

SERIES: II CORINTHIANS: THE HEART AND HUMILITY OF A MAN OF GOD, WEEK 49

TITLE: THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE

TEXT: II CORINTHIANS 12:11-13

INTRODUCTION: (1) THERE ARE GROUPS UNDER THE HEADING OF CHRISTIANITY THAT BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE STILL APOSTLES IN THE CHURCH TODAY.

\* NOW THESE GROUPS BELIEVE THAT THE 12 APOSTLES AND PAUL WERE NOT UNIQUE IN THEIR OFFICE AND POSITION AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE FIRST CENTURY, AS EPHESIANS 2:20 SAYS: (QUOTE IT).

\*\* IN FACT, SOME EVEN CLAIM MORE POWER AND IMPACT ON THE WORLD THAN THE APOSTLES OF JESUS CHRIST THEMSELVES.

\*\*\* NOW STILL OTHERS BELIEVE IN WHAT IS CALLED APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION, THAT THE APOSTLES, AND PRIMARILY PETER WHO THEY SAY BECAME THE BISHOP OF ROME, PASSED DOWN HIS AUTHORITY TO INDIVIDUALS CALLED POPES.

\*\*\*\* AND THE WORD POPE MEANS FATHER, THE HOLY FATHER, THE VICAR OF CHRIST ON THE EARTH.

(2) FOR THE WORD VICAR COMES FROM THE LATIN WORD VICARIOUS WHICH MEANS INSTEAD OF. AND THE POPE IS THE VICAR OF CHRIST, HE IS THE ONE THAT HAS THE SAME POWER AND AUTHORITY THAT CHRIST HAD OVER THE CHURCH WHEN HE WAS HERE ON **EARTH, "INSTEAD OF CHRIST."**

\* AND THE POPE SPEAKS EX CATHEDRA, IN LATIN MEANING THAT HE SPEAKS FROM THE CHAIR, THE SEAT OF AUTHORITY, INFALLIBLY. AND AS OF THURSDAY THE SEAT IS VACANT.

\*\* AND OBVIOUSLY THERE IS A LOT OF CONFUSION AND ERROR PROPAGATED ABOUT APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION AND THAT THERE ARE ACTUALLY APOSTLES ALIVE TODAY.

\* HOWEVER, CONFUSION AND ERROR OVER THE UNIQUE ROLE OF THE APOSTLES IS NOTHING NEW. FOR THE EARLY CHURCH HAD TO CONTEND WITH THOSE WHO FALSELY CLAIMED TO BE APOSTLES.

\*\* IN FACT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE TRUE HEAD OF THE CHURCH COMMENDED THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS BECAUSE THEY ACCORDING TO REVELATION 2:2 - **"PUT TO THE TEST THOSE WHO CALL(ED) THEMSELVES APOSTLES, AND THEY WERE NOT, AND...FOUND THEM TO BE FALSE."**

\*\*\* NOW THERE WERE EVEN FALSE APOSTLES IN THE FIRST CENTURY. AND THANKFULLY THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS DEALT WITH THEM.

\*\*\*\* HOWEVER, AS WE HAVE LEARNED IN THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS, THERE WERE FALSE APOSTLES IN THE FIRST CENTURY AT CORINTH.

**2. AND WE KNOW THAT, FOR THAT'S WHAT PAUL ACTUALLY CALLED THE FALSE TEACHERS AT CORINTH. FOR IN II CORINTHIANS 11:13-15, PAUL SAID: (QUOTE THEM).**

\* NOW SADLY, SOME OF THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT HAVE THE DISCERNMENT THAT THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS WOULD HAVE, FOR THE FALSE APOSTLES THERE HAD THEIR EAR.

\*\* AND THESE SO CALLED SUPER APOSTLES WERE BRAGGING ABOUT THEIR QUALIFICATIONS, THEIR PEDIGREE, THEIR TALENTS AND THEIR LETTERS OF COMMENDATION.

\*\*\* AND THE CORINTHIANS STARTED TO BELIEVE SOME OF THEIR LIES ABOUT PAUL, SAYING HE COULD NOT BE AN APOSTLE BECAUSE OF HIS LACK OF AUTHORITY, HIS WEAKNESSES, HIS LACK OF PRESENCE AND HIS LACK OF TRAINING AND PEDIGREE.

\*\*\*\* AND SADLY, SOME OF THE CORINTHIANS BELIEVED THEM.

