

Comfort/encouragement from Second Corinthians ...

To Spare You

The church at Corinth was divided. Some said they were “of Paul,” others “of Peter,” others “of Apollos,” and some claimed they were “of Christ.” In the midst of this division, there were those who were bringing Greek philosophy and a Greek world view into the congregation. These had positioned themselves as leaders and teachers in the congregation, and were responsible for fomenting the developing schisms — schisms that threatened the future of the local body of Christ. Hence the apostle Paul had written, “If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him.” He then superadded, showing the flash of the sword of God’s word at these so-called enlightened ones, “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in

this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God” (1 Corinthians 3:17-19). Because leaders of the factions were trying to gain popularity with those who were still fleshly minded in the church, and because Greek philosophy said that the body was going to be immoral even if a person was a Christian, then “immorality of such a kind that does not exist even among the Gentiles” was allowed to persist. The apostle said that the congregation had become arrogant, allowing one of the men to have “his father’s wife” without doing anything about it. Paul had to take matters into his own hands, since the congregation would not act without his pushing them. In this discussion, then, he asked this question, “Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?” (1 Corinthians 4:21-5:2). Such is the setting for the follow up letter the apostle wrote to the brethren.

■ **Not “yes” and “no”** - Paul’s intention was to come to Corinth on his way north to Macedonia, then to stop in again on his way south and on to Judea. But the internal situation in Corinth had not yet stabilized to the point where it would have been the right time for Paul to show up in person; he would have had to come with the rod. Thus he was delaying his arrival, giving them more time to get their situations straightened out. Because he changed his mind about the time of his coming to Corinth, he had to explain, especially to answer his critics. “With me,” he queried, should there “be ‘yes, yes,’ and ‘no, no’ at the same time?” The answer to that question, of course, backed by the consistency of Paul’s character, was “as God is faithful, our word to you is not ‘yes’ and ‘no’ ” (2 Corinthians 1:17,18). In other words, he is coming to Corinth when he determines, in the sight of God, that the time is right.

■ **Reason for not coming** — Having explained that he was not vacillating in his desire to “doubly bless” the congregation, he then tenders his reason for not coming. “But I call God as witness to my soul,” he punctuates the truthfulness of his comments, “that to spare you I came no more to Corinth” (2 Corinthians 1:23). The congregation had not yet accomplished what Paul wanted them to achieve, and to spare the rod he did not come. “For I determined this for my own sake,” he explains, “that I would not come to you in sorrow again” (2 Corinthians 2:1). Consequently, he is sending this letter rather than coming in person.

In this discussion, the apostle also wants to make it clear that the course each individual takes, and the course of the congregation as a whole will take, is a matter of their own free will. “Not that we lord it over your faith,” is the remark he inserts for clarity, “but are workers with you for you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm” (2 Corinthians 1:24). He is encouraged that their faith at this point is still intact, and is making it clear that his work with them is for their joy and encouragement.

Jay Wilson

The course they will take is a matter of their own free will

IN PLACE OF YOUR FATHERS WILL BE YOUR SONS; YOU SHALL MAKE THEM PRINCES IN ALL THE EARTH



Boaz McDunn, presenting the Lord’s Supper meditation
Christ’s Church
Butte, MT

“For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father.”

John 5:22.23a

January 7, 2018!

Christ's Church

Meeting at
30 Red Fox Lane — Bozeman
Comfort Inn — Butte

MORNING SCHEDULE:

Bozeman - 8:45 a.m.

Opening — Jay Wilson

M.C. — Bob Edgar

Prayer meditation — Charlie Jacobs

Communion Meditation — Phil Sutton

Preaching — Jay Wilson

EVENING SCHEDULE:

Bozeman - 7:00 p.m., **Butte - 7:30 p.m.**

M.C. — Phil Sutton, **George Stone**

Communion Meditation — Matt Wilson, **Boaz McDunn**

Preaching — Davis Ashley, **Jay Wilson**



IN CHRIST GOD WAS
RECONCILING THE
WORLD TO HIMSELF
2 CORINTHIANS 5:11

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Monthly fasting and prayer for evangelism — Sat. and Lord's Day Jan. 13, 14

Chili and Corn Bread cookoff — Combined with monthly fellowship and potluck, Lord's Day Jan. 28 right after assembly

Bible Bowl — Sat., March 10, 2018

Ladies' Advance — April 19-21, Hampton Inn, Great Falls, MT

Men's PEAKS — Thurs. - Sat. July 19-21, 2018 at Delmoe Reservoir

Family Camp 2018 — Aug. 31 - Sept. 3, 2018 at Bozeman church property

Catch us live or archived:

livestream.com/ccib

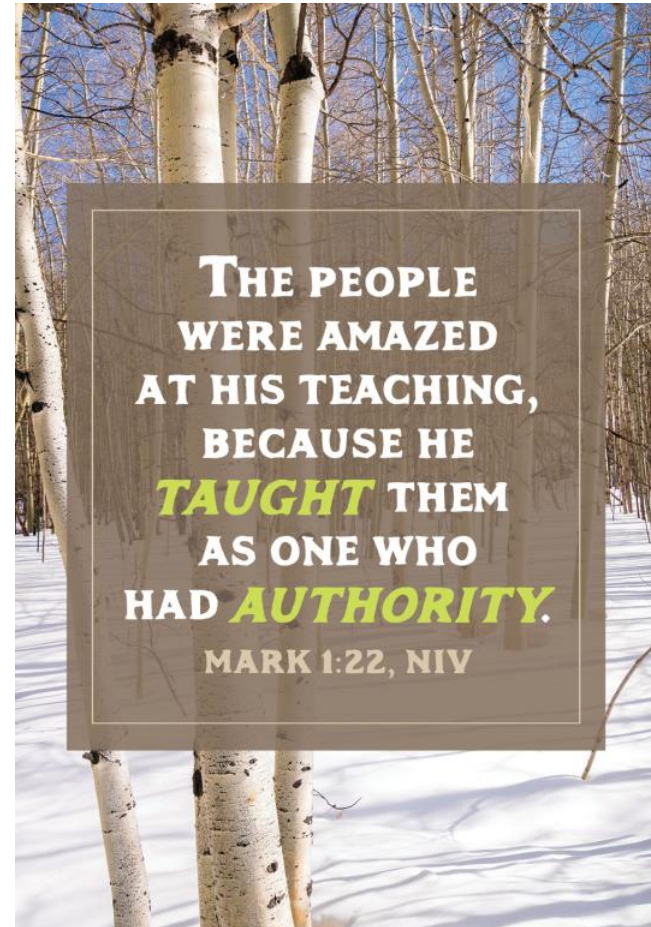
christchurchonline.com

Also check out the youtube videos on targetingtruth.com

and audios at innermanradio.org

This Wednesday, Jan. 10th —

7:00 p.m. — Some enlightenment from Ephesians — Phil Sutton



Question of the week:

What is the last word in the Bible?

Last week's question: In Zechariah 8, God asks the remnant a question about saving His people from the lands of the east and the west. What is His question? *Answer: Will this be too difficult in My sight? (Zechariah 8:6-8).*

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School — 99
Morning Assembly — 114
Evening Assembly — 84

Wednesday Night (1/3) — 74
Butte Lord's Day — 16
Great Falls Lord's Day — 47,68