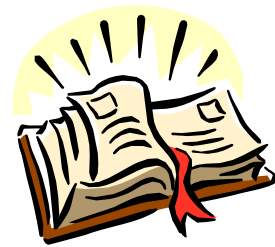


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Salvation In Two Corinthians. (2013)

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Salvation in Two Corinthians.

INTRODUCTION: since the overall and primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in most chapters in Two Corinthians) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and God's grace in Christ.

NOTE: the primary focus of 2 Corinthians is the same as in 1 Corinthians; it is not addressed to those outside of Christ, but to those that are already baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1

The Father of Mercies and God of all Comfort.

2 Cor. 1:2-3 ----- ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.

The title Paul gives to God in these verses is fabulous, "The Father of mercy and comfort (v3) since it clearly shows us two things: -

1. The God of the Bible is not the God of legalism and dogma.
2. If those who confess to believe in God the Fathers Son, the Lord Jesus Christ desire to be great ambassadors for God and for the Lord Jesus Christ they should make it their supreme goal to show mercy and comfort to those in the Kingdom of God and also to those who don't yet know the love and grace of God in Christ.

NOTICE: our relationship to Christ unites us to God the Almighty Father the God of mercy and of comfort. It is His Spirit of pure love flowing through Christ like a crystal clear river with waters of eternal cleansing never stopping until it becomes a lake full of heavenly and spiritual blessings in our hearts.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Paul twice in his greeting says, God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ clearly showing that Paul does not view Jesus as being God, but rather as God's most beloved, perfect and glorified Son. The Bible tells a beautiful story of an Eternal God the creator and source of all life and His relationship to His one and only perfect Son who are not only one in perfect relationship, perfect mind, purpose, goals and plan, but are also one in perfect love and perfect unity. Since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states: -

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim: -

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

For further information see the title: -

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The cost of purchasing the church to God was the sacrifice of His Son and the cost to His Son to save us was his life this should give everyone in the global Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ an idea of how much the Father and the Son love and value them.

All the Promises of God are Yes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 1:20-22 -----²⁰For all the promises of God find their yes in him (Jesus Christ) that is why it is through him that we utter our amen to God for his glory. ²¹And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

All God's promises are yes in Christ means everything God promised in the Old Testament Scriptures to Israel and everything promised in the New Testament to both Jews and Gentiles are all guaranteed in Christ. God's answer to all God's promises, are a constant yes in Christ. This means that God will never deny the faithful who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ any of the promises made to Old Testament Israel and to the New Testament Jews and Gentiles all together in Christ will inherit the coming glorious Kingdom of God and be raised to eternal glory and everlasting life.

The Promise God made to Israel's Fathers.

(Gen. 12:1-3) (Gen. 13:14-17) (Gen. 15:4-7) (Gen. 17:1-8) (Gen. 22:15-18) (Deut. 9:5).

Now the majestic wonder and beauty of God's promise is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul writes that the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law, but through the righteousness of faith that is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all Abrahams offspring—referring to Jews and Gentiles who share the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all as it is written: -

- I have made you (Abraham) the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (creation and the resurrection). In hope Abraham believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be."

Paul tells us that: -

- The twelve tribes of Israel earnestly worshipped night and day hoping to attain to this promise (Acts 26:7). And then gloriously points out that the Scripture does not say, "And to offsprings, referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring who is Christ" (Gal. 3:16).

Some may think the promises made to Abraham was for the Jews only, but Paul magnificently explains in the book of Ephesians that the promises of God have been extended to all nations through being baptised into the Lord Jesus Christ and clearly shows that the promises made to Abraham and to his offspring the Lord Jesus Christ are not limited to the Jews only but embraces whoever will come to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:13) (Rom. 4:16-18) (Gal. 3:16) (Gal. 3:27).

For further information concerning this promise see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel" (at the end of this chapter).

Uttering amen through Christ to God for His glory: before we begin to find an answer to this question let's take a moment to look at the fascinating history and global glory and majesty of the word amen. Amen means, "Verily, firm, so it is, so be it and may it be fulfilled." It is used at the beginning of a discourse to proclaim that what is being said is, surely a truth and when used at the end of a discourse carries the thought of what has been said is certain and asking for it to come to pass and be fulfilled. It was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded by saying, "Amen" and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own.

The word amen is a most remarkable word translated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and into English and many other languages, so that amen is practically a universal word. It has been called the best known word in human speech. Amen is directly related and almost identical to the Hebrew word for believe (aman) and faithful, thus, it came to mean sure and truly and to be an expression of absolute trust and confidence. At the end of a discourse, conversation and dialogue amen means, "So it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." It signifies the end of that discourse or subject, similarly amen at the end of a paragraph tells the reader this is the end of the previous subject and now the story will bring a new subject into focus.

Why believers say amen through Jesus: Paul says, "Yes and no is not in Jesus Christ because in Jesus it is always yes," for the following reason; all the promises of God find their yes in Jesus since God establishes believers in Jesus and has redeemed and saved them through Jesus and put His seal on them because of their faith in Jesus. God has given those who belong to Christ His Spirit and His love in their hearts as a guarantee of salvation and eternal life that is why believers say amen in Jesus name because all of God's promises concerning salvation and eternal life are in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1:19-22).

God has put His Seal on Us and Given Us His Spirit in Our Hearts.

The word, seal in the following verse, "God has put his seal on us and given us his Spirit (the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts in KJV) in our hearts as a guarantee (v22) literally means: -

- To seal up; to close and make fast with a seal, or signet; as on legal documents and letters, etc., so that they may not be read. But it has various applications; it can be used to denote ownership or to distinguish one thing from another, or to show esteem and affection for persons or things. It can be used for security and protection or to hide and conceal something.

All of these different applications can be expressive of the grace of God sealing His people: -

- To distinguish them from the rest of the world.
- To claim them as His own.
- To set His affections on them.
- To secure, protect and keep them for eternal life.

Nevertheless the use of the word seal is not limited to these applications only as it is also used in the sense of setting a seal I (or mark) on anything to certify that it is genuine and authentic, confirmed and approved of as when a deed, will or agreement is sealed not only as proof and evidence that it is authorised and approved of, but also that it is permanent and unchanging. This means when the word sealed is applied to those in Christ it is denoting that they are approved of by God and that the Holy Spirit is given to them to confirm them as belonging to God.

God grants them His Spirit which not only produces in their hearts those feelings, hopes, and desires which are an evidence that they are favoured by God and accepted as His adopted children, but also confirms that their hope is genuine and their redemption and salvation is sure in the same way as a SEAL makes a will, a document or an agreement undisputable, definite and without question guaranteed.

The sealing and earnest pledge of God: God grants His Holy Spirit to those in Christ as the certain pledge that they are His children and will be approved of and saved to eternal life in the last day. This sealing and earnest pledge consists of the ordinary operations of the Spirit on the heart which brings about the following four spiritual changes: -

1. Repentance, faith, hope and joy.
2. The desire to honour God and the name of Christ.
3. The ongoing growth of the fruits of the Spirit (i.e. kindness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness and grace etc.).
4. The same passionate and intimate cry, "Abba! Father!" that Jesus cried when praying to his heavenly Father in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Paul wrote the following glorious words to brothers and sisters in Christ, "You are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!" (Gal. 4:6) (Rom. 8:15) (Mark 14:36). All these are evidences that the Holy Spirit has renewed the heart and that the Christian is sealed for the day of redemption.

2 Corinthians 2.

We are the Aroma of Christ to those who are Being Saved.

2 Cor. 2:14-16 ----- ¹⁴But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

Fragrance: (sweet savour in KJV) means, good-scentedness it carries the idea that a person is a tremendous blessing to whoever they come in contact with (Aroma means the same thing).

God Spirit in Christ leads Paul: Pauls says, it is God in Christ who spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of God through Christ everywhere (v14). Showing that it was God's Spirit working through Christ and through Paul and by extension continues today to flow through all who are in Christ spreading the knowledge of the Lord everywhere. The Spirit of God the Almighty, our heavenly Father is the source of all life and all things, His Spirit is like a pure crystal clear river that cannot be stopped and has no end, it started life, flows through life and brings life, vitality and energy upon whoever dinks of it. God, at Jesus water baptism poured without any limitations His Spirit upon Christ, Jesus then through his life manifested the following: -

- God's miraculous power over all creation.
- God's character, grace mercy and love.
- God's, promises, purposes and plans for the present and the future.
- God's power to resurrect the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory.

