

The fourth point made in his speech we have really already noted above in verse 40 where the townclerk noted that Demetrius and the other craftsmen had exposed themselves to legal action by causing this unruly unorganized uproar. Obviously these words of the townclerk were heeded by this unruly assembly, thus he was able to successfully dismiss this assembly.

## Paul's Stay at Ephesus Ends

ACTS 19:41 *And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.* These words conclude the 19th chapter of ACTS, and the events of this day essentially ended Paul's stay at Ephesus. So before moving on to the 20th chapter of ACTS, let's reflect where this brings us in our studying about the life of the Apostle Paul.

The Apostle Paul is now through establishing the church at Ephesus, and for the most part is through establishing any new churches, at least as a free man. The exception to this statement may be Rome, where we read in ACTS 28:30 & 31 -- *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.* So the Apostle Paul did hold church in Rome as a prisoner, where he received all that came in unto him, however he did not there have the freedom to go out unto the people of Rome, but rather they had to come unto him. Just because the Apostle Paul was now through establishing any new churches doesn't mean that he was through establishing the saints however. In fact from this point forward in the life of the Apostle Paul, his duty as a Gentile Apostle led him, by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, to concentrate his efforts on the establishment of the saints. We see this same theme also reflected in his future writings.

Keep in mind that up to this point in time in the life of the Apostle Paul he has only penned three of the fourteen epistles that we have recorded from him. As Paul leaves Ephesus it is coming upon summer time in the year 57 A.D. It has been around twenty-one years since Paul met the Lord in the way on the way to Damascus. At his first mention in scripture (ACTS 7:58) Paul was a young man, probably no older than early twenties. Now here at the conclusion of ACTS 19 Paul is in his mid forties! History and scripture indicates that Paul will live almost exactly eleven more years after ACTS 19! In a few short years he will write in PHILEMON 1:9 -- *Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.* Paul was approximately fifty years old when he wrote this statement, yet in his day he was "Paul the aged" for the life span of people in his day was not much longer than this! As Paul leaves Ephesus, he has written three epistles so far, 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS, and within the last few weeks he has written his first epistle unto the CORINTHIANS. His first two epistles were addressed *...unto the church of the Thessalonians...* . The epistles written after this time that addressed an assembly were written to the saints of that particular city, and included a phrase that would encompass a larger audience such as is noted in EPHESIANS 1:1 *...and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.* Thus we begin to see how the focus of the Apostle Paul from this point forward will be more and more on the establishment of individual saints. Paul will even write four epistles addressed specifically unto individual Saints, (1 & 2 TIMOTHY, TITUS, and PHILEMON).

This brings us back to why we are studying the life of the Apostle Paul in the first place. And the reason we are studying the life of the Apostle Paul is because he is the Apostle of the Gentiles. When Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, the future Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, Jesus ordained him to be the Apostle of the Gentiles with this life changing statement that we have so often referenced in this study: ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Of course Saul of Tarsus didn't become the Apostle Paul, or the Apostle unto the

Gentiles overnight. There was a lot of overcoming that Saul of Tarsus needed to go through before he could ever reach his potential as an Apostle, much less the Apostle of the Gentiles. Of course by the time frame of the 19th chapter of ACTS we have found that the Apostle Paul is indeed the Apostle unto the Gentiles, and is running his race course well. Paul spoke these words in ACTS 13:46 and 47 *...lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.* Here Paul no doubt was quoting from the Greek version of the Old Testament know to us as the Septuagint, and quoting that part of ISAIAH 49:6, which reads: *...I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.* Paul also acknowledges the fact that he is the Apostle unto the Gentiles in several of his later writings. ROMANS 11:13 *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.* 1 TIMOTHY 2:7 *Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.* 2 TIMOTHY 1:11 *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* So we once again note that the Apostle Paul is the Apostle unto the Gentiles, making him the Apostle to follow during this yet present church age. That is why we are studying about him, and his doctrine.

