ εἰς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

misimus autem cum illis et fratrem nostrum quem
probavimus in multis saepe sollicitum esse nunc autem
multo sollicitiorem confidentia multa in vos

LWB 2 Cor. 8:23 Next regarding Titus: he is my partner and fellow-worker on your behalf; then our colleagues, messengers from the assemblies, reputable on behalf of Christ.

KW 2 Cor. 8:23 Whether you are asking concerning Titus, he is my colleague and fellow-worker with respect to you; whether concerning our brethren, they are missionaries of the assemblies, the glory of Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:23 Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In case the Corinthians are curious about Paul's organization, he explains his (rather flat) chain of command. Titus is his second-in-command, so to speak, since he is characterized as Paul's partner and their fellow-worker. Then comes their colleagues, who consist of messengers from each assembly who travel back-and-forth bearing money for ministries and the Word for their brethren. These men were well-known for their walk with the Lord, and most likely had an administrative gift.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word "apostolos" does not refer to the office of apostle in this verse, but rather a commissioned representative of a congregation. It is used here by Paul of the men who at

his request were to accompany him to Jerusalem with the collection he had organized among the Greek congregations for the poor saints. (TDNT) “Koinonos” (partner) here can hardly refer to the mere bond of friendship; at the very least it includes spiritual union in the same faith. Here there is a particularly close bond of union between them, with the idea of participating in a common enterprise together, and ultimately sharing in the spiritual blessings of the community of saints. (TDNT)

2 Cor. 8:23 Next (chronological; if you are wondering about the chain of command) regarding (prep.) Titus (Obj. Gen.): he is (ellipsis) my (Nom. Rel.) partner (Pred. Nom.) and (connective) fellow-worker (Pred. Nom.) on your behalf (Acc. Adv.); then (chronological; if you are wondering) our (Gen. Rel.) colleagues (Subj. Nom.), messengers (Nom. Appos.; delegates, envoys, sent on an errand or mission) from the assemblies (Abl. Source), reputable (Descr. Nom.; renown) on behalf of Christ (Abl. Agency).

Greek Text

είτε ὑπὲρ Τίτου, κοινωνὸς ἐμὸς καὶ εἰς ὑμᾶς συνεργός· εἶτε ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν, ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν, δόξα Χριστοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

sive pro Tito qui est socius meus et in vos adiutor
sive fratres nostri apostoli ecclesiarum gloriae
Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 8:24 Therefore, keep on giving an indication to them, evidence of your virtue love and of our boasting on your behalf face-to-face before the assemblies.

KW 2 Cor. 8:24 Wherefore, be demonstrating to them in the presence of the assemblies the evidence of your divine and self-sacrificial love and of our boasting concerning you.

KJV 2 Cor. 8:24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is quite happy that some Corinthians are willing to donate financially to the Jerusalem believers. He uses the Iterative Present tense to tell them (Imperative Participle) to keep on donating to the ministry as often as they are able. Their grace giving and their own growth in grace and knowledge will be observable proof of their virtue love on the inside. Not only that, but these external activities will prove that what Paul has been boasting about is also true. The delegates from the churches would most likely observe their grace giving and then report back the account to their home churches.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is now generally recognized by New Testament grammarians that, in accordance with Semitic idiom, occasionally the Greek particle functions as the imperative mood ... supported, as it is, by representatives of the Alexandrian and the Western texts. (B. Metzger) The discovery of the Imperative use of the participle sealed this matter. Paul is issuing an Imperative Entreaty to the Corinthians to provide a practical demonstration of their virtue love, i.e, walk the talk.

It is one thing for Paul to boast about liberality in giving; it is another thing for the church in Corinth to make this boasting a fact. It is one thing for the Christians in Corinth to receive a trio of helpers sent by Paul and the churches; it is another to work harmoniously with these men. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 8:24 Therefore (inferential), keep on giving an indication (ἐνδείκνυμι, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Imperative; observable proof, demonstration) to them (Prep. Acc.), evidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of your (Poss. Gen.) virtue love (Obj. Gen.) and (connective) of our (Poss. Gen.) boasting (Obj. Gen.) on your behalf (Gen. Adv.) face-to-face before the assemblies (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

Greek Text

τὴν οὖν ἔνδειξιν τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν καὶ ἡμῶν καυχῆσεως ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἐνδεικνύμενοι εἰς πρόσωπον τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν.

Latin Vulgate

ostensionem ergo quae est caritatis vestrae et nostrae gloriae pro vobis in illos ostendite in faciem ecclesiarum

Chapter 9

LWB 2 Cor. 9:1 Now indeed, concerning support for the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you,

KW 2 Cor. 9:1 For indeed, concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to be writing to you,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

After all that Paul has just written concerning grace gifts for the poor in Jerusalem, it would indeed seem superfluous to lecture them on ministering to their own needy brethren. This could be translated as a Potential Indicative, meaning “maybe it’s unnecessary to talk about it, but maybe it bears repeating for good measure.” If he had not just been talking about grace giving, he would normally (Iterative Present tense) bring the topic up again in his letters at this time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul tells them it was needless to press them with further arguments to afford relief to their poor brethren, being satisfied he had said enough already to prevail with those of whom he had so good an opinion. (M. Henry) Love carries with it these two things – good hope, and anxious concern. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 9:1 Now (transitional, continuous) indeed (affirmative), concerning support (Adv. Gen. Ref.; contributions, ministering) for the saints (Acc. Adv.; poverty-stricken believers in your own geographical location), it is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) unnecessary (Pred. Nom.; superfluous) for me (Dat. Ind. Obj.) to keep on writing (γράφω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) to you (Dat. Adv.),

Greek Text

Περὶ μὲν γὰρ τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους περισσὸν μοί ἐστιν τὸ γράφειν ὑμῖν·

Latin Vulgate

nam de ministerio quod fit in sanctos ex abundantia est mihi scribere vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 9:2 For I know quite well and have confidence in your positive motivation, which I continually take pride in and boast about you to the Macedonians, [since Achaia has been in the process of preparing themselves since last year], because your positive motivation stirred up many,

KW 2 Cor. 9:2 For I know positively of your earnestness concerning which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia has been prepared since a year ago; and your zeal stimulated the majority of them.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:2 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the rare Gnostic Perfect tense to relate his pride and confidence in the motivation of the Corinthians. He takes continual pride (Iterative Present tense) in them and boasts about their eagerness to give to the poor in Jerusalem to the Macedonians. Then in a small parenthesis, Paul gives a reason why he boasts of the Corinthian's motivation to the Macedonians so often – because the Achaians have been taking their monetary collection for almost a year. They started out gung-ho in their efforts, but evidently lost interest and needed to be reminded, prodded even, to complete their efforts.

Paul boasts about the Corinthians (uses them as an illustration) to challenge (Constative Aorist tense) the Achaians and others to complete their grace giving efforts. Paul tells the Corinthians that their positive motivation is the beacon or standard that other assemblies try to emulate. Paul spreads good stories about the Corinthians everywhere he goes, and these reports have roused complacent believers in other cities to begin collecting for the poor in Jerusalem.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It would seem that the apostle feared that he had somewhat overstated the case, as he is evidently anxious about the Corinthian collection. (R. Nicoll)

2 Cor. 9:2 for (explanatory) I know quite well and have confidence in (οἶδα, Perf.A11S, Gnostic & Intensive) your (Poss. Gen.) positive motivation (Acc. Dir. Obj.; eager mental attitude), which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) I continually take pride in and boast (καυχᾶμαι, PMI1S, Iterative, Deponent) about you (Dat. Adv.; use them as an illustration) to the Macedonians (Dat. Ind. Obj.), [since (causal) Achaia (Subj. Nom.; southern Greece) has been in the process of preparing themselves (παρασκευάζω, Perf.MI3S, Iterative; equipped) since last year (Gen. Extent of Time)], because (causal) your (Poss. Gen.) positive motivation (Subj. Nom.; eager mental attitude) stirred up (ἐρεθίζω, AAI3S, Constative; roused, challenged, stimulated) many (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the majority, fellow believers in other geographical areas).

Greek Text

οἶδα γὰρ τὴν προθυμίαν ὑμῶν ἣν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καυχῶμαι Μακεδόσιν, ὅτι Ἀχαΐα παρεσκευάσται ἀπὸ πέρυσι, καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν ζῆλος ἠρέθισεν τοὺς πλείονας.

Latin Vulgate

scio enim promptum animum vestrum pro quo de vobis glorior apud Macedonas quoniam Achaia parata est ab anno praeterito et vestra aemulatio provocavit plurimos

LWB 2 Cor. 9:3 However, I have dispatched fellow believers, so that our boasting about you might not be rendered void with reference to this incomplete matter, in order that, just as I stated previously, you might be making preparations;

KW 2 Cor. 9:3 But I am sending the brethren in order that our boasting which is concerning you may not be rendered futile in this respect [in the collecting of the money] so that, just as I was saying, you may be prepared,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul wants to make sure that all the boasting he has made about the Corinthians does not fall apart (Culminative Aorist tense), so he has dispatched (Epistolary Aorist tense) this three-man team to go to Corinth and help complete the collection of funds for the poor in Jerusalem. The Potential Subjunctive points to the unknown conclusion: the Corinthians will either keep their previously donated money and render Paul's boasting null and void, or they will get back into fellowship, deliver their promised funds to the collection team, and prove Paul's boasting true. Paul uses the word "incomplete" because he understands that great initial progress was made in collecting donations, but something interfered with the process and it has been left hanging in the air.

Paul uses the Iterative Imperfect tense to remind the Corinthians that he has already (on more than one previous occasion) explained to them why this special collection team is coming to Corinth. The Imperfect tense also "zings" the Corinthians a bit, because Paul is lamenting that his previous talks have not brought about the completion of this collection, due to apathy on their part or interference by false teachers who saw their means of financial support in jeopardy. Then Paul uses the Consummative Perfect tense to express his desire that their preparations for the collection team come to a conclusion. In other words, whatever donations they originally promised or have already collected should be completed and made ready for a handoff to the collection team. The procrastination of some believers in Corinth (due to a negative mental attitude) who have not produced the donation they originally promised is holding up the greatly needed relief effort for Jerusalem.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

By sending the brothers, Paul wants them to see that the Corinthians are true to the words he has spoken. Therefore, delegates go to Corinth to bolster the eagerness of the Corinthians. (S. Kistemaker)

Paul intimates that if they only show eagerness and nothing more, their words will be hollow sounds. Words and deeds must go together, and the apostle is confident that the recipients of his epistle will demonstrate this sequence to the churches. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 9:3 However (adversative), I have dispatched (πέμπω, AAI1S, Epistolary; commissioned) fellow believers (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the 3-man team), so that (Purpose) our (Poss. Gen.) boasting (Subj. Nom.; praiseworthy testimony) about you (Gen. Adv.) might not (neg. adv.) be rendered void (κενόω, APSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; emptied of meaning, evacuated) with reference to this (Dat. Spec.) incomplete (Dat. Measure; partial, fragmented) matter (Dat. Ref.; collections for the poor), in order that (Result), just as (comparative) I stated previously (λέγω, Imperf.AI1S, Iterative; maintained, declared), you might be (εἰμί, PAsubj.2P, Descriptive, Potential) making preparations (παρασκευάζω, Perf.MPtc.NMP, Consummative, Predicative; for the arrival of the 3-man collection team);

Greek Text

ἔπεμψα δὲ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς, ἵνα μὴ τὸ καύχημα ἡμῶν τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κενωθῆ
ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ, ἵνα καθὼς ἔλεγον παρεσκευασμένοι ᾦτε,

Latin Vulgate

misi autem fratres ut ne quod gloriamur de vobis
evacuetur in hac parte ut quemadmodum dixi parati sitis

LWB 2 Cor. 9:4 **Otherwise, if Macedonians return with me and find you unprepared, we (I don't necessarily mean you) may be humiliated in this conviction.**

KW 2 Cor. 9:4 Lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and they find you unprepared, we – we do not say you – should be put to shame in this confidence.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts this sentence with the word “otherwise” to point to the possible negative consequences of being unprepared. He uses a string of Potential Subjunctive moods in a

3rd class conditional sentence to emphasize the importance of their being prepared for his return. If some Macedonians accompany him on his return trip (maybe they will, maybe they won't) and if they find the Corinthians unprepared for the collection of the grace gifts for Jerusalem (maybe they will, maybe they won't), the boasting that Paul and his colleagues have been engaging in on behalf of the Corinthians would prove to be empty. The worst scenario is that in the end (Culminative Aorist tense) Paul and his colleagues may be humiliated (maybe they will, maybe they won't) because of their confidence in the preparedness of the Corinthians.

The 3rd class condition (in each case) means Paul didn't know for sure what the outcome would be. The Potential Subjunctive mood means the outcome depends on whether the Corinthians are prepared or not, as well as how understanding the Macedonians are towards whatever they encounter in Corinth. In any case, the boasting was done by Paul and his colleagues, not by the Corinthians themselves, so he adds a disclaimer in parenthesis. When talking about the possibility of being humiliated, he says he isn't necessarily (maybe yes, maybe no) referring to them, but to himself and his colleagues. What Paul means by this is that if the Corinthians are unprepared, he and his associates will be humiliated; if the Corinthians are prepared, they won't be humiliated. As to whether any of this humiliation would rub-off on the Corinthians should they fail to prepare, he is uncertain; maybe they would share in the humiliation, maybe they wouldn't care one way or the other. His humiliation would be certain, theirs uncertain.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul assumes the Corinthians are still positive and have completed the collection. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) However, Paul could be shamed because of his exaggerated statements. (R. Nicoll)

At the moment of his writing, Paul is not certain who will accompany him on his journey from Macedonia to Corinth. Among the travel companions who eventually accompanied Paul, the Macedonians (Acts 20:4) were Sopater from Berea and Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 9:4 Otherwise (neg. adv. with enclitic particle), if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe they will, maybe they won't") Macedonians (Subj. Nom.) return (έρχομαι, AASubj.3P, Constative, Potential, Deponent) with me (Dat. Accompaniment) and (connective) find (εὕρισκω, AASubj.3P, Constative, Potential; discover) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) unprepared (Adv. Acc.), we (Subj. Nom.) [**I don't** (neg. adv.) **necessarily** (subordinate) **mean** (λέγω, PASubj.1S, Customary, Potential) **you** (Acc. Gen. Ref.)], may be humiliated (καταισχύνω, APSubj.1P, Culminative, Potential; embarrassed, ashamed) in this (Dat. Spec.) conviction (Loc. Sph.; assumption, undertaking, confidence in their being prepared).

Greek Text

μή πως ἐὰν ἔλθωσιν σὺν ἐμοὶ Μακεδόνες καὶ εὕρωσιν ὑμᾶς ἀπαρασκευάστους καταισχυιθῶμεν ἡμεῖς, ἵνα μὴ λέγω ὑμεῖς, ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει ταύτῃ.

Latin Vulgate

ne cum venerint mecum Macedones et invenerint vos inparatos erubescamus nos ut non dicamus vos in hac substantia

LWB 2 Cor. 9:5 Therefore, I considered it necessary to urge my fellow believers (3-man collection team) that they might proceed ahead of me to you and prepare in advance your previously promised contribution, which might be prepared as though a voluntary gift and not as something one feels forced to give.

KW 2 Cor. 9:5 Therefore I deemed it necessary to exhort the brethren that they should go before to you and make ready your liberal gift which was previously promised, that this might be ready beforehand, thus as a matter of generosity and not as a gift which a covetous spirit would withhold but gives grudgingly under pressure.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:5 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul regards (Epistolary Aorist tense) the Corinthian contribution as an urgent and pressing matter, because of the dire need for the funds in Jerusalem, and because the Corinthians are dragging their feet now that the collection time has arrived. He urged (encouraged, even begged) his 3-man collection team to proceed to Corinth ahead of him (Constative Aorist tense) so the collection might be in progress or even completed before he arrived. He uses the Potential Subjunctive mood twice, first to leave the decision to proceed without him up to the members of the collection team (maybe they will, maybe they won't go ahead of him), and to leave the unknown result of their collection efforts (maybe the collection will be ready before he arrives, maybe it won't) in the ultimate hands of the Corinthians. Paul combines a Possessive Genitive (your) and the Middle voice to say in effect: "You yourselves made this promise," so don't get irritated at me for reminding you of your prior promise.

Paul hopes they will prepare the donation in advance (Culminative Aorist tense) without reservation because they had already promised this contribution a long time ago. The Aoristic Perfect tense means their promise was complete, but the end result (the actual collection of the money) had not been completed. His purpose for sending the 3-man

collection team ahead of him is to give the Corinthians ample time to gather the donation on a grace basis, which is how the promise to give was originally made. What Paul doesn't want is to arrive in Corinth, discover nothing has been resolved, and that he has to twist their arms to fulfill their promise. He uses two Comparatives to point out the two possible conclusions he sees, but uses an Adversative Conjunction to point to one conclusion being undesired for all concerned. If Paul has to coerce them to give as they promised, due to reluctance or avarice (Latin) on their part, they lose their spiritual reward for assisting him in this grace ministry to the Jerusalem believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Note the apostle's emphasis on the concept "before" that occurs three times in this verse: ahead of me, in advance, and beforehand. He places the burden on the Corinthians and is fully assured that they will complete what they had promised. He seems to indicate that the people in Corinth were not unwilling to give, but needed help in organizing the work of collecting the funds. (S. Kistemaker)

A parallel verse to this passage of Scripture is the use of "logeia" in 1 Corinthians 16 called the "collection for the saints." This Greek word (which some scribes have changed to "eulogeia") can be demonstrated to have been used in Egypt from the 2nd century B.C. at the latest: it is found in Papyrus documents ... related to a society which had to perform a part of the ceremonies required in the embalming of bodies. They had the right, as members of the guild, to institute collections, and they could sell this right. We also find the word, further, in the taxation-roll of the Ptolemaic period, in which it is used six times, probably in the sense of tax. It is also related to "andrologeia" which was a levy or collection of soldiers for military service ... or a collection (tax) from each individual sent. (A. Deissmann)

The Epistolary Aorist is an understandable idiom, and a rather gracious one, whereby the writer courteously projects himself in imagination into the position of the reader, for whom actions contemporaneous with the time of writing will be past. (C.F.D. Moule)

Since the tithe played such an important part in the OT and in Judaism contemporary with early Christianity, it is surprising to discover that never once is tithing mentioned in any of the instructions given to the church. Paul writes about sharing material possessions to care for the needs of the poor and to sustain the Christian ministry. He urges and commends generosity, but never once does he demand, as a command from God, that any specific amount be given. Paul, however, did demand of his churches that collections be taken for the saints, i.e. for the Christians at Jerusalem. Since the word "logeia" can mean a collection of taxes as well as voluntary contributions collected at worship for charity, it might be assumed that Paul's choice of this unusual word implies an official tax paid by the Pauline churches to the poor in Jerusalem. Paul takes this word for "income tax" and like other special vocabulary words, he uses it to represent a voluntary, non-compulsory, free will act of sharing material possessions with no stipulated amount, such as a tax or tithe, demanded of him. Hence the Christian's giving is not limited to a tithe (tax) of each

year's income. Rather it is done cheerfully, voluntarily, systematically, and with open-ended generosity. (Colin Brown: G.F. Hawthorne)

2 Cor. 9:5 Therefore (inferential), I considered (ἡγέομαι, AMIIS, Epistolary, Deponent; regarded, RBT: objective command decision) it (ellipsis) necessary (Pred. Nom.; urgent, pressing) to urge (παρακαλέω, AAIInf., Constativ, Inf. As Obj. of Verb; plead, beg) my (Acc. Rel.) fellow believers (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the 3-man team) that (Indirect) they might proceed ahead of me (προέρχομαι, AASubj.3P, Constativ, Potential, Deponent; arrive before Paul) to you (Acc. Gen. Ref.; the Corinthians) and (continuative) prepare in advance (προκαταρτίζω, AASubj.3P, Culminative, Potential) your (Poss. Gen.) previously promised (προεπαγγέλλομαι, Perf.MPtc.AFS, Aoristic, Attributive, Deponent; Aoristic: the end result is lost) contribution (Acc. Dir. Obj.), which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) might be (εἶμί, PAInf., Aoristic, Purpose) prepared (Adv. Acc.; ready) as (Comparative) though (adverbial; in the sense of) a voluntary gift (Acc. Manner; gracious blessing) and (adversative) not (neg. adv.) as (Comparative) something one feels forced to give (Acc. Manner; reluctance, extortion).

Greek Text

ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἡγησάμην παρακαλέσαι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς, ἵνα προέλθωσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ προκαταρτίσωσιν τὴν προεπηγγελμένην εὐλογίαν ὑμῶν, ταύτην ἐτοιμίην εἶναι οὕτως ὡς εὐλογία καὶ μὴ ὡς πλεονεξίαν.

Latin Vulgate

necessarium ergo existimavi rogare fratres ut
praeveniant ad vos et praeparent repromissam
benedictionem hanc paratam esse sic quasi benedictionem
non quasi avaritiam

LWB 2 Cor. 9:6 However, this remains true: “He who makes it a habit to sow sparingly [*reluctantly*] shall also reap sparingly, but he who makes it a habit to sow bountifully [*graciously*] shall also reap bountifully.”

KW 2 Cor. 9:6 But [although I am not pressing you to give] this [is true] – he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows in a beneficent, generous spirit, with a view to the blessing of the recipient, shall also reap blessings given in a beneficent, generous manner.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul just reassured the Corinthians that he doesn't want to twist their arms to donate what they originally promised, because that would defeat the grace basis of spritual giving. However, he does quote a verse to remind them of a investment-return principle. A person who year-after-year plants a small amount of seed (Iterative Present tense) will receive in return (Predictive Future tense) a small crop. A person who year-after-year plants a substantial amount of seed will receive in return a substantial crop. This agricultural principle is used by way of analogy to represent grace giving.

Paul probably has quantity in the back of his mind when quoting this verse, since he is so concerned for the welfare of the believers in Jerusalem. As Paul will explain in the next verse, the principle of grace giving is the attitude of the giver, not the quantitative amount. Therefore, words like "sparingly" should bring to mind a negative attitude of reluctance or begrudging the amount you contribute, as opposed to a tiny sum of money. And "bountifully" should bring to mind a positive attitude of grace and blessing, as opposed to a large sum of money.

Below are two sets of comparisons, the first between quantity and quality, the second an elaboration on quality. When taken spiritually, the quantity of the grace gift is what human viewpoint concentrates on; the quality of the grace gift is what divine viewpoint concentrates on.

Agricultural quantity

- sparingly
- bountifully

Spiritual quality

- grudgingly
- blessing

Motivation

- legalistically
- graciously

Attitude

- strings attached
- no strings attached

Result

- no rewards
- rewards

Isn't it interesting that many pastors and evangelists are quick to emphasize the *amount* of your contribution, but are not so quick to emphasize the *attitude* by which you contribute to their cause? It seems as though they aren't trusting in God to provide the amount He deems necessary for their ministry. And isn't it interesting that many believers who contribute emphasize the positive *attitude* they donated under, even though what they contributed was far less than the *quantity* they were able to donate? It seems as though they aren't willing to forgo some luxuries in life to further God's work.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In a sense, the farmer loses the seed he has scattered; he takes the risk of weather conditions, disease, or insects destroying much of the seed. But as he sows, he trusts that God will grant him the satisfaction of reaping a harvest. This is also true spiritually. The word “blessings” (bountifully) has spiritual overtones. (S. Kistemaker)

If Christians were to donate all their belongings to help the poor, their resources to generate additional income would be gone and they themselves would be poor. The members of the early church (Acts 4:34) helped the poor by selling parcels of land or houses, but they did this only from time to time. The apostles never coerced the rich to sell their property, but they expected that each person would give voluntarily from a cheerful heart. By distributing blessing upon blessing to our fellow human beings, we in turn receive multitudes of unexpected blessings from God. Whatever one distributes bountifully will be returned eventually in even greater measure. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 9:6 However (adversative), this (Subj. Nom.) remains true (ellipsis): He (Subj. Nom.) who makes it a habit to sow sparingly (Adv. Manner; grudgingly, reluctantly, miserly) shall also (adjunctive) reap (θερίζω, FAI3S, Predictive; harvest) sparingly (Adv. Manner), but (contrast) he (Subj. Nom.) who makes it a habit to sow (σπείρω, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; plant seed) bountifully (Instr. Manner; on a grace basis) shall also (adjunctive) reap (θερίζω, FAI3S, Predictive; harvest) bountifully (Instr. Manner; grace for grace: spiritual husbandry).

Greek Text

Τοῦτο δέ, ὁ σπείρων φειδομένως φειδομένως καὶ θερίσει, καὶ ὁ σπείρων ἐπ' εὐλογίας ἐπ' εὐλογίας καὶ θερίσει.

Latin Vulgate

hoc autem qui parce seminat parce et metet et qui seminat in benedictionibus de benedictionibus et metet

LWB 2 Cor. 9:7 Each person should always decide according to the mentality of his soul, not reluctantly, nor under compulsion, for God loves a giver with a relaxed mental attitude.

KW 2 Cor. 9:7 Let each one give accordingly as he has purposed in his heart, not out of an annoyed and troubled heart, nor because of necessity, for God loves a cheerful, ready giver.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul now gives some attitudinal conditions related to giving, so the Corinthians (and others throughout history) won't think he is concentrating on the quantity of donation as opposed to the quality of the giver's attitude. First, each person should (Potential Subjunctive mood: as a spiritual obligation related to the giving concept) always (Gnomic Perfect tense: without exception) decide in his own mind and heart (mentality of the soul) when and how much to contribute to God's work. The emphasis here is on the mind, not the emotions. Think, reason, and come to a settled rational conclusion as to your prospects of giving every single time an opportunity comes along.

Second, never give to a worthy cause if your mental state is one of regret or reluctance to depart with the money. This mental attitude sin will nullify any blessing you might receive in return for the contribution. Third, never give to a cause when you are being coerced to give. Your financial situation should not be in a state of distress or trouble; if it is, and you give because someone is putting pressure on you to give, this contribution will also receive no spiritual reward.

God loves (Gnomic Present tense: always without exception) a cheerful giver. "Cheerful" means having a positive mental attitude, not being giddy with emotions. The unfortunate transliteration of the Greek (*hilaron*) and the Latin (*hilarem*) has led some "opportunistic" pastors and evangelists to teach that you should be "hilarious" when you give, preferably in some kind of emotionally unstable condition where your mentality has been suspended and you have forgotten about your legitimate financial responsibilities to your family. These pastors or evangelists and their teachings should be avoided at all costs. They are not properly representing God's spiritual conditions for giving; they have resorted to snake-oil salesmen methodology to get you to empty the contents of your wallet into their bank account.

The Greek word properly translated does not refer to an emotionally-drunk condition of hilarity or goofiness, but rather possessing a benevolent, happy, favorable disposition ... having a kind heart that is disposed to generosity ... positively motivated to assist others ... or having a relaxed mental attitude about a situation. (TDNT) All of these concepts merge comfortably with a decision made in the mentality of your soul, as opposed to a decision made by an emotional state that has rejected the authority of your mentality. In other words, make your decision while you are cool, calm and collected - filled with the Holy Spirit as opposed to being in emotional revolt of the soul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Biblical psychology is practical rather than scientific, but is understandable in its context. Thus, since strong emotion frequently affects the lower parts of the body from the solar plexus downwards, the bowels is the term used where we today, in equally popular terms, would speak of the heart. At the opposite extreme is the mind, intellect, or understanding.

Reason stands somewhere between the two, being sometimes emotional, though less warm than generally understood, and sometimes representing the inner set of the life pattern, including volition. Thus the NT seizes on commonsense descriptive terms to describe centers of emotion, feeling, volition, life pattern, and comprehension. One may class these aspects of the personal psyche, but the Bible is concerned, not with theory, but with bringing every single part of the person into an effective whole through the Holy Spirit giving continuous life to the human spirit. Man is seen as a whole being, and whatever touches one part affects the whole. (*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Colin Brown: J. Stafford Wright, 1971, Zondervan Publishing) This is one of the reasons I translate the Greek word “kardia” the mentality of the soul, since it is referring not to the literal heart, but to the mind and emotions working properly together – the mind in control or authority over the emotions.

Tithing in the Church Age is blasphemous. Tithing in the Age of Israel was income tax. In the Old Testament, it always read “tithes and offerings.” Tithes were the 10% across the board income tax, while offerings embodied the principle of grace giving. Trying to take the income tax of the Old Testament and call it “tithing” today is legalism and nobody ever reaps a reward for it. It’s strictly human viewpoint. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The Greek word “logeia” is used in extra-biblical literature as a special collection of money, an extraordinary tax, a contribution for official services, and a collection for the gods. It is necessary to bear in mind that in the use of “logeia,” especially the sacral use, the primary emphasis obviously does not fall on the element of regular taxation. The choice of the word by Paul does not imply any reference to an assessment, evaluation or “levy which the mother congregation lays on Gentile Christians.” It makes it clear that this is not an imposed tax but a gift gathered, even if in orderly fashion, as a collection. In keeping is the fact that the synonyms which Paul uses for this “logeia” are not taken from the area of taxation, but from that of edification. In other words, they depict acts of love. But this does not rule out the possibility that Paul regarded this collection made by his congregations for the original church as an action parallel to certain Jewish collections. The point is, however, that the real analogy is not the temple (treasury) tax to which there is reference in Matthew 17:24, which does not fall only on the diaspora but is an impost (required income tax) on all adult male Israelites both in Palestine and abroad, and which is an established religious tax on the basis of Exodus 30:11 and Nehemiah 10:33. (TDNT, G. Kittel)

The objection that this “service for Jerusalem” was a kind of tax corresponding to the Jewish temple tax is weakened by the fact that Paul expects only freewill gifts as each individual sees fit. (Colin Brown: H. Schultz)

A semantic anachronism is a fallacy that occurs when a late use of a word is read back into earlier literature. It is sheer semantic anachronism to note that in this text, the Greek word behind “cheerful” is “hilaron” and conclude that what God really loves is a hilarious giver. Perhaps we should play a laugh-track record while the offering plate is being circulated. (*Exegetical Fallacies*, D.A. Carson, 1984, Baker Books)

Paul gives the Corinthians complete freedom and tells them to decide in their own hearts what to give. Each person must ponder this matter in his or her own heart and then decide. (S. Kistemaker) Works of charity, like other good works, should be done with thought and design; whereas some do good only by accident. They comply, it may be hastily, with the importunity of others, without any good design, and give more than they intended, and then repent of it afterwards. Or possibly, had they duly considered all things, they would have given more. Due deliberation, as to this matter of our own circumstances, and those of the persons we are about to relieve, will be very helpful to direct us how liberal we should be in our contributions for charitable uses. (M. Henry)

Giving money is an aspect of true worship, part of our priestly function. Worship always involves giving back to God something we possess from Him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Giving should result from inward resolve, not from impulsive or casual decision. Once the amount to be given has been determined, says Paul, the gift should be given cheerfully. (F.C. Gaebelein)

It is not uncommon to hear sermons practically built on the etymology of some significant word. Sometimes this tendency goes beyond biblical words, as when the word “hilarious” is thought to shed light on giving in this verse. These observations may seem innocuous enough, but unless used with great caution, they tend to create certain associations in the mind of the modern Bible reader that might have been foreign to the original writers. (*Biblical Words & Their Meaning*, Moises Silva, 1983, Academic Books)

2 Cor. 9:7 Each person (Subj. Nom.) should always decide (προαιρέω, Perf.MI3S, Gnostic, Potential Ind. Expressing Obligation) according to the mentality of his (Poss. Gen.) soul (Instr. Manner; heart), not (neg. adv.) reluctantly (Gen. Attend. Circumstances; regretfully, grudgingly, distressed, trapped), nor (neg. adv.) under emotional compulsion (Gen. Attend. Circumstance; necessity, pressure gimmicks, emotional trickery, trouble), for (explanatory; quote from Proverbs 22:8) God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) loves (ἀγαπάω, PAI3S, Gnostic; desires) a giver (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with a relaxed mental attitude (Adv. Acc.; happy, cheerful: cool, calm, and collected).

Greek Text

ἕκαστος καθὼς προήρηται τῇ καρδίᾳ, μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης· ἰλαρόν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός.

Latin Vulgate

unusquisque prout destinavit corde suo non ex tristitia
aut ex necessitate hilarem enim datorem diligit Deus

LWB 2 Cor. 9:8 Moreover, God has the inherent power to make every grace gift superabound to your advantage, so that when you think self-sufficiently in all types of circumstances, you may continue to superabound in every category of intrinsically good work.

KW 2 Cor. 9:8 Moreover, God is powerful to make every grace superabound to you in order that, having always an all-sufficiency, in all things, you may superabound to every good work,

KJV 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:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only does God love a believer who gives graciously to His ministry while in a cool, calm, and collected state of mind, but He has the power (Dramatic Present tense: omnipotence) to take every grace gift you offer accordingly and give you a more rewarding life because of it. He is able to make your grace gift reciprocally superabound (Culminative Aorist tense) to your spiritual advantage! How does He do this? When you make it a practice (Iterative Present tense) to study His Word and utilize its principles (doctrinal application) to solve life's daily problems without falling apart and leaning on others, He will cause your grace giving in conjunction with doctrinal application to superabound in your spiritual life.

Metabolizing doctrine that you have been taught by your pastor-teacher (priesthood of the believer) and applying those doctrinal principles (ambassadorship of the believer) in every kind of circumstance you encounter in life's journey, is the *summam bonum* of the spiritual life. If you follow this divine protocol as a daily practice, you will grow in grace and knowledge and reap an abundance of spiritual rewards. If you add to this divine protocol the proper attitude of grace giving when an opportunity arises, you will reap a superabundance (exponential increase) of spiritual rewards. Grace giving under these circumstances is like "icing on the cake."

Why do I use the word "if" when referring to abundant and superabundant blessings? The Potential Subjunctive mood means it is up to you; God has the power to bless you, but there are experiential requirements before He will do so. What kind of requirements does he have in order to obtain these spiritual blessings? Whatever you do in life (your studying, thinking, working, recreating) must be done by the filling of the Spirit ... then it qualifies as an intrinsically (by divine standards) good undertaking and will be spiritually rewarded. If you are rarely (or never) filled with the Spirit, whatever you do will be human (of the flesh) good and will not receive a spiritual reward – being burned at the Judgment Seat as wood, hay, or stubble. But add grace-giving to the grace-living

equation and your spiritual rewards multiply exponentially – gold, silver, or precious stones.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Ultimately Christians can dispense only what they have received, whether material or spiritual. The good work is done through God’s enabling. (D. Lowery) Can a man be a loser by doing that with which God is pleased? May not such a one be sure that he shall some way or other be a gainer? Nay, are not the love and favour of God better than all other things, better than life itself? (M. Henry)

Note the alliteration of “pas” (four times), “pantote,” and “perisseuo” (twice). (S. Kistemaker) Another way to capture the attention of the listener or reader is through the figure of speech known as paronomasia. It involves a fullness of expression by repeating words that are similar in sound, but not necessarily similar in sense or meaning. In this verse there is “panti pantote pasan” or “in all things always having all sufficiency.” (*Biblical Hermeneutics*, Walter Kaiser, 1994, Zondervan Publishing)

Paul says that he hopes that they abound and have an abundance at all times so that they have “independence” or, as it is perhaps better translated here, “enough.” The Stoics and Cynics used this word of self-sufficiency, a philosophy of life to which Paul did not subscribe, since he believed in the sufficiency of God. But here he refers to material sufficiency. (B. Witherington, III)

All aspects of worship are based upon accurate, doctrinal thinking. Giving is a mental attitude, and the privilege of contributing to the Lord’s service is extended to believers who understand God’s grace. But by far the most important form of worship is concentrating on the teaching of God’s Word. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Giving is, to the natural eye, the way to lessen our store, not to increase it. The Bible says it is the way to increase it. To believe this it is only necessary to believe in the power, providence, and promise of God. God is able to make the paradox, “he that scatters, increases,” prove true. The idea, therefore, is that God is able to increase your wealth to the point of sufficiency or contentment. (C. Hodge) The word “autarkeia” means self-sufficiency, the feeling of being able to rely on one’s own resources without having to look to others or, as the Stoics said, without being dependent on the caprices of fortune. It also describes the contentment which such self-sufficiency engenders. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 9:8 Moreover (continuative), God (Subj. Nom.; the Father) has the inherent power (δυνατέω, PAI3S, Dramatic; divine omnipotence, ability) to make every (Acc. Spec.) grace gift (Acc. Dir. Obj.) superabound (περισσεύω, AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; increase, overflow) to your advantage (Acc. Adv.; spiritually), so that (Purpose) when you make it a habit to think (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMP,

Iterative, Temporal; doctrinal application) **self-sufficiently** (Complementary Acc.; using the doctrine in your soul rather than leaning on others) **in all types of** (Dat. Measure) **circumstances** (adverb; at all times), **you may continue to superabound** (περισσεύω, PASubj.2P, Iterative, Potential; multiply) **in every category of** (Acc. Spec.) **intrinsically good** (Complementary Acc.; satisfactory by divine standards) **work** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; activity, undertaking, occupation).

Greek Text

δυνατεῖ δὲ ὁ θεὸς πᾶσαν χάριν περισσεύσαι εἰς ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἐν παντὶ πάντοτε πᾶσαν αὐτάρκειαν ἔχοντες περισσεύητε εἰς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν,

Latin Vulgate

potens est autem Deus omnem gratiam abundare facere in vobis ut in omnibus semper omnem sufficientiam habentes abundetis in omne opus bonum

LWB 2 Cor. 9:9 Just as it stands written: “He was generous, he gave to the poor, his righteousness will abide during his age [lifetime].”

KW 2 Cor. 9:9 Even as it stands written, He [the liberal person] scattered abroad, he gave to those who are poor, his righteousness abides forever.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the traditional Intensive Perfect tense to quote an Old Testament verse. The Constative Aorist tense is used twice once to point out how generous this person was in his overall attitude, and secondly to provide an example of giving to the poor. Because of this positive mental attitude, the Futuristic Present tense says his righteousness (as attested by those he assisted through grace orientation) will abide during his lifetime (his age). A person who follows this example during the Church Age will receive a reward for his liberality provided he performed these generous deeds in the filling of the Spirit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Practical righteousness endures forever not only through the deeds but in the doer as he is progressively transformed into Christlikeness. Ultimately a believer’s reward is the culmination of the process. (D. Lowery)

2 Cor. 9:9 Just as (comparative) it stands written (γράφω, Perf.PI3S, Intensive; in Psalms 111:9): “He was generous (σκορπίζω, AAI3S, Constative), he gave (δίδωμι, AAI3S, Constative) to the poor (Dat. Adv.); his (Poss. Gen.) righteousness (Subj. Nom.) will abide (μένω, PAI3S, Futuristic; continue, remain) during his age (Acc. Extent of Time; lifetime).

Greek Text

καθὼς γέγραπται, Ἐσκόρπισεν, ἔδωκεν τοῖς πένησιν, ἡ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

Latin Vulgate

sicut scriptum est dispersit dedit pauperibus iustitia eius manet in aeternum

LWB 2 Cor. 9:10 Likewise, He Who keeps on providing resources for the purpose of sowing and bread for the purpose of eating, shall continue to provide and multiply your resources, as well as increasing the harvest from your charity,”

KW 2 Cor. 9:10 Now, He, who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, shall also supply and multiply your seed [your means of giving] and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;).

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The verse Paul is quoting goes on to encourage grace givers, by stating that the same God who keeps on supplying (Iterative Present tense) seed for planting and the ultimate bread for eating which comes from the agricultural harvest, will also provide all the resources that a grace giver might require. It is no more difficult for the sovereign God to supply agricultural needs as it is for Him to supply monetary needs. The purpose for His providing seed is for (Customary Present tense) planting it and the purpose for His providing bread is for eating it. So if He can provide these basic needs, He can obviously provide an adequate income for you to continue your grace-giving ambassadorship function.

Three Progressive Future tenses state that He will keep on providing (1) and multiplying (2) your resources as well as increasing (3) your harvest, a promise to those who would like to participate in grace-giving, but who might be afraid of going bankrupt. It is quite interesting to compare two different Greek words Paul uses in this verse. God will multiply (exponentially) your resources, but He will only increase (incrementally) the

harvest from your grace-gifts. Why would He provide exponentially, but reward incrementally? Answer: The amount that you give may not be in proportion to what you receive. He leaves it up to you to determine how much of your resources you pass on to others. The initial provision comes from God, the grace-gift comes from you. One is certain to be exponential, the other may or may not be in accordance with what He provides to you. It would be a rare occasion for a person to graciously give 100% of what he received to God's work and/or people. If that were possible, the harvest would be exponential, rather than just incremental.

Why is it rare for a person to give 100% of his resources to charity? In most cases, you must keep some percentage of what you receive (earn) for your own living expenses, as well as for future investment opportunities and a percentage for your retirement plan. God is a capitalist. He understands and blesses wise investments. He also commands everyone to set aside part of their profits or wages for retirement purposes. He does not want any of us to depend on our children, the local assembly, or the government for our subsistence in old age. Whatever resources He provides us with, He expects us to do five things: (1) pay for our current living expenses, (2) pay off our debts, (3) make wise investments so as to turn a profit, (4) set aside adequate funds for our retirement, and (5) give graciously to His work and/or His people who are in need. Because of the first four personal financial considerations, He will provide resources to us on an exponential basis, and after we have taken care of those personal considerations, the remaining (incremental) amount is expected to go to His work and/or people. The harvest from the grace-giving will be commensurate with our attitude in giving and how responsible we are as stewards with the resources He provides us with. Ouch! That principle stings a bit, doesn't it?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Greek word used for "providing" means to furnish a chorus at one's own expense. (A.T. Robertson) God has provided the Corinthians with seed, that is, money, and seed is for sowing, in this case in a poor Jerusalem field. In part the seed was to provide bread for themselves, but God also gave it to them and multiplied it so that they could be a blessing to others and so produce a crop of righteousness. Good acts have good consequences and do not go unrewarded. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul does not quote but his allusion comes from Isaiah 55:10 and Hosea 10:12: "Plant righteousness, and reap the blessings that your devotion to me will produce." Notice that Paul does not say that God will bless the giver with a harvest of material good. Alluding to this prophesy in Hosea, he writes that for the giver God will increase a harvest of righteousness. God blesses a cheerful giver with riches in every respect: materially, economically, spiritually, intellectually, socially, temporarily, and eternally. His blessings are imparted to the giver in various forms and often at different times. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 9:10 Likewise (comparative), He (Subj. Nom.; God the Father) Who keeps on providing (ἐπιχορηγέω, PAptc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival; supplying) resources (Acc. Dir. Obj.; spores, representing the Word of God) for the purpose of sowing (σπείρω, PAptc.DMS, Customary, Purpose) and (connective) bread (Acc. Dir. Obj.; food) for the purpose of eating (Acc. Purpose), shall continue to provide (χορηγέω, FAI3S, Progressive; supply) and (connective) multiply (πληθύνω, FAI3S, Progressive) your (Poss. Gen.) resources (Acc. Dir. Obj.), as well as (continuative) increasing (αὐξάνω, FAI3S, Progressive; incremental benefits) the harvest (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from your (Poss. Gen.) charity (Abl. Source; righteousness),”

Greek Text

ὁ δὲ ἐπιχορηγῶν σπόρον τῷ σπείροντι καὶ ἄρτον εἰς βρώσιν χορηγήσει καὶ πληθυνεῖ τὸν σπόρον ὑμῶν καὶ αὐξήσει τὰ γενήματα τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὑμῶν·

Latin Vulgate

qui autem administrat semen seminanti et panem ad manducandum praestabit et multiplicabit semen vestrum et augebit incrementa frugum iustitiae vestrae

LWB 2 Cor. 9:11 So that you will be enriched in every way as concerns each category of generosity, which keeps on accomplishing through us gratitude towards God,

KW 2 Cor. 9:11 You being enriched in everything resulting in all liberality which is of such a nature as to achieve through us thanksgiving to God,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul applies the concepts from the Old Testament verse to the Corinthians, pointing out to them that God’s desire and purpose (Telic Participle) is to enrich them (Futuristic Present tense) both spiritually and materially so they will have the means to be generous to the less fortunate. God’s generous blessings to the Corinthians would then enable Paul and his colleagues to continue assisting (Iterative Present tense) the Jerusalem Christians, as well as others in the mission field. The way this plan should work is that God provides the necessary resources to the Corinthians, the Corinthians provide grace gifts to the

collection team, and through the collection team the gifts are delivered to the poor. The end result is thanksgiving to God.

Paul rather subtly merges both spiritual and material generosity in his consideration. If the Lord provided the Corinthians material prosperity without spiritual prosperity, they might think they were the sole source of their prosperity and they would not be so generous to the poor in Jerusalem. Also, there are other types of generosity that could be provided that are needed as well, for instance, prayer for the saints in Jerusalem, food and housing for the collection team and future missionary teams, and the training and sending out missionaries from their own assembly.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Corinthian participation in this charitable gesture would demonstrate the reality of their confession and the vitality of their spiritual lives. (D. Lowery)

When Paul's heart was all ablaze with passion, as in 2 Corinthians 9:11-14, he piles up participles like boulders on the mountain-side, a sort of volcanic eruption. But there is always a path through these participles. Paul would not let himself be caught in a net of mere grammatical niceties. (A.T. Robertson) The participles in verses 11 and 13 may stand for semitisms – for imperatives or indicatives. (C.F.D. Moule)

2 Cor. 9:11 so that you will be enriched (πλουτίζω, PPpTc.NMP, Futuristic, Telic; sufficient) in every way (Loc. Sph.; both spiritually and materially) as concerns (towards) each category of (Acc. Spec.; both spiritual & material) generosity (Acc. Result), which (adj.; generosity) keeps on accomplishing (κατεργάζομαι, PMI3S, Iterative, Deponent; producing, working) through us (Abl. Means; mediatorial role) gratitude (Acc. Dir. Obj.; thanksgiving) towards God (Dat. Adv.),

Greek Text

ἐν παντὶ πλουτιζόμενοι εἰς πᾶσαν ἀπλότητα, ἥτις κατεργάζεται δι' ἡμῶν εὐχαριστίαν τῷ θεῷ.

