

FAITH THAT IS TESTED

2 Corinthians 13:1-11: The Apostle Paul decided that a third visit was necessary to the Corinthian church to check on the troubles that were happening there. He first warned that all testimony against anyone must be established by more than one witness. This requirement helps to curtail situations where a person may speak falsely against another because he/she may have a vendetta against the other person. Paul warned that if they did not repent of the sins he addressed previously, he was going to invoke the Lord's discipline upon them.

Paul assured the people that the power of Christ was speaking through him; and although Christ was crucified in weakness, He lives by God's power. Paul asserted that he also lives by the power of God as he deals with the church. In other words, they should not take Paul's admonitions lightly or think that he is a weak apostle. He's coming with God's authority and power.

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians to test themselves to be sure that Christ lived within them. He prayed that they would not do wrong by refusing correction so that his authority from Christ would not have to be demonstrated. He told them to do what is right even before he arrived.

Paul concluded by telling them to **restore** those who have sinned. He wanted them to **rejoice, encourage** each other, be **united** and **at peace** with one another. **In this way, he promised that the God of love and peace will be with them.** These admonitions are so very much applicable to the modern day church. If we chose not to live in the ways as outlined by Paul, the church would be in great chaos and turmoil.

The New Testament teaches that churches have the right and responsibility to discipline members who persist in sinning. The purpose is not to punish the sinner (**that's God's business**), but to lead the sinner to repent and reform (2 Thess. 3:14). Discipline also helps to prevent sin from spreading within the church (Rev. 2:20).