3. AND PAUL RELUCTANTLY HAD TO DEFEND HIMSELF AND QUOTE BOAST ABOUT HIS QUALIFICATIONS WHICH PAUL DESPISED DOING.

**\* AND HIS QUOTE "BOASTING" WAS NOT THE PRIDEFUL BOASTING THAT WE THINK ABOUT WHEN SOMEONE LIFTS UP SELF IN PRIDE AND ARROGANCE.**

**\*\* PAUL'S "BOASTING" WAS LIFTING UP GOD'S GRACE THAT GIFTED HIM AND EMPOWERED HIM THROUGH GOD'S CALL TO BE AN APOSTLE. BUT STILL, PAUL WAS NOT COMFORTABLE IN DOING THAT AND FELT LIKE A FOOL.**

\*\*\* SO IN OUR TEXT TODAY, PAUL CONTINUES TO DEAL WITH FALSE APOSTLES, AND HE WILL TALK ABOUT **"THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE"** WHICH IS THE TITLE OF OUR SERMON TODAY.

**\*\*\*\* AND LIKE PAUL'S DAY, THERE ARE MANY FALSE APOSTLES TODAY, BUT UNLIKE PAUL'S DAY WHEN THERE WERE TRUE APOSTLES, WE HAVE NONE TODAY.**

4. YET IN OUR DAY, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY ARE. AND WE WILL FIND OUT FROM OUR STUDY, THAT THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE ARE NON-EXISTENT IN THEIR LIVES.

\* WITH THAT SAID, AS WE WORK OUR WAY THROUGH II CORINTHIANS 12:11-**13**, **WE'LL** FOCUS ON 3 MAIN POINTS.

\*\* NO. 1 THE SADNESS OF PAUL IN THAT THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT DEFEND HIS APOSTLESHIP TO THE FALSE APOSTLES, V. 11; NO. 2 THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLES, V. 12; AND NO. 3 THE SUPPORT THAT PAUL NEVER TOOK FROM THE CORINTHIANS, SPEAKING OF THE FACT HE NEVER RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THEM, V. 13.

\*\*\* AND WITH THOSE 3 POINTS AS OUR GUIDE,  
**LOOK AT V. 11 PLEASE, WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR**  
FIRST POINT, THE SADNESS.

I. THE SADNESS, (READ V. 11)

A. NOW AS WE HAVE OBSERVED, BOASTING  
**WAS NOT PAUL'S THING. HE DESPISED IT.**

\* AND THOUGH IT WAS NECESSARY, HIS  
DISCOMFORT WITH BOASTING REASSERTS  
ITSELF AND HE DECLARES AT THE BEGINNING OF  
**V. 1, "I HAVE BECOME FOOLISH."**

\*\* AND THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT PAUL  
EXPRESSES FOOLISHNESS IN HIS BOASTING, HE  
HAS DONE IT ABOUT 5 TIMES BEGINNING IN  
CHAPTER 11 VERSE 1.

\*\*\* AND IN USING THE TERM FOOLISH, PAUL  
AGAIN IS SAYING THIS WAS VERY DISTASTEFUL  
FOR HIM TO HAVE TO TALK ABOUT HIS  
QUALIFICATIONS AS AN APOSTLE. HE WAS  
WEARY OF DOING IT.

\*\*\* AND YOU MAY BE THINKING, THEN WHY DID HE CONTINUE?

1. AND THE ANSWER IS HIS LOVE FOR THIS CHURCH MAKES HIM DO WHAT HE IS UNCOMFORTABLE IN DOING TO TRY TO PROTECT THEM FROM THESE FALSE APOSTLES.

\* HOWEVER, PAUL STATES AS WE CONTINUE ON IN V. 11, IT WAS THE CORINTHIANS THEMSELVES WHO COMPELLED HIM TO QUOTE "BOAST," THEIR SILENCE FORCING HIM TO SPEAK.

\*\* IT IS TO SAY, HIS QUOTE FOOLISHNESS WAS FORCED UPON HIM BY THE DISLOYALTY OF THE CORINTHIANS.

\*\*\* FOR IF INSTEAD OF RECEIVING THE SLANDERS OF THE FALSE APOSTLES, THE **CORINTHIANS HAD RUSHED TO PAUL'S DEFENSE**, HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO DESCEND TO THE FOLLY OF BOASTING IN ORDER TO RESCUE THEM.



\*\*\*\* IN OTHER WORDS, INSTEAD OF HAVING TO DEFEND HIMSELF TO THE FALSE APOSTLES PAUL SHOULD HAVE BEEN COMMENDED AND DEFENDED BY THE CORINTHIANS.

