

## **Bible Study for June 1 – 7**

*You are encouraged to take some time to reflect on the scripture and the questions provided either individually, or with members of your household.*

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 13:11 - 13

**Notes:** Last week we looked at the 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians, noting how they were a very different sort of congregation, one with little background in faith, and open to a variety of ideas, both Christian and pagan. The tone of that 1<sup>st</sup> letter was one of lovingly pleading with the people in an effort to help them better understand Christianity.

Something happened between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the Corinthians, and unfortunately, we aren't sure exactly what, but the tone has changed, especially in chapters 10 - 13. Scholars have dug for clues in this second letter and suspect that a small group of people were challenging Paul's teachings by stressing the following of Law and minimising the power of Gospel. They appear to have been more concerned with outward appearances and not the contents of one's heart. Unfortunately, the majority of the congregation appears to act like lost sheep, not really sure of who to follow, and they are in need of leadership.

And so, using a variety of tones, Paul attempts to set them straight as to why he should be listened to rather than those who challenge his authority. What is unique to this letter, and to us as we look forward to Trinity Sunday, is how he ends this letter, referring to God as the triune Lord of all. I invite you to read the entire book for yourselves.

### **Questions to Ponder:**

Misunderstanding gentleness and compassion as negative traits was a problem in this congregation. How is that same problem true in society? How can we as a congregation do something about this?

Considering the problems in this congregation, how might the benediction at the end of the chapter be appropriate?

Do the words of the benediction speak to you in tones of Law or Gospel? Why?

Can you think of where you have heard this benediction before? What does it tell us about the 3 aspects of the Trinity? Are we able to use these 3 aspects in our own lives?