

## 2 Corinthians 12:11-21 The Jesus Style

**It has been said that most parents will go through 3 Phases with your Children:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Phase:** Elementary School yrs - My parents are so smart – They know everything – My Dad is **Superman** – I know that there is a giant S under that Shirt –

**2<sup>nd</sup> Phase:** The Elementary yrs are followed by the Teen years – My parents don't know very much at all.- They don't know anything – not hip too old fashioned –

**3<sup>rd</sup> Phase:** Adult years: My parents were pretty smart after all. – Maybe I should call dad and get his advice. –

Sometimes we hear these words – affectionately stated from our parents when we ask advice from them – hard situation – **This is pay back you know.**

**Well we could say that the Church of Corinth is in that teenage phase with Paul**

**A)They are questioning everything, challenging everything.**

**B)Left Paul defending himself – Not because he was worried about his reputation but because he was worried about the message of God's word being undermined there**

**Now I have to admit as we come to the close of this book – I am ready for it to end. Not because I don't like it- I like it a lot.**

**A)But because the section we are in now is so painful.**

**Aa)Paul is bearing his heart being very real – We hear his pain, his hurt, his heartache.**

**B)Speaking really as a father to this congregation – He has been deeply hurt by their accusations and the questioning of his motives & His heart.**

**1)I have found myself in tears several times readying these final Chapters book**

**C)Comes with the territory in ministry.**

**D)So I am ready for this to end and almost finished it today but I think the Lord has one final study for us next week.**

**But here is what I want to do today: I have entitled this message the Jesus style. Servant Leadership.**

**A)All of us are leaders in something: Ministry, family, Team, Work, Friendship**

**B)As we listen to Paul share his heart – gain some great insight – Leading like Jesus**  
1) See 4 Principles of Servant leadership Paul’s words - So different from the world.

**C)Not find in any leadership manual**

**11 I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.**

**A)Paul has been reluctant to boast about himself – choosing rather to boast in his weakness – Christ is magnified.**

**B)Here he is speaking with a tone of sarcasm:** You forced me to it [boasting], for I ought to have been commended by you.”

**C)Now that is an ironic statement because Paul had affectionately written early in Ch.3:2 is, “You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all”**

**The Corinthians were his letter of commendation.** A)The changed lives of the Corinthians had demonstrated beyond question that Paul’s ministry was genuine.

**B)And proof positive of his loving affection for them was that they were permanently written on *his* heart, the epicenter of his being.**

**C)The fact that they weren’t defending him really hurt Paul.**

**12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.**

**A)“Signs” authenticated the message, “wonders” evoked awe, &“mighty works” manifested divine power.**

**B) Paul did all of these as he preached Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead.**

**C)Although miraculous gifts did, indeed, flow through Paul,**  
1)he didn’t boast about them or focus on them the way others did. Why?

**D)Because he knew that miracles don’t produce faith. Faith comes only by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17).**

**#1 Paul had a realistic view of himself. V.11 for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.**

A)When Paul says, "I am not inferior," he means, "Everything I am in Christ, everything that Christ can do through me makes me equal to anything they can do."

B)This is the attitude that every Christian ought to come to about himself: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," Philippians 4:13.

C)"If God tells me to do something I can do it. I can obey his word & follow his precepts.. do what he asks. "

**There is a ringing note of confidence because you are not relying on yourself, but on Christ.**

A)At the same time the apostle could add, "Relying on myself I am nothing.

B)All my abilities, my gifts, my natural talents won't get me anywhere in God's sight.

C)Dependent on the Lord.

**13 For what is it in which you were inferior or less favored to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!**

A)"Forgive me for working to support myself so that I would not be a financial burden to you.

B)Forgive me for attempting to do good to you. Forgive my selfless sacrifice." **Paul's emotions were on the surface. He felt deeply.**

C)Remember the false teachers demanded support because they said their ministry was of such a caliber it deserved compensation –

1) the reason Paul didn't take anything is because he knew his teaching and ministry were not worth anything.

D)That they would even entertain such an idea about him deeply hurt Paul as their spiritual father

**14 Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; {Still not going to ask anything of you.} Here is why for I do not seek yours, but you.**

A)This is such a powerful statement: I don't seek yours – but YOU! **#2 Paul was interested in people not the program**

B)Paul was interested in their hearts – period.

1)He wanted to see them growing and flourishing in Christ.

**Bb)That by the way is the heart of Jesus and should be the heart of every Church.**

1)Seek you – Jesus said: I came to seek and save the lost!

