

A. Commendation

- a. Paul defends his financial integrity (2 Cor 2:17-3:6)
 - i. Others are peddlers of God's word and seek a profit
 - ii. We are sincere, as from God (we are ambassadors)
 - iii. You are the living proof of our sincere ministry, and epistle known and read by all men
- b. Paul defends his ministry integrity (2 Cor 5:11-14)
 - i. Well known to God. God knows our ministry. He knows us well.
 - 1. Reference: Psalm 139, Matthew 25, 10 Virgins (buy the oil)
 - 2. He knows every in the broad sense - Psalm 139
 - 3. Like an artist would know their painting as the creator
 - 4. Like an architect would know the building they designed
 - 5. What about knowing us personally as a friend?
 - 6. You are my friends... a new command I give you, that you love one another
 - 7. Example of Rachel and me dating - time is the key!
 - 8. Quality time *and* frequency fellowship throughout the day
 - 9. Rachel recently posed the question - what would you tell someone who says they are too busy to spend time with the Lord?
 - 10. 1 Corinthians 8:3 - if anyone loves God, this one is known by him
 - ii. Paul's plea - you know us, we are well known in your consciences

B. Outward Appearance and Judging One Another

- a. The natural man looks on the outward appearance
 - i. Positive - we give regard / prestige / honor / recognition according to the outward
 - ii. Negative - we judge, criticize, critique, people according to the outward
 - iii. Like the Pharisees - outside of cup and dish, whitewashed tombs
 - iv. 1 Sam 16:7 - the Lord does not see as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.
 - v. Brief interlude on judgment, not Paul's heart to focus on judgment in this chapter
 - vi. Primary focus is reconciliation, with both Corinthians and God
- b. 2 Cor 5:13 - we may appear beside ourselves (crazy) - it's for God; or we may appear of sound mind - it's for you. We don't care how other people view us

C. The Love of Christ Compels Us

- a. Jn 13 - the love of Christ compelled him to wash his disciples' feet on the night of his betrayal
- b. Jn 15 - we are secure in Christ's love, just remain there!
- c. Romans 8 - who shall separate us? In all things more than conquerors
 - i. Persecution story - brothers and sisters in Colorado de la Mora, Mexico
- d. That might not be God's plan for you, but here is something that is!
- e. Jn 15:13 and 1 Jn 3:16 - laying down our lives for the brethren

D. Dying to Self, Living for the Lord

- a. That if Christ died for all (which he did), then all died!
- b. Those who live (by Christ's life) should live for Him, not for ourselves
- c. Example of John Dunkel - Lord, what is on your agenda for the day?
- d. There is a lot that could be said about dying to self and living for the Lord, but for the time, we move on
- e. It primarily plays out in relationship

E. Love for the Brethren (vv 16-17)

- a. The apostles (collective “we”) knew Christ in the flesh
- b. Yet now *no longer* (that is an old thing that has passed away!)
- c. What is our “status”? IN CHRIST
- d. What is true of those in Christ? NEW CREATION
 - i. Literal rendering if the Greek
- e. What happens to our past in Christ? GONE
- f. What have we become in Christ? NEW
- g. How do we live? Looking at the outward appearance and judging our brother, or according to the new creation, viewing our brothers and sisters as those “in Christ”
 - i. Those for whom Christ died
 - ii. A brother or sister, a fellow heir with Christ

F. The Heart of the Matter: The love of Christ compels us to lay down our soul live for the brethren

- a. Relate with one another in the realm of the new creation - this is who we really are!
- b. Marriage - she's a new creation!
 - i. You always...
 - ii. You never...
 - iii. The flesh keeps record of wrong, but not the love of God
 - iv. How many negative experiences in marriage happen because we respond to their flesh, or we respond to our flesh, rather than living in Christ as a new creation?
 - v. How hard it is to pick a fight with one person (even just one!) walking in the Spirit!
- c. Not just marriage - it's every relationship we have - we regard “no one” according to the flesh!
- d. Church life - they are a new creation
 - i. The past - forget about it! Forgive and move on
 - ii. The VDPs (very difficult people) - how does Christ see them?
 - 1. Justified, forgiven, one for whom Christ died, a new creation, and part of *the* new creation, the one new man
 - iii. We regard Christ's members as we would Christ himself