

## The Book of 2 Corinthians 2 Corinthians 1:22-24

### Session 13: Notetaker

Fig. 1

### Seal/Sealed

- \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Fig. 2

### How Paul dealt with the 3<sup>rd</sup> accusation

- 1:12: By the testimony of \_\_\_\_\_ regarding that which was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning his \_\_\_\_\_ toward them.
- 1:17b: By that which was \_\_\_\_\_ about the things Paul \_\_\_\_\_; that he did not purpose according to the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1:18-20: By that which was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning his \_\_\_\_\_ toward them.
- 1:21-22: By that which was \_\_\_\_\_ regarding God's \_\_\_\_\_ to keep His promises, which was the basis of Paul's life and ministry.

Fig. 3

### How Paul dealt with the 4<sup>th</sup> accusation

- 1:12: By the testimony of Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ regarding that which was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ toward them.
- 1:23: By that which was \_\_\_\_\_ regarding \_\_\_\_\_ about coming to see them a second time.
- 1:24: By that which is \_\_\_\_\_ regarding Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ over them in the Lord, and regarding his \_\_\_\_\_ toward them.

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#### Opening Prayer:

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Heavenly Father,

Today we will see the example of our apostle on how to handle personal attacks that are made against us. May our attitude and response not be that of our flesh, or of the world, but may we rise above and truly present ourselves as a living sacrifice. We pray to be changed by the doctrine which we study today, and therefore, we will respond to what we learn by putting it into practice in our lives so that the life of the Lord Jesus may be manifested in us. Amen.

## The Book of 2 Corinthians

### 2 Corinthians 1:22-24

#### Session 13: The Third Accusation, cont.

In 2 Corinthians 1:12-24, there are four accusations being brought against Paul, that he is duplicitous, insincere, a disappointment, and domineering. The first two attacks were against Paul personally. In the third accusation, the attack has been enlarged to include Paul's ministry. Personally, Paul's "word" was called into question (verse 18), and ministerially, Paul's "preaching" is under attack (verse 19).

In chapter 1, we are studying the third set of accusations against Paul and his ministry. Paul's response is that his word toward the Corinthians has been as true as God has been in keeping His promises toward them.

2 Corinthians 1:18 But **as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.**

2 Corinthians 1:20 **For all the promises of God in him are yea,** and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

Then, beginning in verse 21, Paul lists four things that God has faithfully done toward every saint. We covered the first two at the end of the previous session that He "stablisheth us in Christ," and He has "anointed us."

Now we turn our attention to verse 22 and the last two things which God has done for every saint in this dispensation of grace.

2 Corinthians 1:22 **Who hath also sealed us,** and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

What does it mean to be "sealed?" The word "seal," like the word "grace," is used in a variety of ways. In Paul's epistles, the words "seal" and "sealed" occur seven times and we are going to look at them all. But even though the circumstances are different, when someone or something is sealed, it has to do with being made **secure** or **to preserve**, the seal is a **confirmation** or **guarantee**, it is a **sign** or **evidence** of some truth, or the seal serves as a **proof of authenticity** or

**ownership.** While there is a shade of difference between them, there is also some overlap.

Let's look at our first reference in Romans 4, where Paul is referring to Abraham.

Romans 4:11 And he received the sign of **circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet being uncircumcised***: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

Abraham's circumcision was evidence of God's approval of him, when He imputed righteousness to Abraham solely on the basis of his faith. So, in this verse, the "seal" is the **sign or evidence** that righteousness comes by faith.

Now, our second reference is Romans 15. We will start with verse 26 so we can understand the context.

Romans 15:26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make **a certain contribution for the poor saints** which are at Jerusalem.

Romans 15:28 When therefore I have performed this, **and have sealed to them this fruit**, I will come by you into Spain.

The "fruit," Paul is talking about is the offering which the Gentiles have given for the poor saints at Jerusalem. When he says "have sealed to them this fruit," he means, "when he has placed the offering securely in their hands." In this verse, "sealed" has to do with *faithfully delivering* the offering to Judea, secure and sure. In other words, that Paul should deliver the offering whole and safe, and in such a manner as to leave no suspicion that he had used any part of it for himself.

