2 Corinthians 1

Introduction
-The city of Corinth was located on a narrow strip of land (called an isthmus) with sea ports on each side
-There was much land traffic across the isthmus, so that sailors would not have to sail around the southern tip of Greece (very dangerous waters, many storms, etc.)
-Goods were unloaded on one side of the isthmus and carried across the land to the other side and reloaded on ships bound for Rome
-This constant traffic of sailors, travelers, businessmen, government officials through Corinth made the city a very evil place
-But Paul and Priscilla and Aquila began a congregation there

Date for 2 Corinthians: about 57 AD (6-18 months after 1 Corinthians)
Place of the writing: Macedonia (modern-day Greece) (2 Cor. 2.13) – Paul had received a report back from Titus
-So the book was probably written from Philippi in Macedonia

Main divisions of 2 Corinthians
Ch. 1-7 – Discussion of some continuing problems at Corinth; some old ones had been settled, but others were still there
Ch. 8-9 – The subject of poor giving (contributions) at Corinth
Ch. 10-13 – A defense of Paul's apostleship – The false teachers at Corinth were attacking Paul, and he answered all of the charges against him

General characteristics of 2 Corinthians
1. A very emotional letter (like Galatians) – Not as neatly organized as 1 Corinthians; a "chain" type letter – one thought would lead to another thought (also called: stream of consciousness)
2. Very autobiographical – We learn more about Paul from 2 Corinthians than from any other of his letters
3. Some very famous passages in 2 Corinthians
   -4.7 – treasure hidden in earthen vessels
   -4.16-18 – outer man decaying….
   -5.1-10 – present in the body…
   -6.14-17 – unequally yoked…

2 Corinthians 1.1-11
V.1 – Why "by the will of God"? To establish his apostleship (in light of Chs. 10-13)
-He was assisted by Timothy (he must have returned from his work at Corinth – 1 Cor. 16.10)
-"Saints" – we are all "saints" (sanctified, set apart for service to God)
-"Saints" therefore are not people canonized by the Catholic Church, but are special people in the eyes of God
-Other congregations in Greece? Athens (some believers – Acts 17.34), possibly Cenchrea
(Phoebe from there – maybe there was a congregation there, or maybe she was a member at Corinth)

V2 – Typical greeting from Paul?
1. From whom
2. To whom
3. Greetings and a blessing)

V3-7 – The word "comfort" is used 10 times
- Purpose? To make us appreciate the comfort we receive from God the Father
- Maybe some at Corinth had grown lazy and were no longer appreciating the comfort that God gives his people
- Remember John 14-15 – The Holy Spirit is referred to as our comforter (He comforts us through the words of the Bible today)

V4 – How are we best able to comfort others? When we have experienced something that they are experiencing
- It is like having wisdom teeth extracted – then we truly know what it is like, instead of just referring to it as "dental work"

V5 – Read John 15.18-23 – Why will we be persecuted? Because our Lord was persecuted
- Greek word for "comfort": Like standing beside a person to encourage him when he is undergoing severe testing

V6 – If Paul suffered persecution, on whose behalf did he suffer? The Corinthians

V7 – Suffering and comfort go together for the Christian
- Paul had high expectations for the church at Corinth

V8 – Asia = Asia Minor (name for that area today) – that included Ephesus
- Acts 19.23-41 – Demetrius and the silversmiths of Artemis (Diana)
- Remember 1 Cor. 15.32 – He fought “wild beasts” at Ephesus
- How bad did the situation at Ephesus get? They thought they were going to die; they gave up hope of living
- The false teachers at Corinth should have felt humbled as this letter was being read there (after attacking Paul's sincerity)

V9 – The sentence of death? They believed they were going to die
- Purpose of this suffering? To learn to trust in God and not in human flesh
- Old Testament parallel: Abraham and Isaac
- Remember: Genesis 22.1-19 and Heb. 11.17-19

