

## **II CORINTHIANS: MINISTERING TO BELIEVERS FACING FALSE TEACHERS**

### **I. Paul's Relationship With The Church, 2 Corinthians 1-7**

#### **H. The Solemn Accountability Of Godly Ministries (2 Corinthians 5:11-15)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. False teachers, claiming to be apostles, had entered the Church at Corinth, and they had tried to promote their own views while discrediting the person and message of the Apostle Paul. (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 552)
- B. This was a difficult situation for Paul: his readers were immature believers who had been saved out of corrupt backgrounds in a city known for its vice, so they were easy prey for false teachers, and Paul had to be careful how he handled the situation lest his readers think he was being unjustly defensive and thus discredit himself.
- C. 2 Corinthians chapters 1-7 deal with Paul's relationship with the church, and 2 Corinthians 5:11-15 presents the solemn accountability of godly Christian ministries. We view it for our insight and application:

#### **II. The Solemn Accountability Of Godly Ministries, 2 Corinthians 5:11-15.**

- A. Right after referring in 2 Corinthians 5:10 to the accountability every believer in Christ will give to Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ, Paul expressed awe at "the thought of one day standing before his Savior" to give an account of his life and ministry, and he mentioned that it elicited "fear" (*phobos*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 871) of the Lord in him, 2 Corinthians 5:11a.
- B. We need to translate this fear as "reverence, respect" (Ibid.) and not "terror" due to the instruction of 1 John 4:17-18 that claims if we believers who have eternal salvation security are perfected in our love, we will have confidence in the day of the believers' judgment and not terror, for perfect love casts out terror.
- C. However, Paul's "reverence, respect" for the Lord in view of his accountability to Him in eternity led him and his ministry team to "persuade, appeal to" (*peitho*, Ibid., p. 644-645) men with the truth, 2 Corinthians 5:11b.
- D. This solemn sense of accountability to the Lord Whom Paul revered marked Paul's deep-seated dedication to the ministry of the truth to other people, what is expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:11c-15 (as follows):
  - 1. Paul's ministry team was aware that they were "permanently, passively displayed, manifested" (*pephanerometha*, perfect passive of *phaneroo*, "displayed, manifested," U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 630; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 323, 422) to God, 1 Corinthians 5:11c.
  - 2. Paul also hoped that his ministry team was manifested to the consciences of his readers at Corinth, v. 11d.
  - 3. The apostle added that he was not again trying to commend his ministry team to his readers, but that he was giving them opportunity to support as genuine their motives before Paul's critics as seen in their openness to his readers that they might answer those false teachers and false prophets who took pride in what was seen on the outside rather than in what was unseen in the heart, 2 Corinthians 5:12.
  - 4. Some of the critics of Paul's ministry team had charged the team with being out of their minds, or insane, and Paul responded to this charge by saying that if the charge was true, they were out of their minds for God, 2 Corinthians 5:13a. This was not an actual admission by Paul that his team was insane, but he meant to assert that his team made no apology for what *seemed* to be insanity in them to their critics.
  - 5. On the other hand, if Paul and his ministry team were functioning in their right minds with full sanity, they were doing so for the sake of their readers, 2 Corinthians 5:13b.
  - 6. Regardless how they were viewed, Paul wrote that Christ's love "impelled, urged on" (*sunecho*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 796-797) his team to minister as they did regardless how their critics or sympathizers viewed them, for Paul's team was convinced that One Jesus Christ died for all people, and therefore that all had died, 2 Corinthians 5:14. [Incidentally, this statement is a strong argument for the Unlimited Atonement view that Christ died for all versus some Calvinists who say that Christ died only for the elect!]
  - 7. Christ then died for all men that those who live by faith in Christ should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and was raised again, 2 Corinthians 5:15 NIV.

***Lesson:*** Awareness of their solemn accountability to the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ in eternity after the rapture of the Church, Paul's ministry team transparently appealed to and persuaded people to believe that Christ died for all men because all had died, and that those who believe in Christ should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again in their behalf.

***Application:*** In view of the solemn accounting to Christ that all we believers in Christ will give at His Judgment Seat, may we live as transparently before others as we are to God's view and share Christ's truth to disciple others.