

II CORINTHIANS 1:1-11

INTRODUCTION...

- **THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**
 - Our desire to is to teach through the whole Bible Genesis to Revelation
 - **Acts 20:27** – “**For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.**”
 - We have finished I Corinthians - and will now move on to II Corinthians...

THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS...

- **THE AUTHOR OF II CORINTHIANS...**
 - Paul – the same Paul who whose life we followed from Acts chapter 13 to 28
 - Paul who wrote the book of I Corinthians (*14 total epistles in the New Testament*)
 - He opens the letter with his greeting – “**Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ...**”
- **CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE CORINTHIAN EPISTLES...**
 - **Acts 18** - Paul began his second missionary Journey - arriving in Corinth...
 - He was in Corinth for 1-½ years - it was at this time Paul planted the church...
 - After he left Corinth he returned to Jerusalem - then to his home church of Antioch...
 - **Acts 19-20** - Paul went out on his 3rd missionary journey...
 - He arrived in Ephesus (*modern day Turkey*) - and stayed there three years...
 - While in Ephesus Paul had several visitors come from Corinth...
 - They told him about all the problems that were occurring in the church...
 - So Paul wrote the book of I Corinthians to correct the error in the church...
 - He gave the letter to Timothy to deliver to the church...
 - While waiting for a reply - Paul heard about more problems with the church...
 - So he went to Corinth (*during his 3 years in Ephesus*) - to address the church personally
 - **II Corinthians 2:1** - “**I decided I would not bring you grief with another painful visit.**”
 - He then wrote a 2nd letter to the church - often called the ‘severe letter’...
 - **II Corinthians 2:4** - a sharp stern letter of rebuke - given to Titus to take to Corinth...
 - The 2nd journey / and 2nd letter are not recorded in the Bible...
 - Paul left Ephesus and traveled north to Philippi...
 - He got word from Titus that the church of Corinth had repented at the 2nd letter...
 - It was then - AD 55 - that Paul wrote this 2nd Epistle to the church of Corinth...
- **OVERVIEW ...**
 - 13 Chapters / 257 verses – the Book of II Corinthians...
 - Paul had 2 main purposes in writing his epistle to the church...
 - 1st - To express his joy at how they had obeyed the first epistle to them...
 - I Corinthians was written as a rebuke to a carnal church - get right with God!
 - II Corinthians was an encouragement and comfort to a church that had repented...
 - The book of II Corinthians is the least doctrinal of all Paul’s epistles...
 - It contains more of his personal testimony and experiences than any other epistle...

- 2nd - In defense against the false teachers flooding into Corinth...
 - Warning about certain doctrinal errors / instruction for Christians
 - To defend his apostleship against legalistic teachers who sought to bring bondage...
- o Outline – we will TRY to cover about ½ a chapter each week...
 - **I Corinthians 1:1-11** - Greetings of Paul to the church...
 - **I Corinthians 1:12-7:16** - Paul's defense of his apostleship - his love for Corinth...
 - **I Corinthians 8:1-9:15** - Instructions for the collection for Jerusalem...
 - **I Corinthians 10:1-13:14** - More defense of Paul's apostleship...

GREETING TO THE CHURCH IN CORINTH... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST - THE CHURCH OF GOD... vs. 1-2**
 - o Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ - with Timothy...
 - Paul had written I Corinthians to correct numerous problems in the church...
 - Many did not like the things Paul was saying - so they tried to discredit him...
 - Timothy was also not popular with the church because he delivered the letter...
 - If Paul was not an Apostle - representative of Jesus - did not have to listen to him...
 - Paul was an Apostle of Jesus Christ...
 - The word 'apostle' simply means someone who is 'sent out' to preach the Gospel...
 - **The picture is that of an ambassador - a representative of God to the world...**
 - **Sent out to share the Good News - the hope of salvation through Jesus!**
 - Certainly Paul was 'sent out' from the church in Antioch - **Acts 13:1-5**
 - **The calling of an Apostle is still alive in the church today - Ephesians 4:11...**
 - **God 'sends us out' to tell others - our family - friends at work/school about Jesus!**
 - Paul was the 12th Apostle - replaced Judas - chosen by Jesus - **Acts 9:3...**
 - Jesus came to Paul on the road - as he was going to imprison and kill believers!
 - Chosen by Jesus to be the Apostle to the Gentiles - **I Timothy 1:11**
 - Chosen to be an example of the power of the Grace of God - **I Timothy 1:16**
 - **If God can choose to save a sinner as bad as Paul - murdered Christians...**
 - **Then no one is beyond the reach of God's grace - God can save/use anyone!**
 - o To the church of God at Corinth with the saints in Achaia (*modern day Greece*)...
 - The church of God is not a building - it is not a particular denomination...
 - There is only one church of God - the Body of Christ...
 - No matter what name - no matter what traditions - we are all part of God's church!
 - **We are the church of God - in the bukid of Himamaylan - part of Jesus' church!**
 - The church in Corinth was far from perfect - but they were still saints!
 - **We get the wrong idea about 'saints' (*the word means holy - or set apart*)**
 - **We think people become saints because of what they did - good works/miracles...**
 - **In fact it is not what we do - it is what God did that makes us saints...**
 - **We are saints - 'holy' / set apart - because of what Jesus did on the cross for us!**
 - **If God can look at the church in Corinth - as see them as saints - there is hope for us!**
 - **We also have our days - when we are immoral - rebellious...**
 - **But God looks down on us - and sees Jesus - and calls us saints!**

