

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD, WEEK 13

TITLE: MERCY MOTIVATES MINISTRY

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 4:1&2

INTRODUCTION: (1) HOW DO CHRISTIANS EXPERIENCE VICTORY AND TRIUMPH IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLE AND DISCOURAGEMENT?

* HOW DO CHRISTIANS APPROPRIATE GOD'S PROMISED HELP IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS, IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULT AND DISHEARTENING CIRCUMSTANCES?

** WHAT KEEPS US FROM QUITTING AND GIVING UP DURING DIFFICULT DAYS WHEN THERE APPEARS TO BE NO LIGHT AT THE END OF A DARK LONG TUNNEL?

*** HOW DO WE NOT LOSE HEART?

**** WELL, THE PHRASE LOSE HEART IS USED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE N.T. AND GIVES US SOME ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS I HAVE PROPOSED.

(2) FOR EXAMPLE: IN GALATIANS 6:9 IT SAYS: "LET US NOT LOSE HEART IN DOING GOOD, FOR IN DUE TIME WE WILL REAP IF WE DO NOT GROW WEARY."

* NOW THE ANSWER HERE IS THINK ABOUT ETERNAL BLESSING AND ETERNAL REWARD IN CHRIST. WE WILL REAP REWARD IF WE DON'T QUIT, IF WE PERSEVERE BY GOD'S GRACE.

** THEN HEBREWS 12:2&3 SAYS: (QUOTE THEM).

*** NOW THE ANTIDOTE HERE IS TO FOCUS ON CHRIST AS THE FINISH LINE AND TO CONSIDER WHAT HE DID FOR US ON THE CROSS AND THAT HE DIDN'T QUIT.

**** THEN IN LUKE 18:1 JESUS SAID: "NOW HE WAS TELLING THEM A PARABLE TO SHOW THAT AT ALL TIMES THEY OUGHT TO PRAY AND NOT TO LOSE HEART."

(3) NOW IN THIS TEXT THE REMEDY FOR NOT LOSING HEART IS PRAYER. WHEN YOU WANT TO QUIT AND GIVE UP, PRAY, TAKE YOUR BURDENS TO THE LORD AND LEAVE THEM THERE, COMMUNE WITH THE LORD IN PRAYER.

* THEN IN EPHESIANS 3:13 IT SAYS: "THEREFORE I ASK YOU NOT TO LOSE HEART AT MY TRIBULATIONS ON YOUR BEHALF, FOR THEY ARE YOUR GLORY."

** NOW HERE, IN AND THROUGH EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF HIS CHILDREN, GOD WORKS HIS GOODNESS, BLESSING AND GLORY.

*** AND PAUL'S CIRCUMSTANCES AND SUFFERINGS WERE DISHEARTENING TO THE BELIEVER AT EPHESUS, BUT WOULD BE USED FOR THEIR OWN BLESSING AND GLORY, TRUSTING IN GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND HIS HIGHER WAYS.

**** NOW WITH THAT SAID, THERE ARE TWO MORE TEXTS I WANT TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION IN ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS, WHAT CAN KEEP US FROM QUITTING AND GIVING UP DURING DIFFICULT DAYS?

(4) AND BOTH OF THOSE TEXTS ARE FOUND IN II CORINTHIANS 4, THE CHAPTER WE ARE STARTING TODAY.

* AND IN II CORINTHIANS 4:16 PAUL SAID: "THEREFORE WE DO NOT LOSE HEART, BUT THOUGH OUR OUTER MAN IS DECAYING, YET OUR INNER MAN IS BEING RENEWED DAY BY DAY."

** NOW WHILE OUR PHYSICAL BODY IS DECAYING AND GROWING OLDER, THE INNER SELF OF THE BELIEVER CONTINUES TO GROW AND MATURE INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST, AND ULTIMATELY ONE DAY WE WILL BE LIKE CHRIST, WITH AN INCORRUPTIBLE BODY. SO FOCUS ON THE ETERNAL AND NOT THE TEMPORAL IS THE ANSWER HERE.

