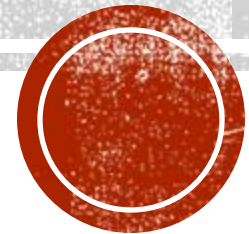


# MARKS OF A GENUINE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

2 Cor 12:11-19

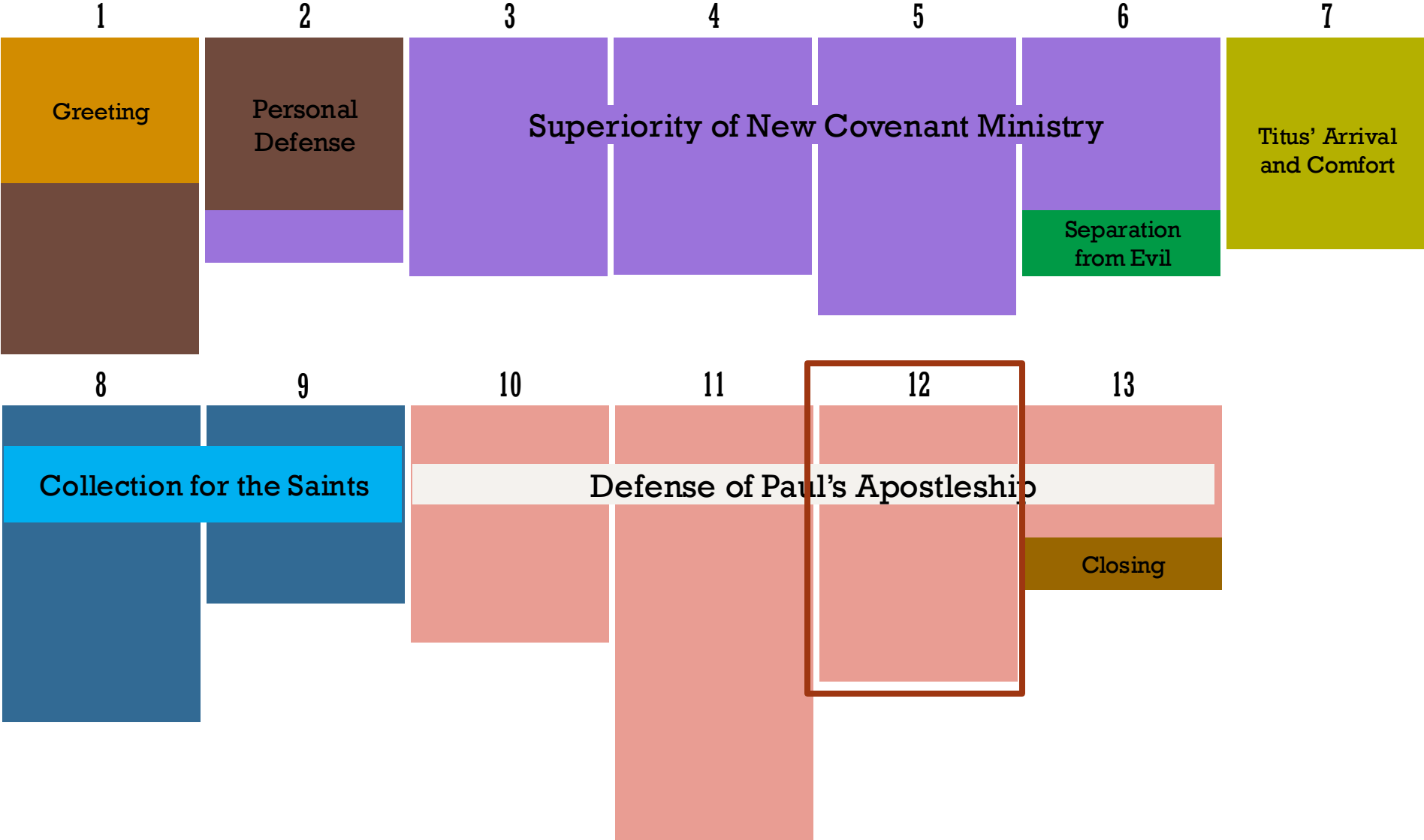


FAITH BUILDERS

# THEME

Paul's defense of His Apostolic Ministry  
*for the Spiritual Good of the Corinthians.*

