

MANY WHICH CORRUPT THE WORD OF GOD

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14 – 3:14



~ Our Spiritual Safari is dealing with an area of the Word of God that is marvelous and wonderful. I suppose I say that about all areas of the Bible – because it's true – but this epistle that the apostle Paul took the time to write to us is probably a little more wonderful than any other; because it deals with the way in which the Holy Spirit comforts us with grace and mercy in this present world we live in. There is comfort for our fears, comfort for our hurts, comfort for our anxieties, and comfort from present suffering. I do not know about you dear readers but I, Andrew Curtis Hunt, just happen to need a *WHOLE* lot of mercy, comfort and grace.

The first chapter of second Corinthians revealed God's comfort by His plan for our life. If you have not read our first three reports from second Corinthians, I suggest you go back and do so now. Our previous report instructed us in restoring a sinning saint. We saw that when the man of God – and he was a man of God – was found in gross immorality, namely incest, in the church in Corinth, who were shutting their eyes to his sin, by the way – and tolerating that which even the heathen didn't do – Paul was scathing in his criticism and intended to do something about it. Well, the church at Corinth beat Paul to the punch; and they excommunicated him.

Well, that man recognized his sin and confessed under genuine conviction. They were then instructed to receive him back into the congregation again. See, if Satan cannot push us one way, he will push us the other way. One way the devil pushes us is to close our eyes to immorality; the other way is to make us unforgiving, hard-nosed and hard-hearted to the man who confesses his sin and genuinely repents. Both errors are extremely effective at destroying a Christian life and walk with God. Paul said this man would have been overwhelmed and swallowed up in much sorrow if the church had not restored him; but guess whose problem that would have ultimately been – the *CHURCHES* problem is the answer. We need to remember that any of us could fall into sin at any time; and, if that happened to you, and if

you repented, would you want to be brought back into fellowship? I suspect you would. All of that is part of the ministry we all have when we are in God's will and the Holy Spirit is living in us and through us, my friends. That's a critical part of loving one another.

So, our last report left Paul waiting at Troas for Titus, but Titus didn't arrive when he probably should have. That's when Paul went to Philippi in Macedonia and began this letter. That's when Titus finally caught up to Paul, bringing word about how the church had dealt with the problem, and that the man had repented. It is absolutely *CRITICAL* that we understand who, what, when, where and how the condition was among the people in Corinth at the time in which we are studying. We can never have an effective ministry unless we know *PRECISELY* what we are talking about, by the way. Personally, I thank God and rejoice He has revealed these things to me so that I may, in turn, reveal them to you; although I understand that many of you actually hate my work for the Lord – even though you tell me you love me; but I digress - wink, wink....

II

14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

~ This is a dramatic section of Scripture; as Paul says preaching the Gospel is like leading a "*triumphal entry.*" We can relate a vision of Rome; a picture where a great emperor or general would return from a crusading conquest out on the frontier. Most of them had victory after victory in Europe, the Far East, or Northern Africa. When they returned, it was always to a hero's

welcome home to Rome. Many of the returning parades lasted all night and into the next day. The soldiers brought back the spoils of the campaigns, and they brought the captives they had taken. In the front of the procession were those who, although captives, were going to be freed — because they were going to be made Roman citizens. Then, there would be those in the back of the line — who were going to be executed. Well, that’s the picture Paul presents. Interestingly, one of the hallmarks of these events was that they burned copious amounts of incense to their gods — whom they gave credit for the victories. Sometimes the cloud was so thick that the procession couldn’t even be seen as it went by. Well, you simply *CANNOT* lose when you are in Christ, friends — it is impossible to be defeated.

Remember, in the tabernacle, incense speaks of prayer. Paul says he triumphed everywhere he went. Paul had great success in Ephesus, but he didn’t seem to do so well in Athens; however, he says he triumphed *ALWAYS*. Perhaps Paul forgot about the incident at Lystra? No, friends, even when we do not see any turning to Christ we are assured we have the victory. See, those who were going to be set free and those who were going to be executed were all part of the triumphal entry. Who is sufficient for these things? That’s my question, too. I’m not.

I recognize the average Christian today considers themselves leaders. I just happen to know that I’m not worthy of this ministry Jesus has provided for me. Paul actually doesn’t answer that question at this time — but he will later. Those who make merchandise of the Lord Jesus Christ by distorting His Word corrupt His Word — and I could give you a very long list of names who are doing that today. The greatest privilege you and I will ever have in this world as Christians is to give out the Word of God. There is nothing quite like being chosen by God Himself to teach the Word of God properly, correctly and completely. However, it creates a tremendous responsibility, also. That is the entire plan of the Christian life.