Latin Vulgate

ut in omnibus locupletati abundetis in omnem simplicitatem quae operatur per nos gratiarum actionem Deo

LWB 2 Cor. 9:12 Because the support of this ministry is not only for the purpose of providing what is lacking by the saints, but also for the purpose of continuing to superabound with ever-increasing gratitudes toward God.

KW 2 Cor. 9:12 Because the ministration of this sacred service is not only filling up the things which the saints are lacking, but also is superabounding in many thanksgivings to God,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul wants the Corinthians to understand that grace-giving is a bonified form of worship. All this talk about the poor in Jerusalem and the proper attitude and mechanics of giving might lead them to believe this ministry is a one-way street. However, the support of Paul's ministry does not (Customary Present tense) only provide the obvious benefits for the needy, but it also provides benefits to the donors. The second purpose of this ministry is to provide the opportunity for the Corinthians to keep on superabounding (Iterative Present tense) not only in their level of finances, but their level of gratitude towards the ultimate source of their blessings. Paul hopes that both the spiritual and material objectives of grace-giving are obtained. As the Corinthians receive a superabundance of resources from the Lord, they should also be cognizant of where those resources came from. As their blessings increase, their gratitude towards the Lord for those blessings should also increase. That's a more subtle dimension of Paul's ministry to the poor.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul represents his calls to generosity as calls for the grace of God Himself to be extended to more and more people. That in turn becomes a call for increased thanksgiving to God and thus a call to glorify God. Givers do not just give. They worship. (T. Schreiner)

In speaking of the collection for the poor in Jerusalem, Paul has other synonyms besides "logeia" (income tax), among them "leitourgia" (financial support), which is a more general term similarly associated with "logeia" in Papyrus Lond. In 1 Corinthians 16 Donnaeus and H. Grotius proposed to alter "logeia" to "eulogia," as the collection is named in 2 Corinthians 9 (especially verse 5). This is of course unnecessary: but it does not seem to the author to be quite impossible that, conversely, the first "eulogia" in the latter passage should be altered to "logeia." (A. Deissmann)

2 Cor. 9:12 because (causal) the support (Subj. Nom.) of this (Gen. Spec.) ministry (Obj. Gen.) is (είμι, PAI3S, Customary) not only (neg. adv.) for the purpose of providing (προσαναπληρώω, PAPtc.NFS, Customary, Purpose) what is lacking (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by the saints (Gen. Poss.; in this case for those in Jerusalem), but (adversative) also (adjunctive) for the purpose of continuing to superabound (περισσεύω,

PAPtc.NFS, Iterative, Purpose) with ever-increasing (Gen. Content) gratitudes (Gen. Attend. Circumstances; thanksgivings) toward God (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

ὅτι ἡ διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας ταύτης οὐ μόνον ἐστὶν προσαιαπληροῦσα τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν ἁγίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ περισσεύουσα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ θεῷ.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam ministerium huius officii non solum supplet ea quae desunt sanctis sed etiam abundat per multas gratiarum actiones in Domino

LWB 2 Cor. 9:13 Meanwhile they [the Jerusalem saints] are glorifying God, due to the evidence of this ministry, on the basis of obedience to your profession concerning the good news of Christ and the generosity related to your contribution to them and to all others,

KW 2 Cor. 9:13 Inasmuch as they [the saints in Judea] through your approved character, which approval finds its basis in this ministration, are glorifying God for the obedience of your confession with respect to the good news regarding the Christ and the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

KJV 2 Cor. 9:13 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;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While God is providing abundant resources to the Corinthians, and they are accumulating a substantial part of these resources for the collection team, the saints in Jerusalem (meanwhile back at the ranch) are glorifying (Dramatic Present tense) God to the maximum! They are praising Him for His abundant supply of resources to the Corinthians, for His ministry which He has entrusted to Paul, and for the working of His Spirit of obedience in the Corinthians. The Corinthians, of course, are being reminded of their necessity to be obedient in the background. Nevertheless, they are making good their prior profession related both to Christ and their promise to contribute to the ministry. Evidently, some of the Corinthians are giving graciously to poverty-stricken believers in other geographical locations as well.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Actions speak louder than words. The brethren in Jerusalem will know by this collection that Gentiles make as good Christians as Jews. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 9:13 Meanwhile they (the saints in Jerusalem) are glorifying (δοξάζω, PAPTc.NMP, Dramatic, Temporal) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.), due to the evidence (Abl. Cause; proof, character) of this (Gen. Spec.) ministry (Adv. Gen. Ref.; grace-giving ministry), on the basis of obedience (Instr. Means) to your (Poss. Gen.) profession (Adv. Gen. Ref.; acknowledgement) concerning the good news (Acc. Gen. Ref.) of Christ (Abl. Source) and (connective) the generosity (Dat. Ind. Obj.) related to your (Poss. Gen.) contribution (Adv. Gen. Ref.; grace giving) to them (Acc. Adv.; those in Jerusalem) and (connective) to all others (Acc. Adv.; in other geographical locations),

Greek Text

διὰ τῆς δοκιμῆς τῆς διακονίας ταύτης δοξάζοντες τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἀπλότῃ τῆς κοινωνίας εἰς αὐτοὺς καὶ εἰς πάντας,

Latin Vulgate

per probationem ministerii huius glorificantes Deum in oboedientia confessionis vestrae in evangelium Christi et simplicitate communicationis in illos et in omnes

LWB 2 Cor. 9:14 As they also, with prayers on your behalf, long for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

KW 2 Cor. 9:14 While they also, with petitions on your behalf, are longing after you because of the grace of God upon you,

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

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses yet another Temporal Participle to relate to the Corinthians that the Jerusalem saints are simultaneously praising God for His blessings and offering intercessory prayers for the Corinthians. It is also customary for grace-oriented believers to enjoy being around other grace-oriented believers. The Jerusalem saints are longing to meet and become friends with their Corinthians brothers and sisters in the faith. They have probably heard many of the negative reports about the Corinthians, but in their

estimation, these problems are minute compared to the immeasurable grace the Lord is obviously pouring upon them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When Paul speaks of longing and desire in a good sense, he uses the “epipitheo” word group, which is closely related to the “epithumia” word group for lust and pleasure. (Colin Brown: H. Schonweiss) If the request is made not in one’s own interest, but on behalf of someone else, then “deomai” means to intercede. Thus intercession is often the visible and practical expression of that heartfelt affection and fellowship which exists among Christians. (ibid)

2 Cor. 9:14 As they also (adjunctive), with prayers (Instr. Means; intercessory) on your behalf (Gen. Adv.), long for (ἐπιποθέω, PAPtc.GMP, Customary, Temporal) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.), because of the surpassing (ὑπερβάλλω, PAPtc.AFS, Descriptive, Attributive; immeasurable) grace (Causal Acc.) of God (Abl. Source) upon you (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

καὶ αὐτῶν δεήσει ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐπιποθούντων ὑμᾶς διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐφ’ ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

et ipsorum obsecratione pro vobis desiderantium vos propter eminentem gratiam Dei in vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

KW 2 Cor. 9:15 Thanks be to God for His ineffable gift.

KJV 2 Cor. 9:15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul adds his own personal thanks to God for providing such a superabounding, unimaginable, financial resource gift to the Corinthians. The entire process of providing, collecting, and distributing financial blessings from a group of donors (for their spiritual benefit) to a group of recipients (for their material benefit) is astounding to Paul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the grace of God Christians are rewarded in three ways for their generosity: (1) the givers are enriched, (2) the receivers’ needs are met, and (3) God, the Source of all

blessing, is praised. (D. Lowery) God receives the tribute that is due Him for His providence to make the collection a blessing to the entire church. (S. Kistemaker)

God's indescribable gift could be the collection for the saints in Jerusalem, His Son, Jesus Christ, His inexpressible gift of salvation, or the gift of eternal life. (S. Kistemaker) The free or gracious gift, one given with no strings attached, is from heaven. Jesus Christ became the gracious gift – the God-Man, the unique person of the universe, the only Savior. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Such glorying is in truth mainstream biblical Christianity – an immeasurably richer reality than can ever emerge from any account of the love of God that stops short at general goodwill. May all God's people come to appreciate it. (B. Ware)

2 Cor. 9:15 Thanks (Subj. Nom.) be (ellipsis) to God (Dat. Adv.) for His (Abl. Source) indescribable (Instr. Measure; unable to adequately recount, wonder beyond description, words fail to express the nature of the gift) gift (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

Greek Text

χάρις τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνεκδιηγῆτῳ αὐτοῦ δωρεᾷ.

Latin Vulgate

gratias Deo super inenarrabili dono eius

Chapter 10

LWB 2 Cor. 10:1 Now, I myself, Paul, encourage you by the genuine humility and grace orientation of Christ, who, on the one hand, when in your presence, *seem* meek and mild, but on the other hand, when I am absent, I am rather courageous towards you,

KW 2 Cor. 10:1 Now, I myself, Paul, beg of you, please, through the meekness and sweet reasonableness of the Christ, who indeed in personal appearance am [as some of you say by way of reproach] grovelling, slavish, mean-spirited [the pagan attitude towards the Christian grace of humility] among you, but being absent, am of good courage toward you, [however that may be],

KJV 2 Cor. 10:1 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:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

By using the person pronoun “myself” Paul begins this passage by commenting on a personal note. As with other assemblies he addresses by letter, Paul (Customary Present tense) encourages them by the genuine humility and grace orientation of Christ. Both of these words are loaded with both doctrinal concepts and sanctified sarcasm. Some of Paul’s detractors, who have no concept of “genuine humility,” have accused him of behaving like a slave rather than a free man. And having no concept of “grace orientation,” they also accused him of being inordinately modest by Greek standards. Paul takes their humanistic use of these two words and transforms them into attributes of Christ that he hopes to emulate.

Paul continues with his sarcastic introduction to this passage, by letting the Corinthians know he has heard about these slanderous remarks made by his detractors. They have accused Paul of being meek and mild (Casper Milktoast) when he is in Corinth, but courageous (Leo the Lion) when he is gone. In other words, they accuse him of being a sweetheart when he is in their presence and wants to avoid a confrontation, but as soon as he leaves he becomes a tough guy again. Paul compares and contrasts these two comments that have been spread about him using the Customary Present tense, meaning his opposition says he always behaves this way no matter where he goes, i.e., that it is his customary *modus operandi*. Ironically, Paul’s detractors always wait until he is gone before spreading these slanders; they are quiet, lurking in the shadows, when he is present.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This emphatic stress on his own person is the fit introduction to the portion of the epistle which, beyond any other part of his writings, is to lay open his individual life and character. (*The Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*, Arthur P. Stanley, London, 1876) Paul is here defending his own apostolic authority where the whole point turns on his personality. In this chapter, he uses first the singular, then the plural. But it is not credible that here Paul has in mind anyone other than himself. It may be that at this point Paul took the pen from the amanuensis and wrote himself. (A.T. Robertson)

The following chapters are marked by satire and sarcasm, spirited personal defense, reproach directed towards the Corinthians and bitter attacks levelled at outsiders who have infiltrated and are now influencing the congregation. Paul, finding his authority usurped and his apostleship called into question, was forced, against his better judgment, to provide a strong personal defense and to mount a vigorous attack against his opponents. (C. Kruse) Here, and in many similar passages of this section, he is evidently adopting or quoting the actual taunts of his adversaries. (F.W. Farrar)

There is no place in which the apostle Paul met with more opposition from false apostles than at Corinth; he had many enemies there. Let not any of the ministers of Christ think it strange if they meet with perils, not only from enemies, but from false brethren; for Paul himself did so. Though he was blameless and inoffensive in all his carriage, so

condescending and useful to all, yet there were those who bore him ill-will, who envied him, and did all they could to undermine him, and lessen his interest and reputation. Therefore he vindicates himself from their imputation, and arms the Corinthians against their insinuations. (M. Henry)

Paul concedes the point that he was base among them, but verses 2 and 11 show that he does so only to gain another point. This is an example of synchoresis, or making a concession of one point to gain another. (E.W. Bullinger) As is his custom, Paul often quotes the very words of his antagonists, which in this case are “subservient” and “bold.” Paul deliberately chooses this taunt of his detractors, for in his vocabulary the word “subservient” has a positive meaning and is akin to meekness. But his opponents use it negatively to present him as weak, miserable, and unimportant. (S. Kistemaker)

When Paul sensed that new danger had risen he wrote a blistering note, full of irony, invective, ridicule, and self-defense. This is 2 Corinthians 10-13, at the heart of which is Paul’s “Fool’s Narrative.” It was dispatched to Corinth in a bold attempt to ward off present danger, and to accomplish what previous efforts had failed to achieve. (R.P. Martin) Paul was forced to counteract the work of the false apostles, for they were undermining his authority in Corinth. They invaded the church he had founded and sought to destroy his work. (S. Kistemaker)

Because Paul is dealing with a complex and interlocking set of problems, he must follow the procedure known as “insinuatio,” the indirect approach. In this rhetorical move one only alludes to the major issue that is under dispute in the early stages of the rhetorical discourse, reserving the real discussion of the major bone of contention for the end of the discourse, where it is attacked, using much *pathos*, in a more direct fashion. Aristotle is very clear on this point. The closing stages of one’s forensic argument must include both praise and defense of one’s self and blame of one’s opponent - precisely what we find in the next three chapters. Some scholars point to the difference in tone between chapters 10-13 and 1-9 as decisive evidence that these cannot be two parts of the same letter. This fails to take into account the rhetorical conventions that Paul is following. A sudden change in tone and atmosphere was not unusual in a document using forensic rhetoric, especially when the case was difficult and a firm appeal to the stronger emotions (*pathos*) near the end was required to win the audience. (B. Witherington, III)

We shall win goodwill for ourselves if we refer to our own acts and services without arrogance, if we weaken the effect of charges that have been brought or of some suspicion of less honorable dealing that has been cast on us, if we dilate on the misfortunes that have come to us or the difficulties that we still face, and if we use prayers and entreaties with a humble and submissive spirit. (*On Inoffensive Self-Praise*, Cicero, Bantam Books) Paul follows quite closely the advice given here when he engages in inoffensive self-praise.

There is a most surprising break between chapters 9 and 10. Up to chapter 9 everything seems to be going well. The breach is healed and the quarrel is over. Chapters 8 and 9

deal with the collection for the Church at Jerusalem, and, now that that practical matter is dealt with, we might expect Paul to draw to a close. Instead, we find four chapters which are the saddest and the sorest chapters Paul ever wrote. It makes us wonder how they got there. Twice in 2 Corinthians Paul speaks of a severe letter that he had written, a letter so stern that at one time he almost regretted ever having written it (2 Cor. 2:4, 7:8). That description does not at all fit 1 Corinthians. So we are left with two alternatives - either the severe letter is lost altogether or at least part of it is contained in these chapters 10 to 13. (*The Letters to the Corinthians*, William Barclay, 1975, Westminster Press)

Chapters 10-13 are so much more vehement and severe than the former part of the Epistle, and the whole style and tone of the Epistle at this point changes so completely, that many have supposed that this is in reality another letter, and some have even identified it with the letter alluded to in Chapter 7:8-12. There is no trace of external evidence in favour of this view. It is much more probable that Paul would here have ended the letter but for fresh information given him by Titus, or the arrival of some new messenger from Corinth, from whom he learned the bitter way in which his enemies spoke of him. (*Pulpit Commentary: 2 Corinthians*, F.W. Farrar, 1962, Eerdmans Publishing)

2 Cor. 10:1 **Now** (transitional), **I myself** (Subj. Nom., personal pronoun), **Paul** (Nom. Appos.), **encourage** (παρακαλέω, PAIIS, Customary; urge, request) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **by the genuine humility** (Abl. Means; internal) **and** (connective) **grace orientation** (Abl. Means; external) **of Christ** (Poss. Gen.), **who** (Nom. Appos.; Paul quoting his reversionistic critics), **on the one hand** (correlative), **when in your presence** (Acc. Extent of Time; face-to-face with the Corinthians), **seem** (ellipsis) **meek and mild** (Pred. Nom.; lacking confidence, pathetic cowardice, pusillanimous, timid), **but on the other hand** (contrast, compare), **when I am absent** (ἀπειμι, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Temporal; gone away from, departed), **I am rather courageous** (θαρρέω, PAIIS, Customary; insolent, confident, bold, bravado) **towards you** (Acc. Gen. Ref.),

Greek Text

Αὐτὸς δὲ ἐγὼ Παῦλος παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς διὰ τῆς πραύτητος καὶ ἐπιεικείας τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς κατὰ πρόσωπον μὲν ταπεινὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀπὼν δὲ θαρρῶ εἰς ὑμᾶς·

Latin Vulgate

ipse autem ego Paulus obsecro vos per mansuetudinem et modestiam Christi qui in facie quidem humilis inter vos absens autem confido in vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 10:2 But on the contrary, I am praying that when I was present, I did not act boldly with arrogant self-confidence, supposing myself to be presumptuously brave in the presence of some who consequently consider us as walking according to the flesh.

KW 2 Cor. 10:2 I beg of you, please, that when I am present, I may not be courageous with the confidence with which I am counting on myself to be bold toward certain who take account of us as ordering our behavior in accordance with mere human considerations.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:2 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has heard the rumors and insults hurled at him by his detractors and is greatly concerned about the impression he left on the Corinthians after his last visit. He uses the Descriptive Present tense to tell them that he is currently praying that he did not leave such a negative impression. He prays that when (Temporal Participle) he was previously in Corinth (Historical Present tense), he did not act fearlessly (Constative Aorist tense) with arrogant self-sufficiency, trusting in his own ability rather than God's direction. He also prays that he did not consider himself at that time (Historical Present tense) to be courageous or brave out of presumption (Constative Aorist tense), especially in front of some Corinthians who had heard bad rumors about Paul from the false teachers and so had questions about his integrity in the first place.

It would be bad enough if these borderline ("on the fence") Corinthians assumed Paul was operating (Iterative Present tense) in carnality, but the worst thing he could imagine was that he might have done something wrong that would cause them to impute his bad behavior to his colleagues – all the singulars Paul used to describe himself suddenly turned into the plural "us." Paul is hoping to convey to the Corinthians that he is constantly monitoring his behavior, being as careful as possible not to bring an ill report upon himself or to his colleagues by way of association. They are all walking according to the Spirit, not the flesh, placing their trust and confidence in Christ Jesus, not in themselves. In other words, they are living the same spiritual life that they are trying to teach the Corinthians to live. They are walking the talk.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The carnal Christian is characterized by a "walk" that is on the same plane as that of the "natural" man. "Are you not carnal, and walk as men?" The objectives and affections are centered in the same spiritual sphere as that of the "natural" man. In contrast to such a fleshly walk, we are to walk in the Spirit. (L.S. Chafer)

Pau's opponents regarded the apostle not only as an ordinary man, but as acting under the control of his corrupt nature, governed by selfish or malicious feelings, and relying on himself. (R.V.G. Tasker) Paul begins to respond to the accusations by setting up an extended use of military metaphors. He piles up military (martial) figures – waging war, weapons, warfare, the destruction of strongholds, destroying every obstacle, taking captives, and standing ready to punish (court-martial) disobedience. (C. Kruse)

It is clear that the Corinthians had charged Paul with being bold enough when he was not face to face with them, but a pretty poor creature when actually there. They are saying that when he is absent he can write things that he has not the courage to say in their presence. Paul's reply is that he prays that he may not have occasions to deal with them personally as he knows he is quite capable of doing. Letters are dangerous things. A man will often write with a bitterness and peremptoriness which he would never use to another person's face. Exchange of letters can do a deal of harm which might well have been avoided by a face to face discussion. But Paul's claim is that he would never write anything which he was not prepared to say. (W. Barclay)

2 Cor. 10:2 but on the contrary (adversative), I am praying (δέομαι, PMI1S, Descriptive, Deponent) that when I was present (πάρειμι, PAPtc. NMS, Historical, Temporal; last time Paul was in Corinth), I did not (neg. adv.) act boldly (θαρρέω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Articular; fearlessly) with arrogant self-confidence (Instr. Manner; trusting in his ability rather than God's), supposing myself (λογίζομαι, PMI1S, Historical, Deponent) to be presumptuously brave (τολμάω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Articular) in the presence of some (Prep. Acc.; Corinthian believers in emotional revolt of the soul) who (Acc. Gen. Ref.) consequently (temporal) consider (λογίζομαι, PMPTc.AMP, Customary, Substantival, Deponent) us (Acc. Dir. Obj.; Paul and his colleagues) as walking (περιπατέω, PAPtc.AMP, Iterative, Temporal; ordering our behavior, conduct) according to the flesh (Adv. Acc.; in carnality, according to the old sin nature).

Greek Text

δέομαι δὲ τὸ μὴ παρῶν θαρρήσαι τῇ πεποιθήσει ἢ λογίζομαι τολμήσαι ἐπί τινας τοὺς λογιζομένους ἡμᾶς ὡς κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦντας.

Latin Vulgate

rogo autem ne praesens audeam per eam confidentiam qua existimo audere in quosdam qui arbitrantur nos tamquam secundum carnem ambulemus

LWB 2 Cor. 10:3 For although we walk in an earthly body, we are not continually fighting a battle according to the norms and standards of the flesh,

KW 2 Cor. 10:3 For, though we are ordering our behavior in the sphere of human experience, not in accordance with mere human considerations are we waging warfare [against evil],

KJV 2 Cor. 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul immediately concedes (Concessive Participle) that we live our lives on earth in a physical body, but we are not continually (Iterative Present tense) waging war (Latin: conducting a military campaign) corresponding to our physical bodies. The daily battles we fight are often carried on in the spiritual realm, where angels and demons are arrayed against each other about us. We may look like we are living just like everyone else (unbelievers) by going to work, eating, drinking, recreating, and the like, but there is a hidden meaning, purpose and definition in the mature Christian's life that is unseen. The unseen conflict of this life is in the spiritual realm.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Doctrine in the soul is the source of divine viewpoint and your sole defense against reversionism and the influence of evil. Nobility of character, impact for Christ, spiritual dynamics, stability, confidence, and glorification of the Lord are all related to what you think – the proper function of the soul. A thought can make or break you! As a believer, you are literally a walking battlefield; you are continuously engaged in an inner conflict – human viewpoint versus divine viewpoint. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Satan knows that his time is coming to an end, and so he uses every available weapon to resist defeat. In his arsenal he has the weapons of deceit, lies, subterfuge, guile, intimidation, compulsion, and force. (S. Kistemaker)

In one sense there is no escaping the flesh. But in this passage Paul makes an important distinction, "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh." While we must live out our lives here and now in the flesh we need not live them in accordance with the standards that our lower nature would set. The flesh has its appetites, and these all too easily become the occasion of sin. To do the lusts of the flesh, then, is the natural thing. All unregenerate men do this. It matters not whether a man lives in crude and blatant lust, or in a refined intellectuality, if he is basically concerned to carry out his own desires (even though these desires seem to him 'good') he is living "in the lusts of the flesh." It is not easy for us to grasp the truth that, man being what he is, there is an element of sin even in his 'good' works. (L. Morris)

It is crucial that all Christians see their life as a warfare. Life is war because the maintenance of our faith and the laying hold on eternal life is a constant fight. Paul makes it clear (1 Thess. 3:5) that the number one target of Satan is faith (doctrine). Satan is fighting always to bring us to ruin by destroying our faith. Concerning his ministry, Paul says “Though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.” So life is war and ministry is war. The need of the hour is a global wartime mentality. I say “wartime” because life is war. I say “global” because “the field is the world.” (J. Piper)

According to the “law of envoys,” mistreating an ambassador constituted an act of war. Since Paul considers himself an “ambassador for Christ,” the warfare theme in our passage may also reflect that connection. (J. Scott) Paul admits that his apostleship in no way renders him superior to human infirmity. He is no superman, but has to walk in the flesh (human body) as all other men. But in the exercise of his apostleship, which involves him in a spiritual campaign in which he is always on active service, he is not at the mercy of the instincts of corrupt human nature, nor does he have to rely on his own human resources. Frail human being though he is, as a man in Christ he is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Here lies the permanent source and the unfailing supply of his supernatural strength and courage. (R.V.G. Tasker)

Paul uses the debater’s technique to compare two uses of the Greek word “sarx” - living in his physical body (which is true) versus fighting spiritual warfare according to the flesh (which is not true). This is a sarcastic reply to the self-righteous criticisms against Paul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Force and poise are not synonymous. Silent forces are often mighty. A man who is ever anxious to “assert himself” usually shows how very little he has to assert. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:3 **For** (enclitic) **although we walk** (περιπατέω, PAPTc.NMP, Customary, Concessive; conduct ourselves, order our behavior) **in an earthly** (physical) **body** (Loc. Sph.; flesh, house for the soul), **we are not** (neg. adv.) **continually fighting a battle** (στρατεύω, PMI1P, Iterative; engaged in a war) **according to the norms and standards of** (corresponding to) **the flesh** (Adv. Acc.; in accordance with carnal standards),

Greek Text

ἐν σαρκὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦντες οὐ κατὰ σάρκα στρατευόμεθα,

Latin Vulgate

in carne enim ambulantes non secundum carnem militamus

LWB 2 Cor. 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare *are not material, but powerful according to the norms and standards of God, for the purpose of tearing down fortresses [satanic strongholds], for the purpose of overthrowing false concepts [cosmic thinking]*),

KW 2 Cor. 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not human but mighty in God's sight, resulting in the demolition of fortresses,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his explanation of our spiritual warfare by pointing out that the weapons we use in the angelic conflict are not obtained from this world. They aren't manufactured in a factory or made by soldiers in the field; man-made weapons are powerless in this battle. They are immaterial, belonging to the spirit world. It makes sense that to fight a spiritual battle you need spiritual weapons, and our powerful weapons are supplied by the Lord. The purpose (Telic Participle) for these spiritual weapons in this passage is twofold: (1) they are used to destroy satanic organizations, and (2) to destroy satanic philosophies in whatever form they present themselves.

Weapons are only useful in battle when they are being wielded by a skilled, spiritual warrior. It should be evident by Paul's use of military metaphors that this warfare requires classroom instruction (intake and metabolization of Bible doctrine) and practice in the field (practical application through testing). My conclusion, therefore, is that the average Christian soldier is ill-equipped and insufficiently trained, and when he enters the battlefield, he is repeatedly conquered by any number of Satan's emissaries.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul depicts thought testing as a battle in the soul. But this is a battle for which God has devised brilliant strategy and tactics. He has powerfully armed and amply supplied the believer to win this inner warfare against erroneous thinking. Although divine viewpoint thinking searches out and destroys false human viewpoint, the destruction of incorrect ideas and attitudes is not the ultimate victory in thought testing. Victory lies in possessing the true perspective, thinking with true ideas, understanding and applying true doctrines. All aspects of worship are based upon accurate, doctrinal thinking. By far the most important form of worship is concentrating on the teaching of God's Word. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The doctrines of the gospel and discipline of the church are the weapons of this warfare. (M. Henry)

The use of the Greek word "stratia" in the Fayyum Papyri frequently mentions military campaigns, the documents having not seldom to do with the concerns of soldiers either in

service or retired. (A. Deissmann) In the use of the word “strongholds” here there may lie a reminiscence of the rock-forts on the coast of Paul’s native Cilicia, which were pulled down by the Romans in their attacks on the Cilician pirates. Pompey inflicted a crushing defeat upon their navy off the rocky stronghold of Coracesium on the confines of Cilicia and Pisidia. (M. Vincent)

The Apostle Paul was naturally of a combative, soldier-like disposition. As a soldier of Christ he fought a good fight and gained an honorable reputation. (F.W. Farrar)

These strongholds appear in many forms but are essentially the same. They are the systems, schemes, structures, and strategies that Satan designs to frustrate and obstruct the progress of Christ’s gospel. The message of the gospel penetrates manmade walls by means of men and women armed with wisdom, courage, dedication, and faith. Through many means of communication (among them are the airwaves, computers, and the printed page), God’s Word enters Satan’s strongholds and demolishes his opposition. (S. Kistemaker) Spiritual warfare demands the use of spiritual weapons. The believer is called into offensive action against satanic systems of thought by using the divine viewpoint of Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Regeneration of the soul is often described by conquest metaphors. Conquest supposes opposition; therefore, the corrupt nature of man, dead in sin, was fully armed against God, but not able to frustrate God’s purpose to save him. When regenerated, the rebellious sinner is carried captive, not against his will, but with his will as a voluntary subject of Christ. Some of the strongholds we war against are sin, Satan, unbelief, pride, hardness of heart, etc. The imaginations of the mind are silenced and conquered by applied truth (Bible doctrine). Thoughts are brought to the obedience of Christ. (W.E. Best)

The legalist assumes that overt activities – “handle not, taste not, touch not” – are the means of fulfilling the command to overcome the world. Worldliness – the opinions, attitudes, and systems of thinking characteristic of all human viewpoint – is a state of mind and can be conquered only by a right mental attitude and a viewpoint based on Bible doctrine. Do not live in a mire of legalism when you already possess every provision needed to live in spiritual freedom with Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) If you would have a full enumeration of spiritual weapons, doctrine must be conjoined with zeal, and a good conscience with the efficacy of the Spirit. (J. Calvin)

There are citadels of various kinds in which evil is established. Habit, social custom, vested interests which withstand reform, political systems which deny freedom and reject the Christian valuation of personality: all are strongholds in which opposition to God entrenches itself. (*Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, James Reid, 1953, Abingdon Press)

See the catalog of weapons used by Paul at Corinth: “In pureness, in knowledge,” etc. (Chapter 6:6-7). Come honor or dishonor in this world, good report or evil with such weapons must all the soldiers of Christ be content in the warfare to which they are called.

The strongholds they assail may make a formidable resistance, but nothing is gained by changing the spiritual weapons for the carnal. They are mighty in God's sight and in God's strength. Paul knew them to be so. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:4 (**For** (explanatory) **the weapons** (Subj. Nom.; equipment) **of our** (Poss. Gen.) **warfare** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; military engagement: angelic conflict) **are** (ellipsis) **not** (neg. adv.) **material** (Pred. Nom.; carnal, human attributes, belonging to this world), **but** (contrast) **powerful** (Pred. Nom.; attributes of divine power) **according to the norms and standards of God** (Dat. Respect; spiritual: immaterial; the utilization of divine omnipotence in the sphere of divine power), **for the purpose of tearing down** (Acc. Purpose; offensive action: demolition, devastation) **fortresses** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; mental strongholds, thought fortifications), **for the purpose of overthrowing** (καθαίρω, PAptc.NMP, Durative, Telic; offensive action: topple, depose) **false concepts** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; satanic thoughts, cosmic reasoning)),

Greek Text

τὰ γὰρ ὄπλα τῆς στρατείας ἡμῶν οὐ σαρκικὰ ἀλλὰ δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ πρὸς καθαίρεισιν ὀχυρωμάτων, λογισμοὺς καθαιροῦντες

Latin Vulgate

nam arma militiae nostrae non carnalia sed potentia Deo ad destructionem munitionum consilia destruentes

LWB 2 Cor. 10:5 And every classification of arrogant mental obstacle [human viewpoint panacea] contrary to the knowledge of God [divine viewpoint], that is, with the result that every category of thought process [intellectual rationale] is brought into strict obedience to Christ,

KW 2 Cor. 10:5 Demolishing reasonings and every haughty mental elevation which lifts itself up against the experiential knowledge [which we believers have] of God, and leading captive every thought into the obedience to the Christ,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:5 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;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If we utilize the weapons of our spiritual warfare, we should also be able to overthrow every mental obstruction, every philosophical difficulty, and every psychological

hindrance that the world and the devil throws in our direction. In other words, every mental abstraction that opposes Bible doctrine is false and should be rejected outright by the mentality of our soul. Divine viewpoint (Bible doctrine) and human viewpoint (anthropocentric academic speculation and cosmic panaceas) are mutually exclusive.

Paul uses the Gnostic Present tense to eliminate any exceptions to this rule. Every intellectual rationale, every mental reasoning, should in the end (Result Participle) be taken prisoner (brought into captivity) to Christ. These anti-biblical thoughts or rationales are portrayed as rebellious, erroneous thoughts that should be brought into obedience to divine viewpoint thinking. We should never allow cosmic thinking to overcome our thoughts, but should make them POWs (prisoners of war) to Christ. Human viewpoint thinking has engulfed all but a fraction of the earth's population. Bible doctrine is unknown by even the most ardent Christians; it's a tragic sign of the times.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the local church, every believer-priest listens with the same self-discipline and continuity of positive volition to every subject that comes up in the passage being taught, no matter how dull or seemingly irrelevant. He cannot pick and choose doctrines that suit his fancy at the moment and at the same time maintain stability or grow spiritually. Some believers who seem to be positive (and who think themselves to be positive) have the tragic flaw of basing their intake of doctrine on their personal problems. They concentrate only on the points that apply or that can be distorted to apply to their immediate difficulties. Instead, under the filling of the Spirit, we should practice a neat little trick when we come to Bible class: Leave personal problems at the door. (R.B.Thieme, Jr.)

Paul describes the conflict in terms of spiritual warfare that is not against people as such but against thought patterns, philosophies, psychologies, theories, views, and tactics. Paul has to destroy these false doctrines and break down the reasoning behind them. Translated into the area of philosophy, this figurative speech relates to any human theory raised up against the knowledge of the truth. It is earthly wisdom originating with the devil and, therefore, must be shattered by the knowledge of God. There is no mention of bloodshed and killing on this battlefield. Rather, all the theories are captured and brought into obedience to Christ. The culture that is conquered for Christ remains intact, but its components are transformed to serve him. These are the captive thought patterns that are brought into conformity with the teachings of the Lord. (S. Kistemaker)

As the believer contemplates his heavenly responsibility, he is confronted with a threefold impossibility. First, the heavenly position demands a manner of life which is beyond any human possibility. Second, the enemy is stronger than he, and can thwart every resolution. Third, the believer's fallen nature entices him to do positive evil when he would do good. Notwithstanding this threefold impossibility, there is a clear call to a victorious life, wherein every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ, and if the believer fails by one degree, he will dishonor the God who has called

him. Where, then, is the relief from this dilemma? If it is found only in the power of the Spirit. God has provided a complete salvation from the dominion and power of evil, which is a real victory – the only victory for the believer in this present life and conflict. Salvation from the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil, may be secured as freely and completely as the salvation from the penalty of sin. (L.S. Chafer)

The way that God “makes a Calvinist” is by bringing a person into His throne room, there to bow before His supreme majesty. As it was once said of the typical Puritan, “His God is his center.” God is the center, ruling in sovereign might. The true Calvinist has seen this, and thus keeps God at the center of everything he does. God is the center of his worship, for in true worship attention is drawn away from earthly things and reverently fixed upon God and His glory. God is also the center of the true Calvinist’s thinking. His goal is to “take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ,” and to that end his reasoning begins and ends with God. His vision of sovereign majesty shapes his entire mindset, filling his mind with thoughts of God and His glory, and in this way the God of grace becomes the center of his whole life. (J.M Boice)

Metabolized Bible doctrine first enters your frame of reference and memory center, the initial staging areas for retaining and storing information. From there it flows into the vocabulary storage compartment for developing the ability to think divine viewpoint. Next doctrine flows into the categorical storage compartment where concepts are organized and accumulated. From this doctrine, norms and standards are created in your conscience. Now, you can grow and develop momentum in your spiritual life and manifest wisdom – the application of divine viewpoint to experience. These divine standards fulfill the principle of “taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” Now you are a doer (James 1:22) of the Word. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

It is the common habit to make plans and ask God’s help to carry them out. But it is the plans and projects themselves which should be directed by Him. Political schemes, national policies, social ideals and programs, as well as our own personal ambitions, must all be made subject to the spirit of Christ. (J. Reid)

The conflict to which the apostle here refers is that between truth and error, between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world. When the gospel was first proclaimed it found itself in conflict with all the forms of religion and philosophy then prevailing among men. To the wise of this world the gospel appeared as foolishness. It was, however, the wisdom and power of God. The conflict then begun has continued ever since, and is now as deadly as at any former period. Men of science and philosophers are as confident in their conclusions, and as much disposed to exalt themselves, or their opinions against the knowledge of God as ever. We must not try to overcome these enemies by argument. This would make it a human conflict on both sides. It would be human reason against human reason, the intellect of one man against the intellect of another man. We are not here as philosophers, but as witnesses to the Word and power of God. (C. Hodge)

Satan attacks knowledge (gnosis) with great success, but he rarely has success when he attacks full knowledge (epignosis). That's why our goal in life is to metabolize as much doctrine into our frontal lobes (gnosis) and then apply that doctrine over-and-over again until it is part and parcel (epignosis) of our soul. That process is accomplished by using the mental tools God has provided us with, otherwise known as GAP or the grace apparatus for perception. By bringing all our thoughts under the authority of Christ by using GAP, we foil Satan's counterattack and are able to stand firm. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Liberalism is straight out of the pit of hell. (ibid)

The Christian faith provides an outlook on the world and on the facts of life and experience which makes sense. But it is opposed by arguments that also claim to be derived by reason. Non-Christian beliefs are supported by specious and powerful philosophies and psychologies which have wide appeal. Such beliefs may come in part from faulty reasoning. But in general they spring from views of life which omit essential facts and experiences. They often give no place to the Christian revelation of God in Christ. In many cases the arguments used to support them are forms of rationalization, the process of finding reasons to bolster a way of life or justify a course of conduct already determined on. (J. Reid)

2 Cor. 10:5 and (connective) every classification of (Acc. Spec.) arrogant mental obstacle (Acc. Dir. Obj.; human viewpoint obstruction, philosophical difficulty, psychological hindrance) contrary to the knowledge of God (Adv. Gen. Ref.), that is (explanatory), with the result that every category of (Acc. Spec.) thought process (Acc. Dir. Obj.; divine viewpoint thinking: mental reasoning, intellectual rationale) is brought (αἰχμαλωτίζω, PAPtc.NMP, Gnostic, Result; taken prisoner, held captive by) into strict obedience (Prep. Acc.; captivity, under the authority of) to Christ (Poss. Gen.),

Greek Text

καὶ πᾶν ὕψωμα ἐπαιρόμενον κατὰ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντες πᾶν νόημα εἰς τὴν ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

Latin Vulgate

et omnem altitudinem extollentem se adversus scientiam Dei et in captivitatem redigentes omnem intellectum in obsequium Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 10:6 As well as maintaining a state of mental preparation [disciplined doctrinal garrison in the soul] for the ultimate purpose of correcting every occasion of disobedience [immediate confession of sin and restoration to fellowship], as often

as your obedience [desire to follow God’s protocol plan] aspires to be brought to completion [attainment of spiritual maturity].

KW 2 Cor. 10:6 And being in readiness to discipline every careless, apathetic hearing of and disobedience to the Word [if there remain any still disobedient] when your obedience [to me and my apostolic authority] shall be fulfilled.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

While we are utilizing our weapons of spiritual warfare, we should also (Circumstantial Participle) be maintaining a constant state (Durative Present tense) of mental discipline, being prepared at all times to correct our disobedient thoughts and behavior. Disobedient thoughts and behavior can occur at any time (Latin: in promptu), so we must maintain a state of emergency (Defcon) mental preparedness. This internal correction is both a continual process and an end result. Pronouncing a mental judicial verdict against our disobedient thoughts and transforming them into obedient thoughts is an ultimate goal.

Since we have old sin natures, our flesh will strive for disobedience at every turn. But when we walk in the Spirit, our will to be obedient will be strong, desiring to please God whenever possible. Paul’s use of the Temporal Subjunctive mood implies uncertainty as to realization, meaning obedience is not automatic end result; our will always has the prerogative to be disobedient. In other words, when we are walking in the Spirit, our will desires to be completely obedient to God’s will. When we are walking in the flesh, our will desires to be disobedient to both human and divine authority – being a law unto itself. We must always be mentally alert, prepared to check our rebellious thoughts and bring them into conformity to Christ. “Continual obedience to the mandates of God’s protocol plan will result in spiritual adulthood.” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The infiltrators in the Corinthian church will have to face a general in Christ’s army who is ready to mete out punishment. Paul is not revealing what measures he will take when he arrives in Corinth. But everyone who has shown disobedience to Christ’s gospel will face punishment. Although he addresses the readers as a group, the apostle distinguishes between the many who are faithful and the few who are not, namely, those who are led astray by intruders. (S. Kistemaker)

Where there is perverse resistance to his ministry and deliberate attempts are made to undo his work, and where gentleness on his part is persistently being misconstrued as weakness, he is ready to revenge (punish) all disobedience. (R.V.G. Tasker)

When we succumb to the world, the flesh, or the devil, hopefully we have ample doctrine in our soul to enable us to bounce back into fellowship quickly. If we are obeying God's protocol plan for our life, by consistently metabolizing Bible doctrine and applying it to our daily life, we can maintain our momentum regardless of the distraction. The goal of this life of obedience to God's plan is to complete a structure or edifice in our soul that can withstand anything Satan throws at us. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 10:6 as well as (continuative) maintaining a state of (ἔχω, PAptc.NMP, Durative, Circumstantial; having a well-disciplined thought process) mental preparation (Loc. Sph.; doctrinal garrison in the soul) for the ultimate purpose (or end result) of correcting (ἐκδικέω, AAInf., Culminative, Purpose/Result; obtaining justice on, avenging, court-martial) every occasion of (Acc. Spec.) disobedience (Acc. Dir. Obj.; occasional lapse into apostasy or reversionism), as often as (temporal; whenever) your (Poss. Gen.) obedience (Subj. Nom.; consistent metabolization and application of doctrine) aspires to be brought to completion (πληρώω, APSubj.3S, Ingressive, Temporal: Implies Uncertainty as to Realization; completion of the edification complex of the soul).

Greek Text

καὶ ἐν ἐτοίμῳ ἔχοντες ἐκδικῆσαι πᾶσαν παρακοήν, ὅταν πληρωθῇ ὑμῶν ἡ ὑπακοή.

Latin Vulgate

et in promptu habentes ulcisci omnem inoboedientiam cum impleta fuerit vestra oboedientia

LWB 2 Cor. 10:7 You are in the habit of observing things [superficially] according to external appearance [subjectivity]. If anyone has convinced himself that he is continually living by means of Christ, let him consider this: that just as he *is living* by means of Christ, likewise, also *are* we.

KW 2 Cor. 10:7 You are in the habit of looking at external appearance. If, as is the case, anyone has fully persuaded himself that he is Christ's [belongs to a special party of which he has placed Christ at the head], let him be considering this again with himself, that just as he himself belongs to Christ, so also do we.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:7 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As if things weren't bad enough for Paul already, he has also overheard negative comments about his demeanor and physical appearance. Although the Lord entrusted him with the gospel to the Gentiles, he did not have the accompanying "good looks" and "commanding personality" that the Corinthians expected a man of God to possess. Therefore, Paul sarcastically tells them that they have a detrimental habit of always looking at things (Iterative Present tense) according to their external human standards. This is not a question, it is an indictment. In other words, if somebody entered a Corinthian stage with a message to the people, and he was not as attractive as a Hollywood movie star, the Corinthians did not consider his message worth hearing.

Paul presents a rhetorical question to those Corinthians who consider themselves to be fine human specimens. If they (the strong, attractive ones) currently believe they are living by means of Christ, and the 1st class condition means they are indeed thinking this, then they should keep an obvious well-known fact in mind. The Intensive Perfect tense points to their thinking they have a superior walk with Christ because they are stronger and more attractive than other believers. They are completely convinced (Intensive) that because they are so strong and attractive, they live (Iterative Present tense) a superior Christian life! And because Paul is so weak and unattractive, the assumption is that he (and other weak, unattractive believers) lives an inferior Christian life.

Paul tells these strong, attractive believers to consider (Aoristic Present tense) this important fact within themselves every time they think they are living a superior Christian life compared to their weak, unattractive brethren. Paul compares the strong, attractive Christian with the weak, unattractive Christian and informs the strong, attractive Christian that they both live the same quality of spiritual life regardless of external appearances. Unlike the cultural norms and standards of Corinth, attractiveness and unattractiveness (as well as a commanding personality versus a weak presence) are irrelevant when it comes to living the Christian way of life. It's what is on the inside (the mentality of the soul) that counts. And in the case of Paul and his colleagues, it's the message, not the man.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul had critics and enemies in the city of Corinth. The believers there listened to these people more than they should have. Even some of his own converts apparently wondered whether Paul could furnish "proof of Christ speaking" in him. But Paul had no doubt that he could do that because of the power of the Lord he served. (Z. Hodges)

There is room in Christ for many; and those who differ much from one another may yet be one in Him. It would help to heal the differences that are among us if we would remember that, how confident so ever we may be that we belong to Christ, yet, at the same time, we must allow that those who differ from us may belong to Christ, too, and therefore should be treated accordingly. We must not think that we are the people, and

that none belong to Christ but ourselves. His we may plead for ourselves, against those who judge us and despise us that, how weak so ever we are, yet, as they are Christ's, so are we: we profess the same faith, we walk by the same rule, we build upon the same foundation, and hope for the same inheritance. (M. Henry)

According to 2 Cor. 11:4 and parts of chapters 12-15, emissaries arrived at Corinth, perhaps wishing to exploit the recent disaffection with Paul on the part of a section of the Corinthian leadership. These messengers were warmly received – but quickly reopened old wounds and insinuated that Paul was no true apostle or even not a Christian at all. He lacked all the qualities, gifts, and graces of an impressive apostolic figure; he was weak, insecure, and exposed to suffering at every turn. (R.P Martin)

Sometimes the outward appearance is untrue by being below the reality. This seems to have been the case with Paul. His insignificant appearance, and his modesty and considerateness of manner, gave little indication of the force that was in him, or the bold and valiant defense of the truth which he could give upon occasion. So the outward appearance may be unworthy of the inward, without being wrongfully so. (F.W. Farrar)

It was a sad thing for this noble spirit to be sorely chafed in an hour when it was rallying from an unusual depression and girding itself for special endeavors to cement the Asiatic and European churches closer together. While he was exerting every nerve to help the church in Jerusalem, men from that very community were working in Corinth to disparage his ministry and undermine his personal character. It was shocking ingratitude. (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, Lange, Eerdmans Publishing)

2 Cor. 10:7 You (the Corinthians in general) are in the habit of observing (βλέπω, PAI2P, Iterative; looking, regarding) things (Acc. Dir. Obj.) according to external appearance (Adv. Acc.; human viewpoint superficiality, shallowness; what is in front of your face: Paul was evidently weak in presence and unattractive). If (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it's true") anyone (Subj. Nom.; referring to those who consider themselves to be strong, attractive human specimens) has convinced (πείθω, Perf.AI3S, Intensive: Existing State; confident) himself (Dat. Adv./Disadv.) that he is continually living (εἰμί, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) by means of Christ (Abl. Means), let him consider (λογίζομαι, PMImp.3S, Aoristic, Periphrastic, Deponent) this (Acc. Dir. Obj.) again (adv.; once more) within himself (Gen. Adv.): that (introducing an objective fact) just as (comparative) he (Subj. Nom.; the strong, attractive human specimen) is living (ellipsis) by means of Christ (Abl. Means), likewise (comparative) also (adjunctive) are (ellipsis) we (Subj. Nom.; the weak, unattractive human specimen).

