

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 244 – September 1st – 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

Verse 11

Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου ἀνθρώπους
πειθομεν, θεῶ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα· ἐλπίζω δὲ
καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι.

εἰδότες see v.6

οὖν Paul moves from the thought of judgment
to its practical consequences.

φοβος, ου m fear

Paul's life is shaped by a reverential awe of
God, cf. Phil 2:12.

πειθω persuade, convince, win over

Bultmann suggests that this was an accusation
by Paul's opponents and that Paul would more
naturally have used the verb παρακαλεω.
Most commentators think that Paul is here
referring to the work of evangelism, but
Hughes (and others) suggest that Paul is
speaking of persuading others (Christians) of
his integrity and apostolic authority. Martin
writes, "Thus Paul's use of πειθομεν has a
double flavour; he tries to persuade men and
women that Christ is the means of salvation,
and he attempts to persuade them of his purity
of motive. As Denney says, 'the first [nuance]
is suggested by the general tenor of the
passage, and the second seems to be demanded
by what follows.'" Whatever the case, Paul
may be sensitive to those who accuse him of
being a man-pleaser (cf. use of πειθω in Gal
1:10). Paul *does* seek to persuade men, but
without compromising the message for he is
conscious that he is always under the eye of
God.

πεφανερῶμεθα Verb, perf pass indic, 1 pl
φανερῶ see v.10

By using here the perfect tense of the very verb
he used previously of the future judgement,
Paul highlights the fact that his work is subject
to the scrutiny of God moment by moment.
Hering suggests that the perfect has a present
meaning, 'we are visible just as we are'.
Martin translates 'we stand open to God.'

ἐλπίζω hope

συνειδήσεις, εως f conscience

If, as Paul hopes, the Corinthians put aside
their prejudices, they will recognise the purity
of his motives.

Verse 12

οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν, ἀλλὰ
ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ
ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ
καυχωμένους καὶ μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ.

παλιν again, once more

συνιστημι and συνιστανω recommend,
commend, give approval to

Cf. 3:1. Paul is conscious of the charge of self-
commendation, yet he is forced to defend his
ministry in order to defend the Gospel.

ἀφορμη, ης f occasion, opportunity
καυχημα, τος n ground for boasting, pride

Paul is strengthening the hand of those who are
sympathetic to his cause.

ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς 'so that you may have
something to set against'

προσωπον, ου n appearance, presence
καυχομαι boast, boast about

Cf. Gal 2:6; 1 Thess 2:17. "Apparently Paul is
not the only one 'boasting.' His opponents –
those mentioned in the stern letter ... – also
boast. But Paul is quick to point out the
different sources of the two acts of boasting."
Martin

Verse 13

εἴτε γὰρ ἐξέστημεν, θεῶ· εἴτε σωφρονοῦμεν,
ὑμῖν.

ἐξέστημεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ἐξίστημι
be out of one's mind

There are two ways of taking this verse:

i) Paul is answering the accusation by some
that he is mad (cf Mk 3:21 and Acts 26:22-
24). So Hering.

ii) Paul is responding to criticism that his ministry is not spiritual because it does not include sufficient ecstatic elements. In this case Paul is saying that his ecstatic experience is between him and God alone; his ministry towards men involves rational presentation of the truth (cf 1 Cor 14, esp. vv 18,19). This view is advocated by Deney, Barrett, Martin etc.

The aorist is probably a timeless aorist.

σωφρονεω be in one's right mind

"Whether Paul speaks of his exceptional behaviour or his ordinary, all of his actions are directed toward someone else... He has done nothing to push himself forward except to be a minister of the Gospel; rather, he is intent on seeking to please God and to serve his fellows." Martin

Verse 14

ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς,
κρίναντας τοῦτο ὅτι εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων
ἀπέθανεν· ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον·

"This verse marks the end to Paul's explicit proof that he is not commending himself, and the beginning of his manifesto on reconciliation." Martin

ἀγάπη του Χριστου is this a subjective genitive (Christ's love for us) or objective (our love for Christ)? The former seems to be demanded here.

συνεχω surround, hem in, control

'Hold in one's grip.'

The love of Christ, seen in his giving of himself for us, compels Paul to give himself utterly to the work of the Gospel. "What Christ has done is the basis of the apostle's life." Martin

κρινω judge

A judgment formed in the past, at or soon after his Damascus road experience.

ἀπέθανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s ἀποθνησκω die

Paul understands the death of Christ as the death of a representative substitute – both elements are included. We should not lose sight of the link with Paul's understanding of baptism, cf. Rom 6:1-14.

ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον Refers to those who belong to Christ. Those coming to Christ have died to the old life and been raised to the new (Rom 6:1-11). Hence Paul reckons himself dead to everything except this – to live for Christ (cf. v.15).

Verse 15

καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες
μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν
ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι.

ζωω live, be alive

Must mean (contra Barrett) all those who have life *in him* – "those who are spiritually alive ... freed from the bondage of sin." Martin

μηκετι no longer

Living to oneself is a description of unredeemed human life.

ἀποθανόντι Verb, aor act ptc, m & n dat s

ἀποθνησκω

ἐγερθέντι Verb, aor pass ptc, m & n dat s

ἐγειρω raise

There is a simple and inescapable logic: if he has died for us, we must live for him; if he is risen and lives now for us, we must live for him.

Martin suggests that these verses encompass the 'triad' of themes of substitution, representation and renewal.

Verses 16-21

The love of Christ expressed in the cross (vv. 14,15) is the ground of Paul's life and ministry, his proclaiming of redemption and reconciliation (cf. Paul's arguments in Rom 5:1-11).

Verse 16

Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ
σάρκα· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα
Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

ἀπο το νυν not from the time of writing but now as a Christian.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

κατα σαρκα from a human perspective.

Having an understanding of the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection changes one's view of everything else. Paul's new perspective is eschatological. It is from this same perspective that Paul expected the Corinthians to view his ministry.

εἰ καὶ 'though' is read by p⁴⁶ B κ* D*. The added δε between εἰ and καὶ in the majority of MSS has little effect on the meaning.

ἐγνώκαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl
γινώσκω

"In his pre-conversion days he judged Christ using human criteria and came to all the wrong conclusions." Kruse. The cross marked out Jesus as one cursed by God (cf. Gal 3:13) and therefore previously despised and rejected. Baur thought *κατα σαρκα Χριστον* a reference to the Jewish hope of a political Messiah.

οὐκετι adv no longer, no more

Verse 17

ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρήλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά·

καινος, η, ον new

κτισις, εως f creation, what is created

ἀρχαιος, α, ον old, former

'the old order'

παρερχομαι pass, pass by, pass away

"It has 'gone' in the sense that its regime is broken, though its power remains (Gal 5:16-21, 24) to be neutralised in Christ." Martin

γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γινομαι

"Christian existence means that by faith one lives in the midst of the old creation in terms of the new creation that God has brought about through Christ." Barrett

Hering would re-punctuate the verse to read, "If anyone is a new creation in Christ, then for him the old order has passed away and a new world has arisen." But this weakens the eschatological dimension emphasised by Martin who says, "Paul is not describing *in this context* the personal dimension of a new birth; rather he is announcing as a kerygmatic statement *the advent of the new creation 'in Christ,'* the dramatic recovery of the world, formerly alienated and dislocated, by God who has acted eschatologically in Christ, i.e., the world is now placed under his rule... To conclude: ἐν Χριστῷ καινὴ κτίσις in this context relates to the new eschatological situation which has emerged from Christ's advent (unlike the sense of Gal 6:14,15)." Paul is saying that the new age has already dawned. The church is the community of this new age (Eph 2:15).

Many MSS include *τα πάντα* after *καινα* (and this is reflected in the AV). Martin suggests that *if* these words are included (he includes them in square brackets), they should be understood adverbially, 'in every way'. The words are omitted by p⁴⁶ ⋈ B C D* G etc.

Verses 18-21

These verses may include some traditional pre-Pauline material. Martin says, "The literary structure of this section suggests a carefully prepared piece of soteriological credo, that is, a specimen of confessional statement expressing in summary form what the first Christians believed about God's redemptive work in Christ... His use of this device is well known, namely, he will claim the agreement of his readers by citing what he and they have in common possession. The reason is clear to see: the quarrel between Paul and his readers is not simply personal; it is above all about the kerygma. Hence Paul's resource is made to tradition (*παραδοσις*), with a parallel instance in 1 Cor 15:1-11."

Verse 18

τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἐαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς,

The "all things" means all the things that he has been speaking of, the new creation and new knowledge.

καταλασσω reconcile

On *Reconciliation*, see particularly, Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, Ch.7. The critical question is whether it is simply humankind who need to be reconciled to God (so Stewart, Hering) or whether also, or even primarily, it is God who needs to be reconciled to humankind (so Denney, Ladd, Morris, Martin). Ladd and Morris draw attention to the use of the terms 'enemy' and 'enmity' in Rom 5:10, suggesting that it is God who has something against us.