In this way God's Spirit was working through Christ, manifesting God to those on earth. Paul is saying that the same Spirit that was working through Christ is working through him to manifest Christ on earth. By extension this principal applies all who testify of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to others. God's Spirit through Paul's faith in Christ was working through him (howbeit with certain limitations (i.e., he did not have power to control the stormy seas, or winds or produce bread and fish from nothing to feed five-thousand etc.,) and in the same way it is God's Spirit (howbeit with even greater limitations) working through the faith of all who are in Christ manifesting the Lord on earth through their speech, character and acts of compassion and kindness to others.

Israel had a false concept of who God was: the Pharisees, scribes and chief priest's saw God as an extremely legal and formal God who only accepted people if they were born into Israel or maintained a high standard of religious and ceremonial rites. Jesus came to manifest the mercy, grace and love of his heavenly Father. Jesus by the love and compassion he showed toward for the poor and the weak, toward those in lowly positions of society and toward those who the Jewish religious leaders, the noble and rich considered unworthy and unclean shone a brilliant floodlight on the love of God.

Being saved: the words being saved do not apply to those who have humbled themselves before God and in honest repentance placed their trust and their lives in the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation, but rather to those who are hearing the Gospel being proclaimed and have a heart that is open to hear it, these are the people the phrase being saved applies to.

The King James Bible leaves no-doubt that eternal salvation in Christ is certain, guaranteed and absolute whereas certain verses of some modern Bibles appear to imply that those in Christ are being saved, but the Gospel of Christ does not proclaim that those who come to Lord in humble repentance and faithfully follow him are only 95% saved and will not be 100% saved until they by their own self-effort they achieve the other 5%.

This is not the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ rather salvation in the Lord is certain, guaranteed and absolute because it is not based on self-effort but on faith and God's grace. It is interesting to notice that the King James Bible is always empathically absolute when it refers to salvation in Christ, whereas the more modern versions leave room for doubt.

The following are some clear examples: -

In the book of Corinthians the English Standard Bible says: -

- The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who *are being saved* it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

The King James says of the same verse: -

- Unto us which *are saved* it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

In a later chapter the English Standard Bible again says: -

- By which you *are being saved* if you hold fast to the word I preached to you. (1 Corinthians 15:2).

Whereas the King James Bible says: -

- By which also ye *are saved* (1 Cor. 15:2).

The English Standard version in the book of Acts says: -

- The Lord added to their number daily those who *were being saved* (Acts 2:47).

The King James Bible says: -

- The Lord added to the church daily as *should be saved* (Acts 2:47).

Since those being saved are being added to the church the expression being saved in this context refers to those who are hearing the Gospel with a right heart attitude and are in the process of being saved and added to the body of Christ.

SUMMARY: The words being saved refers to the unsaved in the process of being saved and not to those who are already saved. Salvation in the King James Bible is always absolute, definite, assured and decided it leaves no room for doubt in believing and trusting in the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. The translation of the King James Bible in regards to eternal salvation and those being saved is in perfect harmony with the Gospel message of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If anyone is still in doubt consider the following two questions: -

1. What can I (a sinner) do by self-effort to pay-back the Almighty and Holy God who so loved me, that he gave his only Son, that if I believe in him I will not perish but have eternal life? (John 3:16).
2. What can I do by self-effort to pay-back Christ who after suffering a brutal, bloody and cruel death laid his life down so that I could be raised to eternal life?

It not only becomes very clear, but also very humbling that there is nothing we can do by self-effort that is able to put us in a position by which we can stand before God or before Christ and say, "I have paid the debt." Salvation in Christ is certain, guaranteed and absolute, the only way anyone is going to be rejected by Christ is for them to firstly reject him, all other things fall under the category of gaining some degree of reward or suffering some measure of loss but regardless of the loss at the judgment seat of Christ in the first resurrection. Those who are in Christ will nevertheless be saved to eternal life as stated in the following Scriptures: -

- If anyone builds on the foundation (the Lord Jesus Christ) with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:10-15).

In regards to eternal salvation the Bible presents the following three groups of people: -

1. Those already saved.
2. Those who are being saved.
3. Those who are perishing (referring to those who want nothing to do with God).

To one a fragrance to death, to the other a fragrance to life: (v16) these words of Paul reveal the power those in Christ have when sharing the message of the cross and the Good News of the Gospel since there are only two responses: -

1. Accept and receive eternal life.
2. Reject and continue on the path to death.

From death to death, or from life to life (v16) mean that those who reject Christ will at the Judgment go from mortal death to eternal death (i.e., cast into the Lake Of Fire a symbol of eternal death and total and utter extinction) while those who accept Christ will go from mortal life to eternal life. This is why Paul states that the Gospel is a fragrance of life to the ones hearing and believing it, but it is a fragrance of death to the ones hearing and rejecting it.

For further information concerning the Lake of Fire, see the title: -

- Lake of Fire in, Death ON WEBSITE MENU.

2 Corinthians 3.

The Letter Kills, but the Spirit gives Life.

2 Cor. 3:1-6 ----- ¹Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? ²You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. ³And 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. ⁴Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as

coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Paul is saying that neither he nor those ministering with him need a religious certificate from the established religious leaders to prove he or they are approved of by God or the Lord Jesus Christ, rather their evidence of approval are those they are ministering to. To share the Good News of the Gospel no-one needs a document from any religious organisation since the fruit of their ministry will evidence whether they are ministering in the letter of the law or the Spirit of grace.

The words, written on our hearts to be known and read by all (v2) means that the love and care Paul and those with him have for those they minister to can be seen by all and the words, "You are a letter from Christ delivered by us" (v3) carries the idea that wherever a brother or sister in Christ go they are a like a living letter to whoever they come in contact with, not only from Christ, but also from the one whose ministry they are sitting under. They are in this way a reflection of Christ and those who minister with him, i.e., the assembly reflects the character and ministry of those they are under.

The words, "Written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (v3) is contrasting the Law of Moses with the Good News of the Gospel of grace. Under the Old Covenant of law, Jews regardless of their heart attitude toward God and toward others outwardly and legalistically followed the ceremonial Law of Moses written in stone by the finger of God. They strictly and meticulously adhered to ceremonial rites, holy Sabbaths, feast days, and painstakingly kept their religious customs and traditions to be counted righteous regardless of what their heart condition was and regardless of their outward behaviour, providing they legalistically did the outward things they believed they were right with God.

Whereas the new covenant of grace sealed in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in contrast brings about an inward change in the heart of every repentant sinner who discovers what it cost God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to save them to eternal life. This radical change of heart changes the inward desires, motivations and ambitions so that those in Christ are in this sense born again in that they do not trust in adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to save them and their heart and mind is filled with a new passion that desires to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The words, the confidence that we have through Christ toward God (v4) refer to the confidence Paul has that the Spirit of God has imprinted on the hearts of the faithful brothers and sisters he ministered to, not with the letter of the law, but by the power of the cross and the Good News of the Gospel of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is shining a spotlight on his confidence that it is the Spirit of God (i.e., love, compassion, grace and mercy etc.,) that changes the human heart and not the legalistic letter of the law.

The Lord Jesus Christ Removes the Veil from the Mind.

2 Cor. 3:14-16 ----- ¹⁴But their minds (Israel's) were hardened. For to this day when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶But when one turns to the Lord the veil is removed.

The glory that shone upon Moses face was destined to end because the law rather than bring life brought condemnation and death. Though our Old Testament fathers were under the law they were not saved by the law (since no-one could attain to it) and therefore it brought condemnation not life. Old Testament Israel though condemned by the law was saved by faith. The faithful of Israel had a joyful expectation and faith in the coming of the promised seed of the woman in (Genesis 3:15), the prophet to come like Moses, the promised seed Abraham and the promised seed David their Messiah the Christ spoken of by the prophets and the Scriptures. Added to this they had a contrite (sorry remorseful and regretful) and repentant heart before God (Psalm 51), but because of the religious rulers legalistic

approach to the law and their hardened hearts (v14) neither they, nor the majority of the population of Israel recognised the promised seed their Messiah the Christ when he did come, and until they do the veil which blinds their minds to the glory of the law of the Spirit and of righteousness in Christ will continue to blind them.

To this Day, when Israel Reads the Old Covenant the Veil remains Unlifted.