We are to follow the Apostle Paul and his example of faith, for he is one of our best examples of a New Testament worthy of faith. In HEBREWS 11 we find a chronicle of some of the Old Testament worthies of faith; people who lives we have studied and referenced many times during our Sunday School lessons. Yet these Old Testament worthies of faith are not yet made complete without "us," as is noted in HEBREWS 11:39 & 40 -- *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* To be a New Testament worthy of faith we need to follow Paul's life as an example of what it takes to have the right stuff (so to speak) in our own lives. Here again is some of what the Apostle Paul encouraged "us" to do: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Don't be surprised in following Paul to also find yourself also having many trying days just like the one read about in ACTS 19:23-41! Remember no two days are ever exactly alike, and each day is designed by the Lord with your best interest in mind. There isn't anyone who wants you, and me to be an overcomer more than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. That is to say, He is the Author and Finisher of our day, and the Author and Finisher of our faith. {HEBREWS 12:2}. EPHESIANS 2:10 tells us: *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* This means each and every day.

In the recent weeks prior to this most eventful day we have just studied in ACTS 19:23-41, Paul has written this statement unto the Corinthians: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (disapproved, that is to fall short of winning the prize).* We see then that we are to follow the Apostle Paul, and study his life to learn what this race course consists of, and what is the prize at the end of our race course. The Apostle Paul explains this a little further in PHILIPPIANS 3:14 where he writes: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Earlier in verse 8 Paul had written about winning Christ, stating: *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,...* Paul wasn't writing about winning Christ as Saviour, for Jesus Christ was already His Saviour, but rather he was writing about winning Christ as his Bridegroom, a fact that remains a mystery to so many Christians yet today, mainly because they do not know, nor are they correctly taught Paul's gospel. Paul's gospel teaches of joint heirship with Christ Jesus in ROMANS 8. ROMANS 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,*

that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together,... that is glorified together with Him. In order for the bride of Christ to be glorified together with Him, ROMANS 8:17 tells us that she must be willing to suffer with Him, and 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 re-emphasizes this fact stating: "If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with him... ." The beginning of reigning with him will take place on that day of the marriage of the Lamb as stated in REVELATION 19:7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* She became "worthy" to be the bride on the day of her salvation when she recognized that she herself was not "worthy," but only through His precious shed blood, which she had accepted as the remission of sins for her, and the eternal redemption for her, herself becoming a new "worthy" creation in Christ Jesus. Each and every believer in this present church age has the opportunity to be in the bride of Christ, which is to say in another way, to have God's best. And one of the very important things that needs to be acknowledged is the fact that our "worthiness" does not come from self righteousness, but rather from the facts stated in 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: (new "worthy" creation) old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* We are studying the Apostle Paul to see what it takes to be a race course runner, and a prize winning full overcomer! And it is a road that requires some suffering with Him, as we just read above, and will expound upon in the following paragraphs.

Within three days of being saved, the Lord appeared unto Ananias of Damascus in a vision, and told him this concerning the Apostle Paul, and how that Paul was to ...*bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* We have found that the Apostle Paul up to this point in time in his life has witnessed to many Gentiles about the salvation of Jesus, and that he has told many of the children of Israel the very same thing. It has been recorded in ACTS 17:6 how that the gospel of the Apostle Paul had "turned the world upside down!" Quite a statement isn't it? Also we have read in ACTS 19:10 how "...that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." Yet we haven't found the Apostle Paul preaching to any bona fide kings yet, so we know that the Lord isn't through with him either, for as of the conclusion of ACTS 19 the Apostle Paul hasn't fulfilled all of the statements that the Lord told Ananias in ACTS 9:15 he would do.

