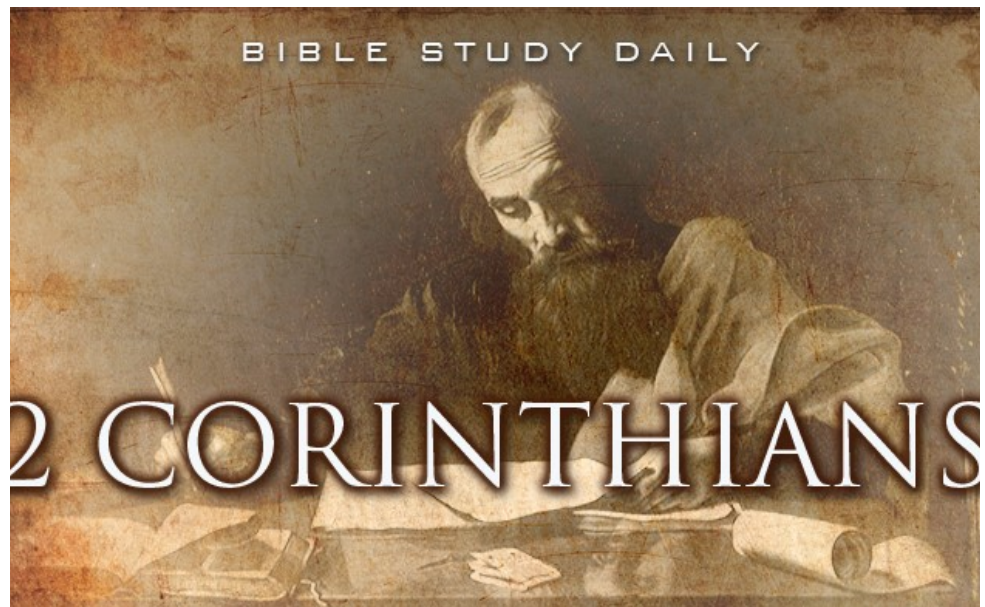




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 2 Corinthians as well as my study notes for the book.

Name

The title “2 Corinthians” comes from the intended audience designated in 1:1, “To God’s church at Corinth, with all the saints who are throughout Asia.” The opening description as well as the body of the epistle makes it clear that Paul’s intended audience in Corinth is both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Author

Paul claims authorship in 2 Corinthians 1:1, and 10:1. Internal evidence is in the personal nature of the letter.

External sources also acknowledge Paul as the author of the epistle to the Corinthians. Among them are Polycarp, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian.

Genre

Epistle

Literary Form

The epistle to the Corinthians is an "apology," an argument for his authority and ministry.

Time Frame

The epistle of 2 Corinthians was written during the last year of Paul’s third missionary journey while he was in Macedonia (probably Phiippi). In all likelihood this was in the fall of A.D. 56 (about six months after the letter to 1 Corinthians).

Emphasis

2 Corinthians is the most personal and the least doctrinal of all of Paul's letters. Paul's emphasis in 2 Corinthians is on 1) the nature of the apostolic ministry and his authority, 2) the new covenant, and 3) sacrificial gracious giving.

Outline

- Introduction and Thanksgiving (1:1-1:11)
- Paul's Apostolic Ministry (1:12-7:16)
- Sacrificial Giving for the needy (8:1-9:15)
- The Issues of False Apostles (10:1-13:10)
- Final salutation and benediction (13:13-14)

What I Noticed Today (2 Corinthians 1-4)

2 Corinthians 1

In verses 1-2 Paul opens the letter in typical form; naming the author, the recipients, and a greeting. Paul refers to himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, by God's will.

Note: Paul's emphasis on his apostleship based on God's will becomes a distinguishing point in the letter as he deals with false apostles in Corinth.

In verses 3-11 Paul offers praise to God and thanksgiving for God's comfort.

Note: Paul spoke of God using three titles: 1) the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, 2) the Father of mercies (compassion), and 3) the God of all comfort.

God comforts us so that we might be a comfort to others.

