



Introduction

■ Background:

- Most of us have had a task that we didn't feel that we were up to doing.
- Especially in spiritual matters
- Reading the exacting instructions of the Law of Moses.
- Considering the sacrifices of Christ, Paul and the early church.

Introduction

- **The Corinthian brethren likely had similar feelings.**

- **They thought they were on top of everything.**
- **Wise, learned, cultural people in a cultural center of their world.**
- **Possessing miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.**
- **Knowing Paul and other preachers they held in high esteem.**

Introduction

- **The Corinthian brethren likely had similar feelings.**
- **Yet, Paul's first letter showed that they were way off base.**
 - **Almost as though they couldn't do anything right.**
 - **They had harbored a sinful situation that even the Gentiles wouldn't have tolerated.**
 - **They couldn't even judge simple matters between themselves.**
 - **They grossly misused the miraculous spiritual gifts.**
 - **They botched something as simple as the Lord's Supper.**
 - **They didn't even know how to treat one another.**
 - **Paul appeared to have realized that they may have been feeling very inadequate.**

Introduction

■ Intent of the lesson

- To account for the context of what Paul is saying to this early church.
- To understand his remarks in light of that context.
- Then to make some application regarding our own feelings of inadequacy

Adequacy

■ II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings

- 2CO 2:14 ¶ But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is **adequate** for these things? 17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **Immediate context**

 - **Ch. 2:12-13 - Paul spoke of his anxiety over not finding Titus in Troas.**
 - **vs.14-16 - Paul describes a scene of a returning conquest.**
 - **Where the Romans would return from conquering a foreign nation.**
 - **Parading the spoils of war through the streets of Rome.**
 - **Such as Titus and the candlestand from the temple.**
 - **Leading captive rulers and nobles.**
 - **Who would then be executed.**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 14-16 - Paul describes a scene of a returning conquest.**
 - **Among other things, incense was likely burned on this occasion.**
 - **This was a scene of irony.**
 - **The Romans perceived this as the smell of victory.**
 - **The captives perceived this as a the smell of death.**
 - **Paul is applying this scene to the Christians in Corinth.**
 - **They were the smell of life to those who put their trust in Christ.**
 - **They were the smell of death to those who were rebellious.**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 16 - Paul then asks, "Who is adequate for these things?"**
 - Like, "Who's adequate for this job?"
 - From the context of the letter, the Corinthians probably didn't feel much like a scent of life.
 - **adequate - 2425g hikanos - sufficient, fit (2)**
 - Common vernacular
 - Adequate or sufficient is perhaps just up to the minimum
 - Context – perhaps more the notion of "up to the task"

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 17 - 3:1 - Paul turns the focus to his boldness of speech,**
 - **but this thread of adequacy continues in the weave.**
 - **3:1 - Paul points back to the Corinthians themselves.**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 3:1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you? 2 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3 being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. 4 And such confidence we have through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **3:2-3 - Paul described them as being a living letter of Christ, a letter of commendation.**
 - **Did they feel like a letter of commendation?**
 - -> Probably not.
 - **What had they accomplished to deserve this honor?**
 - -> Nothing
 - **Except, they had allowed the words of Christ into their hearts and were transformed from their own past.**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs.4 - Paul summarizes his point:**
 - Their confidence, and adequacy, is through Christ.
 - **vs.5 - The source of their adequacy, and ours, is not ourselves,**
 - but Christ.
 - I.E., "NO I'm not up to the job, but Christ is."
 - EPH 3:20 ¶ Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Adequacy

■ II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings

- 2CO 3:6 who also made us **adequate** as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, 8 how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? 9 For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. 10 For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

Adequacy

■ II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings

■ vs. 6-11 - Made adequate to be ministers of the new covenant.

- Paul appears to using this as well to address the Judaizing teachers.
- Paul discusses the glory of the old covenant,
 - As illustrated by the illumination of Moses's face at the giving of the Law.
 - And how the glory of the new covenant surpasses the glory of the old.

