

## LESSON ELEVEN

# PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS (Continued)

Scriptural Reference: II Corinthians Chapters 5, 6, 7.

### A. **THE MOTIVATIONS FOR PAUL'S DEDICATION TO THE MINISTRY:**

Paul states a number of things that have motivated him in his dedication to the ministry. We shall simply list them here for the student's further consideration and study:

1. The knowledge and certainty of immortality (5:1-9);
2. Judgment (5:10);
3. Fear (5:11);
4. Unselfishness (5:12, 13);
5. Love (5:14, 15);
6. Regeneration (5:16, 17);
7. Reconciliation (5:18 - 21);
8. Time (6:1 - 2);
9. Suffering (6:3 - 10).

### B. **THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY: (II Corinthians 5:1-9).**

The knowledge and hope of immortality gives Paul strength to endure that he might please Christ (verse 9). The verb "know" is the same verb used in I John 2:21 and I John 3:1-2. There is no uncertainty regarding the hope of immortality. The only uncertain fact about it is the matter of time.

The apostle makes a comparison between what we have now and what we will be. Our bodies are likened to frail tents, which will be exchanged for new permanent homes. As the tabernacle was exchanged for the temple, so will our present bodies, for a glorious body made in the likeness of Christ. With triumphant joy Paul spoke of his glorified body with which he knew he would be clothed when he folded life's transient tent and awoke in the likeness of God. He did not fear to appear in the presence of his God for he knew his reward was sure.

There are some very important truths taught in this passage of Scripture. We shall be content to draw the attention of the student to two of these truths: (1) The hope of the resurrection. Death is spoken of here as being unclothed. The coming of Jesus is being spoken of as being clothed. The truth that we should recognize is that no one longs for death. Death is an enemy. Our hope and longing is not for death but rather for the coming of our Lord. This explains how that a saint of God may testify of his longing to go home to be with Jesus. However, should he take sick, he does his utmost to still remain in this life. This is not inconsistent for no one longs for death, but it is for the coming of the Lord when we shall be clothed with our new house and mortality will be swallowed up of life. God has put this desire to live in the heart of every one of His creatures. (2) The second truth that this passage of Scripture teaches is that there is no ground for the doctrine of soul sleep. When the child of God dies, he is immediately present with the Lord. When he is absent from this body, he will be present with the Lord. This means that the child of God will be in a state of conscious rest until Jesus comes

and at that time he will be clothed with his new resurrected body but until then, he is still present with the Lord in a conscious rest in paradise.

**C. THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST: (II Corinthians 5:10).**

The judgment seat of Christ takes place immediately following the coming of the Lord for His church and the child of God is judged for works, and faithfulness. This will be payday for him. *"And, behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be"* (Revelation 22:12). This reward, according to works, will be handed out at the judgment seat of Christ. This judgment has nothing to do with salvation. It has to do with a man's faithfulness, his motives and his ministries.

**D. A NEW CREATION: (II Corinthians 5:17).**

Paul frequently uses the phrase "in Christ." Certainly the Christian is either in Christ, or not. If he is in Christ, he then has become a new creation, with old things passed away, and all things become new. We may conclude that if a man is not a new creature, then he is not in Christ, and of course, not saved. Actually, this brings out the conclusive proof of salvation, whether or not he is a new creature, with old things passed away, and all things become new.

**E. GOD IN CHRIST: (II Corinthians 5:19).**

This verse is a positive statement of the Oneness truth. Every student of the Bible should have this verse underlined and memorized. Let us note that God was IN Christ. Christ means "the anointed one," and the anointing one is God. Here we have stated that God is reconciling the world unto Himself. Note the singular pronoun Himself. It does not say that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto themselves but rather unto Himself. We need no stronger statement than this in order to believe the Oneness truth.

**F. THE POSSIBILITY OF FALLING FROM GRACE: (II Corinthians 6:1).**

This verse reveals that it is possible to fall away from grace. This statement, of Paul's, explodes the doctrine of unconditional eternal security. This statement alone should be sufficient to convince any honest seeker, for truth, that unconditional eternal security is error.

**G. THE DAY OF SALVATION: (II Corinthians 6:2).**

The passing of time is a strong motivation both for the preacher to preach the gospel and for the individual to receive and to accept Jesus Christ and to be saved. The statement here is a strong warning against procrastination. The word "now" refers to the gospel age.

**H. PAUL'S SUFFERINGS AND PATIENCE: (II Corinthians 6:3-13).**

In chapter 6 we find the Apostle Paul again defending his ministry and referring to his sufferings and patience as proof of that ministry. He is always zealous to defend the ministry and it would seem that he suffers disappointment that the ministry is always misunderstood.

Paul gives proofs of the commendation of the ministry by referring to his afflictions, stripes and toils. He also mentions the virtues of the ministry, which are coordinated with patience recurring through the outward hardships, purity of life, teaching of the word of truth and love unfeigned. In all of these Paul shows the Corinthians that he is a true minister.

**I. A SEPARATED LIFE: (II Corinthians 6:14 - II Corinthians 7:1).**

Here we have one of the strongest exhortations to a life of separation and holiness that we can find anywhere. There is no place of real fellowship between light and darkness. This is sufficient reason why a Christian should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. This is generally used in referring to marriage and rightly so but it also may be used in business partnerships, in being members of associations where a Christian has close connection with unbelievers.

The promise of being received by the Lord Almighty is conditional and dependent upon the Christian's separation from the world. God will receive us if we will separate ourselves from the world and dedicate ourselves to Him. There must be a complete abstaining from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The student should note here that it is not only the filthiness of the flesh but also the filthiness of the spirit that one must abstain from. It is possible to be moral and upright, outwardly, but yet have a wrong spirit. Finally, let us note that holiness is a quality that may be perfected. There are definitely degrees of perfection and holiness, which the Christian should strive for. He does this by separating himself from the world and cleansing himself from everything that is unclean.

**J. THE GOOD NEWS BROUGHT BY TITUS: (II Corinthians 7:2-16).**

Paul had sent Titus to Corinth with a letter and apparently his mission had been successful. Under the influence of Paul's second letter and the presence of Titus, the church as a whole had been brought back into line. Paul had had misgivings, but now he is not sorry that he wrote to them in such a severe tone for it brought them to repentance. Theirs was a godly sorrow, not the sorrow of the world. The result of their sorrow was a real repentance. In verses 10 and 11, we have a wonderful definition and explanation of true repentance.

Paul was comforted and rejoiced over the good news that Titus had brought back from Corinth. This shows us how the gospel minister will rejoice when he sees real fruit from his ministry and the people of God responding to an appeal for holiness and righteousness.

## LESSON ELEVEN

### SELF HELP TEST

- A. List the motivations for Paul's dedication to the ministry.
- B. Explain the following Scriptures:
1. II Corinthians 5:10 -
  2. II Corinthians 5:17 -
  3. II Corinthians 5:19 -
  4. II Corinthians 6:1 -
- C. How is it possible for a Christian to long to go to be with Jesus and at the same time want to live here?
- D. Explain how the error of soul sleep is clearly refuted in II Corinthians 5.