Greek Text

Τὰ κατὰ πρόσωπον βλέπετε. εἴ τις πέποιθεν ἑαυτῷ Χριστοῦ εἶναι, τοῦτο λογιζέσθω ἄλλιν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ, ὅτι καθὼς αὐτὸς Χριστοῦ, οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς.

Latin Vulgate

quae secundum faciem sunt videte si quis confidit sibi Christi se esse hoc cogitet iterum apud se quia sicut ipse Christi est ita et nos

LWB 2 Cor. 10:8 For though I could boast superiority over anyone on account of our authority, which the Lord delegated for the purpose of strengthening and not for the purpose of tearing you down, I shall not be put to shame [not ashamed of possessing or exercising my authority],

KW 2 Cor. 10:8 For, even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority which the Lord gave me for your building up and not for your casting down, I shall not be put to shame,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:8 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says he could if desired (Potential Subjunctive mood) brag about his superiority in the Christian life over anyone else, but he won't do it. Why could he brag about his superiority over them since he was so unattractive and weak in demeanor? He could boast superiority, as well as his colleagues who also had a ministerial spiritual gift, because the Lord Himself delegated (Dramatic Aorist tense) authority to them over the Corinthians. What Paul is doing by this neat hypothetical is to embarrass the strong, attractive believers into realizing their arrogance. He is telling them that by divine (internal) standards, as opposed to their human (external) standards, he could boast about his superior Christian life.

However, Paul is quick to point out that this delegated, divine authority was not given so he could become an arrogant braggart. It was given for the purpose of building the Corinthians up, not tearing them down. What a zinger! Here is Paul, an unattractive and weak person by human standards, teaching the strong, attractive persons by human standards in Corinth the very Christian way of life they are bragging superiority in! And to top that off, what he is teaching them is building them up spiritually, while their negative comments about Paul (and others like him) is tearing him down. How arrogant, how ironic, and how sinful can these Corinthians be!

Paul then adds his *coup de grace* by saying he refuses to boast in his superiority over the Corinthians (Prohibitive Future tense) because he will not shame himself in such an

ignoble manner. This is, of course, a clever way of telling these arrogant Corinthians (the strong, attractive ones) that they should be ashamed of themselves for tearing down Paul and other (allegedly) weak, unattractive believers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The second floor of the edification complex in the soul (ECS) is genuine humility. Built upon the sane, objective, rational truth of Bible doctrine, genuine humility represents the successful transition from authority to freedom in life. The authority orientation of the advancing believer is built on understanding and obeying the principles of doctrine and divine establishment. If the Corinthians were humble, they would benefit from Paul's authoritative epistle; if they were arrogant, they would be unteachable and would continue toward their own destruction. Humility represents teachability and forms the basis for the next floor of the edification complex. The floors or building blocks of the edification complex (structure) in your soul are (1) the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine or the Word of God, (2) genuine humility and teachability, (3) motivational virtue in the form of personal love for God, (5) functional virtue or impersonal love for fellow believers, and (6) inner happiness which comes from accurate application of doctrine to life's experiences, also called wisdom. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The authority of the Word passed from apostles to pastors and teachers in the churches. When they proclaim the gospel, they speak in the name of the Lord. They are ministers of the Word of God. Their task is to strengthen believers in the faith, to call sinners to repentance, to oppose doctrine that is contrary to God's Word, and to exercise discipline. (S. Kistemaker)

The authority which the Lord had given Paul had been used, and was being used, for edification. On the other hand, the assumed authority of the false apostles was equally clearly being used for destruction. It was dividing the body of Christ. (R.V.G. Tasker) Paul essentially says: "Though I should boast more, I should not be ashamed, for there will be good ground for it." (J. Calvin)

Paul is not ashamed of possessing authority from God, nor is he ashamed of using it when necessary. In other words, the Corinthians may be one big happy family (which they weren't), but Paul was in charge! They may all share eternal security, and they may all share Bible doctrine, but Paul is an apostle by the will of God and he will exercise his authority when they get out of line. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 10:8 **For** (enclitic) **though** (concessive) **I could boast** (καυχάομαι, AMSubj.1S, Constative, Potential, Deponent) **superiority** (comparative) **over anyone** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **on account of our** (Poss. Gen.; Paul and his colleagues) **authority** (Prep. Gen.; as pastors and teachers of the Word of God), **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **the Lord** (Subj. Nom.) **delegated** (δίδωμι, AAI3S, Dramatic; gave) **for the purpose of**

strengthening (Acc. Purpose; edification, building the believer up with doctrine) **and** (connective) **not** (neg. adv) **for the purpose of tearing you** (Obj. Gen.) **down** (Acc. Purpose; destroying), **I shall not** (neg. adv.) **be put to shame** (αἰσχύνω, FPI1S, Prohibitive),

Greek Text

ἐάν [τε] γὰρ περισσώτερόν τι καυχῆσωμαι περὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἡμῶν ἢς ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν ὑμῶν, οὐκ αἰσχυνθήσομαι,

Latin Vulgate

nam et si amplius aliquid gloriatus fuero de potestate nostra quam dedit Dominus in aedificationem et non in destructionem vestram non erubescam

LWB 2 Cor. 10:9 So that I might not obtain a reputation [among those who are in human viewpoint subjectivity] on the grounds that I intimidate [rebuke] you by means of letters,

KW 2 Cor. 10:9 In order that I may not seem as if I would make you afraid by my letters,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If Paul used his authority from God in an arrogant, braggart manner, he might (Potential Subjunctive mood) obtain (Culminative Aorist tense) a terrible reputation in the end. He could use it to bully others, to draw curses from heaven down on believers, etc. But he doesn't want to be known as a "letter terrorist," as somebody who functions as a spiritual bully, intimidating (Intensive Present tense) his flock. And by comparison, the strong, attractive Corinthians don't want to obtain a reputation as spiritual bullies either.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle is not interested in embarrassing or frightening his readers. In effect, he has told them that his task is not to destroy but to build. However, when he arrives in Corinth, he will show the intruders that he is a person to be feared. (S. Kistemaker) "Ek" has a causative force in composition sometimes as in "ekphobein" or "because I intimidate." (A.T. Robertson)

When needed, Paul did not hesitate to chew the Corinthians out. Sometimes they needed to be clobbered, so Paul rebukes them as part of the legitimate exercise of his divine authority. The plural of "letters" means the Judaizers were not just opposed to Paul's

letters to the Corinthians, but to all his letters. They made it a habit to follow him wherever he went, from place to place, and after he left, they came in and caused trouble. In other words, they bounced from one church to another like church tramps, seeking out the malecontents and fomenting rebellion. This was always done under a façade of sweetness and life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 10:9 so that (Result) I might not (neg. adv.) obtain a reputation (δοκέω, AASubj.1S, Culminative, Potential; among those in subjectivity) on the grounds that (comparative; on the pretext of, as if) I intimidate (ἐκφοβέω, PAInf., Intensive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb: Causal; terrorize, spread fear, clobber, rebuke) you (Acc. Disadv.) by means of letters (Abl. Means),

Greek Text

ἵνα μὴ δόξω ὡς ἂν ἐκφοβεῖν ὑμᾶς διὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν·

Latin Vulgate

ut autem non existimer tamquam terrere vos per epistulas

LWB 2 Cor. 10:10 Because on the one hand, his letters, they [Paul's critics] allege, are weighty [too much doctrine] and powerful [too harsh], but on the other hand, his bodily presence is weak and his speech is counted as nothing [contemptible].

KW 2 Cor. 10:10 Because his letters, indeed, they say, are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his discourse of no account.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul has heard some of the malicious gossip spoken against him. They say (Customary Present tense) his letters are powerfully written and contain a wealth of important and sometimes difficult doctrines. But when he is present face-to-face, he is weak (Latin: sickly, infirm) and his messages (Latin: sermons) are terribly delivered. This is merely another form of the same old maligning he has come across before: that he is a lion when away and a mouse when present.

In this one verse, Paul's critics attack both the message (too doctrinal and harsh) and the man (physically weak with crude speech). His critics, therefore, are rejecting both the authority of God's message and His divinely appointed messenger. After Paul lowered the boom, they crept in and spread heresies under a façade of emotional *coombahya*.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was forced to the defensive from the emissaries who came with allegations that he was no rhetorically trained or gifted speaker, whatever his skills as a letter-writer at a safe distance may have been. Paul does not deny the accusation, and in 2 Cor. 11:6 he concedes the point that he is unskilled in public speaking. But he has already made it plain that his “simple” preaching style was one he had chosen to cultivate for theological reasons, namely that only in this way could the true nature of the gospel be honored and the Corinthians would be led to see that their faith was the gift of the Holy Spirit and not the result of human persuasiveness such as popular speakers in hellenistic society exploited. (R.P. Martin)

Occasionally one hears the Apostle Paul lauded as a great orator, even as the greatest orator the Christian church has ever had. There is good reason to doubt that he was so regarded in his day. In fact, it is practically certain that by the standards of the Graeco-Roman world he did not qualify as an orator at all, as stated in this verse. Evidently Paul was neither a Demosthenes nor a Cicero. Yet, the impact which he made on his hearers is proof that he knew how to grip and hold an audience. (R.B. Kuiper)

The Greek word “ektroma” could be used here as a term of abuse coined by Paul’s enemies. They invented the term, meaning a malformed fetus and so a monster, and hurled it at him to discredit his apostolic rank. Perhaps they had in mind his lowly demeanor or his insignificance as a person, with a lack of theoretical skills and a simple style of preaching counting against him. (R.P. Martin) They made their living off Paul’s malecontents, those who for one reason or another, reacted to Paul with emotional subjectivity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

As the words of Jesus are spirit and life, for they throb and pulse today, so the letters of Paul are weighty and powerful, as even his enemies admit. The Judaizers at Corinth did not discuss the rhetorical niceties of these Letters. They felt the power of the ideas in them even when they resisted Paul’s authority. Paul used tropes (figures of speech), but he smote hearts with them and did not merely tickle the fancy of the lovers of sophistry. Paul denied that he spoke with persuasive words of wisdom, though his words seem to the lover of Christ to be full of the highest appeal to the soul of man. One must discount this disclaimer not merely by Paul’s natural modesty, but by contrast with the Corinthian’s concept of persuasiveness. They loved the rhetorical flights of the artificial orators of the time. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 10:10 **Because** (causal) **on the one hand** (correlative), **his** (Abl. Source) **letters** (Subj. Nom.; Paul’s message), **they** (Paul’s critics) **allege** (φημί, PAI3P, Customary), **are** (ellipsis) **weighty** (Pred. Nom.; severe, difficult, important, heavy on teaching) **and** (connective) **powerful** (Pred. Nom.; mighty, forceful in rebuke), **but on the other**

hand (contrast), his (Poss. Gen.) bodily (Gen. Descr.)
presence (Subj. Nom.; Paul the man) is (ellipsis) weak
(Pred. Nom.; delicate, infirm, sickly) and (connective) his
(Poss. Gen.) speech (Subj. Nom.; message, conversation) is
(ellipsis) counted as nothing (Pred. Nom.; contemptible,
crude).

Greek Text

ὅτι, Αἱ ἐπιστολαὶ μὲν, φησὶν, βαρεῖαι καὶ ἰσχυραί, ἡ δὲ παρουσία τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενὴς καὶ ὁ λόγος ἐξουθενημένος.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam quidem epistulae inquit graves sunt et fortes
praesentia autem corporis infirma et sermo
contemptibilis

LWB 2 Cor. 10:11 May this kind of person [critic of both the message and the man] consider this: perhaps it is possible that we are teaching through letters when we are absent [non face-to-face teaching], similar [consistent], as a matter of fact, to the overt expression of that activity when we are present [face-to-face teaching].

KW 2 Cor. 10:11 Let such a one [who makes comments such as the above] take into account this fact that the kind of person we are in our discourse through our letters when we are absent, such are we also in action when we are present.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:11 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is rather kind to his detractors in this passage, obviously showing impersonal love towards those who are maligning his character, his appearance, and his speech. He allows them the option (Imperative of Permission) of thinking about something (Customary Present tense) that might not have occurred to them. He states in the affirmative that it is possible to teach doctrine by letters (Customary Present tense) when he is not in the same geographical location as his students, just like he teaches them face-to-face when he is present (Customary Present tense) among them. Both methods are legitimate, depending on the circumstances.

In a roundabout way, Paul is being extremely gracious towards those individuals who don't like his appearance or manner of speaking. He gives them permission to learn from his written letters as opposed to looking and listening to him face-to-face. As long as they are learning the Word of God, he is not particular how they do it. It is the Word of God that is important, not Paul's speech patterns or physical appearance. The last thing he

wants is his “persona” to get in the way. Whether he teaches in person or by letter, he is consistent in what he teaches.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13) who had received a “different spirit,” accepted a “different gospel,” and preached an “other Jesus,” need to be identified in order to understand what Paul was working against in this chapter. These “super-apostles” were either Gnostic pneumatics or triumphalistic, miracle-working Hellenistic Jews who wanted to taunt Paul with their own theological creations. (W. Kaiser)

Paul refrains from naming his opponent, whom he identifies as “anyone” and “such a person.” This person is the representative of the infiltrators in the Corinthian church. (S. Kistemaker) The conventional themes of ridicule are social background, immorality, physical appearance, religious and philosophical belief, speech, avarice, and personal activities. All of these come into play in chapters 10-13 and Paul responds with invective of his own. (B. Witherington, III)

Though Paul was distinguished by signal endowments, he was nevertheless the subject of bitter envy and cruel slander. The higher gifts a man has the more he is exposed to the malice of others; the more distinguished a man is in gifts and graces, the more he will arouse among his contemporaries the spirit of detraction and hate. It was so with Christ Himself. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:11 **May this kind of** (correlative) **person** (Subj. Nom.; critic of both the message and the man) **consider** (λογίζομαι, PMImp.3S, Customary, Permission, Deponent; take into account) **this** (Acc. Dir. Obj.): **perhaps it is possible** (relative) **that** (introductory) **we are** (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) **teaching** (Dat. Ref.) **through letters** (Abl. Means) **when we are absent** (ἄπειμι, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Temporal; non-face-to-face teaching), **similar** (correlative; consistent with), **as a matter of fact** (affirmative), **to the overt expression of that activity** (Dat. Ref.; face-to-face teaching) **when we are present** (παρείμι, PAPtc.NMP, Customary, Temporal).

Greek Text

τοῦτο λογιζέσθω ὁ τοιοῦτος, ὅτι οἰοί ἐσμεν τῷ λόγῳ δι' ἐπιστολῶν ἄπόντες, τοιοῦτοι καὶ παρόντες τῷ ἔργῳ.

Latin Vulgate

hoc cogitet qui eiusmodi est quia quales sumus verbo per epistulas absentes tales et praesentes in facto

LWB 2 Cor. 10:12 For we are not so presumptuous [we wouldn't dare] as to classify [they are out of our class] or compare [our standards are inferior] ourselves with those [false teachers] who make it a practice to recommend themselves. As a matter of fact, these individuals who make it a practice to measure themselves by themselves and who make it a practice to compare themselves to themselves [mutual admiration society], are not collectively [as an elite group] intelligent [the entire group is without spiritual understanding].

KW 2 Cor. 10:12 For we are not daring to judge ourselves worthy to be among nor compare ourselves with certain ones of those who are commending themselves. But they themselves, measuring and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:12 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul goes on the attack, first making sure that nobody places himself and his colleagues in the same category of ministry as that claimed by the false teachers in Corinth. With a cute (clever) use of words, he says we (himself and his colleagues) are not so bold (Descriptive Present tense) as to classify (Constative Aorist tense) or compare (Constative Aorist tense) ourselves to the false teachers. Pauls uses the Present tense to say that if he was “an outsider” he wouldn't dream of comparing himself to the apostle to the Gentiles and then claim superiority over him. Then he uses the Aorist tense to point out that this is exactly what the false teachers have been doing in the past to him!

In contrast to Paul, these false teachers first recommend themselves (Iterative Present tense) everywhere they go, and then they compare themselves to Paul and claim superiority over his ministry – even to the point of maligning his appearance and method of presentation (as seen in verse 11). Where did they get their teaching? From an apostle or one of the original disciples of Christ? Have they had any training whatsoever, and if so, from whom? Has anybody ever heard of them? Since their letters of recommendation are forgeries, they should be under suspicion.

Paul does not mince words. He says these false teachers are dumber than fenceposts in west Texas ... well, of course Paul hasn't heard of Texas, but he does say they are (Descriptive Present tense) without understanding. And by using a Greek word with the prefix “soun” attached to it, he means not only are they individually ignorant, but they are collectively (together as a group) ignorant as well. Why are they so ignorant of the truth? For two reasons: first, they formed their own little group (similar to cults) and only MEASURED themselves (standard: lowest common denominator) to those in their own little group; second, they only COMPARED themselves (in a vacuum) to those in their

little, isolated group. And by calling them unintelligent, Paul points out that they have had no training in the Word or the ministry.

Roman Catholicism has used this verse in the past to prohibit believers from studying the Word of God. On the contrary, Paul is trying to protect the Corinthian believers from small groups of “self-appointed, self-annointed” false teachers, not from legitimate studying and teaching of the Word. This verse should be applied to many cults today that claim to adhere to the Bible, but in fact deny the Word of God by adding something illegitimate to it. Historically, the apochryphal books of Catholicism, as well as the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants of Mormonism and the Watchtower tracts of the Russellites, are perfect examples of a small group of self-appointed, self-annointed individuals attempting to lead Christians astray.

I also apply this verse to the so-called “charismatic movement,” which is comprised of the most ignorant Christians on earth. The leaders of this “movement,” without exception, have virtually no training in the Word of God, and like the false teachers in this verse, they compare what they know (virtually nothing) to others like themselves who also know little-to-nothing. Also in the same manner as these false teachers, they claim they have superior knowledge of the Word over those who have attended theological seminary and received formal training in exegeting the Word of God.

Before you decide on sending me an email saying: “Brother Ben, aren’t you being a little harsh on these cultists and holyroller, Christian aberrations?” Reread this section of Scripture that Paul wrote (and the Holy Spirit blessed) and see if he didn’t name names and label the false teachers for what they are ... and in so doing, he often used the harshest terms imaginable.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This verse is a polyptoton (assonance), or repetition of the same part of speech in different inflections. “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.” This is still more emphatic when we see the structure of this verse (ABCCBA):

- A - For we are not bold
- B - To number or compare OURSELVES
- C - With certain of them that commend THEMSELVES
- C - But they THEMSELVES, measuring THEMSELVES by THEMSELVES
- B – and comparing THEMSELVES with THEMSELVES
- A – are without understanding

Here in both “A” we have the declaration as to what we are not and what they are not. In both “B” we have comparison. In both “C” we have commending and measuring. (E.W. Bullinger)

In the background is the accusation leveled against him that he had no right to be an apostle and certainly no sanction either from the Lord or from the leaders in the Jewish mission to come to Corinth in the first place. These same individuals in 2 Cor. 11:7 claim to be the sole representatives of Christ at Corinth, and so, by inference, insinuating that Paul’s mission was invalid because he was not a true Christian, and so a phony leader. Paul proceeds to counter this claim, and to offer his own understanding of what his apostleship meant in terms of keeping to the limits of the area designated to him as apostle to the Gentiles. Paul has in his sights the Jewish Christian proselytizers who were molesting Gentile church members and endeavoring to undermine his authority. (R.P. Martin)

In the words, “we dare not,” the apostle intimates by irony, that he was far beyond those who thought themselves to be somebodies. (E.W. Bullinger) The use of the verb “to dare” makes the irony in this sentence obvious. No one can miss Paul’s intention of ridiculing his opponents. The apostle sarcastically places them on a level he himself will never be able to reach. He dares not call them his peers, for they surpass him in their ease of speaking and their use of power. He portrays them as eminent leaders whom the Lord should be pleased to have in His church. He himself does not presume to be worthy of their company, in view of the low ratings they have given him. (S. Kistemaker) Paul is being sarcastic: “Naturally, I wouldn’t THINK of comparing myself to them,” meaning there is no real comparison since they are false apostles. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul says: “I am satisfied with my moderate way, for I would not dare to put myself on a footing with your apostles, who are the heralds of their own excellence.” In the meantime, when he intimates that their glory consists of mere speaking and boasting, he shows, how silly and worthless they are, while he claims for himself deeds instead of words, that is, true and solid ground of glorying. He further fingers their folly by showing how satisfied they are with themselves, and showed themselves off among others, simply because they did not look to any that were superior to themselves, for if they had compared themselves with Paul, or any one like him, they would have felt constrained to lay aside immediately that foolish impression which they entertained, and would have exchanged boasting for shame ... all of them being arrogant asses who at the same time looking upon themselves as learned persons. (J. Calvin)

Paul shows that his estimate of himself is formed on very different methods from those of his adversaries and that he referred all grounds of boasting solely to the judgment of God. (F.W. Farrar) Little cliques of factious religionists, never looking outside their own narrow circles, became inflated with a sense of importance which would have been annihilated if they had looked at higher standards. Hence they thought themselves at liberty to intrude and lay down the law and usurp a claim to infallibility which there was nothing to justify. Such conduct is the reverse of wise. It is a mixture of selfishness,

legalism, and conceit, and there have been abundant examples of it among religious parties in all ages. Paul, on the other hand, keeps within his own measure, because he has learned to adopt larger and loftier standards. (ibid)

Paul uses a *paronomasia* to express both sarcasm and humor against his critics. He uses the words *egkrino* and *sugkrino* to say our critics are way out of our class (humor) and their standards of judging are superior (sarcasm) to ours. In other words, we wouldn't dare to try and join this group of highly exalted critics, because they are so beyond us that we aren't worthy to associate with them. Their comparison of themselves with themselves (patting each other on the back) is a classic example of a mutual admiration society, the forerunner of what can be seen today in business and military life as a *peer evaluation*. The true standards by which an objective measurement should be made is disregarded in favor of a subjective standard. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 10:12 For (explanatory) we (Paul and his colleagues) are not (neg. adv.) so presumptuous as (τολμάω, PAI1P, Descriptive; daring, bold) to classify (έγκρίνω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; humor: we're way out of our class) or (coordinating) compare (συγκρίνω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; sarcasm: our standards are inferior to our critics) ourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) with those (Dat. Assoc.; false teachers) who make it a practice to recommend (συνίστημι, PAPtc.GMP, Iterative, Substantival; approve) themselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.). As a matter of fact (emphatic), these individuals (Subj. Nom.), who make it a practice to measure (μετρέω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantival) themselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by themselves (Instr. Assoc.; lowest common denominator) and (continuative) who make it a practice to compare (συγκρίνω, PAPtc.NMP, Iterative, Substantival) themselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to themselves (Dat. Measure; in a vacuum), are not collectively (neg. adv.; as an elite group) intelligent (συνίημι, PAI3P, Descriptive; the entire conclave of critics are without spiritual understanding).

Greek Text

Οὐ γὰρ τολμῶμεν έγκρίναι ἢ συγκρίναι έαυτούς τισιν τῶν έαυτούς συνιστανόντων, ἀλλὰ αὐτοὶ έν έαυτοῖς έαυτούς μετροῦντες καὶ συγκρίνοντες έαυτούς έαυτοῖς οὐ συνιᾶσιν.

Latin Vulgate

non enim audemus inserere aut comparare nos quibusdam qui se ipsos commendant sed ipsi in nobis nosmet ipsos metientes et comparantes nosmet ipsos nobis

LWB 2 Cor. 10:13 Now we ourselves will not boast beyond limits, but rather within the measure of the limits [of authority] that God assigned to us for a measure, extending even as far as you [including Corinth].

KW 2 Cor. 10:13 But, as for us, we will not boast without a proper standard of measurement but in accordance with the measure of the measuring rule which God apportioned to us as a measuring unit, one that reaches even up to you [Paul's divinely appointed field of service].

KJV 2 Cor. 10:13 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Gnostic Future tense to promise that he and his colleagues will never boast beyond certain limits that have been divinely placed on them. The false teachers apparently boast without reservation, knowing no limits but their own. Paul knows God has placed limits to his ministry. He knows that God assigned (Constatative Aorist tense) a certain geographical area for his ministry, and to go beyond that sphere of influence, which Paul tried to do on more than one occasion, would court disaster. There are limits to every ministry whether known or unknown. In Paul's case, the measure God assigned to him reached (Culminative Aorist tense) all the way to Corinth. This is quite a revealing statement, because if Paul's divinely bestowed limits included Corinth, then his opposition obviously has no legitimate reason for being there and are contradicting him. The Corinthians were given to Paul as part of his ministry; the false teachers were intruders, operating out of bounds.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul regarded his ministry as specially to the Gentiles, and that he habitually refused to establish himself permanently where any former Christian teacher had preached. The Jewish teachers at Corinth had invaded his sphere as the apostle to the Gentiles, and had also occupied the ground which he had won for himself by his successful labors among the Corinthians, as they did also at Antioch and in Galatia. He says here, therefore, that his boasting of his apostolic labors is not without measure, like that of those Jewish teachers who establish themselves everywhere, but is confined to the sphere appointed for him, of which Corinth, thus far, was the extreme limit. Hence the "measure of the rule" is the measure defined by the line which God has drawn. The image is that of surveying a district, so as to assign to different persons their different parcels of ground. Corinth was thus far the extreme limit of the field measured out for him. (M. Vincent)

The Greek word "canon" here means a definitely bounded or fixed space within the limits of which one's power or influence is confined, the province assigned to one, one's

sphere of activity, the distance which God told the Apostle to go in his missionary work. (R. Earle) Paul has a mission field or “jurisdiction” which has been apportioned to him by God. This jurisdiction reached even to the Corinthians. In other words, the Corinthian church falls within the swath of (Japhethite) territory from Cilicia to Spain that has been divinely allotted to Paul. (J. Scott)

These assailants are not guided by any objective standards; their boasting centers on themselves. They measure themselves by a standard that is invalid. But Paul glories in the territory that God has apportioned to him, which includes Corinth as the farthest point on his missionary journeys. (S. Kistemaker)

How common it is for people to judge those they have never seen by general report! But a miserably false standard of judgment is this. Not unfrequently have I received impressions concerning a person whom I have never seen, which a subsequent personal acquaintance has completely dispelled. As a rule, the public estimate of men, both in Church and state, is most fallacious and unjust. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:13 Now (superordinate) we ourselves (Subj. Nom.; Paul and his colleagues) will not (neg. adv.) boast (καυχάομαι, FMI1P, Gnostic, Deponent) beyond limits (Acc. Measure; like his critics do), but rather (contrast) within the measure (Acc. Measure; with reference to what lies outside our scope) of the limits (Gen. Measure; inside the geographical or authoritarian boundary) that (Adv. Gen. Ref.) God (Subj. Nom.) assigned (μερίζω, AAI3S, Constativ; delegated divine authority) to us (Dat. Adv.) for a measure (Adv. Gen. Measure), extending even (ascensive) as far as (ἐφικνέομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Result, Deponent; reaching) you (Gen. Adv.; including Corinth).

Greek Text

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος οὗ ἐμέρισεν ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς μέτρον, ἐφικέσθαι ἄχρι καὶ ὑμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

nos autem non in inensum gloriabimur sed secundum mensuram regulae quam mensus est nobis Deus mensuram pertingendi usque ad vos

LWB 2 Cor. 10:14 For we did not ever extend ourselves beyond the limits of our authority when reaching out to you [in Corinth], (although we did reach out even as far as to you [Corinth] with the gospel of Christ),

KW 2 Cor. 10:14 For we did not extend ourselves beyond the prescribed limit as though we did not reach as far as to you, for we came as far as to you in announcing the good news about the Christ,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:14 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:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reiterates, emphatically, that neither he nor his colleagues ever stepped beyond (Latin: superextended) the boundaries of the authority God assigned to them (Gnomic Present tense) when they reached out (Customary Present tense) to them with the gospel. He also adds a parenthesis to remind them that they did indeed reach out (Culminative Aorist tense) as far as Corinth with the gospel message, bringing it even to the Corinthians. In other words, Paul is defending his divine commission to carry the gospel to Corinth and a large number of other cities in that geographical area. He remains inside God's assigned sphere of influence, not beyond that sphere.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The false apostles had no authority for ministering at Corinth other than that which they had arrogated to themselves. It was they who were stretching themselves beyond measure, not Paul. Priority of service gave Paul a prior claim to the loyalty of the Corinthians. He was the first to get there. (R.V.G. Tasker)

How common it is for men to credit themselves with the labors of others! We find this in every department of labor. In literature there are plagiarists, in scientific discoveries and artistic inventions there are unjust claimants, and even in religion one minister is often found to claim the good that others have accomplished. Paul was above this. The genius of Christianity condemns this mean and miserable dishonesty. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:14 **For** (explanatory) **we did not** (neg. adv.) **ever** (emphatic neg. adv.) **extend ourselves** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **beyond the limits of our authority** (ὑπερεκτείνω, PAI1P, Gnomic; overstepped their assigned boundaries) **when** (temporal) **reaching out** (ἐφικνέομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Customary, Temporal, Deponent) **to you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **(although** (concessive) **we did reach out** (φθάνω, AAI1P, Culminative; came face-to-face) **even** (ascensive) **as far as** (prep.) **to you** (Gen. Adv.) **with the gospel** (Instr. Assoc.) **of Christ** (Obj. Gen.)),

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ ὡς μὴ ἐφικνούμενοι εἰς ὑμᾶς ὑπερεκτείνομεν ἑαυτοὺς, ἄχρι γὰρ καὶ ὑμῶν ἐφθάσαμεν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

Latin Vulgate

non enim quasi non pertingentes ad vos superextendimus nos usque ad vos enim pervenimus in evangelio Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 10:15 Not boasting beyond limits in the labors of others, but possessing confidence that your intake and application of doctrine will continue to increase, since it [doctrinal teaching] was extended to you within our limits with abundant results,

KW 2 Cor. 10:15 Not boasting without a proper standard of measurement, namely, not in other men's labors, but having hope that as your faith grows, we may be increased [in our apostolic efficiency] among you in accordance with our measuring rule [apportioned to us in our apostolic labors], resulting in a superabundance [of fruit in service],

KJV 2 Cor. 10:15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It is quite acceptable to be excited and to boast about (Iterative Present tense) the fruitful ministry of the gospel no matter where it is received or who does the teaching. But there are acceptable limits that should not be exceeded by a minister of the gospel, such as taking credit for another man's labor. The Corinthians were the fruit of Paul's labor and the false teachers were doing exactly what he refuses to do - take credit for another man's labor. This is, of course, a counterattack against his opposition.

Since the Corinthians are the fruit of Paul's labor, he is confident (Durative Present tense) that their faith (perception and application of doctrine) would continue to increase (Futuristic Present tense). Why is Paul so confident? He is confident because he knows that God extended (Constative Aorist tense) the limits of his ministry to include Corinth, and if God is behind his ministry to the Corinthians, how could it possibly fail? As a matter of fact, his ministry to the Corinthians hasn't failed in the past and won't fail in the future, because he adds the words "abundant results" at the end. His ministry to them has already borne fruit and it will continue to do so, in spite of the detrimental influence of the false teachers. The "abundant results" are primarily evangelistic, since that is where Paul's greatest success has occurred so far. The experiential results, unfortunately, have not been quite so abundant, or there wouldn't have been the need for the letters to the Corinthians in the first place!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

His hope was that their faith was increased. (M. Henry) The false apostles were talking as though they had been the first to preach the gospel at Corinth, and were claiming it as their rightful sphere of jurisdiction. This was preposterous. (R.V.G. Tasker) Paul reproves more freely the false apostles, who, while they had put forth their hand in the reaping of another man's harvest, had the audacity at the same time to revile those who had prepared a place for them at the expense of sweat and toil. It was to the great discredit of a small section of the Corinthian Christians that they had given these men a hearing. (J. Calvin)

Paul hopes his sphere of service among the Corinthians will be enlarged as their faith grows. (C. Kruse) The Greek word "kanon" could denote a measured area or a limited domain of service, as well as a sphere of action or influence, a province or jurisdiction, conveying the idea of geographical limits. If someone else intrudes on another's *kanon*, they can be said to be out of bounds. (B. Witherington, III)

The apostle hopes that in the secret will of God, that when the Corinthians grew stronger and became more settled and established, and so would not stand in so much need of his care and instruction, that the measure of his ministry should be drawn to a greater length, the bounds of it extended and carried abundantly further. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 10:15 not (neg. adv.) boasting (καυχάομαι, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Modal, Deponent) beyond limits (Acc. Measure) in the labors (Loc. Sph.) of others (Dat. Poss.), but (contrast) possessing (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMP, Durative, Circumstantial) confidence (Acc. Dir. Obj.) that your (Poss. Gen.) intake and application of doctrine (Subj. Nom.; faith perception) will continue to increase (αὐξάνω, PPPtc.GFS, Futuristic, Complementary), since it (doctrinal teaching) was extended (μεγαλύνω, APInf., Constative, Inf. As Modifier; enlarged, elaborated to a great degree) to you (Dat. Adv.) within our (Poss. Gen.) limits (Acc. Measure; divinely delegated sphere of influence) with abundant results (Acc. Result),

Greek Text

οὐκ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχώμενοι ἐν ἀλλοτρίοις κόποις, ἐλπίδα δὲ ἔχοντες
αὐξανομένης τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν μεγαλυθῆναι κατὰ τὸν κανόνα
ἡμῶν εἰς περισσεΐαν

Latin Vulgate

non in inmensum gloriantes in alienis laboribus spem autem habentes crescentis fidei vestrae in vobis magnificari secundum regulam nostram in abundantiam

LWB 2 Cor. 10:16 For the purpose of spreading the good news to lands beyond you, not for the purpose of boasting on the work already done within the limits of another man.

KW 2 Cor. 10:16 With a view to proclaiming the good news in the regions beyond you, not boasting ourselves in another's field of activity with reference to the things made ready [in advance by others, namely, the Christian assemblies already founded by others].

KJV 2 Cor. 10:16 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

It has always been Paul's plan (assigned to him by God) to evangelize the Corinthians, teach them basic and eventually advanced doctrine, and when they have sufficiently matured, to use Corinth as a hub for further expansion of his ministry. So the ultimate purpose for teaching the Corinthians is for spreading the good news (Culminative Aorist tense) to geographical areas adjacent to Corinth. What Paul's purpose is emphatically not about is for boasting (Culminative Aorist tense) in the work somebody else did before him, taking credit for their ministry – which is what the false apostles have been doing. Again, Corinth is in Paul's divinely assigned territory, not the false apostles; so they are infringing upon his previously won ministerial territory.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

No one would dare to say that the missionary Paul left it to the churches in the founding of which he had been instrumental, to educate themselves. Contrariwise, he kept educating them on his visits to them and by his epistles. He hoped to eventually preach the gospel in regions beyond them “when” their faith had increased. (R.B. Kuiper) Paul combines “huper” and the pronoun “ekeina” into one word in the Byzantine Greek. It occurs only once in the NT (hapax legomena) with the ablative in the sense of “beyond,” as “into the regions beyond you.” (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 10:16 for the purpose of spreading the good news (εὐαγγελίζω, AMInf., Culminative, Purpose) to lands beyond you (Acc. Dir. Obj.; hapax legomena), not (neg. adv.) for the purpose of boasting (καυχάομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Purpose, Deponent) on the work already done (Acc. Dir. Obj.) within the limits (Loc. Sph.; inheritance of sphere of labor) of another man (Dat. Poss.).

Greek Text

εἰς τὰ ὑπέρεκεινα ὑμῶν εὐαγγελίσασθαι, οὐκ ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ κανόνι εἰς τὰ ἔτοιμα καυχῆσασθαι.

Latin Vulgate

etiam in illa quae ultra vos sunt evangelizare non in aliena regula in his quae praeparata sunt gloriari

LWB 2 Cor. 10:17 So then, he who is in the habit of boasting, let him make it a practice to boast in the Lord,

KW 2 Cor. 10:17 But he who boasts, let him be boasting in the Lord,

KJV 2 Cor. 10:17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If a person is in the habit of boasting (Iterative Present tense) about the fruits of his ministry, Paul says let him (Hortatory Imperative mood) boast in the Lord, rather than in himself. Too much boasting in oneself can lead to sinful arrogance and conceit.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Though there may be some room for legitimate pride in work done by the grace of God, nevertheless the true ground of Christian boasting is the privilege of knowing God Himself. (C. Kruse) Not in himself, nor in his outward circumstances of life, or inward endowments of mind; not in his natural or acquired parts; not in his wisdom, knowledge, learning, and eloquence; nor in his own righteousness, labors, and services, nor in his sense of himself; nor in the opinion and popular applause of others; but in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author and donor of all gifts, natural and spiritual. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 10:17 So then (inferential), he (Subj. Nom.) who is in the habit of boasting (καυχάομαι, PMPTc.NMS, Iterative, Substantival, Deponent), let him make it a practice to boast (καυχάομαι, PMImp.3S, Iterative, Hortatory, Deponent) in the Lord (Loc. Sph.),

Greek Text

Ὁ δὲ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω·

Latin Vulgate

qui autem gloriatur in Domino gloriatur

LWB 2 Cor. 10:18 For *it is not the person who recommends himself that is approved, but always whom the Lord tests and approves.*

KW 2 Cor. 10:18 For not he who recommends himself, that one is accepted after having been put to the test, but he whom the Lord recommends, that one has His stamp of approval placed upon him, that approval being based upon the fact that the approved one has met the test satisfactorily.

KJV 2 Cor. 10:18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to explain that the person who recommends (Aoristic Present tense) himself to himself (and to others) is not necessarily approved. The Lord Himself always does the formal testing and approval (Gnomic Present tense) of his ministers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “dokimos” translated “accepted” carries the idea of approval after testing. Paul uses the word to describe a tried and tested servant of Christ, one whose worth has been proved. It matters little what the individual says by way of self-recommendation or what judgments others make. All that matters is the commendation which the Lord Himself gives. This is the rubric under which Paul carried out his apostolic labors, and in the present context it is probably implied that his opponents in Corinth did not. (C. Kruse)

Such may be said to commend themselves, who ascribe that to themselves, which do not belong to them; as that they are the ministers of Christ, and sent forth by him, when they are not; who boast that they have large ministerial gifts, when they have none; and of their great service and usefulness, when it is all the produce of other men’s labors; and what they have and do, they wholly impute to their own power and industry, and not to the grace and power of God: now such persons are neither approved by God, nor good men; for their own self-commendation stands for nothing, and is so far from being acceptable to God or men, that it must be nauseous and disagreeable. (J. Gill)

To God alone must be reserved the right of passing judgment upon us, for we are not competent judges in our own cause. For it is easy to impose upon men by a false impression, and this is matter of everyday occurrence. (J. Calvin) A good man’s difficulties do not always come from avowed adversaries. It sometimes happens that those who are professedly upon his side trouble and harass him. So the Apostle Paul found it, for he had to complain of perils among false brethren, and he frequently had to contend with the undermining influence of those who disparaged his ability and authority, and asserted and praised themselves. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 10:18 **for** (explanatory) **it is** (ellipsis) **not** (neg. adv.) **the person** (Subj. Nom.; reference to members of the mutual admiration society in Corinth) **who recommends** (συνίστημι, PAPtc.NMS, Aoristic, Substantival) **himself** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **that** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) **approved** (Pred. Nom.), **but** (contrast) **always whom** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **the Lord** (Subj. Nom.) **tests and approves** (συνίστημι, PAI3S, Gnostic).

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἑαυτὸν συνιστάνων, ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν δόκιμος, ἀλλὰ ὃν ὁ κύριος συνίστησιν.

Latin Vulgate

non enim qui se ipsum commendat ille probatus est sed quem Dominus commendat

Chapter 11

LWB 2 Cor. 11:1 I hope you can tolerate me regarding something a little foolish, and not only this, but also please give patient attention to me.

KW 2 Cor. 11:1 Would that you would be patiently tolerant of me in a little foolishness [ironically of his enforced self-vindication and boasting]. But you are really patiently tolerant of me.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts a new transition by expressing two sarcastic wishes towards the Corinthians. First, he hopes they can endure listening to him (Latin: remain interested) on a rather small (Latin: modest) but foolish topic (Latin: a reply to an accusation). He uses the Voluntative Imperfect tense because he won't be in Corinth when they read the letter, and he knows it is completely up to them to be tolerant of his next topic or not. Following the thoughts in the Latin, Paul isn't going to spend much time answering this latest attack on his person, but he is going to defend himself to a small degree. He calls the topic a little foolish, probably because he can't believe he has to defend himself against such an attack in the first place. Second, while they are tolerating this somewhat foolish topic, he also asks them to please (Imperative of Entreaty) pay attention (Customary Present tense)

to the other, rather important topics that he is also going to cover next. In other words, they might not want to hear about the first topic, but he wants to make sure they retain their objectivity on the other topics, because they are very important.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

He had just condemned all self-commendation, yet he was forced to do what had the appearance of self-laudation. The Corinthians were in danger of being turned away from Christ by having their confidence in Paul undermined by the misrepresentation of his enemies. It was therefore necessary for him to present the grounds which he had for claiming authority over them, and for asserting his superiority over his opponents. Yet so repugnant was this task to his feelings, that he not only humbly apologizes for thus speaking of himself, but he finds it difficult to do what he felt must be done. (C. Hodge)

The tone of irony makes it doubtful whether to take “alla” as copulative (and) or adversative (but). In this and similar passages it is not necessary to drop the adversative idea (but), but merely to retain the original copulative (and) meaning. (A.T. Robertson) I did just that in my translation: “and not only this but.” In prose laced with irony, Paul asks the Corinthians to put up with him as he lowers himself to the level of his opponents. In fact, he acts against his own principle not to commend himself. (S. Kistemaker)

The phrase “would to God” translates one word in the Greek, “ophelon,” which expresses a fruitless wish. This is an example of the fondness of the KJV translators for the expression “would to God” even though it is not in the Greek (also “God forbid,” 15 times). The correct translation is simply “I hope.” (R. Earle) Like most people, the Corinthians were slow to absorb the truth that divine standards differ radically from those of the world. Paul had tried to make this clear in his former letter concerning the message of the Cross: the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world. If, however, the Corinthians persisted in looking at things from the world’s point of view, he would accommodate himself to their perspective. (D. Lowery)

Paul is very conscious that it is no business of an apostle, or indeed of any Christian, to praise himself. Such self-commendation is only justified, in the present instance, because his affection for his converts is so great, that he will go to almost any length to prevent them from becoming the dupes of unscrupulous men, and to keep them loyal to Christ. (R.V.G. Tasker) The Corinthians do fancy themselves wise, but Paul’s discourse will intimate that he believes they have acted like fools in regards to receiving and believing the false apostles and so only deserve a fool’s discourse meant to shame them into seeing the error of their ways. (B. Witherington, III)

Human jealousy is a vice, but to share divine jealousy is a virtue. God imparted to Paul a jealousy for the well-being of his people ... an ardor for the Corinthians and a readiness to keep them safe from the advances of his rivals. (S. Kistemaker, Murray Harris)

Irony was especially appropriate in contexts of invective and forensic oratory, hence its omnipresence in this Pauline discourse. Since this is written irony, it must be conveyed by its content, not just by delivery or the ethos of the speaker. Quintilian actually seems to prefer open boasting to “that perverted form of self-praise that makes a millionaire say he is poor, a famous man describe himself as obscure, the powerful pose as weak, and the eloquent as unskilled and even inarticulate. But the most ostentatious kind of boasting takes the form of actual self-derision.” (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 11:1 I hope (transitional verbal particle; wish, desire) you can tolerate (ἀνέχω, Imperf.MI2P, Voluntative; endure) me (Gen. Adv.; sanctified sarcasm) regarding something (Adv. Acc.) a little (Acc. Spec.; bit) foolish (Descr. Gen.), and not only this but (adversative) also (adjunctive) please give patient attention (ἀνέχω, PMImp.2P, Customary, Entreaty) to me (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

Ὁφελον ἀνείχεσθέ μου μικρόν τι ἀφροσύνης· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνέχεσθέ μου.

