

“READY OR NOT - HERE I COME !”

(2Corinthians 13:1-14)

September 3, 2017

The believers in Corinth have had numerous problems, discussed at length and sometimes repeatedly in the two letters. Paul is ready to visit them again, but he still has CONCERNS for them:

*Now I am ready to visit you for the third time ... For I am afraid that when I come I may **not** find you as I want you to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.*

2Corinthians 12:14, 20

I. The NUMBER

This simple statement signifies a couple of important things. First, he is NOT ready to give up on them. Secondly, Paul knew that some issues can only be resolved FACE to FACE.

Don't try to RESOLVE issues through social media!

II. The NEED

• His WITNESS

Paul may be referring to Deuteronomy 19:15, which states that two or three witnesses are required to establish the TRUTH. This third visit he may see as a third witness of how they are BEHAVING. He may be traveling with some proteges, who would act as witnesses.

• His WARNING

He will come in his human weakness, BUT with the power of Christ to confront any sin among them.

“For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

2Corinthians 12:10

He charges them to examine themselves, to see if they have even RECEIVED Christ as Lord.

• His WISH

Paul's desire is to find them MATURE in their faith. This is EVERY Pastor's wish. We long to see those we are called to lead and shepherd GROW in their faith, their trust and hope in the Lord.

III. The ADMONITIONS

• Aim – for PERFECTION?

This may seem like an UNFAIR assignment, but we also read:

Be perfect therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:48

“If the sermon on the Mount sets forth God's standard of holiness, then I may as well resign from the start.” -Philip Yancey

“The degree to which we draw near to this perfection cannot be seen; all we can see is the extent of our deviation.” -Leo Tolstoy

Dostoevsky found the answer in Scripture:

There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

It is not in OUR power to be perfect. But, God chooses to SEE as perfect those who are “in Christ Jesus,” that is those who have repented of sins and received him as Lord.

- **Listen- to Paul's APPEAL**

His greatest appeal is for them to be SURE of their faith.

- **Be UNIFIED**

This is every Pastor's desire of every church. We have a bitter enemy who will do everything in his power to DIVIDE us. Do not succumb.

- **Bask in God's LOVE and PEACE**

When we do those three things, the result is love and peace. Who wouldn't want both?

IV. The BENEDICTION

Paul prays for the church, the full blessings of the TRIUNE God:

- **The GRACE of Jesus**
- **The LOVE of the Father**
- **The FELLOWSHIP of the Holy Spirit**

Jesus said:

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” John 14:3

“You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” Luke 12:40

Are you READY? Are you seeking the perfection only HE can give? Do you have the CONFIDENCE of Paul who wrote elsewhere:

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that we will be like his glorious body. Philippians 3:20