LESSONS THIS QUARTER
1) 04 March 2018.............1Cor 1-3............United in Christ
2) 11 March.............1Cor 4-6........Glorifying God
3) 18 March.............1Cor 7..........Keeping Commitments
4) 25 March.............1Cor 8-10........Influencing for Christ
5) 01 April.............1Cor 15-16........Assurance of the Resurrection
6) 08 April.............1Cor 11........Remembering the Sacrifice
7) 15 April.............1Cor 12 & 14........Serving God’s People
8) 22 April.............1Cor 13........Understanding Love
9) 29 April.............2Cor 1-2........Enjoying God’s Comfort
10) 06 May.............2Cor 3-5........Displaying the Gospel
11) 13 May.............2Cor 5-7........Becoming New
12) 20 May.............2Cor 8-9........Giving Faithfully
13) 27 May..........................2Cor 10-13........................Finding Strength

INTRODUCTION
• Paul couldn’t even get his thorn in the flesh healed yet he accomplished more for the Gospel than all of his critics combined. How did he do this?
• Paul had to address 2 audiences in this epistle – the loyal majority and the disloyal minority who were severely opposed to him.
• Paul makes his case to the disloyal minority in these last few chapters: What have we all done for Christ except cause confusion, but look what I have done and suffered for Christ – Can you compare?

Passage | Comments
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Paul’s Challenge to His Skeptics | vv1-3. Principle of being meek & gentle with sheep – but not toward goats or sheep who act as goats
| • What’s the difference in walking vs. warring in the flesh?
| • vv4-5. Casting down arguments! How is this done?
| • Use Convincing Miracles? Make Bodily Threats?
| • vv6. We are ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is complete! Say what? Consider this: God can’t correct the world till His house is in order. For example: The world says divorce & remarriage. The Bible says if you are separated, either be reconciled or remain single. vv7-9. “...you are looking at things outwardly.”
| • What does this mean? Consider this: Their focus was saving & gentleness. Paul’s approach used divine power to destroy. Unforgiveness?
| • Consider this:
| • vv10-11. Paul’s weak bodily appearance and contemptible speech belied his ability to hit hard. Don’t judge the book by its cover, aka don’t judge on looks alone.
| • vv12-13. Watch out for comparing yourself with others, and not having God’s standard of holiness to go by. E.g., I am not as bad as my co-worker.
| • vv17-18. Seek God’s approval and not man’s... HOW?

Paul Defends His Apostleship | v3. “As the serpent beguiled Eve”—It is so easy to lose focus and chase after worldly things that shimmer & shake
| • Satan can throw distractions at us such as anxieties and doubt; or the lust of our eyes will cause us to wander away
| • vv13-15. Satan & his horde of demons can transform into angels of light or ministers of righteousness. Example – Jesus called Peter “Satan” for trying to distract Him from the cross
| • Any other examples? False or weak Bible teachers? Naysayers? Prosperity preachers? Others
| • vv22-29. Paul compares his sufferings with those of the false apostles to convince the Corinthians on whom to believe
| • Stripes 200x (40x5) | Severe Beatings 3x | Shipwrecks 3x
| • ...and perils from robbers, from countrymen, in the city, in the wilderness, imprisonments, false brethren, in hunger, in fastings, in cold and nakedness – WOW!
| • Would we ask, “Where is the God of comfort?” or “Why isn’t God meeting my needs as He promised?”
| • Remember ➔ God Promised Persecutions. While we have it easy we should be working twice as hard while it is day

Paul’s Heavenly Vision | v1-7. Paul was privileged to see a glimpse of Heaven, but he received a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humbled about it
| • vv8-10. God refused to answer Paul’s prayers to remove the thorn. Instead, a blessing was behind the handicap – God is glorified in his weakness
| • Paul had to rely more on God to accomplish God’s will then on his own human strength (no flesh will glory in His presence – 1Cor 1:29)

Self-Examination
• vv1-2. Paul says he will clean up and spare not the rod when he next visits Corinth. What would this look like? Nehemiah pulled beards (Neh 13:25). Would Paul dote the same or would it be just a tongue lashing? Do Pastors have such authority today to “clean house”? (cf 13:10). How do you judge 2Cor 10:1, where Paul said he urged “meekness & gentleness”?
• vv5. How do we examine ourselves to make sure we are saved and working & living in the Spirit? What would this look like? Phil 2:12; 2Peter 1:10
• Do we consider our fruit? Words? Deeds? Thots? Attitude? Focus where our eyes roam? Others?

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS
• Paul’s authority to use tough measures to straighten up the Corinthians came directly from God (2Cor 13:10).
• Elders and the congregation at large, can seek the removal of unrepentant sinners from the church’s midst to protect the sheep (1Cor 5:1-7), but when there is unwillingness to invite church discipline the rest of us need to take note of how the faithful performed in the unforgiving churches seen in Revelations 2 & 3; They still prayed, challenged, instructed with meekness and gentleness, and lead by example

NEXT WEEK: 2Samuel 1-2. David assumes the throne of Israel and War, and Mayhem are the norm. How would you handle this?