2. BUT OBVIOUSLY THEY REMAINED SILENT. THEY DID NOT SPEAK UP FOR THE ONE THAT BROUGHT THEM THE GOSPEL, STARTED THAT CHURCH AND SPENT 18 MONTHS WITH THEM TO ESTABLISH THEM IN THE FAITH.

\* AND THE APPLICATION IS TO BE SILENT WHEN LIES AND SLANDER ARE CAST ON THE LIVES AND MINISTRIES OF GODLY MEN, OF FAITHFUL MEN IS TO SHARE IN THE GUILT OF THEIR DETRACTORS.

\*\* PURITAN MATTHEW HENRY SAID AND I QUOTE: **"IT IS A DEBT WE OWE TO GOOD MEN** TO STAND UP IN THE DEFENSE OF THEIR REPUTATION; AND WE ARE UNDER SPECIAL OBLIGATION TO THOSE WE HAVE RECEIVED BENEFIT BY, ESPECIALLY SPIRITUAL BENEFIT, TO **OWN THEM AS INSTRUMENTS IN GOD'S HAND** OF GOOD TO US, AND TO VINDICATE THEM WHEN THEY ARE CALUMNIATED (KA - LAM-NE-ATED) LIT. MALIGNED, TO UTTER MALICIOUSLY **FALSE STATEMENTS BY OTHERS."** (END QUOTE)

\*\*\* AND PAINFULLY, THIS HAD TO CAUSE PAUL SADNESS, THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT DEFEND HIM, THEREFORE TO PROTECT THE CORINTHIANS PAUL HAD TO DEFEND HIS APOSTOLIC CREDENTIALS.

\*\*\*\* BUT THEN NOTICE IN THE LAST PART OF V. 11, PAUL COMMUNICATES IN DEFENDING HIMSELF SINCE THE CORINTHIANS ARE NOT DOING IT, THAT HE WAS IN NO RESPECT INFERIOR TO THE MOST EMINENT APOSTLES.

**3. AND WE SAW THE PHRASE “THE MOST EMINENT APOSTLES” BACK IN CHAPTER 11 VERSE 5, TRANSLATED SUPER APOSTLES IN THE ESV AND NIV.**

\* AND PAUL SARCASTICALLY CALLS THEM SUPER APOSTLES FOR MOST LIKELY THIS WAS HOW THEY SAW THEMSELVES OR BILLED THEMSELVES THAT WAY WITH ALL THEIR PRIDEFUL BOASTING.

\*\* THE FALSE TEACHERS WERE THE QUOTE **“SUPER APOSTLES.”**

\*\*\* HOWEVER, PAUL SAYS IN CONTRAST, **“I AM A NOBODY.”**

\*\*\*\* AND THIS CAN BE TAKEN IN ONE OF TWO WAYS.

**4. THAT THE SUPER APOSTLES CALLED PAUL “A NOBODY,” A NOTHING KIND OF PERSON.**

\* OR, AND THIS IS HOW I LEAN, PAUL IN HIS HUMILITY DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A NOBODY, AS NOTHING.

\*\* PAUL WILLINGLY LOWERS HIMSELF BY SAYING THAT HE IS NOTHING AND THEN REVEALS HIS PROPER PERSPECTIVE, HIS HUMILITY THAT HE IS NOTHING IN AND OF HIMSELF.

\*\*\* WHICH TAKES US BACK TO I CORINTHIANS 15:10 WHERE HE SAID. ALSO QUOTE ROMANS 12:3.

\*\*\*\* NOW IN APPLICATION ONCE AGAIN, PAUL HAD PROPER PERSPECTIVE. HE HAD LIFE BECAUSE GOD WILLED IT, HE HAD GIFTS AND APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY BECAUSE GOD WILLED IT, AND HE WAS SAVED BECAUSE GOD WILLED IT AND HE SERVED BECAUSE GOD WILLED IT AND EMPOWERED HIM. THROUGH SAVING GRACE AND STRENGTHENING GRACE, PAUL WAS WHAT HE WAS.

5. AND HOW COUNTERCULTURAL IS THAT, HOW OTHER WORLD MINDED IS THIS?

\* I MEAN, IF PAUL LIVED IN OUR DAY, SOME CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGIST WOULD COME UP TO PAUL AND SAY, **"YOU NEED COUNSELING!"**

\*\* PAUL YOU SHOULD NEVER SAY I AM A NOBODY, THAT YOU ARE NOTHING, YOU NEED MORE SELF-ESTEEM, A CODE WORD TODAY FOR PRIDE.

\*\*\* BUT PAUL REALIZED HE WAS NOTHING OUTSIDE OF CHRIST. THAT HIS WORTH AND VALUE IS IN CHRIST. THAT HE COULD AS PHILIPPIANS 4:13 SAYS: (QUOTE IT).

\*\*\*\* AND BELOVED, LET US NOT BOW TO THE SELF ESTEEM CULT, BUT BOW TO JESUS CHRIST WHO HAS SAVED US BY GRACE, WHO ENABLES US TO SERVE BY GRACE AND TO WORSHIP HIM, QUOTE JOHN 15:5.

6. BUT ALSO LET ME REMIND YOU OF WHAT PAUL SAID EARLIER IN II CORINTHIANS 3:5 – **“NOT THAT WE ARE ADEQUATE IN OURSELVES TO CONSIDER ANYTHING AS COMING FROM OURSELVES, BUT OUR ADEQUACY IS FROM GOD.”**

\* AND THEN PAUL SAID IN EPHESIANS 3:7 – **“OF WHICH I WAS MADE A MINISTER, ACCORDING TO THE GIFT OF GOD’S GRACE WHICH WAS GIVEN TO ME ACCORDING TO THE WORKING OF HIS POWER.”**

\*\* AND THEN IN PHILIPPIANS 2:13 THE ESV **SAYS: “FOR IT IS GOD WHO WORKS IN YOU, BOTH TO WILL AND TO WORK FOR HIS GOOD PLEASURE.”**

\*\*\* SO WHO SHOULD GET ALL THE CREDIT, ALL THE GLORY, ALL THE PRAISE, AND ALL THE WORSHIP? PAUL?

\*\*\*\* NO, OUR GREAT SOVEREIGN, SAVING, SUSTAINING GOD. AND PAUL UNDERSTOOD THAT AND MAY WE, BY HIS GRACE.

**7. AND THAT'S WHY PAUL FELT FOOLISH IN TALKING ABOUT HIS CREDENTIALS AS AN APOSTLE, YET HE HAD TO, BECAUSE THE CORINTHIANS DID NOT. AND THAT WAS SAD.**

\* SO IN V. 12 PAUL REMINDS THE CORINTHIANS OF THE SIGNS THAT WERE WROUGHT THROUGH HIM AS AN APOSTLE. LOOK AT V. 12 PLEASE **WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR SECOND POINT TODAY,** THE SIGNS.

II. THE SIGNS, (READ V. 12)

A. NOW HERE IN V. 12, PAUL PRESENTED IRREFUTABLE PROOF THAT HE WAS A GENUINE APOSTLE, THAT IN A WIDER BROADER SENSE, ALSO ESTABLISHES THE UNIQUENESS OF THE APOSTLES AND REMINDS US EVEN PRACTICALLY THAT THERE ARE NO TRUE APOSTLES TODAY.

\* FOR THE APOSTLES HAD A ONE OF A KIND, NON-REPEATABLE AND NON-TRANSFERABLE ROLE IN ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH, EPHESIANS 2:20.

\*\* AND GOD PERFORMED SIGNS, WONDERS AND MIRACLES THROUGH THEM TO AUTHENTICATE THAT THEY WERE SENT BY GOD AND TO ESTABLISH A FOUNDATION FOR THE CHURCH IN ITS BEGINNING INITIAL STAGES.

\*\*\* AND THE GREEK WORD FOR APOSTLE, USED 82 TIMES IN MY BIBLE, LIT. MEANS A MESSENGER, A DELEGATE, OR AN AMBASSADOR.

\*\*\*\* AND IS PRIMARILY USED IN THE N.T. TO TALK ABOUT 14 MEN. THE 12, MATTHIAS AND PAUL.

1. NOW WITH THAT SAID, THE SIGNS THAT WERE THE BENCHMARK, THE STANDARD OR REFERENCE POINT OF A TRUE APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST WERE PERFORMED BY PAUL AT CORINTH.



\* **AND IT'S INTERESTING THAT THE GREEK VERB TRANSLATED "WERE PERFORMED" IS IN THE PASSIVE VOICE EMPHASIZING THAT IT WAS GOD'S POWER WORKING THROUGH PAUL THAT ENABLED AND EMPOWERED HIM TO PERFORM THOSE SIGNS.**

\*\* AND HERE AGAIN, BY PAUL USING THE PASSIVE VOICE, HE IS NOT EXALTING SELF, BUT THE POWER OF GOD WORKING THROUGH HIM. PAUL WAS SO CAREFUL ABOUT THAT. HE **DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO THINK THE** POWER FOR THESE SIGNS AND WONDERS CAME THROUGH HIM.

