An Overview of the second epistle the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians

Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians sets forth the apostle's great love for them. Everything that Paul did was for the benefit of the Corinthian brethren (see 2 Corinthians 1:6; 2:4; 4:15; 12:14-15, 19). Paul's great desire for the Corinthians was that they would be fully restored to the Lord (see 2 Corinthians 13:9). The Corinthians, however, needed to clear three major hurdles to achieve restoration. First, the Corinthians needed to identify and pray for the forgiveness of their sin of being unwilling to forgive one who seeks forgiveness (see 2 Corinthians 2:5-9). Secondly, the Corinthians needed to clear themselves from sharing unlawful affections with unbelievers such as uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness (2 Corinthians 6:11ff; 12:21). Thirdly, the Corinthians needed to be restored for being deceived by factious brethren who were teaching false doctrines and making faulty accusations against Paul (see 2 Corinthians 13:3).

The beauty of reading 2 Corinthians is that one can clearly see God's expectation for His beloved saints. The saints are those who are obedient in all areas of truth (see 2 Corinthians 2:9). The saint is to be the mirror image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). The saint is to be cleansed from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1). The saint is to be presented to God as a pure virgin in respect to sin (2 Corinthians 11:2). The saint of God is to "do no evil" (2 Corinthians 13:7). The Christian today is expected to be no less perfect than these early New Testament Christians (see Matthew 5:48). There is no sin that God overlooks or excuses without man seeking justification.

A great "device" of Satan is lies (see 2 Corinthians 2:11). There were many ministers of Satan in Corinth who laid claims to being Christian yet their deeds were far from Christ like (see 2 Corinthians 11:13-15). These factious brethren sought to destroy Paul's reputation as an apostle who spoke divine revelation so that the Corinthians would turn away
from him. These men accused Paul of being inconsistent (2 Corinthians 1:17), preaching his own ideas (2 Corinthians 3:1; 4:1-6; 5:12; etc.), deluded (2 Corinthians 5:13), a coward (2 Corinthians 10:1, 10), an idiot (2 Corinthians 11:15), not an apostle (2 Corinthians 12:11; 13:3), and that he and Titus were participating in a scam of the brethren (2 Corinthians 12:17-18).

Paul was fearful that the Corinthians would be fully persuaded by these false accusations. Paul wrote, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Again, Paul writes, “For I fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as ye would not; lest by any means there should be strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults;” (2 Corinthians 12:20). Paul had great anxiety for the brotherhood of saints (see 2 Corinthians 11:28). He would not sit back idly and do nothing while brethren lost their eternal souls.

To combat the false accusations by the factious brethren of Corinth Paul lowers himself to their tactics. Apparently the factious were boasting of their ancestry and the need for the Corinthians to continue in the Mosaic system as well as the teachings of Christ (very similar to the Acts 15 Jerusalem Conference and the book of Galatians) (see 2 Corinthians 3:4-18; 11:22). Paul boast not only of his sufferings but also his experience of being transported to the third heaven (see 2 Corinthians 11:22 - 12:6). Paul was in all since of the word an apostle of Jesus Christ who spoke divine revelation. Paul writes, "I am become foolish: ye compelled me; for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing" (2 Corinthians 12:11).

Having proved his apostleship and the error of the factious there was only one thing left to do. Paul was coming to Corinth and those who would not repent of their sins would be not be spared but rather dealt with sharply (see 2 Corinthians 13:1-2, 10). The practical application for the saints today is that we too must "do no evil" (2 Corinthians 13:7). Those who will not be restored to the Lord through teaching, patience, and longsuffering must be dealt with. Paul would not sweep men's sins under a rug of apathy and pretend to be in favor with God. One year had passed between the writings of 1 and 2 Corinthians (2 Corinthians 8:10). Now was the time for the brethren to be either restored or exposed as moving from death unto death (see 2 Corinthians 2:16). Paul concludes by saying, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Corinthians 13:11).
Father's Day 2011

Introduction:

God said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Solomon wrote, "Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, So are the children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: They shall not be put to shame, When they speak with their enemies in the gate" (Proverbs 127:3-5). With marriage comes a home and with a home comes children. While children are exciting to have they demand a great deal of responsibility from the father and mother. This lesson will examine the father in the home.

I. The Father is:

A. To set the Biblical tone in the home (Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:1).

B. A man who loves his children (Psalms 103:13; Luke 11:11). "You don't have to deserve your mother's love. You have to deserve your father's. He's more particular." -- Robert Frost

C. Instructor (Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; 6:20; 10:1; 13:1; 15:5; 23:22; Ephesians 6:4).

D. One who sets an example (brushing teeth / grow up / wives - Ephesians 5:25ff). Alexander the Great was know to have said, "I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well."

E. Disciplinary (Daddy's hands) (Proverbs 3:12; 13:24; 23:13; Hebrews 12:9) - "this is going to hurt me more than you."

F. Children are commanded to honor their fathers (Ephesians 6:1-2). Mark Twain, Old Times on the Mississippi "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years."

Conclusion:

When you hear the word dad or father what comes to mind? Some may have warm thoughts and great memories while others may have bitter and unpleasant thoughts. What do you want your children to think about when they hear the word dad or father at the age of 30, 40, or 50 years old? He saw to it that we worshipped God faithfully. He treated mother with tenderness and loving affection. He stroked me when I needed it and hugged me when I needed that as well. He taught me righteousness, justice, and holiness by word and deed. More importantly what do we want God to think of us when we think back on how we conducted ourselves as fathers? Let us be the best dads we can be!