Now let's again consider the statement Jesus told Ananias in ACTS 9:16 *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* Within a few short weeks of leaving Ephesus, the Apostle Paul will write 2 CORINTHIANS. Here is some of what he wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 11 concerning the things which had happened unto him prior to his writing this. The specifics of the following events are for the most part not recorded in the book of ACTS. However all of the following events happened before Paul finished this third missionary journey, which we are in the midst of studying. Here are some of the "great things" that the Apostle Paul has already suffered.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. 32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: 33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

Additionally even before Paul wrote 2 CORINTHIANS 11, he also wrote before of some suffering things that fell upon him for being the Apostle unto the Gentiles. 1

THESSALONIANS 2:9 *For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.* 1 THESSALONIANS 3:5 *For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.* 2 THESSALONIANS 3:8 *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:* 9 *Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.* And again in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:32 Paul has mentioned that: *I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,...* . Each of these events carried some degree of suffering for the Apostle Paul.

Again in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 Paul writes of being *"in stripes above measure."* He has already wrote something's about these blows of stripes in 2 CORINTHIANS 6, where he also covers a summary of the things he has gone through up to that point in time in order to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. 2 CORINTHIANS 6:1 *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* 2 *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)* 3 *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:* 4 *But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,* 5 *In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;* 6 *By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,* 7 *By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,* 8 *By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;* 9 *As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;* 10 *As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* Here in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:24 we read: *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.* When did these five times occur? Scripture doesn't record all of these events. These five times that Paul received stripes of the Jews prior to his writing this must have come during these five years Saul of Tarsus preached and traveled *...the regions of Syria and Cilicia....* as noted in GALATIANS 1:21. Luke also wrote of one occasion where Paul had many stripes laid upon him in ACTS 16:23, which reads in part: *And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison,...* . Those that laid the stripes on Paul during this Philippian visit were Romans, so many historians think that this particular occasion may have been one of the three times he was beaten with rods as noted in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 where Paul writes: *Thrice was I beaten with rods,...* .

And speaking of prison we find in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 that Paul was *...in prisons more frequent,...* . We know that Paul had one of the first prison ministries, and led many souls to the Lord while in prison. Unknown to Paul at this point in time in his life is the fact that he will spend about seven of his last eleven years in prison also, from which places he will write PHILEMON, COLOSSIANS, EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, and 2 TIMOTHY! Epistles written during the lowest of times in the Apostle Paul's life, yet epistles which give us many of the high water mark statements found in New Testament scripture! Thus we find the Apostle Paul rising above the circumstances, and looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith!

In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 Paul references being *...in deaths oft.* The best way I can think to describe this in our language is to say Paul was often in numerous life threatening situations. His most recent life threatening situation occurred on this day in Ephesus that we just studied about in ACTS 19:23-41, where the unruly mob would have liked to have tossed him unto the lions.

In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 Paul acknowledges that *...once was I stoned.* Usually one didn't get stoned more than once, for that was the ultimate life threatening situation. Miraculously the Lord raised Paul from the dead after this stoning, which coincides with ACTS 14:19 & 20. ACTS 14:19 *And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.* 20 *Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.* No

doubt Paul also spoke of this same time in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-4, which you can read and study out on your own.

Next in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 we read *...thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;...* . Later Paul would face another shipwreck in ACTS 27. Coneybeare and Howson translate this portion: *...thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day have I spent in the open sea.* A night and a day in the open sea may have been in a small boat like a life boat, or floating on a plank from the wreckage, certainly not a fun or comfortable situation to have been in.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 points out eight different kinds of perils Paul faced as a result of being in journeyings often. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 *In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;...* . Often in this study we have pointed out the importance of the number eight. The number eight has five important meanings, which are emphasized over and over again in scripture: NEW CREATION; NEW BIRTH; NEW BEGINNING; RESURRECTION; and the BRIDE; five things, or five different meanings. Five of course is the number of GRACE. The Apostle Paul knew first hand the GRACE of God, and everywhere he went he preached the GRACE of God. To the Ephesian elders Paul emphasized in ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* To these same Ephesians Paul later wrote in EPHESIANS 3:7 *Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* What does all of this have to do with what is said in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26? We certainly see in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 how gracious the Lord was to Paul in helping him survive these eight different kinds of perils in his journeyings often. Surviving these eight fold perils taught Paul much, not only about the GRACE of God, but about His RESURRECTION power, His NEW CREATION, NEW BIRTH, and gave Paul a NEW BEGINNING. Every city, every place Paul visited, and every day was a NEW BEGINNING for him; a new place for him to preach about the NEW BIRTH, and the NEW CREATION that we can only have in Christ Jesus. Everywhere Paul went he also got to teach saints facts concerning the BRIDE of Christ.

