

2 CORINTHIANS 1:15-22

Followers of Jesus are marked by consistency and integrity



Those known to have a heart for gospel ministry should be affirmed in gospel ministry (15-16)

- “*a second experience of grace*” – Paul is referring to the grace of giving.
 - Their support of his gospel ministry in his two journeys – one to Macedonia and the other to Jerusalem – will give them the opportunity to be blessed twice by God.
 - 2 Corinthians 8:6–7
 - By serving others they show evidence that God’s grace that has blessed them and will continue to bless them because of their gospel focus.

Changing plans is not an indication of being unspiritual or unreliable (17-18)

Verse 17

- An opponent or opponents cast Paul's change of plans in a negative light.
- Paul had to change his plans, but that doesn't make him flighty and inconsistent.
 - There will always be negative people who are critical and want to disparage those whose ministry makes them feel uncomfortable.
 - Praise God for positive people who seek to give others the benefit of the doubt.
- “*make plans according to the flesh, ready to say, ‘Yes, yes’ and ‘No, no’ at the same time*” – the accusation is that Paul looks for ways to protect his own selfish desires (*flesh*) and can tell people what they want to hear whenever they want to hear it.

Changing plans is not an indication of being unspiritual or unreliable (17-18)

- Paul was not looking out for his interests (“*according to the flesh*”), but their best interest.
 - 2 Corinthians 1:23
- We live in a dynamic world that demands flexibility and adjustments.
 - Unpredictable events force change and redirection.
 - Holy Spirit inspired patience would be good for us to put into practice.

Changing plans is not an indication of being unspiritual or unreliable (17-18)

Verse 18

- Paul's words were inspired by God to reveal truth about God.
- Paul does not just communicate truth from His faithful God; he walks in the ways of truth from His faithful God.
- Paul's authority and accuracy do not reside in his own thoughts and opinions, but in the revelation of truth from his God.
- Paul's change in travel plans does not mean Paul cannot be trusted.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is real and reliable, uniting and empowering (19-22)

Verse 19

- Paul and his missionary associates did not come trying to win an audience with a message that was adapted to what the Corinthians wanted to hear.
- They came to declare the gospel directly and accurately.
- Faithfulness to the truth of our faithful God should always be our open expression in every circumstance and every situation.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is real and reliable, uniting and empowering (19-22)

Verse 20

- All the promises of life, provision, protection, comfort, hope, joy, peace, etc. are fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus is the only way for men and women to receive God's yes of justification and sanctification.
 - John 14:6
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

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- “*Amen*”
 - It is not simply the final word of prayers to God.
 - It is a word that means “*truly*” or “*surely*” and is spoken to affirm the truthfulness or reality of something spoken.
- These gospel messengers communicated the message of gospel hope and salvation in Jesus to the church in Corinth and everyone said “Amen”.
 - Are these very messengers now not to be trusted?
 - There is to be consistency in all of life with every follower of Jesus who knows the truth, walks in the truth and shares the truth.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is real and reliable, uniting and empowering (19-22)

Verses 21-22

- “*Establishes*” – to strengthen or solidify something or someone
 - Followers of Jesus are not established or strengthened by their own abilities or determination.
 - God makes us stand firm in Jesus.
- *anoints*” - God has purposefully set us apart as His gospel servants and gospel
- “*put his seal on us*” - an item or a letter is given a wax seal that is marked by an impression made by the owner’s ring or medallion
 - God has placed a mark of ownership on all his people.
 - Ephesians 1:13–14
 - This seal is made known in all of life showing they are the property of God.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is real and reliable, uniting and empowering (19-22)

- “*guarantee*” - the first installment or partial payment has been made assuring all will be paid at the proper time
 - The Holy Spirit resides in the heart and life of each follower of Jesus and He guarantees we are secure until the day of fulfillment.
 - The presence of the Holy Spirit is a guarantee that is real and lasting throughout life.
- It is the Holy Spirit who provides integrity and consistency for Paul and every follower of Jesus.

Questions to Consider

- Are you typically and consistently a critical faultfinder or one who looks to affirm God's grace?
- Is your primary concern your earthbound interests or actual and intention efforts to advance the gospel?
- When you see and hear God's activity do you openly affirm it and praise God for it?
- Are moral integrity and gospel consistency affirming the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life?

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