Optional material: A great Russian writer [Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881)] was a radical anarchist and was sentenced to be shot by a firing squad; he was standing outside in freezing weather and waiting to be executed, when a reprieve arrived from the Czar. It changed his life, and he became a much more religious man
V 10 – How was Paul's thinking changed? He had a deeper appreciation of God's care; he placed all his hope on God after that

V 11 – Why did God intervene? Because of the prayers of many

-V 1-11 – This is typical of the autobiographical nature of 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1.12-14 – Paul's sincerity was being attacked

V 12 – Did Paul rely on "fleshy wisdom"? No

-V 12 – How had Paul conducted himself toward the Corinthians, according to v 12? With holiness and godly sincerity

V 13 – Another charge against Paul? It was hard to understand his letters

-V 13 – Very interesting: 2 Peter 3.14-17 – Peter said that the untaught and unlearned were distorting the writings of Paul

-V 13 – But Paul didn't use tricks of language

V 14 – Had they understood Paul's message at Corinth? Partially, but Paul was still proud of them

2 Corinthians 1.15-24

V 15-16 – Paul's plans? To visit Corinth twice (on his Third Missionary Journey) – in other words, going and coming through Macedonia (Greece)

V 17 – But there was a change of travel plans

-V 17 – How had some at Corinth interpreted this? "Paul can't be depended on – he didn't follow through with what he said he was going to do"

-V 17 – Read 1 Cor. 16.7 – in other words, his plans were always dependent on the will of God

-V 17 – Did Paul make promises like politicians today? No

V 18-19 – No changing in Jesus and no fickleness in Paul's preaching about Jesus

V 20 – What a beautiful verse: Faith in the promises of God

-V 20 – "Amen" – meaning: That which is reliable, firm, "So be it" (a name given to Christ in Rev. 3.14)

-V 20 – Remember 2 Peter 3.9 – God is not slack concerning his promises

V 21 – What was Paul anointed to do? Acts 9.15 – Preach the gospel to the Gentiles

V 22 – A reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit

-V 22 – God sees us as his own people when he sees the Holy Spirit dwelling in us

V 23-24 – Why hadn't Paul made his second visit to Corinth? To give them time to get their house in order
-Fellow-workers? He was not lording himself over the Corinthians

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2 Corinthians 2

2 Corinthians 2.1-4 – Further explaining his delay in coming
V 1 – Two possible references to previous "sorrow":
   1. A reference to an intermediate visit between 1-2 Corinthians (in other words, things were in an awful state)
   2. A reference to 1 Corinthians – the same as coming to them
      -We have no record of an intermediate visit by Paul to Corinth

V 2 – Who should have cheered up Paul? His fellow Christians at Corinth (if they had responded to his sorrow by obedience to his letter)

V 3 – A reference to 2 Cor. 1.23-24 – He didn't return because he wanted to give things time to cool off
   -He was hoping that they had worked through their problems (that would have given him great joy)

V 4 – What was Paul's mental and emotional state as he wrote 1 Corinthians? Affliction, anguish, many tears
   -Is this apparent as we read 1 Corinthians? Not too much
   -We don't think of Paul as weeping over the manuscript that he was going to send to the church at Corinth
   -Why was Paul so torn up in writing 1 Corinthians? He had established the church in that location
   -For those who have physically baptized someone, how does it feel to later see that person fall away from the faith and return to the world? Just awful – the same with Paul
   -According to v 4, if we love someone, what will we do? Tell them the truth
   -That is what Paul had done in 1 Corinthians – he had told them the truth

1 Corinthians 2.5-11
   -Remember the details of the man in 1 Cor. 5? A man in the church was having a sexual affair with his step-mother
   -At Paul's instructions, the church withdrew fellowship from the man
V 5 – Had the man of 1 Cor. 5 caused sorrow to the Corinthians? Yes
   -But Paul didn't want to exaggerate the damage; the man had not wrecked the church