One of the main facts Paul taught concerning the BRIDE of Christ comes from his different suffering experiences. One of his closest followers, and probably his best student that we know about was Timothy. Paul wrote Timothy much about suffering, but not just suffering to be suffering, rather suffering with Christ Jesus so that he too, (we too), could reign with Him. Here is how Paul wrote this unto Timothy: 2 TIMOTHY 1:8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ...7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. 8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: 9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: 13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

As Brother Hill has so often pointed out to us concerning this portion of scripture, the main topic here is suffering with Him. If we are not willing to suffer with Christ, then He has no other choice but to deny us the right to reign with Him. Those that are willing to suffer with Him will also reign with Him. Those that will be in the BRIDE of Christ are the very same ones who let Jesus Christ take them through some very tough suffering testing times; times of peril similar to what our example in the faith, the Apostle Paul seemed to face on a daily basis. Now I will be the first to tell you that I don't like to suffer, nor do I think any of us like to suffer. I don't like to see anyone suffer either. But I realize that it is through these suffering tests given us by the Lord in our life that brings us to the place where we make our choice, suffer with Him, or deny Him the right to give us His best. Name one example of the many we have in scripture of a full overcomer who didn't not allow the Lord to have His way in their lives. You can't find one example of those in HEBREWS 11 who didn't suffer with the Lord, and not allow the Lord to have His way in their lives. And a great part in allowing the Lord to have His way is to allow the Lord to take us through each and every trying test, and suffering event of our lives. After all we know that Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, (HEBREWS 12:2). In other words He is the one who designed and brought into our lives these testing events that often make us suffer with Him, to prove Himself faithful to us in all things. There are no accidents along our specially designed race course, only testing events of His choosing. PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;...* . What did Jesus say to the Saints of the church of Smyrna? REVELATION 2:10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Those were full overcomers He was talking to; Bridal Saints.

Now back to 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 *In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;...* . Here we find eight Bridal building kinds of perils that the Apostle Paul faced in his journeyings often to bring us the Bridal message. These eight fold perils found in this verse are broad in scope, and cover a multitude of tests.

*Perils of waters* means the perils of crossing rivers. In Paul's day any journey over land would mean the crossing of many rivers. Each and every river crossing was a peril.

*Perils of robbers.* Even in Paul's day there were robbers. Bandits who would take all you had. Saul of Tarsus before being saved was a robber, *...entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.* {See ACTS 8:3}. Now he was on the receiving end of similar treatment.

*Perils by my own countrymen.* Paul's own countrymen were the Jews. We have already read in ACTS 9:23 how that *...the Jews took counsel to kill him...*, and that was just at Damascus the first city in which he preached. This happened more often than not in every city he came too. Then also came *...perils by the heathen...* that is Gentiles who also sought to kill or harm him. {See ACTS 13:50; 14:19; 17:5, 13, and 18:12-14.}

Next he lists *...perils in the city.* His latest peril in the city was when this unruly crowd gathered against him in Ephesus.

*Perils in the sea.* Reading the life of Paul it seems like he was in an unusual number of shipwrecks, for he was. The devil wished to make shipwreck of everything that the Apostle Paul stood for too, but he failed to do so.