Latin Vulgate

utinam sustineretis modicum quid insipientiae meae sed et subportate me

LWB 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am deeply concerned for you with a profound Godly interest, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, hoping to present you an undefiled virgin to Christ,

KW 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I gave you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to the Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Durative Present tense to communicate to the Corinthians that he is constantly and deeply concerned for their welfare. This is why he wants them to pay close attention to what he has to say next. It is for their ultimate benefit as well as straight from his heart. At the precise moment when the Corinthians became believers, Paul promised them in marriage to Christ as His bride. This is an accomplished, positional fact. The Corinthians, as well as other Christians, are the bride of Christ. As an apostle and a teacher of the Word of God, Paul (in an experiential sense) wants the Corinthians to remain true to the Word and faithful to their husband, Jesus Christ. Those who have been following the false teachers (Judaizers) are not remaining faithful to the Word or

their true Husband. By succumbing to false teachings, cosmic panaceas, and satanic philosophies, they have defiled themselves, i.e., lost their virginity.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Temptations and seduction were real dangers, but the ease with which some of the Corinthians fell suggests that powerful factors of another kind were at work to lead them astray. There were four: divisions within the congregation, a precarious understanding of Christian morality, confusion on grace gifts, and most serious of all, many theological errors. (R.P. Martin)

Paul presents himself as a parent who has sought and found a suitable husband for his marriageable daughter. The church in Corinth is engaged to be married, while Paul serves as friend of the bridegroom and guardian of the bride. He wants the bride to be faithful to her future husband. The phrase “to one man” illustrates divinely intended monogamy. (S. Kistemaker)

As the people of God are so often represented in the Bible as standing to God in a relation analogous to that of a wife to a husband, so God is represented as being jealous, i.e., moved to deep displeasure when they transfer their love to another object. It was also natural for the apostle to feel this jealousy over them, for he stood in a most intimate relation to them. Their union with Christ was his work. He may compare himself in this verse to a father who gives his daughter to the bridegroom. His desire was that the Corinthians should remain faithful to their vows, so as to be presented to Christ a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, on that great day. He dreaded lest they should, in that day, be rejected and condemned as a woman unfaithful to her vows. (C. Hodge)

Many Corinthians have entered reverse-process reversionism, abandoning the apostle Paul (their true teacher) and Christ (their true husband) for false teachers and pseudo-lovers. The parallels are evident: there is one true husband (right man) for one true bride (right woman); Jesus is the Husband, the Church is His bride; Paul is their true teacher (right pastor), the Corinthians are his church (right congregation). Paul uses the concept of virginity and loss of virginity to communicate sarcastically the pursuit of illegitimate lovers (Judaizers) by some Corinthians. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul was the “best man” who led the bride to the heavenly bridegroom and rejoiced at the nuptial ceremony. Now, unhappily, they are estranged and alienated in their affections towards him. Even worse, they have crossed over the boundary line between the church where God’s rule is acknowledged and the world in which the forces of evil are dominant. (R.P. Martin)

2 Cor. 11:2 **For** (explanatory) **I am deeply concerned** (ζηλώω, PAIIS, Durative; devoted) **about you** (Acc. Adv.; because of your gullibility) **with a profound Godly** (Descr. Gen.) **interest** (Instr. Manner; zeal), **for** (explanatory) **I promised**

in marriage (ἀρμόζω, AMI1S, Constative) you (Acc. Adv.) to one (numeric) husband (Dat. Adv.; Jesus Christ), hoping to present (παρίστημι, AAInf., Futuristic, Purpose; exhibit) you (ellipsis) an undefiled (Compl. Acc.; innocent, chaste) virgin (Pred. Acc.; bride) to Christ (Instr. Assoc., Dat. Adv.),

Greek Text

ζηλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς θεοῦ ζήλω, ἡρμοσάμην γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἀνδρὶ παρθένον ἀγνήν παραστήσαι τῷ Χριστῷ·

Latin Vulgate

aemulor enim vos Dei aemulatione despondi enim vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo

LWB 2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear that in some way, as the serpent deceived Eve by means of his craftiness, your minds might become corrupted from single-hearted devotion (as well as purity) against Christ.

KW 2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the snake deceived Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from your simplicity [single-hearted loyalty] and purity [uprightness of life] which you express towards Christ.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul starts this sentence with the adversative conjunction “but,” because although he hopes to present them to Christ as undefiled virgins, he has reason to think they have already been corrupted. Because of the reports he has received from Corinth, Paul is afraid that they might (Potential Subjunctive mood) become corrupted (Ingressive Aorist tense) from their original devotion and purity to Christ to a disadvantageous mindset against Christ. He uses an indefinite adverb because he isn’t sure exactly “how” the Corinthians are being deceived, but he nevertheless knows it is happening.

Paul then compares the Corinthians to Eve in the garden. Rather than attacking Adam, the serpent attacked Adam’s authority over his wife by seducing (Constative Aorist tense) Eve. In the same manner, the false teachers attack Paul’s authority by seducing the Corinthians. The false teachers, by comparison, are doing this in exactly the same manner as Satan did to Eve – by means of trickery and deceit. They creep into the social circles of Corinth and distort the Word of God, seducing anyone that will listen.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Satan appears in Scripture as the recognized head of the fallen angels. He was originally, it would seem, one of the mightiest princes of the angelic world, and became the leader of those that revolted and fell away from God. The name “Satan” points to him as the “adversary,” not in the first place of man, but of God. He attacks Adam as the crown of God’s handiwork, works destruction and is therefore called Apollyon (the destroyer), and assaults Jesus when He undertakes the work of restoration. After the entrance of sin into the world he became Diabolos (the accuser), accusing the people of God continually. He is represented here as the originator of sin. (L. Berkof)

Like Adam was to Eve, Paul remains faithful to the Corinthians. But Paul is fearful of their recent descent into reverse-process reversionism. In both sides of the analogy, authority must be overturned. Satan attacks the Corinthians in the same manner as he attacked Eve, by evil cunning and deceit. He appeals to some form of intellectualism in order to seduce them, because he knows how powerful a weapon that is for those who are entering reverse-process reversionism. The Corinthians are demonstrating their reverse-process by rejecting the Apostle Paul in favor of the Judaizers – false apostles and teachers. The Corinthians lavished their wealth and affection on the Judaizers, but heaped criticism, insults, animosity, and even cruelty on Paul. Therefore, reverse-process reversionism is the status quo of unrestrained and perpetual sinfulness, fragmentation, and extensive cosmic involvement. The believer is brainwashed by satanic propaganda. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The phrase in parenthesis (“as well as purity”) is difficult to account for in some manuscripts, although the witnesses (apparently all of them patristic) may have had special interests that led them to quote only one part (“single-hearted devotion”) of the conflated text. In view of the age and character of such witnesses, the Committee retained the longer reading in the text, but in deference to the testimony of some manuscripts, they enclosed it within brackets. (B. Metzger)

Where Eve first gave way was in mentally harbouring for a moment the possibility insinuated by the serpent, of God not having her truest interests at heart, and of this “other” professing friend being more concerned for her than God. (Jamieson)

Eve was created holy, she stood in paradise in the perfection of her nature, with every conceivable motive to secure her fidelity. Yet by the subtilty of Satan she fell. What reason then have we to fear who are exposed to the machinations of the same great seducer. (C. Hodge) The account of the temptation as recorded in Genesis is regarded by the inspired writers of the new Testament not as a myth, or as an allegory, but as true history. (ibid) The imagination is filled with false images, and the foolish heart darkened. Eve was thus deceived by the subtilty of Satan. She was made to disbelieve what was true, and to believe what was false. Paul’s apprehension was lest the Corinthians, surrounded by false teachers, the ministers of Satan, should in like manner be beguiled.

(ibid) Our translation, “your minds,” as including the idea of both thought and feeling, is the most appropriate rendering. (ibid)

Just as Satan attacked the *thinking* of Eve, so the intruders are trying to change the *thought* patterns of the Corinthians. These intruders are Satan’s servants who attempt to subvert the *thinking* pattern of the Corinthians. (S. Kistemaker) The danger was not moral corruption, but intellectual deception leading to spiritual apostasy. (F.E. Gaebelien)

When a believer thinks only with his left lobe, his thinking (“noema:” mind) is corrupted and he becomes subjective. Their darkened thinking aptly describes the blackout of doctrine in the soul. As Bible doctrine is excluded from the thought process, the mentality of the soul is thrown open to apostate doctrine, false criteria, perverted norms and standards. This massive breakdown in the spiritual life is described by the phrase “excluded from the life of God because of their ignorance.” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Single-hearted devotion to Christ is easily destroyed. This is implied in the parable to the sower when, after the Word of God has been heard, “the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.” The danger of the false apostles lay in their false estimate of Jesus, and in their desire to improve upon, by making their own additions and subtractions, the simplicity of the gospel. When men, beguiled by false philosophies of human origin, look anywhere else except to the cross of Calvary for salvation, or when they are misled into thinking that the rites and ceremonies practiced in churches are in themselves the means of salvation, then the simplicity that is in Christ is lost ... The weapon of all false teachers is subtilty. And the sphere in which this weapon does its deadly work is the human imagination; for once the minds of men are corrupted, their whole personality is rendered impotent to do good. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 11:3 But (adversative) I fear (φοβέομαι, PM1S, Static, Deponent) that (solemn assertion) in some way (enclitic, indefinite adverb; somehow), as (comparative) the serpent (Subj. Nom.; Satan) deceived (ἐξαπατάω, AAI3S, Constativē; corruption of one’s mind) Eve (Acc. Disadv.) by means of his (Poss. Gen.) craftiness (Instr. Means; trickery, deceit), your (Poss. Gen.) minds (Subj. Nom.; thoughts, thinking) might become corrupted (φθείρω, APSubj.3S, Ingressive, Potential; seduced, ruined) from single-hearted devotion (Abl. Separation; loyalty) (as well as (connective) purity (Abl. Separation)) against Christ (Acc. Disadv.).

Greek Text

φοβοῦμαι δὲ μή πως, ὡς ὁ ὄφις ἐξηπάτησεν Εὐάν ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτοῦ, φθαρῆ τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπλότητος [καὶ τῆς ἀγνότητος] τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν.

Latin Vulgate

timeo autem ne sicut serpens Evam seduxit astutia sua ita corrumpantur sensus vestri et excidant a simplicitate quae est in Christo

LWB 2 Cor. 11:4 For example, when a person [false teacher] arrives on the scene repeatedly preaching another of the same kind of Jesus [the same historical Jesus but with something added] whom we [Paul and his colleagues] have not preached, or you receive another of a different kind of spirit [the spirit of legalism rather than the spirit of grace] which you have not previously received or another of a different kind of good news [something in addition to and superior to what Paul taught] which you have not previously accepted, you always give kind [unwavering adoration] patient attention to *him* [the false teacher].

KW 2 Cor. 11:4 For, indeed, if, as is the case, he who comes proclaims another person as Jesus than the one whom we proclaimed, or you receive a spirit different in nature from the one you received, or a message of good news different in character from that message you received, you are most beautifully tolerant of him.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

To explain why he worries about them, Paul provides an example of why the Corinthians are just as spiritually naïve as Eve was in the garden. Whenever a person arrives in Corinth (Customary Present tense means this is going to happen again and again) who makes it a practice (Iterative Present tense) to preach another Jesus, they listen to his message (Gnomic Present tense means every single time this happens) just like Eve listened to the Serpent’s message. It never fails, the Corinthians are always duped by false teachers!

There are two words used for “another” in this verse: “allos” means another of the same kind, while “heteros” means another of a different kind. The Jesus Who is preached by the false teachers is another of the same kind, meaning it is the same historic Jesus that everyone has heard about – but something is added or taken away from the true Jesus in contrast to the Jesus Paul preaches. “In this case, the Judaizers arrive in town preaching the same historic Jesus that Paul preaches, but they add false concepts to their message.” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

By contrast, the Corinthians take home with them (Static Present tense) another of a different kind of spirit. Instead of the spirit of grace which Paul teaches, they leave with a spirit of legalism. The Holy Spirit, also by way of contrast, teaches grace, not legalism. This spirit of legalism is not the spirit of grace which they previously (Ingressive Aorist tense) began to learn from Paul. The two are diametrically opposed to each other. The gospel which they began to learn from Paul (Ingressive Aorist tense) is also not the same gospel that is taught by the false teachers. Again, the Judaizers add legalism to grace, both to obtain salvation and to continue their daily walk. In other words, they preach Christ AND the law for salvation, as well as Christ AND the law for sanctification.

By way of inference, any person or organization who says “faith alone in Christ alone” is not enough to be saved is a false teacher. Also, any person or organization who says grace is enough to save you, but you have to keep the law in order to grow (legalism creeps into the picture again), is also a false teacher. It is all accomplished by grace; the law provides nothing of value in either positional or experiential sanctification. At one time, the Corinthians had heard the truth from Paul and had accepted it (Ingressive Aorist tense), but now they have turned their attention toward evil just like Eve did in the garden.

Paul really rubs it in by sarcastically stating that they “always” (Gnomic Present tense) render kindness and adoration to false teachers that come to town. How ironic that they treat their true apostle (Paul) with disdain, but they treat every false apostle that comes along with kindness and generosity. In the same manner, Eve rebelled against the authority of her husband (Adam) while giving adoration and attention to the serpent (Satan). What an ironic and sarcastic commentary on the pitiful state of the spiritually seduced Corinthians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Emissaries arrived at Corinth, perhaps wishing to exploit the recent disaffection with Paul on the part of a section of the Corinthian leadership. These messengers were warmly received – but quickly reopened old wounds and insinuated that Paul was no true apostle or even not a Christian at all. He lacked all the qualities, gifts, and graces of an impressive apostolic figure; he was weak, insecure, and exposed to suffering at every turn. (R.P. Martin)

Should the word “spirit” be capitalized, referring to the Holy Spirit? No, because the spirit that the intruders propose is not the Spirit of God but a human spirit. The interlopers wanted to give the Corinthians a worldly spirit in place of the Holy Spirit. But a worldly spirit enslaves people and fills their heart with fear. (S. Kistemaker) The phrase “You put up with it well enough” points to the fact that changes in doctrine were presented gradually so that the members of the Corinthian church hardly noticed the difference. Paul himself has to call their attention to the spiritual threat in their midst. For this reason, he must be direct in confronting the readers. (ibid)

Here the apostle refers to an individual (someone), as if there were only one intruder. Perhaps Paul is thinking of the ringleader, for elsewhere he clearly refers to a plural number of opponents. (J. Scott) It appears that one person is the ringleader of the opposition in Corinth, since Paul refers to “anyone” or “one” coming to Corinth. (B. Witherington, III)

Note the triad: Jesus, spirit, gospel. And note the three verbs: proclaimed, received, accepted.

- 1) Someone proclaims a Jesus – OTHER than the one we proclaimed
- 2) You receive a spirit – DIFFERENT from the one you received
- 3) You accept a gospel – DIFFERENT from the one you accepted

This is the reality of someone who has come to Corinth to proclaim another Jesus, a different spirit, and a different gospel. (S. Kistemaker)

Paul was using a bit of sarcasm here. Men had come preaching the same kind of Jesus, but a different kind of spirit and a different kind of gospel. The error was revealed when it did not work. It brought death to the people of God. It contradicts the words that the risen Son of God spoke to Paul when Paul was caught up to the third heaven. (K. Lamb) The facile acceptance of novelty is the cause of Paul’s anxiety. Such instability is always a danger in the case of new-found Christians. (R. Nicoll) They acknowledged that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, but they seem to have represented him as merely human, as merely a prophet, as destitute of Divine claims upon the faith and reverence of men. The form of error chages, whilst the substance remains. In our own day there are public teachers who commend Jesus to the admiration and the imitation of men, but who ridicule or despise the notion that he is the one Saviour, that he is the rightful Lord, of humanity. (F.W. Farrar)

The name “Jesus” in this verse is a *metonym of the subject* where the object (Jesus) is put for that which pertains or relates to it. In other words, “preaching another Jesus” means preaching a different doctrine or teaching concerning Jesus. (E.W. Bullinger) The change is made from “another of the same kind” (allos) to “another of a different kind” (heteros) for the very reason that Paul is not willing to admit that it is a gospel on the same plane as that preached by him. He is stigmatizing the gospel of the Judaizers and the spirit preached by them as not being of the same type as the Jesus preached by him. (A.T. Robertson)

The Gospel is a favorite target for satanic attacks. Satan has a gospel of his own. It includes attacks on the imputation of soul life resulting in human life as opposed by the highly speculative hypothesis of evolution and by the philosophy of materialism. It attacks the doctrine of Adam’s original sin by the mistaken notion of the inherent dignity of man and its corollary of noble human equality. It attacks the potential for eternal salvation by using false, obscure psychological systems, including the idea that improved

environment is the solution to life's problems. It attacks the Gospel directly through counterfeits of his own making and spiritual blindness through negative volition. It attacks the hope of the believer by spreading a debilitating uncertainty about life and by trying to reach God by a system of salvation by works. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There is a safe and sure criterion by which the Christian may gauge his inward impulses, and ascertain whether there proceeds from his own restless spirit, an evil spirit, or the Spirit of God. That criterion is the written Word of God, and by it all must be measured. The Holy Spirit never prompts anyone to act contrary to the Scriptures. How could He, when He is the Author of them! His promptings are always unto obedience to the precepts of Holy Writ. Therefore, when a man who has not been distinctly called, separated, and qualified by God to be a minister of His Word, undertakes to "preach," no matter how strong the impulse, it proceeds not from the Holy Spirit. When a woman "feels led" to pray in public where men are present (I Cor. 14:34) she is moved by "another spirit." (A.W. Pink)

2 Cor. 11:4 **For** (explanatory) **example** (emphasis; on the one hand), **when** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he will") **a person** (Subj. Nom.; the ringleader of the false teachers) **arrives on the scene** (έρχομαι, PMPTc.NMS, Customary, Temporal, Deponent, Articular; makes an appearance) **repeatedly preaching** (κηρύσσω, PAI3S, Iterative) **another of the same kind of** (comparative; the same historical Person) **Jesus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **whom** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **we** (Paul and his colleagues) **have not** (neg. adv.) **preached** (κηρύσσω, AAI1P, Constative), **or** (continuative) **you receive** (λαμβάνω, PAI2P, Static; take home with you) **another of a different kind of** (contrast) **spirit** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; spirit of legalism) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you have not** (neg. adv.) **previously received** (λαμβάνω, AAI2P, Ingressive), **or** (continuative) **another of a different kind of** (contrast) **good news** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; gospel) **which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **you have not** (neg. adv.) **previously accepted** (δέχομαι, AMI2P, Ingressive, Deponent), **you** (spiritually seduced Corinthians) **always give kind** (adv.; unwavering adoration, undeviating pseudo-love for the Judaizers), **patient attention to** (ἀνέχω, PMI2P, Gnostic) **him** (ellipsis).

Greek Text

εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν κηρύσσει ὃν οὐκ ἐκηρύξαμεν, ἢ πνεῦμα ἕτερον λαμβάνετε ὃ οὐκ ἐλάβετε, ἢ εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον ὃ οὐκ ἐδέξασθε, καλῶς ἀνέχεσθε.

Latin Vulgate

nam si is qui venit alium Christum praedicat quem non praedicavimus aut alium spiritum accipitis quem non accepistis aut aliud evangelium quod non recepistis recte pateremini

LWB 2 Cor. 11:5 For I conclude after an objective personal evaluation that I have not been in the past and am in no way now inferior to the highly-exalted apostles.

KW 2 Cor. 11:5 For I account myself as not being in even one thing inferior to these superfine apostles.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

After evaluating himself (Static Present tense) Paul continues with biting sarcasm the comparison of his ministry to that of the false apostles. He concludes that he has never in the past nor at this current time (Consummative Perfect tense) ever been inferior to the false apostles. He also sarcastically calls the false apostles highly exalted (extra-special), both in their own opinions and unfortunately in the opinions of many Corinthians. Not only has Paul never been inferior to them temporally, but he was and now is inferior to them in absolutely nothing (Latin: nihil).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul's design is not so much to reprove the Corinthians for tolerating the folly of the false teachers, as to induce them to bear with his. He was fully entitled to all the deference and obedience which were due to the chiefest apostles. (C. Hodge) The word "hyperlian" means over much, pre-eminent, and as suggested by Arndt and Gingrich, "super-apostles." There is little doubt that the phrase is a sarcastic description of the Judazing leaders, who claimed to be acting with the authority of the Twelve against one who had no such authority. (R. Earle)

Their criticism of Paul involved his oral presentation of the gospel. They argued that he was an amateur, untrained in words, which here likely means ornamental rhetoric. This may explain the abundance of rhetorical devices here. Paul proves he is capable of more than passable rhetoric. Despite the form, the content is good. (B. Witherington, III)

Few things in human life are more distasteful than egotism or vanity. There are those in society whose chief delight is to parade their own imaginary merits and distinctions. We are wrong, however, if we regard the man who sometimes speaks about himself as an egotist. When a man is denied virtues which he knows he possesses, and charged with faults of which his conscience tells him he is not guilty of, he is bound by the laws of his nature to stand up in self-defense. Every man is justified in fighting for his moral reputation, which is to him more precious than gold, and dear to him as life. This is just

what Paul does here and in many other places in his letters to the Corinthians. (F.W. Farrar)

No one but Jesus appointed the twelve apostles, chose Matthias to succeed Judas Iscariot, and called Paul as an apostle to the Gentiles. Jesus commissioned no successors to these men, with the result that apostleship never became an established and continuing church office. The apostolate is therefore unrepeatable and untransferable. (S. Kistemaker)

The word used by Paul for “very chiefest” is one which, in its strangeness, marks the vehemence of his emotion. It involves an indignant sense that he had been most disparagingly compared with other apostles, as though he were hardly a genuine apostle at all. There is here no reflection whatever on the twelve; he merely means that, even if any with whom he was unfavorably contrasted were “apostles ten times over,” he can claim to be in the front rank with them. There is no self-assertion here; but in consequence of the evil done by his detractors, Paul with an utter sense of distaste, is forced to say the simple truth. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:5 For (explanatory) I conclude after an objective personal evaluation (λογίζομαι, PMI1S, Static, Deponent; personal evaluation, dogmatic conclusion) that I have not been in the past and am in no way now (neg. adj.; in nothing) inferior (ὑστερέω, Perf.Ainf., Consummative, Result; lacking importance or relevance, falling short of the apostolic standard) to the highly-exalted (sarcastic superlative; extra-special, super-doooper, pneumatic superstars) apostles (Obj. Gen.; false).

Greek Text

λογίζομαι γὰρ μηδὲν ὑστερηκέναι τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων·

Latin Vulgate

existimo enim nihil me minus fecisse magnis apostolis

LWB 2 Cor. 11:6 As a matter of fact, even though *I may be unskilled with reference to speech [inadequate verbal communication skills], I am not, however, [unskilled] with reference to information [doctrinal principles]; on the contrary, on every occasion we have made the truth known to you in every category of thing [comprehensive systematic theology].*

KW 2 Cor. 11:6 But even if, as is the case, I am not a professional orator in the realm of discourse, yet I am not unlearned nor unskilled in the realm of knowledge, but in everything we made it [our knowledge of God’s Word] plain among all with a view to your benefit.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only is Paul not inferior to the false apostles, but he has taught the Corinthians (Constativ Aorist tense) every category of systematic theology, not just the bits-and-pieces the false apostles chose to present. Paul concedes that he may be an unskilled speaker compared to the well-trained sophistry of the Judaizers. But the one thing he is not unskilled in is the Word of God. He has all the doctrinal information they will ever need, if they will only listen and not be sidetracked by legalism. But instead of listening to “boring old Paul” they have been “spiritually fornicating with celebrities” (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) i.e., the Judaizers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Evidently Paul was neither a Demosthenes nor a Cicero. Yet, the impact which he made on his hearers is proof that he knew how to grip and hold an audience. Nevertheless, he admits that he was “unskilled in speaking.” (R.B. Kuiper) Even though he disclaims classic eloquence, he is the most personal and most powerful writer of antiquity. It is hard to characterize this individuality in whom Christian fulness of love, rabbinic keenness of perception and ancient willpower so wonderfully mingle. (A.T. Robertson)

He was no rhetorician, and did not appear in the character of an orator. What Paul concedes is not the want of eloquence, of which his writings afford abundant evidence, but of the special training of a Grecian. He spoke Greek as a Jew. It is not improbable that some of his opponents in Corinth, although themselves of Hebrew origin, prided themselves on their skill in the use of the Greek language, and made the apostles’ deficiency in that respect a ground of disparagement. (C. Hodge)

Paul may speak crudely, but he is not crude in what really matters: Bible doctrine. The language of legalism made Paul sound crude to the Corinthians, but before the Judaizers infiltrated Corinth and while they were young believers, they had not considered him crude. He put his thoughts into words that everyone could understand on purpose; he did not want to sound “hi-falutin.” Instead, he made the entire sphere of Bible doctrine known to them (for their benefit) by any means possible, including different types of speech, including crudities. So what should the Corinthians prefer: (a) true doctrine crudely communicated, or (b) false doctrine beautifully spoken? (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The word “idiotes” was used for those who, because they lacked technical or professional training, tended to dabble in a subject or an occupation in a rather amateurish manner. Paul here admits that he had had no training in professional rhetoric. He is an apostle, not an orator. An exponent of the gospel did not need, he would have claimed, to be a rhetorician, for the Spirit enabled him to give spiritual expression to spiritual truths. It

was the truth he taught that mattered the most. What he will not admit is that he is unskilled in knowledge. The mystery of Christ had been fully revealed to him and fully expounded by him. (R.V.G. Tasker)

The apostle was an amateur in oratory, but a genius in factual and spiritual knowledge. He especially knew the Scriptures and had profound insight into the mystery of Christ's gospel. In this text and others he associates the term "knowledge" with both the preaching of the Good News and spiritual knowledge. (S. Kistemaker) Paul was not trained in all the rhetorical parts of Grecian oratory, his periods were not polished, his sentences were not tuneful, and perhaps, his utterances lacked flow and his voice music. But what of that? He had the highest "knowledge." What is the grandest orator without true knowledge? Clouds of golden splendour without water for the thirsty land. (F.W. Farrar)

It is possible that Paul is using a rhetorical device by which he places himself in an inferior position vis-à-vis his opponents even though he knows (and expects his readers to know) that he is in fact superior to them. (C. Kruse) The Greeks regarded a man as "idiotes" who just attended to his own affairs (ta idia) and took no part in public life. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 11:6 As a matter of fact (adversative), even (ascensive) though (protasis, 1st class condition: "assumes he is" or 3rd class condition: "maybe I am, maybe I'm not") I may be (ellipsis) unskilled (Pred. Nom.; untrained, crude, sorely lacking) with reference to speech (Dat. Ref.; verbal communication skills, sermon delivery), I am (ellipsis) not (neg. adv.) however (contrast), with reference to information (Dat. Ref.; knowledge); on the contrary (adversative), on every occasion (Loc. Time; instance, case) we have made the truth known (φανερῶ, AAPTc.NMP, Epistolary, Complementary; plainly revealed, made evident) to you (Acc. Adv.) in every category of thing (Loc. Sph.; comprehensive systematic theology).

Greek Text

εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ γνώσει, ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ φανερώσαντες ἐν πᾶσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

et si inperitus sermone sed non scientia in omnibus autem manifestatus sum vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 11:7 Have I even committed a sin by continuing to support myself under humble circumstances [making tents to pay his living expenses] so that you

might be spiritually exalted, because I preached the good news of God to you without cost?

KW 2 Cor. 11:7 Or, did I commit a sin in humbling myself [in supporting myself making tents] in order that you might be exalted [in spiritual privileges] because I preached the good news of God to you without charge?

KJV 2 Cor. 11:7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Of course Paul didn't sin (Constative Aorist tense) by supporting himself (Iterative Present tense) financially. But some Corinthians, obviously provoked by the false teachers who did ask for money, thought less of Paul because he wouldn't accept their financial favors. Paul made tents to pay for his own living expenses because he didn't want anything to stand in the way of their spiritual growth. The very gospel he preached to them (Ingressive Aorist tense) cost them nothing. He refused all financial contributions from the new believers in Corinth.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Professional Greek rhetoricians, alluded to in verse 6, would be suspect if they failed to demand fees. (D. Guthrie) Paul's refusing to be supported by the Corinthians was represented by his enemies as arising from the consciousness of the invalidity of his claim to the apostleship. (C. Hodge) Among the Greeks it was regarded as degrading for a philosopher or an itinerant teacher to engage in manual work to supply his needs. (C. Kruse)

Paul humbled himself by working for a living and teaching Bible doctrine. The Judaizers said Paul didn't ask for money because he knew his message was worthless, not being as valuable as the law. Paul refused to take a salary so the Corinthians would not be hindered in their spiritual growth, so they might receive a completed edification complex of the soul (ECS) quicker. Ironically, the poor people of Philippi supported Paul so he could lead them to Christ and then teach doctrine to the rich people in Corinth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:7 Have I even (ascensive) committed (ποιέω, AAI1S, Dramatic, Interrogative Ind.) a sin (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by continuing to support myself (Acc. Dir. Obj.) under humble circumstances (ταπεινός, PAPtc.NMS, Iterative, Instrumental; making tents to pay his living expenses) so that (Purpose) you might be spiritually exalted (ύψόω, APSubj.2P, Culminative, Potential), because (Causal) I preached (εὐαγγελίζω, AMI1S, Ingressive) the gospel (Acc. Dir. Obj.;

good news) of God (Obj. Gen.) to you (Dat. Adv.) without cost (adj.; free of charge, gratuitously)?

Greek Text

Ἡ ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησα ἑμαυτὸν ταπεινῶν ἵνα ὑμεῖς ὑψωθῆτε, ὅτι δωρεὰν τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγέλιον εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν;

Latin Vulgate

aut numquid peccatum feci me ipsum humilians ut vos exaltemini quoniam gratis evangelium Dei evangelizavi vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 11:8 I robbed other assemblies [mature believers] by receiving compensation for the purpose of ministering to you [carnal believers],

KW 2 Cor. 11:8 I robbed other assemblies, having taken wages from them, accepting from them more than their share of my support in order to minister to you.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

On more than one occasion, Paul accepted financial support (Constative Aorist tense) from other churches so he could live in Corinth and teach doctrine there free of charge. Because many of the assemblies that Paul received money (Latin: stipend) from were poor, Paul says it was a form of robbery. The Corinthians hassled him about his doctrinal teachings on grace giving, but if it weren't for grace gifts from other churches, Paul wouldn't be able to come to Corinth to teach them for free in the first place. On the one hand, he took a considerable amount of donations from mature believers in other assemblies to spend a lot of time teaching carnal believers in Corinth. On the other hand, he spent relatively little time teaching mature believers face-to-face in other assemblies, while the Corinthians had yet to cover even those expenses. Humanly speaking, this was not an equitable arrangement. Other assemblies (mature believers) were givers while the Corinthians (carnal believers) were takers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In effect, Paul seized wages from the helpless to teach the wealthy. He took money from the poor to pay for his travel expenses so he could teach the Corinthians face-to-face. So at other believer's expense, which the Corinthians took for granted, Paul would eventually return to Corinth and resume his ministry there. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) When Paul went to Corinth, he took with him a supply of money derived from other churches, which he supplemented by the proceeds of his own labor; and when his stock was exhausted the deficiency was supplied by the brethren from Macedonia. (C. Hodge)

The singular of “ophonion” in the Papyri means “army pay” or wages. (A. Diessmann)
Robbed (pillaged) and support (ration-money) are military metaphors. (N. Hillyer)

2 Cor. 11:8 I robbed (συλάω, AAI1S, Constative; meant “tongue in cheek,” pillaged: to strip a dead soldier of his armour) other (Acc. Spec.) assemblies (Acc. Dir. Obj.) by receiving (λαμβάνω, AAPtc.NMS, Constative, Instrumental) compensation (Acc. Dir. Obj.; wages, salary, rations) for the purpose of (Purpose) ministering (Adv. Acc.) to you (Gen. Adv.),

Greek Text

ἄλλας ἐκκλησίας ἐσύλησα λαβῶν ὀψώνιον πρὸς τὴν ὑμῶν διακονίαν,

Latin Vulgate

alias ecclesias expoliavi accipiens stipendium ad ministerium vestrum

LWB 2 Cor. 11:9 And when I was present face-to-face with you and was in need of financial assistance, I was not a financial burden to anyone, (for fellow believers who came from Macedonia supplied me what I was lacking), and in every circumstance I have maintained myself at no financial cost to you, and [because of your immaturity in financial matters] I will continue to maintain *myself*.

KW 2 Cor. 11:9 And when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden to anyone, for that which I lacked, the brethren, having come from Macedonia, supplied. And in all things I kept myself from being a burden to you and will continue to keep myself thus.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reminds the Corinthians that when (Temporal Participle) he was in Corinth the last time (Historical Present tense), teaching them face-to-face, he was in a rather serious state of financial instability (Constative Aorist tense). However, he did not become a financial burden (Constative Aorist tense) on them in spite of his need for help. He supported himself by making tents, and representatives from Macedonia arrived in Corinth (Constative Aorist tense) and provided him (Culminative Aorist tense) with exactly the amount of financial assistance he required to remain solvent.

He continues to remind them that in every circumstance (he didn't break down and ask them for money no matter what happened), he maintained himself (Constative Aorist tense) financially, so they could receive his teaching free of charge. It was Paul's policy that believers should not be burdened with the financial support of their ministers until they have matured to the point where money is not an issue. So far, in their carnality and by the contentious prodding of the false teachers, money was an issue with them – in spite of their wealth compared to other assemblies. It is Paul's estimation that they are still in this immature mindset, because he states that his plan is to continue supporting himself (Futuristic Present tense) in the future.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was flat broke while ministering to the wealthiest church on earth. The poor Macedonians came to his rescue. He did not want to be a burden on any Corinthians, especially those who are giving their money to the Judaizers. As a matter of principle, Paul would not take money from believers who were negative to Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul's conduct in reference to receiving aid varied with circumstances. From some churches he received it without hesitation; from others, he would not receive it at all. He was unwilling that his enemies should have the opportunity of imputing to him any mercenary motive in preaching the gospel. (C. Hodge)

One of Paul's cilicisms (a provincial expression he picked up in Tarsus) means "paralysis," and is also the name given to the electric eel, or the torpedo cramp-fish, which benumbs with the shock of its touch. "I did not," he indignantly says, "cramp you with my torpedo-touch." Perhaps in a less vehement mood he would have chosen a less picturesque or technical and medical term. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:9 **And** (continuative) **when I was present** (πάρεμι, PAPtc.NMS, Historical, Temporal) **face-to-face with you** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **and** (connective) **was in need of financial assistance** (ὑστερέω, APPTc.NMS, Constative, Temporal; lacking in resources), **I was not** (neg. adv.) **a financial burden** (καταναρκάω, AAI1S, Constative; numbing effect: narcotic) **to anyone** (Gen. Disadv.), (**for** (explanatory) **fellow believers** (Subj. Nom.) **who came** (έρχομαι, AAPtc.NMP, Constative, Substantival, Deponent) **from Macedonia** (Abl. Source) **supplied** (προσαναπληρώω, AAI3P, Culminative; grace provision) **me** (Gen. Adv.) **what I was lacking** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; financial needs), **and** (continuative) **in every circumstance** (Loc. Sph.; financial matters) **I have maintained** (τηρέω, AAI1S, Constative) **myself** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **at no financial cost** (Adv. Acc.) **to you** (Dat. Adv.), **and** (continuative; because

of their immaturity in financial matters) **I will continue to maintain** (τηρέω, FAiLS, Futuristic & Iterative; Paul plans to keep on being financial independent) **myself** (ellipsis).

Greek Text

καὶ παρῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑστερηθεὶς οὐ κατενάρκησα οὐθενός· τὸ γὰρ ὑστέρημά μου προσανεπλήρωσαν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἐλθόντες ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας, καὶ ἐν παντὶ ἀβαρῆ ἑμαυτὸν ὑμῖν ἐτήρησα καὶ τηρήσω.

Latin Vulgate

et cum essem apud vos et egerem nulli onerosus fui nam quod mihi deerat suppleverunt fratres qui venerunt a Macedonia et in omnibus sine onere me vobis servavi et servabo

LWB 2 Cor. 11:10 The truth from Christ keeps on residing in me, so that this boasting [in financial independence] shall not be silenced as it pertains to me in the regions of Achaia.

KW 2 Cor. 11:10 As the truth concerning Christ is in me, this boasting [in my independence of financial support] shall not be stopped so far as it pertains to me in the regions of Achaia.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Bible doctrine, the Word of God, and the Truth are all synonymous. They all come from Jesus Christ (Source), are about Jesus Christ (General Reference), and are of Jesus Christ (Possessive). Paul says this truth continues to abide (Iterative Present tense) in him, so he isn't about to back off his policy of maintaining his financial independence. He knows what he is doing and saying. As long as he remains in Achaia, he will communicate the Word of God freely and will continue to support himself financially so nothing derogatory can be said about his policy of obtaining and distributing money to the poor. Likewise, his boasting in this financial policy will not be silenced (Predictive Future tense, Latin: weakened, broken-off) as long as he is around.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul says: "Bible doctrine (the Truth) is in me." You cannot love Jesus Christ without loving Bible doctrine and you cannot love Bible doctrine without loving Jesus Christ. Any person who claims to love Jesus and isn't interested in His Word is a phony. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul's opponents boasted their disinterestedness whilst making gain of the Corinthians, and eagerly watched him to detect self-enrichment, that they might boast of their own superiority. These have been the tactics of demagogues in all ages. But Paul resolved to refuse just recompense for real and great benefits, that thus by his example he may compel those who boasted their superiority to come up to his own level of working without pay, so that when his conduct and theirs are investigated, they may be found to be as disinterested as he was. Truly that man might well exult who feels that, however deficient in mere verbal learning, he possesses the highest knowledge – the knowledge of Christ; and who also feels that he is rendering to men the highest service from kindly generous impulses without a desire for fee or reward, giving freely to men what God has given freely to all – the gospel of Jesus Christ. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:10 The truth (Subj. Nom.; Bible doctrine) from Christ (Abl. Source) keeps on residing (εἰμί, PAI3S, Iterative) in me (Loc. Sph.), so that (consecutive) this (Nom. Spec.) boasting (Subj. Nom.; in financial independence) shall not (neg. adv.) be silenced (φράσσω, FPI3S, Predictive; stopped) as it pertains to me (Acc. Gen. Ref.) in the regions (Loc. Place) of Achaia (Gen. Spec.).

Greek Text

ἔστιν ἀλήθεια Χριστοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ὅτι ἡ καύχησις αὕτη οὐ φραγήσεται εἰς ἐμὲ ἐν τοῖς κλίμασιν τῆς Ἀχαΐας.

Latin Vulgate

est veritas Christi in me quoniam haec gloria non infringetur in me in regionibus Achaiae

LWB 2 Cor. 11:11 For what reason? Because I no longer continue to extend virtue love towards you? God knows better!

KW 2 Cor. 11:11 Wherefore? Because I do not love you? God knows.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks the Corinthians a rhetorical question: Why won't I be quiet about my financial independence, as well as my teaching, and let it rest? Then he adds sarcastically: Because I don't love you anymore? In other words: Since I don't love you Corinthians anymore, why don't I quit boasting about "doctrine for free" from this day forward? Of course Paul still loves the Corinthians. That's why he continues to suffer their indignities and their lack of financial support. That's why he keeps on teaching them doctrine and chews them

out when they need it. If he didn't care about them, he'd just give up and go elsewhere. The Gnostic Perfect tense says God knows better, even if they don't.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Corinthians lost what progress they had made in the Christian life (building their edification complex of the soul) to apostasy and reverse-process reversionism. But he still has Bible doctrine to give them even though they have given nothing to Paul. Doctrinal teaching will not be silenced (obstructed) by reverse-process reversionism. Teaching will continue anyway. Paul shows his love for them by teaching doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:11 For what reason (interrogative; why)? Because (Causal; sarcastic) I no longer (neg. adv.) continue to extend virtue love (*ἀγαπάω*, PAI1S, Iterative & Durative) towards you (Acc. Dir. Obj.)? **God** (Subj. Nom.) knows better (*οἶδα*, Perf.AI3S, Gnostic)!

Greek Text

διὰ τί; ὅτι οὐκ ἀγαπῶ ὑμᾶς; ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν.

Latin Vulgate

quare quia non diligo vos Deus scit

LWB 2 Cor. 11:12 Moreover, what I am currently doing [supporting myself financially], I also plan to keep on doing, so that I might remove the occasion for those [false apostles] who are constantly desiring an opportunity [to receive money], so that while they are boasting [in their assumed status as apostles] they may also be found just as us [able to support themselves].

KW 2 Cor. 11:12 Moreover, that which I do [refusing to accept financial help from you] I will also continue to do, in order that I may cut off the particular occasion [the opportunity for attacking me should I accept help] from those who desire an occasion, that in the matter of their boast [namely, that since they had apostolic rank they possessed the right to be financially supported] they may be found even as also we are.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is currently supporting himself financially (Iterative Present tense) and he plans to keep on supporting himself financially (Predictive Future tense) for a good reason. False

apostles have come to Corinth hoping to find (Iterative Present tense) Paul receiving financial support from the Corinthians. That way, they can claim they are legitimate apostles, too, and likewise deserve to be supported financially. Paul is not going to give them this opportunity. He is going to continue supporting himself so he might be able (Potential Subjunctive mood) to cut (Culminative Aorist tense) their desire for financial support off (Latin: amputate) at the knees.

Paul then uses a rare combination of the Locative case with an Infinitive to say that while (temporal: during) the false apostles are actually in the process of boasting (Customary Present tense) in their being apostles and needing financial support, the Corinthians will realize (Culminative Aorist tense) that these (false) apostles are just like the (legitimate) apostles, and therefore able to support themselves as well. If I may transliterate the Greek a bit: “Eureka! We have discovered that these false apostles can support themselves just like Paul and his colleagues.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

His refusal to accept support must undermine his rivals’ claims to work on the same terms as Paul. (N. Hillyer)

Paul says: “What I have been doing, I’m going to keep on doing!” He continues with his irony and sarcasm because it seems to be the only way to get the Corinthian’s attention. His plan is to cut off the false apostle’s present opportunity to receive money. The false teachers have been building their ministry on running down Paul’s ministry. Paul wants the Corinthians to discover the false teachers for what they really are, and to discover that they have been victimized by these false teachers while in reverse-process reversionism. He also uses a nice comparative phrase “even as we.” The analogy is: Paul isn’t being listened to, and Paul isn’t being paid. Therefore, the false teachers shouldn’t be listened to, and they also shouldn’t be paid. Imagine the Corinthians hearing this cutting irony and sarcasm from the true apostle. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:12 **Moreover** (continuative), **what** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; supporting myself financially) **I am currently doing** (ποιέω, PAI1S, Iterative), **I also** (adjunctive) **plan to keep on doing** (ποιέω, FAI1S, Predictive), **so that** (purpose) **I might remove** (ἐκκόπτω, AASubj.1S, Culminative, Potential; cut down, cut off) **the occasion** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; opportunity) **for those** (Gen. Disadv.; false apostles) **who are constantly desiring** (θέλω, PAPtc.GMP, Iterative, Substantival; wanting, wishing) **an opportunity** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **so that** (result) **while** (rare: with infinitive) **they are boasting** (καυχάομαι, PMI3P, Customary, Deponent; in their being legitimate apostles) **they may also** (Adjunctive) **be found** (εὕρισκω, APSubj.3P, Culminative, Potential; discovered) **just as** (comparative) **us** (Acc. Gen. Ref.; supporting ourselves).

Greek Text

Ὁ δὲ ποιῶ, καὶ ποιήσω, ἵνα ἐκκόψω τὴν ἀφορμὴν τῶν θελόντων ἀφορμὴν, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καυχῶνται εὐρεθῶσιν καθὼς καὶ ἡμεῖς.

Latin Vulgate

quod autem facio et faciam ut amputem occasionem eorum qui volunt occasionem ut in quo gloriantur inveniantur sicut et nos

LWB 2 Cor. 11:13 Indeed, such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, who are constantly transforming themselves with clever disguises [masquerading] into apostles of Christ.

KW 2 Cor. 11:13 For such men as these are false apostles, crafty workers, changing their outward expression to one which does not come from within and is not representative of their inner character, but is assumed from without, masquerading as Christ's apostles.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul makes no bones about calling these men false apostles. He calls them for what they are: lying, deceitful men. Like actors in a movie or play, they transform themselves (Latin: transfigure) again and again (Iterative Present tense) into characters that they are not, wearing whatever internal and external disguise necessary to convince the crowd of their legitimacy. And what role are they trying to play? They are pretending to be apostles of Christ, and are so successful in their charade that they have some Corinthians supporting them financially because of their excellent performance!

