

A Painful Visit

2 Corinthians 10 – 13

by Don Falkos

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Paul's letter to the community of believers in Corinth did not have the desired effect. The situation grew worse rather than better. Paul went to Corinth. It was not a pleasant visit. People had arrived there bad-mouthing Paul and boasting about themselves. They taught a different Jesus, a different Spirit, and a different good news than the one Paul had shared. These "super-apostles" persuaded the Corinthian believers to turn away from Paul and follow them instead.

Yet their boasting was nothing compared to Paul's resume: a Hebrew-speaker, an Israelite, a better and more hard-working servant of Christ, in prison more often, suffered more beatings, once stoned, been shipwrecked three times, faced danger from all sides, endured sleepless nights, been hungry and thirsty, shivered in the cold, not to mention having received many visions and revelations from the Lord.

Upon returning to Ephesus, Paul wrote a scathing letter to the Corinthians:

I would never compare myself to these ignorant fools who tell you how wonderful they are! I only boast in the work God has done through me in assemblies like yours.

To keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh. Three times I begged it be taken away. But the Lord said, "My grace is all you need. My power is perfected in your weakness." So now I'm glad to boast about my weaknesses; for when I'm weak in myself, I'm strong in the Lord.

Before I come to you again, examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine; repent of your impurity, sexual immorality, and debauchery; otherwise I will have to be as stern with you in person as I have been in this letter from far away.