The words, to this day when they read the old covenant" (Testament in KJV) that same veil remains unlifted (v14) is still true today. Though the Jewish nation had the most convincing evidence, the most powerful preaching, the clearest call from Christ himself and from his apostles, ever since the first preaching of the Good News of the Gospel of grace multitudes of them have remained even to this day hardened and blinded to the glory of God's grace in Christ by their obstinacy and unbelief from generation to generation.

The Jewish people and Jesus today: though the Jewish nation had the most convincing evidence, the most powerful preaching, the clearest call from Christ himself and from his apostles, ever since the first preaching of the Good News of the Gospel of grace multitudes of them have remained even to this day hardened and blinded to the glory of God's grace in Christ by their obstinacy and unbelief from generation to generation.

In (2011) I attended a public meeting in which an Israeli lecturer who travelled the world speaking for the Jews today and about Israel's land and their history as recorded in the Bible. At the end of her lecture the meeting was opened up to the audience for questions. One lady asked: -

- How do the Jews view Jesus today?

The Jewish speakers' answerer was: -

- Our Messiah has not yet come.

There was a sudden silence over the meeting at this moment, then the same lady obviously a Christian quoted a few Scriptures to show that Israel's Messiah did come, the lecturer was kindly patient, but after a short while turned and picked up a Jewish Bible, held it in the air and said: -

- This is our Bible and there is no New Testament in it."

A man stood up and asked: -

- How do the Jewish people view a Jew who converts to Christianity?

The speakers replied: -

- We would consider that they have left the faith.

As she spoke it was clear that the Jewish people love God and love their Messiah the promised seed of Abraham and David they just haven't recognised him yet (and even this is in God's eternal plan) but it reminded me of the following fabulous and prophetic words of Zechariah: -

- The LORD will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, the land and the priests shall mourn, and all the families that are left each by itself shall morn (Zech. 12:9-14).

When this momentous and beautiful moment takes place the entire world will change as we know it today, and a glorious New Age will begin, one of righteousness, justice, joy and peace because the King of peace will be the Head and Shepherd of all nations.

Only through Christ is the veil removed: the statement: only through Christ is the veil taken away (v14) implies the following three things: -

1. Until a person accepts Christ they will never understand or perceive the spiritual message contained in the Scriptures of the Bible.
2. Until a person accepts Christ they will always try to attain to righteousness by self-effort.
3. Until a Christian fully comprehends that it is their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that God counts as their righteousness they will at some level almost always hear the condemning voice of the law in their mind (for some it may sound like a trumpet while for others it can come as a very faint voice in the background of all other noises), but until they understand the depth of the majestic words, the free gift of God is eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:23) and understand that they are saved by faith and God's grace the condemning voice of the law will never be far away.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Freedom.

2 Cor. 3:17-18 ----- ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And we all with unveiled face (open face in KJV) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

The Spirit in this context refers to grace, mercy, kindness, forgiveness and patience etc., in the book of Galatians Paul wrote: -

- Whoever is led by the Spirit, is not under the law (Gal. 5:18).

And in verse twenty-two he states: -

- The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (Gal. 5:22).

These verses show that the Spirit of the Lord is love which means being led by the Spirit is to be led by love since whatever is done within the boundaries of love (as explained in 1 Cor. 13:4-7) will never offend God or cause harm to another human this is why there is freedom in love and the reason there is no law against it. The Spirit of Jesus is love, he manifested perfect mercy, compassion, kindness and justice in that he (at the risk of his own life) spoke against the powerful Jewish religious leaders of his generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) on behalf of his heavenly Father and the lost and innocent sheep of the house of Israel and willingly gave his life over to his enemies knowing he would suffer a brutal, bloody and cruel death so others could have life.

Jesus is the Image of the Invisible God.

John in his writings states: -

- Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 John 4:8).

And again: -

- God is love and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16).

These verses clearly highlight the truth that the Spirit of the Almighty and invisible God is love. Paul in Colossians tells us that: -

- Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15).

This means that he is a mirror image of his heavenly Father in the following two ways: -

1. In Spirit which means the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ is love they are one in perfect love and therefore one in perfect unity, perfect mind and in perfect harmony in everything they do.

2. In character and personality meaning Jesus is the perfect reflection of God's nature and His love, compassion, mercy, grace and forgiveness etc.

Therefore the words, we are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another as we behold the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18) means the following two things: -

1. As we behold the life of Christ in our minds we will be changed from being self-focused to others-focused, from being selfish to being willing to give, from being driven by ego and pride to being humble and serving which means we will take on deeper levels of love and in this way be changed to deeper degrees of glory and into the same image of Christ as we behold his glory.
2. That at the end of our mortal life this body will put on immortality and we will be changed to be like Christ (i.e., an immortal and eternal being).

NOTE: in God's eyes the glory of Christ was not his miraculous powers, but his obedience even to death and the unselfish life of love he lived for others, it is not spectacular achievements, success or miraculous power that God considers glorious, but a life that is full of love toward others especially the poor and less fortunate.

We all with unveiled face: the word, unveiled (open in KJV) means to open or take away. When a human heart receives Christ the veil over the mind is taken away. Until then the beauty, wonder and splendour of the Bible cannot be understood since faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the key to unlocking its mysteries. Whoever attempts to unlock the wonders of the Bible without Christ dwelling in the heart and the mind is like a man standing at the door of Fort Knox not knowing the combination.

Christians are able to look without any Veil and see the Glory of the Lord.

The words with unveiled face (v13) allude to the fact that the face of Moses was veiled so the children of Israel could not steadfastly look upon it (Exod. 34:29-35). In contrast from Moses face being veiled brothers and sisters in Christ are enabled to look upon the Gospel without any veil over their mind and see the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Added to this the splendour and glory that shone on Moses face gradually died away whereas the light and glory that is reflected from the Good News of the Gospel becomes deeper and brighter the more a person looks upon it because its glory is like a polished mirror clearly reflecting the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious promises and privileges that are in Christ back to those looking into it

We all with an open face: Paul is shining a brilliant spotlight on the truth that "We all" (v18) (i.e. not just ministers and preachers), but all believers whether Jews or Gentiles, whether greater or lesser, whether rich or poor, whether noble or lowly are not like Moses, who had a veil on his face when he delivered the law, nor are we like the Jews who have a veil over their hearts, because of their religious practises, customs and traditions which darken and blind their mind to the glory of their Messiah the Christ.

In contrast those seeking God with an honest heart are enlightened by the Spirit of God and are converted to Christ as it were, with an open face (v18) meaning there is no veil covering the mind to who Christ is nor to his glory (meaning his God given power, his God given honour and favour, his perfect character his perfect love and the majestic truth that he is the only begotten Son of God and the Saviour of the world).

Mirrors among Jews, Greeks, and Romans: mirrors, among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, were made of highly polished metal, they would (especially in strong light) reflect and greatly illuminate the face by its strongly reflected light. It is to this reflection Paul is alluding to. The symbolism is that by earnestly contemplating the words of the Lord Jesus Christ and believing on him the mind becomes illuminated with his divine splendour, as the Gospel mirror reflects back on to those in Christ the image of the Lord whose perfections the word of God shines a floodlight on.

Paul is saying that it is not only through this reflection that we see the glorious form and character of Christ, but also that it is by its light our minds are fashioned and by its influence our character is changed into the same image (howbeit with certain limitations) which we behold so vividly and devotedly in our minds.

Beholding as in a glass: the words, beholding as in a glass (v18) is not referring to the law and the ordinances of it, but rather to the Good News of the Gospel and the grace, mercy, love and life proclaimed in it. It is not through the natural eyes of the body that the phrase, beholding as in a glass is referring to, but the spiritual eyes of our understanding and the spiritual sight we have through our faith which throws a veil over all other obstacles that would have previously hindered and stopped us from longing above all things to be with Christ, in this way Christ who we behold in our mind influences us to become like him. This principle of being transformed into what we behold is because of the spiritual law that God has engraved into our human nature: this law states, "The object we behold in our mind influences us to become like it (2 Cor. 3:18).

This means the following three things: -

1. We are moulded in our moral feelings, by the persons with whom we associate with and by whom we envision in our imaginations and who we think and meditate about in our minds.
2. We consciously and unconsciously become conformed to those with whom we strongly admire and have social contact with.
3. We absorb the opinions, we copy the habits, we imitate the manners, we fall into the customs of those with whom we highly esteem and have daily conversation with and with whom we make our companions and friends. Their sentiments become our sentiments and their ways our ways.
4. We absorb the opinions, the ideas, the principles contained in books we love, esteem and are familiar with.

We are moulded into conformity to the opinions, sayings, principles and feelings which are expressed by those we admire, esteem and exalt and in this way our own opinions, feelings, views, thoughts, ideas, attitudes and emotions undergo a gradual change as we behold in our minds the one we exalt and give ourselves over to the image we have established of them in our minds we become in this manner likened to them and are gradually formed into their image (good or bad).

It is on this same great principle that Paul says that by contemplating the glory of Christ in the Gospel his image will be reflected on us. We shall catch and absorb his opinions, feelings, views, thoughts, ideas attitudes and emotions and be moulded into the image of his character. Such is the great and wise law of our human nature. It is on this principle and by this means that God has designed that we should be, made like Christ on earth in character (i.e., grace, mercy, compassion and love etc., and become conformed to his image and made like him).

From one degree of glory to another: mirror, in the context of the following verse, "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12) carries the idea of looking in a mirror (being the Gospel) that is brilliantly and openly reflecting the glory and countenance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This verse is one of great beauty and is designed to set forth the Gospel as being the reflection of the infinite glories of Christ to the minds and hearts of those who seek him. The words, "Now in part" means we see Christ in our minds through the faith and the Gospel, but when he returns we will see him face to face. For further information on the Lord's return, see the title: "Future Kingdom of God in the New Testament," in, Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

God's light shines and beams from heaven upon on the Good News of the Gospel and reflects in brilliant light the glory of Christ. The mirrors of the ancients were made of burnished metal and reflected images with great brilliancy and distinctness. The symbolism is that the Gospel reflects the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was, so to speak the polished, burnished substance (mirror) in which the

glory of the Lord shone and where that glory was so highly brightened that its reflection could be seen by all who had faith in Christ. There was no veil over it; no obscurity nothing to break its dazzling splendour or to prevent its meeting the eye.

Anyone (with a right heart) by looking on the Gospel could see the glorious perfections and plans of God as bright and clear and brilliant as they could see a light reflected from the burnished surface of the mirror. The picture is one of the glorious perfections of God shining from heaven and beaming on the Gospel and thereby reflecting Christ to the mind and the heart of those seeking him and of Christ influencing them in such a manner that they are slowly and gradually transformed into the same image.

Reflecting Christ's glory: the more we behold the brilliant and glorious light of the Gospel, the more we reflect back its rays, the more we anticipate, meditate, consider and envision its grace and think about its Good News of mercy, divine forgiveness and love and its promise of immortal life and everlasting glory the more our minds become saturated, impregnated and permeated with the Spirit of the Gospel and the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ and in this manner our character is changed and we become a reflection to others of the one we behold.

Six steps that show how, the Good News of the Gospel gloriously contrasts the law.

1. When God's glory appeared on Mount Sinai it made the people of Israel so afraid of death that they cried to Moses, "Let not God speak to us anymore, lest we die (Exod. 20:19) (Deut. 18:16) and Paul tells us that in receiving the law they also received the spirit of bondage to fear (Rom. 8:15). In contrast to this those in Christ have been given the Spirit of power and love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7) and the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father!" (Rom. 8:15) (Gal. 4:6). The author of Hebrews alludes to these contrasts and difference in his writings in (Heb. 12:18-24).
2. Moses with all his glory was the minister of the law written on Tablets of Stone which only gave the Jews the letter that killeth whereas the apostles were ministers of the Gospel written on the hearts of those who believe and imparts the Spirit that gives life.
3. The glory which Moses received at the giving of the law slowly diminished over time, because it was to vanish away, whereas the glory which is received from Christ is an increasing glory and his message and divine influence remain forever.
4. The law was veiled under types and shadows and many ceremonious rites, but the Good News of the Gospel has scarcely any ceremonies and the whole doctrine of Christ crucified and resurrected is made as plain and as clear as human language can make it.
5. The Jews only saw Moses face shining through a veil, whereas those in Christ see clearly with an open face through the shining glory of the Gospel the miraculous and perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ; the perfect image of God and the perfect example of His will manifested in love, grace, mercy and compassion toward others.
6. Israel saw the law through a veil which prevented the reflection of it shining upon them and so the glory of the law only shone on the face of Moses and not upon all the people of Israel, whereas the glory of the Gospel shines on Christ, as a mirror which reflects the image of the Lord upon those who believe so that they are transformed into the image the glass of the mirror reflects.

Thus we find that in everything the Good News of the Gospel with its message of divine forgiveness, grace mercy and love is by far superior to the law with all its legalistic rules, statutes and institutionalized traditions and religious customs.

The veil removed: the Old Testament fathers who lived under the law had only cloudy and passing glimpses of their Messiah the Christ and glorious Saviour who was to be put to death and rise again. Though many prophets spoke of the Lord Israel's vision of him was veiled in their minds and upon their hearts.

Whereas today the veil is removed, God's plan of eternal salvation is made clear since Israel's Messiah the Christ has come into the world, as the perfect image of God, and his death and resurrection is made as plain and as clear (as human language can make it). The veil is now taken away by the arrival of Christ to this earth.

When a person is converted to Christ the veil of ignorance is removed and those who are converted not only enjoy and believe the Gospel, but their heart is transformed to live in a manner that desires to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, because God's light has entered into their mind and now with open face behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4.

The Gospel is Veiled to those who are Perishing.

2 Cor. 4:3-4 ----- ³And even if our gospel is veiled it is veiled only to those who are perishing (lost in KJV).
⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The Gospel is veiled to those who are perishing (lost in KJV) because the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious message of God's forgiveness and eternal plan of salvation contained in the Gospel message cannot be perceived until a person humbles themselves before God in honest repentance and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour until they do this they remain separated from God and spiritually blind.

The glory of Christ, who is the image of God: the words, "The glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (v4) does not mean that Jesus is God (as some believe), but rather that he is the mirror image of God. It presents the idea of a person standing in front of a mirror and the mirror reflecting back the perfect image of that person. The image is not the person, but it is a perfect reflection of them. It is in this manner that the Lord Jesus Christ the glorified and perfect Son of God reflects the image of his heavenly Father. God and Jesus are not only one in their eternal plans and purposes, but are also one in perfect mind, perfect love and perfect unity.

The god of this world.

The words, "The god of this world" (v4) refer to the entity we all know as satan, to understand what Paul is saying it helps to firstly have a brief understanding of the word satan and what it means. Satan in the Hebrew and Greek language does not have a capital *S* and simply means an adversary, one who withstands, opposes or resists it is a word that has come to symbolize everything that is the total opposite to what is good, decent and right.

In many verses of the Bible the word satan is often personified as the arch enemy of God. The New Testament says the works of satan are evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication's, thefts, a false witness, blasphemies, covetousness, wickedness, deceit and lasciviousness. Pride, foolishness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation's, wrath, strife, sedition's and heresies, envying, drunkenness, reveling, and such like.

The Bible tells us all of these dwell in the human heart and that they are all the works of satan, which shows us that satan's dwelling place must be in the human heart therefore the word satan is a personification of the evil in the heart that influences a person's own lust, ego and pride etc., in rebellion against God or to act as an adversary to Christ and those who follow him, but the word satan is not limited in its meaning to only religious matters, satan in its widest and fullest sense is a personification of everything that is opposed to what is good, religious or secular, this is why the universal title of satan is, "the arch enemy of good."

This influence can be manifested through an individual, a group, a government or leaders of nations that act as an adversary and enemy to everything that is good, decent and right.

The evil One ---- The prince of the power of the Air ---- The god of this World.

John tells us that the whole world lives under the influence and power of the evil one and Paul says unbelievers follow the prince of the power of the air because the god of this world has blinded their minds. The titles: -

The Evil One --- The Prince of the Power of the Air --- The god of this World.

All refer to the same power and influence that affects the human mind mentally, emotionally and spiritually, they are simply different titles for the same entity which personifies the evil that rises up out of the human heart and influences the world this entity in most verses is called satan or the devil (1 John 5:19) (2 Cor. 4:4) (Ephesians 2:2).

