



SERIES: MAY- JULY: THE MAIN THING

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Scripture: 2 Corinthians

TITLE: 2 Corinthians – Stand Your Ground

As I prepared to write this message, the verdict was released from the Johnny Depp and Amber Heard trial. That trial was all about defamation. We consistently see how damaging accusations can be. Reputation takes years to build up but is destroyed in a moment. So when the allegations are false, a thorough and intentional defense must be prepared. If you've ever experienced false defamation and an attack on your faith, you should read the Book of 2 Corinthians.

The Book of 2 Corinthians was the third letter written to the Corinthians by the Apostle Paul. But then, why is it called 2 Corinthians? The other letter was lost. We discover this in 2 Corinthians 2:4. This letter is the most biographical of all of Paul's writings. Its theme is different than his first letter. It was written to the same church. It was written in 57 A.D. There was an opposition that had developed since he wrote that first letter. Though many had changed their mind about Paul, a few remained. Paul writes to defend his character and credentials and call back the stragglers.

In this 13-chapter letter, we find an explanation of Paul's ministry, a collection for the saints, and a vindication of Paul's apostleship. So what's the main thing from 2 Corinthians? It's, "stand your ground." Now, before you use this as a defense for your stubborn sinfulness or opinion, this is all about standing your ground for Christ.

We are new creations in Christ. Therefore our conduct should reflect this reality. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 (CSB),

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come! Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation."

We no longer can fall back on our old ways as an excuse to "just be me."

But we know that when we live out our faith as God prescribes in the Bible, people will reject us. They will attack. They will defame us. Paul has a purpose and message when this happens. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4,

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

Your trial and persecution are meant to be a help to those who experience the same after you.

But what if you're tired of the fight? What if you've lost hope? Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18,

“Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

Friend, life is not easy. Being a Christian will result in hardship in this life. But Christ has overcome the world. Our future is brighter than any darkness we face today. So we must lean into Christ as we look forward to that glorious day.

When we live out the reality of our new identity in Christ, we will win the day.