

THE REST OF THE STORY

Where Paul drives home the greatest story that was ever told!



2 Corinthians 1:8 - 22

⁸"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹ as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many."

We see here a terrible experience by Paul that was so bad he did not want to talk about it...

We know where it happened...Ephesus.

The experience was almost beyond bearing.

He was in such grave danger that Paul believed that the sentence of death was passed on to him...that there was no escape...

No escape...except by the hand of God.

Paul felt much like King George V...

One of the King's rules of life... "If I have to suffer, let me do it in silence and alone...for I can't bear the burden of repeating it. The animals don't have anyone for counsel...and neither should I because I don't want to think about it...for the thought brings me great pain!"

Paul saw in his terrifying experience that there was one good thing that came of it...that it had driven him back to trust God in everything...It was a demonstration of God's grace, mercy, wisdom and understanding that saw him through.

The danger of prosperity is that it encourages a false independence: it makes us think that we are well able to handle life alone.

For every prayer that rises to God in days of prosperity, ten thousand rise in days of adversity.

Abraham Lincoln said, "*I have often been driven to my knees in prayer because I had nowhere else to go.*"

We often need some adversity to show us how much we need God.

The outcome of this experience was that Paul had an unshakable confidence in God.

David, the Psalmist...stated "*Thou hast delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.*" (Psalm 116:8)

Paul Bunyan's conversion stemmed from a conversation he overheard between some old women about what God had done for their souls. Bunyan stated the affirmation of faith from those precious women was so "soul stirring" that he wanted what those women had.

The confidence of the Christian in God is not a thing of theory and speculation; it is a thing of fact and experience.

The Christian knows what God has done for him and therefore is not afraid.

Paul, unashamedly, asks for the prayers of the Corinthians.

Paul was a saint that knew that it was the prayers of saints (all the little people who are big in God's kingdom) that reaches the throne room...and can make the difference between life and death.

2 Corinthians 1:12-14

¹²*"Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted*

ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace. ¹³ For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that, ¹⁴ as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus."

The undertones (not specific, but speculated) of what some of the Corinthians were accusing Paul is in this passage.

Some slanders with which they were trying to accuse him...

- **There is more to Paul's conduct than meets the eye ("We are seeing what Paul wants us to see...underneath it all, Paul is not who he represents himself to be.")**

*Paul's answer was that he has lived with the holiness and the purity of God. **There were no hidden actions in Paul's life.***

A new beatitude should be..."Blessed is the man who has nothing to hide. "....but the one that really gets God's blessings is the man who hides nothing because he knows that God knows the hidden secrets of our heart.

Paul had been a monster who tracked down Christians and oversaw their demise...even their death. It was Paul who said, "Oh wretched man that I am, who can save me from this body of death?"

But...He...along with Job, "knew whom he believed and was convinced that God is able to keep that which I" (Paul...Job and Gerald), "have committed to Him against that day." (2 Timothy 1:12; Job 19:25)

Yes...Paul entrusted to God all that Paul had in the way of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Life...the time in the span of eternity in which we have the opportunity to accept the truth that God loves us...and has made a way for us to escape the pits of hell.

Liberty...freedom, to accept or reject the truth of God's Word. That...Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life...a ticket to heaven purchased by God's Son on the cross of Calvary.

Pursuit of Happiness...happiness can be a camouflage for joy....a good feeling that is only short lived and temporary. Or...it can be joy everlasting and extremely victorious.

Seek the truth; Find the source of life, liberty and happiness...in Jesus!

- **He (Paul) had hidden motives in his "goody-two-shoes" approach to their life.**

Paul's answer:

- My conduct is dominated, not by calculating shrewdness, but by the grace of God.
- There were no hidden motives in Paul's life.
Paul knew the saying... "Man regards the deed but God sees the intention." Purity of action may be difficult...but purity of motive is still more difficult. Paul...tried to sooth any criticism by saying that "my old self died and Christ lives in me."

- **What he (Paul) stated in his letters...he doesn't really mean as he said it.**

Paul's answer:

There were no "hidden meanings" in his words... "I say what I mean...and I mean what I say."

Words are odd things...

A man may use them to reveal his thoughts...or equally...to conceal them.

We may say a thing:

- Because it is the right thing to say...
- For the sake of being agreeable...
- For the sake of avoiding trouble.

James, who saw the danger of the tongue more clearly than any man that put it in writing...

The Extended Discourse on the Tongue:

- **The Perversity of the Tongue** "if any one makes no mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man." (James 3:2b).
- **The Power of the Tongue** (James 3:-5a)...Just as a small rudder can steer a huge ship...or a small bit in the mouth of the horse can make the large horse obey us...so the tongue has that kind of power in us...
- **The Pictures of the Tongue** James 5b, 6, 8

When used by our base nature:

- The Tongue is a Fire.
- The Tongue is a World of Iniquity
- The Tongue is a Defiler
- The Tongue is an Inflamer
- The Tongue is a Gehenna Fire
- The Tongue is a Sac of Deadly Poison
- The Tongue is Unruly...
- The Tongue is Inconsistent.

But, when used by the Holy Spirit....It is an Organ of Blessing.

The tongue has:

The power to hurt or help.

The power to tear down or build up.

The power to criticize or to praise.

We must choose with our mind as to how our tongue reacts!

In Paul's life...there were no hidden actions, no hidden motives and no hidden meanings.

This is something to aim at...in our lives.

What are you aiming at?

Do you hit the mark...or miss the mark?

2 Corinthians 1:15-22

¹⁵"Because I was confident of this, I wanted to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. ¹⁶ I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea. ¹⁷ Was I fickle when I intended to do this? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say both "Yes, yes" and "No, no"?"

¹⁸ But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us-by me and Silas[c] and Timothy-was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." ²⁰ For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹ Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us,

and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

Another accusation:

"Paul is not trustworthy because he says he will come and then doesn't"...

The criticizing faction stated that Paul was a kind of man who made frivolous promises with a fickle intention...and could not be pinned down to a definite "yes or no." They went on to say... "If we cannot trust Paul's everyday promises, how can we trust the things he told us about God?"...

Paul...stated that Jesus is the yes to every promise of God. He means this:

- **" Had Jesus never come we might have doubted the tremendous promises of God,**
- **" Might have argued that the promises were too good to be true.**

But....God who loves us so much that He gave us His Son is quite certain to fulfill every promise that He ever made.

Jesus is the personal guarantee of God that the greatest and the least of his promises are all true.

It is true...however, that the trustworthiness of the messenger affects the trustworthiness of the message.

Preaching is always "truth through personality."

If a man cannot trust the preacher, he is not likely to trust the preacher's message.

Before a man gives a promise, he should count the cost of keeping it and make sure that he is able and willing to pay it.

Paul goes on to say two (2) great things:

1. It is through Jesus that we say "Amen"...to the promises of God. Jesus was the "So Be It!"...the promise that it is to be...that heaven is real...and Jesus is waiting.
2. God anointed us and sealed us...and gave us the Holy Spirit...who was the first installment and the pledge that there are greater things to come.

What more can we ask for? Jesus, Salvation, Eternity with the Father, the Son, The Holy Spirit, and all of the followers of Christ...worshipping with the angels of the Lord.

Give praise to the King! It will be worth it all!

Eternity