# Chapter-wise Overview



# OUTLINE OF 2 CORINTHIANS *12:11-19*

- I. Authenticated by Apostolic Signs** (*vv. 11-12*)
- II. Authenticated by Sacrificial Love** (*vv. 13-18*)
- III. Authenticated by an Altruistic Self-Defense** (*vv. 19*)

# I. AUTHENTICATED BY APOSTOLIC SIGNS (VV. 11-12)

- A. Paul hesitatingly embraced foolish boasting (*v. 11a*)
- B. The Corinthians drove him to it (*v. 11a*)
- C. The Corinthians failed in their duty to defend Paul (*v. 11b*)
- D. Paul's humility did not imply inferiority (*v. 11c*)
- E. Paul's ministry was marked by the signs of a True Apostle (*v. 12*)



# APPLICATION:

1. Boasting in self, abilities, or possessions is unfitting for a Christian (Jer 9:23–24; Prov 30:32).
2. Like Paul, believers should boast only in the Lord (Ps 34:2) or, if necessary, for the Gospel's sake—with others' good in view.
3. Christians should defend fellow believers—especially leaders of proven integrity—against false charges (Phil 1:7; 1 Tim 5:19–20)
4. All believers, especially leaders, must view themselves as “earthen vessels”—God's instruments, easily replaced (2 Cor 4:7).
5. Ministry authenticity still rests on Apostolic authority, now expressed through faithful proclamation of God's Word (Eph 2:20; Jude 3).



## II. AUTHENTICATED BY SACRIFICIAL LOVE (VV. 13-18)

- A. Paul Denies He Saw the Corinthians as inferior (*v. 13a*)
- B. Paul's Refusal of support was misunderstood (*v. 13b*)
- C. Paul had a consistent gospel-first principle of ministry (*v. 14a*)
- D. Paul was driven by paternal love not ministerial rights (*vv. 14b–15*)
- E. Paul's team possessed the same integrity (*vv. 16–18*)



# APPLICATION:

1. Imitate Paul's impartiality toward all believers (and churches-if you are a itinerant minister)
2. Ministry must be driven by genuine pastoral love, not by entitlement or financial gain (such ministries deserve your loyalty)
3. Love may require humility and voluntary sacrifice, even when scriptural rights permit otherwise (*1 Cor 8* principle)
4. Integrity and accountability are essential marks of authentic ministry teams.



# III. AUTHENTICATED BY AN ALTRUISTIC SELF-DEFENSE (V. 19)

- A. Paul's defense was God-ward
- B. Paul's defense was aimed at the Corinthians' edification
- C. Paul's defense was marked by pastoral affection



# APPLICATION:

1. Defense and correction should be done with God as the ultimate witness, not for personal vindication.
2. Ministry must prioritize the spiritual growth and well-being of others above personal reputation.
3. Correction should be motivated by love, aiming to restore and build maturity, not to win arguments.



# CENTRAL ARGUMENT OF 2 COR. 12:11-19

Paul's ministry is authenticated by Apostolic Signs, Sacrificial Love, and an Altruistically motivated self-defense, one which he wouldn't have to engage in if the Corinthians had defended him, but he does for the sake of their spiritual good.



# REFLECT:

How do we judge the authenticity of a ministry or a minister today?

What kind of ministers and ministries are we attracted to?

Is it based on the numbers they boast of, the charisma and communication skills of the preacher, or their ability to advertise and promote themselves?

*Or is it based on these three marks of an authentic ministry we saw today:*

1. Those Rooted in the Word of God, which is where we find Apostolic Authority today.
2. Ministries and ministers marked by Love that gives up rights
3. Ministries and ministers that are God pleasers and not people pleasers, but evidence a genuine pastoral heart of affection

