

# Fortitude, Process, & Blessing

*Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece*

*Lord's Day December 10th, Anno Domini 2023*

Scripture Reading - 2 Cor 13      Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Psalms 119 Q & R

## **Outline & Features of 2 Corinthians**

A book about Comfort [strength giving] through Suffering<sup>3</sup>

### **I) 1-9 - Part 1 - Pleased (With the Majority)**

- 1) 1:1-24 - The Greeting, Thanksgiving, & Defense
- 2) 2:1-17 - The Excommunicated Offender and the Continuing Triumph of the Gospel
- 3) 3:1-11 - Proof of the Apostle's Fitness for His Work, and Its Nature
- 4) 3:12-18 - The Clarity and Freedom of the Gospel as Contrasted with the Obscurity of the Law
- 5) 4:1-18 - God's Treasures in Jars of Clay
- 6) 5:1-10 - The State of Believers After Death
- 7) 5:11-21 - Paul's Defense of Himself Against the Charge of Self-commendation (Verses 11-21)
- 8) 6:1-18 - The Apostle's Faithfulness and Love
- 9) 7:1-16 - The Effect Produced on the Church in Corinth by the Apostle's Previous Letter, and His Consequent Satisfaction and Joy
- 10) 8:1-24 - Exhortation to Be Generous to the Poor
- 11) 9:1-15 - Continuation of the Discourse in the Preceding Chapter on Making Collections for the Saints

### **II) 10-13 - Part 2 - Most Seriously Displeased (with 'the Super Apostles' & Minority)**

- 12) 10:1-18 - Paul's Assertion of His Authority and the Vindication of His Apostolic Prerogative
- 13) 11:1-33 - Reasons for His Self-commendation; Paul's Labors and Sufferings
- 14) 12:1-21 - Paul's Revelations and Visions
- 15) 13:1-14 - Paul's Warnings and Exhortations<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Outline edited from work from chapter headers in Charles Hodge 2 Corinthians, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1995)

## TEXT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 13:1-14 - Paul's Warnings and Exhortations

**13:1 This will be the third time I am coming to you. “By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.” 2 I have told you before, and foretell as if I were present the second time, and now being absent I write to those who have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare— 3 since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. 4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.**

### 1) Process

- a) Third series of in person discussions - the second series of discussions about the issues.
  - i) These issues were already public, but Paul had not brought charges to deal with some of these things in the church courts yet.
- b) Establishing the evidentiary basis.
  - i) Even an Apostle is required to follow the evidentiary process to bring charges to a public court.
- c) A Public Trial - He will not spare
  - i) Paul does not just pass judgment as some bishop who is the court. He is prosecuting.
  - ii) He asserts his intention to bring things to the church court.
  - iii) Investigative Powers of the Court - Church Courts have the right to delegate investigative work to 2 or 3 court members to look into a matter and then report back as witnesses.
    - (1) Individuals do not have investigative powers to require the giving of information.
  - iv) Habeas Corpus - The prosecution (the offended) must establish some claim of observable sin to prevent trials from being used as fishing expeditions. A clear charge about some action or inaction being a violation of some particular law or a necessary inference of the law (with the arguments to show the basis for the claim of sin) is necessary for a person to be required to appear for trial in order to prevent harassment or weaponization of conflict resolution and courts.

- v) Presumption of Innocence - The prosecution (offended) must establish guilt by Biblical evidentiary standards before a guilty verdict.
- vi) Settled malice in rejecting the law OR Cankered corruption of doctrine OR Public Sin OR Criminal / Grievous Sin
- d) Public process is a display of might and a risk because of the principle of restitution and punishment of wrongful accusations
- e) V.4 - Paul asserts that the weakness of Christ in dying and the power of God in resurrection will both be displayed in Paul & the apostolic band.

**5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified [do not stand the test]. 6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.**

2) Self Examination

- a) Are you in the faith? Do you know that Jesus is in you?
  - i) How to Test
    - (1) Do I understand the Gospel?
    - (2) Do I believe the Gospel? Is the Gospel True?
    - (3) You can be as certain that you are saved as you are that you understand and believe the Gospel.
  - ii) How not to Test
    - (1) Fruit of Good Works
      - (a) Good works do not prove you are saved
      - (b) The absence of good works and the presence of sin should cause you to examine yourself - it is right for others to call you to examine yourself based upon this evidence though and to not believe you that you are a believer if you have unrepentant sin and/or fail to bear fruit.

3) Other Examination - Credible Profession & Answerable Behavior

- a) Wise Words
- b) Holiness of relationship
- c) Righteousness of action or inaction

**7 Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do what is honorable, though we may seem disqualified. 8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete. 10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.**

- 4) Blamelessness - Do no observable evil
- 5) Duty to be honorable regardless of Paul's Apostolic Band
- 6) V. 8 - Duty to advance the Truth
- 7) WSC Question 76: Which is the ninth commandment?

Answer: The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Question 77: What is required in the ninth commandment?

Answer: The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness bearing.

Question 78: What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

Answer: The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own, or our neighbor's, good name.

- 8) V. 9 - Our weakness - opportunity for God to show his strength. The Strength of others we help - the glory to God for their strength in the message and not in us as messengers. We pray for the strength of others and for their maturity and completeness (full equipping)
- 9) V. 10 - Clear writing can help to prevent the need for sharpness in person. We must be willing to back it up in person or repent of the unnecessary sharpness.
- 10) Authority - for edification and not for destruction

**11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.**

**12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.**

**13 All the saints greet you.**

**14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion [fellowship] of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.**

11) Greetings

- a) Become Complete.
- b) Be of Good Strength (Fortitude)
- c) Be of One Mind
- d) Live in peace
- e) The God of Love and Peace will be with you.

12) Trinitarian Benediction

- a) Grace
- b) Love
- c) Communion