

2 Corinthians 1:23-24

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/2cor/2cor-1/2-corinthians-123-24/>

Paul affirms his integrity by calling upon God as his witness and naming the Corinthians as his ministry partners.

Paul continues to explain himself: *But I call God as my witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth* (v 23). As previously noted earlier in Chapter 1, one of the charges against Paul is that he was “vacillating” (v 17) when he intended to return to Corinth, but then did not do so. *But as I call God as my witness to my soul.* The word for *soul* used here is “psychen,” which is often translated as “soul” or “life.”

In this usage, Paul is indicating that his *soul* is the self that is aware of responsibility to God. As we have seen thus far in this letter, Paul’s authority, character, and integrity as an apostle are being questioned or challenged, so here he calls God as *my witness to my soul*. His reason for not returning to Corinth was not a decision made on a whim, but was at the very heart of his ministry as an apostle to the church at Corinth: *To spare you I did not come again to Corinth*. Paul wanted to return, but he did not do so because of his love and concern for the brothers and sisters in Corinth.

He states, *Not that we lord it over your faith* (v 24). Perhaps there was also an allegation that Paul was abusing his authority as an apostle, so Paul is clear to acknowledge that the believers in Corinth are his colleagues in the ministry of the gospel, *but we are workers with you for your joy*. This ministry is not just for Paul and Timothy and Silvanus, that they will receive credit or notoriety for the church in Corinth, but *your joy* is our joy and our joy is *your joy*. *For in your faith you are standing firm*. Paul has no need to dominate them or be domineering as he acknowledges that they are *standing firm* on their own without him being there.

Biblical Text

23 But I call God as my witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm.