

Preface To The Second Epistle Of Saint Paul To The Corinthians

(1546 and 1522)

In the First Epistle, St. Paul rebuked the Corinthians severely for many things, and poured sharp wine into the wounds, and terrified them. But an apostle should be a preacher of comfort, to raise up terrified and fearful consciences, rather than to frighten them. Therefore, in this Epistle, he praises them once more, and pours oil into their wounds, and shows himself wonderfully kind to them, and bids them receive the sinner back with love.

In chapters 1 and 2, he shows his love toward them, how all that he said, did, and suffered was for, their profit and good, and how they ought to trust him for the best.

After that, he praises the office of the Gospel, which is the highest and most comforting of all works and is for the profit and good of men's consciences. He shows how it is nobler than the office of the law, and how it is persecuted, and yet increases among believers, and produces, through the Cross, a hope of eternal glory. But with all this he touches the false apostles, who were concerned with the law, rather than the Gospel, and taught mere outward holiness, which is hypocrisy, and allowed the inner shame of unbelief to continue. This he does in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

In chapters 6 and 7, he exhorts them to obey this preaching with works and sufferings, and concludes by praising them, so that he may incite them to go forward in it.

In chapters 8 and 9, he exhorts them to contribute temporal support and help, in a time of scarcity, to the saints in Jerusalem, who, at the beginning, had given up all their goods.

In chapters 10, 11 and 12, he deals with the false apostles.

In chapter 13, he threatens those who had sinned and not reformed.