1 Corinthians 9:2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: **for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.**

Another use of the word "seal" is as a *proof*, just as the Corinthians themselves were **proof** of the validity of Paul's apostolic ministry.

2 Corinthians 1:22 **Who hath also sealed us**, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

This is the verse we are studying to see what it means when Paul writes that we have been sealed.

If you notice, all four of these things listed in verses 21-22 are given to us by God, and provided for by Christ, but they are all in connection with the Spirit. It is the Father who stablisheth us in Christ, but He does it by the Spirit who baptizes us into Christ upon our faith in His finished work.

It is the Father who anoints us, which is to say, we are set apart for God's purpose and service. That setting apart has to do with holiness and our sanctification, which is also a work of the Spirit.

Now, in verse 22, we are sealed, and this is something the Father has done, but it was done by Him giving us His Spirit. And this sealing has to do with the **guarantee or confirmation** that we are God's possession, right now, as we live in this world, even when we sin against God. God put His Spirit within us, and as a result, that is the seal, or testimony, or proof, or certification that we belong to God.

We are irrevocably God's possession, so in this sense, the Spirit of God within us is proof of God's ownership of us. And because of that, a lot of other things are true concerning our eternal life and inheritance as heirs of God. We are His because He has bought us with the blood of His Son. Of course this is not a physical seal, (yet it can be observed as the doctrine works in us, and we are conformed to the image of God's Son. By our godly living, we manifest who we belong to.)

But even when we do not manifest in our living that we belong to God, we have still been sealed as God's sons and daughters; and that relationship with God cannot be undone.

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, **having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.** And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Praise the Lord for this seal! The Lord knoweth them that are His! And notice the last part of the verse is an exhortation to start living like it.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, **ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**

This is the Spirit of God confirming that we are His children by the Spirit being given to us. This is an event that happened once in the past (after ye believed). In this verse, the “sealed” has to do with the Spirit being given to us as the seal, or proof, that we belong to God.

Now, we move to the last of the four promises, which the Father has fulfilled with us.

2 Corinthians 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, **and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**

We can run a reference on this to Ephesians.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not **the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

The “day of redemption” is the day when our body is redeemed. That will happen at the Blessed Hope, when the Lord returns at the end of the dispensation of grace. The dead in Christ will rise and that corruptible will put on incorruption. Those who are alive, will be caught up to meet the Lord, and these mortal bodies will be changed into immortal bodies. That is the day of redemption, the day of redemption.

Therefore, the fact that we have been given the holy Spirit of God is the seal, or guarantee that one day our body is going to be redeemed; it is a promise that is sure. It is in that vein that the Spirit serves as the earnest, or down payment, or guarantee of the future redemption of our body. This is actually the last of the four issues in 1 Corinthians 1:21-22.

2 Corinthians 1:22 **Who hath** also sealed us, and **given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**

When you make a down payment on something, that is your promise to pay the entire amount. In verse 22, we are not talking about money, but we are talking

about we have all been given the Spirit, as He serves as God's promise that one day He will redeem our physical body, and when that happens, our redemption will be complete; spirit, soul, and body.

When Paul says that we are given "the earnest of the Spirit," he does not mean we were only given a part of the Spirit now, but we get the rest of the Spirit later, in eternity. But rather, that the Spirit serves as a guarantee of the believer's future inheritance and redemption.

So, before we take all of this information and tie it back into Paul's defense, let's just list what Paul has listed.

1. The Corinthians have been established in Christ (so have we)
2. The Corinthians have been anointed; set apart to God's purpose (so have we)
3. The Corinthians have been given the Spirit as a confirmation that they belong to God (so have we)
4. The Corinthians have been given the Spirit as a guarantee of the future redemption of their body (so have we)

So, what does all this have to do with Paul's integrity in his actions and decisions toward the Corinthians? Up to this point, Paul's defense has pointed to the faithfulness of God and the fulfillment of God's promises in Christ as the basis for his actions and ministry toward the Corinthians (verses 19-20).