V 6 – What was the punishment? Disfellowshipping
   -What indicates that they had taken a vote? "the majority" (NASB, NIV, RSV, English-Greek Interlinear)
   -ASV: "the more" (as opposed to "the less")
   -It appears that in the absence of elders (who are never mentioned in 1 Cor.), the congregation took a vote
   -What was the purpose of the action? To save the man's soul (not just to make him feel bad or commit suicide)
V 7 – Had the man repented? Yes (including getting out of the relationship with his step-mother)

V 8 – Paul's instructions? To keep the opposite effect from happening (driving the man away from the church and into a state of despair)

V 9 – It appears that Paul had written 1 Cor. 5 to see if the Corinthians were obedient to the will of God

V 10 – Paul was the leader of the action against the man
- Paul forgave him; therefore, the Corinthians should also have forgiven him

V 11 – Satan was defeated in the case of this man – a brother had been brought back into the church
- Conclusion: From the words of Paul in these verses, the Corinthians were having a hard time forgiving the man (they went from one extreme to the other), so Paul had to command them to take the man back (based on his repentance)

2 Corinthians 2.12-17 – Paul reemphasizes his love for the Corinthians
V 12 – Where had Paul gone after 1 Corinthians? Troas
- What had he found there? Receptive people

V 13 – What kept him from staying at Troas? Titus was not there, and no news from Corinth
- Where to next? Macedonia (probably to Philippi)

V 14 – Example of how one thought leads on to another
- Paul is not so concerned with order in 2 Corinthians as he was in 1 Corinthians
- He is overwhelmed with gratitude to God
- Paul sees that God is helping things work out for good at Corinth
- Paul is making a reference to when the emperor returns from a conquest; there are palms in the street, incense burning, sweet smells, and behind the victorious army came the captives (for slavery or death)

V 15 – Everywhere Paul and others went, they spread the gospel

V 16 – "death to death" – Those who reject the gospel are in that situation
- This is a very powerful statement about life with Christ
- For the evil people, there is "death" in this life, and "death" in the life to come
- Following Satan never results in anything good

V 17 - Possible reference to the false teachers at Corinth
- Paul was sincere and only acted from good motives
- Paul said that we should never "peddle" the Word of God
- In other words, we should keep our business out of the assembly and not use our position in
the church as a way to sale products (from Girl Scout cookies to insurance to siding for the house to candy bars for the band, etc.).
-For the writer of these class notes, the greatest elder that he ever knew was an insurance salesman, but you had to ask him what he did for a living (because he never brought the subject up). Then if you were interested, you had to ask him to make a visit to your house and explain the insurance policies that he had available. He never, ever took advantage of his position in the Lord's church to advance his business.
He was truly a great elder, and all Christians in northwest Illinois know the one being referred to here
-He was a great example of what Paul was talking about in 2 Cor. 2.17!

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2 Corinthians 3

2 Corinthians 3.1-3

V.1 – Paul is defending his ministry, which was being attacked by the Judaizing teachers

-Who were the Judaizing teachers? False teachers claiming to be "Christians," but they
  were trying to bind things from the Old Testament on the New Testament Christians
  -Paul: "Do some think I am patting myself on the back?"
  -A possible reference to 2 Cor. 2.17 – A self-compliment?
  -Paul had foes at Corinth and maybe figured they would take 2 Cor. 2.17 as being
  egotistical -- Are we all familiar with the practice of a person taking a letter of
  recommendation with him when he moves to another congregation?
  -It is practiced by some congregations today, but not enough
  -When a person moves into our area and wants to place membership at a congregation, the
  elders should ask for a letter from the previous church, or the new family should bring such a
  letter with them = See Romans 16.1-2 - concerning Phoebe
  "Some" in v 1 – a reference to the false teachers at Corinth – They wanted letters of
  recommendation for the church at Corinth from Paul
  -They were saying sarcastically, "Where is Paul's letter of recommendation?"

