

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 256 – September 13th – 2 Corinthians 13:1-13

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

2 Corinthians 13:1

Τρίτον τοῦτο ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ τριῶν σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα.

τρίτον ... see 12:14

στομα, τος n mouth, testimony

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two

μαρτυς, μαρτυρος m witness

τρεις, τριων three

σταθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s ἵστημι stand, establish

ῥημα, ατος n word, thing, matter

Compare Deut 19:15 and Matt 18:16. Some suggest that Paul's words here are a warning to his opponents that any charge *against him* must be sustained by the evidence of witnesses. Others that Paul is saying that *they* have had ample warning by means of his visit and letter. If, when he now comes, he finds them still doing wrong, this will amount to multiple witnesses against them.

Verse 2

προεἶρηκα καὶ προλέγω ὡς παρὼν τὸ δεῦτερον καὶ ἅπὼν νῦν, τοῖς προημαρτηκόσιν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν, ὅτι ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν οὐ φείσομαι,

προεἶρηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s προλέγω say beforehand, warn in advance

παρῶν Verb, pres ptc, m nom s παρειμι be present

δευτερος, α, ον second

"The occasion of the original warning was the apostle's 'second visit', i.e. the 'painful' visit during which he had been attacked by the offender (cf. 2:5; 7:12)." Kruse

ἅπων Verb, pres ptc, m nom s ἀπειμι be away, be absent

The TR, following D¹ vg^{ms} includes γραφῶ after νῦν. There appears no reason why, if original, it should have been omitted.

προημαρτηκόσιν Verb, perf act ptc, m dat pl προαμαρτανῶ sin previously

λοιπος, η, ον rest, other

Kruse suggests that *those who sinned before* may be a reference to unrepentant sexual offenders (see 12:21 and cf. 1 Cor 6:12-20), while the *others* are those who condoned their conduct.

ἐὰν if

Here the meaning would appear to be 'when' – there is no doubt that Paul is coming.

ἔλθω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἔρχομαι

πάλιν again, once more

φείσομαι Verb, fut midd dep indic, 1 s φειδομαι spare, refrain from

Perhaps recalling the punishment "that was meted out to the offender who opposed Paul on his second visit. While we are unsure of what that punishment was, nevertheless it appears to have been effective (2:6-11; 7:9-12). Yet we must remember that the majority of the Corinthians favored this action (2:6). The point is, will Paul have such backing at his third visit?" Martin

Verse 3

ἐπεὶ δοκιμὴν ζητεῖτε τοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ λαλοῦντος Χριστοῦ· ὅς εἰς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἀσθενεῖ ἀλλὰ δυνατεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν,

ἐπεὶ since, because, for

δοκιμη, ης f proof, evidence

ζητεω seek, look for

The Corinthians, or at least Paul's opponents in Corinth, treated powerful speaking and signs and wonders as the marks of Christ's presence. "The only test of the validity of any ministry is whether it conveys the word of Christ to his people." Barrett

ἀσθενεω be sick, be ill, be weak

The latter part of this verse can be understood in one of two ways. It could be Paul's sarcastic repetition of their claim to have powerful evidence of Christ's presence with themselves, unlike the feeble Paul. Or it could be Paul's serious reminder that Christ had indeed been powerfully at work in them. So they should recognise the power of Christ which Paul can and will now exercise towards them (cf. the following verse). Martin suggests "If the Corinthians examine themselves and find that indeed Christ is in them (which of course Paul knows is true and is confident that the Corinthians themselves will come to discover), then this should be sufficient proof that Paul is a true apostle, for he brought the Gospel first to Corinth."

Verse 4

καὶ γὰρ ἐσταυρώθη ἐξ ἀσθενείας, ἀλλὰ ζῆ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ. καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἀσθενοῦμεν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ ζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς.

