

Sunday, May 22, 2016—I Corinthians 4:21: Correcting the Corinthians, Part 2

### **Review/Introduction**

- I Corinthians 4:21—Paul opens verse 21 with a question, “what will ye?” In other words, “what do you want?”
- Having confronted those who are “puffed up,” and having told them that he is not interested in their empty words and talk but in the presence of power in their lives, he now gives them a choice. If they continue in their arrogant frame of mind, he will respond accordingly. On the other hand, if they allow the Holy Spirit to replace their fleshly haughtiness with humility, he will come unto them in a spirit of meekness.
- II Timothy 3:16-17—Paul is seeking to reprove and correct the poor thinking and behavior of the Corinthians via the act of addressing them through this epistle.

### **Whom The Lord Loveth He Scourgeth**

- I Corinthians 4:21—much could be said about the word “rod” in scripture. It is clear in this context that Paul has the issue of correction in mind. The “puffed up” attitude of the Corinthians necessitated correction.
  - Proverbs 22:15—does Paul literally mean that he is going to line up the Corinthians and spank them physically.
- Verses like I Corinthians 4:21 often bring up questions for people regarding how correction works during the dispensation of grace.
- Hebrews 12:5-11—see preacher the Bible says whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Is it scriptural to say that the Lord will punish his children to keep them in line?
- Scourgeth—means to flog or beat with a whip
  - Matthew 10:17
  - Matthew 20:19
  - John 19:1
- Hebrews 1:1-2; 2:1-4—the readership of Hebrews has a reference point in God’s prophetic dealings with then nation of Israel in time past. The writer of Hebrews is drawing his readers attention to some things they had already been taught.

- Ephesians 2:11-12—the gentile readers of Ephesians do not possess the same historical perspective as the readers of Hebrews because in time past they were strangers from the covenants of promise, without hope, and without God in the world.
- Ephesians 3:3—the formation of the Body of Christ is the subject of the mystery, therefore, the gentiles have no prophetic reference point like the readers of Hebrews.
- So the question becomes, if the book of Hebrews is not written to the Body of Christ, does God still chasten believers and if so what form does chastening take?

### *Two Forms of Chastening*

- Psalm 94:10-12—the first definition of chastening is that of correction which takes the form of instruction. The law provided correction which is a form of chastisement. Therefore, the first definition simply means to educate or inform with the goal of correcting.
- Proverbs 3:11-12—the second definition deals with keeping the law and fearing the punishment of God that is outlined in the Law.
  - Deuteronomy 28:1-14—delineate a series of blessings that would be given to Israel for following the Law.
  - Deuteronomy 28:15-44—delineate a series of curses that would come upon Israel for their failure to comply. The Law contract said they would be cursed for disobedience.
  - Deuteronomy 28:45—these curses were designed by God to pursue after them until they were destroyed.
  - Deuteronomy 28:46—this system of curses was to serve as a sign that is a flag, marker, or indicator that would tell the nation where they were at in their relationship with God.
- Romans 6:14-15—we are not under the Law system. Therefore, we are not under the sign program of the Mosaic Law. The things that happen to us are not indicative of God's favor or disfavor with us.
  - I Corinthians 4:8—the very fact that the Corinthians were rich and prospering materially despite living in spiritual rebellion proves that that they were not under the Law.
- Romans 5:1—based on the merits of his Son, God is at peace with us. If God is at peace with us he is not out to destroy us when we mess up.
- Colossians 2:13—believers have already been forgiven all trespasses. Why would God punish us for things for which we have already been forgiven?

### **What About Suffering?**

- I Corinthians 10:13—there is nothing in your life that you will experience that is not common to man. No one today is given any type of special temptation.
- Job 5:6-7—suffering comes upon all men because of the curse of sin.
- Job 14:1—suffering and trouble are common to all men.
- Ecclesiastes 2:22-23—we are part of a suffering tradition, it's called the human race.
- Philippians 1:28-29—suffering is a privileged part of what God is doing today during the dispensation of grace. We can expect suffering as believers because we live in a world system that was charted by the prince the power of the air (Eph. 2:1-3).
- Is this the same teaching that we saw in Duet. 28? Did God tell Israel that they could rejoice in their suffering?
- In the Dispensation of Grace, suffering is a gift from heaven designed to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ.
- II Corinthians 1:4-5—God is not chastening us the way Israel was in time past.
- Romans 5:3-5
- II Corinthians 4:8-11—our sufferings are not designed to destroy us. Rather, they are opportunities for the life of Christ to be made manifest in our mortal flesh.
- II Corinthians 4:16-18—God is not working in the realm of what can see but what we cannot see.

### **Chastening Under Grace**

- I Corinthians 4:21—as members of the body of Christ we still need correction from time to time as the book of I Corinthians makes abundantly clear. The question is what form does that correction take?
- I Corinthians 11:32—we need to judge ourselves through the Word of God.
- I Corinthians 2:14-16—we are all in possession of the mind of Christ. We need to use the mind we have been given and judge ourselves in light of the word of God.
- I Thessalonians 5:21
- Philippians 1:9-10

- I Corinthians 11:31-32—if we don't judge ourselves other saints will. When believers are judged Paul says that it is the chastening of the Lord.

#### *How It Works*

- I Timothy 1:20—"that they may learn"
- II Timothy 2:25-26—"instructing"
- Titus 2:12—"teaching"
- II Timothy 3:15-16—"correction and instruction in righteousness"
  - I Corinthians 4:21— Paul is seeking to reprove and correct the poor thinking and behavior of the Corinthians via the act of addressing the epistle of I Corinthians unto them.
- God is chastening believers today through the Word of God. Our chastening is according to the first type, i.e., correction by instruction.