For further information see the title: -

- Demons.
- In, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers: with this understanding it is clear to see that the phrase "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers" (v4) in this context is an expression that embraces within its meaning human pride, ego, greed, selfishness, lust, etc., it is that spirit in us that puts self-first, that entity that says, "Me first." The god of this world is self, pride, ego, greed, sexual lust and lust for power and profit (i.e., money) and such like, for simplicity these are all summed up in the words, "The god of this world," since they are what drive the world's governments, trade and economy and influence human nature because self, ego and pride do not want to bow down to God or be accountable to Him, this is the reason it is our own ego and pride that blinds us to the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ.

Let Light Shine out of Darkness

2 Cor. 4:6-7 ----- ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

The words, For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness" (v6) are stunningly awesome since they allude to the beginning of creation when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light (Gen. 1:1-5). Paul is likening God's breath-taking power that brought natural light into a world of darkness to another light that God shines in the heart of those in Christ which gives them majestic knowledge and insight of God through their faith in Jesus. It is the Almighty God of creation who through a person's faith in Christ illuminates the knowledge of himself to their mind. Added to this the glory of God is seen by whoever looks with eyes of faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ because he was the perfect image of God on earth in power and in character, (i.e., miracles, wonders and divine forgiveness, grace, mercy and love etc.).

We have this treasure in jars of clay: the statement, "We have this treasure in jars of clay (v7) means that the, majestic light of the knowledge of the glory of God that comes through faith in Lord Jesus Christ and shines in the human heart is hidden by the mortal flesh of the human body.

The Surpassing Power belongs to God and Not to Us.

The words, "To show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us" (v7) is in the context of Paul and those ministering with him being afflicted, persecuted, brutally beaten, confused and deserted, but never driven to despair mentally or emotionally which means that the words, "The surpassing power belongs to God and not to us" means that their suffering is evidence that there is a power within themselves that far surpasses their own nature (i.e., self, ego and pride) otherwise why would they continue to proclaim the Gospel when it brings pain, suffering and persecution to their own bodies.

God will Raise Us also with Jesus and Bring Us into His Presence.

2 Cor. 4:13-14 ----- ¹³Since we (Paul and the apostles) have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.

The words I believed and so I spoke allude to the words of David Who in praising the LORD said: -

- I believed, therefore have I spoken though I was greatly afflicted and all mankind are liars, nevertheless I will pay my vows to the LORD amongst the people knowing that the death of God's saints is precious in the sight of the LORD (Psalm 116:10-14).

Paul is pretty much saying the same as David. Paul and those ministering with him believe in the Lord Jesus Christ they will continue to proclaim the Gospel regardless of the perils and dangers they may face, since they are fully assured that even if they are killed serving Christ God who raised the Lord Jesus will not only raise them to be with Christ, but will at the same time raise the Corinthians with them into the Lord's presence (v14).

Our inner Nature is Being Renewed Day by Day.

2 Cor. 4:13 ----- ¹³So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.

This refers to our mortal body which loses its vigour and elasticity and becomes weak and feeble as we grow older until it eventually decays, perishes dies and is laid in a grave since it is not designed to bear up forever the trials of life, and the wear and tear of constant action. The expression the outer nature should not be mistaken with the term, the outward man since the phrase; the outward man mostly refers to our fallen corrupt human nature (i.e., self, ego, pride, lust, greed, jealousy, anger, envy and such like things) and not the flesh and bones of the body itself.

Renewed day by day: our inner nature is being renewed day by day (v16) in this context refers to the inward spiritual life of those in Christ, which is strengthened invigorated and filled as they meditate on the joys and triumphs of the Gospel, the breath-taking and awesome knowledge that they are accepted by Almighty God the creator and source of all life and the humbling understanding that not only are all their sins forgiven (because of their faith in Christ), but God counts them as righteous and sets His love and favour on them.

Added to this is the majestic image created in the mind by their faith that underlies all other thoughts, passions, plans and desires etc., (whether life is charmed or troubled) which is the excitement generated by the expectation of the fulfilment of God's glorious promise of eternal life spent in everlasting glory with the Lord Jesus Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords. When these things are valued, believed and permeate the mind the inner nature of every brother and sister in Christ is being renewed day by day.

This does not mean they will be consciously aware of it each day as they live out their life in this world with all its frustrations, sorrow and troubles, but as time passes and they endure there is no-doubt they will see that they have a hidden strength, contentment, joy and hope in their inner man (also called the heart) that they would not trade for all the wealth of this world.

A second manner in which the inner nature is renewed day by day: the inner nature is also renewed comforted, energised, refreshed, strengthened and sustained when we do-good to others and promote the salvation of mankind even when the body is weary, grows old and move closer to death. This is a principle and sentiment that is not only grounded on Paul's own personal experience, but the experience of thousands who in their efforts to do-good to others have experienced the same vitality of life well up within themselves. When a brother or sister in Christ spends their life in helping and benefiting others and proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel the power of excitement, strength and joy of their mind will not only expand, but they will have a clearer view of the Gospel and their faith

in God will increase which will as they grow older and move nearer to the grave and to eternal life and everlasting glory result in their inner life being raised far above the things of this world and their own ego and pride. There is no-question that the grace that comes with the Good News of the Gospel is an effectual and powerful force against despair, depression and anxiety in times of crisis and trouble.

The knowledge that Christ was raised from the dead and that his resurrection is God's assurance and guarantee that those who die with faith in His Son will also be raised from the grave not only gives overwhelming comfort and enormous encouragement during a time of suffering and sorrow, but also sets the suffering person far above the fear of death, because the guaranteed hope of eternal life and everlasting peace, joy and happiness is an enormous mental and emotional comfort and support to a troubled mind.

Our outer nature and our inner nature: for the ardent Bible student it should be mentioned that the term, the outward nature (v16) can refer to the following two different things depending on the context it is used in: -

1. To the mortal physical body of flesh and bones.
2. To the carnal nature of all mankind (also called the flesh and the outward man) which refers to self, ego, pride, greed and lust etc.

It is the context that determines which of these two applications the outward nature (also called the outward man) should be applied to. This same principal applies to the inner nature (v16) as it also is not limited to the nature of Christ that dwells within those who faithfully follow him, but can also refer to the natural inner nature of all mankind, (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed and lust etc.). It is the context that determines whether the writer is referring to the inner nature of Christ or the inward nature of all humanity.

2 Corinthians 5.

If our Earthly Home, is Destroyed, we have an Eternal House from God.

2 Cor. 5:1-7 ----- ¹For we know that if the tent which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling ³if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. ⁴For while we are still in this tent we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. ⁶So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight.

The word, tent refers to our mortal human body, notice Paul sees himself as a spiritual being living within a body, meaning he is not the body, but he needs the body to dwell in to remain alive, without the body he perishes, until the majestic and glorious day of the resurrection. In these verses we see the highest expression of great faith, Paul and those ministering with him are not concerned about their life or existence in this temporal world, since their faith was so powerful death was not something they feared but rather a birth that would not only deliver them into a far better world made by God, but they would also be clothed with an immortal and eternal body.

The thought of their mind and attitude of their heart that outshined all others was one of longing to be delivered from their mortal body and this temporal world to receive a new immortal body and everlasting life in eternal glory with the Lord Jesus Christ.

We may not be found naked: the words, we may not be found naked (v3) is contrasting the Greek theory and pagan belief that when the Spirit left the mortal body it remained without a body whereas Paul is saying that those in Christ will be

clothed with a body and not remain as a naked Spirit (i.e., as a ghost like creature), but rather be clothed with a majestic royal immortal, eternal and heavenly body this is the reason for Paul's words: -

- In this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling (v2).

It is an expression which implies his earnest desire to be clothed with such a body and clearly shows that in that future state, the Spirit will not be naked that is, destitute of a body or any covering but will be clothed in some form of angelic and heavenly body.

God has given us the Spirit as a guarantee: the Spirit in the following verse, God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee (v5) refers to the same Spirit that was dwelling in Jesus which when praying in the garden of Gethsemane was manifested in his words: -

- Abba, Father (Mark 14:36).

We know this because Paul in the book of Romans writes: -

- You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" (Romans 8:15).

And in Galatians he states: -

- You are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4:6).

