



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Chapter 13

Bishop Youssef



Introduction

- In this chapter, St. Paul makes final comments in preparation for his coming (1-4)
- He encourages them to examine themselves to prove whether or not they are in the faith (5-6)
- His prayer is that they do no evil, but that which is honorable, and to be made complete (7-10)
- St. Paul closes his epistle with exhortations designed to ensure that the God of love and peace will be with them (11-14)

Coming with Authority (13:1-6)



- This proves an intermediate visit between the two recorded in Acts 18:1; 20:2
- Quoted from Deut 19:15, every offence will be disciplined, but the trials will be legal: two or three witnesses will establish a charge
- His two or three visits as establishing either:
 - ❖ The truth of the facts alleged against the offenders, and/or
 - ❖ The reality of his threats

Coming with Authority (13:1-6)



- As he told them, when he was there the second time, so now he writes that when he comes again he will not spare offenders
- Those who have sinned before my second visit and the rest who have sinned after
- Since some denied his apostleship, he would give a proof of the might of Christ through him
- Long ago Christ has exhibited great proofs of His power by me among you (2 Cor 12:12)

Coming with Authority (13:1-6)



- Christ submitted himself unto death, voluntarily choosing the weakness of mortality
- But by the power of God He rose from death
- We appear weak by partaking of the same sufferings for His sake but we shall live with Him
- We will exercise our apostolic authority against offenders, which flows to us in respect to you from the power of God
- Let there be self-examination

Coming with Authority (13:1-6)



- This should be your first aim, rather than "seeking a proof of Christ speaking in me" (2 Cor 13:3)
- Finding Christ dwelling in yourselves, you may well believe that He speaks in me
- Christ must dwell in them unless they are disqualified because of their infidelity
- Christ is in those who are qualified, and the power of Christ, that he will display when he comes, will show that St. Paul himself is also not disqualified

St. Paul Prefers Gentleness (13:7-10)



- If they should do evil, St. Paul's display of power would show that he was not disqualified
- We do not pray that we may appear approved, "by restraining you when you do evil; "but that you should do what is right"
- He desires only to promote the truth
- Our apostolic power is given us that we may use it not against, but for the furtherance of, the truth
- Weak: no occasion for displaying our power

St. Paul Prefers Gentleness (13:7-10)



- Strong: "mighty" in faith and the fruits of the Holy Spirit, even if this makes us appear weak
- We pray for your complete restoration and transformation
- He writes in order that he may not have to use sharpness when he comes, or the power which God has given for edification, not for destruction
- I wish the "sharpness" to be in my letters rather than in deeds

Greetings and Benediction (13:11-14)



- Farewell; means in Greek also "rejoice"; thus in bidding farewell he returns to his starting point, "we are helpers of your joy" (2 Cor 1:24)
- Become complete by filling up what is lacking in your Christian character (Eph 4:13)
- Be of good comfort: If you take my advice, you shall have consolation
- Think the same; let there be no dissensions among you. Follow peace, and pursue it

Greetings and Benediction (13:11-14)



- While you are full of contentions, dissensions, and discord, peace can have no place among you
- Love cannot live, neither exist, where there are contentions, and divisions
- And where neither peace nor love is to be found, there God cannot be
- And if He be not there, yourselves and the devil make the whole assembly
- Let the spirit of friendship live among you

Greetings and Benediction (13:11-14)



- The practice was maintained at the celebration of the Eucharist "Apostolic Constitutions"
- On Passion Week it was omitted in commemoration of Judas' kiss
- The Christians of Macedonia or Philippi, from which he wrote this epistle
- The benediction proves the doctrine of the Divine Trinity in unity
- The Holy Trinity can be mentioned in any order

Greetings and Benediction (13:11-14)



- The grace of Christ" comes first, for it is only by it we come to "the love of God" the Father
- The variety in the order proves that "in this Trinity none is afore or after other"
- Communion: fellowship, or participation, in the same Spirit, who joins us all in one Church
- Whoever has "the fellowship" has also "the grace" and "the love"; because they are inseparable as the Holy Trinity is also inseparable



Conclusion

- What will be the significance of St. Paul's third visit to them?
- What is St. Paul's warning should he come again?
- What does St. Paul exhort them to do?
- What was St. Paul's prayer for them?
- Why was St. Paul writing this epistle?



Conclusion

- In expressing farewell, what four exhortations does he leave with them?
- Provided they heed these four exhortations, what blessing will they enjoy?
- What final exhortation does he give to them?
- What three blessings does St. Paul pray for them as he closes this epistle?