Scriptural basis for such a letter:

- Romans 16.1-2 – Paul's letter for Phoebe
- 1 Cor. 16.3 – "with letters" – certify the men
- Acts 18.26-28 – letters for Apollos
- 1 Cor. 16.10 – Paul's endorsement of Timothy
- There are many other references to gospel writers commending someone at a certain church

What are the advantages of such letters? It keeps charlatans and false teachers from going
from congregation to congregation and causing trouble

V.2 – What was Paul's letter of recommendation? The church at Corinth

- Paul's deep love for the Corinthians is seen here
- Corinth was the center of travel; other Christians knew about his work there
- It was widely known in the church of the first century

V.3 – What comparison did he make here? False teachers = written letters = Old Testament
  - Paul = spiritual letter (Corinthian church) = New Testament
  - Therefore, Paul doesn't need a letter of recommendation – the church is his letter, written on
  the human heart, not on tablets of stone

2 Corinthians 3.4-6

V.4-5 – What is Paul saying about his success at Corinth?
- 1 Cor. 3.6 – I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth

V.6 – The Old Testament = letter (outward action counted)
- New Testament = the spirit (the heart counts)
-Why does the letter kill? We can never keep it perfectly
-Read Heb. 12.18-24 – Comparison of Old Covenant and New Covenant (what a contrast!)

2 Corinthians 3.7-11

V 7 – "If" – Did it come this way? Yes, they could not look at the face of Moses

V 8 – How glorious was the New Covenant going to be? More so

V 9 – Did the Old Testament have value ("glory")? Read Gal. 3.24
-How would we be worse off without the Old Testament? Great moral lessons, great examples of faith, Heb. 11, etc.

V 10 – But the New Testament far surpasses the glory of the Old Testament

V 11 – The Old Testament had faded away – the New Testament would always be glorious

Conclusion for v 1-11 – Paul's ministry was based on the New Testament – it was far superior to anyone's preaching based on the Old Testament (he is attacking the Judaizing teachers)

2 Corinthians 3.12-18

V 12 – Two effects of preaching from the New Testament?
1. Hope – How can we have more hope under the New Covenant? We can stand justified in God's eyes
2. Boldness in our preaching
   -Remember the veil of Moses – See Exod. 34.28-35
   -There was no veil over Paul's face – He could preach the truth the way it really was – no holding back

V 13 – The Children of Israel could not look directly at the face of Moses
-Explain: "The end of what was fading away" The Old Testament

V 14 – Old Testament prophecies about Jesus? Gen. 3.15, Isaiah 7.14, Isaiah 53, Micah 5.2
-Did the Jews ever get the veil lifted? No
-It is the same today – the fast majority of the Jews still cannot see Christ in the Old Testament (the veil is still there, whenever we try to talk to them about Christ)

V 15 – They reject the very Christ that Moses and the prophets wrote about

V 16 – Purpose of the Old Law? To lead people to Christ

V 17 – In what sense is there liberty in the New Covenant? Romans 6.1 – We are changed into new people
-That never really happened under the Old Covenant – there was no action similar to
baptism, no sanctification, no transformed people

V.18 – The image of Christ is reflected off of a mirror (the word of the New Testament) - we become like that image as we see him in the New Testament

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2 Corinthians 4

Review of 2 Corinthians so far

- **When was this letter written?** 6-18 months after 1 Cor.
- **Purpose?** To deal with lingering problems at the church at Corinth

  - **Chapter 1** – Explains why he hasn't returned to Corinth

  - **Chapter 2** – He had to "ask" (actually order or command) the Corinthians to forgive the man who was disfellowshipped in 1 Cor. 5 for living with his step-mother

  - Also he had to deal with attacks on him from the Judaizing teachers

- **Who were the Judaizing teachers?** False teachers who were trying to bind the Old Testament on the Christians – examples: Jewish holy days, circumcision, prejudice against Gentiles, other things from Old Testament worship

- **Chapter 3** – **Advantages of a letter of recommendation for new members?** It protects the congregation from false teachers and charlatans

- **How was Paul's preaching better than the preaching of the Judaizing teachers?** Paul was preaching the New Covenant, not the letters of stone (the Old Covenant)