These verses show that the Spirit (also called the Holy Spirit) that guarantees our eternal salvation is that Spirit dwelling in our heart through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that not only permeates and floods our minds with light, but is also involved in our behaviour, choices, decisions and actions, meaning Christ becomes involved and intertwined in our entire life in contrast to him being someone a person only thinks about on Sundays. It is that love for God in the heart that transforms the self-serving passions of our human nature to ones that desire to live a life that honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Abba: is an Aramaic word for father translated into Greek and then into English it is used three times in the New Testament (Mark 14:36) (Rom. 8:15 9) (Gal. 9:16). The cry, "Abba Father" means, "Father, Father" it is an expression that shows a person's deep heartfelt connection to God (the creator and source of all life) as being their spiritual and heavenly Father.

While we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord: Paul's statement, while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord (v6) should not be taken to mean that we are spiritually separated from Christ since through faith his Spirit dwells deep within the heart and mind of those who believe in him. The idea behind Paul's words in this verse is that Jesus is eternal while we are mortal; Christ is in heaven while we are on earth.

We walk by faith, not by sight: the words, for we walk by faith, not by sight (v7) does not mean as some teach that we can set extremely high goals and to achieve them borrow vast amounts of money (that we cannot afford to pay) and then say, "We are walking by faith, not by sight," believing God will provide the money and bring the goal to pass. This teaching is a total abuse of the Scripture and of what Paul is saying. Rather the context of what Paul is saying is in re-guards to us being physically separated from Christ, the words, we walk by faith, not by sight means that until Christ returns and we physically see him with our own eyes our lives are governed by faith since no-one alive today has seen the Lord and therefore we have no tangible evidence of his existence, this is why the need to walk by faith not by sight.

We Must All Appear Before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

2 Cor. 5:8-11 ----- ⁸Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰For we

must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. ¹¹Therefore, knowing the fear (terror in KJV) of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

Paul's attitude to death was that he would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. The body in this context refers to the physical human body, which shows that Paul sees himself as a Spirit living in a tangible body made of flesh and bones etc. Paul and those ministering with them preference is to be in eternal glory with Christ than here on earth living in their mortal bodies, but while on earth they will live in a manner that honours God and the name of Christ, knowing that all who are in Christ will one-day stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The words, what is done in the body, whether good or evil (v10) can refer to the following three things: -

- How a person has treated their brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.
- How we have treated those outside of the body of Christ.
- Whether what we have done while serving Christ was done for our own selfish-gain or for the Lord.

This means that knowing the fear (terror in KJV) of the Lord (v11) refers to the fact that Christ was compassionate, merciful, kind and forgiving etc., and therefore if we oppress or use people for our own gain or deliberately do harm to others physically, verbally, mentally financially, sexually, emotionally or spiritually we will be judged accordingly, but if we have lived to bring honour to God and to reflect the character of Christ by showing kindness, compassion, mercy and forgiveness etc., to others we will be rewarded.

What we are is known to God.

Paul's words, what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience means that Paul is confident that he and those ministering with him are men of integrity and honesty. It means that their whole aim and focus in this life was: -

- To honour God in whatever they did.
- To be a good reflection of Christ on earth.

Their hope was that the Corinthian brothers and sisters perceive that they are not men of hypocrisy, pretence or serving the Lord for their own selfish gain, but are men of honesty before God and are in the ministry to serve Christ and to serve others.

Judging others in Christ: Paul knowing that every brother and sister in Christ will stand before the perfect judge the Lord Jesus Christ and either suffer loss or be rewarded encourages and teaches the Corinthian brothers and sisters how to live a life that honours God and reflects Christ to others. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians expressed the same idea in the following words: -

- If anyone builds on the foundation (being Christ) with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:12-14).

Since not one of us can stand before God and claim to be sinless because we all have sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our human nature and therefore we cannot know the hidden motives or intents of another person's heart and for this reason judgment to eternal life, eternal reward or eternal loss should be left in the hands of the sinless and eternal judge who does; the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords.

One Has Died for All, therefore all have Died.

2 Cor. 5:12-15 ----- ¹²We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. ¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

Boasting about outward appearances primarily refers to religious leaders boasting about religious works (i.e., keeping the Jewish ceremonial law, holy days, Sabbaths and circumcision etc.), today it would be boasting about building opulent church buildings, teaching large congregations, writing multitudes of books, ministering in many countries etc., it is about boasting in outward achievements, but a brother or sister can do all these things and at the same time still be driven by pride, ego selfish ambition, wealth, the lust for power, control or fame etc.

This is why Paul says if he and those ministering with him are going to boast they will boast about what is in their heart, which is love toward Christ and toward those they minister to, thus Paul's words, the love of Christ controls us (v14) means they are motivated by Christ's love and not selfish ambition 'pride' and ego etc.

If we are beside ourselves: the expression, being beside themselves means that they appear to be out of their right minds (v13) and even mad to some. This is because of the Gospel message they proclaim and the claim that Christ is the Son of God and died and rose again, even today when brothers and sisters in Christ share the message of the cross many will think they are out of their mind or at least have a weak or childish mind, but this should be expected since even the Bible says: -

- For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

Paul stated that he and those with him: -

- Preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles (1 Cor. 1:23) and that the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to them, and they are not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14).

This clearly shows that the Gospel of Christ and the death and resurrection is going to sound foolish to those who are full of pride and worldly wisdom and whose heart is not right to receive the message.

The love of Christ controls us: Paul's statement, "For the love of Christ controls us," shows that the self-denial, extraordinary passion and zeal of Paul and those ministering with him was influenced by the love which Christ had shown in dying for all people. Christ showed and proved his great love for us, and for all, by giving himself to die; and it was this love which Christ had shown that compelled Paul and those with him to their own acts of love and self-denial.

They gave themselves to the work of their ministry constrained by that love which Christ had shown and by the desire to imitate Christ and to manifest the same spirit of love which the Lord had demonstrated.

One has died for all, therefore all have died...Continued: -

The expression, "For all" obviously means "For all" mankind this is an exceedingly important expression in regard to the extent of the atonement which the Lord Jesus made, and while it proves that his death was in the place of others, and for their sakes, it also demonstrates that the atonement had no limitation to any class or condition of people there was nothing in it that made it more applicable to one portion of mankind than to another, but rather that Christ's death was sufficient to save all regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor, noble or lowly.

Some religious teachers state that Christ died for the elect (only for small part of the human family i.e., the chosen) and not for all mankind, but consider the following: -

- If a person is told that all the human family must die, the obvious interpretation is that it applies to every individual on planet earth.
- If told that all the passengers on board a steamboat were drowned, the obvious interpretation is that every individual was meant.
- If told that a plane crashed and all the crew perished, the obvious interpretation would be that none escaped.
- If told that all the inmates of a hospital were sick, it would be understood that there was not an individual that was not sick.

Such is the view which would be taken by nine-hundred and ninety-nine persons out of one-thousand if told that Christ died for all. Added to this the following verses clearly show Christ died not for a select group, but for all of mankind.

- That by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone (Heb. 2:9).
- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).
- Who gave himself as a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6).
- The Son of Man came to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28).
- He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2).

Throughout the Bible there are numerous Scriptures full of free offers of salvation to all mankind, the apostles were directed to: -

- Go into all the world and to preach the gospel to the whole creation, with the assurance that whoever believes and is baptized will be saved (Mark 16:15-16).

Isaiah wrote: -

- Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price (Isaiah 55:1).

John said: -

- On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink" (John 7:37).

The Spirit and the Bride say: -

- Come and let the one who hears say, come and let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price (Rev. 22:17).

These offers are made on the ground that the Lord Jesus Christ died for all people; they are invitations of salvation through the Gospel of the forgiveness of sin, and of eternal life to all mankind. If Christ died only for a part of the human family (i.e., the elect) then there is a large portion of the human race that he did not die for which means that those proclaiming the Gospel cannot proclaim it with sincerity since if Christ did not die for all the offer to come is simply tantalizing those Christ did not die for since for them the offer does not exist.

If it was true that Christ only died for the elect, then God must know this which means He would also know that the offer of salvation does not exist for much of the human family and therefore any verse stating it is would not only be proving God to be insincere when he inspired by His Spirit the apostles to state that Christ died for all but also prove Christ to be deceptive everytime he said things such as: -

- Whoever comes to me I will never cast out (John 6:37).

It is of no use here to say that the preacher does not know who the Elect are, and that he is obliged to make the offer to all in order that the elect may be reached. For it is not the preacher only who offers the Gospel it is also God who offers it, and He knows who the elect are, and yet He offers salvation to all and if there is no salvation provided for all and no possibility that all to whom the offer comes could be saved, then God is insincere; and there is no way possible of vindicating His character.