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Satan uses deception to imitate the real ministers of Christ. His false apostles cannot so appear unless they gather into their message every available "form of godliness" and cover their lies with the most subtle hypocrisy. Evil will not appear on the outside of these systems; but they will be announced as "another gospel" or as a larger understanding of the previously accepted truth, and will be all the more attractive and delusive since they are heralded by those who claim to be ministers of Christ, who reflect the beauty of an "angel of light," and whose lives are undoubtedly free from great temptation. It should be noted that these false ministers do not necessarily know the real mission they have. Being unregenerate persons of the satanic system, and thus blinded to the real gospel, they are sincere; they preach and teach the best things the angel of light, their energizing power, is pleased to reveal to them. (L.S. Chafer)

They are phoney apostles with fraudulent production. They masquerade (costumed) as apostles of Christ just like Satan masquerades as an angel of light - both for the purpose of deceiving ignorant believers. The scope of evil that they bring includes human good and every attempt to solve the problems of life apart from Bible doctrine and divine establishment: anthropocentric altruism, utopian socialism, religious activism, legalism, marxism, pacifism. Their gospel message often includes the restriction of human freedom for the so-called greater good: the distortion of the law for the purpose of social and economic engineering, the rise of bureaucracy, governmental abuse of power and interference with free enterprise. Their form of worship includes Christian activities which substitute service for spiritual growth, or which attempt to provide spiritual growth outside the academic discipline of the local church. Their production, in short, involves the total inclusion of human ability, human talent and works and the total exclusion of grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

It would appear from Colossians 2:20 (elemental spirits of the universe used legal means to bring Christians into bondage) that social, political, judicial and economic structures can become demonic. It also seems evident to anyone who has considered the state: in Romans 13 it is the minister of God, while in Revelation 13 it has become the ally of the devil. (D.A. Carson) Were corrupt men to show the state of their hearts to their contemporaries, they would recoil from them with horror and disgust, and they would be utterly unable to enjoy social intercourse or to transact their worldly business. As a rule, the worse a man is the more strenuous his efforts to assume the habiliments of virtue. Some of the worst men on earth have been deacons and pastors, occupied pulpits and preached sermons. Hence it behooves us to look well into the real moral character of those who set themselves up as the representatives of Christ and the teachers of religion. (F.W. Farrar)

The false apostles here, who have received a different spirit, accepted a different gospel, and preach another Jesus, need to be identified in order to understand what Paul was working against. These "super-apostles" were either Gnostic pneumatics or triumphalistic, miracle-working Hellenistic Jews who wanted to taunt Paul with their own theological creations. (Walter C. Kaiser, Moises Silva)

The gospel that the legalizers were bringing was a message of "right action." These ministers were disguised as ministers of righteousness. They were preaching the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." They were saying that to do right is to be like God. No believer in Christ would be deceived by a message that told him to do evil, but to require righteous action seems plausible. If someone says to us, "You must love God," we agree immediately that we should, so we make a sincere effort to do so. The sad result is that we offer a love that is not sincere. We learn quickly that it is only by the Spirit pouring His love into our hearts that we can love Him. It is the "truth" that sets us free. It is not what is true, but rather the "truth." It is true that we should love God. It is also true that we do not. The "truth" is that God loves us anyhow. That is the gospel, and that is good news. That is the message of the "tree of life." Does this seem to be missing from much of our preaching today? Those who put emphasis on works to obtain or maintain right

standing with God are always legalistic in their approach to the message of the gospel. They believe that once God has accomplished His work, we must maintain our relationship by how we behave. What makes this subtle approach appealing is that it sounds right. But it is legalism and the legalizers who preach it like to “glory in your flesh.” (K. Lamb)

2 Cor. 11:13 Indeed (affirmative; certainly), such men (Subj. Nom.) are (ellipsis) false apostles (Pred. Nom.), deceitful (Descr. Nom.; dishonest) workers (Pred. Nom.), who are constantly transforming themselves with clever disguises (μετασχηματίζω, PMPTc.NMP, Iterative, Substantival; changing appearance, masquerading, only acting a part) into apostles (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of Christ (Poss. Gen.).

Greek Text

οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι ψευδαπόστολοι, ἐργάται δόλιοι, μετασχηματιζόμενοι εἰς ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

nam eiusmodi pseudoapostoli operarii subdoli transfigurantes se in apostolos Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 11:14 And it's no wonder, since Satan himself is constantly transforming himself with clever disguises [masquerading] into an angel of light.

KW 2 Cor. 11:14 And no marvel, for Satan himself changes his outward expression from one that comes from his inner nature and is representative of it, to one that is assumed from without and not representative of his inner being, masquerading as a messenger of light.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates that the Corinthians will find his assessment of the false apostles to be harsh and difficult to swallow. Most people find it hard to believe that they are being lied to and taken advantage of. But Paul tells them their case shouldn't be that hard to accept, because it's not such an amazing miracle to perform when you think about it. Satan himself, the sponsor of these false apostles, is likewise constantly transforming himself with clever disguises (Iterative Present tense) in the same manner.

However, while the false apostles are merely trying to associate themselves with Christ, Satan is trying to make himself out to be a messenger of light (good) *instead of* Christ. Since light is often used to represent divine attributes, Satan is in the business of

convincing people that he is a god (possessing divinity) with a message for mankind of ultimate goodness. If mankind rejects the reality of his person (victory #1), he still has his system of human goodness which he uses to snare them (victory #2).

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The perfect vessel for satan's use is not the "drunk in the gutter." Given a choice, satan would choose the preacher who spouts rules, regulations, and laws from the pulpit. Sinful people are going to do sinful things without a lot of satan's help. But if he is going to snare the committed Christian, he must do it in an area that is of deep concern to the Christian. That area is his desire to please God. Satan, then, puts up a religious smoke screen: "Just be religious and do righteously, and God has to approve of you." God does not "have to" do anything except agree with His Son. So if we are not in the Son, all is lost. The problem with our righteousness is that it is ours. If my obedience to Him is not out of my knowledge of His great love for me, then it will be an outward show. I may look good, I may make my church look good, but my heart will be far from Him. (K. Lamb)

Social caution is a duty. Do not let us estimate men by their appearances, and take them into the circle of our confidence and friendship merely on account of what they appear to be. Often those whose outward garb is the most holy are inwardly the most corrupt, who outwardly move as angels of light are inwardly the greatest devils. Let us learn to take off the mask, to disrobe corruption of its external robes of purity, and to give neither our trust nor our sympathy until we are convinced that they have truth in the "inward parts." (F.W. Farrar)

Christians are often overly subjective. They emphasize feeling and experience, detaching these from the work of God in history and the clear propositions of the Word of God. When these are absent or at a low ebb, Christians may try to work up so-called spiritual feelings and fall prey to autosuggestion, circumstances or even the machinations of the devil, who, we are told, at times appears to use as "an angel of light." (J. Boice) The last days of the church age will witness a great apostasy from the ranks of the church, but this apostasy does not include the entire church. (*Millennialism: The Two Views*, Charles L. Feinberg, 1980, Moody Press)

We are born under two rulers who came to power when Adam sinned. Satan is the "god of this world," ruling through a policy of good and evil; the sin nature is the sovereign of human life, ruling through spiritual death. Under both of these tyrannies, "good and evil" is the order of the day. It is the policy of Satan; it is the function of the sin nature. Satan is a brilliant chameleon, an ingenious counterfeiter, able to present himself as all things to all men. On the one hand, he favors sweetness and light and prosperity for all – a chicken in every pot. Personally, he is the most beautiful creature ever created; he is eloquent, smart, entertaining, personable, persuasive – just the kind of company you would enjoy. His attacks often come in the guise of this calm, engaging, drawing-room type of attractiveness. He knows that life depends on how people think, and he sponsors "good"

anti-God thoughts. He has no integrity. Ruthlessly ambitious to advance himself, Satan promises happiness and prosperity he cannot produce. His policies appear to be noble, elevated, and enlightened, but his apparent truths always have a dark side. If you are not alert to his sinister lies, you become his slave. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:14 And (continuative) it's (ellipsis) no (Neg. Adv.) wonder (Pred. Nom.; amazing miracle), since (explanatory) Satan (Subj. Nom.) himself (Nom. Appos.) is constantly transforming himself with clever disguises (μετασχηματίζω, PMI3S, Iterative; changing appearance) into an angel (Acc. Dir. Obj.; messenger, representative) of light (Adv. Gen. Ref.; divine good).

Greek Text

καὶ οὐ θαῦμα· αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Σατανᾶς μετασχηματίζεται εἰς ἄγγελον φωτός.

Latin Vulgate

et non mirum ipse enim Satanas transfigurat se in angelum lucis

LWB 2 Cor. 11:15 It is no great accomplishment, therefore, if his [Satan's] ministers also make it a practice to transform themselves with clever disguises [masquerading] as ministers of righteousness [legalistic do-gooders], whose ultimate end [determined at the Great White Throne] shall be according to their production [burned].

KW 2 Cor. 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if also, as is the case, his servants change their outward expression from one that comes from their inner nature and is representative of their inner character, to one that is assumed from without and not representative of their inner being, masquerading as servants of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reiterates that it isn't a great accomplishment for Satan's ministers to live by the same *modus operandi* that their their master lives by. Satan pretends to be an angel bringing something of innate value to the human race; likewise, his ministers continually pretend to bring a way of righteousness (Iterative Present tense) to the human race. Their righteousness, however, is by keeping the law, not by believing in Christ. The ultimate end of those who live by keeping the law as opposed to believing in Christ will be

determined at the Great White Throne judgment. All ministers of righteousness and their followers will end up (Predictive Future tense) in hell throughout eternity. Live by the law, die by the law. Only those with Christ will enter heaven.

Notice that Satan's ministers are called ministers of righteousness, rather than ministers of unrighteousness. That seems to be the reverse of what we think about Satan and his ministers today. We think of Satan as deceiving men by preaching evil, and his ministers as deceiving men by preaching wild, riotous living. But that scenario is too simplistic, showing considerable naivete towards Satan's dynamic system of evil. Only a small percentage of Satan's captives are obtained by preaching obvious evil or wild, riotous living. The vast majority of Satan's captives will think they are doing good in this world, living righteous, upstanding lives compared to the rest of their fellow man. Most of Satan's traps are concealed by masquerading as something good for the human race (philosophy, psychology, socialism, environmentalism, etc.) when in effect they are evil to the core. So Satan's ministers of righteousness do not preach riotous living, but rather an elaborate system of laws, codes, or philosophies to live by.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The system which Satan has constructed includes all the good which he can incorporate into it and be consistent with the thing he aims to accomplish. A serious question arises whether the presence of evil in the world is due to Satan's intention to have it so, or whether it indicates Satan's inability to execute all he has designed. The probability is great that Satan's ambition has led him to undertake more than any creature could ever administer. (*Systematic Theology Volume 2*, L.S. Chafer, 1948, Dallas Seminary Press)

Satan's ministers masquerade as righteousness (by the law), but their "righteous" production will be burned at the Great White Throne judgment. His ministers produce a counterfeit righteousness based on human good - any benevolent production or deed that attempts to meet the standards of God apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit - rather than the divine good required in Church Age protocol. Satan's antithetical methods of operation are employed not only by his human emissaries, but also by his vast, highly organized, well-led army of angelic subordinates, known as demons. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The phrase "servants of righteousness" is a remarkable statement. When they come to put us under a legalistic ritual, they come preaching righteousness. That is what makes it sound so plausible. They convince us by appealing to what we already know - God desires righteousness. The problem is, if the burden of righteousness - and performing righteously and maintaining a righteous position - is placed on me, I am no better off now than when I was under the demands of the law. That is what makes it an "heteros" gospel, a different kind of gospel. (K. Lamb)

Satan's ministers waive aside the Bible emphasis on a new birth, which is by the power of God through faith and which is the only source from which works acceptable to God can be produced, and devote their energy to the improvement, morally and righteously, of

the individual's character. Such workers, in spite of their sincerity and humanitarian motives, are by the Spirit of God said to be "the ministers of Satan." (L.S. Chafer)

Their emphasis on "works" at the expense of free grace means that they will ultimately get the "works" they deserve. (N. Hillyer) Satan does not come to us as Satan; neither does sin present itself as sin, but in the guise of virtue; and the teachers of error set themselves forth as the special advocates of truth. (C. Hodge)

The passage has a deep spiritual meaning. It shows us the great power of Satan in adapting himself to circumstances and using means suited to times and occasions. It shows him versatile, adroit, untiring in inventiveness as well as in energy, and able to impart to others this transforming or fashioning power which he pre-eminently possesses. It recognizes a mighty agent who employs the utmost skill and a prodigious strength of will and passion to call out and direct this indwelling evil. And it shows this satanic agency working in the Church, and even counterfeiting the apostleship. The passage is full and explicit. Its force cannot be evaporated in rhetoric. Its truth is the sternest reality in most earnest speech. Paul met this occasion by exposing the diabolical source of their conduct. (F.W. Farrar)

Transformed does not mean they are really transformed physically into such ministers, but they appear and look like such. They put on the form and air of faithful, upright ministers of the word, and would be thought to be such. They mimic gospel preachers, who assert the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, though they most miserably corrupt it, and blend it with something of their own, and which they endeavor to palliate and cover from the sight of men. They set themselves up to be great friends to holiness and good works, which they press with much vehemence, and they oppose the doctrines of grace with all their might and main. A dreadful character these men have, for though they would pass for ministers of righteousness, friends to holiness, and men zealous of good works, they are no other than ministers of Satan, doing his work, serving his interest, and propagating his kingdom, which is a kingdom of darkness. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 11:15 It is (ellipsis) no (neg. adv.) great accomplishment (Pred. Nom.; thing, deed), therefore (inferential), if (1st class condition, "and it's true") his (Poss. Gen.; Satan's) ministers (Subj. Nom.; satanically inspired delegates) also (adjunctive; likewise) make it a practice to transform themselves with clever disguises (μετασχηματίζω, PMI3P, Iterative; change appearance) as ministers (Pred. Nom.) of righteousness (Adv. Gen. Ref.; legalism as innate goodness), whose (Adv. Gen. Ref.) ultimate end (Subj. Nom.; judgment at the Great White Throne) shall be (είμι, FMI3S, Predictive) according to their production (Adv. Acc.; evil works, deeds, actions).

Greek Text

οὐ μέγα οὖν εἶ καὶ οἱ διάκονοι αὐτοῦ μετασχηματίζονται ὡς διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης· ὧν τὸ τέλος ἔσται κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν.

Latin Vulgate

non est ergo magnum si ministri eius transfigurentur
velut ministri iustitiae quorum finis erit secundum
opera ipsorum

LWB 2 Cor. 11:16 I say again, don't anyone suppose me to be a fool, but if this isn't possible, then please welcome me as a fool [just like I was a false apostle], so that I also may boast a little about something [even if all I can boast about is being a fool].

KW 2 Cor. 11:16 I say again, let no man think me to be foolish. But even if you do, as is the case, yet receive me as foolish in order that I also [as well as they] may boast a little.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul again tells the Corinthians (Static Present tense) not to think (Subjunctive of Prohibition) he is a fool. Some of the Corinthinians obviously assume so or he wouldn't be repeating this request. But if that prospect is too much for them, and they can't help but think he is a fool, then he asks (Imperative of Entreaty) them to at least greet him (Constative Aorist tense) as a fool.

By way of context and his continuing cutting sarcasm, they already know Paul thinks the false teachers are fools. And since the Corinthians are treating such fools with open arms and ears, then he wants to be accepted as a fool just like them. That way, he will at least have something to boast about (Culminative Aorist tense), even if it is just being a fool. And if that isn't sarcasm enough, he adds that he only wants to boast a little bit (Latin: modicum), inferring that it won't be nearly as big a boast as that of the false apostles, because he isn't nearly as big a fool as they are.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Some of the Corinthians assume Paul is stupid. So Paul says please receive him then as stupid, and listen to him, so he can boast in the Holy Spirit. Since the Judaizers are fools, since boasting is done by fools, and since Paul is considered a fool, then he's going to boast a bit! In other words, in order to communicate, Paul is ready to lower himself to the standards of his opponents so he may gain an opportunity to teach the truth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul reminds his audience that he is not really foolish, that he is simply playing a role in order to make a point about himself and expose his opponents for what they truly are. He reiterates in the next verse that this is not the real Paul; he is not speaking as the Lord might want, but desperate times call for desperate measures. (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 11:16 I say (λέγω, PA1S, Static) again (adv.; once more, the 1st time in 11:1), don't anyone (Subj. Nom.) suppose (δοκέω, AASubj.3S, Constativ, Prohibition; think) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) to be (εἰμί, PAInf., Descriptive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb) a fool (Acc. Appos.; ignorant, lacking mental sanity), but (adversative) if (protasis, 1st class condition, "and you do anyway") this isn't possible (idiom: enclitic crasis, expecting negative answer), then (apodosis) please welcome (δέχομαι, AMImp.2P, Constativ, Entreaty, Deponent; receive, accept) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as (comparative) a fool (Acc. Appos.; lacking mental sanity), so that (result) I also (Subj. Nom.) may boast (καυχάομαι, AMSubj.1S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) a little (Acc. Spec.) about something (Acc. Gen. Ref.).

Greek Text

Πάλιν λέγω, μή τίς με δόξη ἄφρονα εἶναι· εἰ δὲ μή γε, καὶ ὡς ἄφρονα δέξασθέ με, ἵνα καγὼ μικρόν τι καυχῆσωμαι.

Latin Vulgate

iterum dico ne quis me putet insipientem alioquin velut insipientem accipite me ut et ego modicum quid glorier

LWB 2 Cor. 11:17 What I am attempting to communicate [through the foolishness of sarcasm], I am not communicating against the norms and standards of the Lord [sanctified sarcasm is a legitimate teaching device], but rather on the grounds of the foolishness associated with this confident boasting.

KW 2 Cor. 11:17 That which I am saying, not after the pattern of the Lord am I speaking, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul anticipates that some Corinthians will take his last sarcastic statement and believe it is now divine protocol to boast in being a fool. This is obviously not what he is attempting (Potential Indicative mood) to communicate. Furthermore, Paul reassures

them that he is not communicating (Customary Present tense) against the standards of the Lord by teaching them in such a sarcastic manner. What he is trying to do is show them how foolish this kind of boasting is in the first place. And what better (more effective) way to get this point across than by providing irony and sanctified sarcasm?

Rather than apologize for the rough way he is speaking to them, Paul compares the foolishness of sarcasm with the foolishness of boasting. In other words: "If you Corinthians don't like the sarcastic way I'm talking to you, that's too bad." All of Paul's sarcastic statements are part of the completed canon of Scripture, and are therefore legitimate (though last resort) teaching methods.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul uses shock treatment to teach the Corinthians a lesson. He uses the foolishness of sarcasm to communicate to them the foolishness of boasting. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) There was nothing wrong in his self-laudation. He never appears more truly humble than when these references to his labor and sufferings were wrung from him, filling him with a feeling of contempt. He was justified in boasting in this particular matter. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 11:17 What (Acc. Dir. Obj.) I am attempting to communicate (λαλέω, PAI1S, Static, Potential Ind.), I am not (neg. adv.) communicating (λαλέω, PAI1S, Customary) against the norms and standards of the Lord (Acc. Relationship: Disadvantage), but rather (contrast) on the grounds of (comparative) the foolishness (Instr. Manner; ignorance) associated with this (Dat. Assoc.) confident (Instr. Manner) boasting (Gen. Disadv.).

Greek Text

ὃ λαλῶ, οὐ κατὰ κύριον λαλῶ ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν ἀφροσύνη, ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ὑποστάσει τῆς καυχήσεως.

Latin Vulgate

quod loquor non loquor secundum Dominum sed quasi in insipientia in hac substantia gloriae

LWB 2 Cor. 11:18 Since many [Judaizers] are making it a practice to boast according to the norms and standards of the flesh, I also will make it a practice to boast,

KW 2 Cor. 11:18 Seeing that many are boasting in accordance with human standards and in human attainments, I also will boast,

KJV 2 Cor. 11:18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul keeps on piling sarcasm upon sarcasm. Since the Judaizers continually boast (Iterative Present tense) in their state of carnality, Paul decides he should follow their example and likewise boast (Iterative Present tense), although he leaves his state of carnality out of the equation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

These men were influenced in their boasting by unworthy motives, according to corrupt human nature. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 11:18 Since (subordinate) many (Subj. Nom.; Judaizers) are making it a practice to boast (καυχάομαι, PMI3P, Iterative, Deponent) according to the norms and standards of the flesh (Adv. Acc.; carnality), I also (Subj. Nom.) will make it a practice to boast (καυχάομαι, FMI1S, Iterative, Deponent),

Greek Text

ἐπεὶ πολλοὶ καυχῶνται κατὰ σάρκα, κἀγὼ καυχῆσομαι.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam multi gloriantur secundum carnem et ego gloriabor

LWB 2 Cor. 11:19 For you [Corinthians] always gladly give patient attention to fools [every false teacher that comes through town], since you are so thoughtful and wise.

KW 2 Cor. 11:19 For you gladly tolerate those who are foolish, being wise yourselves.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The sarcasm continues to bite word after word. In the previous verse, Paul decides he wants to boast like a fool because the Corinthians always (Gnomic Present tense: without fail) pay their kind respects and offer continuous hospitality to boasting fools. But that shouldn't be a surprise to anyone, since the Corinthians are (Descriptive Present tense) so thoughtful and wise – obviously an erroneous assumption.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul used irony well. What initially sounds like a compliment - “You gladly put up with fools since you are so wise!” – was actually a form of ridicule and criticism. They assumed themselves to be wise when actually they were not. Their lack of wisdom was revealed in the fact that they “put up with fools,” that is, false apostles. The sting of irony is evident in many examples in this chapter. (Roy B. Zuck)

There is undoubted use of irony in this chapter. Jesus used it Himself as “high scorn” in Matthew 23:32, Mark 7:9, and Luke 13:33. There is more of it in Paul’s writings than in the gospels. There was never more nimble a mind than that of Paul, and he knew how to adapt himself to every mood of his readers or hearers without any sacrifice of principle. (A.T. Robertson) This verse amounts to biting irony. Paul shames his audience by showing how foolish they have already been by allowing people to enslave, devour, or take advantage of them, to lift them up and even slap them on the face. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul has a subtle play on words in the Greek text that cannot be matched in English. He calls fools “aphronoi” and the wise “phronimoi,” and with these words identifies two groups of people: the false teachers and the Corinthians respectively. His choice of words is deliberate, for he wants to show a close relationship between the two. Relying on their own wisdom, the people in Corinth have made fools of themselves. (S. Kistemaker)

The Corinthians, of their own volition, rendered pseudo-love towards a bunch of boasting fools. No wonder, though, since both the Judaizers and the Corinthians wore a façade of respectability. The Judaizers stroked their egos, and the Corinthians gave them pseudo-love fanaticism in return. This is standard *modus operandi* for believers in emotional revolt of the soul and “Operation Overthink.” Arrogantly assuming they are wise, they give their love and allegiance to the wrong persons. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:19 **For** (explanatory) **you** (Corinthians) **always** (without fail) **gladly** (adj.; warm welcome) **give patient attention to** (ἀνέχω, PMI2P, Gnostic) **fools** (Gen. Disadv.; referring to the false apostles, lacking mental sanity), **since you are** (εἰμί, PAPtc.NMP, Descriptive, Causal) **so thoughtful and wise** (Pred. Nom.; obviously an erroneous assumption).

Greek Text

ἡδέως γὰρ ἀνέχεσθε τῶν ἀφρόνων φρόνιμοι ὄντες·

Latin Vulgate

libenter enim suffertis insipientes cum sitis ipsi sapientes

LWB 2 Cor. 11:20 For you [Corinthians] continue to give patient attention to anyone [false teacher], even if someone brings you into the slavery of legalism, even if someone exploits you, even if someone collects [financial maintenance] from you, even if someone behaves arrogantly, even if someone punches you in the face.

KW 2 Cor. 11:20 For you tolerate a man, if, as is the case, he brings you to the point of abject slavery; if a man strips you of your possessions [by greedily demanding maintenance]; if a man takes you captive; if a man exalts himself; if a man slaps you in the face.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul gives several sarcastic examples of how truly stupid the Corinthians really are. Regardless of how they are mistreated, they keep on giving patient attention (Iterative Present tense) to any false teacher that comes to town. From Paul's following list of circumstances ("even if" scenarios), we may infer that the Corinthians have virtually no discernment whatsoever. Paul uses several Customary Present tenses to paint a picture of the usual *modus vivendi* of false teachers who come to Corinth. Because he clearly sees the behavior of false teachers as customary, while the Corinthians apparently don't get it at all, the irony is even more pronounced.

The Corinthians keep on giving rapt attention to false teachers even when the false teachers capture and lead them into the slavery of legalism, even when they prey upon their sympathies and consume their daily lives, even when they require constant financial maintenance from them, even when they walk around town like strutting peacocks, and even when they physically abuse them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The wages of reverse-process reversionism (chasing after false teachers) is powerlessness, lack of true authority orientation, and a general deficiency in all categories of life. Rather than demonstrating real courage and running false teachers out of town, the Corinthians demonstrated pseudo-courage by allowing them to remain and wreak havoc throughout town. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul uses sarcasm that cuts to the bone. (A.T. Robertson)

The Corinthian community allowed false teachers to introduce destructive heresies into the church. Today the Christian community faces similar problems. Religious charlatans are able to gain a following of gullible men and women. These charlatans enslave people with their teaching and steal from them to live luxuriously. It is sad indeed that some Christians quickly turn away from the doctrines of the Scriptures to follow someone

whose words and deeds are in conflict with those teachings. These followers are being enslaved, robbed, and cheated. Their stance has blinded them to reality and the truth. They ardently defend their acknowledged leader whom they consider their messiah. And they will continue to do so unless the law of the land intervenes, death terminates their perilous plight, or the error of their way become obvious to them and they repent. (S. Kistemaker)

They might well bear with Paul since they bore with the tyranny, the rapacity, the insolence, and the violence of the false teachers. These men were tyrants, and therefore they devoured, insulted and maltreated the people. Such was the treatment to which the Corinthians submitted from the hands of the false teachers; and such is ever the tendency of unscriptural church-authority. It assumes an absolute dependence of the people on the clergy – an inherent, as well as official superiority of the latter over the former, and therefore false teachers have, as a general rule, been tyrants. The gospel, and of course the evangelical, as opposed to the high-church system of doctrine, is incompatible with all undue authority, because it teaches the essential equality of believers and opens the way to grace and salvation to the people without the intervention of a priest. (C. Hodge)

The fact that so many of the converts were downtrodden slaves and artisans would make them less likely to resent conduct to which they were daily accustomed among the heathen. Neither Greeks nor Orientals felt to anything like the same extent as ourselves the disgrace of a blow. That sense of disgrace rises from the freedom which Christianity has gradually wrought for us, and the deep sense of the dignity of human nature, which it has inspired. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:20 **For** (explanatory) **you continue to give patient attention to** (ἀνέχω, PMI2P, Iterative; tolerate, endure) **anyone** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; false teacher), **even if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he does," all the uses of "even if" point to servile endurance on the part of the Corinthians) **someone** (Subj. Nom.) **brings you** (Acc. Disadv.) **into the slavery of legalism** (καταδουλόω, PAI3S, Customary; takes advantage of, traps like birds in a snare), **even if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he does") **someone** (Subj. Nom.) **exploits** (κατεσθίω, PAI3S, Customary; preys upon, consumes and controls your daily life) **you** (ellipsis), **even if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he does") **someone** (Subj. Nom.) **collects from** (λαμβάνω, PAI3S, Customary; obtains financial maintenance from) **you** (ellipsis), **even if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he does") **someone** (Subj. Nom.) **behaves arrogantly** (ἐπαίρω, PMI3S, Customary; strenuous spiritual directors, puts on airs like a strutting peacock), **even if** (protasis, 1st class condition, "and he does") **someone** (Subj. Nom.) **punches** (δέρω, PAI3S, Customary; strikes, hits) **you** (ellipsis) **in**

the face (Acc. Place; the height of insolence on their part).

Greek Text

ἀνέχεσθε γὰρ εἴ τις ὑμᾶς καταδουλοῖ, εἴ τις κατεσθίει, εἴ τις λαμβάνει, εἴ τις ἐπαίρεται, εἴ τις εἰς πρόσωπον ὑμᾶς δέρει.

Latin Vulgate

sustinetis enim si quis vos in servitutum redigit si quis devorat si quis accipit si quis extollitur si quis in faciem vos caedit

LWB 2 Cor. 11:21 I am speaking about mis-evaluation, under the pretext that we [Christians in general] have been and continually appear inept [without common sense or discernment]. However, when someone in this situation [a false teacher] appears to be courageous [an erroneous subjective evaluation], (I am speaking with foolishness, [tongue in cheek]), I myself am courageous [a correct objective evaluation].

KW 2 Cor. 11:21 I am speaking by way of disparagement [humbly of myself], as though, as for ourselves, we have been weak. And yet, whereinsoever a man is bold, I am speaking in foolishness, as for myself, I am bold also.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

What Paul is trying to explain (Aoristic Present tense) is how the Corinthians have misplaced their trust and honor in false teachers when they should be placing their trust and honor in him and his colleagues. Because they have been duped by the false teachers, they have only added to the generally held belief that Christians (as a group) are without common sense in worldly matters (Latin: infirm), sorely lacking in discernment, and therefore easy prey. Whether that is true or not is not the issue in this situation. They (the Corinthians in particular) have in the past and at the time of Paul's writing continue to appear (Iterative Perfect tense) that way to the average person.

Paul adds a 'tongue in cheek' thought knowing he is being both foolish and sarcastic. The Corinthians have also made an erroneous, subjective evaluation that the false teachers are (Descriptive Present tense) quite courageous men. This mis-evaluation was based on appearances and not on objective facts. If they had been objective in their evaluation, they would have realized the false teachers were scoundrels. They would also have realized, based on objective facts and not subjective appearance, that Paul was (Descriptive Present tense) the truly courageous apostle.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

By subjective criteria, the false teachers “appeared” to be courageous. But by objective criteria, the apostle Paul was “in fact” courageous. The Corinthians were basing their evaluation of Paul and the false teachers on personality rather than spirituality. In this section of 2 Corinthians, which could be called “Paul’s scrapbook,” he tries to explain that “spirituality is not personality change.” The subtext is that the Corinthians are in reverse-process reversionism. Because of this unenviable condition, they are seeking the phonies in life, being totally blind to those with spiritual character. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul admits with mock shame that he did not come to the Corinthians like a conquering ruler as his opponents did. The opponents allege that Paul’s personal appearance is weak. Picking up on that thought, Paul mockingly admits his weakness as a reason he did not come to Corinth to enslave and exploit the Corinthians. (J. Scott)

They more than tolerate those who trample on them while they criticize as “weak” one who shows them great consideration. (Plummer) The verse may be understood as an ironical admission that, if absent from these violent and self-assertive proceedings be a sign of weakness, he has been weak. (F.W. Farrar) After these prolonged explanations Paul changes his tone from irony to direct and masterful assertion. (Bernard)

2 Cor. 11:21 I am speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Aoristic) about mis-evaluation (Acc. Spec.; mislaid trust, misplaced honor, subjective worth, wrongly esteemed), under the pretext (comparative) that (introducing a subjective idea) we (Subj. Nom.; Christians in general) have been and continually appear inept (ἀσθενέω, Perf.AI1P, Iterative; considered weak, impotent, without common sense: easy prey). However (adversative), when (circumstantial) someone (Subj. Nom.; a false teacher) in this situation (Loc. Sph.; case, instance) appears to be courageous (τολμάω, PASubj.3S, Descriptive, Comparative with Contingency; an erroneous subjective evaluation based on appearances and not on objective facts), (I am speaking (λέγω, PAI1S, Static) with foolishness (Instr. Means; nonsensically, “tongue in cheek”), I myself (Subj. Nom.) am courageous (τολμάω, PAI1S, Descriptive; a correct objective evaluation based on facts rather than subjective appearance).

Greek Text

κατὰ ἀτιμίαν λέγω, ὡς ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠσθηθήκαμεν. ἐν ᾧ δ’ ἂν τις τολμᾷ, ἐν ἀφροσύνη λέγω, τολμῶ κἀγώ.

Latin Vulgate

secundum ignobilitatem dico quasi nos infirmi fuerimus
in quo quis audet in insipientia dico audeo et ego

LWB 2 Cor. 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

KW 2 Cor. 11:22 Hebrews are they? I also. Israelites are they? I also. Offspring of Abraham are they? I also.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The false teachers have been bragging about their heritage to the Corinthians, because the Corinthians are enamored by middle-eastern believers. Paul thinks their boasting about their heritage is irrelevant, especially when he has the same heritage. He asks the Corinthians (Interrogative Indicative mood) three questions, and affirms the answer to all three questions for himself. Paul is a Hebrew (native language, outer identity, ethnicity), an Israelite (spiritual allegiance), and a descendant from Abraham (ancestry) – but he doesn't brag about such matters.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There was not an Israelite in the world prouder of his birth, with a more magnificent sense of his country's glories, than the apostle to the Gentiles; and it provoked him beyond endurance to see the things in which he gloried debased, as they were debased, by his rivals – made the symbols of a paltry vanity which he despised, made barriers to the universal love of God by which all the families of the earth were to be blessed. (Denny)

Jewish culture is not a part of Christianity. The nation of Israel is not part of Christianity. Jewish traditions are not part of Christianity. Jewish descent is not part of Christianity. All of these things are inconsequential; Bible doctrine is the only issue. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The phrase “so am I” is an *epistophe in argument*, or the repetition of the same words at the end of successive sentences used in an argument. The repetition here greatly emphasizes and displays his feelings. (E.W. Bullinger) These are quite emotional questions. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 11:22 Are they (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind.) Hebrews (Pred. Nom.; nationality)? So am

I (adjectival pronoun, idiom: "I also"). Are they (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind.) Israelites (Pred. Nom.; special relation to God's covenant)? So am I (adjectival pronoun, idiom: "I also"). Are they (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind.) descendants (Pred. Nom.; offspring) of Abraham (Gen. Rel.; heirs of the kingdom, messianic privilege)? So am I (adjectival pronoun, idiom: "I also").

Greek Text

Ἑβραῖοί εἰσιν; κἀγώ. Ἰσραηλιταί εἰσιν; κἀγώ. σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ εἰσιν; κἀγώ.

Latin Vulgate

Hebraei sunt et ego Israhelitae sunt et ego semen Abrahae sunt et ego

LWB 2 Cor. 11:23 Are they ministers of Christ? I will speak on behalf of myself [as compared to the false teachers] as though I'm out of my mind: in hardships, to a greater degree; in imprisonments, more often; in beatings, much more severe; in danger of death, quite frequently.

KW 2 Cor. 11:23 Servants of Christ are they? I am speaking as one who is beside himself, I more [in a higher degree than they], in labors to the point of exhaustion more abundantly than they, in prisons more abundantly than they, in stripes inflicted by being whipped, beyond measure, in danger of death, often.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks a question this time (Interrogative Indicative mood) and then answers it with several comparatives to the claims of the false teachers residing in Corinth. Are they ministers (Descriptive Present tense) of Christ? In order to answer the question like the false teachers would answer it, Paul says he will have to pretend that he's out of his mind (Concessive Participle) and carry on with idle chatter. He has suffered hardships to a greater degree than the false teachers; he has been imprisoned more times than they; he has been beaten far more severely than any of them; he has faced death many times. In short, the false teachers are mere "pointers," spectators who give orders to others, but who themselves are non-participants. Paul and his colleagues, on the other hand, are the "hard workers" who get the job of ministering the Word done.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Comparing himself to the false apostles, Paul says he will have to chatter like a crazy person. He answers the rhetorical question, but in a manner in which the reverse-process reversionism of the Corinthians is again revealed. They have been pursuing shallow persons, they have fallen for their façade of suffering, they have been following self-appointed celebrities, and they have been primarily interested in fluff rather than substance. On the other hand, Christians with Bible doctrine in their soul pursue Jesus Christ. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

“In deaths oft” is a *metonym of effect* (change of one noun for another related noun), and cannot, of course, mean that he had died more than once; but that he had been at death’s door, and in troubles which cause or bring about death. (E.W. Bullinger) Some of the persecutions listed here may even have been practiced by Saul/Paul the Pharisee against believers in Jesus. Now the persecutor becomes the persecuted. (J. Scott) Paul says, “It is downright insanity on my part to enter into this contest of rival egotism.” (F.W. Farrar)

Paul claims superiority over his opponents as “a minister of Christ” on four points: (1) He has undertaken more numerous and more arduous evangelistic campaigns than they, (2) He had been the victim, as they have not, of excessive corporal punishment, (3) He had been more frequently in prisons than they, and (4) He was constantly in danger of death. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 11:23 Are they (εἰμί, PAI3P, Descriptive, Interrogative Ind.) ministers (Pred. Nom.) of Christ (Gen. Rel.; not hardly)? I will speak (λαλέω, PAI1S, Futuristic) on behalf of myself (Nom. Appos.) as though I’m out of my mind (παραφρονέω, PAptc.NMS, Descriptive, Concessive; idle chatter, beside myself, insane, infatuation): in hardships (Loc. Sph.; troubles), to a greater degree (comparative); in imprisonments (Loc. Sph.), more often (comparative); in beatings (Loc. Sph.), much more severe (comparative); in danger of death (Loc. Sph.), quite frequently (Comparative; many times).

Greek Text

διάκονοι Χριστοῦ εἰσιν; παραφρονῶν λαλῶ, ὑπὲρ ἐγώ· ἐν κόποις περισσοτέρως, ἐν φυλακαῖς περισσοτέρως, ἐν πληγαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως, ἐν θανάτοις πολλάκις.

Latin Vulgate

ministri Christi sunt minus sapiens dico plus ego in laboribus plurimis in carceribus abundantius in plagis supra modum in mortibus frequenter

LWB 2 Cor. 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes, less one.

KW 2 Cor. 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes less one.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Ironically, some of the Jews in Jerusalem (whom the Corinthians were so enamored with) scourged (flogged, whipped) Paul on five different occasions. On each occasion, Paul received (Dramatic Aorist tense) thirty-nine lashes.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul was flogged by mistake as a Roman citizen. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The later Rabbis say that the scourge was made with three thongs, so that each blow inflicted three stripes; and that only thirteen strokes were given to make up the prescribed number of thirty-nine lashes. On this occasion, Paul's enemies supposed he was dead. He must therefore have been rendered for the time insensible. (C. Hodge)

Whenever he entered a new city, Paul used the synagogue as a basis for evangelism. The fact that the apostle received a synagogal punishment ... shows that he was taken seriously as a Jew who operated within the parameters of Judaism, as an erring member rather than as an outsider or apostate. (J. Scott)

Scourging by Jewish law is with forty stripes save one. Maimonides observes that "they did not add to forty, if a man was as strong as Samson, but they lessen the number to a man that is weak; for if a weak man should be beaten with many stripes, he may die; wherefore the wise men say, that if he be so robust, they scourge him but with thirty-nine." No mercy was showed to Paul, or any regard to his weak constitution, for it was the utmost they inflicted upon him. "When they condemn a delinquent to how many stripes he is able to receive, they do not count but by stripes that are fit to be trebled. If they reckon he is able to bear twenty, they do not say he is to be beaten with twenty-one, but only eighteen. If they condemn a person to receive forty, and after he begins to be beaten, they see he is weak, and they say he cannot receive more than these nine or twelve that he has been beaten with, he is freed; they condemn him to receive twelve, and after he is scourged they see he is strong and able to receive more, he is freed anyway, and is not to be beaten any more than the original estimation." According to their canons, they could have mitigated this punishment of the apostle's, but such was their cruelty and malice, that they carried it to the utmost height they could. (J. Gill)

2 Cor. 11:24 From the Jews (Abl. Source) five times (temporal) I received (λαμβάνω, AAI1S, Dramatic) forty (Acc.

Dir. Obj.) **stripes** (ellipsis; lashings), **less one** (Acc. Spec.).

Greek Text

ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων πεντάκις τεσσαράκοντα παρὰ μίαν ἔλαβον,

Latin Vulgate

a Iudaeis quinquies quadragenas una minus accepi

LWB 2 Cor. 11:25 I was beaten with wooden rods three times. I was stoned once. I was shipwrecked three times. I endured a night and a day in the open sea.

KW 2 Cor. 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in the sea.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Since the false teachers made it a practice to draw attention to themselves by relating their troubles to the Corinthians, Paul counters with a short list of his own. Any one of Paul's catastrophes could kill an ordinary person, so they are enumerated using the Dramatic Aorist tense.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Attention-getting through your problems with the hopes of obtaining sympathy or pity is not true love. Rapport based on whining and complaining is sinful. Try it out and you'll find the silence deafening. Sharing problems and troubles back-and-forth is a pathetic substitute for applying Bible doctrine in the privacy of your soul and sharing the good things in life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This alludes to scourgings inflicted by Gentile magistrates with the "vitis," or vine-stick, of soldiers, or with the "fasces" of lictors. They were egregious violations of Paul's right of Roman citizenship; but this claim (as we see in Cicero's various orations) was often set at nought in the provinces. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:25 **I was beaten with wooden rods** (ῥαβδίζω, API1S, Dramatic; at the hands of Romans) **three times** (temporal). **I was stoned** (λιθάζω, API1S, Dramatic) **once** (temporal; in Lystra). **I was shipwrecked** (ναυαγέω, AAI1S, Dramatic) **three times** (temporal). **I endured** (ποιέω, Perf.AI1S, Dramatic;

spent) a night and a day (Acc. Spec.) in the open sea (Loc. Place).

Greek Text

τρὶς ἐραβδίσθην, ἅπαξ ἐλιθάσθην, τρὶς ἐναυάγησα, νυχθήμερον ἐν τῷ βυθῷ πεποίηκα·

Latin Vulgate

ter virgis caesus sum semel lapidatus sum ter naufragium feci nocte et die in profundo maris fui

LWB 2 Cor. 11:26 On journeys often, in perils related to flooded rivers, in perils related to robbers, in perils from my own family, in perils from Gentiles, in perils in the inner city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren,

KW 2 Cor. 11:26 In journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from those of my own race, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in an uninhabited region, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren,

KJV 2 Cor. 11:26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues to enumerate the dangerous situations (perils) he has encountered as an itinerant preacher, i.e., apostle to the Gentiles. In this list, he has suffered physically (body) and mentally (soul) at the hands of both places and people. All of the prepositions “in” that are translated as Locative of Sphere could also be translated “by” as Instrumental of Means, since it was “by” these trials and sufferings that he was proving his point.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul’s list of sufferings should be understood in the context of utilizing doctrinal resources (problem-solving devices in the Word of God) and receiving (deliverance) divine grace provision, not for eliciting sympathy from the Corinthians. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 11:26 On journeys (Loc. Sph.; road weary) often (temporal; repeatedly), in perils (Loc. Sph.; dangerous situations) related to flooded rivers (Adv. Gen. Ref.; swollen torrents), in perils (Loc. Sph.) related to robbers

(Adv. Gen. Ref.; insurrectionists, brigands), in perils (Loc. Sph.) from my own (ellipsis) family (Abl. Source; countrymen, Jewish race, people), in perils (Loc. Sph.) from Gentiles (Abl. Source; pagans, Roman tribunals), in perils (Loc. Sph.) in the inner city (Loc. Place, mob violence), in perils (Loc. Sph.) in the wilderness (Loc. Place; uninhabited places, desert, wild beasts), in perils (Loc. Sph.) in the sea (Loc. Place), in perils (Loc. Sph.) among false brethren (Instr. Assoc.; those pretending to be believers),

Greek Text

ὁδοιπορίαῖς πολλάκις, κινδύνοις ποταμῶν, κινδύνοις ληστῶν, κινδύνοις ἐκ γένους, κινδύνοις ἐξ ἔθνων, κινδύνοις ἐν πόλει, κινδύνοις ἐν ἐρημίᾳ, κινδύνοις ἐν θαλάσῃ, κινδύνοις ἐν ψευδαδέλφοις,

Latin Vulgate

in itineribus saepe periculis fluminum periculis latronum periculis ex genere periculis ex gentibus periculis in civitate periculis in solitudine periculis in mari periculis in falsis fratribus

LWB 2 Cor. 11:27 In tiresome labor and hardships, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in involuntary deprivations often, in cold weather and without sufficient clothing,

KW 2 Cor. 11:27 In labor and travail, in sleepless nights often, in hunger and thirst, in need of food often, in cold and in lack of sufficient clothing,

KJV 2 Cor. 11:27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul's list of sufferings continues, with special emphasis on sleep, food, water, and clothing deprivations.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Fastings should be construed as hardships laid upon the apostle by force of circumstance, rather than voluntary fasts submitted to for religious ends. There is no evidence that Paul ever fasted in the latter sense after his missionary work had begun. (R.V.G. Tasker) Sleep deprivation can occur because of nocturnal labors, worry, or vigils. Paul's anxiety for the churches kept him awake at night. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 11:27 In tiresome labor (Loc. Sph.; fatigue) and (connective) hardships (Loc. Sph.; troubles), in sleeplessness (Loc. Sph.) often (temporal), in hunger (Loc. Sph.) and (connective) thirst (Loc. Sph.), in involuntary deprivations (Loc. Sph.; lack of basic necessities) often (temporal), in cold weather (Loc. Sph.) and (connective) without sufficient clothing (Loc. Sph.),

Greek Text

κόπω καὶ μόχθω, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις πολλάκις, ἐν λιμῶ καὶ δίψει, ἐν νηστείαις πολλάκις, ἐν ψύχει καὶ γυμνότητι·

Latin Vulgate

in labore et aerumna in vigiliis multis in fame et siti
in ieiuniis multis in frigore et nuditate

LWB 2 Cor. 11:28 **And in addition to those left-out [not on the list] things [that I just enumerated] is the pressure upon me that occurs daily: anxiety [apostolic care and concern] for all the assemblies.**

KW 2 Cor. 11:28 Apart from the things I just enumerated is this, the pressure day after day, namely, my anxiety for all the assemblies.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

So far, Paul's list of sufferings have been primarily external, meaning things he has encountered during his travels. But in addition to those circumstances is the pressure of responsibility that comes with being an apostle. His mind (soul) is continually occupied with care and concern for the assemblies that he himself started and continues to feed as he travels elsewhere. Apostolic leadership carried a unique form of anxiety as part of its ministerial responsibility.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Of all the congregations founded by his apostolic service none posed so many problems as the Corinthians, and no group of Christians so well illustrates what was to Paul the cost in pastoral care and concern of being a servant of Christ to His people. No congregation brought Paul more anxiety than the church at Corinth. (R.P. Martin)

2 Cor. 11:28 And in addition to (continuative) those left-out (adj.; external to the list) things (Adv. Gen. Ref.; which I just enumerated) is (ellipsis) the pressure (Subj. Nom.) upon me (Loc. Sph.) that (Nom. Appos.) occurs (Prep. Circumstances; in his case) daily (Acc. Extent of Time): anxiety (Nom. Appos.; worry, apostolic care and concern) for all (Gen. Spec.) the assemblies (Obj. Gen.).