- **Did the Old Testament have glory?** Yes, but nothing like the New Testament

- **Is Christ still veiled to the Jews today?** By and large, yes

2 Corinthians 4.1-6 – The thrilling nature of the New Covenant

**V 1** – **What ministry?** The New Covenant

- **Why would Paul talk about the mercy he had received?** The circumstances of his conversion

  - "Lose heart?" He was not going to get discouraged, even when attacked by false teachers

**V 2** – **Had Paul's methods as an evangelist been secretive or "above board"?** Always open and honest

  - **Example:** He had accepted no money for his preaching at Corinth

  - **Another example:** He had asked several men to go with him in taking the money to Jerusalem

  - **Remember Acts 23.1** – he had a clear conscience about everything he had done as a Christian and as an apostle

  - **Paul had not played politics; there was no cunning behavior in his past**

  - **How do some people "adulterate" the word?** By acting deceitfully

  - **Paul and his associates had based their reputation on their proclamation of the truth**

**V 3** – **1 Cor. 1.18 spoke of the gospel being foolishness to those who are perishing**

  - **Some have let Satan blind them to the gospel**

**V 4** – **"The god of this world"?** Rev. 12 – Satan was thrown down to the earth

  - **See John 12.31, 14.30, 16.11, Eph. 2.2, 6.23**

**V 5** – **The essence of Paul's message?** Christ is Lord

  - **There is no place for self-glorification in preaching or in church work in general**
V 6 – A reference to Gen. 1.3 – light from darkness
-Paul is enthusiastic about preaching, because the light has been shone into his heart and had taught him about the glory of Jesus
-God created both physical light and spiritual light
-Some people "see the light" and are converted – other never see it
-But all who see the light of Christ want to be baptized immediately

2 Corinthians 4.7-15 – The glory of the gospel and the suffering of God's ministers
V 7 – To what is he comparing preachers? Earthen vessels (clay pots)
-How are ministers like clay pots? Valuable, but flawed and of no great value in themselves
-The city of Corinth was famous for little clay lanterns; they sold for 2-3 cents, but gave a lot of light
-Old Testament parallel? Gideon and his men VS. the Midianites – Gideon and his men had torches inside clay pots; they broke the clay pots and terrified the Midianites (Judges 7.15-22)
-People frequently put valuable things inside cheap holders
-Example: Silverware in a wooden box, jewels in jewelry boxes, etc.
-In other words, the power is from God, not from ourselves
-In some congregations, too much emphasis in placed on the preacher, his personality, his manner of dress, his family, etc., instead on the message of salvation that he is preaching

V 8-11 – What problems did Paul have as an evangelist?
1. Afflicted, but not crushed
-Explanation? Maybe his thorn in the flesh
2. Perplexed, but not despairing – he was confused sometimes
3. Persecuted, but not forsaken (possible reference to being beaten at Philippi)
4. Struck down, but not destroyed (a possible reference to Acts 14.19 – left for dead at Lystra)

V 12 – It was a "living death" for Paul and those with him on the 4 missionary journeys

V 13 – If things were so bad, why did Paul keep on preaching?
-He quoted Psalm 116.10; he believed; therefore, he spoke!
-What a great philosophy for a gospel preacher
-1 Cor. 9.16 – Woe is me if I preach not the gospel

V 15 – Paul's goal as a preacher? To spread the gospel
-And Romans 15.20 – not to build on another's man's foundation (to establish congregations where none had already been established)

2 Corinthians 4.16-18 – How he was able to endure
**V 16** – How does the world view the decay of the outer person? Terrible: special creams for the face, face-lifts, Botox, wigs, new clothes, sports cars, etc.
-We can look at pictures of ourselves when we were 20 years old – what a change today
-World can only produce death (the Grim Reaper)

**V 17** – Persecution? It produces eternal glory

**V 18** – What a powerful verse!
-If we can see something in this life, then it is not permanent – it will not last
-In fact, try to think of something that we can see in this life that will endure into heaven
-It is the things that we cannot see that will last into eternity: The human soul, our righteous deeds, love, etc.

