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November memory verse [Isaiah 7:14 \(NKJV\)](#) Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

**Commentary on 2nd Corinthians chapters 9 and 10,
by Chuck Smith 11.26 .23**

CHAPTER 9

Paul has been, in the last couple of chapters, talking to them about the collection that he wanted them to take for the poor in Jerusalem. The church in Jerusalem had gone through a lot of problems, severe persecution. And the Christians in Jerusalem were in great physical need. And so, Paul is asking the Gentile churches to show their love in the body of Christ for their brothers in Jerusalem by sending an offering by his hand to them. And in chapter eight, he talks to them about the gathering together of these funds. In chapter nine, he continues his appeal to them to give for the aid of the church in Jerusalem. And so,

As touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you ([2Cr 9:1](#)):

Because, he said, "I know how willing you are to do these things."

For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of [which are in] Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many ([2Cr 9:2](#)).

So, Paul is talking to them again about ministering to the needs of the church in Jerusalem. And he said that, I know a year ago you were ready to do it, and I shared with others your willingness, and they became excited over your willingness. And it was an inspiration to them to give. Your zeal has been an inspiration, provoked others.

Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf ([2Cr 9:3](#));

And so Paul sent Titus and another brother ahead to receive the collections that they had taken up to help the church in Jerusalem, and Paul's a little concerned now. He's

been boasting of how generous and willing the Corinthians were in supporting, and now he's hoping that they'll come through after his boasting of them. And so, "I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf;"

that, as I have said [that as I have declared of you], ye may be ready [to give]: Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting ([2Cr 9:3-4](#)).

So, Paul is sort of trying to cover his bases in a sense. He's been bragging all about them, told the churches in Macedonia, "Oh, these guys are really super givers and all, and they're really ready to aid." And now, if I come and you haven't done anything, you know, I'll be embarrassed, and you'll be embarrassed and all. So it's encouraging them in this giving.

Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness ([2Cr 9:5](#)).

Now, Paul really didn't want any offerings taken while he was there. He wanted it to all be done in advance. Paul wanted to preclude any criticism that might come of his ministry saying, "Well, Paul's just in it for the bucks." And he was extremely careful in this regard, not wanting to bring a reproach to Jesus Christ in the matter of giving.

But Paul didn't want any kind of accusation that he was fleecing the church. And therefore, he wanted it all to be taken care of. He sent a couple fellows in advance so that all of the giving would be over with by the time he got there. That he could just receive what was given, and take it on to the church in Jerusalem. But didn't want any collections made while he was there.

And I was just really embarrassed. I don't like my name used as the goat or the gimmick or whatever to get people to give. I do trust in my Father to supply my needs, and He does, and He's very good about it. He's very faithful in that. And so, really, I sort of modeled myself after Paul in this regard.

But in the giving, Paul does mention an interesting basic law of God. And that law of God is a spiritual law. And it is interesting because it is hard, at times, to understand just how it can work. And I don't know the mechanics of how it works, all I do know is that it does work

The same with spiritual laws that are also established by God within the universe. And though I can't explain how they work, I know they do. And so, you learn to live by these laws. You learn to follow these laws, and to reap the results. Now, I know that there is a spiritual law that declares, "Give, and it shall be given unto you, measured out, pressed down, running over" ([Luke 6:38](#)). Now, just how it is that the more you give to God the more you receive, I don't know how that operates. But Paul brings out this spiritual law here.

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But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully ([2Cr 9:6](#)).

Now that's the spiritual law. And when you put it like this, I can begin to understand it a little bit how the more you give, the more you'll get. For Paul here puts it in a framework that I can begin to understand a bit. If I am sowing wheat in the field, it stands to reason the more seed I sow, the greater harvest I will have. Now, if I want to be very careful about how I sow, and just take the seeds and toss them out here and there, then I'm only going to have little wheat shoots here and there. I'm not going to have much of a harvest. But if I go out and sow just abundantly, then I'm going to reap an abundant harvest. So, putting it in that kind of a framework, I can begin to understand a little bit how the more you give, the more you get. The more God returns, the greater the harvest.

And so, Paul brings it over into this law of giving, saying that if you sow sparingly, you're going to reap sparingly. But if you will sow bountifully, then you will reap bountifully. That is a law of God. Interesting, it is the only law that God challenges you to prove. A lot of people say, "I'm going to prove God now." But God has only challenged you to prove Him in one area, and that is in this law of giving. And God said, "Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD, and see if I will not pour out unto you a blessing that you cannot contain" ([Malachi 3:10](#)). And that proving Him is in the giving to God of tithes and offerings.

