**BY GOD’S POWER WE WILL LIVE WITH HIM**

2 Corinthians 13:1-13

Key Verse 4

“For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him in our dealing with you.”

**Introduction**

 

 In this passage Paul urged Corinthian believers to repent their sins before his third visit. He also encouraged them to examine their faith and do what is right. Above all, Paul says that he is weak in Jesus but he live by God’s power and deal with them with the power. Through this passage, we can learn why we are still strong and have power even though we are weak, and how we can do what is right before God.

**1. Read verses 1-4. What is Paul’s final warning for those who didn’t repent after two visits and three letters? (1-2) What did they demand? (3a) How would the Lord deal with them? (3b) How would Paul deal with them with God’s power? (4)**

**1-1.** **Read verses 1-4.**

 This will be my third visit to you. “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” **2** I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others, **3** since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. **4** For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him in our dealing with you.

**1-2.** **What is Paul’s final warning for those who didn’t repent after two visits and three letters? (1-2)**

***· This will be my third visit to you. “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. 2 I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others,***

· Paul was going to visit Corinthians the third time to deal with the problems that they had kept. It was very exhausting to deal with the same problems visiting them even three times. But Paul wouldn’t stop visiting them until the problems would be fully resolved.

· ‘Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses’- at the court, to establish matter testimony of two or three witnesses was needed. (Deuteronomy 19:15)

* Paul mentioned this to confirm that he would carry out the plan of his third visiting after his two previous visiting. Some people in Corinthian church thought that he would not visit them but Paul confirmed his third visiting firmly.

· Paul might also mention this to express his determination that he would deal with the problems in the Corinthian church strictly according to the traditional law. Paul showed that he would judge them strictly if they would not repent their sins.

· Paul gave them warning twice through two previous visiting.

· **On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others,**

. Paul gave them warning that he would punish those who sinned or are still sinning. Paul wanted them to repent of sins before he would visit them.

· God told them to repent already through his previous two visits. Paul determined firmly to punish them if they still would not repent despite his warning.

· God helps us to repent our sins but if we still refuse to repent, God judges us severely.

**1-3.** **What did they demand? (3a)**

***· since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me.***

· Even though Christ had spoken to them through Paul, Corinthians didn’t recognize it and demanded proof that Christ spoke through Paul seeing Paul’s weakness only.

**1-4.** **How would the Lord deal with them? (3b)**

***· He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.***

· Even though Paul was week, the Lord, Jesus who was working in Paul was strong and powerful.

· It was not Paul who would deal with Corinthians but Jesus who was working through Paul. Corinthians couldn’t see Jesus who is working with power through Paul. Paul told them the Lord, Jesus will deal with them through him.

· We should not see God’s servants’ weakness only. We should recognize the Lord Jesus who is working in them and doing his work through them and listen to them with humble heart.

· We should also believe that the Lord, Jesus who is working in us is strong even though we are weak. We serve God’s work and sheep with the faith that Jesus is working through us with his mighty power. It is not us who are dealing with our bible students but Jesus. He deals with his flock with his mighty power.

**1-5.** **How would Paul deal with them with God’s power? (4)**

**· For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him in our dealing with you.**

· Jesus was crucified on the cross in his weakness to pay the price of our sins but he rose again from the dead with God’s resurrection power. God’s mighty power worked in him

· Paul was weak but he would live by God’s power and be strong with his power and he would deal with them with the power of God. Jesus became weak to obey God’s will.

· Paul told them that he would be strong with God’s mighty power even though he was weak and he would deal with their sin problem with God’s power

· God’s servants might look weak but they work with God’s power for the church and the people. The mighty God and Jesus Christ are the servants’ power.

· God’s power of resurrection, which the most powerful power is working in us.

2. **Read verse 5-10. What did Paul tell the Corinthian believers to examine? (5a) What did they not realize? (5b) What was Paul’s prayer for them? (6-9) What was his purpose for writing this letter to the Corinthian believers? (10)**

2-1. **Read verse 5-10.**

 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? **6** And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test. **7** Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed. **8** For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.**9** We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is that you may be fully restored. **10** This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

**2-2. What did Paul tell the Corinthian believers to examine? (5a)**

· ***Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves***

· Paul told them to examine themselves to see if they had genuine faith in Jesus.

· Paul told them to check their faith in Jesus because if they had faith, they would know that Jesus was in them and listened to Paul and kept the true gospel that he preached and obeyed him.

· We could get lost and go astray when we lose our faith in Jesus. We have to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith.

**2-3. What did they not realize? (5b)**

***· Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?***

· Jesus is in those who believe in him. When we received Holy Spirit by believing in Jesus we received the Spirit of Christ. Jesus is in us as the Spirit.