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2 Corinthians 5

2 Corinthians 5.1-5

V 1 – Is Paul certain about this matter? ...For we know...
   -Why does he say "if"?  Alternative: The Second Coming of Christ
   -Example: Enoch (Gen. 5.24, Heb. 11.5) walked home with God
   -Example: Elijah did not experience death (2 Kings 2.11)
   -Our bodies?  Like tents
   -Why does Paul call our bodies tents?  Shows us the temporary nature of this life
   -What is the difference between a tent and a building?  A building is permanent
   -Notice: Abraham was looking for the city that God was building (Heb. 11.8-10)
   -God's body for us is going to be eternal

V 2 – Why do we groan?  This body has been infected with sin
   -Adam and Eve were designed to live forever, but Satan intervened, and their bodies were infected with sin
   -Examples of that infection?  Arthritis, kidney stones, loss of memory – So we look forward to the return of Christ
   -"Dwelling from heaven" – Our eternal bodies (1 Cor. 15)

V 3 – The soul will put on the eternal body at the Second Coming of Jesus

V 4 – We don't want to die necessarily, but we want to receive those eternal bodies
   -We are looking forward to eternal life

V 5 – What assurance do we have of all of this?  The Holy Spirit is given to us as a pledge (like a down payment)

2 Corinthians 5.6-10

V 6 – We are to maintain good courage
   -If we are in the body?  Then we are absent from the Lord
   -Are we conscious after death?  Yes – we are "at home" with the Lord
   -Proof?  The Transfiguration – Moses and Elijah were conscious; they were living in a spiritual form
   -More proof: The Account of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 13) – Lazarus was at home with the Lord

The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus is not a parable!
   -There are no proper names ever mentioned in any of the 80 parables in the New Testament, but the names of Lazarus, Abraham, and Moses are mentioned here
   -It is not called a parable, as much as the Jehovah's Witnesses would like it to be a parable, so that they could say that the dead are annihilated at death and that there is no such place as hell – that would be a very comforting belief, if it were only true!
   -This account is historically accurate, since Abraham was a temporary "stand-in" for Jesus until he returned to heaven from his time on the earth
-So this is not a polite story that Jesus told to teach the people a lesson – it was an actual account of what had happened to a man who believed that he would live many more years
-And this account proves that regardless of our eternal destiny, we will be conscious after death
-More proof: The Thief on the Cross (Luke 23.43 – Today you shall be with me in Paradise....)
-Also: Rev. 6.10 – The martyrs of the first century church – they cried out, "How long, O Lord...will you refrain from avenging our blood...?" - They were obviously conscious

These passages point to the idea that we are judged when we die and that the "Day of Judgment" is more like a day of sentencing

V.7 – Any comments? Things are seldom the way they appear to be

V.8 – Good courage – repeated from v 6
-"We prefer to be absent from the body" – Why? We want to be at home with the Lord
-Remember Phil. 1.21-24 – Paul wanted to live on for the sake of the first century churches, because they needed him - however, his preference was to depart and be with the Lord

V.9 – Paul's conclusion based on these facts? He wanted to please Jesus

V.10 – Remember the Mormon "baptism for the dead" doctrine – That false doctrine is refuted here: "deeds done in the body"
-How sad that people believe, "When you say Bud, you've said it all" and similar slogans these days
-But according to this chapter, that is not quite correct!

2 Corinthians 5.11-15

V.11 – Does our society need more fear of God today? Yes
-Recently on educational TV, there was a documentary about the burning of the Hindenburg
-A reporter was broadcasting the landing of the Hindenburg, when it exploded and burned and crashed (1938) – But the interesting thing was that the reporter did not use any profanity, he did not take God's name in vain, he did not make any profane or obscene comments
-It was a great tragedy that would have been treated much differently by modern reporters and observers
-We need to be afraid to do some things in this life – we need to be afraid of offending God
-God knew Paul's motives

V.12 – Not bragging
-Maybe Paul was a poor dresser or weak in appearance (2 Cor. 10.1)
-But some people place too much emphasis on outward appearances

