

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Week #24 – Adult Bible Study**  
**Study Notes**

**2 Corinthians 5:11 – 7:4**

**March 25 & 26 2025**

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**Key Themes and Points of Corinthians**

- The Ministry of Reconciliation
- Living in Light of Christ's Love
- Walking by Faith, Not by Sight
- Accountability and the Judgment Seat of Christ
- The Fear (Respect) of the Lord
- Persuasion and Encouragement
- Paul's Confidence and Courage
- The New Creation
- Comfort and Encouragement

**The Preacher's Motive (5: 11-15)**

1. Paul has no intention of boasting about what he has done. If there is to be any boasting, the Corinthians should be doing it for him.
2. Above all his work and trials Paul insists he will be judged by Christ and that Christ's love controls his whole life.
3. What is important is the "heart" which Christ will examine on the day of judgment.
4. If love is to control it must have power. Love has a power of its own which is not to be measured in terms of ordinary strength or force.
5. Having introduced Christ's love Paul cannot but go on to voice what is both its greatest act and his own deepest conviction. Christ died for all.
6. Christ died for all. What does "for" mean?
  - Substitute?
  - Beneficiary?
  - Representative?
7. There is no sense in which we can be said to have commissioned Christ to die for us. He did so out of love.
8. Christ's death requires a deep and abiding response on our part. A response that we can make because Christ not only died but was raised for our sake.
9. Paul started out with a defense of his own position and with personal statements, but he rapidly drew in Christ and his sacrifice, and then the Corinthians.

### **The Preacher's Message (5: 15-21)**

10. This is one of Paul's greatest passages in which, after affirming what Christ means to him (vv. 11-15), he goes on to trace out the nature of ministry.
11. As a Christian, Paul sees everyone from a new angle, and in particular, he sees Christ from this new lens. The old way in which he saw people was "a human way." in Greek kata sarka (according to the flesh)
12. Once "according to the flesh," or the "human way." But now according to the Spirit. Paul's judgments are now controlled by God's Spirit.
13. Reconciliation is the burden of the message of Paul's ministry. Here Paul links up with the major theme of Romans and Galatians.
14. Reconciliation is perhaps an easier term to understand than justification, since unlike the latter it is drawn from ordinary life rather than the legal system. For Paul it is always God who initiates reconciliation
15. For Paul all true peacemaking between human beings entails their peace with God.

### **The Preacher's Life (6: 1-10)**

16. These ten verses are closely linked to 5:16-21 which focuses on the concept of reconciliation through Christ.
17. Verses 4-10 break up roughly into four sections
  - "Through great endurance"
  - "Paul looks inwardly at this motivation"
  - "Putting on the armor of God"
  - "Another set of contrasts"
18. Paul has sketched the ideal of the Christian life as exercised to help others and has claimed to fulfill it.

### **The Preacher's Love for His People (6:11-13; 7:2-4)**

19. Paul now ends the discussion of his ministry which has occupied him since 2:14 and in doing so reaffirms his love for the Corinthians.
20. He is proud of them and expresses that pride to others in chapters 7, 8 and 9. This is the end of Paul's defense of his ministry.

## **Fragment – 2 Corinthians 6: 14 – 7:1**

21. This passage deals with the relation of believers and unbelievers.
22. There is an ongoing debate among scholars if this passage has a place in this letter and question Paul as the author.
23. But putting aside the authorship. What does the passage say to us?
24. Paul is concerned about the new believers remaining halfway in Christianity and halfway in Paganism.
25. He emphasizes the monotheistic nature of Christianity.
26. Paul asks five rhetorical questions to each of which he expects a “no” in answer. He employs five synonyms.
  - Partnership
  - Fellowship
  - Accord
  - Common
  - Agreement
27. In the New Testament believers are regularly termed “sons of God.” Unusual here is the reference to “daughters.” The author appears to stress it deliberately. God loves all, and so does Paul.

## **REFLECTIONS**

1. Paul is making a case to the hearers that the judgment of Christ is nothing that he fears. This has more to do with the judge than with the person being judged. How does the notion of judgment reconcile with the fact that we are saved by grace? If judgment is not tied to salvation, what is it for?
2. Paul was confident of his message because he had thoroughly examined it and thought through it. How might you do the same for the message of Christ that you carry?
3. Love has a power of its own and can bring about miracles. Share a time in your life when love changed a situation for the good.
4. What do you think “for” means in the phrase Christ died “for” us?
5. Talk about the ministry of reconciliation. Have you experienced an act of reconciliation with a friend or family member? How did it come about and how are you nurturing that relationship now? What part did Christ play in our reconciliation with God?

**RESOURCES**

1. Second Corinthians, Interpretation, Ernest Best
2. Second Letter to the Corinthians, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, Roy E. Ciampa and Brian Rosner
3. The Message of 2 Corinthians, The Bible Speaks Today Series, Paul Barnett
4. Feasting on the Word, David Bartlett, Barbara Brown Taylor Editors
5. C.S. Lewis, Paul and the Theology of Suffering
6. Second Corinthians, New Interpreter's Study
7. The Message Translation – Eugene Peterson