- o Grace to you and peace...
 - The Grace of God...
 - Judgment is getting what I deserve - mercy is not getting what I deserve...
 - But Grace is getting what I do not deserve - a free gift from God...
 - We earned the right to go to hell through our sin and rebellion - judgment...
 - Instead God gave us the incredible gift of righteousness and heaven - through Jesus!
 - Peace with God...
 - Before we were saved - we lived in expectation of God's wrath and judgment
 - There was no peace in our lives - only the fear of death - and punishment...
 - **Hebrews 10:27** - "There will be nothing to look forward to but the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies."
 - When we have the Grace of God - the free gift of salvation - we have peace with God!
 - You cannot have peace - rest in the knowledge we are forgiven - without grace...
- **2ND - COMFORT FROM GOD... vs. 3-7**
 - o The comfort of God...
 - The word comfort is used 6 times in these 4 verses / 25 times in the book...
 - This is a key word - and a key theme of the book of II Corinthians...
 - The word means - 'to call along side' - to encourage / build up / strengthen...
 - We as saints are called to 'come along side' others and encourage them in their walk...
 - The problem in many churches is people don't comfort - they want to tear down...
 - If we tear them down - to somehow we feel like we are better / more righteous...
 - Christians have a tendency to judge others - quick to notice other's faults...
 - 'You go to church - you believe in Jesus - and you do that...'
 - It seems rather than healing the wounded - Christians try to finish them off!
 - But God does not call us to tear down our brothers - but in stead to comfort them!
 - o Three reasons why we should comfort others...
 - 1st - Because God gives us comfort!
 - God is the Father of mercies - He does not give us what we deserve - judgment...
 - And because we have not received the judgment of God - we are comforted...
 - o God does condemn us when we make mistakes - he forgives us!
 - o We have the comfort of knowing that we are saved - we are going to heaven!
 - o If God has comforted us - then we should also likewise comfort others...
 - So often people look for comfort in all the wrong places...
 - o They think if only we had million pesos - I would be comforted...
 - o If only I had the right job / the perfect relationship - I will be comfortable...
 - o We have a God shaped hole in our heart - He is only one who can fill it!
 - 2nd - We receive comfort so that we can comfort others!
 - We are going to go through hard times - so that we can comfort others...
 - A number of years ago I had to go and tell a family their little boy died...
 - I had not idea what to say - because I had no idea what it felt like to loose a child...
 - The best person to comfort you - is someone who has been through it!

- 3rd - The result of comfort - hope...
 - Life is not easy - everyone has trials and difficulties that they face...
 - It is easy to get distracted / overwhelmed - and get our focus off of Jesus...
 - But as God comforts us - reminds us of His mercy and grace...
 - Then we are able to comfort others with that same hope - point them back to Jesus!
- 3RD - DELIVERANCE BY GOD... vs. 8-11
 - o God wants us to understand the reason for trials...
 - Paul uses an example from his own life - a trial that came in Asia...
 - Likely referring to the riot he caused in Ephesus in **Acts 19**...
 - It was the month of May - the festival of Artemis - the goddess of the Ephesians...
 - Paul knew thousands of pagans would be flooding into the city - people to preach to!
 - But there were also many enemies - in particular the idol maker - Demetrius...
 - Paul ended up causing a riot in the theatre of over 25,000 people - **Acts 19:28-41**
 - He tried to go in and preach Jesus to the enraged mob - but his friends kept him out...
 - If he had gone in the crowds would have beaten him to death!
 - o The Gospel is not a message of an easy life - it is all about perspective...
 - **II Corinthians 4:17** – “For our present troubles are quite small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever!”
 - What are we looking to - are we looking to this life - or eternal life...
 - If our eyes are only on this life – we will not understand the reasons for trials...
 - o The purpose of trials and difficulties (3 reasons)...
 - 1st - We need help learning not to trust in ourselves - **II Corinthians 1:8-10**
 - Pressed above measure - beyond strength - the sentence of death...
 - When hard times come - our first reaction is to look to depend on us...
 - God can ‘turn up the heat’ - till we can no longer handle our problems...
 - So that we would learn not to trust in ourselves - but instead trust in God!
 - 2nd - Because we find Strength in Weakness - **II Corinthians 12:9-10**
 - We pride ourselves in our strength - what is our strength in comparison to God’s...
 - In truth we are weak – but it is in our weakness we find true strength...
 - When we realize we are weak we learn to depend on God’s strength!
 - 3rd - When understanding the reason for trials - we have deep roots...
 - God does not just deliver us once - past / present / and future...
 - When we realize that we gain GREAT confidence in the Lord...
 - **Colossians 2:7** – “Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with thanksgiving for all he has done.” (NLT)
 - Like a tree that has grown on the weathered windward side of the hill...
 - We become unmovable / unshakable / grounded and rooted in Christ!
 - o The deliverance of God makes us thankful...
 - Paul knew many in the church in Corinth were praying for him...
 - So he was not alone - there were many who were comforting him in his trials...
 - And when everyone saw how God delivered him - they would all be thankful!

- As we stand with our brothers - comforting them in their trials...
- We will also be able to rejoice with them - as we see God do a work in their lives!