*** THEN IN OUR TEXT TODAY, IN II CORINTHIANS 4:1 PAUL SAYS: (QUOTE IT).

**** NOW WHAT WAS THE THING THAT KEPT PAUL FROM QUITTING HIS MINISTRY, WHICH WAS VERY DISCOURAGING AT THAT TIME WITH THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH?

(5) THE ANSWER WAS THE MERCY OF GOD IN HIS LIFE IN GOD SAVING HIM.

* IT IS TO SAY: MERCY MOTIVATES MINISTRY, THE MERCIES OF GOD IN OUR LIVES MOTIVATES US TO DO WHAT WE NEED TO DO AND NOT ULTIMATELY QUIT.

** HENCE, ONE OF THE MOST DAUNTING CHALLENGES WHICH FACES TRUE BELIEVERS IS THE CHALLENGE TO KEEP GOING.

*** FOR WHEN TIMES ARE HARD AND ENCOURAGEMENTS ARE FEW, IT CAN BE FATALLY EASY TO GIVE UP THE FIGHT.

**** AND THE MOOD AND ATTITUDE OF DEFEATISM CAN TAKE US UNAWARES.

(6) AND SOMETIMES IT DOES NOT DAWN ON US UNTIL SOME TIME HAS PASSED THAT WE HAVE OPTED OUT OF THE STRUGGLE AND NOW LOOK ON FROM THE

SIDELINES, LEAVING OTHERS TO RUN THE RACE WE ONCE RAN.

* AND THIS HAPPENS SOMETIMES TO PASTORS, WHEN THEY LOSE HEART, GIVE UP, AND ARE NO LONGER SERVING THE LORD IN ANY CAPACITY, WHICH IS FRIGHTENING.

** AND FOR ALL OF US, WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE LOSE HEART? WELL, PAUL, IN OUR TEXT TODAY SAID, HE DID NOT LOSE HEART BECAUSE HE HAD RECEIVED MERCY.

*** AND FOR PAUL, FOCUSING ON THE MERCY OF GOD IN HIS LIFE WAS NOT ONLY A VITAL THEOLOGICAL TRUTH BUT ALSO A VITAL PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE.

**** FOR AS HE WAS INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO WRITE II CORINTHIANS, PAUL FACED THE MOST DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS MINISTRY.

(7) NEVERTHELESS, AS HE FOCUSED ON THE MERCY OF GOD, HE DID NOT QUIT, HE DID NOT GIVE UP HIS MINISTRY, HE DID NOT LOSE HEART.

* THEREFORE I'VE TITLED OUR STUDY TODAY, MERCY MOTIVATES MINISTRY.

** AND UNDER THAT THEME AND TITLE, WE'LL LOOK AT JUST TWO POINTS AS WE BEGIN II CORINTHIANS 4.

*** NO. 1 THE MOTIVATION OF PAUL'S MINISTRY, V. 1; AND NO. 2 THE MANNER OF PAUL'S MINISTRY, V. 2.

**** AND WITH THOSE POINTS TO HANG YOUR THOUGHTS ON, LOOK AT V. 1 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR FIRST POINT, THE MOTIVATION OF PAUL'S MINISTRY.

I. THE MOTIVATION OF PAUL'S MINISTRY, (READ V. 1)

A. NOW THE FIRST WORD IN V. 1, THE WORD "THEREFORE" POINTS US BACK TO PAUL'S DISCUSSION OF THE NEW COVENANT IN CHAPTER 3 VERSES 6 THROUGH VERSE 18 AND ESPECIALLY V. 18.

* AND BELOVED, STRENGTH TO ENDURE DISCOURAGEMENT, GRIEF, SORROW AND HEARTACHE COMES FROM THE UNVEILED LOOK INTO THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST MADE POSSIBLE UNDER THE NEW COVENANT.