He has just given them four proofs of God's faithfulness, and they believe these things to be true; so where did they learn these things? From Paul. To reject Paul's ministry would necessitate that they reject Paul's teachings, which means they would reject that they are in Christ; that they have been set apart for God's purposes, that they belong to God, and that they have a sure hope of the redemption of their body.

To reject Paul's preaching would come at a high price, theologically. The only thing Paul needs to validate his ministry is for the Corinthians to look in the mirror (so to speak.) They are the seal of his apostleship and ministry. To deny the validity and integrity of Paul's ministry would be to deny the spiritual work that has been done in them. Their life in the Spirit points to both the faithfulness of

God and the faithfulness of Paul's ministry with them. Oh, it looks like those two things are tied together, which is exactly Paul's point.

Paul is explaining to the Corinthians, in verses 18-22, that his character and his ministry are grounded in the faithfulness of God. Paul's life and message are what they are because of God's fidelity to keep His promises.

Remember how all this has come about. Paul is answering accusations made against him by his enemies. In the face of these accusations, Paul explains the facts of the situation; that everything he was doing was for their benefit. But what was Paul's motive for answering these accusations at all? It was because he knew the spiritual health and the future of the church was at stake.

Paul's point is that as an apostle; his change of plans was not the expression of a vacillating character but was an expression of his faithfulness and love toward the Corinthians and his wisdom in dealing with them with their restoration in mind.

This is a good lesson for us, when we feel like we want vindication. We should ask ourselves, "Is how I am responding to my critics, is it for my own sense of well-being, or is it for the sake of ministering to my offenders?" It may be easy to talk about, but to do it requires the transforming work of this doctrine in our inner man.

Paul has rooted his ministry, not in his actions or those of his associates, but in the character of God, which is the opposite of how people normally respond to accusations. Our confidence in God's faithfulness will help us when our path gets rough. This is not to say that a minister can never make a mistake, make the wrong choice or be motivated from self rather than the Spirit; he can. But when he does, he can return to these principles of living his life and conducting his ministry, not in the flesh, but by the grace of God. We can conduct ourselves with simplicity (no ulterior motives) and godly sincerity (motivated to the accomplishment of our Father's purposes). We can purpose not to make decisions according to the flesh, to not be motivated by fleshly things, but to find our character and actions rooted in the faithfulness of God.

This is a great endeavor which will take time and effort, but the reward is to be conformed to the image of God's Son. Or, to say it another way, this is how we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

So, let's sum up how Paul dealt with this third accusation.

- 1) 1:12: By the testimony of Paul's conscience regarding that which was true concerning his attitude and actions toward them.
- 2) 1:17b: By that which was true about the things Paul purposed; that he did not purpose according to the flesh, and should not be seen as a disappointment.
- 3) 1:18-20: By that which was true concerning Paul's word and preaching toward them, which was designed to remedy their loss of enthusiasm.
- 4) 1:21-22: By that which was true regarding God's faithfulness to keep His promises, which was the basis of Paul's life and ministry.

This brings us to the last of the accusations in this first category of the sufferings of Christ; that Paul was arrogant in his attitude and domineering in his actions toward the Corinthians.

1:23-24: Paul is arrogant and domineering

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**The Most Important Decision**

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**Closing Prayer:**

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*Heavenly Father,*

*I pray that all of us, as members of the body of Christ, would continually work with the doctrine that provides for those things, which are true. And when, like Paul, we are unjustly attacked, we will remember this doctrine and find remedy by the testimony of our conscience regarding what is true. May we find comfort by the knowledge that our actions are the product of godly motives. We pray to remember that we are not here for ourselves, but we are here for You, and for Your work in this world, and in light of that, we will work to accomplish your will in the lives of our offenders. We can imagine how it must have hurt Paul for the Corinthians to turn on him the way they did, and to say the things they said about him, but are grateful for his patient endurance of those things for the benefit of his offenders. We pray that our attitudes and actions might be based on Your faithfulness, and extend from, the doctrine working in us. May our decisions not be made by fleshly wisdom, but in simplicity and godly sincerity, we would make decisions by Your grace. May we live as those who have been stablished in Christ, set apart for Your purposes; as those who belong to You, and rejoice in the promised redemption of our body. Amen.*