One has died for all, therefore all have died (continued) when Christ laid down his life for others, he died for all mankind, therefore it follows that the statement, one died for all (v14), means that all were dead. The entire human race is dead in the following three ways: -

1. Under the law and the sentence of condemnation to death.
2. Dead in sins and trespasses.
3. Spiritually dead and separated from God.

This was the wretched condition of us all for whom Christ died: we were lost and undone, dead and ruined, and would have remained so had Christ not died for us all. Paul in the book of Romans expressed it in the following way: -

- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

This is the most perfect example of love and the most splendid and humbling of all Scriptures since it clearly shows how much Christ loves us, Paul in the same letter also said: -

- While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

These two verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that God loved us long before we loved Him. This means that though we were full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations dwelling within our bodies (i.e., self, ego, pride, greed and lustful thoughts etc.,) Christ died for us, he laid down his life that we could be made righteous by faith apart from the law, self-effort and works. In spite of our corrupted fallen nature that we have inherited from our earthly father Adam God counts our faith in Christ as our righteousness it is imputed to us as a pure and free gift. Though some of us might die for a friend or loved one, Christ died for us while we were ungodly and indifferent to God and His ways and in many cases blasphemers, because of a lack of perceiving this great love God has toward us that these two verses (and others like them) shine a spotlight on some in the Christian faith tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances.

They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteousness so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote: -

- While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life (Romans 5:10).

We Regard No-One According to the Flesh.

2 Cor. 5:16-19 ----- ¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if

anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

The words we regard no one according to the flesh (v16) means it matters little to Paul and those ministering with him whether a person is a direct descendant of Abraham, Hebrew, Jewish or born of a Gentile nation, nor does it make any difference to them if they are noble, wealthy, rich a priest, an elder or a lowly cobbler working in the streets none of these things influences Paul's ministry. Similarly the words, even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer (v16) mean the same thing, it makes no difference what race or nation Christ was since he died for people from both the Jewish and Gentile nations.

If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation: the statement, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (v17) means that in Christ no-one is counted as a Jew or Gentile, noble or lowly, no-one is counted as being superior to others simply because of their station in life or because of their birthright.

In Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself: the entire human race is separated from God, without hope and spiritually dead, but the Good News is that in Christ God is reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them (v19). God by His Spirit came to humanity through Christ and in Christ not only manifested His love, compassion, kindness mercy and grace to all humanity, but also His power, purposes, promises and eternal plan of salvation through Christ. It is faith that reconciles whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ to God (regardless of their corrupt or crooked past). Now the ministry of those who are reconciled to God is to reconcile others to Him through sharing the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reconcile: means to mutually change and join together it carries the idea of two people mutually changing and agreeing to be different to the way things have been. God's ways in the New Testament are different to His dealings with Israel in the Old Testament in the following sense; God is not counting trespasses against those in Christ this is why the New Testament Covenant is far better than the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is a covenant (agreement) of grace and not condemnation as was the law.

The Christians covenant to God is to love and faithful abide in Christ, while God's covenant to a Christian is twofold, firstly that He will not count their sins against them and secondly, that all, who love and faithfully follow His Son He will love and accept. Those for whom Christ died should live to him this is what Christ designed for those who have been made alive unto God by means of his death. Every brother and sister who has been reconciled to God should live to him that died for them, and rose again for their sakes and not live to themselves (v15).

Every brother and sister in Christ is called to make Christ their end for living and not themselves, Christ death was not only to reconcile us to God, but also to cure us of self-love and instead excite us to act under the commanding influence of his love. It is when a Christian's life is devoted to Christ who died for them that they are able to live in a manner that honours God and the name of Christ.

2 Corinthians 8.

The Glory of Christ.

2 Cor. 8:21-23 ----- ²¹for we (Paul and those ministering with him) aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man. ²²And with them (Titus and the brother who is famous for preaching the gospel) we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found earnest in many matters, but who is now more earnest than ever because of his great confidence in you. ²³As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

When someone refers to the, glory of Christ most of us immediately think of the Lord Jesus Christ, his life and his miracles, but here Paul is calling Christs servants, the glory of Christ this is because they are men of compassion, kindness, integrity, honesty and faithfulness and therefore reflect the character of Christ himself. Every faithful and compassionate brother and sister in Christ can be referred to as, the glory of Christ since they are a good reflection of the Lord to others. This no-doubt is why Paul said that he and those ministering with him, aim at what is honourable not only in the Lord's sight, but also in the sight of man (v21).

2 Corinthians 10.

Let the one who Boasts, Boast in the Lord.

2 Cor. 10:17-18 ----- ¹⁷Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." ¹⁸For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

The idea here is that we are to be approved or rejected by God alone. He is to pass judgment on us, and that judgment is to be in accordance with HIS estimate of our faith and our character and not, according to our own estimate. If God approves us we will be saved, but if God does not, vain will be all our empty boasting and self-glory all our reliance on wealth, eloquence, learning or earthly honours none of them will save us from condemnation since not one of these things can purchase for us God's free gift of eternal life.

Paul is seriously showing that it should be the grand aim and purpose of our life to obtain God's favour rather than being anxious about obtaining man's approval. All Christians and all Christian ministers are engaged in warfare they are at war with sin in their own hearts, and with sin wherever it exists on earth and therefore we should all repress any reliance and self-confidence in our talents, attainments or accomplishments for salvation to eternal life and everlasting glory.

Of all flattery, not only is, self-flattery, self-commendation and self-applause the worst, but they are self-deceit, foolish and as vain as they are proud. Instead of praising or commending ourselves, we should strive to approve ourselves to God and know that the LORD'S approval will be our best praise.

2 Corinthians 11.

I Betrothed You as a Pure Virgin to One Husband, Christ.

2 Cor. 11:2-3 ----- ²I (Paul) feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Jealousy in this context carries the following two ideas: -

1. Of protectiveness, watchfulness, and of being desirousness.
2. Of caring about a person's safety and their well-being.

The majority of this chapter is focused on Paul's defence against the so called self-appointed super apostles disguised as angels of light (v13-14) who are not only turning some of the Corinthian brothers and sisters against him, but are also seductively enticing them to accept their teachings about Christ rather than the Gospel Paul had proclaimed to them at the beginning.

This is why Paul asks the Corinthians to be patient with him while they read this chapter because he feels it is foolish and egotistical to boast in such a manner of himself. Paul's motive for speaking in this manner is that his defence would hopefully turn those being influenced by the self-exalting so called super apostles back to himself and those ministering with him and to a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

NOTE: as much as it goes against the grain of a proud person to acknowledge their infirmities and sins, likewise it is goes as much against the grain of a humble person to speak of their own praise. It is no pleasure for a good person to speak well of themselves, yet in some cases it is lawful and right when it is for the advantage of others or for their own necessary vindication as it here with Paul.

The following are two reasons why Paul felt it necessary to commend himself to those he had ministered to: -

1. He had espoused the Corinthians to one husband, the Lord Jesus Christ as a chaste virgin and wanted to preserve their minds from being corrupted by the insinuations of the false apostles and from being led back under the Law and ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions to be saved and protect them from being subtly deceived as Eve was by the serpent.

Paul was jealous over them with godly jealousy and was afraid that their faith would be weakened by listening to criticisms that lessened their regard to his ministry by which they were brought into Christ by the Gospel and faith in Christ.

2. To vindicate himself against the false apostles who were proclaiming another Jesus, another Spirit and another Gospel and were also telling them that Paul was weak and his words mean nothing (2 Cor. 10:10).

The true heart of a shepherd: here we see the true heart of a shepherd. Paul feels a divine jealousy for the brothers and sisters that he ministers to. This means that he is zealous about protecting them and passionate about their well-being which also means he feels enormous grief over the fact that he knows that there are amongst their midst false apostles, deceitful workmen who are claiming to be apostles of Christ (v13). This is what Paul feels jealous about he is jealous that these false apostles are having an influence over the church he established especially since he does not see himself as a teacher to the Corinthians, but as their father and as such Paul loves them as a biological father loves his own children.

I Betrothed You to One Husband, to Present You as a Pure Virgin to Christ.