** AND WE LOOK INTO THE FACE OF CHRIST IN HIS WORD. AND AS WE LOOK INTO THE WORD OF GOD AND ENGRAFT IT IN OUR LIFE, THE SPIRIT OF GOD TAKES THE WORD OF GOD AND CONFORMS US MORE AND MORE INTO THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF CHRIST.

*** AND SPECIFICALLY AS WE DO THAT, WE ARE SANCTIFIED, WHICH IS THE PROCESS OF BECOMING LIKE

CHRIST. AND THE MORE WE ARE LIKE HIM, THE MORE WE HAVE STRENGTH TO OVERCOME DISCOURAGEMENT AND TRIALS.

**** SO THE WORD THEREFORE TAKES US BACK TO CHAPTER 3 AND THE TRUTHS FROM IT THAT WILL TRANSFORM US, THAT WILL BRING ABOUT SPIRITUAL METAMORPHOSIS.

1. BUT ALSO, THE TRUTH OF CHAPTER 4 DEFINES PAUL'S MINISTRY THAT HE TALKS ABOUT HERE, "THEREFORE, SINCE WE HAVE THIS MINISTRY." NOW WHAT MINISTRY?

* WELL, THE MINISTRY OF THE NEW COVENANT FOR IN CHAPTER 3 VERSE 6, PAUL SAID HE WAS A SERVANT, LIT. A MINISTER OF THE NEW COVENANT.

** AND THAT MINISTRY WAS TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST'S DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION, THAT WE CAN BE FORGIVEN THROUGH REPENTANT FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST ALONE, NOT THROUGH LAW KEEPING, NOT THROUGH CEREMONIES, BUT THROUGH THE ONE WHO FULFILLED THE LAW, KEPT THE LAW AND TO WHOM THE LAW POINTED TO.

*** AND BELOVED, WE USE THE LAW OF GOD FOR PEOPLE TO SEE THEIR SIN AND NEED OF A SAVIOR. AND WE ALL HAVE THAT MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL.

**** HOWEVER, THERE IS NO DOUBT, PAUL HAD A SPECIAL MINISTRY AS AN APOSTLE AND THE WE IN V. 1, SINCE WE HAVE THE MINISTRY, WOULD INCLUDE PAUL'S CO-WORKERS.

2. BUT ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO SERVE AND PROCLAIM AND BE WITNESSES OF THE NEW COVENANT MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL, AND WE ARE TO FULFILL OUR MINISTRY FOR THE LORD USING THE TALENTS AND GIFTS THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE LORD SERVING THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH.

* AND THE MOTIVATION FOR US TO FULFILL THIS MINISTRY, WHICH WAS THE MOTIVATION FOR PAUL AND HIS CO-LABORERS TO FULFILL THEIR MINISTRY WAS, "WE RECEIVED MERCY."

** NOW THE WORD MERCY IN THE GREEK LIT. MEANS BENEFICIAL OR CHARITABLE. AND THE BASIC MEANING IS TO GIVE HELP TO THE AFFLICTED AND TO RESCUE THE HELPLESS. MERCY IS COMPASSION IN ACTION. MERCY IS MEETING A NEED.

*** AND WHEN IT COMES TO GOD'S WORK OF MERCY IN SAVING AN INDIVIDUAL, MERCY IS A GIFT OF GOD.

**** WE WERE DEAD, HELPLESS AND AFFLICTED BECAUSE OF OUR SIN AND GOD SHOWS COMPASSION AND MEETS OUR NEED FOR FORGIVENESS IN CHRIST TO THOSE HE SOVEREIGNLY SAVES.

3. AND IN OUR SALVATION, MERCY SAYS NO HELL WHEREAS GRACE SAYS HEAVEN, AND MERCY FROM GOD BRINGS GOD'S PITY UPON US AND GRACE BRINGS PARDON.