**C) He isn't interested in your pocket book – not trying to get something from you.**

1)His heart is to see you – Discover who you are in Him – and give to bless

D)Life of fullness walking in Him – Service as an added blessing and bonus – not because He needs us at all.

**The heart of these false teachers was the opposite: They saw pp as a means to an end.**

**A)They wanted to use them to promote their agendas – and to see what they could get from them**

**B)That was not Paul's style because that was not the Jesus style.**

**C)Which is why Paul didn't take anything from them while he ministered there.**

**D) Paul proceeds to give a very interesting and relatable – illustration:**

**For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.**

A)Paul gave himself in selfless love because he is the parent and they are the children; he had led them to Christ.

B)It is the responsibility of parents to provide for the children, **not to expect the children**, while they are yet children, to support their parents.

**D)A parent's heart desires to provide for the welfare and the future of your children, because God has made it that way.**

E)One of the great marks of a true servant of Christ, a true apostle, is that he gives himself without restraint to those to whom he is ministering.

1)He does not ask for anything back from them.

**Which is why Paul continues: 15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.**

**#3 Paul was gladly poured out for them.**

**A)I gladly am poured out and emptied for you – even though – It is not appreciated.**

**B) Jesus style loves unconditionally and gives expecting nothing in return.**

**The normal response of a child to his parents' care is to love them.**

A) But even if the Corinthians do not, Paul says, "I am **still gladly** going to pour out everything for you."

I read a story of a mother who went down to breakfast one morning and found a bill from her son lying beside her plate. He had written it out for her.

Mowing the lawn -- \$2.00  
Drying the dishes -- \$1.00  
Raking leaves ----- \$3.00  
Cleaning garage --- \$4.00  
Total ----- \$10.00 owed

She did not say anything, but went about her work. When the boy came home from school for lunch that day he found a bill lying beside his plate. It said:

Ironing clothes --- nothing  
Mending socks --- nothing  
Cooking meals --- nothing  
Bandaging cuts -- nothing  
Baking cookies -- nothing  
Love, Mother

**That is the apostle's attitude, isn't it? He does not expect and does not demand anything in return.**

A) It would be nice if he got it back, but he is not expecting it.

B) And the fact that he isn't receiving it is not going to stop him.

C) That kind of selfless, unqualified love is the mark of a true servant of Christ.

**16 But be that as it may, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning!**

**NIV helpful in understanding this verse: 16 Be that as it may, I have not been a burden to you. Yet, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you by trickery!**

**Hear the sarcasm:** His enemies in the church had to concede that he had not burdened them by asking for support, but they argued, rather, that his self-support was a deceptive ploy:

Some actually believed that Paul was a con man.

**They reasoned that his working with his hands and refusing support was done to make them believe that he was a man of integrity,**

**A) This was Paul's play: He was going to ask them to support the Church in Jerusalem –**

**B) Which they generously agreed to - Paul was going to line his own pockets with the offering.**

**1) We have already seen – Paul chose to travel with men they knew and respected – to take the offering**

**C) Purpose of showing accountability to avoid these type of accusations.**

**D) The fact that they would even think that about Paul hurt him –**

**So Paul here exposes the hollowness of their accusations with some pointed questions**

17 Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you? 18 I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?

19 Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification.

**Paul's ministry to the Corinthians was one of hard-working sacrifice from beginning to end.**

A) He was spending everything he had for their souls. He was ministering like Christ, for Christ.

B) Everyone he sent there had the same heart – and He had sought nothing but their spiritual well-being the whole focus was on their edification – build them up.

**C) #4 Everything Paul did was for their Edification.**

**This was Paul's concern: Instead of being built up they were going to be torn down.**

20 For **I fear lest**, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults; 21 lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

**Here is what Paul understood – sin never lies dormant. Like leaven it grows and it spreads**

**A) Like a root in the ground it grows and produces a tree that produces fruit.**

**B) A root of Bitterness – causes many to become defiled.**

**Bb) The very attitude that the Church had adopted of Paul was sinful and would just increase and spread to greater sin – greater problems**

**C) For Paul to have to come and discipline this Church that he had planted and nurtured would be a very humbling thing.**

**D) But Paul will do what he has to out of his love for them.**

**Ok I hear what you are saying:**

**A) Yes it is different – goes against our nature**

**B) But the way I see it – didn't work out well for Jesus – Crucified.**

**C) Joy set before him endured the cross**

**1) Joy fulfilled fathers plan**

**Joy – Salvation: Big Picture – Eternity**

**Did it work out well for Paul? – Not really, no indication things got straightened out here**

2 Timothy 4:6-8

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”