So there is a basic law, it works. I can't explain how it works. All I can do is assure you that it does work. God says prove me and see if it doesn't. Only in the one area of giving. Now,

Every man ([2Cr 9:7](#)) And here is how we are to give, "Every man" according as he has purposed in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity [out of pressure]: for God loveth a cheerful [hilarious] giver ([2Cr 9:7](#)).

And that's what the Greek word means. God takes it as a personal affront, and I would, too, if I were God. When someone gives Him something, and then gripes about it. You ever had someone give you something, and then they go around and they complain and you know, about what they gave to you?

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work ([2Cr 9:8](#)):

That is God's return now to you. You have given to God hilariously. God will never be a debtor to you. Remember that. God will never be a debtor to man. As the scripture said, "Who hath given, and it has not been recompensed unto him again?" ([Romans 11:35](#)) And as Jesus said, "Give and it shall be given, measured out, pressed down, running over," because God's not going to be your debtor. So, "God is able to make all grace abound toward you," taking care of all of your needs, "every good work."

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(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever ([2Cr 9:9](#)).

And so, he puts together here, actually, some of the psalms in this verse, "has dispersed abroad; given to the poor: his righteousness remains."

Now he that ministereth seed to the sower [or God] both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness:) ([2Cr 9:10](#))

And so God, who gives the seed to the sower, gives us the bread. May He multiply the seed that you have sown, and just increase your fruits.

Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God ([2Cr 9:11](#)). And so, may God just return to you riches untold.

For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God ([2Cr 9:12](#));

While by the experiment of this ministration [ministry] they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; And by their prayer for you ([2Cr 9:13-14](#)),

And of course, they, in turn, having received, will pray for you,

which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift ([2Cr 9:14-15](#)).

So we're talking about giving to God, but yet, you think of what God has given unto us: that unspeakable gift of Jesus Christ. And what was the motive behind it? "God so loved the world that He gave" ([John 3:16](#)).

Paul seeks now in the next few chapters to defend himself, as though he needed to defend himself. It's tragic that Paul was put in this posture. And Paul is embarrassed by it. He's more or less forced now to say things he doesn't want to say. These are things that were between he and the Lord. These are things that he endured for Christ's sake, willingly, gladly. Things that he didn't go around, you know, trumpeting all over the land. But now he's more or less forced, because of his position being challenged by these evil people in Corinth, to reveal some of the things whereby his apostleship is really proved.

CHAPTER 10

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent [I am] bold toward you ([2Cr 10:1](#)):

This is one of the charges that are made. "Hey, when he gets away he can write these terrifying letters, but when he's here, he's just so meek and you know, just so mild mannered and all. But he gets away, and then he writes these terrifying letters to you. But when he's around, he's an ugly little runt." And they were making fun of his appearance.

But I beseech you ([2Cr 10:2](#)),

Twice now, the beseeching, not demanding, but just appealing to them.

that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh ([2Cr 10:2](#)).

They were accusing Paul of walking according to the flesh. They were making all kinds of bitter accusations against him and he's warning that when he comes, he doesn't want to really come down heavy on them. However, if the necessity is there, he will.

For though [he said] we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but [they are] mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ([2Cr 10:3-5](#));

So we walk in the flesh; that is, we are in a body of flesh. However, our real warfares are not fleshly warfares. Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, said, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and spiritual entities in high places" ([Ephesians 6:12](#)). Our real battles, our real warfare are not physical battles. They are spiritual battles with these spirit entities that surround us, and there is spiritual warfare constantly going on. We do not and cannot imagine the extent to which this spiritual warfare is being waged in the universe around us.

So, there are really the three R's I call the spiritual victory. And the one is to *recognize* the source of the attack. This is the enemy at work. He's attacking me. Having recognized it, then I can deal with it by *resisting* it in the name of Jesus. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. And then the third key to victory is to *rejoice* in the victory of the Lord over the powers and the forces of darkness, and as you rejoice you find the depression goes; you find that the irritation leaves, and you begin to really feel victory in Christ. And what a difference the day becomes because you have taken that victory that is yours through Christ over this attack of the enemy against you.

So, we walk in the flesh but we really don't war after the flesh. The warfare is a spiritual warfare, and for this spiritual warfare it takes spiritual weapons. And God has provided us those spiritual weapons. And in Ephesians chapter six, Paul said, "Therefore recognizing that we're wrestling against these spirit forces and powers, **put on the whole armor of God**, that you might be able to withstand the works of the evil one." That you

might stand against them. And he talks about the helmet of salvation; he talks about the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; the shield of faith whereby we quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. And then having armed you completely, he then concludes by saying, "Praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, let your requests be made known unto God" ([Philippians 4:6](#)).

