

# **The Confidence of a Clear Conscience**

**II Corinthians 1:12-22**

# **Complicated & Troubled Relations**

## **– A generally strained and painful relationship**

Several 7 years of tense and hostile relationships.

At least 3 different visits by Paul, plus numerous other contacts back and forth. He wrote at least 4 different letters to the church and it sent at least one to him.

This church caused Paul more grief than any other!

## **– Specific criticisms of Paul in II Cor 1 & 2**

Paul's change of travel plans supposedly 'proved' to his opponents that he was unstable, dishonest, self-serving, unspiritual...

# The World of the Bible



- **1<sup>st</sup> Visit to Corinth**
- **Earlier letter (now lost)**
- **I Corinthians**



# Revised Plan



• Two proposed visits *It's complicated!*

# Actual Travels



- **2<sup>nd</sup> Visit to Corinth**
- **Stern Letter (lost)**

*It's complicated!*

- **II Corinthians**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Visit to Corinth**

# Complicated & Troubled Relations

## A Clear Conscience → Confidence

– Paul can **boast**, for his conscience is clear!

- Root idea: confidently assert the excellencies of one's accomplishments or abilities
- 'Boast' can have a positive sense: [Jer. 9:23-24](#); [Rom. 15:17-19](#)
- Paul's knows that he has nothing to be ashamed of for he is convinced that it is God who has been working in and through him.

# Complicated & Troubled Relations

## A Clear Conscience → Confidence

- Paul can **boast**, for his conscience is clear!
- His **conscience** is ‘good’
  - It works properly: it has been trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb 5:14)
  - He has not ignored it (I Tim 1:19). It is not weak, defiled, seared or corrupted (I Cor 8:7; I Tim 4:2; Titus 1:15)
  - Yet he knows that God, not his conscience, is the final judge (See I Cor 4:3-5)

# Complicated & Troubled Relations

## A Clear Conscience → Confidence

- Paul can **boast**, for his conscience is clear!
- His **conscience** is ‘good’
- It affirms the **sincerity** of his behavior
  - Sincere = ‘*sunlight*’ + ‘*to evaluate*’  
Able to be exposed to the light of day without fear of revealing flaws
    - No hidden actions ([vs. 13-14](#))
    - No hidden motives in his heart ([vs. 15-16](#))
    - No hidden meaning to his words ([vs. 17-22](#))

# **The Confidence of a Clear Conscience**

**God's way for us to live:  
Nothing to Hide – No Fear of Exposure**