

“The Defense Rests”

2 Corinthians 12:11-21 (NASB)

Paul calls **3** witnesses.

Witness #1, **The Corinthians**

¹¹ And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. Acts 18:11

A. They testify regarding their **Past Experiences** (11:13)

⁴ For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully. 2 Corinthians 11:4

Experiences that were:

1. **Powerful**
2. **Deliberate**
3. **Shared**

Witness #2, **Paul**

B. He will testify regarding his **Present Affection** (14-18)

Love that is:

1. **Parental**

² Make room for us in your hearts; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one. ³ I do not speak to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. 2 Corinthians 7:2-3

2. **Sacrificial**
3. **Consistent**

Witness #3, **God**

C. He will testify regarding **Paul’s motivation**. (19)

1. This was not a defense in the **flesh**.
2. This was an exercise in the **spirit**.

Closing Argument:

Paul confidently assures the Corinthians of **Phuture Apostolic Ministry**.

1. **Promise** of persistence
2. **Painful** anticipation

⁴ Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction. 2 Corinthians 7:4

¹⁶ I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you. 2 Corinthians 7:16

3. **Pastoral** priorities

¹⁰ For this reason I am writing these things while absent, so that when present I need not use severity, in accordance with the authority which the Lord gave me for building up and not for tearing down. 2 Corinthians 13:10

¹⁴ I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. ¹⁵ For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me. ¹⁷ For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church. ¹⁸ Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power. ²¹ What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness? 1 Corinthians 4:14-21