

## I. Review

### A. 2Cor. 13:5-6

- i. Instead of cross-examining him, Paul calls the Corinthians to examine themselves.
- ii. Paul was not telling them to see if they really became Christians!
  1. They did believe the gospel and were baptized (cf. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 18:8)
- iii. Paul is challenging them to examine their conduct!
- iv. The word phrase “TEST YOURSELVES” shows a more serious emphasis than the previous word used “EXAMINE YOURSELVES.”
  1. To test means to prove. And something is proved when it goes through rough testing.
    - A person who tests an ax does, to see whether it is good or not, does not look at it or studies about the properties of iron and steel.
    - He, rather, goes into the woods and tests it there:
      - i. If it cuts well if it did not break, if it did not become dull, then it is a tested and tried ax!
  2. In the same way, if we are to test our faith, it would be best tested in how we live in the world; in how we do good; in how we respond in difficult situations; in how we respond to false teachings; in how we imitate Jesus!
- v. As the result of their self-examination, Paul hoped that they would find that he was not a false apostle and that he has passed the test of being a true follower of Jesus!

## II. Continuation: Final Remarks

### A. 2Cor. 13:7 (ESV), “*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.*”

- i. After the painful visit Paul had, he has been diligently praying for their repentance, especially of the practices mentioned in 12:20-21.
- ii. Paul greatest desire was for their vindication as Christians, not his as an apostle!
  1. In other words, Paul was more concerned that the Corinthians appear as tried and true Christians than for him to appear as a tested and true apostle of Christ.
- iii. Paul’s goal was not to set himself up in a pedestal for all to revere, nor was his goal to maintain his reputation, but his desire was to make others worthy of Christ!
- iv. If the Corinthians do what is right when he returns for a third visit:
  1. Paul would not have any need to display his power or to show that he can be as severe as he is in his letters.
  2. He will maintain his usual “weak” appearance among them, thus giving an appearance to some that he has failed the test of an apostle.
  3. But that’s OK because when he comes, he will deal boldly with those (namely, the false apostles) who continue to oppose truth.

### B. 2Cor. 13:8 (ESV), “*For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.*”

- i. Paul will not tamper with the truth to make things easier for himself or for his converts!
  1. Paul said to the Galatians that if he preached a message that was designed to seek the approval of or to please men, he would not be a servant of Christ.
    - Gal. 1:10 (ESV), “*For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*”
  2. Paul could not and would not adjust the truth to excuse the Corinthians’ sins and errors as many do today.
  3. This verse shows us that anyone who is led by the Spirit, as Paul was, these are those who are controlled by truth, not by what was culturally acceptable or easy.
    - Jesus said in Luke 6:26 (ESV), “*Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.*”
    - False apostles seek the approval of men by adjusting the truth.

- C. 2Cor. 13:9 (ESV), *“For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.”*
- i. The context here seems to be referring to Paul’s weak appearance:
    1. He is saying to the Corinthians that he rather come there in weakness, seeing them strong in the Lord than to come there as a disciplinarian.
    2. In other words, Paul was gladly willing to appear weak if by that weakness his gospel children would become strong and mature in the Lord!
    3. Paul’s aim was to present everyone mature in Christ (Col. 1:28)
  - ii. Paul gives the specific reason for his prayer to God regarding them: Restoration!
    1. The word “restoration” means to return to its original condition.
    2. The Corinthians needed to restore their relationship with Paul, with each other and with Christ.
    3. And seeing that Paul calls them to examine themselves, his hope and prayer is that their self-examination would reclaim their hearts back to him as their gospel father and to Christ, their Lord and Savior.
- D. 2Cor. 13:10 (ESV), *“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.”*
- i. If this epistle accomplishes its purpose, then the Corinthians would have reform themselves and there will be no need for disciplinary actions towards them.
    1. Paul wants to use his apostolic authority to build them up, not to tear them down.
    2. But if he needs to discipline them so that the church may be cleansed, then he will do what he needs to do for the sake of truth!
- E. 2Cor. 13:11a (ESV), *“Finally, brothers, rejoice...”*
- i. The term “rejoice” is sometimes translated as “good bye” or “farewell.”
    1. It is a term used as a greeting or a parting salutation.
- F. 2Cor. 13:11b (ESV), *“... Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.”*
- i. He gives them the “practicals” of restoration:
    1. Comfort one another (have mutual brotherly affection).
      - This comes with fellowship.
    2. Agree with one another (be unified).
      - This comes with humility (Eph. 4:2-3).
    3. Live in peace (work together; be harmonious).
      - This comes with a life that pleases to the Lord (Prov. 16:7).
  - ii. A congregation that aims for restoration is a congregation that emanates the love of God and experiences the peace of God.
- G. 2Cor. 13:12 (ESV), *“Greet one another with a holy kiss.”*
- i. The term “greet” also translates to “embrace”
    1. He tells them to embrace each other with a holy kiss.
    2. The term “holy kiss” denotes a sign of Christian affection and kindness that would also be free of scandal and inappropriate behavior.
- H. 2Cor. 13:13 (ESV), *“All the saints greet you.”*
- i. All saints greet you shows the love other Christians have for their fellow brethren at Corinth.

- I. **2Cor. 13:14 (ESV), “*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*”**
  - i. **May the grace of the Lord that empowers and saves (2Cor. 12:9; Eph. 2:8)...**
  - ii. **May the love of God that authenticates one’s relationship with Jesus (John 13:34-35)...**
  - iii. **And may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit that identifies one’s ownership to God (Romans 8:15)... Be with you all!**