"Several MSS (κ² A D¹ Ψ lat syr Ambst) have και γαρ ει which leaves us with 'for if he was crucified...' The text (without ει) is supported by p⁴⁶ κ* B D* F G 0243 33 81 1739. Barrett ... appears correct when he observes that the variant reading 'lacks the vigour' of the [shorter] text found in Nestle-Aland." Martin

σταυρωω crucify

ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness

Christ's weakness, as exhibited in his crucifixion, is not through lack of power. "When Christ chose the cross, he did so because he was acting in God's power. Yet he assumed ἀσθενεια as a role. In taking God's will to be his own, Christ acted in power, despite the fact that the world would think otherwise (cf. Mark 15:30-32). His death on a cross was his own choice and not to be understood as submission to alien powers, such as satanic-demonic forces, as in gnostic theology." Martin

ζῆ Verb, pres act indic, 3s ζω live, be alive

ἀσθενεω be weak

Under the influence of the following σὺν αὐτῷ, several witnesses replace ἐν αὐτῷ with σὺν αὐτῷ.

"Christ came in weakness yet God vindicated him with resurrection life... Likewise, Paul came in 'weakness' and thus he too will be vindicated like his Lord... God regarded Christ's work as fully acceptable; Paul wishes that the Corinthians would see his work *mutatis mutandis* in the same light." Martin

The future ζήσομεν may imply that the Corinthians will fully recognise these things only in the age to come.

Verse 5

Ἐαυτοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἑαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε· ἢ οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἑαυτοὺς ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν; εἰ μὴτι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε.

"There are different ways to interpret the punctuation of this verse. One way is to end this verse with a question mark (KJV/AV; RSV; NIV; NEB). Another way is to create a series of questions. Also the whole verse can be understood as a statement (Phillips)." Martin

πειραζω test, put to the test

Paul urges them to examine themselves rather than subjecting *him* to scrutiny.

πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις, εως f faith, the Christian faith

Cf. 1 Cor 16:13. 'In the faith' is essentially synonymous with 'In Christ.'

δοκιμαζω test, examine, prove

ἢ or

ἐπιγινωσκω perceive, understand

"The Corinthians appear to have been quite confident that Christ was in them, so the purpose of Paul's question is to reawaken them to the moral implications of that great fact." Kruse

εἰ μὴτι unless

ἀδόκιμος, ον failing to meet the test, disqualified, worthless, corrupted

Paul is also optimistic of the Corinthians' standing, but he seeks to startle them into wakefulness.

Verse 6

ἐλπίζω δὲ ὅτι γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμεν ἀδόκιμοι.

The call for them to examine themselves may waken them to a more sober judgment concerning Paul.

ἐλπίζω hope, hope for, hope in, expect
γνώσεσθε Verb, fut mid dep indic, 2 pl
γινωσκω

In recognising the genuine nature of Paul's ministry they must realise the need to obey his instructions and reject his opponents.

Verse 7

εὐχόμεθα δὲ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν μὴ ποιῆσαι ὑμᾶς
κακὸν μηδέν, οὐχ ἵνα ἡμεῖς δόκιμοι φανῶμεν,
ἀλλ' ἵνα ὑμεῖς τὸ καλὸν ποιῆτε, ἡμεῖς δὲ ὡς
ἀδόκιμοι ὤμεν.

εὐχομαι pray, wish, long

εὐχόμεθα (p⁴⁶ A B D* F G K P 33 81 1175 lat)
εὐχομαι (2 Ψ 0243 vg^{mss} syr^p sa^{ms} Ambst).

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

"ὑμας, 'you' is the accusative and, grammatically speaking, can be taken as either the subject (so RSV) or the object of the aorist infinitive ποιῆσαι (from ποιᾶν). The latter, however, seems unlikely. If the Corinthians are the object, then the subject is understood to be either God ... or Paul himself (so NEB [1961 ed.] '[we pray] that we may not have to hurt you'). Either choice leaves us with an awkward thought, for what follows suggests that Paul wishes nothing but the best for the Corinthians." Martin

μηδέν adverb not at all, in no way
δοκιμος, ον approved, genuine, valued
φανῶμεν Verb, aor pass subj, 1 pl φαινω
pass. appear, be seen, be revealed

Paul's concern is for them, not for the damage to his own reputation because of them, cf. 12:19. Barrett remarks that Paul is prepared to take the sins of others upon himself and "to be counted a transgressor for their justification."

καλος, η, ον good, right, beautiful
ὤμεν Verb, pres subj, 1 pl εἰμι

'even if we appear to have failed.'

Verse 8

οὐ γὰρ δυνάμεθά τι κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας, ἀλλὰ
ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας.

