

Homework #4 - *Follow the Leader*

II Corinthians 2:12-3:6

*"But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him."*

II Corinthians 2:14

**Day One:**

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 2:12-3:6. What are the key words?

**Contrasts in Corinthians:** Paul often contrasts two opposite themes or words in this book. What contrasts can you find in this section?

2. In II Corinthians 2:12-13, Paul explains how he retraced his steps to find Titus. (See map below.)

4. Titus was returning to Paul from Corinth, carrying important news of the church's condition. Paul was expecting to meet Titus in Troas. What was Paul also planning to do in Troas? (Verse 12)

Was there evidence that God would bless this plan?

5. How did Paul respond to this open door and why? (Verse 13)

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

6. Read Luke 4:42-44. What did Jesus do "at day break" and why do you think He needed this time alone?

Do you think there was an opportunity for ministry? Explain why:

Page 2

How does Jesus' situation relate to Paul's decision to move on?

7. Read "the rest of the story" in II Corinthians 7:5-7, to learn what happened when Paul finally met up with Titus in Macedonia.

What news did Titus bring with him of the Corinthians?

How is this story further evidence of Paul's deep commitment to the Corinthians?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. Have you ever left an "open door" for ministry in search of a "Titus", some loved one who needs extra time and attention? Perhaps even now you are faced with two conflicting opportunities. How can Paul's example help you to discern God's best for you?

## **Day Two**

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. How does Paul describe his ministry and life in II Corinthians 2:14?
2. Who is our leader, according to the above verse and how does he lead us?

What do we spread?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. *Here is the history behind Paul's writing: Roman generals would lead their soldiers with their captives through the streets in triumph, while spectators applauded and burned incense in the street.*  
How is this imagery a great illustration of every believer in Christ?
4. What promises are given in the following scripture:

--Romans 8:28:

--Joshua 1:3,9:

How do these promises impact our confidence in serving Christ?

Page 3

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

5. What is your own attitude toward serving Christ? Are you sometimes paralyzed by a fear of failure? Or do you live with regret over what you could have done? How can you be encouraged by Paul's attitude and these promises in scripture?

### **Day Three**

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 2:15-17. How does God perceive those who tell others about Jesus? (Verse 15)
2. What are the two different reactions to hearing about Jesus? (Verse 16)
3. What do so many so-called ministers do, according to verse 17?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. What do the following verses tell you about sacrifices to God?

--Exodus 29:18

--Proverbs 21:3

--Ephesians 5:1-2

--Hebrews 13:15-16

After reading these verses, what do you think II Corinthians 2:15 means?

5. Can you answer Paul's question in verse 16c?
6. Write a definition for the word "peddle":

Is it possible to make money off of serving Christ?

Page 4

When money is the sole motive for ministry, how do you think this negatively affects the impact of God's Word on others' lives?

7. Read Acts 18:1-4. How did Paul provide for his needs while serving in Corinth?

What motivates Paul to speak to others about Jesus? (Verse 17c and also I Corinthians 9:14-18)

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. What motivates you to serve Christ? Have you ever done something for nothing just because you loved the person or in response to God's call? How did this affect the impact of your words or actions?

Do you sometimes hope to gain some tangible reward for serving Christ? Do you ever serve for approval or praise or some financial benefit, or for position or recognition? How does Paul's example help you to serve "with sincerity"?

#### **Day Four**

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 3:1-3. What rhetorical question does Paul ask in verse 1?
2. What "letters" does Paul present instead? (Verse 2)

Who will read this letter?

3. What "ink" will be used to write this letter? (Verse 3)

What is the writing surface or stationary?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. Looking again at Paul's question in verse 1, do you think a formal letter of recommendation can truly prove a person's sincerity and fully describe their character? Why or why not?

Page 5

5. Read James 3:13, 17-18. How can a person prove their ability to lead others wisely?
6. Read Ezekiel 36:26-27. What promise is given and how does it relate to Paul's words to the Corinthians?
7. Describe the evidence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life, according to Galatians 5:22-23:

Why is the word "fruit" a good illustration of these qualities?

8. Read Matthew 7:15-18 and Luke 6:43-45. What does Jesus say is the proof of a person's integrity in ministry?

Where does fruit come from, according to John 15:5?

9. Explain why a changed life is the best evidence of a valid ministry:

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

10. Paul tells us that we are all living letters. Who has God used to write His story on your own heart?

Where are your letters? Who are you influencing for Christ?

## **Day Five**

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 3:4-6. How is Paul made "competent" as a servant of Christ?
2. Of what is Paul a "minister"?
3. The word "letter" can refer to the Jewish law. What does the "Letter of the law" do in verse 6?

What does the Spirit do?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. How would you define "competent"?

Page 6

- How would you define the word "minister"?
5. Why is Paul so confident, according to II Corinthians 3:4?
  6. Read Romans 7:4-6. How have we died to the law? (Verse 4)  
  
What is the result of sin as defined by the law? (See verse 5 and also Romans 6:23)  
  
How are we released from the law? (Verse 6)
  7. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. Describe the new covenant:
  8. How would you describe Paul's ministry after studying this entire week's lesson?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

9. How confident are you to step out and serve Christ? Are you still depending on your own "competence" for confidence? How can Paul's example encourage you to step out and rely more on God's Spirit to serve?