Greek Text

χωρὶς τῶν παρεκτὸς ἡ ἐπίστασις μοι ἢ καθ' ἡμέραν, ἡ μέριμνα πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν.

Latin Vulgate

praeter illa quae extrinsecus sunt instantia mea cotidiana sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum

LWB 2 Cor. 11:29 Who [false teacher] is occasionally weary, yet am I not constantly weary? Who [false teacher] is being occasionally doubted, yet am I not being constantly treated with inflamed, self-righteous indignation?

KW 2 Cor. 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is being made to stumble, and I am not indignant?

KJV 2 Cor. 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The false teachers are boasting about how tiring their work is and how they are often rejected by the Corinthians. Paul contrasts and compares their weariness and rejection with his own, and in the form of questions (Interrogative Indicative mood), concludes their complaints to be inferior to his own. The Present tenses associated with the false teachers can be translated in two ways; likewise, the Present tenses associated with Paul can be translated in two ways. As long as the contrast between the two is maintained, either translation is acceptable.

False teachers are occasionally (Iterative) or currently (Static) weary
Paul is constantly (Durative) or always (Gnomic) weary

False teachers are occasionally (Iterative) or currently (Static) doubted
Paul is constantly (Durative) or always (Gnomic) treated with inflamed indignation

In the first half of the verse, both Paul and the false teachers are weary, but Paul to a much greater degree. In the second half of the verse, the false teachers are rejected, but

Paul meets with something far worse than mere rejection; he is treated with indignation by people with inflamed, burning annoyance against him. In other words, when the Corinthians listen to the false teachers, they sometimes shake their heads in doubt. But when they listen to Paul, their emotions are inflamed with self-righteous indignation.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

When a brother stumbles, Paul is set on fire with grief. (A.T. Robertson) Paul reveals to them that he struggles with the same weaknesses they encounter. (S. Kistemaker)

2 Cor. 11:29 Who (Subj. Nom.; false teacher) is occasionally (Static: currently) weary (ἀσθενέω, PAI3S, Iterative, Interrogative Ind.; weak, tired), yet (contrast & compare) am I not (neg. adv.) constantly (Gnomic: always) weary (ἀσθενέω, PAI3S, Durative, Interrogative Ind.; weak, tired)? Who (Subj. Nom.; false teacher) is being occasionally (Static: currently) doubted (σκανδαλίζω, PPI3S, Iterative, Interrogative Ind.; rejected), yet (contrast & compare) am I (Subj. Nom.) not (neg. adv.) being constantly (Gnomic: always) treated with inflamed, self-righteous indignation (πυρόω, PPI1S, Durative, Interrogative Ind.; burned with distress, profound annoyance, inflamed emotions)?

Greek Text

τίς ἀσθενεῖ καὶ οὐκ ἀσθενῶ; τίς σκανδαλίζεται καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ πυροῦμαι;

Latin Vulgate

quis infirmatur et non infirmor quis scandalizatur et ego non uror

LWB 2 Cor. 11:30 Since it appears necessary to boast [an unfortunate custom in Corinth], I will make it a practice to boast about things related to my inability.

KW 2 Cor. 11:30 Since it is a necessity in the nature of the case for me to boast, I will boast of the things that concern my weakness.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The false teachers have apparently set the precedent in Corinth for boasting about one's heritage, abilities and unusual experiences. If Paul must follow that course of action, and apparently he does (Customary Present tense) to make everyone happy, then he is going

to start a local custom on his own. He is going to make it a habit to boast (Iterative Future tense) about his inabilities, rather than his abilities. On the one hand, this is a sarcastic way to cast dispersion on the arrogant custom adhered to by the false apostles; on the other hand, this also renders glory where it belongs, to the sovereign grace of God. The current custom focuses on arrogant self-sufficiency; the new custom focuses on the grace of God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The false teachers are boasting from the position of legalism, self-pity and emotionalism. Paul, on the other hand, is boasting about his grace provision. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The persecutions, the poverty, the scourgings, the hunger and nakedness of which Paul had boasted, were not things in which men of the world prided themselves, or which commonly attract human applause. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 11:30 since (protasis, 1st class condition, "and it seems to be the case") it appears necessary (δεῖ, PAI3S, Static, Potential Ind.) to boast (καυχάομαι, PMInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent; which seems to be the custom in Corinth), I will make it a practice to boast (καυχάομαι, FMI1S, Iterative, Deponent) about things (Acc. Dir. Obj.) related to my (Poss. Gen.) inability (Adv. Gen. Ref.; weakness).

Greek Text

Εἰ καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ, τὰ τῆς ἀσθενείας μου καυχῆσομαι.

Latin Vulgate

si gloriari oportet quae infirmitatis meae sunt gloriabor

LWB 2 Cor. 11:31 **The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows for certain, (He Who is blessed unto the ages [forever]), that I am not lying.**

KW 2 Cor. 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows, He Who is the Eulogized One forever, that I am not lying.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says God knows beyond any shadow of a doubt (Intensive Perfect tense) that he is not lying (Static Present tense). He adds a brief word of praise (parenthetical) in the

middle of his sentence. The reason for this statement, actually in the form of swearing an oath of truthfulness in the presence of God, is because Paul is about to tell them something that they will find extremely hard to believe, even though it is true.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

An oath is the act of calling God to witness the truth of what we say. Some suppose that the apostle intended by this oath to confirm the truth of the whole preceding exhibition of his labors and sufferings; others, that it is to be confined to the assertion in verse 30 that he would only boast of his infirmities; many others refer it to what follows, i.e., to the account which he was about to give of his escape from Damascus. (C. Hodge)

The apostle now calls God to witness that everything he has said bears the hall-mark of truth. There has been no inaccuracy and no over-statement. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 11:31 The God (Subj. Nom.) and (connective) Father (Nom. Appos.) of our (Poss. Gen.) Lord Jesus Christ (Gen. Rel.) knows for certain (οἶδα, Perf.AI3S, Intensive; beyond any shadow of a doubt), (He (Nom. Appos.) Who is (εἰμί, PAPTc.NMS, Descriptive, Substantival) blessed (Pred. Nom.; worthy of praise) unto the ages (Acc. Extent of Time; forever)), that (coordinating) I am not (neg. adv.) lying (ψεύδομαι, PMI1S, Static, Deponent; living a lie).

Greek Text

ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ οἶδεν, ὁ ὧν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι.

Latin Vulgate

Deus et Pater Domini Iesu scit qui est benedictus in saecula quod non mentior

LWB 2 Cor. 11:32 In Damascus, the governor of Aretus the king attempted to guard the city of the Damascenes for the purpose of arresting me,

KW 2 Cor. 11:32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king kept a constant guard over the city of the Damascenes in an effort to apprehend me,

KJV 2 Cor. 11:32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The governor of Damascus, believe it or not, placed an entire city on alert in an all-out effort (Infinitive of Purpose) to find Paul and have him arrested (Culminative Aorist tense). His attempts to guard the city (Tendential Imperfect tense) evidently did not work, since Paul was indeed in the city and later escaped, but Paul's reason for citing this event is to again compare his dangerous ministry with that of the false teachers. How many of them had an entire garrison of soldiers guarding a city, hoping to find and arrest them? The governor, and quite possibly King Aretus by implication, found Paul's ministry so dangerous that he believed the city needed protection from him.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

A famous official in Damascus put a whole garrison in the field just to locate and arrest Paul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The famous official, the governor or ethnarch, was appointed by Aretas, the father-in-law of Herod Antipas. The governor set a guard at the gates to seize the apostle should he attempt to leave the city. (C. Hodge)

Some manuscripts have the Greek word "thelon" (desire) inserted along with the purpose of arresting. Its insertion at various positions can be explained as the work of copyists in the interest of stylistic amelioration. (B. Metzger)

During the reign of the emperor Caligula (AD 37-41), when a policy of reinstating eastern states of the empire as client kingdoms was followed, Aretas was given control over Damascus and thus would have been able to appoint a governor there. (C. Kruse)

2 Cor. 11:32 In Damascus (Loc. Place), the governor (Subj. Nom.; official) of Aretas (Gen. Rel.) the king (Adv. Gen. Ref.) attempted to guard (φρουρέω, Imperf.AI3S, Tendential; protect) the city (Acc. Dir. Obj.) of the Damascenes (Adv. Gen. Ref.) for the purpose of arresting (πιάζω, AAIInf., Culminative, Purpose) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.),

Greek Text

ἐν Δαμασκῶ ὁ ἐθνάρχης Ἀρέτα τοῦ βασιλέως ἐφρούρει τὴν πόλιν
Δαμασκηῶν πιάσαι με,

Latin Vulgate

Damasci praepositus gentis Aetae regis custodiebat
civitatem Damascenorum ut me conprehenderet

LWB 2 Cor. 11:33 **But by means of a window through the wall I was lowered in a rope-basket and escaped his hands.**

KW 2 Cor. 11:33 And through a window I was let down in a rope basket through [a window in] the wall and escaped out of his hands.

KJV 2 Cor. 11:33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul escaped (Culminative Aorist tense) the arrest attempt of the governor by being lowered (Dramatic Aorist tense) down a city wall through an open window while hiding in a rope-basket. This was a dangerous and exciting event for Paul, to be sure, but his reason for relating the incident is to show his utter helplessness and God's grace to provide him such an escape.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In view of the military imagery earlier in his tribulation catalog, one of the keys to understanding why Paul includes this apparently antiheroic tale is the Roman military honor called the *corona muralis*, the "wall crown." This was one of the highest military awards and was given to the soldier who was first to scale the wall into an enemy city. It was still being awarded in Paul's day, though to no one under the rank of centurion. Paul is saying that while the typical Roman hero is first up the wall, he is first down the wall! (B. Witherington, III)

Why should Paul refer in the last verse to the event that happened at Damascus, when he was let down "through a window in a basket," has been a puzzle to commentators. But as it was amongst his first trials as an apostle, it perhaps, made the greatest impression on his mind. (F.W. Farrar)

2 Cor. 11:33 but (contrast) by means of a window (Abl. Means) through the wall (Gen. Place) I was lowered (χαλάω, APIIS, Dramatic) in a rope-basket (Prep. Loc.; fish-hamper, plaited basket) and (continuative) escaped (ἐκφεύγω, AAIIS, Culminative or Dramatic; fled) his (Poss. Gen.) hands (Acc. Separation; authority, arrest attempt).

Greek Text

καὶ διὰ θυρίδος ἐν σαργάνῃ ἐχαλάσθην διὰ τοῦ τείχους καὶ ἐξέφυγον τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

et per fenestram in sporta dimissus sum per murum et effugi manus eius

Chapter 12

LWB 2 Cor. 12:1 On the one hand, it is not necessary to boast for the purpose of gaining an advantage [over the false teachers], but on the other hand, I will on occasion experience visions and revelations from the Lord.

KW 2 Cor. 12:1 It is a necessity in the nature of the case for me to be boasting, though it is not expedient [my opponents force me to do so], but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a standard combination of correlative and contrast conjunctions to show the dilemma he finds himself in. On the one hand he knows it is not necessary to boast (Customary Present tense) in his ministry in order to gain the ascendancy (Customary Present tense) over his opponents, the false teachers. This may be the customary form of Corinthians debate, but it's a sad substitute for glorifying God. But on the other hand, since this is the environment he finds himself in, he will continue with such ludicrous techniques. On occasion, he knows he will receive visions and revelations (Iterative Future tense) from the Lord. He has had them in the past and he expects them to continue in the future as long as the Lord brings them to him.

The false teachers have been making an issue over their confessed visions and revelations, while Paul has ignored their taunts and said nothing about whether he had any himself. Paul doesn't want to play their game of oneupmanship, but since he apparently has no choice in the matter, yes, he has had visions and revelations in the past and he expects to have more in the future. However, he does not think they are important and goes on to downplay them as much as possible so the Corinthians might not become distracted by such rare phenomenon.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The apostle narrates the favours God had shown him, and the honour he had done him, for doubtless he himself is the man in Christ of whom he speaks. Of the honor itself which was done to the apostle: he was caught up into the third heaven. When this was we cannot say, whether it was during those three days that he lay without sight at his conversion or at some other time afterwards, much less can we pretend to say how this was, whether by a separation of his soul from his body or by an extraordinary transport in the depth of contemplation. It would be presumption for us to determine, if not also to

enquire into, this matter, seeing the apostle himself says, Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. (M. Henry)

What Paul is saying is that he gains nothing by continually boasting, because as a helpless man, he was delivered in a basket. But he finds it necessary to keep on boasting, even though there is nothing in it for himself, because the false teachers have set the precedent for such ridiculous activity. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The words simply express again his distaste at the whole business of boasting, and his sense that it is a desperate and suspect emergency measure of whose value he is not certain. (J. Reid)

Paul knows the emotional impact of such claims, especially on pneumatics. Thus he raises their expectations here, then teases them. He realized that with experientially oriented Corinthians it was not just the authenticity of his ministry that was on trial, but also the very authenticity of his experience of God. (B. Witherington, III) Visions are mental pictures which have definite shape and form. Revelations are truths made clear to and apprehended by the insight of the soul. (J. Reid)

2 Cor. 12:1 On the one hand (correlative), it is not (neg. adv.) necessary (δεῖ, PAI3S, Customary; expedient, profitable) to boast (καυχάομαι, PMInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) for the purpose of gaining an advantage (συμφέρω, PAPtc.ANN, Customary, Purpose; an advantage over one's opponents, an opportunity for a hearing), but on the other hand (contrast), I will on occasion experience (ἔρχομαι, FMI1S, Iterative, Deponent; be brought to) visions (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective) revelations (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from the Lord (Abl. Source).

Greek Text

Καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ, οὐ συμφέρον μὲν, ἐλεύσομαι δὲ εἰς ὀπτασίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις κυρίου.

Latin Vulgate

si gloriari oportet non expedit quidem veniam autem ad visiones et revelationes Domini

LWB 2 Cor. 12:2 I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I do not know or out of the body I do not know, God knows), such a person who was transported as far as the third heaven [abode of God].

KW 2 Cor. 12:2 I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago, whether in the body I do not know positively, or out of the body I do not know positively – God knows – this man being of such a character that he was caught up to the third heaven.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul refers to himself as he relates an historical event in his past (Aoristic Perfect tense), when he was already a Christian, in which he was transported (Historical or Dramatic Present tense: caught up) to the abode of God in the third heaven. The first heaven is the atmosphere above the earth; the second heaven is where angels dwell (some call it outer space); the third heaven is where God resides. He adds a parenthesis to explain that this event was so profound and unlike anything he had ever experienced before, that he didn't know (Intensive Perfect tense) whether he was still in his physical body or not. The only person who could know for sure (Intensive Perfect tense) was God.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul relates to us an autobiographical incident in which his mind was ecstatic, but fully operational. He was conscious, but his ability to do anything but observe was dead. (R.B. Thieme) Paul is talking about the kind of experience here that later came to be identified as Merkabah mysticism - from the merkaba or chariot-throne of Ezekiel's vision. (B. Witherington, III) The Coptic Apocalypse of Paul from Nag Hammadi, whose Greek original may stem from the 2nd century A.D., provides a gnostic interpretation of these verses in which Paul is made to allude to Psalm 68:18. This clear allusion provides evidence that Paul's ascent to heaven was interpreted in light of the Psalm from an early period, even though the Pauline tradition may have undergone significant modification in the gnostic text. Hence, we see that 2 Cor. 2:14 and 12:2-4 are linked by their common basis not only in merkabah mysticism generally but also in the Psalm 68 tradition particularly. (J. Scott)

The Apostle Paul did not hesitate to speak of the body as the tabernacle or the house of clay in which man's transcendent soul indwells. In 2 Cor. 12:2-4 he could describe a person as being completely conscious while out of the body as well as when the person was in the body. The man in the passage did not cease to exist while out of his body. The man's transcendent soul or spirit could leave his body and ascend to the third heaven and be conscious in the presence of God. (R. Morey) In any event, he recognizes the possibility of conscious receptivity in disembodied spirits. (R. Jamieson)

2 Cor. 12:2 **I knew** (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Aoristic) **a man** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; referring to himself) **in Christ** (Loc. Sph.), **fourteen** (Gen. Spec.) **years ago** (Gen. Time), **(whether** (subordinate) **in the body** (Loc. Sph.) **I do not** (neg. adv.) **know** (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Intensive) **or** (subordinate) **out of the body** (Loc. Sph.) **I do not** (neg. adv.) **know** (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Intensive), **God** (Subj. Nom.) **knows** (οἶδα, Perf.AI3S,

Intensive)), such a person (Acc. Appos.) who was transported (ἀρπάζω, PAPTc.AMS, Historical or Dramatic, Substantival; carried off) as far as (Prep.; to the point of) the third (Gen. Spec.) heaven (Gen. Place; to the abode of God).

Greek Text

οἶδα ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ πρὸ ἐτῶν δεκατεσσάρων, εἴτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἴτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν, ἀρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

scio hominem in Christo ante annos quattuordecim sive in corpore nescio sive extra corpus nescio Deus scit raptum eiusmodi usque ad tertium caelum

LWB 2 Cor. 12:3 Again, I knew such a man, (whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows),

KW 2 Cor. 12:3 And I know such a man, whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know – God knows –

KJV 2 Cor. 12:3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses a rare form of an adjunctive conjunction to start his train of thought over again, repeating what he just said for emphasis. He uses a different preposition this time, offering the plausible theory that he was actually temporarily dead, but quickly saying for the second time that only God knows for sure.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This may be significant in that a Greek or Roman would naturally think of such experiences as occurring out of the body, because of their dualistic understanding of the human person and because they did not usually regard the body as having any religious or eternal importance. Paul says he got as far as “the third heaven,” which he also calls “paradise,” a term from the Eden story that had come to be synonymous with what we call “heaven.” (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 12:3 Again (adjunctive, emphatic), I knew (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Aoristic) such (Acc. Spec.) a man (Acc. Dir. Obj.), (whether (subordinate) in the body (Loc. Sph.) or (subordinate) apart from the body (Loc. Sph.) I do not (neg.

adv.) know (οἶδα, Perf.AI1S, Intensive), God (Subj. Nom.)
knows (οἶδα, Perf.AI3S, Intensive)),

Greek Text

καὶ οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον, εἴτε ἐν σώματι εἴτε χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος
οὐκ οἶδα, ὃ θεὸς οἶδεν,

Latin Vulgate

et scio huiusmodi hominem sive in corpore sive extra
corpus nescio Deus scit

LWB 2 Cor. 12:4 That was transported into Paradise and heard words [doctrinal truths] too sacred for him to be able to communicate, concerning which it is not permitted [against divine policy] for a man to communicate.

KW 2 Cor. 12:4 that he was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If you didn't see it in the preceding verse, here is the Latin word "raptus" again, which is translated "transported" (no pun intended). Christian theology has adopted this word to represent the "translation of the Church" into the air to meet Christ in the clouds, otherwise known as the "rapture." Paul is not addressing "the rapture" here, but he was caught-up into heaven in similar fashion a long time ago.

He uses the Dramatic Aorist tense to emphasize how remarkable this experience was, and the Passive Voice to point out that he had absolutely no part in this mode of transportation; he did not exercise some special spiritual gift, it was done to him without his volition involved. He probably stated it in the Passive Voice to contrast himself with the false apostles who are claiming to exercise these kind of miracles on a regular basis using their own power.

He also heard (Dramatic Aorist tense) doctrinal truths that were so profound that he can't begin to express them in words. As a matter of fact, even if he wanted to explain them to us, it is not allowed (Gnomic Present tense combined with a negative adverb means "never allowed") for a man to teach them (Culminative Aorist tense). Paul learned some incredibly advanced doctrinal truths while in Paradise, but Divine policy forbids him to teach us what he heard, even if we think it would be to our advantage to hear them.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

They were words he was not permitted to repeat, and not that they were unintelligible. The Corinthians would understand this in terms of their knowledge of the mystery religions. Some things were revealed only to special people at special times. Indeed, the deep secrets given to initiates in the mysteries have still not been disclosed, though at Pompeii and elsewhere we have found evidence of the secret rites. (B. Witherington, III)

Whereas Paradise in the gospel account (Luke 23:43) referred to the section of Hades reserved for the righteous, by the time Paul wrote this verse, it was assumed that Paradise had been taken out of Hades and was now placed in the third heaven. At the time of Luke's writing, Paradise was understood to refer to that part of Hades which was reserved for the righteous dead. It did not mean 'heaven' as it was later understood here. It referred to a place of conscious bliss in Sheol, or Hades, popularly known at that time (Luke 16:19-36) as Abraham's bosom. (R. Morey)

Paradise is from a Persian word meaning "park" or "garden." It is used in the LXX for the Garden of Eden, and in the NT for the place where the glory lost in Eden is regained by Christians. (N. Hillyer) He heard unspeakable words, such as it is not possible for a man to utter – such are the sublimity of the latter and our unacquaintedness with the language of the upper world: nor was it lawful to utter those words, because, while we are here in this world, we have a more sure word of prophesy than such dreams and visions and revelations (2 Peter 1:19). The account which Paul gives us of his vision should check our curious desires after forbidden knowledge, and teach us to improve the revelation God has given us in His Word. Paul adhered to the doctrine of Christ: on this foundation the church is built, and on this we must build our faith and hope. (M. Henry)

A change has taken place which affects Paradise. Paul was caught up into the third heaven ... into Paradise. Paradise, therefore, is not in the immediate presence of God. It is believed that Ephesians 4:8-10 indicates the time of the change. "When He ascended up on high He led a multitude of captives." It is immediately added that He had previously "descended first into the lower parts of the earth," i.e., the Paradise division of Hades. During the present Church Age the saved who die are "absent from the body, at home with the Lord." The wicked dead in Hades, and the righteous dead "at home with the Lord," alike await the resurrection. (J.D. Pentecost)

2 Cor. 12:4 **that** (introductory; whether it was his body, soul, spirit or a combination of the three is unknown to Paul) **was transported** (ἀρπάζω, API3S, Dramatic; caught up) **into Paradise** (Acc. Place; garden, pleasure ground, grove) **and** (continuative) **heard** (ἀκούω, AAI3S, Dramatic) **words** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrinal truths) **too sacred for him to be able to communicate** (Adv. Acc.), **concerning which** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **it is not** (neg. adv.) **permitted** (ἔξεστι, PAPtc.ANS, Gnostic, Attributive; against divine policy) **for a man** (Dat.

Adv.; not even Paul) **to communicate** (λαλέω, AAInf., Culminative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb).

Greek Text

ὅτι ἠρπάγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι.

Latin Vulgate

quoniam raptus est in paradysum et audivit arcana verba quae non licet homini loqui

LWB 2 Cor. 12:5 On behalf of such a person [someone else who has such an extraordinary experience] I will continue to rejoice, but on behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses.

KW 2 Cor. 12:5 Concerning such a man as this I will boast, but concerning myself I will not boast except in my weaknesses.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Without concluding that other people who claim to have had such extraordinary experiences are liars, Paul gives them the benefit of the doubt and says he will keep on rejoicing (Iterative Future tense) on their behalf. However, in his case, since his experience was done without his input (Passively), he will not boast (Predictive Future tense) about his experiences, unless (one exception) it concerns his inability in such situations. He uses the same Greek word (kaukaomai) for both rejoicing and boasting; it can be translated favorably or unfavorably, depending on the context. This is a subtle way of teaching genuine humility when it comes to extraordinary spiritual experiences, as opposed to bragging and glorying in yourself for having had such an experience.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It's also possible that Paul is speaking on behalf of himself in both examples. "On the one hand, he will boast about his experiences while in the third heaven, but he will not boast about them while on earth." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:5 On behalf of such a person (Gen. Adv.; any one who has such an extraordinary experience) I will continue to rejoice (καυχάομαι, FMI1S, Iterative, Deponent; be happy for them), but (contrast) on behalf of myself (Adv. Gen. Ref.) I will not (neg. adv.) boast (καυχάομαι, FMI1S, Predictive,

Deponent; glory), **except** (idiom: combination of subordinate conjunction & neg. particle; unless) **in my** (Poss. Gen.) **weaknesses** (Loc. Sph.; inability).

Greek Text

ὑπὲρ τοῦ τοιούτου καυχῆσομαι, ὑπὲρ δὲ ἑμαυτοῦ οὐ καυχῆσομαι εἰ μὴ ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις.

Latin Vulgate

pro eiusmodi gloriabor pro me autem nihil gloriabor nisi in infirmitatibus meis

LWB 2 Cor. 12:6 For if I choose to boast, I will not become a fool [like the false apostles], since I will always speak the truth; however, I am refraining [from boasting] so nobody may evaluate me as above [superior to] what he is able to see nor whatever he may hear from [about] me.

KW 2 Cor. 12:6 For, if I should desire to boast, I shall not be foolish, for I speak the truth. But I am abstaining [from boasting] lest any man consider me above that which he sees me to be or above that which he hears from me.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul explains why he does not boast about his experiences like the false apostles boast about theirs. If he decides to boast about something (Potential Subjunctive mood: maybe he will and maybe he won't), he promises not to become (Predictive Future tense) a fool like the false apostles who never stop talking about their supernatural experiences and who, by way of comparison, lie about many or most of them. By way of contrast, Paul will always (Gnomic Future tense) speak the truth.

However, as is his customary modus operandi, Paul is refraining from boasting about his extraordinary experiences. Why won't he match the false apostle's claims "miracle by miracle?" Because he does not want anyone to consider (Culminative Aorist tense) him above who he really is, a humble apostle chosen by God to preach the Gospel. The preposition meaning "above" is used as a derogatory comment against the arrogant, boastful practices of the false apostles and the faulty, inflated opinion the Corinthians have of them.

Paul does not want them to over-evaluate him, particularly on the basis of supernatural experiences. He wants the Corinthians to see him (Customary Present tense) as he truly is, and hear him or things about him (Customary Present tense) in an ordinary light. In other words, what they see is what they get. If they try to compare and categorize him with the false, super-apostles, or if they believe some of the inflated rumours about him through the grapevine, he will have failed in this respect.

The use of the Accusative Case could be either Complementary or Non-complementary, depending on your perspective. If the Corinthians evaluated Paul based on objectivity, what they saw of him would be complementary. If they evaluated him based on subjectivity, what they saw of him would be false and therefore non-complementary.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

God does not come to us in ecstasies in which we are withdrawn from the hard realities of daily living. It is there, in fact, that God meets us – amid frustrations, vexations, sufferings – and makes known to us His grace. This is why Paul boasts of his weaknesses, as he goes on to show in another personal experience (thorn in the flesh) such as is within the range of all. (J. Reid)

2 Cor. 12:6 **For** (explanatory) **if** (3rd class condition, “maybe I will, maybe I won’t”) **I choose** (θέλω, AASubj.1S, Constative, Potential; desire, want) **to boast** (καυχάομαι, AMInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent), **I will not** (neg. adv.) **become** (εἰμί, FMI1S, Predictive) **a fool** (Pred. Nom.), **since** (explanatory) **I will always speak** (εἶπον, FAI1S, Gnostic) **the truth** (Acc. Dir. Obj.); **however** (adversative) **I am refraining** (φείδομαι, PMI1S, Customary, Deponent), **so** (introducing negative) **nobody** (Subj. Nom.; idiomatic with negative) **may evaluate** (λογίζομαι, AMSubj.3S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent; consider, think) **me** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **as** (Prep.) **above** (Prep.; beyond, greater than, superior: like the super-apostles claim to be) **what** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **he is able to see** (βλέπω, PAI3S, Customary) **of me** (Compl. Acc.) **nor** (neg. conj.) **whatever** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **he may hear** (ἀκούω, PAI3S, Customary, Potential Ind.; through the grapevine) **from me** (Abl. Source).

Greek Text

ἐὰν γὰρ θελήσω καυχῆσασθαι, οὐκ ἔσομαι ἄφρων, ἀλήθειαν γὰρ ἐρῶ· φείδομαι δέ, μή τις εἰς ἐμὲ λογίσηται ὑπὲρ ὃ βλέπει με ἢ ἀκούει [τι] ἐξ ἐμοῦ

Latin Vulgate

nam et si voluero gloriari non ero insipiens veritatem enim dicam parco autem ne quis in me existimet supra id quod videt me aut audit ex me

LWB 2 Cor. 12:7 Furthermore, with reference to the surpassing quality of revelations [what Paul learned in the third heaven], so that I might not become puffed up with pride, for this reason, a thorn against the flesh was inflicted upon me, a messenger of Satan, for the purpose of repeatedly tormenting me [when necessary], so that as a result I might not become puffed up with pride.

KW 2 Cor. 12:7 And with respect to the superabundance of the revelations, in order that I may not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to the end that he might constantly maltreat me lest I be exalted overmuch.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul continues his discussion on supernatural experiences (revelations) by referring back to his own extraordinary incident in the third heaven. He isn't bragging about it when he describes it as outstanding, spectacular beyond measure (Latin: great magnitude). It was a reasoned assessment of the experience. Wouldn't you consider an experience of that sort astounding?

Paul received a counter-gift, you might say, because he brought some excess baggage back from trip. A thorn "in the flesh" (Locative of Place) or a thorn "against the flesh" (Dat. Adv./Disadv.) was "inflicted upon" or "given to" him. Several options are possible here, depending on your perspective of what the "thorn" accomplished in Paul's life. From a human standpoint, it was a constant, nagging irritant that was inflicted (Dramatic Aorist tense) upon him by God. Who would want that? From a divine viewpoint, it served the purpose of preventing Paul from being overly arrogant (Potential Subjunctive mood) or puffed up with pride. If any of us were chosen to take a trip to the third heaven and were then taught profound doctrines that we were not to tell anyone about, it would be difficult for us to resume the life we once lived without becoming puffed up with pride and arrogance. Human viewpoint would consider this thorn to be a disadvantage, but divine viewpoint would understand it to be an advantage.

Since a Christian cannot be demon-possessed, I chose to use the Dative of Disadvantage translation "against the flesh" as opposed to the Locative of Place translation "in the flesh." Since it was a messenger (fallen angel) of (from) Satan, it would work "against or upon" Paul's flesh, but not "in or through" his flesh. The purpose of this fallen-angel or messenger from Satan was to repeatedly torment (Dramatic & Iterative Present tense) Paul when he needed it. The Potential Subjunctive mood points to the activity being dependent on something. It doesn't happen continuously (without ceasing) just to make

Paul's life miserable. He was only tormented when he started becoming arrogant. It served as a "check" on Paul's thoughts and behavior, so that when he started to become puffed-up with pride, the fallen-angel would harass him, perhaps even striking or punching him out as a reminder.

Twice Paul tells us that this thorn was not a curse from God, but a disciplinary action when he himself went out of bounds. The Potential Subjunctive mood points to the obvious temptation for Paul, as well as any of us, to become arrogant after being blessed with so much doctrinal truth. It also points to the activity of the thorn only being applied when necessary; so if Paul is able to keep himself from arrogance, the thorn discipline would not occur.

The phrase "puffed up with pride" is repeated twice in this passage for emphasis. Both instances are well supported in manuscripts.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Both suffering and Satan are under the direction of God. He uses them as His instruments of good. Satan himself is the servant of the Holy One. The cup may be bitter for Paul, but it has curative powers. Tempests may toss, but those storms will purify the atmosphere round the heart and bear us away from scenes on which our hearts are set. All prayer is answered when the mind of the suppliant is brought into cordial submission to the Divine will. (J.S. Exell)

Pride might have come easy to Paul, since he knew so much doctrine that he couldn't teach. So he was given a thorn. This fallen angel from Satan would make sure Paul refrained from boasting. Since the word "flesh" can also mean "life," the fallen angel might have been punching him when he became arrogant. Surely Paul was tempted to say: "I've been to heaven and I didn't see any Judaizers there!" But if he played this game of one-upmanship, he might get punched. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There is debate as to whether we should take the dative of "sarx" as locative (in the flesh) or as dative of disadvantage (for the flesh). If it is locative then Paul is probably referring to some sort of physical ailment, disease, or condition. If one takes it as dative of disadvantage, then "flesh" is used in a theological sense and the thorn attacked Paul's sinful inclination. The verb here means "batter" or "beat about the head," which certainly suggests something physical, and not mere opposition or temptation. In any case, God chose not to remove this problem from Paul despite repeated prayer. (B. Witherington, III)

The formal cause of Paul's weakness, which the opponents so vehemently decry, is none other than his extraordinary apostolic revelations. In effect, Paul makes suffering and weakness - even the extreme sort that he continually endures - a sign of genuine, and even exceptional, apostleship since the more often that an apostle ascends to the divine throne of glory, the more his pride will need to be held in check by earthly suffering. (J.

Scott) This ought to be allowed and taken for granted, that the thorn in the flesh, and the messenger of Satan, design one and the same thing; the former is a figurative expression, the latter a literal one, and explanative of the former. (J. Gill)

Define the thorn and any believer lacking that particular affliction would dismiss Paul's experience as remote from his own. (N. Hillyer) The thorn has been taken to mean spiritual temptations (Calvin), the opposition and persecution which Paul had to face (Luther), carnal temptations (Roman Catholics), epilepsy (Jerome), severe and prostrating headaches (Tertullian), eye trouble, malarial fever, physical weariness, etc. (W. Barclay) It can also be translated as anything pointed, such as a stake, pointed end of a fish-hook, a splinter or a thorn. (C. Kruse) The thorn in the flesh is a curious phrase which is capable of at least two meanings. (1) It is clear that it was inherently evil as Satan's emissary, and (2) it came to him as an affliction, intended to torment him. It was to prick the bubble of inordinate pride that the thorn was permitted, and as a consequence Paul was kept humble. (R.P. Martin)

The torment is personified by the phrase "messenger of Satan." (M. Vincent) It is a blessing to the rest of us that we do not know the particular affliction that so beset Paul. Each of us has some such splinter or thorn in the flesh, perhaps several at once. In any case, the angel of Satan is the affliction personified. The messenger of Satan kept slapping Paul in the face and Paul now sees that it was God's will for it to be so. (A.T. Robertson) The second part of verse 7 is designed to explain the first. Paul's physical affliction is a messenger of Satan. God allows Satan to send one of his angels to torment him. The messenger of Satan hits Paul in the face. (S. Kistemaker)

In contrast to the amillennial suggestions of a complete or partial binding of Satan, how can he be bound and still send a messenger to harass Paul? Satan is not bound until the beginning of the millennium; he will be loosed at the conclusion of the millennium at which time he will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone into which the beast and the false prophet had been previously cast at the beginning of the millennium. (J. Walvoord)

To protect Paul from his natural vulnerability to arrogance, God sent providential preventative suffering, which Paul called his "thorn in the flesh." Arrogance must be prevented because it neutralizes the effectiveness of doctrine in the believer's life. Doctrine provides spiritual self-esteem; arrogance is self-alienation. Arrogance is the insidious enemy of the spiritual life, the very attitude that corrupted Lucifer. Paul's ministry might have been destroyed by arrogance, but the thorn in the flesh was given to him to preserve him in a period of grave danger. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:7 Furthermore (continuative), with reference to the surpassing quality (Dat. Measure; outstanding, spectacular beyond measure) of revelations (Adv. Gen. Ref.), so that (Purpose/Result) I might not (neg. adv.) become puffed up with pride (ὑπεραίρω, PPSubj.1S, Descriptive, Potential; arrogant), for this reason (inferential), a thorn

(Subj. Nom.; splinter, nagging irritant) against the flesh (Dat. Disadv.; Loc. Place: "in") was inflicted (δίδωμι, API3S, Dramatic; given) upon me (Dat. Adv./Disadv.), a messenger (Nom. Appos.; personified: fallen angel, agent) of Satan (Poss. Gen.), for the purpose of (Purpose) repeatedly tormenting (κολαφίζω, PASubj.3S, Dramatic & Iterative, Potential; harass, knuckle-punch, strike, trouble) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.), so that as a result (Result) I might not (neg. adv.) become puffed up with pride (ὑπεραίρω, PPSubj.1S, Descriptive, Potential; arrogant).

Greek Text

καὶ τῇ ὑπερβολῇ τῶν ἀποκαλύψεων. διό ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι, ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, ἄγγελος Σατανᾶ, ἵνα με κολαφίζῃ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι.

Latin Vulgate

et ne magnitudo revelationum extollat me datus est mihi stimulus carnis meae angelus Satanae ut me colaphizet

LWB 2 Cor. 12:8 I begged the Lord three times concerning this [thorn in the flesh: torment from the fallen angel], so that it might depart from me.

KW 2 Cor. 12:8 Concerning this three times I begged the Lord that he might depart from me.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul pleaded with the Lord (Dramatic Aorist tense) on three occasions to make the fallen angel go away (Culminative Aorist tense) and quit tormenting him. Obviously, on at least three occasions, Paul had become puffed-up because of his advanced doctrinal knowledge, and the thorn discipline was brought to bear upon him. The Potential Subjunctive mood points to Paul's understanding that the messenger from Satan would never leave him permanently, but he hoped by his prayer (entreaty) that the Lord might make it go away now – while he is under divine discipline.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The worst time for Paul to pray was when he was under pressure or discipline. That's when he was supposed to use all that doctrine he learned in heaven to get his act together again! Paul begged and prayed while disoriented, whining like a baby, instead of utilizing Bible doctrine. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The apostle admits that God Himself is ultimately responsible for his physical weakness! Just as God was responsible for his heavenly

ascent, so also God was responsible for his receiving a thorn in the flesh; however, the real crux of Paul's admission consists in the reason for which he was given this physical malady, that is, to keep him from becoming conceited. (J. Scott)

Though afflictions are sent for our spiritual benefit, yet we often pray to God for the removal of them: we ought indeed to desire also that they may reach the end for which they are designed. (M. Henry) Paul felt that it would interfere with his energy and happiness, and, of course, the satanic side of the torture would be uppermost in his thought. The evil in pain is what we see first. If this were not realized, it could not be an affliction. Christians often fail at this point. They doubt at times whether their afflictions come from God. Some Christians cannot be induced to believe that their sufferings are sent from above, and they see in them nothing more than evil casualties. But if they fail to recognize God in the sorrow, they will not find Him in the joy of His blessed promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." A literal answer to the prayer was refused; a spiritual answer was granted. The "grace" bestowed was "sufficient," not only to bear the pain as a peculiar addition to his "infirmities" already existing, but to enable him to "glory" in it. (J. Exell)

As the first stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual self-esteem is still an awkward phase in which the believer has not yet developed the true instincts of spiritual maturity. That is why Paul reacted emotionally to the pain of providential preventative suffering. In an understandable human reaction, he was momentarily affected by the discomfort before regaining his composure and passing the test. Paul's use of prayer was a false solution to suffering for blessing; his request that the suffering be removed was a wrong application of doctrine. Providential preventative suffering is essential to the adult believer's spiritual advance. He should never ask God to remove the means of his growth. He should never pray for the removal of suffering for blessing by which the protocol plan of God is fulfilled. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The mission of suffering may be continuous through life. It may be the point of God's dealing with us that He does not sanctify us by sudden, occasional, and severe afflictions, but by calling us to bear a lifelong burden of disability or frailty. Troubles of this kind cannot be removed in response to prayer, because to remove them would be to check the sanctifying process. God, in sending a temporary affliction, may have a temporary end in view, and so, when that end is duly reached, the affliction may be removed. But if the work of our sanctification is, in the Divine wisdom, to be wrought by a continuous life-pressure, then the response to our prayer can only be this: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Those who are looking for kinds of grace for which they have no immediate and pressing needs will be in danger of missing the glorious provisions which their Lord is ever making for them. (J. Exell)

2 Cor. 12:8 **I begged** (παρακαλέω, AAI1S, Dramatic; summoned, prayed to, pleaded with) **the Lord** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **three times** (adj.) **concerning this** (Adv. Gen. Ref.; thorn in the flesh: torment from the fallen angel), **so that** (purpose) **it**

might depart (ἀφίστημι, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; go away, leave) **from me** (Abl. Separation).

Greek Text

ὕπὲρ τούτου τρὶς τὸν κύριον παρεκάλεσα ἵνα ἀποστῆ ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

propter quod ter Dominum rogavi ut discederet a me

LWB 2 Cor. 12:9 But He replied: “My grace provision is always enough for you, for the power [delegated divine omnipotence] finds full strength with weakness [progressive phases of suffering].” All the more, therefore, will I boast in my weaknesses [progressive phases of suffering], so that as a result the [delegated divine omnipotent] power of Christ might rest upon me.

KW 2 Cor. 12:9 And He has said unto me, and His declaration still stands, My grace is enough for you, for power is moment by moment coming to its full energy and complete operation in the sphere of weakness. Therefore, most gladly will I the rather boast in my weaknesses in order that the power of the Christ [like the Shekinah Glory in the Holy of Holies of the Tent of Meeting] may take up its residence in me [working within me and giving me help].

KJV 2 Cor. 12:9 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul didn’t get the answer he hoped to receive from the Lord. Instead, the Lord answered (Intensive Perfect tense) him by saying His grace provision (spiritual resources) was always sufficient (Gnomic Aorist tense) for Paul. Not only that, He explains that divine power finds its ultimate fulfillment (Dramatic Present tense) in human weakness. In other words, the greatest display of God’s power is not to perform a visible miracle on behalf of a believer, but rather to perform an invisible miracle through the thoughts and soul of a believer under pressure.

It is man’s tendency when under pressure to ask God to take the problem away, but it is God’s plan for the believer to use His Word to think through the pressure situation. This is what is meant by “grace provision.” Believers are not left in their weaknesses to merely beg God to take the problems of life away! Nor are we left to sit on a park bench and expect him to pick up the pieces of our life. We are meant to utilize His grace provision (the Word of God) to overcome these problems with His assistance (by the

filling of the Holy Spirit). This is how the fullest expression of His power is made manifest.

In that case, Paul finally changes his mind about taking the thorn away and decides he will be most happy to boast (Predictive Future tense) in his weaknesses! He understands that by doing this, the potential result (Culminative Aorist tense) is that Christ's power might rest upon him in great measure. The minute he collapses under pressure and prays to God to take the problem away, or when he tries to solve the problem using human rather than grace resources, Christ's power does not find full strength or manifestation in his life.

The Textus Receptus adds the personal pronoun "mou" (My) where it is not found. It is absent from the best manuscripts and "seems to have been added by copyists for the sake of perspicuity." (B. Metzger) Unfortunately, this addition was a blunder by the copyists, and has led believers throughout the ages believing they have no responsibility to utilize the Word of God to solve problems in their lives. The addition of the personal pronoun leads them to believe they should "just sit there" and God will deliver them through His sovereignty. The "power" definitely comes from Him as a Source, but it is delegated to all believers to use under proper protocol to solve life's problems.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are spiritual resources [filling of the Spirit and problem-solving devices from the Word of God] that can enable a man to triumph over his defect, and even to win something out of it which was not possible before. In this trial, Paul receives grace [provision] sufficient to carry the suffering and endure the strain. The point of Paul's weakness could become the place of God's power. It could become a center through which that power could most fully radiate. The struggle to overcome the weakness develops capacities that would otherwise have lain dormant. (J. Reid)

Paul came to experience Christ's presence and power in a new way. In the hard school of discipline and suffering he learned lessons of trust and reliance on God's strength which presumably he would never have known except in this bitter frustration. (R.P. Martin) The identity of the thorn is a mystery. (ibid) The Lord needs our weakness more than our strength: our strength is often His rival; our weakness His servant, drawing on His resources and showing forth His glory. Man's extremity is God's opportunity; man's security is Satan's opportunity. God's way is not to take His children out of, but to give them strength to bear up against trial. (R. Jamieson)

Jesus Christ is not speaking to Paul in the present, but in the past. Paul is recalling this lesson in orienting his prayers according to Bible doctrine. Rather than ask for the pain to go away, he was supposed to use the doctrine he already had in his soul. In all three negative attempts to change God's mind, he did not receive the answer from God he desired. He was directed back to grace. And by grace, we are not referring to Christ's grace to perform a miracle, but to Paul's use of the grace provision from Christ. This is

extremely important: The grace procedures given by Christ can provide contentment for you. This is part of the supergrace life we are supposed to be living here and now. Through this supergrace life, God's omnipotent power is fulfilled (completed) by means of our helplessness. It is the failure to utilize Bible doctrine in daily life that closes the channel for grace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

If you believe the thorn in the flesh was a physical ailment or disease, "this passage has numerous implications for ministry. It shows that it is not always God's will to heal someone with a physical malady, for whatever reasons. The "health and wealth" gospel has overlooked not only the fact that there are occasions for suffering for Christ, but also that there are occasions when ordinary suffering is used by God for a higher good, including powerful witness to others. The theology that suggests that lack of healing necessarily means lack of faith has failed to reckon with numerous scriptural examples, including Paul's, and has failed to recognize that for early Christians, life in this body was seen as temporary and temporal." (B. Witherington, III)

Paul uses the superlative "with the greatest pleasure" or "to the highest degree" to express how he will boast in his weaknesses in the future. Now he understands that the application of Bible doctrine in his soul is far better than a miracle. Now he understands that the inherent power of Jesus Christ is perfected by a believer who lives the supergrace life. The boasting or celebrityship belongs to Christ, not Paul and not us. And His celebrityship is best expressed by believers who use His grace provision (resources), enabling the Shekinah Glory to tabernacle (bivowac as in a tent) on them. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) His grace would enable Paul to cope with it. It does not mean Paul enjoys weaknesses as such; what he delights in is the power of Christ that rests upon him in these weaknesses. The word "dwell" is a military term for the billeting of soldiers. It may, therefore, be better to translate the verb as "dwell in" or "reside" rather than "rest upon." Either way it is the experience of the power of Christ in Paul's weakness that enables him to boast gladly. (C. Kruse)

"The power is achieved with weakness" states that suffering is necessary for spiritual advance. The Greek word "dunamis" (power) refers to God's omnipotence as utilized by the believer in the advance through spiritual adulthood: spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity. The adult believer has power because he consistently lives inside the sphere of power (divine dynasphere). The verb "teleo," which is ambiguously translated "made perfect" in the KJV, means "to finish, to accomplish, to fulfill, to achieve," the latter best agreeing with the context in verse 9. How is power achieved? The Greek preposition "en" plus "astheneia" in the instrumental case of manner, indicates the manner in which the action of the verb is carried out: "with weakness." "Weakness" refers to the progressive phases of suffering for blessing. Weakness here is not failure or sin but helplessness. Suffering for blessing puts the spiritually adult believer in a situation he cannot resolve with human resources. He is helpless and must totally depend on divine assets that he has acquired by metabolizing Bible doctrine in his soul. The suffering itself does not advance the believer; his utilization of God's power in suffering is what advances him. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

To eject the devil's messenger was poor compared with transforming it into a ministering spirit. Paul's faith must transcend his feeling. He must lay hold of Christ with more tenacious grasp; he must believe that Christ can use this trouble for high purposes. The Lord's resources are boundless; they are our resources when strong faith [doctrine] binds us to their possessor. Glorifying in infirmities bears upon humility, nourishes dependence on God, cultivates character, and keeps a man open to God. (J. Exell)

Just as Paul's sufficiency for being the revelatory mediator is God, Who has made him sufficient, so also Paul's sufficiency for coping with the thorn in the flesh, which God gave him, is also God. Paul boasts in his weakness so that Christ's power might rest on him. And because Paul is the dwelling place of the power of Christ, he takes delight in his weaknesses. The apostle has come to this understanding of suffering after realizing that the power of Christ manifests itself most fully and obviously when he is at his weakest, i.e., in suffering. His light and momentary troubles are achieving for him an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (J. Scott) Divine power is best displayed against the backdrop of human weaknesses, so that God alone is praised. Rather than removing the problem, God gave him grace in it. This grace is sufficient or adequate in the sense of providing contentment. (D. Lowery)

God sends the weakness of providential preventative suffering, momentum testing, or evidence testing. God has provided the sphere of power; man experiences the weakness in suffering that is beyond human solution. God's power, which is employed by man in helplessness, produces accelerated spiritual growth. Paul's category of boasting indicates submission to God's system and is the antithesis of arrogance. Thus Paul demonstrates that providential preventative suffering has been effective in his life. He had stopped feeling sorry for himself, as when he had begged God to remove the pain. Rather than being preoccupied with himself and his problems, Paul now has focused his attention on the person of Christ. His suffering had not changed. His human weakness had not changed. His old sin nature had not changed. The sphere of power had not changed. What had changed was Paul's attitude. He began to apply the doctrine he knew to the circumstances in which he found himself. He began to think objectively, utilized his problem-solving devices, and regained control of his life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:9 But (adversative) He replied (εἶπον, Perf.AI3S, Intensive) to me (Dat. Adv.): "My (Poss. Gen.) grace provision (Subj. Nom.; divine resources: the Word of God and the filling of the Holy Spirit) is always enough (ἀρκέω, PAI3S, Gnostic; sufficient) for you (Dat. Adv.), for (explanatory) the power (Subj. Nom.; delegated divine omnipotence) finds full strength (τελέω, PPI3S, Dramatic; is accomplished, attains perfection) with weakness (Instr. Means; progressive phases of suffering)."
All the more (comparative) gladly (superlative), therefore (inferential), will I boast (καυχάομαι, FMI1S, Predictive, Deponent) in my

(Poss. Gen.) **weaknesses** (Loc. Sph.; progressive phases of suffering), **so that as a result** (Result) **the power** (Subj. Nom.; delegated divine omnipotence) **of Christ** (Poss. Gen.) **might rest upon** (ἐπισκηνώω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; dwell, tabernacled, live in) **me** (Acc. Adv.).

Greek Text

καὶ εἰρηκέν μοι· Ἄρκει σοι ἡ χάρις μου, ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελείται. ἥδιστα οὖν μᾶλλον καυχῆσομαι ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις μου, ἵνα ἐπισκηνώσῃ ἐπ' ἐμὲ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Latin Vulgate

et dixit mihi sufficit tibi gratia mea nam virtus in infirmitate perficitur libenter igitur gloriabor in infirmitatibus meis ut inhabitet in me virtus Christi

LWB 2 Cor. 12:10 Therefore, I remain content in weaknesses [progressive phases of suffering], during insults, in distress, during persecutions and calamities on behalf of Christ, for when I am weak [relying totally on divine grace resources], then I become strong [able to live a powerful Christian life].

KW 2 Cor. 12:10 Wherefore I am well content in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, and in circumstances under which I am subject to extreme pressure on behalf of Christ, for when I am weak, then I am filled with ability and power.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:10 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul learned how to remain content (Customary Present tense) no matter what circumstances he met in life. By utilizing the Word of God and the filling of the Spirit, he was able to endure weaknesses, insults, distress, persecutions and calamities in a manner that honored Christ. He learned the secret that when he was weak (Descriptive Present tense: totally dependent on God's grace provision), then he was empowered by Christ to live the supergrace life.

There are differing opinions on how to translate the preposition "en" in this passage. If it is translated Locative of Sphere, it will be translated "in;" if translated as Locative of Time, it will be translated "during." Each instance could be different, or they could all be the same.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul learned the secret of thinking instead of praying when troubles came upon him. By utilizing the filling of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine resident in his soul, he was even able to take pleasure in weaknesses. He was able to maintain a relaxed mental attitude when insulted; he was able to master the details of life when his needs were severe; he was able to exercise impersonal love when being persecuted by others; and he was able to stimulate inner happiness in his soul through anguishing events. On the occasions when he was weak (relying totally on divine resources), he became strong – able to live the dynamics of the supergrace life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Not in myself, but in the fresh access of power from Christ for the emergency. (A.T. Robertson)

Power and weakness exist together at the same time: the adult believer uses the strength of spiritual self-esteem to move through his weakness in providential preventative suffering. He uses the strength of spiritual autonomy to go through his weakness in momentum testing. And he uses the strength of spiritual maturity to move through his weakness in evidence testing. He not only exercises the power inherent in each stage of spiritual adulthood to meet the test, but when he succeeds in passing each test, he “achieves the power” of the next stage of spiritual adulthood. With each test he passes, he moves up. As a result of dealing with the undeserved suffering that God sends, the believer’s strength increases so that he is able to cope with the next increment of suffering when it comes. In His perfect wisdom God gives each believer the unique sequence of blessing and suffering, of prosperity and adversity, necessary to bring him to maximum glorification of God. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

From the context it is plain that the reference here is to sufferings – of which reproaches, necessities, persecutions and distresses were different forms. These words all belong to the preceding term: suffering. Suffering endured for Christ’s sake was considered as the condition of the manifestation of His power. (C. Hodge)

Contentment, or capacity for happiness in one’s present circumstances, begins in spiritual self-esteem, grows stronger in spiritual autonomy, and reaches a peak in spiritual maturity. In spiritual adulthood, sharing the happiness of God is the Christian’s greatest and most effective problem-solving device. If God the Holy Spirit could sustain Jesus under the excruciating pain of being judged for our sins, certainly the ministry of the Spirit can utilize our doctrinal assets to sustain us in any hopeless situation in which we may find ourselves. Paul passed the test of providential preventative suffering (his thorn in the flesh) and has attained new power. “Powerful” in this context becomes a synonym for spiritual autonomy. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:10 Therefore (inferential; for this reason), **I remain content** (εὐδοκέω, PA11S, Customary; capacity for happiness, pleased, delighted) in weaknesses (Loc. Sph.; progressive phases of suffering, inability of the flesh), during insults (Loc. Time; mistreatment), in distress (Loc. Sph.; troubles), during persecutions (Loc. Time) and calamities (Loc. Time; extreme pressures) on behalf of

Christ (Gen. Adv.; as his representative), for (explanatory) when (temporal) I am weak (ἀσθενέω, PASubj.1S, Descriptive, Temporal; dependent on divine resources), then (temporal) I become (εἰμί, PA1S, Descriptive) strong (Pred. Nom.; spiritual autonomy: powerful in the Christian life).

Greek Text

διὸ εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ὑβρεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν διωγμοῖς καὶ στενοχωρίαις, ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ· ὅταν γὰρ ἀσθενῶ, τότε δυνατός εἰμι.

Latin Vulgate

propter quod placeo mihi in infirmitatibus in contumeliis in necessitatibus in persecutionibus in angustiis pro Christo cum enim infirmor tunc potens sum

LWB 2 Cor. 12:11 I have become a fool [by boasting]; you [Corinthians] compelled me. For I should have been commended by you, for in no respect [in absolutely nothing] am I inferior to those extra-special apostles, even if I am a nobody.

KW 2 Cor. 12:11 I have become foolish and am so now [boasting thus]. As for you, you drove me to it. For as for myself, I ought to have been by you commended, which obligation on your part you have not fulfilled. [Had you done so, you would have saved me from boasting], for in not even one particular was I behind the superfine apostles, although I am nothing.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul laments that he has stooped so low as to have become (Intensive Perfect tense) a fool by boasting. He has a good excuse though; the Corinthians themselves compelled him to do it as a last resort (Culminative Aorist tense). They should have (Voluntative Imperfect tense) honored him, as was the custom towards guest speakers in Corinth, but they left him in the lurch to recommend himself by boasting like the false apostles – who ironically were welcomed by the Corinthians with special VIP treatment.

As a rebuke, Paul states unequivocally that he is not inferior to these specially-treated apostles, yet he was not treated in such an honorable fashion. And as an added sarcastic zing, Paul says even a nobody (like himself), some person who was (Descriptive Present tense) worth nothing to anyone, was not inferior to these apostles who are receiving such special treatment. Even a “lowlife nobody” who wanders into town deserves better

treatment from the Corinthians than the false apostles who are out to fleece them! Paul is also being sarcastic by referring to himself, their founding apostle, as a nobody.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is embarrassed to have to reassert his authority over the Corinthians because of their reverse-process reversionism. He says he has become unwise in his approach to their behavior because they have forced him to do so. He ought to have been favorably received by them, since he was their founding apostle, the one who preached the gospel to them and taught them Bible doctrine. But in reverse-process reversionism, they rejected his authority and chased after false teachers. He states that he was inferior to the super-apostles in nothing, but if they think he's a nothing (and he agrees with them that he is a nobody), then he deserves at least the welcome they would give to a complete stranger. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:11 I have become (γίνομαι, Perf.A1S, Intensive, Deponent) a fool (Pred. Nom.); you (Subj. Nom.; Corinthians) compelled (ἀναγκάζω, AAI2P, Culminative; forced, insisted) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.). For (explanatory) I (Subj. Nom.) should (ὀφείλω, Imperf.A1S, Voluntative; ought) have been commended (συνίστημι, PPInf., Customary, Complementary; given approval, honored) by you (Abl. Source; as opposed to my having to recommend myself), for (explanatory) in no respect (Acc. Spec.; in absolutely nothing) am I inferior to (ὕστερέω, AAI1S, Gnostic) those (Adv. Gen. Ref.) extra-special (Descr. Gen.) apostles (Obj. Gen.), even (ascensive) if (subordinate) I am (εἰμί, PAI1S, Descriptive) a nobody (Pred. Nom.; worth nothing).

Greek Text

Γέγονα ἄφρων, ὑμεῖς με ἠναγκάσατε. ἐγὼ γὰρ ὀφείλον ὑφ' ὑμῶν συνίστασθαι· οὐδὲν γὰρ ὑστέρησα τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων εἰ καὶ οὐδὲν εἰμι.

Latin Vulgate

factus sum insipiens vos me coegistis ego enim debui a vobis commendari nihil enim minus fui ab his qui sunt supra modum apostoli tametsi nihil sum

LWB 2 Cor. 12:12 Indeed, the miraculous signs of an apostle were produced among you with absolute patient endurance [evidence of Paul's supergrace life]: miraculous warning signs, and not only these but also wonderous predictions of coming events and powerful miracles.

KW 2 Cor. 12:12 Indeed, the miracles of the apostle, the purpose of which is to furnish credentials of that office, were fully performed among you in all patience, both by means of attesting miracles and miracles of a startling, imposing, amazement-wakening character, and miracles that demonstrate God's power.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In contrast to his last sarcastic statement about being a nobody, he reminds them that when he first came to Corinth, all the miraculous signs that attested to the legitimacy of an apostle were produced (Dramatic Aorist tense) among them. How could they forget? What further credentials did they need from him? What else was required of him to receive treatment as special as that of the false apostles?

As evidence of his relaxed and loving attitude towards them, he reminds them of how he patiently endured their demands for miraculous signs. Sure, the false apostles are maligning his character, and his previous letter was disciplinarian in nature, but don't they remember how he was "in the old days?" And most important to them, God brought warning signs, futuristic predictions, and unbelievably powerful miracles to attest to Paul's apostleship.

Paul uses the Dative of Indirect Object rather than the Accusative of Direct Object to enumerate these miracles. Why? Because they were incidentals used only to prove the legitimacy of his apostolic office. The important thing Paul brought to Corinth, the valuable direct object as opposed to the relatively unimportant indirect objects, was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Word of God had the center stage.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

It is interesting that Paul has not made miracles a major part of his defense up to this point and mentions them now at the end as an additional, almost supplementary, argument meant to remove all final doubt that he is an agent of Christ. (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 12:12 Indeed (emphatic), the miraculous signs (Subj. Nom.) of an apostle (Gen. Attend. Circumstances) were produced (κατεργάζομαι, API3P, Dramatic, Deponent) among you (Loc. Place) with absolute (Dat. Spec.) patient endurance (Instr. Manner; evidence of Paul's state of spiritual maturity): miraculous warning signs (Dat. Ind. Obj.), and (connective) not only these but also (enclitic) wonderous predictions of coming events (Dat. Ind. Obj.) and (connective) powerful miracles (Dat. Ind. Obj.).

Greek Text

τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατειργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ,
σημείοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν.

Latin Vulgate

signa tamen apostoli facta sunt super vos in omni
patientia signis et prodigiis et virtutibus

LWB 2 Cor. 12:13 Why is it, then, that you are worse off, far beyond the other assemblies, if not because I myself was not a financial burden to you? Please forgive me for this injustice.

KW 2 Cor. 12:13 For what is there in which you were treated in an inferior manner to the rest of the assemblies except that, as for myself, I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If you thought Paul was finished being sarcastic, you were wrong. He unleashes a three-barbed indictment on the Corinthians in this verse. He begins with a scathing rhetorical question (paraphrased): “Why are you (Static Present tense) Corinthians in worse shape (Constative Aorist tense) than any of my other congregations?” Ouch! And if that isn’t a strong enough indictment, he adds a that they are worse “far beyond” the others! With all the miraculous signs they were given by God when Paul was there, you’d think they would be his most mature assembly, but Paul all but calls them misfits.

Then Paul launches his barbed conclusion to that question (paraphrased): “it must be because I didn’t ask you for money (Constative Aorist tense) like the false apostles do. If I would have demanded money from you for my teaching and performing miracles, then maybe you would be better off because of it.” The final barb is his sarcastic apology (paraphrased): “please (imperative of Entreaty) forgive me (Futuristic Aorist tense) for not asking you for money. It was not fair (just, equitable) for me to ask the other assemblies for money, and not ask you for money.” Don’t forget, these sarcastic statements are in the Bible for a reason; in some situations, church discipline is both acceptable and necessary.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The reason Paul refrains from accepting support is not that he is inferior to the other so-called apostles, but rather that he is concerned for the success of his mission. (J. Scott)

Paul asks the Corinthians in what way were they treated in an inferior manner. The only way he could see that he treated them in a manner “beyond the rest of the churches” is by not becoming a moocher off them. Then he adds: “Forgive me for not becoming a financial burden on you.” This is an obvious, painful use of sarcasm. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

There was an offense in what he did: He had violated the conventions of reciprocity and benefaction. His handling of money matters was a major sticking point, if not the main one, that was alienating him from his converts. (B. Witherington, III) They insinuated that Paul’s refusal to accept support served only to veil a devious scheme to extract a far greater amount for himself by means of the collection ploy. (C. Kruse)

2 Cor. 12:13 Why (interrogative) is it (εἰμί, PAI3S, Static, Interrogative Ind.), then (subordinate), that (Acc. Gen. Ref.) you are worse off (ἐσσομαι, API2P, Constativ, Deponent), far beyond (Prep., comparative) the other (Acc. Spec.) assemblies (Acc. Dir. Obj.), if (subordinate) not (neg. adv.) because (causal) I myself (Subj. Nom.) was not (neg. adv.) a financial burden (καταναρκάω, AAI1S, Constativ) to you (Gen. Disadv.)? Please forgive (χαρίζομαι, AMImp.2P, Futuristic, Entreaty, Deponent) me (Dat. Adv.) for this (Acc. Spec.) injustice (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

τί γάρ ἐστιν ὃ ἠσώθητε ὑπὲρ τὰς λοιπὰς ἐκκλησίας, εἰ μὴ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ οὐ κατενάρκησα ὑμῶν; χαρίσασθέ μοι τὴν ἀδικίαν ταύτην.

Latin Vulgate

quid est enim quod minus habuistis prae ceteris ecclesiis nisi quod ego ipse non gravavi vos donate mihi hanc iniuriam

LWB 2 Cor. 12:14 Look! This is the third time I have prepared to return face-to-face to you; moreover, I will not be a financial burden. Indeed, I am not seeking financial support from you, but rather you [personally]. For children should not provide financial support for their parents, but rather parents for their children.

KW 2 Cor. 12:14 Look! This is a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you, for I am not seeking your possessions but you. For the children are under no obligation to be accumulating material resources for the parents, but the parents for the children.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In case they didn't hear him the first time, Paul says: "Now here this!" This is the third time Paul has prepared (Iterative Present tense) to return (Ingressive Aorist tense: begun the preliminary plans) to Corinth, but as we know from earlier verses, God had other plans for him. In any case, he promises that when he does return to Corinth, he will not be a financial burden (Predictive Future tense) to them. Rather than follow the standard set by the false apostles, he is going to return with his own money.

In spite of all the biting sarcasm Paul has leveled at the Corinthians, his underlying tone towards them is always one of tenderness. He most definitely (emphatic) is not looking to receive financial support (Customary Present tense) from them, which has been the practice of the false apostles. Instead, he is returning from them personally. He doesn't want their money, he wants their friendship and social life as fellow believers.

As an example of why he doesn't expect financial support from them, he uses a common standard of everyday life. Children should not be supporting their parents financially (Customary Present tense), but rather parents should be supporting their children. Children supporting parents is a disadvantage (Dative Disadv.) to both parties, but parents supporting their children is an advantage (Dative Adv.) to both parties. The Greek word for financial support is "thesaurizo" meaning a storehouse for goods or a retirement (banking) fund.

When things are backwards, financially irresponsible parents do not provide for their children (deadbeat dads & moms) nor do they set aside ample funds and supplies to retire on (we're out spending our inheritance). Then while their children should be setting aside money for their own retirement fund, so they won't be a burden on anyone when they get old and infirm, they are unable to adequately do so because they are having to provide for their unprepared parents. It can become a cumulative, downhill cascade for generations.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul does not mean that children should never do anything for their parents, but that it is natural for parents to bring up a family in the spirit of unselfish giving and not ask financial reward or support. (J. Reid) In the course of nature, it was the parent's office to provide for the children, and not the children for the parent. You must allow me, says Paul, a parent's privilege. (C. Hodge)

Paul could be referring to his third attempt to visit Corinth, having already visited twice. He is "in readiness," waiting for them to get out of reverse-process reversionism. When they do, he will return using his own funds, not theirs. Paul won't take money from

Christians in reverse-process reversionism. As an example of this principle, he reminds the Corinthians that children are not obligated to support their parents. In like manner, pastors and teachers must be givers (parents) and not takers (children) in all facets of their life. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

He advised the Corinthians: “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up (thesaurizon) as he may prosper.” It is the parents who should lay up for their children and not vice versa. (C. Kruse) Who ever heard of children starting a banking account for the benefit of their parents! But how right and proper that parents should lay up for their children, particularly in days when there was no “welfare state.” (R.V.G. Tasker)

It is possible that Paul uses parental language because he is thinking of the patron-client relationship that was set up in the process of Roman adoption. Paul would also be thinking of the Corinthians as Christ’s adoptive sons and daughters, bought by means of Christ’s death. Because they were converted and freed through Paul’s ministry, he can claim to be their parent in a derivative sense. It was also true that a teacher was seen as in loco parentis; thus there may be more than one reason for Paul’s use of this parental imagery. (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 12:14 **Look** (particle; listen, now hear this)! **This** (Subj. Nom.) **is** (ellipsis) **third time** (Acc. Spec.) **I have** (ἔχω, PAI1S, Iterative) **prepared** (adv.) **to return** (ἔρχομαι, AAInf., Ingressive, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb, Deponent) **face-to-face to you** (Prep. Acc.); **moreover** (continuative), **I will not** (neg. adv.) **be a financial burden** (καταναρκάω, FAI1S, Predictive; sponge: soaking up their finances). **Indeed** (emphatic), **I am not** (neg. adv.) **seeking financial support** (ζητέω, PAI1S, Customary) **from you** (Abl. Source), **but rather** (contrast) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.). **For** (explanatory) **children** (Subj. Nom.) **should** (ὀφείλω, PAI3S, Customary; ought) **not** (neg. adv.) **provide financial support** (θησαυρίζω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; storehouse, retirement income, investments) **for their** (Dat. Rel.) **parents** (Dat. Disadv.), **but rather** (contrast) **parents** (Subj. Nom.) **for their** (Dat. Rel.) **children** (Dat. Adv.).

Greek Text

Ἴδου τρίτον τοῦτο ἐτοίμως ἔχω ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ οὐ καταναρκήσω· οὐ γὰρ ζητῶ τὰ ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς. οὐ γὰρ ὀφείλει τὰ τέκνα τοῖς γονεῦσιν θησαυρίζειν ἀλλὰ οἱ γονεῖς τοῖς τέκνοις.

Latin Vulgate

ecce tertio hoc paratus sum venire ad vos et non ero
gravis vobis non enim quaero quae vestra sunt sed vos
nec enim debent filii parentibus thesaurizare sed
parentes filiis

LWB 2 Cor. 12:15 However, I myself will gladly spend freely and be completely spent [exhaust myself] on behalf of your souls, even if while I am functioning with virtue love towards you, I receive less virtue love in return.

KW 2 Cor. 12:15 But as for myself, I will most gladly spend and be wholly spent for the sake of your souls. Assuming for the moment that I love you more abundantly [than I love other assemblies I have founded], am I being loved less [than I am being loved by other assemblies]? [Is that the way you are requiting my love?]

KJV 2 Cor. 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul reiterated a commonly known custom as an example of not expecting support from the Corinthians, but (contrast) as for himself, he is going to go beyond that example. He will be more than happy to spend what he has (Predictive Future tense: continual to teach whomever will listen) for the benefit of their souls. In fact, he will completely spend himself (Predictive Future tense: sacrifice all he has) for them. If he receives little or no appreciation from them in return (Static Present tense), it doesn't matter, because he is going to continue exercising virtue love (Durative Present tense) toward them anyway.

Paul adds the comparative "all the more" to show how their lack of appreciation for him actually spurs him to teach more, knowing that that is the only way they will ever grow to maturity and eventually render thanks to God for his Word and His ministers. Most of us give up or leave when we are unappreciated. And to an even greater degree, if we love somebody and we receive nothing in return for that love, we would eventually take it personally and crawl into our shells for emotional protection. Paul's philosophy is that he will continue to teach them no matter what they do or don't do.

Manuscripts differ as to whether the last letter of "agapan" is legitimate or not. I believe it was legitimate, making the function of virtue love a Temporal Participle, translated "while." By dropping it, the verb ceases to be a participle and becomes a verb in the Indicative Mood; I can't see the logic in this choice.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is going to continue studying and teaching no matter what response he gets from the Corinthians. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) He did not abate in his love for them, notwithstanding their unkindness and ingratitude to him; and therefore was contented and glad to take

pains with them, though the more abundantly he loved them the less he was loved. (M. Henry)

Paul could live with the fact that the Corinthian's recompense of love would be less than his investment of love in them. But he found it intolerable that they charged him and his associates with underhanded self-gratification, when just the opposite was true. (D. Lowery)

Probably it had been insinuated by his traducers that Paul cared less for the Churches at Corinth than for those at Macedonia, because he had maintained his independence and sought no gifts. (J. Exell)

2 Cor. 12:15 However (contrast), I myself (Subj. Nom.) will gladly (superlative) spend freely (δαπανάω, FAILS, Predictive; pay your expenses) and (connective) be completely spent (ἐκδαπανάω, FPIIS, Predictive; sacrifice one's own life, exhaust oneself) on behalf of your (Poss. Gen.) souls (Gen. Adv.), even (comparative; all the more) if (subordinate) while I am functioning with virtue love towards (ἀγαπάω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Temporal) you (Acc. Adv.), I receive less (comparative) virtue love in return (ἀγαπάω, PPIIS, Static).

Greek Text

ἐγὼ δὲ ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν. εἰ περισσοτέρως ὑμᾶς ἀγαπῶ[ν], ἦσσον ἀγαπῶμαι;

Latin Vulgate

ego autem libentissime inpendam et superinpendar ipse pro animabus vestris licet plus vos diligens minus diligar

LWB 2 Cor. 12:16 Although this may be true [that I receive less virtue love than I give], I myself did not financially burden you, nor by being craftily at your disposal did I trap you by deceitful means.

KW 2 Cor. 12:16 But let it be so. [Let the former matter be dismissed]. As for myself, I did not saddle you with a burden. Nevertheless, [you say that] being crafty, I caught you [for my own enrichment from the collection for the poor saints] by means of a tricky bait.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says that even if it is true (Imperative of Concession) that he receives less than he gives to the Corinthians, he can still say without equivocation that he has not burdened them financially (Culminative Aorist tense) even to this day. And apparently answering another maligning of his character, he also denies that he placed himself at their disposal (Customary Present tense) merely as a means (Instrumental Participle) to trick them into giving him money. He was not using treachery or cunning to catch them (Dramatic Aorist tense) in a weak moment and then extort money from them. He knows these terrible things have been said of him, but they know it has never happened.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul says he is going to let their lack of virtue love towards him pass by without comment. He's going to let it ride and is going to continue teaching them even if they don't like him. The Judaizers had accused him of being crafty by trapping the Corinthians in the very beginning, when he first came to Corinth and preached the gospel. He denies this insult, fully intending to continue the ministry he started there. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul says of course you will accuse me of taking you in by deceit by such arguments. I am really cunningly getting you to support me by pretending that I do not want your support, all the while indirectly fleecing you through the funds you will give for the collection! A perennial allegation against Sophists was that they were money-hungry and used deception to fleece people. Isocrates, for example, heaps scorn on the Sophistic practice of claiming to teach virtue while having their fees paid to a third party so that it would look like they were not charging anyone. This same sort of allegation was being made against Paul, and the third party in question was Titus, along with some of Paul's other coworkers. (B. Witherington, III)

2 Cor. 12:16 **Although** (adversative) **this may be** (εἰμί, PAImp.3S, Static, Concession; that Paul receives less virtue love in return), **I myself** (Subj. Nom.) **did not** (neg. adv.) **financially burden** (καταβαρέω, AAI1S, Culminative) **you** (Acc. Disadv.), **nor** (adversative) **by being craftily** (Descr. Nom.; cunning, tricky, villainous; ready to do anything) **at your disposal** (ὑπάρχω, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Instrumental) **did I trap** (λαμβάνω, AAI1S, Dramatic; catch, take hold of, seize) **you** (Acc. Disadv.) **by deceitful means** (Instr. Means; treachery).

Greek Text

ἔστω δέ, ἐγὼ οὐ κατεβάρησα ὑμᾶς· ἀλλὰ ὑπάρχων πανοὔργος δόλω ὑμᾶς ἔλαβον.

Latin Vulgate

sed esto ego vos non gravavi sed cum essem astutus dolo
vos cepi

LWB 2 Cor. 12:17 Concerning those [apostolic messengers] whom I sent face-to-face to you in the past, did I ever take advantage of you through them?

KW 2 Cor. 12:17 Of those whom I have sent to you, there was not one through whom I took advantage of you, was there?

KJV 2 Cor. 12:17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul asks the Corinthians a question, expecting a negative answer. He has sent (Dramatic Perfect tense) various messengers, couriers and other colleagues to Corinth on occasion. He asks them (Interrogative Indicative mood) if on any occasion he cheated them out of money (Culminative Aorist tense) using his messengers as a means of circumventing (Latin: circumveni) his promise not to accept money from them?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul asks: “Did I ever take advantage of you?” No, an offering was never collected for Paul by any of his messengers. If they took an offering at all, it was always for the Jerusalem believers. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:17 Concerning those (Acc. Dir. Obj., anacolouthon: redundant pronoun; apostolic messengers or couriers) whom (Adv. Gen. Ref.) I sent face-to-face to you (Acc. Adv.) in the past (ἀποστέλλω, Perf.AIIS, Dramatic), did I ever (solemn assertion, negative response expected) take advantage of (πλεονεκτέω, AAIIS, Culminative, Interrogative Ind.; cheat) you (Acc. Disadv.) through them (Abl. Means)?

Greek Text

μή τινα ὧν ἀπέσταλκα πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐπλεονέκτησα ὑμᾶς;

Latin Vulgate

numquid per aliquem eorum quos misi ad vos circumveni
vos

LWB 2 Cor. 12:18 I encouraged Titus [to ask for travel expenses] and even sent along with him a brother. Did Titus ever take advantage of you? Have we [Paul and

Titus] not always walked by means of the same Spirit? And not in the same footsteps [following Christ]?

KW 2 Cor. 12:18 I exhorted Titus, and with him I sent the brother. Titus did not take advantage of you in anything, did he? Did we not order our behavior by means of the same Spirit, and in the same footsteps?

KJV 2 Cor. 12:18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul says he encouraged Titus (Constative Aorist tense) to ask for travel expenses, both for himself and for the brother Paul sent along with him (Constative Aorist tense). You will recall that the brother was sent along with Titus to assure the Corinthians that their grace gifts were safe en route to Jerusalem. Paul asks (Interrogative Indicative mood) the rhetorical question as to whether Titus ever took financial advantage (Culminative Aorist tense) of them? No. Then he asks if they haven't always walked (Gnomic Aorist tense) by means of the same Spirit and in the same footsteps? Yes.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul asks the Corinthians if Titus ever took advantage of them. The answer was of course, No. Then by asking whether they walked by means of the same Spirit and in the same footsteps, he essentially wants to know if they didn't operate with the same *modus operandi*? Yes. In other words, Paul did not ask new believers for an offering, which is grace *modus operandi*. Later when they had some doctrine and had grown a bit in the Lord, Titus comes through town and asks them for an offering, and this also was grace *modus operandi*. Both the asking and non-asking were grace actions. They were also both appropos, since the level of maturity had changed from when Paul was there and when Titus later passed through. The request or non-request for an offering was not an issue. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

In questions, "mei" expects the answer "No" and "ou" expects the answer "Yes." So in Titus' case: No. In the other cases: Yes. (C.F.D. Moule) Paul and his messengers walked in the same footsteps. That is, they all followed Christ, Whose steps mark the way in which His followers are to tread. (C. Hodge)

2 Cor. 12:18 **I encouraged** (παρακαλέω, AAI1S, Constative) **Titus** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; to ask for travel expenses) **and even** (ascensive) **sent along with him** (συναποστέλλω, AAI1S, Constative) **a brother** (Acc. Accompaniment). **Did Titus** (Subj. Nom.) **ever** (negative response expected) **take advantage of** (πλεονεκτέω, AAI3S, Culminative, Interrogative Ind.; cheat) **you** (Acc. Disadv.)? **Have we** (Paul and Titus) **not** (neg. adv.)

always walked (περιπατέω, AAI1P, Gnostic, Interrogative Ind.; ordered our behavior) **by means of the same** (Dat. Rel.) **Spirit** (Loc. Sph.; divine modus operandi)? **And not** (neg. adv. with elliptical conj.) **in the same** (Dat. Rel.) **footsteps** (Loc. Sph.; following Christ)?

Greek Text

παρεκάλεσα Τίτον καὶ συναπέστειλα τὸν ἀδελφόν· μήτι ἐπλεονέκτησεν ὑμᾶς Τίτος; οὐ τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι περιεπατήσαμεν; οὐ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἴχνεσιν;

Latin Vulgate

rogavi Titum et misi cum illo fratrem numquid Titus vos circumvenit nonne eodem spiritu ambulavimus nonne hisdem vestigiis

LWB 2 Cor. 12:19 All this time that you thought [presumed] we were defending ourselves to you, instead, beloved, we were communicating all manner of things [doctrinal categories] before God in Christ [as witnesses] for the purpose of strengthening you [building a doctrinal, edification structure in your soul].

KW 2 Cor. 12:19 For a long time you are thinking that it is to you I am presenting my verbal defense. In the sight of God in Christ we are speaking. But all the things, beloved ones, [which we are speaking] are for your upbuilding.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:19 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In case the Corinthians think Paul is about to apologize for all the things he has said in this letter, he sets them straight. All of the occasions where it sounds like he is defending himself and his colleagues, he has a much higher purpose in mind. The Corinthians think (Customary Present tense) Paul has been defending himself (Aoristic Present tense) and his fellow ministers, however, he was really teaching (Aoristic Present tense) them various categories of doctrine that they were sorely lacking.

Was it necessary? Yes. And to ensure that he has their best interests in mind, and not his own agenda, he calls them “beloved.” He also says he was communicating these doctrines to them for the purpose of assisting them (Genitive Aspiration) in building an edification complex or structure in their soul. It is to their advantage to hear this teaching and to build this structure in their soul. Was Paul being sneaky by teaching them in this manner? No. Because he states that their teaching was before God (the Father) in Christ

Jesus. The Spirit in verse 18, along with the Father and the Son in this verse, give Paul all the necessary witnesses (Trinity) he needs to ensure his integrity is intact.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul is saying that he devotes the totality of his work to their spiritual edification. He views their spiritual life as a house or structure that is in the process of being built. They are able to live in that house, but it is far from being completed. Paul the builder continues to advance the work performed on their spiritual dwelling. (S. Kistemaker)

The Corinthians have been thinking subjectively (presumption) all this time. Was Paul in the business of defending himself all this time? Not hardly. On the contrary, he keeps on communicating all things (Bible doctrines) before God for them so they might have building material for their edification complex of the soul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:19 All this time (adj.; all along) that (inferential) you thought (δοκέω, PAI2P, Customary; supposed, presumed in subjectivity) we were defending ourselves (ἀπολογέομαι, PMI1P, Aoristic, Deponent) to you (Dat. Adv.), instead (adversative), beloved (Voc. Address), we were communicating (λαλέω, PAI1P, Aoristic) all manner of things (Acc. Dir. Obj.; doctrinal categories) before God (Prep. Abl.; the Father) in Christ (Loc. Sph.) for the purpose of (purpose) strengthening (Gen. Aspiring; edification: building a structure in your soul) you (Gen. Adv.).

Greek Text

Πάλαι δοκεῖτε ὅτι ὑμῖν ἀπολογούμεθα. κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν· τὰ δὲ πάντα, ἀγαπητοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς.

Latin Vulgate

olim putatis quod excusemus nos apud vos coram Deo in Christo loquimur omnia autem carissimi propter vestram aedificationem

LWB 2 Cor. 12:20 Indeed, I am seriously concerned [leery] that when I return, in some manner I may not find you in such condition [state of mind] as I would like, and I myself may not be found in such condition [state of mind] as you would like; for example: quarreling, jealousy, angry tempers, selfish ambitions, insults, gossiping, arrogance, mob violence,

KW 2 Cor. 12:20 For I fear lest by any means, having come, I will find you such as I desire you not to be, and as for myself, I will be found by you such as you do not desire me to be [indignant to the point of severity at your backsliding], lest by any means there

should be strife, jealousy, outbursts of boiling rage, factions, defamation of character, secret slanders, inflated egos, disorders,

KJV 2 Cor. 12:20 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:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is quite leery (Descriptive Present tense) of returning (Culminative Aorist tense) to Corinth, because there is a good chance (Potential Subjunctive mood) that he will not find them (Culminative Aorist tense) in the state of mind that he would (Potential Indicative mood) like them to be in (Customary Present tense). And if that unfortunate circumstance occurred, likewise he might (Potential Subjunctive mood) not be found (Culminative Aorist tense) in the state of mind that they would (Potential Indicative mood) like (Customary Present tense). Paul uses a lot of verbs with a lot of unknown moods to set his stage. Things could go well or they could be a disaster. In this case, he fears the worst, at least for some Corinthians. He lists some of the terrible things he has been hearing about them, because if they are still living in this condition, he doesn't want to waste time coming to Corinth. They need to clean their act up before he returns.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Very tenderly had he appealed to the Corinthians, and now, having called God, even God in Christ, to witness the depth and sincerity of his love for them, he would entreat them not to drive him to extreme measures. To exercise stern authority gave him no pleasure. (J. Exell) The picture is that of a selfish, proud, arrogant, jealous, unkind, quarrelsome, and disorderly church. In a word, it lacked the mind of Christ and did not even know its lack. (J. Reid) Paul fears some carnally-minded believers may still be spoiling their common life, and may take away much of the happiness of the forthcoming visit both for himself and them. He therefore analyzes the ingredients of this obnoxious poison. (R.V.G. Tasker)

This is a formidable list of evils, and it seems hard to reconcile what is here said with the glowing description of the repentance and obedience of the church found in the preceding part of this epistle, especially in chapter 7. A considerable interval of time elapsed between the writing of the former and latter parts of the letter; and during that interval intelligence had reached the apostle that the evils prevailing in the church had not been so thoroughly corrected as he had hoped. The majority of the congregations were penitent and obedient, while another part were just the opposite. When the apostle had the one class in view he used the language of commendation; when the other, the language of censure. Examples of this kind are abundant in his epistles. (C. Hodge)

When men receive the gospel (doctrine), then, and only then, are they in a position to be "edified." It consists in the building up of the Christian character in the case of

individuals. The resemblance to Christ is what is mainly to be sought. The presentation of truth, the addressing of language of encouragement and promise, of admonition and rebuke – these are emphatically the scriptural methods of edification. What purposes does edification subserve? The welfare, the highest spiritual development and happiness, of those who are edified. The impression thus made upon the world by the presence in the midst of it a Divine temple reared with human souls. The honor and glory of the heavenly Architect Himself. (J. Exell)

Life is too short for Paul to go to Corinth and waste his time trying to teach reversionists. He anticipates a lot of negative volition both towards his doctrine and his person. He won't get any pleasure coming to Corinth if he should find all the negative things he has been hearing about. And he knows it doesn't do any good to treat reversionists sweetly, so he knows his attitude will be different as well. There are some sins that Paul wants to list that he knows is hindering them from getting Bible doctrine: (1) strife and discord, especially between the legalists and the antinomians who are polarized against each other, and who are operating from feelings instead of thoughts, (2) jealousy, (3) emotional outbursts of anger, (4) letting off steam by maligning the teacher, the message, and the students, (5) power lust, (6) gossiping and whispering behind people's backs, (7) fat-headedness, and (8) instability due to lack of authority orientation and insurrection from small groups of rebellious individuals bent on disturbing the peace. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 12:20 Indeed (emphatic), I am seriously (neg. emphasis) concerned (φοβέομαι, PMI1S, Descriptive, Deponent; afraid, leery, cautious) that when I return (ἔρχομαι, AAPtc.NMS, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent) in some manner (indefinite; perhaps) I may not (neg. adv.) find (εὐρίσκω, AASubj.1S, Culminative, Potential) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.) in such condition as (Noncompl. Acc.; state of mind) I would like (θέλω, PAI1S, Customary, Potential Ind.), and I myself (Subj. Nom., inferential) may not (neg. adv.) be found (εὐρίσκω, APSubj.1S, Culminative, Potential) in such condition as (Noncompl. Acc.; state of mind) you (Dat. Disadv.) would like (θέλω, PAI2P, Customary, Potential Ind.); for example (indefinite, Attendant Circumstances; list of social and moral evils): quarreling (Pred. Nom.; rivalry, arguments, party politics), jealousy (Pred. Nom.), angry tempers (Pred. Nom.; outbursts of rage), selfish ambitions (Pred. Nom.; disputes), insults (Pred. Nom.; slanders), gossiping (Pred. Nom.; whispers), arrogance (Pred. Nom.; conceit), mob violence (Pred. Nom.; public disturbances, civic disorder),

Greek Text

φοβοῦμαι γὰρ μή πως ἐλθὼν οὐχ οἴους θέλω εὔρω ὑμᾶς καὶ γὰρ εὔρεθῶ ὑμῖν οἶον οὐ θέλετε· μή πως ἔρις, ζῆλος, θυμοί, ἐριθείαι, καταλαλιάι, ψιθυρισμοί, φυσιώσεις, ἀκαταστασίαι·

Latin Vulgate

timeo enim ne forte cum venero non quales volo inveniam vos et ego inveniar a vobis qualem non vultis ne forte contentiones aemulationes animositates dissensiones detractiones susurrationses inflationes seditiones sint inter vos

LWB 2 Cor. 12:21 And not so my God can embarrass me once again [by having to assert my authority] when I return face-to-face to you, since I might start grieving all over again for many who previously sinned and have not yet changed their minds [no reversion recovery] as concerns improper sexual conduct [promiscuity], both immorality [prostitution] and indecency [incest] which they have practiced.

KW 2 Cor. 12:21 Lest, having come again, my God should humiliate me before you, and I should grieve for many of those who have sinned previously and did not repent of their uncleanness, and fornication, and unbridled passionate craving which they committed.

KJV 2 Cor. 12:21 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Not only does Paul want to avoid rubbing up against the list of sins he just recited, but he is not excited about the prospect (Potential Subjunctive mood) of being humbled again (Culminative Aorist tense) by God, which is sure to happen if things in Corinth are still in a mess. The first time he was there he grieved for many of them and if they have not changed their minds (Constative Aorist tense), he will most likely resume his grieving again (Ingressive Aorist tense). He describes these persons with the Intensive Perfect tense as having sinned in the past with great zeal and he fears their sinning has continued unabated. He fears they have not yet (Temporal Participle) turned from their improper sexual conduct, both prostitution and incest, which they have so dramatically practiced in the past. This would require Paul to exercise his authority again, and he never looks forward to resorting to administering church discipline.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Here Paul faces the possibility of far greater humiliation, that of seeing the results of his labours in Corinth marred by serious moral breakdown. He envisages having to mourn over them again, because of their involvement in prostitution and incest. (C. Kruse) In

this case the vulnerability comes from the antinomian trend of the sin nature. Sexual reversionism is degeneracy through licentious and lascivious behavior. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

The eight sins Paul mentioned are all explainable in the context of church division, as are the three sins of verse 21 in the climate of lax morality which disunity produces. While the legalistic bent of the false apostles might be thought to squash the sins of the flesh listed in verse 21, the sad truth is that legalism and immorality are frequent bedfellows. (D. Lowery) The second repentance here is the repentance of Christians in confessing their sin, and thus it is similar in meaning to “confession.” This is not a renewal to salvation from sin’s penalty, hell, but a salvation from sin’s power. (J. Dillow)

Paul is embarrassed to have to always use his authority. He would much rather they change their minds and correct this abnormal behavior on their own in reversion recovery. The word used to describe their improper sexual conduct is the word used for phallic cult activity, of which Corinth was well known. It included both prostitution as a form of worshipping the gods and certain categories of weird sex, i.e., relatives, children, animals, and the dead. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Here was a company of Christian people recently won over from pagan and pernicious ways and always in danger of relapsing into past habits and vices. (R.P. Martin)

It will not do to utilize “theological exegesis” and simply maintain that because they did not repent, this proves, according to the theory of the saint’s inevitable perseverance in holiness, that they were not Christians. Contextual considerations must determine whether or not these people are regenerate, not a theological system which has declared before looking at the evidence that they cannot be! Paul view them as “beloved” and capable of being “built up.” The word is always applied to Christians when it is used elsewhere in the New Testament. (J. Dillow)

2 Cor. 12:21 and not so (subordinate, result) my (Gen. Rel.) God (Subj. Nom.) can embarrass (ταπεινώω, AASubj.3S, Culminative, Potential; humiliate) me (Acc. Dir. Obj.) once again (adj.) when I return (έρχομαι, AAPtc.GMS, Culminative, Temporal, Deponent) face-to-face to you (Acc. Disadv.), since (ascensive) I might start grieving all over again for (πειθέω, AASubj.1S, Ingressive, Final Clause) many (Acc. Spec.) who sinned previously (προαμαρτάνω, Perf.Aptc.GMP, Intensive, Substantival) and (connective) have not yet (neg. adv.) changed their minds (μετανοέω, AAPtc.GMP, Constative, Temporal; turned from their sins, rebound) as concerns (prep.) improper sexual conduct (Dat. Disadv.; sensual wickedness, promiscuity), both (connective) immorality (Dat. Disadv.; prostitution, infamous “Corinthian whores”) and (connective) indecenty (Dat. Disadv.; incest, weird sex) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) they have practiced (πράσσω, AAI3P, Dramatic; pointing to a relapse).

Greek Text

μη̄̄ πᾱλιν̄ ἐλθόντος μου ταπεινώση με ὁ θεός μου πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ πευθήσω πολλοὺς τῶν προημαρτηκότων καὶ μη̄̄ μετανοησάντων ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ ἀσελγείᾳ ἧ̄ ἔπραξαν.