\*\*\* BUT THAT HE AND THE OTHER APOSTLES **WERE CONDUITS FOR GOD'S POWER, NOT THE** SOURCE TO DO MIRACULOUS THINGS.

\*\*\*\* AND THE CORINTHIANS SAW FIRST HAND THE SIGNS PAUL PERFORMED, WHICH IS ANOTHER REASON THE CORINTHIANS SHOULD HAVE DEFENDED HIM.

2. NOW NOTICE, THAT PAUL USES 3 DIFFERENT WORDS TO DESCRIBE THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLES IN CONTRAST TO FALSE APOSTLES, SPECIFICALLY THE SUPER APOSTLES.

\* AND MURRAY HARRIS IN THE BIBLE EXPOSITORS COMMENTARY ON II CORINTHIANS SAID AT THIS POINT IN LIGHT OF THESE THREE WORDS QUOTE: **"THESE WORDS** DO NOT DESCRIBE 3 TYPES OF MIRACLES BUT MIRACLES IN GENERAL CONSIDERED FROM 3 ASPECTS - THEIR ABILITY TO AUTHENTICATE THE MESSAGE **"SIGNS," EVOKE AWE "WONDER," AND DISPLAY DIVINE POWER "MIGHTY DEEDS."** (END QUOTE)

\*\* AND THE POINT IS, THE SUPERNATURAL MIRACLES DONE BY THE APOSTLES WERE SIGNS POINTING TO THEM AS GENUINE MESSENGERS OF GOD.

\*\*\* THEY WERE WONDERS THAT GENERATED ASTONISHMENT AND AMAZEMENT, DIRECTING **AND DRAWING THE ONLOOKERS' ATTENTION TO** THE MESSAGE THE APOSTLES PROCLAIMED.

\*\*\*\* AND PLEASE UNDERSTAND THIS. SUPERNATURAL SIGN MIRACLES HAVE NEVER BEEN THE NORM IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY.

1. AND THIS SHOULD **BE OBVIOUS FROM PAUL'S** DESIGNATION OF THEM AS THE SIGNS OF A WHAT HERE IN V. 12?

\* THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE.

\*\* AND BELOVED IF THEY WERE COMMONPLACE, THEY COULD HARDLY HAVE DISTINGUISHED THE APOSTLES IN THEIR UNIQUE FUNCTION FROM ORDINARY BELIEVERS.

\*\*\* IT WAS THE RARITY AS WELL AS THEIR UNUSUAL EXTENT, THAT MADE THEM DEFINITIVE UNIQUE SIGNS OF THE APOSTLES. THE SIGNS, WONDERS AND MIRACLES HAVE NEVER BEEN NORMATIVE.

\*\*\*\* HOWEVER, TRUE APOSTLES WERE DISTINGUISHED BY THEM IN SCRIPTURE.

2. FOR EXAMPLE, IN HEBREWS 2:3&4, THE WRITER OF HEBREWS SAID: (QUOTE THEM).

\* AND THEN ACTS 2:43 **SAYS: "EVERYONE KEPT FEELING A SENSE OF AWE; AND MANY WONDERS AND SIGNS WERE TAKING PLACE THROUGH THE APOSTLES."**

\*\* **ACTS 5:12 SAYS: "AT THE HANDS OF THE APOSTLES MANY SIGNS AND WONDERS WERE TAKING PLACE AMONG THE PEOPLE; AND THEY WERE ALL WITH ONE ACCORD IN SOLOMON'S PORTICO."**

\*\*\* **ACTS 19:11 SAYS: "GOD WAS PERFORMING EXTRAORDINARY MIRACLES BY THE HANDS OF PAUL."**

\*\*\*\* AND THEN IN ROMANS 15:17-19 PAUL SAID:  
V. 17 - THEREFORE IN CHRIST JESUS I HAVE FOUND REASON FOR BOASTING IN THINGS PERTAINING TO GOD.

V. 18 - FOR I WILL NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK OF ANYTHING EXCEPT WHAT CHRIST HAS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH ME, RESULTING IN THE OBEDIENCE OF THE GENTILES BY WORD AND DEED,

V. 19 - IN THE POWER OF SIGNS AND WONDERS, IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT; SO THAT FROM JERUSALEM AND ROUND ABOUT AS FAR AS ILLYRICUM I HAVE FULLY PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

3. NOW MY POINT FROM ALL THESE SCRIPTURES IS, THE UNIQUENESS, THE EXTRA-ORDINARY, SUPERNATURAL WORK OF THE APOSTLES AND PAUL JUST JUMPS OFF THE PAGE.