Note: Paul uses the word "comfort" or a form of the word four times in verses 3-4, and five more times in verses 5-7, for a total of nine times in five verses.

Paul related his suffering while they were in Asia (probably Ephesus), to the point they even despaired of their lives. God delivered them then and they have put their hope in Him again, while the Corinthians join in with their prayers.

In verses 12-16 Paul expresses his clear conscience with respect to the Corinthians. They had been guided by Godly wisdom and purity, not fleshly wisdom (man's wisdom). He was confident that in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (judgment day) they would boast in Paul as he would of them.

In verses 15-24 Paul explains that he had hoped to visit them twice: to come to Corinth first, then go to Macedonia, and then back to Corinth. Paul claimed not to be unstable when he had to announce a change his plans.

Note: The phrase, "yes, yes, no, no" means to vacillate in making a decision.

For every promise of God to Paul is a "yes" (meaning Paul will do whatever God directs).

God has strengthened us with Christ Jesus, anointed us, sealed us, and given us the Holy Spirit as a down payment in our hearts.

Note: Verses 21-22 are a Trinitarian text: God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. God anoints each believer with the Holy Spirit.

"Christos" (Christ) means "Anointed One." He has also sealed us. The seal on a document in these times identified it and the owner of the seal. The giving

of the Holy Spirit confirms Christians are in Christ and belong to God.

2 Corinthians 2

In verses 1-4 Paul says he would not come to the Corinthians again on another painful visit. Rather than causing pain he decided to write another letter (probably one of the lost letters) so that when he came again he wouldn't have pain from those who should provide joy.

Note: We don't know what the previous "painful visit" was. It likely occurred after the first letter to the Corinthians (since there is no mention of it in that letter).

Note: If Paul did write a letter between 1 and 2 Corinthians it seems from verse 4 that it was a severe letter written from a troubled heart, but written in love. The occasion of the missing letter may be what Paul refers to in verse 5.

In verses 5-11 Paul refers to a man who has caused pain to him and to the brothers in Corinth. The punishment given the man seemed sufficient to Paul. Now they should forgive and comfort the man, and reaffirm their love for him.

Note: Scholars believe the "pain" Paul refers to stems from this man challenging Paul's authority as an apostle, or a false apostle (see 2 Corinthians 11:4). Apparently, the man had repented since Paul now suggests they forgive and affirm him.

Paul says if they have forgiven the man, he does as well. He does this so that Satan might not cause division and disunity in the body.

In verses 12-13 Paul returns to the topic of his changed travel plans first mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:15. He left Ephesus and traveled to Troas where he had a time of fruitful ministry. He had hoped to meet Titus there but did not find him and left for Macedonia.

Note: Troas is a coastal town on the northern edge of the province of Asia (modern Turkey). Paul went to Troas after the riots in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41).


2 Corinthians 2:14-7:16

Paul interrupts the flow of his letter to provide an overview of the ministry and its description.

In verses 14-17 Paul speaks of God putting them on display in Christ and through him knowledge of Him spread.

Note: Paul's description in verse 14 matches the description of a Roman triumphal procession. A victory parade would be awarded to a conquering general in which the prisoners would be forced to march. Paul is describing himself as Christ's captive marching in his parade.

Paul says they bear the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved,



and among those who are perishing. To those who rejected the Gospel, Paul's message was like the stench of death.

Paul refers to the many false apostles who market God's message for profit, saying we are not like them. Rather, Paul speaks with sincerity in Christ.

2 Corinthians 3

In verses 1-3 Paul seems to anticipate an objection from false apostles ("Are we beginning to commend ourselves again?"). He says they never asked for letters of recommendation (as some of the false apostles had). Instead, their lives were their "letters of recommendation" read by everyone. Christ had produced these letters in them with the Spirit of God.

Note: The spiritual transformation of the Corinthian believers were spiritual letters written on Paul's heart.

In verses 4-6 Paul explains his confidence is not based on himself but on God through Christ. God made them competent to be ministers of the new covenant through the Holy Spirit.

Note: The root of the word translated "ministers" in verse 6 is the word for deacon, which is a broader term for those engaged in ministry beyond paid professionals.