Denny (from whom Martin includes an extended quote), writes, "To Paul the estrangement which the Christian reconciliation has to overcome is indubitably two-sided; there is something in God as well as something in man which has to be dealt with before there can be peace. Nay, the something on God's side is so incomparably more serious that in comparison with it the something on man's side simply passes out of view. It is God's earnest dealing with the obstacle on His own side to peace with man which prevails on man to believe in the seriousness of His love, and to lay aside distrust. It is God's earnest dealing with the obstacle on His own side which constitutes the reconciliation; the story of it is 'the word of reconciliation'; when men receive it they *receive* (Romans 5:10) the reconciliation. 'Reconciliation' in the New Testament sense is not something which we *accomplish* when we lay aside our enmity to God; it is something which *God accomplished* when in the death of Christ He put away everything that on His side meant estrangement, so that He might come and preach peace. To deny this is to take St Paul's Gospel away root and branch." It is this objective work of God which forms the ground of the appeal to men and women to be reconciled to God – to accept the *gift* of reconciliation.

"The aorist participial verb form του καταλαξαντος (ἡμας ἑαυτῷ), 'who reconciled' (us to himself) is descriptive of God's past action, located in the mediation of Christ (δια Χριστου)." Martin

δόντος Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι
 διακονια, ας f ministry
 καταλλαγη, ης f reconciliation, being put
 into fellowship with God

Verse 19

ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

ὡς ὅτι generally means 'as if'. Here however it seems to have the force of 'that' or 'that is' – here, according to Martin, introducing a quotation.

θεος ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ ... 'God was in Christ, reconciling ...' or 'God in Christ was reconciling ...' Martin argues that the thought is soteriological rather than incarnational. The thought is not primarily that 'God was in Christ' but that it was through Christ that God has reconciled the world to himself.

λογίζομαι reckon, count, credit

"It is [Paul's] way of insisting that reconciliation includes – and is expressed in – the non-imputation of sins (as Rom 4:3ff. clarifies, with an appeal to Ps 32[31]:2: 'Happy is the man to whom Yahweh does not reckon sin.'). λογισθαι [τινι τι], 'to reckon,' is characteristic of Paul's soteriology and its idioms. παραπτωμα, 'trespass,' too is frequent in Paul..." Martin

παραπτωμα, τος n sin, wrongdoing
 θέμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s τιθημι
 place, set

Verse 20

ὕπερ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβέυομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν· δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.

ὡς As those committed with a ministry of reconciliation.

πρεσβευω be an ambassador
 παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

The preacher is the mouthpiece of God.

δεομαι ask, beg, pray
 καταλλάγητε Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 pl
 καταλασσω

"Paul is appealing to the Corinthians both to embrace the fruits of divine reconciliation – inasmuch as they have moved away from his Gospel – and to heed and accept his proffered gesture of friendship (to be elaborated in 6:1-2, 11-13; 7:2-4)... 'Be reconciled to God' is both the language of the kerygma ... and Paul's adaption of that kerygmatic appeal and *paraklesis* to the pastoral requirements at Corinth." Martin

Verse 21

τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

Some argue that this verse may be pre-Pauline because of its hymnic structure and unusual (for Paul) use of words. Martin thinks that Paul has taken a pre-existing creedal statement but has adapted it to his own ends, particularly by setting it in the context of the preceding verses. However, it may be Paul's way of summing up the work of Christ in a pithy and memorable phrase. Whatever the case, Hughes is surely right in saying of this verse, "There is no sentence more profound in the whole of Scripture."

γνόντα Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s γνωσκω
 ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

ὕπερ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν cf. Isa 53:10.

δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness, what God requires

On the meaning of this verse, cf Rom 3:21-26 and Phil 3:7-9. The balance between Christ being *made* sin and us *becoming* the righteousness of God can be satisfied only by imputation: our sin and its penalty was laid on him and his righteousness has been accredited to us.

Martin draws attention to the parallel with Romans 5:19, 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made/constituted sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made/constituted righteous.' He comments, "The essence of that summarising statement is well stated by Cranfield: 'the many will be constituted righteous through Christ's obedience' – to God – 'in the sense that, since God has in Christ identified himself with sinners and taken upon himself the burden of their sin, they will receive as a free gift from him that status of righteousness which Christ's perfect obedience alone has deserved.'"

Martin also suggests that the 'righteousness of God' (along with 'new creation' and 'reconciliation') is a virtual synonym for the new eon.