\* AND THE APOSTLES HELD A SPECIAL – UNIQUE, NON-TRANSFERRABLE AND HIGHLY PRIVILEGED PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

\*\* AND APOSTLESHIP WAS NEVER INTENDED TO BE A PERPETUAL INSTITUTION. THEY WERE GIFTED MEN LIKE THE PROPHETS WHO WERE GIVEN TO ESTABLISH THE FOUNDATION OF THE **CHURCH, AND WE DON'T PUT THE FOUNDATION** ON THE 21<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR OF THE CHURCH, 21 CENTURIES LATER.

\*\*\* AND HAVING LAID THAT FOUNDATION FOR THE CHURCH, THE APOSTLES PASSED FROM THE SCENE AT THEIR DEATHS NEVER TO BE REPLACED.

\*\*\*\* AND SIGNS AND WONDERS AND MIRACLES CONFIRMED THAT PAUL WAS A TRUE APOSTLE, AND THE CORINTHIANS SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT, FOR THEY SAW IT FIRST HAND, THOSE THINGS WERE PERFORMED AMONG THEM. AND **THE FALSE APOSTLES COULDN'T DO ANYTHING** LIKE THAT.

4. LIKE RAISE THE DEAD, HEALING SICK PEOPLE OF TERRIBLE THINGS, THINGS THAT COULD BE SEEN AND VERIFIABLE. NOT SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE SAID THEY WERE HEALED OF, THAT COULD NOT BE SEEN LIKE ARTHRITIS, A SORE SHOULDER OR HEARING, BUT YOU STILL HAVE TO HOLLER IN THEIR EAR.

\* AND BELOVED GOD HEALS TODAY, BUT NOT THROUGH SOMEONE WHO HAS THE GIFT. AND QUITE FRANKLY, NORMALLY GOD DOES NOT HEAL, BUT GIVES STRENGTHENING GRACE TO GO THROUGH DISEASE, ETC.

\*\* AND IF SOMEONE HAD THE GIFT OF HEALING WHY NOT GO INTO HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES TO HEAL, THERE ARE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES. WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE DONE IN CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTS WITH EVEN OCCASIONS LIKE A RECENT HEALER WHO CAME TO WALSH UNIVERSITY AND CHARGED PEOPLE TO GET IN. IN FACT 95 DOLLARS!

\*\*\* WHAT DOES THAT TELL YOU? WELL, I THINK THE ANSWER IS CLEAR.

\*\*\*\* BUT I MUST MOVE ON. AND ONE LAST THING IN V. 12, PAUL SAID, THE SIGN OF A TRUE APOSTLE WAS PERFORMED AMONG YOU **"WITH ALL PERSEVERANCE."**

5. AND THIS CHARACTERISTIC ALSO DISTINGUISHED PAUL FROM THE FALSE SUPER APOSTLES. FOR THE WORD PERSEVERANCE LIT. MEANS **"TO REMAIN UNDER," "THE ABILITY TO ENDURE," "TO BE PATIENT."**

\* AND THROUGHOUT HIS MINISTRY TO THE CORINTHIANS, HE NEVER ABANDONED THE **CHURCH, HE DIDN'T GIVE UP ON THEM,** PAUL REMAINED FAITHFUL.

\*\* **AND IT WASN'T JUST** SIGNS THAT GAVE EVIDENCE OF PAUL BEING AN APOSTLE, BUT GREAT PATIENCE WITH AN IMMATURE CHURCH, ENDURING, PERSEVERING WITH THEM.



**\*\*\* AND THAT'S HARD TO DO BECAUSE AT TIMES WHEN PEOPLE DON'T GET IT, YOU WANT TO THROW UP YOUR HANDS AND SAY, I QUIT, I'M NOT DOING THIS ANYMORE. BUT PAUL DIDN'T HE WAS FAITHFUL AND ENDURED AND LOVED THE CORINTHIANS MORE THAN HIMSELF.**

\*\*\*\* AND OH HOW THAT DISTINGUISHED HIM FROM THE SELFISH, SELF-CENTERED, MONEY GRABBING, FAME DRIVEN FALSE APOSTLES.

