

Title: BE COURAGEOUS, 2 CORINTHIANS 5:6 – 21
(Chatham, NJ; 06/14/15, AM) [Pc – Exegesis; Twin-Point]

Theme: Paul exhorts the Corinthians to be courageous by buttressing several theological truths with what should be our responses to those truths.

Purpose: To instill courage in my listeners.

Introduction:

1. Remember that this is about Paul defending and defining his ministry, 4:2 & 5:12.
2. His main point here is, “We are always of good courage,” 6.
3. He provides the readers with both theological reasons and motivational strategies.
4. We need both as C. S. Lewis observed: see photocopy.
5. This combination of doctrine and application of doctrine provided Paul and will provide us with the needed confidence and courage to exercise our faith.

I. Theological Statements: Truths that provide direction and motivation

- A. We must all appear before God in judgment, 10
 1. To receive our due based on the choices we make
 2. Romans 2:6-11 teaches the same thing: we reap what we have sown
 3. In Christ we are continuing to reshape our behavior
 4. This becomes a source of confidence and courage
- B. One has died for all; therefore, all have died, 14
 1. “All” is not everyone who has ever lived; it is those who have accepted Christ
 2. Christ sacrificed himself for us so that we too might die to sin
 3. Galatians 2:20, we are crucified with Christ
 4. We are confident that Christ died for all, us, and me
 5. We take the story of the Prodigal Son personally
- C. Anyone in Christ is a New Creation, 17
 1. New creation = born again in John 3
 2. In Christ – New Testament idiom for being a Christian
 3. Colossians 3:3 says our lives are “hidden” in Christ
 4. Not seen so much from the outside but seen by God
 5. By faith, not by sight, we are confident that we are being renewed spiritually
- D. God has reconciled us, 18-19
 1. Col. 1:19-22, by his blood through his death on the cross
 2. If not confidence, how about peace, 20?
 3. Not a matter of personal worthiness
 4. We were enemies, hostile in mind
 5. G. H. W. Bush sought reconciliation with the Japanese whom he fought in WWII
- E. Jesus Became Sin and We Became Righteousness, 21
 1. An unusual idiom
 2. Echoes of Isaiah 53:10
 3. He who had no sin carried the weight of sin and punishment in himself
 4. We are transformed spiritually by his act of sacrifice
 5. Our confidence comes from his sacrifice, not by our perfection nor by always attaining the goal of perfect obedience
 6. Our righteousness comes from his sacrifice

II. Responses: How We Follow the Map

- A. We aim to please him, 9
 - 1. We walk like he walked, 1 John 2:4-6
 - 2. We do his will, Mt. 7:21
 - 3. These are steps on the journey
 - 4. Grace motivates this, 1 Timothy 1:16

- B. We persuade others, 11
 - 1. We do this because we know the fear of God
 - 2. Seems like a counterintuitive confidence builder
 - 3. Yet it helps us confront evil and bring about a more just way of life
 - 4. Confident of our own salvation, we can offer others a chance to turn away from destructive ways of life
 - 5. We are also confident that our warnings are justified

- C. The love of Christ controls us, 14
 - 1. Fear may nudge us but love builds true confidence and courage
 - 2. We no longer live for ourselves: a major shift in thinking
 - 3. This is external: it comes from the heart of God, we experience it through the message of the Gospel
 - 4. And internal: we develop an inner locus of control that transcends other people
 - 5. We love because he first loved us, 1 John 4:10-11

- D. We regard no one according to the flesh, 16
 - 1. We regard or esteem people in a different way
 - 2. Our view of people transcends worldly standards
 - 3. Like Christ who saw the value of sinners: people made in the image of God
 - 4. Seen through the eyes of Christ and the lens of the Gospel, everyone is valuable

- E. We are ambassadors, 20
 - 1. Paul describes his as a "ministry of reconciliation," 18
 - 2. Ambassadors are people who represent the policies and views of the government they work for
 - 3. Our government is the Kingdom of God
 - 4. Our King is Jesus
 - 5. This is who we are because of what God has done for us

Conclusions:

- 1. We say with Paul, "We are of good courage."
- 2. We are driven by a different set of beliefs and values from the world around us.
- 3. It is these things that give us the courage and confidence to maintain our faith.