* AND OUR FORGIVENESS IN CHRIST FLOWS OUT OF GOD'S MERCY AND MERCY FLOWS OUT OF GOD'S LOVE. WE HAVE NEED SO GOD'S MERCY ACTS ON OUR BEHALF.

** SO WHEN PAUL TALKS ABOUT MERCY IN V. 1 HERE, IS HE TALKING ABOUT MERCY TO SAVE OR TO SERVE?

*** WELL, I TIMOTHY 1:12-17 ANSWERS THAT QUESTION FOR US WHICH SAYS:

**** V. 12 - **I THANK CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD, WHO HAS STRENGTHENED ME, BECAUSE HE CONSIDERED ME FAITHFUL, PUTTING ME INTO SERVICE,**

v. 13 - EVEN THOUGH I WAS FORMERLY A BLASPHEMER AND A PERSECUTOR AND A VIOLENT AGGRESSOR. YET I WAS SHOWN MERCY BECAUSE I ACTED IGNORANTLY IN UNBELIEF;

v. 14 - AND THE GRACE OF OUR LORD WAS MORE THAN ABUNDANT, WITH THE FAITH AND LOVE WHICH ARE FOUND IN CHRIST JESUS.

v. 15 - IT IS A TRUSTWORTHY STATEMENT, DESERVING FULL ACCEPTANCE, THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS, AMONG WHOM I AM FOREMOST OF ALL.

v. 16 - YET FOR THIS REASON I FOUND MERCY, SO THAT IN ME AS THE FOREMOST, JESUS CHRIST MIGHT DEMONSTRATE HIS PERFECT PATIENCE AS AN EXAMPLE FOR THOSE WHO WOULD BELIEVE IN HIM FOR ETERNAL LIFE.

v. 17 - NOW TO THE KING ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, THE ONLY GOD, BE HONOR AND GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.”

4. NOW FROM THIS TEXT PAUL TALKS ABOUT GOD'S MERCY TWICE. AND PAUL WAS LIVING PROOF THAT GOD COULD SAVE ANY SINNER, NO MATTER HOW GREAT A ONE HE MIGHT BE.

*** AND GOD WAS MERCIFUL IN SAVING PAUL AND GOD WAS MERCIFUL IN PUTTING PAUL INTO MINISTRY.**

**** AND IT STARTS WITH MERCY IN SALVATION AND LEADS TO MERCY FOR THE PRIVILEGE TO SERVE.**

***** AND I SEE THIS BROUGHT FORTH IN EPHESIANS 2:4&5 AND 2:10 (QUOTE THEM).**

****** NOW I ALSO SEE THIS CONNECTION IN TITUS 3:5-8 –
V. 5 – “HE SAVED US, NOT ON THE BASIS OF DEEDS WHICH WE HAVE DONE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY, BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION AND RENEWING BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,**

V. 6 - WHOM HE Poured OUT UPON US RICHLY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR,

V. 7 - SO THAT BEING JUSTIFIED BY HIS GRACE WE WOULD BE MADE HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

V. 8 - THIS IS A TRUSTWORTHY STATEMENT; AND CONCERNING THESE THINGS I WANT YOU TO SPEAK CONFIDENTLY, SO THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED GOD WILL BE CAREFUL TO ENGAGE IN GOOD DEEDS. THESE THINGS ARE GOOD AND PROFITABLE FOR MEN.”

