

A Study of the Epistles of Paul

NT Survey Lesson 141—2 Corinthians 12

Introduction: Having discussed his conduct and his many sufferings for Christ's sake, Paul continues to defend his apostleship by an appeal to the visions he received from the Lord and the unselfishness with which he dealt with the Corinthians.

Lesson aim: To understand how Paul established his integrity as an apostle by his visions and conduct

Paul defends his apostleship by an appeal to visions and revelations given to him by the Lord—2 Cor. 12:1-10

1. What did Paul think was necessary, but not profitable? (v. 1)
2. Who is Paul describing in v. 2-6? How long before had this vision been received? To where was this man caught up? (v. 2)
3. In what state was Paul when this vision occurred? (v. 3) What did Paul hear while caught up in Paradise? (v. 4) What do you think Paul's point was in mentioning this vision?
4. Did Paul want people to credit him with something they had neither seen nor heard from him? (v. 6)
5. Because of the greatness of the revelation, what was given to Paul? (v. 7) From whom did this thorn originate? What was its purpose?
6. How many times did Paul pray to the Lord to remove his thorn? (v. 8) What was the Lord's answer to him? (v. 9) This made Paul desire to boast in what?
7. In what things did Paul say he was well content? (v. 10) Why?

Paul defends his apostleship by showing his unselfishness in refusing support—2 Cor. 11:11-18

1. Rather than have to boast about himself, what did Paul say the Corinthians should have done? (v. 11) Why?
2. How had Paul proven to the Corinthians that he was a true apostle of the Lord? (v. 12) In what way were the Corinthians treated differently by Paul? (v. 13) Would Paul now change this? (v. 14) Why or why not?
3. What motivated Paul to sacrifice for the Corinthians? (v. 15) How should they have responded to this?
4. Since the Corinthians could find no occasion when Paul took money directly, what did some say? (v. 16) Could anyone prove that Paul had profited from the coming of other evangelists Paul had sent? (v. 17-18) Were they willing to make the same sacrifices as Paul?

Paul reveals the purposes for his “defense”—2 Cor. 12:19-21

(To be considered in the next lesson)