In verses 7-18 Paul compared the Old Covenant of Moses with the New Covenant through Christ.

Paul describes the Old Covenant as the ministry of death, chiseled in stone (the Ten Commandments). It came with God's glory, but its glory was fading (made irrelevant by the New Covenant). What endures (the New Covenant) will be even more glorious. The ministry of the Old Covenant through the Law condemned men, while the ministry of the New Covenant, by the power of the Holy Spirit, brings men to Christ and the imputation of His righteousness.

Paul compares the veil that Moses wore after being in the presence of God to the veil over the Old Covenant. Paul says the people's minds were closed. They had a spiritual veil over their hearts. The veil remains and is only set aside by Christ. The same is true now whenever the Old Testament is read, there is a veil over their hearts that is only removed when a person turns to Christ.

Note: The metaphor of the veil suggests people cannot see clearly to understand until the veil is removed.

Note: Verse 17 is an important Trinitarian verse emphasizing the relationship between the Lord and the Spirit.

Paul concludes saying all the unveiled faces (believers) look at the glory of the Lord, as they are being transformed into His image.

Note: The phrase "from glory to glory" in verse 18 is also translated "ever-increasing glory," suggesting the ongoing transformation of believers into

Christ's likeness (sanctification).

2 Corinthians 4

In Chapter 4 Paul focuses on the power of God that sustains him against the physical and spiritual demands of the ministry.

In verses 1-6 Paul claims their ministry comes from the mercy of God, and so they do not give up. They renounce shameful things, they do not walk in deceit or by distorting God's word.

If the Gospel is veiled it is veiled to those who are perishing, and they have been blinded by God so they cannot see the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are not proclaiming themselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, because they are slaves to Jesus.

In verses 7-18 Paul says he has the treasure from God (the Gospel, the New Covenant) in clay jars (human bodies).

- We are pressured, but not crushed.
- We are perplexed, but not in despair.
- We are persecuted, but not abandoned.
- We are struck down, but not destroyed.

Note: In these four pairs of opposites (vv. 8-9) the first element describes human frailty, the second element provides evidence of God's power.

Paul says they always carry the death of Jesus in their bodies so Jesus' life will also be revealed.

Note: "Jesus' life being revealed" demonstrates the work of the Holy Spirit transforming the believer to be more like Christ.

Paul quotes Psalm 116:8 to explain how he can endure the difficulties of the ministry: we believe therefore we speak. Paul speaks confidently of the One (God) who raised the Son will also raise us also with the Lord.


Note: Paul is referring to the rapture of the church at Christ's second coming.

Paul concludes saying everything is for your benefit so that grace will extend to more people, and increase God's glory. Therefore, he does not give up, even as the outer body is being destroyed the inner body is being renewed daily. His light and momentary troubles are nothing compared to the eternal glory of being with Jesus. So he does not focus on what is seen but on what is unseen because what is seen is temporary and what is unseen is eternal.

Note: The temporal is the glory that will fade away (1 Peter 5:4) and be replaced by the eternal light of Christ (1 Peter 5:10).

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *In the midst of serving God, we are likely to encounter many trials and*



difficulties, perhaps even suffering. Know that our God is a God of comfort who is with us always.

- *There will be those who come against God, rejecting both the messenger and the Message. Jesus knew that better than anyone, yet He persevered. Paul knew it, yet he also persevered knowing that his eternal home was in heaven with Jesus.*

What I Noticed Today (2 Corinthians 5-8)

2 Corinthians 5

In verses 1-15 Paul addresses what happens after death. The word “For” in verse 1 connects this passage to the end of chapter 4.

Paul reflects on the heavenly body that will house the believer in eternity in contrast to the temporal body on earth. We groan in this tent (body), but we have the assurance of God through the Holy Spirit (the down payment) who has prepared a body that will last for eternity.

Paul restates his confidence that while we are in this body and are away from the Lord, by faith we walk knowing in the future we will be out of this body and at home with the Lord. Therefore, whether at home (with the Lord) or away we want to please the Lord, because we will all face the tribunal (judgment) of Christ.

