

**THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**  
**2 Corinthians: God's Pattern For Victory Over Severe Ministry Opposition**  
**Part VIII: Focusing On Our Accountability To God And His Truth In Facing Critics**  
**(2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2)**

**I. Introduction**

A. At times, the believer faces a conflict between what he sees God Biblically directing him to think and to do versus what formidably strong critics assert is right. That can be a tough issue to handle!

B. 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2 is Paul's example of how to function in such a conflict, and why (as follows):

**II. Focusing On Our Accountability To God And His Truth In Facing Critics, 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2.**

A. Right after mentioning the judgment seat of Christ before which every believer is to stand one day and give an account of his Christian life and service (2 Corinthians 5:10), Paul added that his ministry team's fear of such accountability drove them to seek to persuade others to heed his teaching, 2 Cor. 5:11a.

B. In deciding to give this truth in accord with their conscience, Paul added that what his team was as to character, God knew, and he hoped it was verified as true in the consciences of his readers, 2 Cor. 5:11b,c.

C. Thus, Paul's team believed what they taught was God's truths as he explained in 2 Corinthians 5:12-6:2:

1. Paul asserted he was not falsely trying to commend himself and his team like he had been charged by his Judaistic detractors, but to give his readers cause to support his ministry team since they operated not by false external credentials typical of their critics, but by true inner, spiritual ones, 2 Cor. 5:12.
2. Paul implied that some critics said his team was acting as insane (2 Cor. 5:13), to which he replied that whether they were insane or not, their actions were for the edification of his Corinthians readers, implying Paul's team was persuaded that what they taught was God's truths, 2 Corinthians 5:13 ESV.
3. Regardless what Paul's critics charged, he held it would make no difference as to his future ministry actions: Christ's love controlled his team with their awareness that Jesus had died for all men, meaning all were spiritually dead, that those who lived by faith in Christ should no longer live for themselves, but instead for Christ, Who died and rose again for them, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.
4. This awareness inevitably drove Paul and his ministry team to live for Christ and not for themselves, and that in turn had led them to adopt a very different view of themselves and their duties than what the worldly, spiritually dead Judaistic critics had of Paul and his team (as follows), 2 Corinthians 5:16-21:
  - a. If anyone believes in Christ so that he is spiritually placed into Him, that believer is a new creation quite apart from the world's perspective: the old has gone and the new has come, 2 Cor. 5:16-17.
  - b. Paul added that since such a new arrangement is from God (2 Cor. 5:18a), and Christ has reconciled the believer to Himself (2 Cor. 5:18b), Christ has in turn given to the believer the ministry of reconciliation that he might reconcile others in the world to God in his ministry, 2 Cor. 5:18c.
  - c. In clarification, Paul claimed God was in Christ in His ministry on the cross reconciling the world to Himself by not counting their trespasses against them, so He has consequently entrusted to the Christian believer the message of the Gospel of God's reconciliation for the world, 2 Cor. 5:19.
  - d. Believers are thus ambassadors for Christ, people who are not of this world as to thinking and orientation, but who represent a heavenly kingdom to come from heaven, people who represent God's truth to the world as outsiders of the world and its way of thinking, 2 Corinthians 5:20a.
  - e. Applying this viewpoint to his actions toward his readers at Corinth, Paul urged them to be reconciled to God on Christ's behalf, to accept his words as coming from God, 2 Corinthians 5:20b.
  - f. After all, for our sake, God had made Christ to be sin for us on the cross, He who had committed no sin, that we might be positionally made the very righteousness of God in Him, 2 Corinthians 5:21.
5. Paul then urged his readers not to have received God's grace in vain so as to favor his critics' dead Judaistic legalism, but to hold as true the truth he taught them, 2 Cor. 6:1-2; B. K. C., N. T., p. 568.

***Lesson:*** *Not only (1) Paul's fear of accountability to God, but also (2) his conviction of the truthfulness of what he taught drove him to heed Christ and teach the truth regardless of his critics' opposition!*

***Application:*** *May we believers offset ungodly opposition to our beliefs and actions by (1) fearing our accountability to the Lord for our life and conduct, and in (2) getting settled on the TRUTHFULNESS of what God has called us to be and to do in ministry for a very needy, lost world! (2 Timothy 3:12-17)*