\*\*\*\* AND THAT GREAT LOVE IS ALSO SHOWN IN V. 13, BY NOT BEING A BURDEN TO THE CORINTHIANS, BY NOT RECEIVING SUPPORT. **LOOK AT V. 13 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR LAST POINT TODAY, THE SUPPORT.**

### III. THE SUPPORT, (READ V. 13)

A. NOW FROM V. 13 WE CAN SURMISE, WE CAN INFER, THAT ONE OF THE MANY SLANDEROUS ACCUSATIONS THE SUPER APOSTLES MADE AGAINST PAUL WAS THAT HIS TREATMENT OF THEM HAD BEEN SELFISHLY SUB-STANDARD, THAT THEY WERE TREATED INFERIORLY, THAT THEIR CHURCH WAS NOT TREATED FAIRLY IN COMPARISON TO THE OTHER CHURCHES PAUL STARTED.

\* THUS THE QUESTION TO BEGIN WITH IN V. 13, **"FOR IN WHAT RESPECT WERE YOU TREATED AS INFERIOR TO THE REST OF THE CHURCHES?"**

\*\* AND WE KNOW FROM OUR STUDY TODAY, HE WAS VERY PATIENT WITH THEM, AND HE LOVED THEM SACRIFICIALLY AND MANIFESTED THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE AMONG THEM.

\*\*\* WHAT MORE COULD THEY WANT? BUT YOU AND I KNOW, TAKERS ARE NEVER GIVEN ENOUGH ATTENTION AND TIME AND LOVE FOR LIFE IS CENTERED AROUND THEMSELVES.

\*\*\*\* SO IN TURN THERE IS VERY LITTLE GRATEFULNESS.

1. AND OBVIOUSLY IN THEIR MEISM APPROACH FELL INTO THE TRAP SET BY THE FALSE TEACHERS THAT SAID, PAUL IS NOT TREATING YOU RIGHT, LIKE HE TREATS THE OTHER CHURCHES.

\* AND YOU KNOW WHAT, THAT WAS PARTIALLY TRUE.

\*\* FOR AS WE MOVE ON IN V. 13, THE ONLY WAY THE CORINTHIANS WERE TREATED DIFFERENTLY WAS THAT PAUL DID NOT BECOME A BURDEN TO THEM; MEANING THE ONLY THING THEY DID NOT GET FROM PAUL WAS A BILL!

\*\*\* PAUL NEVER CHARGED FOR HIS SERVICES LIKE THE FALSE APOSTLES WHOM TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CORINTHIANS IN CHAPTER 11 VERSE 20.

\*\*\*\* AND ALTHOUGH PAUL HAD A RIGHT TO THE **CORINTHIAN'S** FINANCIAL SUPPORT COMMUNICATED IN I CORINTHIANS 9:1-18, PAUL CHOSE NOT TO ACCEPT IT, PREFERRING TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM THE GREEDY MONEY LOVING SUPER APOSTLES.

2. PAUL DID NOT WANT TO BE A BURDEN TO THE CORINTHIANS AND WANTED TO DISTINGUISH HIMSELF FROM THE MONEY-GRABBING FALSE APOSTLES BY NOT RECEIVING THEIR SUPPORT. THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY THAT PAUL TREATED THE CORINTHIANS DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER CHURCHES.

\* WHICH THE FALSE APOSTLES TURNED AROUND **AND SAID PAUL'S** MINISTRY WAS NOT WORTH **ANYTHING, THAT'S WHY HE DID NOT RECEIVE** YOUR MONEY AND HE DOES NOT WANT TO TAKE TIME WITH YOU BECAUSE HE DOES NOT LOVE YOU AND THUS DID NOT WANT TO BE OBLIGATED TO THEM.

\*\* AND THEN IN THE LAST PART OF V. 13, PAUL SAYS SARCASTICALLY, FORGIVE ME THIS WRONG!

\*\*\* FORGIVE ME FOR TRYING TO DO GOOD TO YOU, FORGIVE ME FOR WORKING TO SUPPORT MYSELF, FORGIVE ME FOR MY SELFLESS SACRIFICE. FORGIVE ME FOR MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU. MY BAD, FORGIVE THIS WRONG - SARCASTICALLY.

\*\*\*\* FORGIVE ME FOR NOT SCAMMING YOU LIKE THE FALSE APOSTLES, FORGIVE ME FOR THINKING ABOUT YOU AND PUTTING YOU FIRST OVER MY NEEDS.

**3. YOU KIND OF GET THE SENSE, HE'S SO HURT**  
THAT HIS EMOTIONS START TO BOIL OVER A  
LITTLE AT THAT POINT.

\* FOR AS A TRUE APOSTLE, PROBABLY NO ONE  
WAS MORE SACRIFICIAL TO THEM THAN PAUL.  
AND TO SUGGEST THAT PAUL TREATED THEM IN  
AN INFERIOR WAY WAS LUDICROUS.

