

## Sermon Notes | 2 Corinthians 1:12-24

### 1. Is my Conscience Clear? (v.12-14)

<sup>12</sup>For our **boast** is this, the testimony of our **conscience**, that we behaved in the world with **simplicity and godly sincerity**, not by earthly wisdom but **by the grace of God**, and supremely so toward you. <sup>13</sup>For we are not writing to you anything other than what you read and understand and I hope you will fully understand— <sup>14</sup>just as you did partially understand us—that on the day of our Lord Jesus you will boast of us as we will boast of you.

**Heb. 9:14** "How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, **purify our conscience** from dead works to serve the living God."

### 2. Have I been Spirit-led or Self-led? (15-17)

<sup>15</sup>Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace. <sup>16</sup>I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea. <sup>17</sup>Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to the flesh, ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? ...<sup>15</sup>Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace. <sup>16</sup>I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea. <sup>17</sup>Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? **Do I make my plans according to the flesh**, ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time?

#### Context:

1. Paul planted the church at Corinth.
2. Paul was at Ephesus for 2-3 years when he wrote 1 Corinthians.
3. The "previous letter"- 1 Cor. 5:9
4. The "painful visit"- 2 Cor. 2:1; 13:2
5. The "tearful letter"- 2 Cor. 2:3-4; 7:8-9
6. Travel plan shift (Acts 19-20)

### 3. Have my Actions Reflected God's Character? (18-20)

<sup>18</sup>As surely as **God is faithful**, our word to you has not been Yes and No. <sup>19</sup>For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but **in him** it is always Yes. <sup>20</sup>For all the **promises of God find their Yes in him**. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

**Big Idea: The mature believer can use criticism for God's glory.**

#### Questions to ask yourself when you are being criticized.

1. Is my Conscience Clear? (v.12-14)

2. Have I been Spirit-led or Self-led? (15-17)
3. Have my Actions Reflected God's Character? (18-20)

*Our current American values would probably seem pretty foreign to Aristotle. They center on wealth, convenience and a "perfect heaven" of consumer choice. At best, ordering yourself through reason and intellect is viewed as an autodidact's pursuit. At worst, it is a pastime for eccentrics. Our culture does not encourage a contemplative life.*

- Blakey Vermeule, Author and Stanford Scholar

#### **4. Am I Established in Christ? (21)**

<sup>21</sup>And it is God who **establishes us** with you in Christ, and has **anointed** us, <sup>22</sup>and who has also put his **seal** on us and given us **his Spirit** in our hearts as a guarantee.

## Discussion Questions | 2 Corinthians 1:12-24

### **Read 2 Corinthians 1:12–14**

- What does it mean to have your conscience give a good testimony?
- What is one thing you can do this month to have a clearer understanding of your conscience?

### **Read 2 Corinthians 1:15–17**

- Share a time when you realized you were self-led rather than Spirit-led.
- How can you be sure you are being Spirit-led?

### **Read 2 Corinthians 1:18–20**

- How much have your actions reflected God's character this year?

### **Read 2 Corinthians 1:21–22**

- What does your reaction to criticism reveal about your identity?
- What do you believe is true about your identity in Christ?