**I) Background to 2 Corinthians**

**A) Corinth -- "the light of all Greece"**

1. Trade routes from Athens and Sparta congregated at Corinth

2. 27 AD it became the capital of Achaia

3. 44 AD it became the senatorial province under the control of the proconsul.

4. Nero started a canal to cut across the isthmus but the project was stopped in 67 AD

5. Vespasian sent 6,000 Jewish prisoners to finish the canal.

6. Mixture of Greeks, Romans, and Jews lived at Corinth

7. See the mixture in the names of Christians there.

a. Greeks -- Stephanus, Achaicus, Eratus

b. Romans -- Fortunatus, Quartus, Justus

c. Jews -- Aquila, Pruscilla, Crispus

**B) Paul's letters**

1. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians about 55-56 AD from Ephesus. On this 3rd preaching tour, Acts 19.22

2. After sending the 1st letter Paul heard more from Corinth.

3. Paul went from Ephesus through Troas to Macedonia, 2 **Corinthians 2.12-13**

4. Titus comes to Paul, **2 Corinthians 7.5-6** with good news

5. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, 57 AD and sends it by Titus, **2 Corinthians 8.16-18**

**C) The church at Corinth in a nutshell**

1. Problems: some challenged Paul's apostleship; still a problem of idolatry; denial of the resurrection

2. Good news -- they dealt with the brother of **1 Corinthians 5** and he had repented; their eagerness to help the needy saints in Jerusalem.

**II) Paul's Final Instructions**

**A) Become complete**

1. Become involves a process, if you will a transformation process to become something.

a. Example: there is a process in which wood becomes paper, another process for wood to become furniture.

b. To become means there must be a goal or something to become, a process to achieve that goal, skill, effort, and time.

2. "Become" is what Jesus wanted the Apostles to do, **Mark 1.17**

a. We are to "become children of God", **John 1.12**

b. Jesus became the "chief cornerstone" **Acts 4.11**

c. Think of the numerous passages aimed at becoming something; become mature, become spiritually minded, become separate, become holy, become heirs of eternal life, etc.

**B) Become complete, goes back to verse 9**

1. Other readings:

a. Be perfect, ASV, KJV

b. Be made complete, NASV

c. Mend your ways, RSV

d. Aim for restoration, ESV (probably the most accurate to the Greek)

2. Think of the line in the movie "Jerry McGuire" you complete me.

a. Perhaps Paul is simply saying they needed to finish the process they had started.

b. But we can think of what completes us.

3. God's word completes or perfects us, **Ps. 19.7**

a. The law is called the perfect law of liberty, **James 1.25**

b. Man without God is lost and incomplete, **Colossians 1.9-10**

c. The lesson from Ecclesiastes is that man without God is doomed to fail because man without God is hopeless and miserable.

4. To the church at Corinth

a. Re-affirm their love for their brother, **2 Corinthians 2.8**

b. Encourage one another, to be of comfort

c. to complete their aid to the poor saints at Jerusalem, **2 Corinthians 8.6-11**

5. Others words of completion can be found written to other churches

a. Complete the good works we start, **Phil. 1.3-7**

b. We are to become complete in Christ, **Phil. 3.13-15**

c. We need to take this to heart and stick to our confession and finish what we start.

Conclusion: Paul finishes by telling them to be of good comfort (listen to my appeal, RSV; or encourage one another (NASV); be of one mind (appeal for unity); live in peace (be peaceable). How many of us as parents would want our children to become complete, to listen to what they have heard, to work together, and to live in peace.