Latin Vulgate

ne iterum cum venero humiliet me Deus apud vos et lugeam multos ex his qui ante peccaverunt et non egerunt paenitentiam super inmunditia et fornicatione et inpudicitia quam gesserunt

Chapter 13

LWB 2 Cor. 13:1 I had hoped [genuine desire] to return face-to-face to you with reference to this third attempt. On the evidence of two or three witnesses [if you don't believe me, ask Titus, Timothy, and the unknown brother], each attempt may be confirmed.

KW 2 Cor. 13:1 This is a third time I am coming to you. Upon the basis of the mouth of two witnesses or three shall every word be established.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul returns to the opening topic in this epistle of his desire to return to Corinth. He reiterates his desire (Potential Indicative mood) to have returned (Aoristic Present tense) to them on several occasions, but singles out his third attempt here. He has heard rumors that they didn't believe he was serious about coming back. In spite of his fear that some of them are continuing to live a lifestyle of sin, and that he might have to administer discipline again, he still desires to return to Corinth.

If Paul's word isn't good enough for them, then maybe the testimony of two or three others (Titus, Timothy, and the unknown brother) might convince them of his sincerity. If desired, any skeptical Corinthian may confirm (Imperative of Permission) his desire to see them on each and every attempt (Constative Aorist tense) by the verbal testimony of his colleagues when they arrive in Corinth. The concept of two or three witnesses has precedence in Deut. 19:15.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Face-to-face teaching is not always possible, and in the case of the Corinthians, sometimes it is better not to be there! However, because the Corinthians had no right pastor-teacher, because in reversionism they had rejected Timothy, he desires to return so they may learn something from him. If that isn't possible, he hopes Titus will fill in the gap. Two pastors were eventually successful in Corinth (Paul and Titus); a third did not succeed (Timothy). Timothy failed because their subjectivity canceled their ability to be reconciled to him. Reconciliation requires objectivity, and they had none when Timothy was in town. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul has made three attempts to come to Corinth, but he only succeeded once. (ibid) From this it is evident that Paul had already been twice in Corinth. He was about to make his third trip. (C. Hodge)

It has been explained as a reference to examinations which Paul intended to hold on his arrival at Corinth. It is much more probable tht Paul is representing his separate visits as separate attestations to the truths he preaches. (J. Exell) This interpretation is the closest approximation to my own. (LWB) By his reference to "third time" he either means the third time that he had planned to come or that he had been twice. (A.T. Robertson)

So far from overlooking the charges which some of his detractors may still be making against him, he will investigate them on his arrival with judicial thoroughness. The truth or falsehood of each indictment will be established by him in accordance with the law of evidence laid down in Deut. 19:15, a law which Jesus commanded His disciples to follow and with which He Himself complied in Matthew 18:16 and John 8:17. (C. Kruse)

2 Cor. 13:1 **I had hoped to return** (ἔρχομαι, PM1LS, Aoristic, Potential Ind. Expressing Desire, Deponent; proposed, intended) **face-to-face to you** (Acc. Adv.) **with reference to this** (Acc. Gen. Ref.) **third attempt** (Acc. Dir. Obj.). **On the evidence of** (Obj. Gen.; swearing by, verbal testimony) **two** (Gen. Spec.; Titus and Timothy) **or** (connective) **three** (Gen. Spec.; Titus, Timothy, and the unknown brother) **witnesses** (Gen. Oaths; Titus, Timothy), **each** (Nom. Spec.) **attempt** (Subj. Nom.; occasion, event) **may be confirmed** (ἵστημι, APImper.3S, Constative, Permission; verified as to my genuine desire: if you don't believe me, ask them).

Greek Text

Τρίτον τοῦτο ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ τριῶν σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα.

Latin Vulgate

ecce tertio hoc venio ad vos in ore duorum vel trium testium stabit omne verbum

LWB 2 Cor. 13:2 I said it before [in 1st Corinthians] and I am saying it again [in 2nd Corinthians], (as though I had successfully arrived [in Corinth] on the second attempt and have now departed), to those [guilty individuals] who made it a practice to live a lifestyle of sin in the past and are continuing to do so to this day as well as all the rest [struggling, borderline individuals], that if I return again, I will not spare you.

KW 2 Cor. 13:2 I have said previously, and I do say beforehand, as when I was present the second time, so now being absent, to those who sinned heretofore and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare you,

KJV 2 Cor. 13:2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul sounds a little exasperated as he tells them that he mentioned this topic before (Dramatic Perfect tense: in the 1st epistle to the Corinthians) and now he is saying it again (Dramatic Present tense: in the 2nd epistle to the Corinthians). He adds a parenthetical, assuming he had actually made it to Corinth (Concessive Participle) on his second attempt and had since departed (Aoristic Present tense) from Corinth. He issues a warning that if (Potential Indicative) he returns to Corinth (Culminative Aorist tense) on his next opportunity, he will not refrain from administering discipline (Predictive Future tense) where it is needed. He addresses this warning first to those who have been living a life of continual sinning (Iterative Perfect tense: guilty individuals) since he has been gone, and secondarily for the benefit of those who have been struggling to stay out of their former pagan lifestyles but who may be thinking about going back to it (borderline individuals). This is a serious matter for Paul and he hits them square in the eye with it. In other words, he's not playing games or making idle threats. In our modern vernacular, he will return to Corinth "kicking butt and taking names."

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Paul tells them "I told you so" in 1st Corinthians and now (in 2nd Corinthians) I'm telling you again just like I was there with you in person. By this statement he is saying his letters carry the same weight as if he was with them face-to-face. He addresses first those spiritual morons who are living in continuous sin, in a constant state of reversionism; then he addresses all the rest who are jumping back-and-forth from their former lifestyle into their new lifestyle and vice versa. Apparently that covers just about everybody in Corinth. In effect, he says: "So you think I'm a mouse?" Well, because of the Bible doctrine in his soul, Paul is going to be brutally honest with them. "If I come back, I will not spare any of you." (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Paul uses the perfect tense which locates the warning in the past while underlining its continuing applicability down to the present. (C. Kruse)

2 Cor. 13:2 I said it before (προεἶπον, Perf.A11S, Dramatic; in 1st Corinthians) and (connective) I am saying it again (προλέγω, PA11S, Dramatic; in 2nd Corinthians), (as though (subordinate, comparative) I had successfully arrived on (παρεῖμι, PAPtc.NMS, Aoristic, Concessive; was present in Corinth) the second attempt (Acc. Gen. Ref.) and (continuative) have now (temporal) departed (ἄπειμι, PAPtc.NMS, Aoristic, Concessive)), to those (Dat. Disadv.; guilty individuals) who made it a practice to live a lifestyle of sin in the past and are continuing to do so to this day (προαμαρτάνω, Perf.Aptc.DMP, Iterative, Substantial) as well as (adjunctive) all (Dat. Measure) the rest (Dat. Adv.; struggling, borderline individuals), that (coordinate, subjective introduction) if (protasis, 3rd class condition, "maybe I will, maybe I won't") I return (ἔρχομαι, AASubj.1S, Culminative, Potential, Deponent) again (temporal), I will not (neg. adv.) spare (φείδομαι, FM11S, Predictive, Deponent; refrain from disciplining) you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

προεἶρηκα καὶ προλέγω, ὡς παρῶν τὸ δεύτερον καὶ ἀπὼν νῦν, τοῖς προημαρτηκόσιν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν, ὅτι ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν οὐ φείσομαι,

Latin Vulgate

praedixi et praedico ut praesens bis et nunc absens his qui ante peccaverunt et ceteris omnibus quoniam si venero iterum non parcam

LWB 2 Cor. 13:3 Since you are continually seeking proof [miraculous evidence] that Christ speaks in me, (Who is not weak [like Paul] towards you, but is powerful among you,

KW 2 Cor. 13:3 Since you are seeking proof that Christ speaks in me, He who is not weak in relation to you [as you think me to be], but is powerful in your midst,

KJV 2 Cor. 13:3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Corinthians are continually demanding (Iterative Present tense) that Paul provide evidence that Jesus Christ indeed speaks (Dramatic Present tense) in and through him. We're back to their emotional search for miracles and wonders again. Rather than looking to Paul, a mere man, for signs and wonders, they should be concentrating on Christ Who is not weak (Descriptive Present tense) like mortals, but is powerful (Descriptive Present tense) among them. In other words, it isn't Paul that is performing miracles, it is the power of Christ among them. They are focusing on the messenger of the Lord rather than the Lord Himself.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Corinthians are constantly searching, seeking with a critical spirit, for observable proof (evidence) rather than the Bible doctrine communicated through Paul. Both are testimonies that Christ speaks through Paul. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Christ, as opposed to Paul, is not deficient of strength, but is powerful. While on earth, Jesus Christ in His humanity relied on the Bible doctrine in His soul. The Corinthians are supposed to be relying on the Bible doctrine in their soul (through the GAP process) just like Jesus did, but they aren't. Once they get with divine protocol and resume their intake of doctrine, He will again be powerful among them all. (ibid)

The apostle will not hesitate to exercise this spiritual authority, if necessary, when he arrives at Corinth, not because he desires to magnify his own importance, but because, in challenging the validity of his apostleship, his detractors are in effect denying that he is a bona fide messenger of Christ. (C. Kruse) He who has thus commissioned me is not weak, but strong, and this paradoxical strength in weakness is mine also. (R. Nicoll)

2 Cor. 13:3 since (subordinate) you are continually seeking (ζητέω, PAI2P, Iterative; demanding) proof (Acc. Dir. Obj.; evidence) that (Adv. Gen. Ref.) Christ (Subj. Gen.) speaks (λαλέω, PAptc.GMS, Dramatic, Modal) in me (Loc. Sph.), (Who (Nom. Appos.) is not (neg. adv.) weak (ἀσθενέω, PAI3S, Descriptive) towards you (Acc. Adv.), but (contrast) is powerful (δυνατέω, PAI3S, Descriptive) among you (Dat. Adv.),

Greek Text

ἐπεὶ δοκιμὴν ζητεῖτε τοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ λαλοῦντος Χριστοῦ, ὃς εἰς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἀσθενεῖ ἀλλὰ δυνατεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν.

Latin Vulgate

an experimentum quaeritis eius qui in me loquitur
Christi qui in vos non infirmatur sed potens est in
vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 13:4 For though He was crucified by reason of weakness [humanity], He nevertheless lives by the power of God [deity]. Indeed, though we are weak in Him [crucified with Him], nevertheless we shall live together with Him [share in His resurrection] by the power of God among you.

KW 2 Cor. 13:4 For though he was crucified in [the] weakness [of His humanity], yet He lives by means of God's power. And as for ourselves, we are weak [in company] with Him [as partaking of frail humanity], but we shall live with respect to you together with Him through God's power.

KJV 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul makes some contrasts and comparisons between the believer and Jesus Christ. Christ was crucified (Dramatic Aorist tense) and experienced both physical and spiritual death (weakness). But He now lives (Durative Present tense) by the power of God. As believers we share in His weakness (Descriptive Present tense: crucified with Christ), but we will live together with Him (Predictive Future tense: share in His resurrection) by the power of God along with the Corinthians.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are several parallels that can be seen by Paul's comparison of weakness and power. There is the weakness of those who put Him on the cross, and the power of Christ Who was put on the cross. There is the weakness of His humanity and the power of His deity. There is His spiritual death on the cross and His spiritual life after the resurrection. In any case, it was the inherent power (omnipotence) of God that resurrected Him from the dead. And the life we live with Him can be the same supergrace life that He lived while on earth. Our weakness is our grace orientation and total dependence on God; our power is His delegated divine omnipotence to the mature believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 Cor. 13:4 For (explanatory) though (adj.) He was crucified (σταυρώω, API3S, Dramatic) by reason of weakness (Abl. Means; physical death), He nevertheless (contrast) lives (ζάω, PAI3S, Durative) by the power (Abl. Means) of God (Poss. Gen.). Indeed (emphatic), though (adj.) we (Subj. Nom.) are weak (ἀσθενέω, PAI1P, Descriptive) in Him (Loc. Sph.), nevertheless (contrast) we shall live (ζάω, FAI1P, Predictive) together with Him (Dat. Accompaniment) by the power (Abl. Means) of God (Poss. Gen.) among you (Acc. Rel.)).

Greek Text

καὶ γὰρ ἐσταυρώθη ἐξ ἀσθενείας, ἀλλὰ ζῆ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ. καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἀσθενοῦμεν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ ζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς.

Latin Vulgate

nam et si crucifixus est ex infirmitate sed vivit ex virtute Dei nam et nos infirmi sumus in illo sed vivemus cum eo ex virtute Dei in vobis

LWB 2 Cor. 13:5 Keep on examining yourselves as to whether you are in the sphere of doctrine [living daily by the Word of God]. Keep on confirming yourselves [honest evaluation of your spiritual status]. Don't you yourselves [each and every one of you individually] yet thoroughly understand that Jesus Christ is in you [indwelling of Christ], unless you are failing to meet the test [out of fellowship]?

KW 2 Cor. 13:5 Be putting yourselves to the test whether you are in the Faith. Be putting yourselves to the test for the purpose of approving yourselves, and finding that you meet the specifications, put your approval upon yourselves. Or, do you yourselves not recognize that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are those who are disapproved?

KJV 2 Cor. 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

“Living together with Him in power” does not happen automatically. There is no guarantee that as a believer you will ever live together with Him in power. You can be saved today and receive the promise of eternal life, but it is quite possible that you will live the rest of your life as a reprobate without ever knowing Him or His power on earth. Paul orders us (Imperative of Command) to examine ourselves every day (Iterative Present tense) as to whether we have been living by the Word of Truth or by the lusts and trends of our sin nature. The Static Present tense means this is a moment-by-moment evaluation. Just because you confessed your sins and studied the Word yesterday does not mean you are in fellowship today.

Paul issues a second order to evaluate our spiritual condition (Imperative of Command), but this time there is an element of proving to ourselves that we are indeed walking by the Spirit and Truth and if not, to get back with the program. The Iterative Present tense is also used here, meaning we are at a minimum to confirm our walk by doctrinal principles at least daily, if not hour-by-hour. This practice never stops. There is never a day when you have finally arrived and no longer need to evaluate yourself and get back on track if you are out of fellowship and therefore outside the sphere of Truth. This

passage has absolutely nothing to do with determining whether you are a Christian or not. It has everything to do with determining whether you are growing spiritually day-by-day.

Because the Corinthians have been involved in so many categories of social and sexual sins, he knows most of them have not been in fellowship and have not been walking by faith in the Word of God. The Greek word “pistis” can be translated as “faith” or “doctrine,” since faith always has an object in mind. There is no such thing as “blind faith” in Christianity. Our faith is in Jesus Christ and His Word, Bible doctrine. Paul asks each and every Corinthian if they truly understand (Dramatic Present tense) that Christ indwells them. This is a spectacular thing in human history; it has never occurred before. Jesus Christ has “come upon” men in the past, but until the Church Age he has never “indwelled” a believer. If the Corinthians fully understood this phenomenal fact, surely they would cease their reversionistic behavior and get with divine protocol.

The use of the temporal particle “yet” (or ascensive “even”) adds sarcasm and disbelief to Paul’s question. In other words, after all he has taught them, don’t they “yet” understand that Christ indwells them? Paul can’t believe how little they seem to comprehend. But wait a minute – there is a qualifier related to the indwelling of Christ. He doesn’t indwell us all every minute of every day. The Static Present tense says that at any given moment we must pass a test, the test of whether we are in fellowship or not. Our sins have to be confessed up to the moment, placing us in fellowship, otherwise Jesus Christ is not indwelling us. The Holy Spirit indwells us permanently, creating a temple for Jesus Christ to dwell in, but Christ is not necessarily dwelling in that temple. By living in sin, we disqualify our temple from habitation, in effect, shutting the door in Christ’s face and preventing Him from entering and dwelling within us.

Once we understand the profound significance of Christ indwelling us when we meet His experiential qualifications, we should begin evaluating our spiritual status at every opportune moment to make sure the door to our temple is open. The confession of our sins should always be “up to date.” Don’t wait until tomorrow to confess a known sin today. By constantly examining ourselves and making the proper corrections, Christ will indwell us with power. And when we walk in His Word, His power will have occasion to express itself in our daily life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This passage is centered on each believer testing himself as to whether he is building an edification complex in the soul or is walking in reversionism. Testing as to whether we are in the faith is the same thing as asking ourselves if we are positive towards Bible doctrine. Lukewarm believers who are not interested in the Word of God on a daily, consistent basis are in one stage or another of reversionism and are not having fellowship with Christ. Paul’s command is to catch yourself before you go too far out of bounds in reversionism. Our approval of our current spiritual status should be “Yes” we are taking in Bible doctrine on a daily basis. If the answer is “Yes” then we know that Jesus Christ is in us and with us and we are growing spiritually. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

If having Christ “in you” refers to salvation, then this passage would seem to lend credence to the idea that we should examine our lives to find out if there are sufficient evidences present to establish to our consciences that we are in fact among the elect. However, it does not mean this. The object of this examination is not to find out if they are Christians but to find out if they are “in the faith.” Why do some assume that being “in the faith” is the same thing as being regenerate? [“This is an unwarranted associative jump.” D.A. Carson] In other uses of this phrase it refers to living according to what we believe. It can also mean “being responsible for something,” or to “live consistently with what you believe,” or to be “sound in the faith,” all of which refer to consistency in the Christian life, not possession of it. Christ “in me” in verse 3 does not refer to salvation but to demonstration of powerful speech and deeds. Similarly, the test they are to perform to find out if Christ is “in them” is not to discover if they are saved but whether or not Christ is manifesting Himself in their words and deeds. Paul, of course, doubts that Christ is in them in this sense. These regenerate people are carnal. Salvation is not in view at all. To “fail the test” is to fail the test that Christ is mighty in them in the sense of mighty words and deeds. This was their charge against Paul in 2 Cor. 13:3, and now he turns it against them. They are only to discern whether or not they are living consistent Christian lives. (J. Dillow)

The Corinthians seek proof of the genuineness of Paul’s apostleship, but Paul tells them to test themselves, to see if they are genuine. It was rhetorically appropriate in a “peroratio” to raise questions in order to force one’s opponent or the audience to come up with some answers of their own. This Paul does, continuing to pursue the agenda of his final argument, which was to put the Corinthians themselves on the defensive. He has become the potential accuser rather than the defendant at the end of the letter. Therefore, he sees it as his job not merely to soften them with an appeal to pity the defendant, the usual defensive move, but rather to rouse them to vigilance about their own spiritual status. (B. Witherington, III)

They had been trying the apostle, seeking proof of Christ speaking in him. He tells them they had better examine themselves and see whether Christ was in them. (C. Hodge) It is they, not he, who should submit to examination. Let them look into their own souls, and they will see that their attitude in this matter is not in keeping with the faith they profess. (C. Kruse) Regrettably, these forceful words have been sadly misconstrued. They have been read by some intgerpreters as thought they were a challenge to the Corinthians to find out whether they were really saved or not! This is unthinkable. After twelve chapters in which Paul takes their Christianity for granted, can he only now be asking them to make sure they are born again? The question answers itself. (Z. Hodges)

Here is no command for the saints today, no admonition to practise continual self-examination and introspection, to see whether they are in the faith, for Christ is in them. Read these words in connection with the context, and the force of this solemn irony will be at once seen; and it will be used no more to vex and perplex God’s dear children, by

taking words which refer to their STATE to upset their STANDING, which is perfect and complete in Christ. (E.W. Bullinger)

2 Cor. 13:5 Keep on examining (πειράζω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; testing, evaluating) yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as to whether (interrogative) you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Static) in the sphere of doctrine (Loc. Sph.; truth, content of faith). Keep on confirming (δοκιμάζω, PAImp.2P, Iterative, Command; proving, discerning) yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.). Don't (neg. adv.) you yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.; each and every one of you individually) yet (temporal, ascensive: "even") thoroughly understand (ἐπιγινώσκω, PAI2P, Dramatic) that (inferential) Jesus Christ (Subj. Nom.) is (ellipsis) in you (Loc. Sph.; indwelling), unless (neg. adv.; except, "if not") you are (εἰμί, PAI2P, Static; point of time: out of fellowship) failing to meet the test (Pred. Nom.; disqualified)?

Greek Text

Ἐαυτοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἑαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε· ἢ οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἑαυτοὺς ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν; εἰ μήτι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε.

Latin Vulgate

vosmet ipsos temptate si estis in fide ipsi vos probate an non cognoscitis vos ipsos quia Christus Iesus in vobis est nisi forte reprobi estis

LWB 2 Cor. 13:6 Now I hope that you will come to know that we [Paul and his colleagues] are not reversionists [disqualified from Christ's indwelling].

KW 2 Cor. 13:6 But I hope that you shall come to know that, as for us, we are not disapproved.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As their apostle, Paul hopes (Static Present tense) that the Corinthians know that he and his colleagues are not (Descriptive Present tense) reversionists. He is following God's protocol plan and is passing the test, not failing it. They are continually confessing their sins, staying in fellowship with the Lord, and are walking in Truth. In other words, they are walking the talk, not just talking the talk.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Such a testing of themselves will give them full knowledge that Paul is not reprobate. (A.T. Robertson) Paul is regularly construed as teaching positional justification in verses 5-7: Were they Christians or not? But it more likely concerned practical sanctification: Did they demonstrate that they were in the faith and that Christ was in them by their obeying His will? (D. Lowery)

2 Cor. 13:6 Now (contrast) I hope (ἐλπίζω, PAI1S, Static) that (coordinate) you will come to know (γινώσκω, FMI2P, Deliberative) that (objective opinion) we (Subj. Nom.; Paul and his colleagues) are (εἰμί, PAI1P, Descriptive) not (neg. adv.) reversionists (Pred. Nom.; disqualified, failed the test, reprobates).

Greek Text

ἐλπίζω δὲ ὅτι γινώσεσθε ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμέν ἀδόκιμοι.

Latin Vulgate

spero autem quod cognoscetis quia nos non sumus reprobi

LWB 2 Cor. 13:7 Moreover, we [Paul & colleagues] pray face-to-face to God that you do nothing evil, not so that we may appear approved [having a reputation as good teachers], but so that you may keep on doing the honorable thing, though we ourselves [Paul & colleagues] might become reversionists.

KW 2 Cor. 13:7 Now, we are praying to God that yo do not even one bit of evil, not, as for us, in order that we may appear as approved, but in order that, as for you, you may be doing that which is honorable, but as for us, in order that we may be as those who are disapproved,

KJV 2 Cor. 13:7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

As is their custom for all of their churches, Paul and his colleagues pray (Customary Present tense) before God that the Corinthians produce (Constative Aorist tense) nothing but good things and not evil. Paul adds that the motivation for these prayers isn't centered on himself, hoping to appear to the outside world (Culminative Aorist tense) as respectable and true apostles and teachers, but because it is in the best interests of the Corinthians themselves to make it a habit to produce (Iterative Present tense) only honorable things.

The second idea that Paul introduces is even more important than his own personal reputation. His desire is that the Corinthians keep on walking in the Spirit and living an honorable spiritual life even if he and his colleagues fall into sin and become (Descriptive Present tense) reversionists themselves. In other words, he wants them to follow the message, not the man. It is the Word of God and what it teaches that is of crucial importance, not the possible failures of their apostle or teachers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The life of the communicator is irrelevant and none of your business. The personality and life of a pastor-teacher is not important either. The important thing is to grow in grace and knowledge, avoiding the various stages of reversionism, even if your pastor-teacher does not appear to be doing so. Keep on taking in Bible doctrine consistently, adhering to the message, even if everything and everyone around you is crumbling. Don't let a personality conflict keep you from learning the Word either. You might imagine that your pastor-teacher is in reversionism, but he might all the while have a successfully operating edification complex of the soul. Who loses out in this case? (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

What would it matter if he and his companions had to pass as reprobates, so long as the behavior of his converts was honest. (R.V.G. Tasker)

2 Cor. 13:7 **Moreover** (continuative), **we pray** (εὐχομαι, PMI1P, Customary, Deponent) **face-to-face to God** (Prep. Acc.) **that you** (Subj. Acc.) **do** (ποιέω, AAInf., Constative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; produce) **nothing** (Acc. Dir. Obj.) **evil** (Noncompl. Acc., Disadv.), **not** (neg. adv.) **so that** (Purpose) **we** (Subj. Acc.; as your true apostle and ministers) **may appear** (φαίνω, ASubj.1P, Culminative, Potential; be seen as) **approved** (Pred. Nom.; passing the good apostle and teacher test, respectable), **but** (contrast) **so that** (purpose) **you may keep on doing** (ποιέω, PAsubj.2P, Iterative, Potential; produce) **the honorable** (Compl. Acc.; correct, good) **thing** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **though** (adversative) **we ourselves** (Subj. Nom.; your true apostle and teachers) **might become** (εἶμί, PAsubj.1P, Descriptive, Potential) **reversionists** (Pred. Nom.; disqualified, fail the test).

Greek Text

εὐχόμεθα δὲ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν μὴ ποιῆσαι ὑμᾶς κακὸν μηδέν, οὐχ ἵνα ἡμεῖς δόκιμοι φανώμεν, ἀλλ' ἵνα ὑμεῖς τὸ καλὸν ποιῆτε, ἡμεῖς δὲ ὡς ἀδόκιμοι ὦμεν.

Latin Vulgate

oramus autem Deum ut nihil mali faciatis non ut nos probati pareamus sed ut vos quod bonum est faciatis nos autem ut reprobi simus

LWB 2 Cor. 13:8 For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but rather in support of the truth.

KW 2 Cor. 13:8 For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but for the truth.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul explains in their defense that they are not able to do (Descriptive Present tense) anything against the absolute truth of the Word of God, only things in favor of the truth. The truth stands on its own and never changes regardless of the success or failures of its ministers.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word “aletheia” means truth in its religious, scriptural sense, that revelation which God has made in His Word as the rule of our faith and practice. (C. Hodge) By the truth is meant the gospel. (R.V.G. Tasker) As used by Paul, the word “truth” refers to the gospel message that he preaches. (J. Reid) “Truth” means all that is real in doctrine. (J. Exell) We can hinder and hold down the truth by evil deeds, but in the end the truth wins. (A.T. Robertson) Paul’s concern was that truth should prevail at all costs, even if it involved his exposure as a false apostle and counterfeit Christian. (F.E. Gaebelin)

2 Cor. 13:8 For (explanatory) we are not (neg. adv.) able to do (δύναμαι, PM11P, Descriptive, Deponent; inability, lacking the power) anything (Acc. Dir. Obj.) against the truth (Obj. Gen.), but rather (contrast) in support of the truth (Obj. Gen.).

Greek Text

οὐ γὰρ δυνάμεθα τι κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας.

Latin Vulgate

non enim possumus aliquid adversus veritatem sed pro veritate

LWB 2 Cor. 13:9 For we maintain inner happiness when we experience suffering [which is all the time], but you when you are spiritually strong [which infrequently

occurs]. We also pray from time-to-time for your spiritual maturity [they can't mature spiritually without suffering for blessing].

KW 2 Cor. 13:9 For, as for us, we rejoice when we are weak, but as for you, when you are strong. And for this we also pray, for your spiritual equipment.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul contrasts his spiritual growth with that of the Corinthians in order to explain to them that they must experience *suffering for blessing* in order to grow spiritually. Paul and his colleagues maintain inner happiness (Durative Present tense) when they are in the midst of suffering (Iterative Present tense) that occurs on an intermittent but regular basis. However, the Corinthians are only happy when they are flexing their spiritual muscles (Iterative Present tense), which occurs intermittently, but rarely, due to their continual carnality.

It's easy to be happy when everything is going your way, which is where the Corinthians are in the elementary stage of spiritual growth. But what happens when times get tough? Paul and his colleagues have learned how to apply doctrine to their problems in life and overcome adversity, growing spiritually throughout the process. The Corinthians, however, fall apart and lose their transitory happiness, because they are sorely lacking in both doctrine and the ability to apply doctrine to life.

Knowing that they will never grow without experiencing suffering for blessing, Paul says we make it a habit to pray (Iterative Present tense) for your spiritual maturity, meaning they pray that suffering from God will come to the Corinthians as an opportunity for them to apply the doctrine he has taught them and grow by it. He is not praying that spiritual maturity will miraculously drop down out of heaven and envelope them. He knows this is not divine protocol. So he actually prays that suffering will befall them, so they might progress in the spiritual life. Praying for suffering, as opposed to praying so that the suffering will go away, seems contradictory to common sense. But that is how experiential sanctification works.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The word for “perfection” is also used in metaphors describing the setting of bones that are dislocated and out of joint, like the disjointed Corinthian believers. (F.E. Gaebelein) The perfection of which he speaks, consists in a fit proportion, and sound condition, of all the members. It alludes to good physicians who cure particular diseases in such a way as not in any part to mutilate the body. (J. Calvin)

2 Cor. 13:9 **For** (explanatory) **we maintain inner happiness** (χαίρω, PAI1P, Durative) **when** (temporal) **we** (Subj. Nom.) **experience suffering** (ἀσθενέω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Temporal), **but** (contrast) **you** (Subj. Nom.) **when you are** (εἰμί, PASubj.2P, Iterative, Potential) **spiritually strong** (Pred. Nom.). **We also** (adjunctive) **pray from time-to-time** (εὐχόμαι, PMI1P, Iterative, Deponent) **for your** (Poss. Gen.) **spiritual maturity** (Adv. Acc.; completion).

Greek Text

χαίρομεν γὰρ ὅταν ἡμεῖς ἀσθενῶμεν, ὑμεῖς δὲ δυνατοὶ ᾗτε· τοῦτο καὶ εὐχόμεθα, τὴν ὑμῶν κατάρτισιν.

Latin Vulgate

gaudemus enim quando nos infirmi sumus vos autem potentes estis hoc et oramus vestram consummationem

LWB 2 Cor. 13:10 **For this reason [concern for your spiritual welfare], I am writing while absent, so that when I am present, I will not have to use that opportunity for severity according to the authority which the Lord has given me for the purpose of building up [construction: providing doctrine for the building of an edification complex of the soul] and not tearing down [destruction: administering divine discipline to reversionistic believers].**

KW 2 Cor. 13:10 On this account I am writing these things when I am absent, in order that I may not deal sharply [with you] in accordance with the authority which the Lord gave me for building up and not for casting down.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul is writing (Static Present tense) while absent from Corinth (Temporal Participle) because he is concerned for their spiritual welfare. In this case, his concern is that they are continuing to fall into reversionism and need additional discipline. As their founding apostle, it is his responsibility to provide the correction. He was given this authority (Constative Aorist tense) over the Corinthians by the Lord, but he prefers to use his authority to teach growing believers as opposed to disciplining reprobate believers. He does not want to use the opportunity of his next visit (Futuristic Aorist tense) for discipline if it is possible to correct them by letter and avoid the unpleasant confrontation. If the corrective letter works, then he can relax and enjoy their company when he returns.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The “present-absent” contrast draws the whole last section of the letter together. The Corinthians are being given one last chance to repent while the apostle is still away. When he is present, he will be compelled to use his apostolic authority and deal harshly with any who are still unrepentant in the congregation. (J. Scott)

If the Corinthian believers were genuinely humble, they would benefit from Paul’s authoritative epistle; if they were arrogant, they would be unteachable and would continue toward their own destruction. Humility represents teachability. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Paul writes sharply so he does not have to act sharply. (Plummer)

2 Cor. 13:10 For this (Acc. Spec.) reason (Causal Acc.), I am writing (γράφω, PAI1S, Static) while absent (ἄπειμι, PAPtc.NMS, Static, Temporal), so that (result) when I am present (πάρειμι, PAPtc.NMS, Static, Temporal) I will not (neg. adv.) have to use that opportunity (χράομαι, AMSubj.1S, Futuristic, Potential, Deponent) for severity (adv.; hard-nosed) according to the authority (Adv. Acc.) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) the Lord (Subj. Nom.) has given (δίδωμι, AAI3S, Constative) me (Dat. Adv.) for the purpose of building up (Acc. Purpose; construction: providing doctrine for the building of an edification complex of the soul) and (connective) not (neg. adv.) for tearing down (Acc. Purpose; destruction: administering divine discipline to reversionistic believers).

Greek Text

διὰ τοῦτο ταῦτα ἀπὼν γράφω, ἵνα παρὼν μὴ ἀποτόμως χρήσωμαι κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἣν ὁ κύριος ἔδωκέν μοι εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν.

Latin Vulgate

ideo haec absens scribo ut non praesens durius agam secundum potestatem quam Dominus dedit mihi in aedificationem et non in destructionem

LWB 2 Cor. 13:11 Finally, brethren, be full of inner happiness [attain supergrace status], keep on being motivated to attain spiritual maturity [building an edification complex], keep on being encouraged [by the doctrine resident in your soul], live in harmony [impersonal love] with one another, live in peace [relaxed mental attitude], and the God of virtue love and peace shall be with you.

KW 2 Cor. 13:11 Finally, brethren, be rejoicing. See to it that you are being spiritually equipped and adjusted. Be encouraged. Be of the same mind. Be living at peace. And the God of love and peace shall be with you.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul addresses the Corinthian as brethren to reassure them that he still cares for them. Then he uses a string of Customary Present tenses to summarize what every Christian should be doing who has positive volition towards the Word of God. He uses the Imperative mood either as an Entreaty (please do these things) or as a Command (using God's delegated apostolic authority I command you to do these things). Since he's already written chapters telling them what to do and not to do, and because he calls them "brethren" at the end of this letter, a case can be made that he is asking them nicely (Entreaty) to do these things. The overall tone of the letter, however, is corrective, so a case can also be made that he is summarizing the entire letter in a set of brief commands.

Since the Corinthians are in a spiritual mess, Paul uses the Customary Present tense to tell them to be happy, since that is the *modus vivendi* of growing Christians. He uses the Iterative Present tense to tell them to continue being motivated in the spiritual life, assuming they have had some growth before getting caught up in carnality. The Iterative Present tense also points to this motivation as being continuous, never letting up because you think you have attained the ultimate stage of spiritual maturity. He also uses the Iterative Present tense to tell them to cheer up, and not just today, but every day! He goes back to the Customary Present tense to tell them that it is normal *modus vivendi* for fellow Christians to live in doctrinal harmony. This doesn't mean you have to agree with every single word in Scripture, but the core or foundational doctrines should be acknowledged by all.

Paul closes this exhortation or command by telling the Corinthians to live in peace, which is Customary for believers who are in fellowship. If they are able to do this, and the aforementioned items as well, God will most certainly be with them (Predictive Future tense) in the future, bestowing His virtue love and peace upon them. Each of them can experience this individually and expand it through blessing by association.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The Corinthian church is wracked with dissention among factions, much like the situation of Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16-17. Paul calls the congregation back to harmony, not just for harmony's sake, but unity in the truth as Paul understands it. To do so, the congregation must separate completely from the false apostles. (J. Scott) The Corinthian church was still racked by dissentions and infighting. The lesson is clear:

there is no lasting reconciliation between antagonistic groups, even Christian groups.
(R.P. Martin)

The severe rebukes contained in the preceding chapters are softened down by the parental and apostolic tone assumed in these concluding verses. He addresses them as brethren, members of the family of God and of the body of Christ. (C. Hodge) It is striking that in Paul's forensic letters, such as 2 Corinthians or Galatians, he does not conclude on a convivial note with numerous personal remarks or greetings. Instead, he continues to offer parting shots on some of his major themes right up to the final benediction. (B. Witherington, III)

Paul finishes this epistle with four things: (1) a warning, that he is coming to Corinth again and this time there will be no more loose talk and reckless statements, (2) a wish, that they should do the right things, (3) a hope, that they will go on to maturity, and (4) a blessing in the benediction. (W. Barclay)

We have here the familiar Christian paradox. God's presence produces love and peace, and we must have love and peace in order to have His presence. God gives what He commands. God gives, but we must cherish His gifts. His agency does not supercede ours, but mingles with it and becomes one with it in our consciousness. We work out our own salvation, while God works in us. Our duty is to yield ourselves to the operation of God, and to exert our faculties as though the effect desired were in our own power, and leave to His almighty, mystic, co-operation its own gracious office. (C. Hodge)

In the Word of God, perfection is presented in seven aspects. In this verse, it means spiritual maturity and understanding. (L.S. Chafer) The rendering of the A.V. "farewell" cannot be justified. It is rather rejoice in the grace you have received. (R. Nicoll)

2 Cor. 13:11 **Finally** (adv.; from now on), **brethren** (Voc. Address; brothers), **be full of inner happiness** (χαίρω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; attain supergrace status), **keep on being motivated to attain spiritual maturity** (καταρτίζω, PPImp.2P, Iterative, Command; perfection, completion, building an edification complex), **keep on being encouraged** (παρακαλέω, PPImp.2P, Iterative, Command; cheer up!, be comforted from doctrine resident in your soul), **live in harmony** (φρονέω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; impersonal love, thinking spiritual principles) **with one another** (Acc. Rel.), **live in peace** (εἰρηνεύω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command; impersonal love, relaxed mental attitude, faith-rest), **and** (connective) **the God** (Subj. Nom.) **of virtue love** (Abl. Source) **and** (connective) **peace** (Abl. Source; spiritual prosperity) **shall be** (εἰμί, FMI3S, Predictive) **with you** (Gen. Rel.).

Greek Text

Λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, καταρτίζεσθε, παρακαλείσθε, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε, εἰρηνεύετε, καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

de cetero fratres gaudete perfecti estote exhortamini
idem sapite pacem habete et Deus dilectionis et pacis
erit vobiscum

LWB 2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another of the same kind [fellow believers] with respect [supergrace rapport] with a sacred kiss [handshake, salute].

KW 2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul uses the Imperative mood to either Command or Entreat (please) the Corinthians to greet each other with respect whenever they meet (Futuristic Aorist tense) in the future. He adds a holy kiss to this greeting, but this was an ancient custom which has been replaced today by handshakes or salutes. In other historical settings, greetings were often accompanied by an embrace, a bow or curtsy, or even kneeling when in the presence of royalty. While we should greet people with respect in general, Paul expects us to treat fellow believers in a more special sense - with supergrace rapport, like royal family.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The holy kiss did not go out of use in the Western churches until about the thirteenth century, and is still observed among some eastern sects. (C. Hodge) Since a kiss was the normal form of greeting in that day, and since that is not the normal form of greeting in our Western culture, it follows that this practice need not be carried over to today. In America a handshake is sometimes accompanied by a hug or a pat on the back. (R. Zuck) It is still observed in the Coptic and the Russian churches. It was dropped because of charges made against the Christians by the pagans. (A.T. Robertson)

2 Cor. 13:12 Greet one another of the same kind (Acc. Rel.; fellow believers) **with respect** (ἀσπάζομαι, AMImp.2P, Futuristic, Command, Deponent; courteous greeting, politeness, supergrace rapport) **with a sacred** (Dat. Spec.; holy) **kiss** (Instr. Means; ancient customary greeting: handshake, salute).

Greek Text

ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν ἁγίῳ φιλήματι.

Latin Vulgate

salutate invicem in osculo sancto

LWB 2 Cor. 13:13 All the saints send respectful greetings to you.

KW 2 Cor. 13:13 All the saints send greeting to you.

KJV 2 Cor. 13:13 All the saints salute you. Amen. {The second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.}

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

All the believers that Paul meets on his journeys send courteous greetings (Customary Present tense) to their Corinthian brethren. It could refer either to the Macedonians or to all members of the universal church.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

This presupposes that all believers are members of one universal church, the worldwide family of God. (J. Scott) The communion of saints includes all believers who believe themselves to be one body in Christ. (C. Hodge)

There is a subscription added to verse 13 or 14 in the King James Version which is not decisively supported by the majority of manuscripts. The word “Amen” is also not supported. (B. Metzger)

2 Cor. 13:13 All (Nom. Spec.) the saints (Subj. Nom.; fellow believers) send respectful greetings (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI3P, Customary, Deponent; courteous greeting, politeness) to you (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

Greek Text

ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἅγιοι πάντες.

Latin Vulgate

salutant vos sancti omnes

LWB 2 Cor. 13:14 May grace [provision] from the Lord Jesus Christ and virtue love from God [the Father] and communion from the Holy Spirit be with you all.

KW 2 Cor. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the partnership of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Paul closes with a Trinitarian blessing to all the Corinthian believers. The standard interpretation is Genitive of Possession: the Lord Jesus Christ possesses grace, the Father possesses virtue love, and the Holy Spirit possesses communion. I have somewhat of a problem with this interpretation, because all three share these divine attributes. Some argue for Objective or Subjective Genitives, but I don't agree with this overly simplistic and unnecessary *positional* interpretation.

There is one God and He is the source (Ablative of Source) of all these attributes. On the one hand, I favor the Ablative of Source if it makes sense that each member of the Trinity provides a particular category of blessing to us that the others didn't provide. In other words, the Son provides grace provision, the Father provides virtue love, and the Spirit provides communion.

It is also possible to translate these as Genitive Relationship, meaning we may share in Christ's grace, the Father's love and the Spirit's communion. This last option supports the Source interpretation and opens up the possibility that we may share in a particular divine attribute by way of a special relationship with each member of the Trinity.

A good case can be made for all three translation options. If I knew of a way to express all three options in one over-arching manner, I'd translate Paul's salutation that way. Since all three members of the Trinity indwell us, perhaps there is a unique relationship we may have with each member. It is, of course, just a salutation; but it is a rather unique salutation even for Paul.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Usually Paul closes his letter with a simple formula. Here, however, he employs a much more elaborate benediction that, in parallel structure, lists both the three persons of what we now call the Trinity and their main gifts to the church. He does not address the question of the ontological nature of the three persons of the Trinity; rather, he associates all three persons in the mutual activity of giving gifts to the Corinthians. (J. Scott) Grace, chronologically first in Christian experience, brings the believer to know the love shown by God, and thence to share in the fellowship of Christians brought about and maintained by and in the Holy Spirit. (N. Hillyer)

The entire Christian Godhead is in Paul's mind and is invoked in this memorable way. Divine resources are made available to reinforce the apostle's appeal for unity and amity. (R.P. Martin) Our bodies are indwelt by all three Members of the Trinity. God the Father indwells us for the glorification of His protocol plan which He designed in eternity past for each Church Age believer. God the Holy Spirit indwells us to create a temple for the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah Glory, to be a down-payment of our royal inheritance, and to empower us in the execution of the Father's plan. God the Son indwells us (1) as a sign or badge of the royal family, (2) as a guarantee of the availability of divine power in time, (3) as a guarantee of life after death in the presence of God forever, (4) as the depository of special blessings for time and eternity and as the escrow officer who will deliver these blessings to the believer when he reaches spiritual adulthood and when he appears before the Judgment Seat of Christ, (5) as motivation for continued momentum when facing the three categories of suffering for blessing: providential preventative suffering, momentum testing, and evidence testing, (6) as the basis for assigning highest priority to relationship with God over relationships with people, and to the use of divine power over the exercise of human power, and (7) as the basis for the glorification of Christ, the Shekinah Glory, in the unique life of the Church Age believer. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

This comprehensive benediction closes the epistle. It includes all the benefits of redemption. The love of God to us is due to the grace and work of Christ. That is, the manifestation of that love in the pardon, sanctification and salvation of men, was conditional on the work of Christ. The primary object of the death of Christ was the communication of the Holy Spirit. He redeemed us from the curse of the law that we might receive the promise of the Spirit. (C. Hodge) Paul desires the Corinthians to live in the atmosphere of that saving grace, that they may experience the love of God, and also that fellowship which the Holy Spirit creates among all who have stood beneath the cross. (R.V.G. Tasker)

The distinct personality and the divinity of the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, to each of whom prayer is addressed, is here taken for granted. And therefore this passage is a clear recognition of the doctrine of the Trinity, which is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity. For a Christian is one who seeks and enjoys the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. (C. Hodge) Here the "economic" Trinity is in view, that is, the persons of God in their roles in relationship to believers. Paul implies that since the Godhead works together, surely he and his converts can do likewise, since God has blessed them greatly. (B. Witherington, III)

Ascribing sundry things unto the distinct Persons, it is [virtue] love that he peculiarly assigns to the Father. And the fellowship [communion] of the Spirit is mentioned with the grace [provision] of Christ and the [virtue] love of God, because it is by the Spirit alone that we have fellowship [communion] with Christ through His grace [provision], and with the Father in [virtue] love, although we have also peculiar fellowship with Him. The Lord Christ, the eternal Wisdom of the Father, and Who of God is made unto us wisdom, erects a spiritual house [edification complex of the soul] wherein he makes grace

provision for the entertainment of those guests Whom He so freely invites. His table is set for us with those spiritual fat things [Bible doctrines] of the gospel, which He has prepared for those who heed his invitation [positive volition]. Surely, to eat of this bread [the Word] which He has so graciously prepared, is to hold fellowship with Him; for in what ways or things is there nearer communion than in such? The soul, by grace [provision] through faith in Christ [occupation with Christ], and by means of Him [filling of the Spirit], brought into the bosom of God the Father, into a comfortable persuasion and spiritual perception [gnosis to epignosis] and sense of His [virtue] love, there reposes and rests itself. To have joy of heart in gladness [sharing the happiness of God] is the highest expression of delight in love. (*Communion With God*, J. Owen, 1980, Vol. 2, Banner of Truth Trust) Bracketed words are mine.

2 Cor. 13:14 May (ellipsis) grace (Subj. Nom.; provision) from the Lord Jesus Christ (Abl. Source) and (continuative) virtue love (Subj. Nom.) from God (Abl. Source; the Father) and (continuative) communion (Subj. Nom.; fellowship) from the Holy Spirit (Abl. Source) be (ellipsis) with you (Gen. Rel.) all (Gen. Spec.).

Greek Text

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Latin Vulgate

gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi et caritas Dei et communicatio Sancti Spiritus cum omnibus vobis amen

Resources

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