

2 Corinthians 12:11-13:10

12:11 - I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing.

- The problem was the Corinthians should have been commending Paul, instead of rejecting him as he said in:
 - 2 Corinthians 3:2 – “You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all. You show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”

12:12 - The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

- First, the changed lives (1 Cor. 9)
- Second, Paul’s Christlike life
- Third, “in all patience” – endurance, perseverance against all opposition and difficulties
- Fourth, (Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:4; Romans 15:18-20; 2 Thes. 2:9)
 - Signs, which provide some kind of insight, teaching or instruction
 - Wonders, which are unique occurrences that amaze men
 - Powers, manifestations of divine power
- Fifth, charismatic gifts in himself and others
- Point, these are all mentioned in the passive which indicates Paul was not the one causing them, and was clearly not the one doing them all.

12:13 - For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

- The only thing Paul didn’t do was collect money for himself
- The false-apostles did collect money, but they did not do the above five things

12:14 - Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

12:15 - I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?

- See 6:11-13 and 7:1-4 where Paul cares for the people
- Paul is stern, but with affection
- Paul wants to win them for Christ, not gain finances from them for himself
- Their lack of love to Paul does not diminish Paul’s ministry and love to them

12:16 - But granting that I myself did not burden you, I was crafty, you say, and got the better of you by deceit.

- Accusation is that Paul has not taken money in order to give the appearance of integrity. And, that part of the large Jerusalem offering will end up in Paul’s pocket.

12:17 - Did I take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you?

12:18 - I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?

12:19 - Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved.

- Paul doesn't want the Corinthians to think this letter is about him defending himself before the Corinthians.
- Paul is not defending himself
- Paul will be judged by Jesus, not the Corinthians as in 1 Cor. 4:3
- "Beloved" is used for only the 2nd time in this letter (also 7:1), because Paul is acting out of love for the people.
- It is for "building them up" (as in 10:8 and 13:10)

12:20 - For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish—that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.

- A chance for self-correction

12:21 - I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.

- Paul identifies with the failure of the Corinthians
- He feels their pain and takes it as his personal responsibility

2 Corinthians 13

13:1 - This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

13:2 - I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them—

13:3 - since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

13:4 - For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

13:5 - Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

13:6 - I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

13:7 - But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed.

- If those opposing Paul claim to be in Christ, then their messenger, Paul, must be in Christ, also. This is true because Paul is the one who brought Christ to them.
- It is not a question if Paul is saved, but of those who heard Paul and are now opposing him are saved

13:8 - For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

13:9 - For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.

- If the Truth is being manifest in Corinth then there is no authority needed to manifest itself since there is nothing higher than the Truth.
- But, if Truth is being neglected the authority of the Truth will be needed

13:10 - For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

13:11 - Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

- “Perfected” – mature into the image of Christ
- “Comforted” – is the opening theme of 2 Corinthians beginning in 1:3. It is the admonishing to receive God’s strength, council, guidance, will, etc. in your life for living the Christian life.
- “Same mind” – refers to being unified with the Truth (this does not mean to set aside individual opinion, taste, judgment, etc.). This is group unity around the Truth. This is LOVE.
- “Live in Peace” – this is the result of maturing, trusting God and being unified in the truth (or, the first three)

Being able to “Live in Peace” is the result of:

1. Maturing (perfected)
2. Trusting God (comforted)
3. Unified in the Truth (same mind)

The God of Love (or, the God of “perfected”, “comforted” and “same mind”) is the God of Peace

13:12 - Greet one another with a holy kiss.

13:13 - All the saints greet you.

13:14 - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.