

WEEK 3 | SOURCE OF HOPE | 2 CORINTHIANS 1:12-24

Inspection – “What does it say?”

Upon what two things was Paul’s relationship based with those in Corinth? (verse 12)

On what should we not rely, and on what should we rely? (verse 12)

What did Paul, Silas, and Timothy do while in Corinth? (verse 19)

What two things has God done to guarantee what is to come? (verse 22)

What was the reason Paul decided not to visit Corinth? (verse 23)

Observation – “What does it mean?”

Is the word “boast” used as a negative or positive in verses 12-14?

Why is it important as a follower of Jesus to let your “yes” be “yes” and “no” be “no”?

Some seem to question Paul’s motives. Why is this a difficult accusation to defend?

What is this “guarantee” of which Paul is referring in verse 22?

What life lessons do we learn from verse 24?

Life Application – “What does it mean for me?”

Consider your motives when making promises to others.

Plan a visit or call on a fellow Christian to encourage them in the faith.

Do a word study on “deposit” as used in the New Testament.

Consider yourself a servant and not a king when interacting with others.

Read about Jesus and the mother of Zebedee’s sons in Matthew 20:20-28.

Meditation – “What does God say?”

Proverbs 11:3

Proverbs 10:9

Proverbs 19:1

Proverbs 28:6

Proverbs 12:22

2 Corinthians 8:21

Ephesians 4:25

James 1:26

Supplication: What Can We Meditate?

Feathers In The Wind

There is a 19th century folktale about a young fellow who went about town slandering the town's wise man. One day, he went to the wise man's home and asked for forgiveness. The wise man, realizing that this man had not internalized the gravity of his transgressions, told him that he would forgive him on one condition: that he go home, take a feather pillow from his house, cut it up, and scatter the feathers to the wind. After he had done so, he should then return to the wise man's house.

Though puzzled by this strange request, the young man was happy to be let off with so easy a penance. He quickly cut up the pillow, scattered the feathers, and returned to the house.

"Am I now forgiven?" he asked.

"Just one more thing," the wise man said. "Go now and gather up all the feathers."

"But that's impossible. The wind has already scattered them."

"Precisely," he answered. "And though you may truly wish to correct the evil you have done, it is as impossible to repair the damage done by your words as it is to recover the feathers. Your words are out there in the marketplace, spreading hate, even as we speak."

How interesting it is that we, as human beings, are so quick to believe the bad that others say about someone, so accepting of the "news" contained in print and television tabloids, and so ready to assume the worst regarding another's actions, so as to actually allow ourselves to believe that the evil "we" spread about someone won't really matter. It is incredible that we can't seem to immediately and resolutely accept the fact that the gossip we speak can (and often does) do significant damage to that person.

It is said, "Gossip is like a fired bullet. Once you hear the sound, you can't take it back." That is what the man in the above story found out in a very disappointing, shameful moment of self-discovery. And it isn't just what we say about someone to others, but what we say to that person directly as well.

We've all been told that "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never harm me." We also know that is totally untrue. While a body will typically recover from a physical injury, the harm caused by direct insults can sometimes last a lifetime and tear the self-esteem right out of a person.

On the other hand, kind, encouraging words can build a person's self-esteem, help him or her to grow and give them the impetus they need to do great, significant things with their lives. The choice regarding how we speak about or to someone is ours. It's called "free will."

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