5. NOW MY POINT IS MERCY IN SALVATION MOTIVATES MERCY IN MINISTRY.

*** THE ACTS OF GOD'S MERCY IN OUR LIVES LEADS US TO MINISTRY, TO SERVE. ONE IS THE ROOT, THE OTHER IS THE FRUIT. BUT IT ALL STARTS WITH MERCY AND WE SEE THIS ALSO IN ROMANS 12:1 (QUOTE IT).**

**** NOW LET ME ATTEMPT TO PUT ALL THESE TRUTHS TOGETHER. WHAT IS OUR MOTIVATION FOR MINISTRY, SERVICE AND GOOD WORKS? GOD'S MERCY IN SAVING US. AND THE SAME FOR PAUL. GOD'S MERCY, GOD SAVING HIM AND HAVING MERCY ON HIS SOUL, AS UNDESERVING AS HE WAS, MOTIVATED HIM FOR MINISTRY.**

***** THEREFORE MERCY MOTIVATES PERSEVERANCE. IT STOPS US FROM GIVING UP AND QUITTING WHEN WE ARE DISCOURAGED AND DISTRAUGHT, DID NOT LOSE HEART.**

6. AND THE WORDS "LOSE HEART" HERE IN II CORINTHIANS 4:1, LIT. MEAN TO NOT BECOME DISCOURAGED, TO NOT BE WEARY, TO BE FAINTHEARTED, TO NOT BE DISHEARTENED THROUGH SPIRITUAL WEARINESS.

*** SO WHAT MOTIVATED PAUL TO NOT QUIT IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS, TRIBULATION AND A HEAVY HEART OF DISCOURAGEMENT?**

**** WELL, HE TOOK HIS EYES OFF OF HIS PROBLEMS AND FOCUSED THEM ON THE ONE WHO WAS IN CONTROL OF**

HIS PROBLEMS AND HIS GREAT MERCY IN NOT GIVING HIM WHAT HE DESERVED, BUT GIVING MORE THAN WHAT HE DESERVED, SALVATION.

***** AND GOD'S MERCY LED HIM TO SERVE AND NOT LOSE HEART. IT WAS FOCUS NOT ON HIS DISCOURAGEMENT BUT ON HIS GOD WHO SAVED HIM AND HAD MERCY UPON HIM.**

****** AND ADDITIONALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO V. 16 OF THIS CHAPTER, BY LOOKING AT THE ETERNAL AND NOT FOCUSING ON THE TEMPORARY, LOOKING UNTO JESUS THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH, THAT WAS THE MOTIVATION FOR PAUL'S FAITHFUL MINISTRY AND NOT QUITTING.**

7. BUT MERCY WILL ALSO LEAD TO INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY, WHICH LEADS US TO V. 2 AND OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE MANNER OF PAUL'S MINISTRY. LOOK AT V. 2 PLEASE.

II. THE MANNER OF PAUL'S MINISTRY, (READ V. 2)

A. NOW IN V. 2, PAUL STARTS TO TALK SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THIS MINISTRY THAT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM

THE LORD AND HOW HE DID IN CONTRAST TO HOW HIS ENEMIES DID MINISTRY, THE MANNER OF THEIR MINISTRY.

*** AND WE KNOW THAT BECAUSE OF THE FIRST WORD IN V. 2, THE ADVERSATIVE CONJUNCTION “BUT” OR “RATHER” IN THE NIV.**

**** AND THIS CONJUNCTION COULD BE TRANSLATED ACCORDING TO ONE THEOLOGIAN I STUDIED “ON THE CONTRARY” OR “ON THE OTHER HAND.”**

***** AND THE CONJUNCTION “BUT” OR “RATHER” INDICATES A CONTRAST BETWEEN PAUL AND THE FALSE APOSTLES, THE JUDAIZERS AT CORINTH.**

****** AND THE PHRASE “THINGS HIDDEN BECAUSE OF SHAME” COULD BE THE VERY THINGS THESE FALSE TEACHERS WERE ACCUSING PAUL OF.**

1. BUT IN REALITY THE FALSE TEACHERS WERE ACTING THIS WAY.

*** IT WAS THEY WHO HAD A SECRET LIFE OF SHAME.**

**** AND THE WORD SHAME HERE HAS TO DO WITH DISGRACEFUL, DISHONORABLE DEEDS THAT PRODUCE EMBARRASSMENT AND HUMILIATION.**