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) ANYONE  
TODAY THAT SAYS HE IS AN APOSTLE OR  
WHATEVER HE CALLS HIMSELF IS EITHER  
DECEIVED OR IS A LIAR.

\* FOR WITH THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BELOVED,  
THERE ARE NO MORE APOSTLES.

\*\* AND TRULY THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE  
ARE NOT BEING PERFORMED FOR US TODAY.

\*\*\* SO THE APOSTLES WERE TEMPORARY IN NATURE, TO AUTHENTICATE THAT THEY WERE **GOD'S SPOKESPEOPLE FOR VERIFICATION** BEFORE THE N.T. WAS COMPLETE AND WERE THE FOUNDATION FOR THE CHURCH, THAT GIFT GIVEN IN A FOUNDATION WAY.

\*\*\*\* **AND I CAN'T HELP BUT TO THINK HOW IN** CHARISMANIA TODAY, THEY REFUSE TO SEE THAT THERE WERE TEMPORARY GIFTS AND GIFTED MEN GIVEN TO THE CHURCH THAT WOULD NOT BE NORMATIVE FOR THE REST OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

\*\*\*\* THAT THERE ARE NO MORE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS. AND NO MORE GIFTS LIKE THE GIFT OF MIRACLES, THE GIFT OF HEALING, THE GIFT OF TONGUES OR LANGUAGES, THE INTERPRETATION OF THESE LANGUAGES, AND THE GIFT OF PROPHECY.

(2) IN FACT I WOULD SEE SPIRITUAL GIFTS DIVIDED INTO THREE KINDS OR CATEGORIES OF GIFTS.

\* SIGN GIFTS, WHICH THERE IS NO MORE NEED FOR, AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH HAS BEEN LAID AND THE N.T. IS COMPLETED. AND FOR EXAMPLE IF YOU SAY WE NEED THE GIFT OF PROPHECY TODAY, YOU ARE SAYING WE NEED NEW REVELATION.

\*\* HOWEVER, GOD FINISHED HIS REVELATION WITH THE BOOK OF REVELATION AND NOW THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE IS COMPLETE.

\*\*\* AND PEOPLE ASK ME, WELL, RAY, SHOW ME WHERE IT SAYS THEY WILL CEASE. AND MY RESPONSE IS, SHOW ME WHERE THEY WILL CONTINUE. THEY WERE UNIQUE, GOD GAVE THEM FOR A TIME AND PURPOSE IN A NEW ERA OF GRACE, BUT THEY WERE NEVER NORMATIVE IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY.



\*\*\*\* AND THE SIGNS AND WONDERS OF A TRUE APOSTLE, ALONG WITH SPECIAL SIGN GIFTS ARE NO LONGER NEEDED, AND THAT DOES NOT **MINIMIZE GOD'S POWER. HE DOES WHAT HE** WANTS TO DO WHEN HE WANTS TO DO IT, CONTROLLED BY HOLY, HOLY, HOLY CHARACTER AND SOVEREIGNTY.

(3) SO WE ARE CESSATIONISTS AS A CHURCH.

\* HOWEVER THERE ARE SPEAKING AND SERVING SPIRITUAL GIFTS THAT ARE STILL IN OPERATION THAT ARE NOT PROPHECY OR REVELATORY OR SIGNS IN NATURE.

\*\* AND I PETER 4:10&11 TALK ABOUT THESE GIFTS.

V. 10 – AS EACH ONE HAS RECEIVED A SPECIAL GIFT, EMPLOY IT IN SERVING ONE ANOTHER AS GOOD STEWARDS OF THE MANIFOLD GRACE OF GOD.

V. 11 – WHOEVER SPEAKS, IS TO DO SO AS ONE WHO IS SPEAKING THE UTTERANCES OF GOD; WHOEVER SERVES IS TO DO SO AS ONE WHO IS SERVING BY THE STRENGTH WHICH GOD SUPPLIES; SO THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, TO WHOM BELONGS THE GLORY AND DOMINION FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

\*\*\* THE QUESTION I CLOSE WITH IS, ARE YOU FAITHFULLY USING YOUR SPEAKING OR SERVING GIFTS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH BODY? PLEASE DO. FOR AS YOU DO, OTHERS ARE BUILT UP AND THE BODY GROWS TO BRING GLORY TO THE ONLY ONE WHO IS WORTHY, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

**(LET'S PRAY)**