So the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. The weapons of the spiritual warfare are spiritual weapons, the word of God, faith, prayer. And by these we come against the attacks of the enemy, and by these we can defeat the enemy. None of you as a child of God need to go on being harassed by Satan. You have the authority and the power through Jesus Christ to put the enemy to flight. And when you come against him in that victory of Christ that was wrought at Calvary, Satan must yield. "Resist the devil and he shall flee from you. Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you" ([James 4:8](#)).

Now, the area of the battlefield is in the mind of man and in his thoughts. Satan battles you in your mind. The spiritual battles are waged in your mind. That's where Satan challenges God. "Hath God said? Does God know? Is there knowledge in the most high? Does God see?" And quite often we are deceived by Satan thinking that we are getting by. God doesn't see.

But in our minds Satan will plant thoughts, ideas, fantasies. What do I do with them? Do I say, "Oh, I like that. Um-hmm." And I begin to fantasize and see myself in this experience, and I begin to go on in my mind and play with it and, "Oh, you know, it would be so good and I could be so happy. And oh, it's so ideal." And you continue to fantasize, and Satan takes that imagination, that fantasy, and he uses it to trip you up.

And so Satan works. You begin to visualize yourself in these things, doing these things. And your subconscious begins to develop the schemes and the methods whereby it becomes a reality. And suddenly you find yourself caught up in that which you really thought I would never do. But you see, you first of all did it in your mind. That's what Jesus was talking about when He said, "You've heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say unto you, Whoever lusts after a woman in his heart" ([Matthew 5:28](#)). You see, there is where it starts: in the mind, in the fantasizing. You're already guilty. You're on the road. You're on the way. You've already in your mind done the act. And so that's where it has to be checked.

That's where we need the spiritual weapons. To check those imaginations. And "casting down every imagination and anything that would exalt itself against the law of God," that would put me in opposition to what God hath said. "Bringing every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Jesus Christ." If that thought that you have doesn't measure up and match what Jesus would have you to be or to do, then get rid of it. Don't play with it. Don't flirt with it, because it can bring you into damnation.

So the weapons of our warfare. We need the spiritual weapons to fight this spiritual warfare. We may walk in the flesh, but that isn't where the real war takes place. It takes place in my mind. The spiritual battle for the control of my mind. And if I have the mind

of the flesh, then I'm going to reap corruption. But if I have the mind of the Spirit, then I'm going to reap life and joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. But the battle is for the mind and Satan is trying to captivate your mind.

And look at the tools that he has today to captivate your mind and to plant things into your mind that would take you away from the Lord. Look at the abundance and the availability of pornography today. Satan is working overtime to bring out things to capture your mind and to cause these fantasies to start going. And you've got to stand in the strength and in the power of the Holy Spirit against these onslaughts of the enemy, or else you will find yourself brought into captivity and in the bondage of your flesh.

My heart goes out to you. It's not easy to live the right kind of life today, because every ungodly pressure in the world is against you. And you cannot in your flesh maintain a spiritual experience. You must take and use everything God has made available for you if you're going to stand in these days.

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled ([2Cr 10:6](#)).

Paul is again referring to those in Ephesus in whom he plans to, if they do not change, bring revenge upon their disobedience. Now,

Do ye look on things after the outward appearance ([2Cr 10:7](#))?

And this is where they were making fun of Paul's outward appearance. You know, "He's weak and contemptible in his presence. His speech is contemptible." Paul said, "Do you look on the outward appearance?"

If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's ([2Cr 10:7](#)).

So these people who were saying, "Well, we are really of the Lord." Paul says, "Wait a minute. I'm also of the Lord." "Oh, we have the mind of Christ." Paul said, "We also have the mind of Christ." "We have received a revelation." Paul said, "I have received a revelation." So these people, they say they're of Christ, but just put this down. "We also are of Christ."

For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed ([2Cr 10:8](#)):

Now Paul's authority was given to him of the Lord to build up the body of Christ. And so be careful. You see, when a person is speaking authoritatively and he is using that to tear down the body of Christ, then that's a dangerous thing. To destroy. Paul said, "My gift wasn't given to me to destroy, but to build up. If I have the anointing of God's Spirit

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and the word of the Lord in my heart, that word was given to me to build up the body of Christ. These people are going around trying to destroy or to tear down the body of Christ."

That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak ([2Cr 10:9-10](#)),

Spinally little guy. and his speech contemptible. Let such a one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present ([2Cr 10:10-11](#)).

When I come in the deeds I will be powerful and weighty. Paul wasn't really one to be messed with.