***** BUT PAUL IN CONTRAST TO HIS ENEMIES HAS RENOUNCED THESE THINGS, THEY WERE NOT A PART OF THE WAY HE OPERATED IN MINISTRY.**

****** HIS MINISTRY WAS OPEN, THERE WAS THE ABSENCE OF SECRECY OR HIDING THINGS. THERE WAS TOTAL TRANSPARENCY. GOD'S MERCY HAD CHANGED HIM FROM WITHIN AND HIS COMMITMENT WAS TO OPEN MINISTRY, NOT TO BE INVOLVED WITH QUESTIONABLE, DISGRACEFUL AND DISHONORABLE WAYS OF DOING MINISTRY. THERE WAS NO DOUBLE LIFE.**

2. THEN MOVING ON, FURTHER CONTRASTING HIMSELF WITH THE FALSE TEACHERS, PAUL DECLARED THAT HE WAS NOT GUILTY OF WALKING IN CRAFTINESS OR ADULTERATING THE WORD OF GOD.

*** AND FIRST OF ALL THE WORD "CRAFTINESS" REFERS TO CUNNING, DECEPTION AND TRICKERY.**

**** AND THE WORD SIGNIFIES A CUNNING READINESS TO ADOPT ANY TRICKERY OR DEVICE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ENDS WHICH ARE ANYTHING BUT HONORABLE.**

***** AND SOMEONE WHO PRACTICED CRAFTINESS WAS UNSCRUPULOUS, WILLING TO DO ANYTHING TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.**

****** AND THE SAME GREEK WORD FOR CRAFTINESS IS USED IN II CORINTHIANS 11:3 TO TALK ABOUT SATAN AND HOW HE WORKS, IT SAYS: “BUT I AM AFRAID THAT, AS THE SERPENT DECEIVED EVE BY HIS CRAFTINESS, YOUR MINDS WILL BE LED ASTRAY FROM THE SIMPLICITY AND PURITY OF DEVOTION TO CHRIST.”**

3. AND THIS GREEK WORD FOR CRAFTINESS IS ALSO USED IN EPHESIANS 4:14 WHERE IT SAYS: (QUOTE IT).

*** NOW SATAN IS CRAFTY AND FALSE TEACHERS WHO GET THEIR DOCTRINE FROM DEMONS ARE CRAFTY. AND HOW THEY OPERATE TODAY IS THEY PREFER A SUBTLER MORE VEILED APPROACH, ONE MORE APPEALING, PALATABLE AND LESS OFFENSIVE TO UNBELIEVERS.**

**** FALSE TEACHERS DON'T WANT TO OFFEND PEOPLE WITH THE UNVARNISHED TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.**

***** BUT NOT ONLY THAT, THEY “ADULTERATE THE WORD OF GOD.”**

****** AND THE WORD ADULTERATE WAS USED IN SECULAR GREEK FOR ADULTERATING WINE BY WATERING IT DOWN OR CORRUPTING GOLD WITH INFERIOR INGREDIENTS OR CHANGING THE ACCURACY OF SCALES.**

4. AND BASICALLY ADULTERATING THE WORD OF GOD IS WATERING DOWN THE WORD OF GOD.

*** NOT TALKING ABOUT SIN, NOT TALKING ABOUT THE LAW OF GOD WHICH SHOWS US OUR SIN, NOT TALKING ABOUT HELL OR JUDGMENT, NOT TALKING ABOUT ANYTHING THAT OFFENDS.**

**** IT IS TELLING PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR RATHER THAN WHAT THEY NEED TO HEAR. IT IS NOT PREACHING THE WORD IN CONTEXT, IT IS NOT BEING TEXT AND TRUTH DRIVEN.**