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Bultmann suggests that 'truth' means Paul's teaching over against a different gospel. And Martin says, "In essence, Paul has laid a foundation for his coming visit. Whatever he finds at Corinth and in whatever way he is led to act, it will be done for God's glory. Whether he rejoices at their repentance or attacks the church at large..., Paul will (and always intends to) promote the will of God in action. Thus, he is committed to serve 'the truth,' i.e., the Gospel entrusted to him, even in the dialectic of weakness-in-strength and acceptance-in-rejection, as well as death-in-life (see 4:12). To his mind, he will not violate this dictum during his third visit."

Verse 9

χαίρομεν γὰρ ὅταν ἡμεῖς ἀσθενῶμεν, ὑμεῖς δὲ
δυνατοὶ ᾗτε· τοῦτο καὶ εὐχόμεθα, τὴν ὑμῶν
κατάρτισιν.

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

ὅταν when

ἀσθενεω be ill, be weak

δυνατος, η, ον strong, powerful, able

Cf. 12:10, also 10:4; 11:19.

εὐχομαι see v.7

καταρτισις, εως f being made complete

The word means putting in a proper condition, restoration. "What Paul has in view is the restoration and repair of what has been broken. There were several relationships that had been fractured. For one, the relationship between Paul and the church was in need of repair. Something had happened after the time Titus left Corinth with a good report (7:2-16) that caused the church to become estranged from him. (Here the intrusion of a rival mission in 11:4, 13-15 probably explains the breakdown of good relations.) In chaps 10-13 we find Paul attempting to mend a broken relationship. For another, the relationship between the Corinthians and God was likewise in need of attention." Morris.

Verse 10

διὰ τοῦτο ταῦτα ἀπὸν γράφω, ἵνα παρὼν μὴ
ἀποτόμως χρῆσωμαι κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἣν ὁ
κύριος ἔδωκέν μοι, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς
καθαίρεσιν.

Paul reviews his purpose outlined in chapters 10-13.

ἀπὸν Verb, pres ptc, m nom s ἀπειμι be
away, be absent

παρὼν Verb, pres ptc, m nom s παρειμι be
present

ἀποτομως sharply, severely

χρῆσωμαι Verb, aor midd dep subj, 1 pl

χραομαι use, make use of

'so that when I am present I may not have to
act harshly.'

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

Cf. 12:19-13:4.

ἔδωκέν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδομι
οικοδομη, ης f upbuilding, encouragement
καθαιρεισις, εως f destruction, tearing
down

Cf. 10:8 also 10:4.

Martin writes, "These words of 13:10 reiterate his topic introduced in 10:1,2. He will not be 'bold' unless forced to be so by the Corinthians. In these four chapters he has presented his case and provided the evidence that is more than sufficient to convict ... any wrongdoers. Yet his arguments have preceded his person in the form of a letter in the hope that those led astray by alien forces (11:1-3) will rectify the situation. Although we are left in the dark as to the outcome of this visit, we may hope that Harris is right in conjecturing that most likely the visit was not unpleasant... There are several hints (though no direct evidence) that possibly Paul's third visit turned out to be somewhat positive. For one thing, if Paul visited Corinth during the time he was in Greece (a three month period mentioned in Acts 20:2,3) and if he wrote the Epistle to the Romans from Corinth ... then Rom 15:30, 31 may shed some light on our concern. In these vv, we see that Paul is apprehensive, but it is for the future, not necessarily the present... There appears to be no pastoral concern (11:28) for the situation in Corinth at the time of writing to the Romans. If the Corinthian church was still the same as described in chaps 10-13, then we could rightly expect Paul to ask for prayer for that situation...

"Again we appeal to Romans (following Harris) when we note that Paul was laying plans for further evangelism (15:24, 28). Would he be so eager to press westward (i.e., towards Spain) if the Corinthian church was still in disarray? Moreover, it appears that the collection (2 Cor 8,9) was completed among the Corinthians (Rom 15:26, 27). It is doubtful this would have transpired if the church had rejected Paul after reading chaps. 10-13. Yet there are no Corinthian delegates in the journey with the collection intended for Jerusalem according to Acts 20:4, 5...