Paul says his fear of the Lord prompts him to persuade people (present the Gospel in a way that they are reconciled to God).

Christ’s love compels us, says Paul: if One died for all, then all died, and He died for all. The result is those who live, no longer live for themselves, but for Christ.

Note: Christ died for all (see also 1 Timothy 2:6, Hebrews 2:9, and 1 John 2:2).

In verses 16-21 Paul’s focus is on the ministry of reconciliation. Paul says from now on we no longer know anyone in a purely human way.

Note: The phrase “in purely a human way” is a translation of the Greek which literally means “according to the flesh.” Paul is saying when Christ was alive we knew Him in a human way, but now (since his conversion) we know Him in a divine way.


Therefore if anyone believes in Christ he is a new creation, the old is passed away and the new things have come.

Note: The “old” is the old self. “New things” have come refers to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s life and the changes that come as a result.

God reconciled us to Himself through Christ, not counting our past sins against us. Therefore, we are Christ’s ambassadors. God made His Son who did not know sin to be sin for us so that we might become righteous.

2 Corinthians 6

In verses 1-2 Paul continues from chapter 5, saying we work together with



God, so do not receive His grace in vain. He quotes Isaiah 49:8: now is an acceptable time, now is the day of salvation.

Note: Paul's quotation of Isaiah 49:8 refutes Judaizers who wanted to impose Mosaic Law on believers to obtain righteousness. Paul's argument is righteousness comes by faith, not by works of the Mosaic Law. The Isaiah verse also suggests there should be no delay between hearing the Gospel and responding to it.

In verses 3-4 Paul says he gives no opportunity to others for stumbling.

Note: Paul's concern is to defend his ministry, not himself.

In verses 4b-5 Paul lists trials and difficulties he has endured for the sake of the ministry:

- By endurance, by afflictions.
- By hardships, by difficulties.
- By beatings, by imprisonments.
- By riots, by labors.
- By sleepless nights, by times of hunger


In verses 6-7 Paul describes character traits:

- By purity, by knowledge.
- By patience, by kindness.
- By the Holy spirit, by sincere love.
- By the message of truth, by the power of God, through righteousness, on the right and on the left.

In verses 8-10 Paul lists nine conflicting responses to his ministry:

- Through glory and dishonor.
- Through slander and good report.
- As deceivers, yet true.
- As unknown yet recognized.
- As dying, we live.
- As being disciplined, yet not killed.
- As grieving, yet always rejoicing.
- As poor, yet enriching many.
- As having nothing, yet possessing everything.

In verse 11 Paul concludes saying his ministry is an open book to the Corinthians, and he felt the Corinthians should respond in kind.



In verses 14-18 Paul warns the Corinthian believers not to be mismatched with unbelievers.

Note: Paul's reference to unbelievers includes the false apostles that Paul warned true believers should avoid.

- There is no partnership between righteousness and lawlessness.
- There is no fellowship between light and darkness.
- There is no agreement between Christ and Belial (a Hebrew term for wicked men).
- There is no agreement between God's sanctuary and idols, for we are the sanctuary of the living God.

Paul answers the rhetorical question from verse 16 by quoting Leviticus 26:12, Isaiah 52:11, and 2 Samuel 7:14. God dwells among His people, will walk among them, and be their God. Therefore be separate from the world, and I will be a Father to you and you will be my sons and daughters.

2 Corinthians 7

In verse 1 Paul concludes saying, therefore since we have these promises let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of flesh and spirit, completing our sanctification in fear of God.

Note: Paul exhorts believers to purify themselves of everything that contaminates the body and soul so that we become more like Christ (Sanctification).

In verses 2-15 Paul returns to his discussion of joy and repentance from 2 Corinthians 6:11-13.

Paul reminds the Corinthians of his integrity: he has wronged no one, corrupted no one, and defrauded no one. He has great pride and confidence in them, he is encouraged, and has great joy despite his afflictions.

Note: The Corinthians continued to vacillate between false apostles so Paul felt the need to emphasize his integrity and heart for the Corinthians.

