

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for July 1, 2012

**Paul's Final Appeal Regarding His
Legitimacy as an Apostle
2 Corinthians 12:19-21**

What were the three basic components of Paul's final appeal to those still questioning his apostolic legitimacy within the Corinthian Church in 2 Corinthians 12:14-21?

Paul focused the Corinthians' attention on the loving and sacrificial character of his apostolic ministry as manifested by his no-charge policy (2 Corinthians 12:14-15).

Paul called those Corinthians who were still rebelling against him to make a final decision about whether his no-charge policy was a ploy to rob them or a means to sacrificially serve them as would be expected from a true apostle (2 Corinthians 12:16-18),

Paul outlined for these still as yet unrepentant Corinthians his fears, if he arrived at Corinth for the third time and found them still unrepentant (2 Corinthians 12:19-21).

Paul had not been defending himself to them throughout this epistle in order to serve himself, but rather to serve them as he, standing before God, spoke to them in Christ (2 Corinthians 12:19).

Because Paul did not have the certain expectation that these as yet unrepentant Corinthians would in fact repent in light of what he had told them, he was fearful of what might happen on this third visit (2 Corinthians 12:20-21).

Paul was afraid that if there was no repentance that neither he nor the unrepentant would find what they wanted from each other when he arrived on his third visit (2 Corinthians 12:20).

For if Paul found certain bad behavior among the unrepentant when he came to Corinth, he, rather than coming to them in gentleness, would be forced to come to them with a rod of discipline (2 Corinthians 4:21).

Paul was also afraid that if there was no response he might be humiliated by God before them (2 Corinthians 12:21).

When Paul told the Corinthians that he was afraid that God would humiliate him before them, he meant that he was afraid that God in His providence would permit him to witness the demise of certain unrepentant Corinthians.

The word “mourn” (PENTHEO) refers to lamenting, stemming from a deep-seated sorrow or grief.

May God give us the grace to understand the importance of repentance, both for others and ourselves, in the areas where God has spoken clearly in His word.