

Chapter 12 concludes Paul's defense of his ministry to the church at Corinth. His efforts to curb the Corinthian believers from the false teachings of the "Super Apostles" has proven to be a challenge, and here, in his final remarks, he takes on his strongest tone yet, all for the ultimate sake of the souls of those he is ministering to.

2 Corinthians

12:11-21

Paul's Final

Defense

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Being misunderstood can be one of life's greatest frustrations. We often have good intentions and motives, sincere and heartfelt, but that is not how they are necessarily received by others. Much like that of Jesus and his work on the cross, sometimes as His followers we can encounter experience shame, pain, and even forms of persecution for doing what's right and good before the Lord

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

DESCRIBE a time when you were recently misunderstood.

HOW does it feel when you find that your good intentions were not received as such?

WHY do you think we are so quickly offended when we are misunderstood?

WHAT tend to be the ways we respond when our motives are drawn into question?

2 Corinthians

12:11-21

Paul's Final Defense

Read 2 Corinthians 12:11-21

OBSERVATION

How does Paul begin this section in vs. 1?

What signs does Paul say were performed among those in Corinth (vs. 2)?

According to vs. 13, in what way did Paul treat the church in Corinth differently than others he visited?

What do you observe as Paul's primary focus in vs. 14-15?

What seems to be the accusation from the church to Paul in vs. 16-18?

According to vs. 19, what is Paul's ultimate purpose in his words?

What does Paul say he fears in vs. 20-21?

INTERPRETATION

How has Paul been a fool? Recall similar words in 11:1, 16-17, and 12:11.

What does Paul mean that he should've been commended by those in Corinth (vs. 11)? Consider what he mentioned earlier in 3:1-2.

What are the signs of an apostle, mentioned in vs. 12? See Romans 15:8-9 for insight.

Explain the sarcasm Paul uses in vs. 13. What did he NOT take from the church in Corinth that he typically received from other churches?

How many times has Paul sought to visit the church in Corinth? See Acts 18:1-17, 2 Corinthians 2:1.

Why does Paul use the example of parent's obligation to their children in vs. 14? See 1 Corinthians 4:15.

How does Paul's ministry focus in vs. 14-15 reflect that of Jesus'? See 2 Corinthians 5:21 for a parallel.

How does Paul argue that he, Titus, and the other brother were at no fault in taking advantage of those in Corinth? See 2 Corinthians 8:20 for insight.

What is the solution to the thing Paul fears as this section closes in vs. 21?

APPLICATION

Read Psalm 51. What sin needs to be repented of in your life? How does Ps. 51 give practical steps in this?