· If Corinthians had genuine faith in Jesus they would know that Jesus is in Paul as well as in them, and they would listen to Paul because Jesus is in them.

· We believers are the people who have Jesus in the same way. If we don’t have Jesus in us by faith, we don’t belong to God and Jesus.

· If we have faith we should believe that Jesus is in us and be led by him instead of following other things or teachings.

**2-4. What was Paul’s prayer for them? (6-9)**

***· And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.***

· Paul wanted the Corinthian to know that Paul had faith in Jesus and that Jesus was in him and working through him. If they had faith they would know that Paul had faith and Jesus was in him. Those who have faith can recognize those who have same faith knowing that Jesus is in them.

***7 Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed.***

· Paul told them to test not to prove that Paul was right but to help them to do what is right before God.

· Paul worried that the Corinthians could do wrong thing by losing their faith in Jesus.

· When people have faith in Jesus and keep right relationship with him, they could know what is right and do the right things.

· Also genuine faith in Jesus and salvation through him can be expressed through believers’ righteous life, because Jesus who is in the believers’ heart leads the believers to do what is right before God.

· The purpose of God’s salvation is to let people to bear good fruit through their life. Saved people lived to do what is right before God. We have to test ourselves if we have faith in Jesus and have Jesus in us.

***8 For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.***

· Paul did all things only for the truth not for anything against the truth. False teachers did things for their benefit even though those things were not truthful. Paul didn’t do the things according to his benefit but did all things only for the truth.

· We could lose something by doing things for the truth, but when we do all things for the truth we can be true God’s servants and lead people to the truth to be saved.

***9 We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is that you may be fully restored.***

· Paul was glad to see Corinthians be strong through their weakness. When Paul was weak, the power of God worked through him and made the Corinthians strong.

· Paul was happy once the believers got strong even if he experienced many weaknesses.

· Paul’s prayer was that the Corinthians may be fully restored to have right relationship with Jesus based on the true gospel of Jesus.

· Paul did all his effort to restore Corinthians’ faith and prayed for them earnestly. We can see a image of a good shepherd from Paul.

**2-5. What was his purpose for writing this letter to the Corinthian believers? (10)**

***· This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.***

· Paul wrote the letter to help them to repent and be restored so that Paul might not use his authority harshly to correct them and punish them.

· Paul wanted them to repent before they would be treated with tough way. We should repent early so that God may not be harsh to us.

· Paul used his authority to build them up, not to tear them down. Any kind of authority that God gave us should be used to build up others.

· When the authority is used in love and righteousness it can build up people. Paul didn’t use his authority according to his emotion or benefits.

**3. Read verses 11-14. What are Paul’s final encouragements? (11-12) What is Paul’s blessing for them? (13,14)**

**3-1. Read verses 11-13.**

 Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. 12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. 13 All God’s people here send their greetings. 14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**3-2. What are Paul’s final encouragements? (11-12)**

 ***Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. 12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.***

· 1) rejoice! – once we repent, we should rejoice believing God’s forgiveness in right relationship with him. Joy is the mark of believers who are saved in Jesus.

· 2) Strive for full restoration- We need to make all effort for the full restoration of God’s image in us. God saved us to grow up to Jesus’ full image.

· 3) encourage one another- We have to encourage and support one another to strengthen and build up each other and build up unity.

· 4) be of one mind- Corinthian church was divided with many reasons. Church should be united to be one with humility and love.

· 5) live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you- We should live in peace by keeping right relationship with God through repentance and faith and keep peaceful relationship with others as well.

· 6) Greet one another with a holy kiss- believers need to have good fellowship and build up intimacy through greetings, expression of love and frequent fellowship.

· holy kiss- one type of greeting in at time, In the Lord it meant fellowship, unity, forgiveness and reconciliation.

· Our spiritual life is personal relationship with God but God also called us to worship and serve him together with other believers as one body, one church. We need to learn how to grow as one part of church.

3-3. What is Paul’s blessing for them? (13,14)

 ***13 All God’s people here send their greetings. 14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.***

· We need the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to live a life that can please God and bear fruit overcoming all the challenges of this world.

· The three blessings are the most important ones to maintain our spiritual life. We have to pray for the blessing each moment.

**Conclusion**

 We are weak but Jesus is in us when we have faith in him and his power is working in us. God does great work through us when we have faith in Jesus. God’s servants look weak outwardly but they are strong because God’s power is working in them. We have to examine ourselves to see if we have genuine faith in Jesus. When we have faith, Jesus is in us and we can be restored to have God’s image and do what is right with his grace and power.

**One word, By God’s power we will live with them.**