Paul refers to his time in Macedonia when Titus joined him with news from Corinth. He told Paul of the Corinthian's longing, sorrow, and zeal for Paul. He was grieved when he heard his letter grieved them, but only for a little while because their grief produced repentance, leading to salvation. Theirs was not a worldly sorrow that led to death. Their diligence in their sorrow produced a desire to clear themselves, to be pure in every matter.

So Paul wrote the harsh letter directing discipline, in order that their diligence might be made plain in the sight of God, and that was a great comfort to Paul.

In addition to their comfort they rejoiced because Titus had been refreshed by them. Titus' affection for the Corinthians has increased because of their

obedience and how they received him in fear and trembling.

Note: Ultimately, Paul is thrilled that the Corinthians received Titus in a way that demonstrated their zeal for carrying out Paul's previous instructions.

2 Corinthians 8-9

Having explained his change of plans, and defended his ministry, Paul now turns his attention to the importance of gracious giving.

2 Corinthians 8

In verses 1-9 Paul discusses the generosity of the churches in Macedonia.

Note: The churches of Macedonia include Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

Despite the affliction and limited resources of the churches in Macedonia they gave joyfully and generously. They gave beyond their ability and begged for the privilege of sharing in the ministry.

Paul then exhorts the Corinthians since they excel in faith, speech, knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us, to excel also in giving. Giving is not a command, but a test of the genuineness of their love.

In verses 8-15 Paul refers to the example of Jesus, who though He was rich, He became poor so that they might become rich.


Note: Paul's use of Jesus as an example is to illustrate the self-sacrifice of Jesus as the highest standard of giving. Jesus had exchanged the wealth His deity to live among man.

Paul exhorts them to eagerly finish the task (complete the offering). Paul is not suggesting the offering for the sake of equality, but that by helping their brothers now while they have a surplus, their brothers will help them in a time of need (the principle of reciprocity). Paul quotes Exodus 16:18 to reinforce how God met people's needs individually during the Exodus: those who gathered much did not have too much, and those who gathered little had just enough.

In verses 16-24 Paul discusses the administration of the collection for the believers in Jerusalem.

Paul expresses his gratitude to the Corinthians that, like Titus, they have a heart for helping the brothers in Jerusalem. Titus was praised throughout the churches for his gospel ministry and has been appointed by the churches to accompany them with the gift.

Note: Paul wanted to make it clear that while he was eager to help with the collection, he did not profit from it. Having Titus administer the collection and transport the gift with the Corinthians to Jerusalem made it clear that Paul wasn't involved in the ministry for the money.



Titus is Paul's partner in the ministry, and coworker with the Corinthians, therefore they should show the proof of their love for the churches.

Note: Only those selected and appointed by the churches were allowed to collect and administer the collection. Paul stresses the integrity of himself, Titus, and an unknown messenger who are all diligent in their ministry.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *We are new a creation in Christ, the old is passed away replaced by the new through the power of the Holy Spirit.*
- *Despite the trials and afflictions, and despite the vacillation that existed in the Corinthian church Paul remained committed to building up the spiritual lives of the Corinthian believers. He remained true to God's call on his life.*
- *Our offerings to support the ministry are not compulsory but are given from an open heart. Yet the intentions of our heart mean nothing unless they lead to completion.*

What I Noticed Today (2 Corinthians 9-13)

2 Corinthians 9

In verses 1-5 Paul reminds the Corinthians the gift for the saints in Jerusalem they had promised. Paul had bragged to the Macedonians about the Corinthian's eagerness to support the saints. This caused the Macedonians to respond by putting their gift together. Paul does not want the Corinthians to be embarrassed if any Macedonians accompany him on his next visit and they find the Corinthians have not fulfilled their promise. Therefore, Paul urged the Corinthians to complete the gift and have it ready as promised.

In verses 6-15 Paul explains three rewards of generosity:

- The givers are enriched (vv. 6-10). Those who sow generously will reap generously. Give what is in your heart to give, not out of necessity or reluctantly, because God loves a cheerful giver. God's grace will overflow to you so that you will have everything you need.
- The recipient's needs are met (vv. 11-12). The recipient's physical needs are met, but their spiritual needs are met as well.
- God is praised (vv. 13-15). They will glorify God for your obedience to the Gospel, and your generosity. They will pray for you because of God's grace in you.