The last of the eight perils Paul mentions is *...perils among false brethren.* Fake brothers in Christ in other words. These are people who profess to be believers but are not. Characters like Judas Iscariot. Eventually their true unbelieving colors will show up, and motivated by greed or some other worldly lust, they, as children of wrath, will turn against the believer, and the Christian values he stands for. False brethren betrayed Jesus, and false brethren betrayed the Apostle Paul, and caused him great peril. How many beatings and whippings and arrests did Paul suffer as the result of false brethren God only knows. This became a large part of the sufferings with Christ Jesus that Paul wrote Timothy about above in 2 TIMOTHY 1 & 2.

In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:27 Paul continues his list of events that has happened unto him for the cause of being the Apostle unto the Gentiles. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:27 *In*

weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Again eight items are listed in this verse: weariness, painfulness, watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold, and nakedness. On your own study these eight items out, and let the Holy Ghost reveal some wonderful truths to your own heart. {Review also pages 79-85 of these notes.}

Most all of the things Paul has listed in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23-27 were exterior physical sufferings that he suffered for Jesus Christ's sake as foretold to Ananias of Damascus back in ACTS 9:16. Each one of these suffering kind of things Paul listed would also weigh heavily on the human mind. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28 Paul called these physical sufferings that he suffered for Jesus' sake "*those things that are without.*" He then tried to explain the further sufferings he had within, the daily every minute of every hour burdens that really only an Apostle could understand, by stating in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28 *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

True Pastors understand this statement probably the best, for they experience the care of their own church. I myself understand the care it takes in doing a Sunday School class, and how heavily it weighs on my mind most all of the time. I never really get too far away from it. Each of us understands a little of what it takes to be faithful in attending church, and even the care that that takes. But I don't think that any of us really can fully appreciate the kind of mental burden and strain that faced the Apostle Paul knowing that he as an Apostle to the Gentiles was entrusted *...the care of all the churches.* Everywhere he went he visited churches, and even started churches. Once he moved on it wasn't "out of sight, out of mind" for Paul. No, but rather he was concerned for, and prayed for everyone in every meeting he ever attended. These different ones would come across his mind at all hours of the day and night, and so he would pray for them, lifting his burden for them up to Jesus, who could solve their every problem. Paul could only do this by having the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. {See ROMANS 5:5}. His daily care of all of the churches even reached down to us in our day as he prayed for those who would receive his gospel. What an overwhelming burden this would be, and a burden that none of us really can fully understand. I know in my own life I am thankful for any prayers that go up in my behalf, and I certainly appreciate the prayers of those who have gone on before me, who prayed for me, like the Apostle Paul did, like Brother Hill did, and Brother Austin did, and my Mother-in-law Sister Burge did, and like my Father-in-law Brother Burge did, and like Bob Wood did, and Chris Wilson did, all of these I knew, and knew that they prayed for me in my behalf. Those were prayers of foresight, and certainly prayers of faith. Now you may think that these statements are a little far fetched, and that the Apostle Paul didn't pray for me, and you, but what did he write in EPHESIANS 1? EPHESIANS 1:16 (I, the Apostle Paul) Cease not to give thanks *for you, making mention of you in my prayers;* 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, *may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:* 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to *us-ward who believe,* according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,... . Saul of Tarsus' eyes of understanding were first opened on the road to Damascus when he first saw Jesus, and his real spiritual eyes of understanding were fully opened three days later when he was filled with the Holy Ghost. He then prayed for everyone he met, and everyone who would read his gospel, and everyone who would hear his gospel that their spiritual eyes too would be opened like his was, to receive the fullness of the gospel that was revealed unto Paul, so that we too could be found one of the New Testament full overcoming worthies of faith. Those of this church age whose spiritual eyes have been fully opened to see, and their hearts opened to receive Paul's gospel, and go on and run the race to receive God's eternal best, will be the ones found in REVELATION 4:6 *...full of eyes before and behind.* Thank God for the Apostle Paul and his prayers, and that as the Apostle to the Gentiles he was entrusted *...the care of all the churches.*