

Series: 2 Corinthians
Title: Christ's Gospel and Love
Text: 2 Corinthians 7: 2-3
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2 Corinthians 7: 2: Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. 3: I speak not *this* to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

Christ sends his preacher to be received by his people. Paul said, "*Receive us.*" He is speaking to *everyone* who heard his letter at Corinth just as *we* hear it preached today. The "*us*" is all Christ's true preachers. He is saying: receive our gospel, our beseeching, our exhortation to repent from all else and turn to Christ alone!

Why does he say "receive" Christ's messenger? Because God the Father sent Christ. And Christ sends his preacher. So it is not only the vessel, but God and his Christ who speaks to you.

2 Corinthians 5: 20: Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

John 12:44: Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

This is what Paul means by *receive us*—receive our gospel by believing on Christ whom we preach; receive our gospel repenting from error to Christ...Christ said,

John 13:20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Not only this, once we receive God's messenger, believing on Christ, we are to receive Christ's preachers by sending them forward to preach this gospel to others.

3 John 1: 5: Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

He is speaking of preachers they knew and preachers they did not know personally who were travelling through.

3 John 1: 6: Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: 7: Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

Those who preach Christ's name are not profiting themselves. Therefore they receive nothing from this world.

3 John 1: 8: We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

So receiving Christ's preacher is receiving Christ who he preaches and sending them forth to preach this gospel to others. But we are not to receive and support all preachers? How do we determine the preacher we are to receive?

Our subject is "Christ's Gospel and Love."

I have titled the message this because we know the preacher we are to receive by the gospel they preach and by their love for the brethren because it will be Christ's gospel and Christ's love.

CHRIST'S PREACHER PREACHES CHRIST WHO SENT HIM

First, Christ's preacher does not wrong, corrupt or defraud men with lies. Christ's preacher preaches Christ who sent him. The servant sent of God preaches the message of him who sent him. When Christ took upon him the form of a servant and walked this earth, he did the same.

John 7: 16: Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17: If any man will do his will, [believing on Christ] he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. 18: He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

Christ is true. No unrighteousness is in him. We know it is so because Christ came preaching the message God sent him to preach.

Luke 4: 16: And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17: And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18: The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19: To preach the ACCEPTABLE YEAR of the Lord. 20: And he closed the book, ... And [all] eyes ... were fastened on him. 21: And he [said] This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

He meant he is the one Isaiah's prophecy declared. He is the Christ who alone is the Prophet, Priest and King of his people—our Salvation—our Gospel! He sent John this world telling us it is so,

Luke 7: 20: When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?... 22: Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

Christ is the Prophet of God and he is the Gospel God the Father sent him to preach. Christ is the great Physician who alone heals his people giving us a new heart. Christ is the Captain of our warfare who alone delivers his captive people out of the bondage of Satan, sin, death and hell by his own righteousness. Christ is the Light who gives sight to his people blinded in sin. Christ is the Son of God and if the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed. Christ is our Kinsman Redeemer whose coming marked the acceptable year—the day of salvation—the year of jubilee. Christ restores more to his people than we lost in Adam. Christ is he who fulfilled all the scriptures and the only one the scriptures are given to point his people unto. Christ is God the Father's message to his people. Christ is God's Gospel, God's Salvation! Therefore, Christ preached the message the Father sent him to preach! He preached,

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 6: 28: Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29: Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath

sent... 35: And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst... 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39: And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day...

We know Christ is true. No unrighteousness is in him. We know he is God's true Prophet sent of God because he came preaching the message God sent him to preach.

Likewise, as Christ preached the message of God the Father who sent him, so Christ's preachers preach the message of he who sent them—Christ Jesus!

Matthew 28: 18: And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Christ gave his apostles, evangelists and pastors and teachers, "*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.*" We go about "*speaking the truth in love, [that believers] may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*" (Eph 4: 13, 15)

For this reason, the apostle Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost and preached Christ crucified and risen and reigning! Christ's preachers went forth, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20: 21) The apostle Paul said, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." (2 Cor 4: 5) Our one message is the ministry of reconciliation,

2 Corinthians 5: 18...[God] hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19: To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Just as Christ preached the message of God the Father who sent him, so Christ's preachers preach the message of Christ who sent them—we preach Christ crucified!

BEWARE!