2 Corinthians 10

In chapter 10 Paul's tone changes dramatically from engaging and encouraging to harsh, as he defends himself and his ministry against the false apostles.

In verses 1-6 Paul begins making a personal appeal. His plan is to challenge certain people (the false apostles) who are accusing him of behaving in an unspiritual way. He does not wage war in an unspiritual way since the weapons of his warfare are from God.

Note: Paul frequently uses warfare as an illustration. In this case, he is saying Christians should not engage in battles in a worldly way (either literal or philosophical) for their weapons are not of this world, but are from God for the demolition of strongholds (Satan).

Note: The transition is direct, "Now I, Paul." The only other place Paul used his name was in the letter's salutation (2 Corinthians 1:1).

Paul says he demolishes every high-minded argument raised up against the knowledge of God and is ready to punish any disobedience.

Note: Paul expects the Corinthians to be obedient to him and to

the Gospel as he taught them, and reject the accusations of the false apostles.

2 Corinthians 10:7-11:15

Paul confronts the false apostles (Judaizers). These were Jews, who claimed to be Christians who wanted Christians to follow the Law of Moses as well.

In verses 7-18 Paul made several points:

- Believers all belong to Christ (v. 7). The false apostles had suggested they were special.
- Those that God has given authority and leadership to have the responsibility to build up the body, never to tear it down (v. 8).
- The false apostles said Paul's letters were strong, but his personal appearance was weak and his public speaking despicable (vv. 9-10).
- Paul said if need be the words of his letters would be like his action when he was present with them (v. 11).
- The false apostles commend themselves (v. 12). They compared themselves to themselves rather than to Christ.
- God was the one who had assigned Paul to take the Gospel to the Corinthians (vv. 13-14).
- The false apostles had exaggerated their accomplishments, bragging to others what they had done (vv. 15-16).
- Paul closes this section saying those that boast must boast in the Lord (vv. 17-18). It is not the one commends himself that is approved, it is the one approved by the Lord.

2 Corinthians 11


In verses 1-4 Paul uses an analogy of marriage to explain his relationship to the Corinthian church:

- He is their spiritual father who has promised them to one husband.
- He is to present them as virgin daughters.
- Christ is their bridegroom, to whom they were to marry.
- Like Eve who was seduced by the serpent, they are being seduced by Satan through false teachers from having a complete devotion to Christ.

In verses 5-15 Paul says he does not consider himself inferior to the "super-apostles."

Note: The Greek translated "super apostles" is a combination of the word for "superior" and "apostles." Paul's use of quotation marks means it could be read "so-called apostles."

Paul admits he may not have been formally trained in public speaking, but he



was not deficient in his knowledge of God. His focus was on making the Gospel clear, not on his oratory. Paul asks a rhetorical question, “did I commit a sin by preaching the Gospel to you for free?” Paul also defended his refusal to take money from the Corinthians to preach to them, saying churches in Macedonia had provided for him.

Note: The false apostles thought Paul’s preaching was inferior because he refused to charge a fee for teaching the Corinthians the Gospel.

In addition, Paul was not a financial burden to the Corinthians because he had also provided for his own needs through his business as a tentmaker.

Note: Timothy and Silas were the brothers that came from Macedonia (verse 8) to support Paul.

Paul says he will continue to do just as he has done, so the false apostles will not be able to boast they are equals. Those who charge for the gospel are false apostles, deceitful, workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ for personal gain. He says these false apostles are servants of Satan who disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 11:16-12:10


This section is often referred to as Paul’s “Fools Speech.” In this section he boasts about experiences that others would have considered foolish or shameful.

In verses 16-21 Paul had said earlier (10:1) to put up with his foolishness. He continues with a list of examples of how he has been “foolish” in his service to God. Paul says they put up with fools, they put up with being enslaved, if someone devours them, if someone dominates you, or even if someone hits you in the face.