"Perhaps we are being too optimistic to suggest that Paul and the church at Corinth lived in renewed harmony. But at least we can say that there are some hints that all was not lost in the writing of chaps. 10-13. Possibly the situation improved at Corinth... But we must note that if the situation at Corinth was pleasant for Paul, nevertheless the church eventually reverted to its old ways (see *1 Clement*, dated AD 96) and Paul's influence went generally into decline."

Verse 11

Λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, καταρτίζεσθε, παρακαλεῖσθε, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε, εἰρηνεύετε, καὶ ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης ἔσται μεθ' ὑμῶν.

Paul's closing appeal is an appeal for unity.

(το) λοιπον adv. finally, henceforth, from now on

ἀδελφοί "suggests that Paul does not yet consider the situation at Corinth irreversible." Martin

χαρω rejoice, be glad; imperat used as a greeting – here perhaps, farewell

Martin thinks that the sense is 'rejoice.' "This is consistent with Paul's use of χαρειν in 13:9, where he speaks of 'rejoicing' at his being weak while the Corinthians are strong. Such an idea comports well with 13:11. Paul's hope is that the Corinthians will rejoice in spite of the bad report that has come to him and in spite of the threats he has made to the Corinthians (13:2)... They can rejoice in that God loves them and Paul as apostle loves them (even if they questioned this: so 12:15)... The Corinthians may rejoice in that they can remedy the situation if they choose to do so."

καταρτιζω restore, make complete; midd strive for perfection

If the passive voice is intended it is an implied prayer, 'be restored.' Martin thinks that the verb is middle, "To take the verb in the passive voice conveys the idea that Paul is lessening the burden on the Corinthians to act. This seems unlikely in view of his desire that the Corinthians should act before he arrives."

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

Middle or passive? Passive would mean 'take our appeal to heart' NEB. Middle, 'encourage one another.' Martin favours the middle voice.

φρονεω think, have in mind

Evidently imperative here. Cf. Rom 12:16; 15:15; Phil 2:2; 4:2.

ειρηνεω live or be at peace

Christians must constantly strive for church harmony, cf. Eph 4:3.

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s ειμι

Cf. Phil 4:7-9; Rom 15:33; 16:20; 1 Thess 5:23 also 1 Cor 14:33.

"In essence, Paul is telling the Corinthians that divine blessing awaits their right and responsive action." Martin

Paul's prayer is that these characteristics of God may be evident characteristics of the Corinthians.

Verse 12

ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν ἀγίῳ φιλήματι.
ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἅγιοι πάντες.

ἀσπάζομαι greet
ἀλλήλων, οἰς, οὐς one another
φιλημα, τος n kiss

Cf. 1 Cor 16:20; Rom 16:16; 1 Thess 5:26 also
1 Peter 5:14. A sign of mutual forgiveness,
reconciliation and acceptance as family.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

Cf. Rom 16:6. The Corinthians are part of a
larger body.

Verse 13

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡ
ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου
πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Cf. Rom 16:20b; 1 Cor 16:23; Gal 6:18; Phil
4:16; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; Philem 25;
see also Col 4:18b; 1 Tim 6:21b; 2 Tim 4:22b;
Titus 3:15b.

On the grace of Christ, see 8:9. On the love of
God see 5:18-21.

κοινωνία, ας f fellowship, sharing in,
participation

Probably both a sharing in the Holy Spirit and,
by the Holy Spirit, having a share in Christ and
having fellowship with one another.

"No other Pauline letter concludes with a
benediction so theologically imposing as the
one [here]." Furnish

Tasker writes, "In this wonderful closing verse,
among the most frequently quoted words in the
Pauline Epistles, the apostle adds his
customary final prayer that his readers may
live in the atmosphere of that saving *grace*,
whose *fons et origo* is the redemptive death of
the *Lord Jesus Christ*. But he does more than
this. Here, and nowhere else in his extant
letters, he prays further that they may
experience *the love of God*, of which Christ's
sacrifice on Calvary was the outstanding
revelation, and also that fellowship which the
Holy Spirit creates among all who have stood
beneath the cross and accepted Christ as their
personal Saviour. As the first of the three
genitives in this verse must be subjective, it is
probable that the other two should be
construed in the same way. It is not the
Christian's love for God, nor his communion
with the Holy Spirit that is here the dominant
thought, but rather the love displayed by God
and the fellowship achieved by the Holy
Spirit."

The TR follows most minuscules in adding
ἀμην.