Paul's magnificent and glorious words, I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ are simply breathtakingly majestic and stunning in the following three ways: -

1. The Corinthian church was an absolute mess when Paul established it, so much so he told them that, "He could not address them as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ acting in merely human ways and therefore could only feed them with milk (babies feed on milk), not solid food, because there was jealousy and strife among them and they were behaving only in a human manner (1 Cor. 3:1-4).

The majority of his first letter is spent on teaching them right behaviour yet despite all this he says, "I presented you as a pure virgin to Christ." How tears must have flooded their eyes when this letter was read to them and how vast and glorious is the grace of God, these heavenly words of love show that grace in Christ has no walls, no-boundaries, it is unlimited, borderless and eternal.

2. Paul here sees Christ as the husband of all those who love the Lord, this implies a unique and intimate relationship that only a husband and wife have. Some religious teachers point out the fact that no-where does the Bible state we must have a relationship with Christ to be saved, but it does not need to be stated, since it is automatic, how can anyone not love someone who has laid their lives down for them. It is more than likely that God in His wisdom did not put any Scriptures in the Bible that clearly stated, "You must have a loving relationship with my Son to be saved, since it is almost certain religious legalist would have turned what is a natural fluid, unfolding and ever growing intimate and spiritual relationship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ into dogmatic theology. (Having a spiritual intimate relationship of devotion with God and with Christ is implied in many Scriptures throughout the Bible).

3. In God's mind when a husband and wife commit to each other it is forever, which means that when Paul who never learned the Good News of the Gospel but received it by Revelation says, "I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ" it means that every sinner who comes to Christ in humble repentance is being joined to the Lord forever.

Christ as the perfect husband will never forsake his bride. Paul in the book of Romans wrote the following fabulous words of enormous comfort: -

- Neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).

As in any marriage the only thing that can separate the bride from her husband (whose love for her glory and beauty is so great that he is willing to lay down his life for her) is her own personal conscious and deliberate rejection of him.

Super Apostles: the so called super apostles (v5) a title for men who are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ and have great influence over many (v13) are likened to the serpent who deceived Eve (v3) and to angels of light (v14) who satan disguises as ministers of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 13.

Examine Yourself to See Whether You are in the Faith.

2 Cor. 13:5-6 ----- ⁵Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realise this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —Unless indeed you fail to meet the test! ⁶I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

The words, examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith are to be considered with Paul's previous words, "Since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me" (v3) certain men amongst the Corinthian church had demanded a proof that the voice and power of Christ was in Paul, he in turn is now directing them to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith and in Christ which should be the first aim of any brother or sister in Christ's rather than seeking a proof of Christ dwelling in someone else.

The following are two reasons Paul calls on the Corinthians to examine themselves: -

- 1 Paul feared that many of them had been deceived by the self-appointed so called super apostles ministering amongst them (2 Cor. 11:5) (2 Cor. 12:11) this is why Paul is calling on them to test what they are being taught by these false teachers against what he has written, and test it against the Gospel he has taught them to see if they are still in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Paul had previously warned them, "If he visits them again he will not spare those who sinned and had told them that "Christ is not weak in dealing with them" (v3) meaning that Paul's authority in Christ will not be weak in disciplining any corrupt behaviour within their midst that dishonours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The primary context of what Paul is saying is in the framework of right and wrong behaviour, which means that Paul is calling them to examine their behaviour against what he has taught them and, see if they are still in Christ.

The Corinthian church was full of boasting, jealousies, contentions and disorders that would no-doubt appear to any faithful Christian looking upon their church that they were totally ignorant of the nature of Christ and of the Christian faith so much so that Paul considered it important for them to examine themselves against what he had written to ascertain whether the false teachers disguised as servants righteousness (2 Cor. 11:15) had completely deceived and led them away from the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The practical application today: this is, not about knowing the Bible from Genesis to Revelation rather the focus is upon the Gospel that Paul teaches. Paul's fear was not that the Corinthians might not have exactly the same understanding of the Bible from cover to cover, but that they would be led away from the Gospel, the message of the cross and away from God's grace that he taught. For further information concerning the Gospel, see "Gospel" (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Christ in you: Jesus says, "Greater love has no-man than this, that he lays down his life for his friends," (John 15:13). When a person's eyes are opened to their fallen condition before God and they perceive what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to save them their heart is filled with love for him, it is in this sense that Christ dwells in the human heart.

Dwelling in the heart of another: the following is a true story and a good example of a person being in the heart of another. An eight-year old disabled girl, whose best friend was her mother was doing her first live stage show at her school. The mother loved her daughter but could not be at the opening show as she was in hospital with terminal cancer. A television reporter asked the mother's daughter if she would be sad and miss her mother at the opening of the show. The young girl with tears in her eyes said, "Yes I will miss her, but she will be in my heart where she belongs." Love for a person creates the reality and spiritual presence of that person in the human heart, the greater the love the greater the spiritual presence.

The Father, Jesus and Believers are all in Each Other by Love.

Jesus prayed: -

- I do not ask for these (the apostles) only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may *all be one*, just as you, Father, *are in me, and I in you*, that they also *may be in us*, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they *may be one* even as *we are one*, ²³*I in them and you in me*, that they may become *perfectly one*, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me (Jn. 17:20-23).

Jesus in prayer prays that everyone who belongs to him will all be perfectly one just as the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. He asks God that everyone who is trusting in him would also be in him as he is in the Father. Jesus desire is that those who belong to him would be one in the Father and in Jesus so that the world may believe that God sent Jesus and loves those who belong to him with the same love that he loves Jesus with. Once again this is all about love, the Father, Jesus and those who belong to him are in each other by love. Jesus is praying that those who belong to him will be in the Father and in Christ by love because it is this love that manifests Christ and the glory of the Father to the world, in this context to become perfectly one means to be united perfectly in love with the Father, with Jesus and with each other.

The Father is in me (Christ) and I am in the Father: it is in the sense of being one in mind, purpose and unity that Jesus is saying, he is in the Father and the Father is in him. In these verses Jesus is praying that all who believe will be one in the same way that Christ and the Father are one, obviously multitudes of people cannot become a single person which clearly shows that when Jesus says that he and the Father are one he is not implying that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are a single person, but rather that they are one in perfect love and perfect unity with each other.

Christ's love for those who trust in him: a Bible teacher once asked his new students, "How do you make someone love you without controlling their free will? After a moments silence he told the young students, "Die for them." Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this that someone lays down his life for his friends." A Christian knows that God and Jesus love them by looking at the cross (John 15:13). It is by love that Christ dwells in the heart of all who faithfully follow him.

Some translate the words: -

- Jesus Christ is *in you* to be, Jesus Christ is *among* you (2 Cor. 13:5).

Those that teach this view say that Jesus was amongst the church of Corinth by his power and miraculous gifts which of course is a true statement. Even today it can be said that in any Christian worship service Christ is amongst the praises of the worshippers. But this does not mean that it is wrong to interpret the verse in the following manner; "Jesus Christ is in you by love since this is also a true statement.

I hope you find we have not failed the test: Paul's words, "I hope you will find that we have not failed the test (v6) are most likely spoken in the following sense, "Whatever may be the result of your (the Corinthians) examination of yourselves, I hope you will not find us (Paul and those ministering with him) false and therefore reject us, but, trust you will find in me and those ministering with me all the qualifications and evidence needed to accept me as a true apostle commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ and find that I have preached the true Gospel and faith amongst you."

SUMMARY: Salvation in 2 Corinthians.

Paul's second letter: to the Corinthians is like the first in that it is addressed to those that are already baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pauls Gospel proclaims: Jesus Christ is the perfect image and reflection of God, and shines perfect light on the knowledge of the glory of God. The central focus of the Gospel is Christ crucified and resurrected and the truth that God in Christ is reconciling the world to himself through the Gospel. For reconciliation to come about the Gospel must affect and bring about a change in the human heart. The effectual reality of this inward change upon the heart brings about a continual and sincere devotion to Christ and a desire to follow him. This desire of the heart will continue until God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from death to eternal glory not only raises us all to be with Jesus, but also brings us into His very own presence.

Paul's message to every brother and sister in Christ: is that they should not look for man's approval, but the approval of the Lord and all should examine themselves to see if they are in the correct faith. Those in Christ will have a heartfelt desire to be with the Lord and the passion of their heart and mind will be to be controlled by Christs love in all that they do and from this love live for him and reflect his life of compassion, kindness, mercy, grace, forgiveness etc., through theirs.

End.