

Parson to Person
2 Corinthians 5 – Part 7
(Defense Continued)

“For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5:12–15).

Defense Continued

As Paul continues his defense for perseverance in ministry, he returns again to self-defense. It was well known that there were false teachers and distractors who were working to dissuade the Corinthians from confidence in Paul and his co-laborers (see 2 Corinthians 1:12–14, 2:17, 3:1–6, 4:5). However, he added a little turning of the tables by giving the Corinthians some reason to go forward using an apologetic offensive toward his adversaries. He wrote, *“that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart”* (vs. 12). Moreover, he wrote, *“For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you”* (vs. 13), suggesting that he and his coworkers would be “insane” to persevere in ministry—unless all they endured was for the Lord. Additionally, the fruit of their labors proved them *“of sound mind”* for the Corinthians themselves proved their work effective. After all, he wrote, *“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart”* (2 Corinthians 3:2–3).

Not to be overly self-focused here, but the same would be true for me, my family, and others who have attended or served here at Candlelight. Just yesterday my granddaughter Ella told me that she had been asked what her grandfather did for a living. When giving her answer she was told “oh, we really don’t like him.” Think about how hard that is on my kids, and grandkids.

As many of you know, those in ministry are persecuted—some to the point of death; others suffer death threats, are marginalized, gossiped about, etc. However, we who serve, do so for the glory of God—and for the saints. *“For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again”* (vss. 14–15).

More on Motivation

Paul’s defense included a bit more related to his motivation for ministry. He already mentioned that *“Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men”* (11a), but then added, *“if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again”* (vss. 14b–15).

On these verses we should consider the following:

1) Paul believed that it is awe inspiring and terrifying to stand before the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:11a *“Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men”*

- I. Awe inspiring for the believer.
- II. Terrifying for the unbeliever.

2) Paul taught that all men need a savior, for all men are born dead in trespasses and sin.

- a. Romans 3:23 *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*
- b. Romans 6:23 *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
- c. Romans 5:12–21 *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

3) Jesus died for the sins of the whole world.

- a. 1 John 2:2 *“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”*
- b. Hebrews 7:25–27 *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.”*

4) Only those who hear and believe the Gospel have forgiveness of sins.

- a. Acts 10:43 *“To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.”*
- b. John 8:24 *“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”*
- c. John 16:8–11 *“And when He [the Holy Spirit] has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”*

5) *“That those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again”* (vss. 14–15).

- a. Galatians 2:20 *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

- b. 2 Timothy 2:11 *“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him.”*
- c. Romans 6:5 *“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.”*
- d. 1 Thessalonians 5:9–10 *“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”*

There is more of the defense Paul provided. We will continue next week.

I love you all,
Pastor Paul