Note: The word translated “foolish” means unlearned or ignorant. Paul’s point is the Corinthians think they are being wise, but in fact, they are being foolish and led astray by these false apostles.

In verses 22-27 Paul now begins a list of comparisons of external qualifications deemed important by the Corinthians:

- A Hebrew, and Israelite, a Jew (seed of Abraham).
- A servant of Christ imprisoned, beaten, received 39 lashes five times, three times beaten with rods, once stoned, once shipwrecked, a night and day in the open sea.
- On many occasions he faced dangers from rivers, robbers, his own people, and Gentiles.
- He faced dangers in the cities, in the country, and on the sea.
- He faced dangers from false brothers.
- He endured hardships, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, cold, and lacked clothing.



In verses 28-33 Paul concludes saying he burns with indignation when someone stumbles. He will boast about his weakness and God the Father knows he is not lying about any of these claims.

2 Corinthians 12

In verses 1-10 Paul continues his “Foolish Speech” discussing revelations and visions he has received from the Lord.

Paul speaks of himself in the third person saying he knows a man who was caught up into the third heaven fourteen years ago. He heard inexpressible words, which a man is not allowed to speak.

Note: The first heaven is the atmospheric sky, the second heaven is the planetary sky, and the third heaven is the dwelling place of God.

Paul speaks of a thorn in his flesh given to him by a messenger of Satan to torment him so he would not exalt himself. Paul pleaded with the Lord three times to take the thorn away, but the Lord said my grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Therefore, Paul says, he will boast in his weakness so that Christ’s power would reside in him.

Note: Paul does not identify what the thorn in the flesh was, although the Corinthians probably knew. Many scholars believe it was probably a physical affliction.

Paul says he takes pleasure in weaknesses, insults, catastrophes, persecutions, and pressures for the cause of Christ, because when he is weak (humanly speaking) then he is strong (spiritually speaking).

In verses 11-13 Paul says the Corinthians should have recognized Paul was not inferior to the “super-apostles” because of the signs and wonders that were done among them.

In verses 14-21 Paul says he is ready to come to them, but will not be a financial burden to them. He only wants to care for them as a father who loves them. He was not a burden to them, nor did he deceive them. He sent Titus to them who walked in the same spirit with them.

Everything he said was not to defend themselves but to build them up in Christ. His fear is that when Paul comes to visit them they will still not find them to be the way he wants, and he will not be what they want. He does not want to see quarreling, jealousy, or outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, slander, gossip, arrogance or disorder among them.

His greatest concern is that they will not have repented of the moral impurity, sexual immorality, and promiscuity they had practiced in the past.

Note: The eight sins mentioned in verse 20 as well as the three sins mentioned in verse 21 Paul attributes to coming from disunity in the church.

2 Corinthians 13

In verses 1-4 Paul says this will be his third trip to visit the Corinthians. In dealing with issues of discipline every fact must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 17:6). He reminds them that he had warned them on his second visit about those who had sinned. He promised he would not be lenient this visit if they had not repented. While Paul was seen as weak by the Corinthians, Christ whom he served was not; he was crucified in weakness but lives by God's power. Paul was also weak toward the Corinthians, but toward them he would live with Him in God's power.

In verses 5-10 Paul exhorts the Corinthians to test themselves to see if they are in the faith, to see if you can recognize Christ in you.

Note: Verse 5-6 is written in present tense meaning, "keep on testing," "keep on examining." It is important to regularly examine one's life in Christ.

Even if at first you fail it is important that you do what is right. We rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. We pray that you will become fully mature. This, says Paul, is why he is writing, to build them up not to tear them down.

In verses 11-14 Paul concludes the letter telling the Corinthians to rejoice, become mature, be of the same mind, be at peace, and then the love of God and peace will be with you.

Paul's benediction is Trinitarian: the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Some thoughts for further consideration:

- *Throughout the scope of this second letter to the Corinthians Paul is focused on bringing them to a true relationship with Christ, and to avoid the false teaching of the false apostles.*
- *Despite all the trials and tribulations, he endured for the sake of building up, never tearing down the believers in Corinth. He wanted unity within the body.*