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## 2 CORINTHIANS VERSE-BY-VERSE | DR. RANDY WHITE

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SESSION 9 | 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-6

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### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS MINISTRY | 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-2

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- Verse 1 -
  - Paul goes back to 2 Corinthians 3:6, when he began the discussion of **this ministry**, in which he, Timothy, and Sylvanus were made **able ministers of the new testament**.
  - It was **mercy** that God gave this ministry to Paul (who was **less than the least of all saints** - Eph. 3:8), and because of this mercy Paul made a pledge that **we faint not**.
- Verse 2 -
  - Paul speaks of renouncing **the hidden things of dishonesty** - These are *shameful* things that could exist but would be kept hidden. Rather than hiding them, they renounce them.
  - There are three activities that describe them as they renounce these things:
    - **Not walking in craftiness** - The word **craftiness** is πανουργία [panourgia], from *pan* (meaning "all") and *ergon* meaning *effective work*. Thus, avoiding *working all the stops* to deceitfully get the desired outcome.
    - **Nor handling the word of God deceitfully** - the misuse of the word of God for one's own agenda is perhaps the greatest sin a preacher can commit.
    - **Commending ourselves to every man's conscience through the manifestation of the truth** - Paul & friends entrusted themselves to **every man's conscience** by making the truth known, and then letting each individual decide whether to receive them or reject them.

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### PAUL'S GOSPEL HIDDEN FROM SOME | 2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-6

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- Verse 3 -
  - Why does Paul speak about **our gospel** rather than *the Gospel*, for isn't there only one? This wording is important and must take precedence over our previous assumptions, regardless how tenaciously we held them.
  - In Romans 1:1 Paul says (similar to 2 Cor. 3:6) that he has been **separated unto the gospel of God**. It is this "Gospel of God" that Paul preaches. In contrast, consider:
    - The Everlasting Gospel - That God as creator is alone to be worshiped.
    - The Gospel of the Kingdom - That God would establish a Kingdom that would save Israel from her enemies (Lk. 1:71) and her sins (Mat. 1:21).
    - The Gospel of God - The Gospel of a coming Savior, displayed in Genesis 3:15, in the Law, Psalms, and in the Prophets. This Gospel was preached by the Apostles, by Jesus, and even by Paul (as in Rom. 1:1-2). It was the Gospel that God would send a "Second Adam" who would restore the created order and defeat Satan.
    - Paul's Gospel - The good news that God is *now, currently* offering individual salvation on the basis of the propitiation of Jesus Christ, and that this salvation is a gift received *by grace through faith*.
  - The challenge for today's believer is to work through the *mixture of gospels* which is present in almost every church.
  - Paul says that if this Gospel **be hid**, using the same word he used in the previous chapter for *the veil*. Thus, *if there is a veil over our Gospel, it is hid to them that are lost* (which is further defined in the next verse).

- Verse 4 -
  - It is precisely because Satan is **the god of this world** that the Savior must come physically and reign physically. The *honor* of God has not yet been restored. Satan tricked Adam into giving up his dominion, and Satan has held that dominion from that day until the present. All theories which view Christ as the reigning King must deal directly with the clarity of this verse. If Satan is **the god of this world** then Jesus Christ is not.
  - It should be noted that **world** is the Greek word αἰών [aion] which speaks of the *age* and not the *kosmos*. (The KJV used the best word for translating *aion* that was available in that day. In old English, the word *worold* meant "man's age" or "the time of man." The *wor* is sometimes spelled *wer* as in *werwolf*.)
  - Satan **hath blinded the minds of them which believe not**.
    - We are not told whether *unbelief* or *blinding* came first. If the blinding came first, this does not convey some sort of Calvinistic election, for we are not told that this is the work of God, but rather of Satan. It would be dangerous to attribute to God that which is Satanic work.
    - Furthermore, *blinding* is what Satan has been doing since the days of Adam and Eve.
    - *Blinding* is one of the **devices** of Satan alluded to in 2 Corinthians 2:11. If we are not discerning, Satan will blind us (though not to the Gospel, for we are already recipients / believers).
    - The reason Satan blinds minds is because the **light of the glorious gospel of Christ would shine unto them** if only their eyes were open.
  - What is the best method to fight the blindness that Satan brings?
    - Start young. Teach children the Gospel from an early age. Include the teaching of Satan from this early age.
    - Teach factual Biblical truth. The Bible is the **sword of the Spirit** (Eph. 6:17), thus the offensive weapon against **the wiles of the devil** (Eph. 6:11).
  - Note concerning **the glorious gospel of Christ**. The Greek is literally *the gospel of the glory of Christ*. In the Gospel of the Kingdom, the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ was not good news, but bad news of which the nation needed to repent. Note Acts 3:14-15, 19-20.
- Verse 5 -
  - The subject being the possibility that **our gospel be hid** (v. 3), Paul claims that he is not the one who hid it, because he (along with Silvanus and Timothy) **preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus** and viewed themselves as **servants for Jesus' sake**.
  - This should be the goal of any witness.
- Verse 6 -
  - As in verse 5, the subject is still the possibility that **our gospel be hid** (v. 3).
  - Not only is Paul not the one who hid it (v. 5) but God Himself is working to overcome the *blinding* work of the devil by shining upon Paul **to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ**.
  - The *visibility* of Paul's Gospel is only made available because God **hath shined in our hearts** so that Paul and his companions can **give the light**. Today, those who study the Word are recipients of that light, and can avoid the blindness that Satan brings.