Paul says, "Hey, as I am in my letters: powerful, weighty; that's the way I'm going to be in my deeds when I deal with these guys when I get there." Man, if I were one of those speaking against Paul, I think I'd take a leave of absence and leave town for a while.

For we dare not make ourselves of the number [of those who are guilty of the mistake of] comparing themselves with others: for by measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, they're not wise ([2Cr 10:12](#)).

Now this is often a mistake that people make. You see, we look around and say, "Hey, I'm not too bad." Because I'm comparing myself with you. And as we use each other as our standard for comparison, we can sometimes feel very heady, very proud, you know, because I'm using another man as my standard for comparison.

But Paul said that isn't wise. Why? Because no man is my standard. Jesus Christ is my standard. God doesn't call me to be like any man; He calls me to be like Jesus Christ. And though I may look at some man and say, "Well, you know, I'm not too bad." When I look at Jesus Christ, I say, "Woe is me; I'm a sinful man. God help me."

So here in Corinth there was this little group puffed up because they were comparing themselves with each other, using each other as the standard for comparison. And thus being puffed by that, but that's a mistake. That's not wise. God help us that we don't fall in that trap. That we don't measure ourselves by others, but let's look at Christ as the standard..

There's only one sin that can condemn a man now, and that is the rejection of Jesus Christ. He "didn't come to condemn the world but to save the world. For the world was already condemned and this is the condemnation, light came into the world but men wouldn't come to the light" ([John 3:17-19](#)). That's the condemnation. Sin, because they don't believe in Me.

But then He said, "Of righteousness, because I ascend into my Father" ([John 16:10](#)). Now, that again is an interesting statement. Why would He equate righteousness to His ascension into heaven? The ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven in the sight of the disciples was God's statement to mankind: This is the righteousness that can be received into heaven. Nothing less. If you want to be accepted into heaven, then that is the righteousness that God accepts into heaven.

You say, "Woe is me; I'm out." No, for by faith in Jesus Christ, God imputes to us that righteousness which is of Christ through faith. But it does immediately eliminate any work that I might be seeking to do to be accepted by God. It does eliminate works as a method to gain entrance into heaven completely. The ascension of Jesus Christ puts the standard of righteousness so high that I cannot attain it by my own effort. I must accept it as the gift of God through His grace. "Of righteousness because I ascend unto heaven." God's declaration, This is the standard.

So He is the standard by which we must measure ourselves, not each other.

But [Paul said] we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you; for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labors; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly ([2Cr 10:13-15](#)),

And so Paul says, "I'm not going to, you know, measure myself by other standards. The work that I did, it's sufficient. The labor that I had among you, that's the measure. Your faith in Christ, your following after Him, that's the testimony. That's the witness to the authenticity of my ministry. You yourselves, the fruit of my ministry attest to the fact that my ministry is valid." And Paul said,

To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand ([2Cr 10:16](#)).

And so Paul talks about his ministry. He wasn't really interested in going around and building on another man's foundations. He wasn't really interested in going where the gospel had already been declared. He was interested in going to regions beyond, and when he had come to Corinth, they had never heard before. Now that they had heard and believed, there were always those fellows ready to move in and to put Paul down and try to build their own little popular followings. And that is always the case.

And so Paul is faced with this in Corinth. All of these guys moved in. They weren't going to unreached regions. They were going in and trying to build on the foundation that he established. Why is it that they go into the church and try to take away from the church, rather than going down to the beach? Or going to the public marketplaces?

But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth ([2Cr 10:17-18](#)).

It's not what I think about myself that counts; it's what God thinks about me. It's not what I say about myself that really matters; it's what is God saying about me? So with you. It's not what you have to say about yourself that is really important; it's what does God have to say about you? Not what you have to say about your calling or your ministry or whatever; what is God saying about it? It isn't he who commends himself. That isn't where it's at. But the commendation of God, that's the thing we need to see. If we want to glory, let's not glory in our works or in our efforts, but let's glory in what the Lord has done.

What does God think of me and of my service? Men might be hailing me, saying how wonderful I am. Hey, that doesn't matter. They could be wrong. What is God saying? That's what I'm concerned with. What's God's opinion? That has me deeply concerned. God help us.

Father, we thank You again for Your word, standard for life. The light for our path. May we walk in Your truth. And O God, may we live after the Spirit and after the things of the Spirit. A life that is pleasing and acceptable, Lord, unto Thee. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

May the Lord be with you and may He bless you through the week as God ministers unto you those infinite riches of His love and grace wherewith He loved you before the world ever existed. And may you come to have a fresh insight of God's love and concern for you. That you, in turn, might have a new depth of love and relationship with Him. May this be a blessed week. Blessed of God in every way.