Just so we’re clear: I have no secular ideations or ambition; particularly since there are no solutions to the problems we have in this world. Honestly, there must be something wrong in the head of anyone who wants to be the so-called “*leader of the free world*” — but — when we are

in Christ and doing His work, He always causes us to triumph. Whether or not anyone ever accepts Christ as the result of our preaching, we still win – every time; and I belabor this point because it is *so, so, so* important to know that you are a savor of death to those who perish. If you have read these safari reports, and you continue to reject Christ, then I am the worst enemy you will ever have on this earth; I am simply *NOT* your friend. The reason is because you can never go into the presence of God and say you didn't hear the Gospel taught properly, correctly and completely. You heard it, my beloved – whether or not you reject it is your problem and responsibility – not mine – because you're in the triumphal procession; irrespective of whether we understand it, agree with it, accept it, like it – or not. Some are going to hear God's calling and accept Christ as their Savior, and some are not going to listen. They will be judged. Every knee is going to bow – make no mistake about that; Christ will either be our Savior, or our Judge – but not both. It's up to us. The incense of the Word of God is going up now – and I am not corrupting it – I'm giving it to you in loving sincerity – exactly as it has been revealed to me....

III

¹ ***Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?***

² ***Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:***

³ ***Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.***

⁴ ***And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:***

~ We are reaching the highest highs in this section of Scripture! My credentials to teach you the Word of God just happen to come from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself – Personally. Bible college training, missionary training, seminary attendance, college degrees, letters of recommendation and church leadership are as worthless as they can possibly be if the Lord Jesus Christ does not set His seal of approval upon me – and He has –

according to His promises. The proof I have is sound doctrine; in the form of letters and messages from all over the world revealing the commands and precepts of Christ have been written in the fleshy places on many hearts!

Lives are being changed and blessed, wrecked homes are being repaired, and the lost are accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as a direct result of this so-called safari. Even intellectually, these factual truths can be determined to be the Word of God; but, I *KNOW* this is the Word of God and I *KNOW* I am giving it out as God Himself has instructed me to. I have many epistles out there reading His Word today; and that is an undeniable fact of my Christian service. I thank God for that, and I thank God for those people. Likewise, the Corinthians were Paul's epistles. What a beautiful picture we have set before us today in this report. Taste of the Lord and see if He is good – I *DARE* you....

⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

~ If you haven't sensed the weakness in this poor Bible teacher named Andrew, then you aren't reading these reports right. Paul says, "... *when I am weak is when I am strong.*" God isn't looking for a big and strong somebody to preach His Word; in fact, most so-called Christians are *too* strong for God to use in *ANY* way. I'm surprised God didn't pass me by a long time ago, quite frankly. God chooses the weak things of this world – little, insignificant things – like me. See, our sufficiency is of God and Him alone....

⁶ Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

⁷ But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

⁸ How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

⁹ For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

¹⁰ For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

¹¹ For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

¹² Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

¹³ And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

¹⁴ But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition with a contrast that begins in verse six. We are now ministers of the New Covenant. When Paul says, “....*the letter*....” he is talking about the Old Testament; specifically, the law. The Mosaic Law condemns us, without question – it *NEVER* gives life. No one has ever been saved by the keeping of the law – not even Moses – and neither will you. The law is a ministration of condemnation and death. Moses was a murderer; David broke it all but, yet, David was a man after God’s own heart! The law that was written in stone says you and I are guilty sinners who deserve the death penalty. The Spirit giveth life; and that is the beautiful, picturesque contrast Paul is painting with his words.

The glory that was on Moses’ face and caused him to put on the veil was diminishing and disappearing – and that means the law, my friends. Most people erroneously believe Moses’ face was shining in glory so much that he had to wear a veil. Well, that just doesn’t happen to be Scripturally accurate. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, after direct contact with God, his face was shining; but that began to diminish as he mingled among the children of Israel. The veil was worn so they didn’t see the glory

fading away. And there came a day when there was no more glory shining on Moses' face!

The Old Testament is glorious; but the New Testament exceeds in glory — because of the Lord Jesus Christ and the grace He offers us now. Believe me, bringing an animal to be killed every time you sinned was a gory, bloody, monotonous and gruesome event. Today, we have a Face that shines in glory — and we're going to learn all about that Face in our next report; the Face of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you and I will simply behold Him in this hour of darkness, we can draw close to God and be transformed entirely. So many so-called Christians are all wrapped up in carnal activities and secular action that they haven't looked at Jesus recently. Some have never seen Him properly at all — and how tragic that really is ~

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