Yet, beware brethren! We are not to receive and support every preacher! The way we determine a preacher is sent of Christ is only if he preaches Christ crucified according to this word. If he strays into meaningless, vain doctrine we are to withdraw from him. Why?

2 John 1: 9: Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: 11: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Preachers who count the ministry of reconciliation a vain thing, eventually turn to preaching strange doctrines! God says "*from such withdraw thyself.*"

A man may claim to be preaching Christ but if his objective is to merely support some strange doctrine—to prove his point—rather than giving God all the glory in salvation by Christ Jesus, shutting sinners up to Christ, then it is vain.

If when a man preaches and shows scripture and the people say, “Well, maybe!” then he ought not preach it. Christ’s preacher has a message Christ sent us to preach

Isaiah 40: 1: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. 2: Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins.

Isaiah 40: 6: The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass,...9:... Behold your God!...he shall lead his flock like a shepherd and carry the lambs in his bosom

1 Timothy 6: 3: If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Brethren, the man Christ has sent preaches Christ who sent him. “*Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God.*” (2 Cor 6: 3-4)

Our dear sister, Winna Groover, told me after God called brother Cody home, that his desire was that throughout his life he would bring no reproach on the gospel! She was thankful that he had not done so. This is the desire of every Christ-sent preacher. “*To give no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed.*”

CHRIST’S PREACHE IS FILLED WITH THE LOVE OF CHRIST

This is the one thing vain preachers cannot fake. Christ preacher is filled with the love of Christ.

Brethren, you can know a man’s message by hearing him on the internet. But you cannot know the man by hearing him on the internet. And one is as important, as the other.

Christ defrauded no man, neither do his ministers. His preacher does not seek to have the preeminence (vain glory) over his brethren nor does he seek filthy lucre fleecing brethren.

1 Thessalonians 2: 3: For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: 4: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. 5: For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness:

2 Corinthians 12: 14...for I seek not yours, but you:...17: Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

Christ’s preacher does not leave one church for another then another then another then another—gaining more profit and more glory for himself with each move. Nor does he seek to have the preeminence over men, exalting himself and rejecting brethren. The loving apostle John said,

3 John 1: 9: I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. 10: Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church. 11: Beloved, follow not

that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

Also, Christ did not condemn men, neither do his ministers. Paul said, "*I speak not this to condemn you.*" Christ dwelt in Paul in Spirit. Christ did not condemn men. He said,

John 3: 17: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

God gave Christ a people all over this world who he came to save. Sinners are condemned already. Christ came to seek and to save that which is lost.

Therefore, since Christ dwelt in Paul, Paul had the same spirit. He said, "**I speak not this to condemn you.**" Our goal is not to draw a line in the sand so as to condemn men, especially not believers with whom is no condemnation in Christ. Our goal is to see God save them. Repeatedly Paul said things like,

1 Corinthians 4:14: I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

God's preacher does not preach down to sinners, exalting himself, saying "*you*" are the worm, but "*we*" are worms; not "*shame on you*" but "*shame on us.*" Paul knew himself to be the chief of sinners. Peter said,

1 Peter 5: 2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3: Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock...5: Likewise, ye younger, [preachers included] submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

False preachers are arrogant to exalt themselves by rebuking elders and condemning God's people just as satan tries to exalt himself over God. But they are the ones who shall be abased even as satan.

Christ loved his people and likewise Christ's preacher is constrained by the love of Christ so that he loves his brethren. Paul said, "*Ror I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.*" He did not say to live and die with you—He said to die and live with you. God's preacher and God's people are filled with the love of God so our desire is to maintain the unity of the spirit so we can serve together in unity until we die then live together for all eternity!

Can you imagine getting mad at family and separating yourself from them? I can imagine it with earthly family who know not God. But now with brothers and sisters in Christ who I shall live with for eternity. Our heart is to die in unity and live with one another for eternity. This is the charity of Christ's heart which we have when Christ is formed in our inward man. It is not so with those who only have knowledge.

1 Corinthians 8: 1...we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 2: And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

1 Corinthians 13: 4: Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5: Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8: Charity never faileth: but whether

there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11: When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12: For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13: And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

This was the heart of Christ and it the heart he creates in our new man. It is called having a pastor's heart. Only Christ our Prophet, Priest and King can give it! So I say with John,

1 John 4: 1: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2: Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

1 John 4: 7: Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8: He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9: In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. 11: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12: No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13: Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

Amen!