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 6-11 - Made adequate to be ministers of the new covenant.**
 - **Yet, the instructions of the new covenant was much simpler than the old.**
 - **And they couldn't even get the simple instructions right.**
 - **Nevertheless, through Christ, they were adequate to be ministers of the new covenant.**
 - **Because they had opened their hearts and were willing to be molded by Christ.**
 - **The same is promised to us:**
 - **2TI 3:17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 3:12 ¶ Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, 13 and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. 14 But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. 15 But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart;

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 3:16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14-4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 12-18 - Paul said that they could be bold in speech**
 - **Not having a veil over their hearts,**
 - **The ONE thing they did right, was to soften their hearts**
 - **In contrast to that Hebrew generation, who hardened theirs, vs. 14**
 - **Instead, they were being transformed into the same image of the glory of the Lord., vs. 18**

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 4:1 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, 2 but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 4:4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14- 4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - 2CO 4:7 ¶ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

Adequacy

- **II Cor. 2:14-4:12 - Comfort in our sufferings**
 - **vs. 4:1 - Having received mercy, they did not lose heart,**
 - Realizing that they were adequate in Christ.
 - Adequate to stand clean and pure before God,
 - In spite of our past sin and failures.
 - **vs. 4:7-12 - The apostles, weak in themselves, were kept alive and continued on by the power of God, and not themselves.**
 - I.E. the apostles too were only adequate in Christ

Adequacy

■ Examples

- **Moses who felt that he didn't have sufficient speaking skills to do the job.**
- **Gideon didn't consider himself to be up to the job of delivering his people.**
 - **JDG 6:15 And he said to Him, "O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house."**
- **Esther didn't think she was up to the job of saving her people by interceding for them before the king.**
 - **Esther 4:10-16**

Adequacy

■ Application

■ We too, feel inadequate when challenged by:

- School
- Our job
- Our role as father or mother
- Etc.

■ Truth may be that we are inadequate

- That realization may be the first step
- The second step is to turn to God
 - Asking Him to stand by us and make us stand
 - Impression of God, just waiting for us to turn to Him and ask
 - Wanting to lift us up and help us.

Adequacy

■ John 3:18-23 - Being condemned by our own heart.

- **1JO 3:18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 19 We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him, 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. 23 And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.**

Adequacy

- **I John 3:18-23 - Being condemned by our own heart.**

- **The context is not one of perfect obedience,**
 - **but continual striving to live with God. - IJn.1:8-9, 3:9**
 - **In fact, John is writing to assure them that they have eternal life. - 5:13**
- **Whether or not our heart condemns us,**
 - **seems to be based on our confidence in God,**
 - **and our active love.**

Adequacy

- **John 3:18-23 - Being condemned by our own heart.**

- **Perhaps similar to our feelings of being adequate or not.**
 - **Feelings of inadequacy are like a form of fear, which is cast out by love.**
 - **1JO 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.**

Adequacy

- **IPeter 5:10 - It is not us, but God who perfects us.**

- **1PE 5:10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.**
- **We are God's work, who will perfect us.**
 - **PHI 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.**

Adequacy

- **IPeter 5:10 - It is not us, but God who perfects us.**

- **Paul considered himself to be a work in the making.**
 - **PHI 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.**
- **Point:**
 - **God didn't choose inadequate material for the work He would perfect.**

Adequacy

- **IPeter 5:10 - It is not us, but God who perfects us.**
 - **In fact, it wasn't observance of the Law that makes men perfect, but God.**
 - **HEB 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,**
 - **HEB 10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.**
 - **HEB 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,**

Adequacy

- **1 Peter 2:4-10 - We are made to be adequate material for God's house, race, priesthood etc.**

- **1PE 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For this is contained in Scripture: "Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, And he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "The stone which the builders rejected, This became the very corner stone,"**

Adequacy

- **1 Peter 2:4-10 - We are made to be adequate material for God's house, race, priesthood etc.**

- **1PE 2:8** and, "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. **9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

Adequacy

- **IPeter 2:4-10 - We are made to be adequate material for God's house, race, priesthood etc.**
 - **vs.4,6-8 speak of Christ and how the Jews rejected Him as the chief cornerstone.**
 - **People may reject us too, nevertheless God has chosen us as His materials.**
 - **And made us to be adequate material.**
 - **Like a mason might chisel a rock until it would fit where he needed it.**
 - **Or a carpenter cuts and shapes a piece of wood to fit the job he needs it for.**

Adequacy

■ Conclusion

- **When we look to ourselves, we should realize our inadequacy,**
- **But not feel inadequate,**
 - **because of our faith in Christ.**
- **We need to appreciate that the Builder knows His materials and has chosen and made adequate materials.**