10/27/17 - We Become Letters

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2 Corinthians 3:1-6

Some lament that letter writing is a lost art. Unlimited calling plans and electronic messaging have taken their place. In the apostle Paul's day, letters were truly a rare thing. First, very few people could read, maybe 5 or 10%. Next, sending letters was very expensive because there was no postal system for the common people; all letters were hand-delivered by personal couriers. Finally, it could take months, even years, to get a reply. However, none of this kept Paul from writing the letters that now compose around half of our New Testament.

One type of letter common both then and now is the "letter of commendation" or "recommendation." Such letters serve as introduction and verification. They communicate the confidence and respect of the sender in the subject.

When Paul told the believers in Corinth that they were "a letter from Christ," he was reminding them of the high calling of their spiritual position (1 Corinthians 3:3). This letter, written on their hearts, declared them "competent as ministers of a new covenant" (v. 6). Have you got that letter?

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