***** AND PAUL TALKS ABOUT THIS IN II TIMOTHY 4:2-4 WHERE HE SAID: (QUOTE THEM).**

****** AND BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH, TRUTH IS REMOVED AND THEREFORE YOU HAVE 15 MINUTE SERMONETTES TO CHRISTIANETTES WHO WANT TO HAVE THEIR EARS TICKLED.**

5. BUT PAUL WOULD NOT DO THAT, HE WOULD NOT ADULTERATE THE WORD OF GOD.

*** BUT IN CONTRAST AS WE MOVE ON IN V. 2, "BUT BY THE MANIFESTATION OF TRUTH COMMENDING OURSELVES TO EVERY MAN'S CONSCIENCE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD."**

**** NOW THE PHRASE “MANIFESTATION OF TRUTH” DESCRIBES HOW PAUL PREACHED, HE SET FORTH THE TRUTH PLAINLY, HE CLEARLY REVEALED THE TRUTH, THERE WAS AN OPEN CLEAR DECLARATION OF TRUTH, THE WORD OF GOD. IT IS A DISCLOSURE OF GOD’S WORD – THE TRUTH.**

***** AND BELOVED, BIBLICAL PREACHING IS CLEARLY EXPOSING THE TRUTH OF THE WORD OF GOD IN CONTEXT WITH THE BACKGROUND AND GRAMMAR MADE CLEAR.**

****** IT IS LETTING GOD SPEAK. IT IS TEXT-TRUTH DRIVEN, AS PAUL TOLD TIMOTHY IN I TIMOTHY 4:13, QUOTE IT AND APPLY.**

6. AND THAT’S WHY WE ARE COMMITTED TO EXPOSITORY PREACHING BY GOD’S GRACE HERE AT FAITH BIBLE CHURCH.

*** WE WANT GOD’S WORD TO BE LIFTED UP SO YOU HEAR HIM AND NOT US, WE WANT TO CUT THE SCRIPTURES STRAIT, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF GOD, QUOTE II TIMOTHY 2:15. ALSO QUOTE I CORINTHIANS 2:1-5 IN PAUL’S FIRST INSPIRED LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.**

**** NOW WITH THOSE SCRIPTURES BEFORE US, WHAT WAS PAUL COMMITTED TO? COMMUNICATING THE**

**UNVARNISHED TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD, BY
MANIFESTATION OF THE TRUTH.**

***** AND PAUL'S PLAIN STRAIGHTFORWARD
PROCLAMATION OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL HAD
THE EFFECT IN THE LAST PART OF V. 2 OF COMMENDING
HIM TO EVERY MAN'S CONSCIENCE.**

****** AND PAUL HERE APPEALS TO THE HUMAN
CONSCIENCE. PAUL INVITES EVERYONE TO APPRAISE
THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD AND THE GOSPEL WITH A
CONSCIENCE THAT IS ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD.**

**7. AND IF HIS OPPONENTS WANT TO EXAMINE HIM AND
HIS MINISTRY, LET THEM DO IT WITH CONSCIENCES
ATTUNED TO THE SCRIPTURES IN GOD'S PRESENCE.**

*** IT IS TO SAY, PAUL WAS CONVINCED THAT WHEN
PEOPLE KNOWING THE TRUTH WERE TRUE TO THEIR
CONSCIENCES AT CORINTH, WOULD BE COMPELLED TO
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HIS MINISTRY WAS ONE OF
INTEGRITY AND TRUTH, HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD
PROPERLY.**

**** PAUL ASKS THE CORINTHIANS CHURCH TO EVALUATE
HIS MINISTRY AND PREACHING AMONG THEM AND IF
THEY DID THAT THEIR CONSCIENCES WOULD TELL THEM**

THAT WHAT THEY SAW AND HEARD WAS THE TRUTH, AND HE WOULD BE JUDGED INNOCENT OF THE FALSE CHARGES OF HIS OPPONENTS.

***** AND THEN IN THE LAST PHRASE OF V. 2, PAUL SAYS "IN THE SIGHT OF GOD."**

****** AND PAUL'S POINT HERE IS HE MINISTERS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, WHO IS THE ULTIMATE JUDGE OF TRUTH.**

8. AND PAUL SOUGHT GOD'S APPROVAL, NOT MAN'S, KNOWING THAT HE IS THE ONE TO WHOM EVERY SERVANT OF GOD IS ULTIMATELY ACCOUNTABLE.

*** PAUL WANTED GOD'S APPROVAL, THAT WAS THE BOTTOM LINE TO HIM. SO THERE IS A HIGHER SCRUTINY THAN THAT OF THE HUMAN CONSCIENCE, FOR IT IS TO GOD THAT EVERY SERVANT OF CHRIST IS ETERNALLY ANSWERABLE. AND IN THE SIGHT OF AN ALL-KNOWING, ALL-SEEING GOD WE MUST GIVE AN ACCOUNT.**

IN WRAP UP: (1) I WANT TO RETURN TO THE THEME OF NOT LOSING HEART IN MINISTRY.

*** FOR IF YOU MINISTER TO OTHERS AND SERVE THE LORD, THERE WILL BE TIMES YOU WILL LOSE HEART. WORKING WITH REDEEMED SINNERS IS DIFFICULT AT TIMES.**

**** AND THEN ON TOP OF THAT, SATAN PLANTS TARES AMONG THE WHEAT, SO YOU ALSO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY ARE REDEEMED BUT ARE NOT.**

***** AND THE FACT IS, IT CAN BE VERY UNREWARDING AND DISHEARTENING AT TIMES IF WE FOCUS ONLY ON THE TEMPORAL, THE TEMPORARY.**

****** BUT AS WE FOCUS ON JESUS OUR REDEEMER, AS WE FOCUS ON THE ETERNAL, AS WE FOCUS ON GOD'S MERCY AND OUR SALVATION BY GRACE ALONE, WE CAN BE RENEWED AND REVIVED.**

(2) FOR WE THEN ARE NOT CONTROLLED BY OUR CIRCUMSTANCES AND LIVING UNDER THEM, BUT LIVING ABOVE THEM AND FOCUSING ON THE ONE WHO CONTROLS THEM.

*** AND IN GENERAL, IF YOU ARE DISCOURAGED AND DISTRAUGHT TODAY, TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS, LOOK FULL IN HIS WONDERFUL FACE, AND THE THINGS OF EARTH WILL GROW STRANGELY DIM, IN THE LIGHT OF HIS GLORY AND GRACE.**

**** FOCUS ON HIS SO GREAT SALVATION AND YOUR REDEMPTION AND THAT IT WILL BE WORTH IT WHEN WE SEE JESUS, LIFE'S TRIALS WILL SEEM SO SMALL WHEN WE SEE CHRIST. ONE GLIMPSE OF HIS DEAR FACE, ALL**

**SORROW WILL ERASE, SO BRAVELY RUN THE RACE TILL
WE SEE CHRIST.**

***** BELIEVER, LET THE MERCY OF GOD MOTIVATE YOU
TODAY.**

****** BUT FOR YOU THAT HAVE NOT BEEN FORGIVEN YOUR
SINS THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD, CRY OUT TO HIM
TODAY FOR MERCY.**

**(3) I CLOSE WITH LUKE 18:9-14 (QUOTE IT AND COMMENT
AND PRAY)**

**V. 1 – THEREFORE, SINCE WE HAVE THIS MINISTRY,
AS WE RECEIVED MERCY, WE DO NOT LOSE HEART.**

V. 2 – BUT WE HAVE RENOUNCED THE THINGS

**HIDDEN BECAUSE OF SHAME, NOT WALKING
IN CRAFTINESS OR ADULTERATING THE WORD OF
GOD, BUT BY THE MANIFESTATION OF
TRUTH COMMENDING OURSELVES TO EVERY
MAN'S CONSCIENCE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.**