V.13 – The accusation? "Paul is crazy"
-Remember what Festus said about Paul in Acts 26.24
-What do people say to us when they find out that we go to church on Wednesday nights? "Are you crazy? Why would you do that?"
V. 14 – We are controlled by the love of God

V. 15 – To live is Christ (Phil. 1.21) – Therefore, Paul was not crazy or a mad man or a hypocrite

2 Corinthians 5.16-19

V. 16 – We are not to recognize fellow Christians according to human accomplishments
- Remember Philemon 16 – Philemon was told to accept Onesimus as a Christian "brother"
- Rank in army? Ph.D? M.D.? Professor? Captain?
- No, we are all brothers and sisters in Christ
- We should be very hesitant to use human titles within the body of Christ!
- "Paul knew Christ according to the flesh"

- The meaning of this statement? This seems to indicate that Paul might have actually met Christ - that he must have seen Jesus, certainly on the road to Damascus, and possibly at some other time – maybe when he was caught up into the third heaven
- Acts 22.3 – He had studied in Jerusalem under Gameliel
- One theory says that Paul might have been the Rich Young Ruler in Mark 10.17ff, but that does not seem to be the case – Paul is never pictured as being rich, and the Rich Younger Ruler did not seem to have any desire to reconsider Christ and repent and follow Jesus

V. 17 – A new creature

V. 18 – Reconciliation (old foes getting back together)

V. 19 – The deity of Christ

2 Corinthians 5.20-21

V. 20 – What are we as Christians called? Ambassadors
- What purpose does an ambassador serve in a foreign country today? He is a representative of the country where he holds citizenship

V. 21 – What great sacrifice did Christ make for us? He became sin on our behalf
- When did that happen? When he died on the cross

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2 Corinthians 6

Paul continues a defense of his preaching at Corinth

2 Corinthians 6.1-10

V 1 - Is it possible to receive the grace of God and lose it? Yes
   -What group of first century Christians fell from grace? The Galatians (Gal. 5.4)

V 2 – Summarize v 2 – We are to do what is right as soon as we learn the truth
   -If we were deathly sick and the doctor prescribed a certain medicine that would save
     our lives, would we delay taking it for days (weeks, months, years, etc.)? Absolutely not
     – we would take it immediately
   -Do we have any examples in the book of Acts of people wanting to be baptized
     immediately?
     -Jews on the Day of Pentecost – Acts 2.41
     -Ethiopian eunuch – Acts 8.36 – "Look! Here is water!"
     -Paul – Acts 9.18
     -Cornelius and his household – Acts 10.47-48
     -Philippian jailer – Acts 16.33
     -See also: Matt. 8.22 – The man who wanted to bury his father first
     -What did Christ say to that man? Let the dead bury the dead – you follow me!

V 3 – Paul did not want to do anything that might discredit his work as a missionary
   -1 Cor. 2.1 – not in cleverness of speech (not like politicians today)
   -2 Cor. 2.17 – not peddling the word of God (not using the gospel for making money)
   -2 Cor. 4.2 – not adulterating the word of God (not compromising to be popular)

V 4-6 – Negative aspects of his preaching?
   -endurance (patience)
   -afflictions, hardships, distress (and remember his thorn in the flesh)

V 5 – Beatings and imprisonment (at Philippi – Acts 16.22)
   -tumults, riots, etc.:
      -Acts 13.50 – Antioch of Psidia
      -Acts 14.5 – Iconium (Jews and Gentiles)
      -Acts 14.19 – Lystra
      -Acts 16.22 – Gentiles at Philippi
      -Acts 17.5 – Thessalonica
      -Acts 18.12 – Corinth
      -Acts 19.23ff – Ephesus
   -labors (maybe a reference to work with his hands (at Corinth)
   -sleeptlessness and hunger (so he could preach for free)

V 6-7 – Positive aspects of his preaching career?
   -purity (clean conscience)
-knowledge
-patience, kindness, Holy Spirit, in genuine love

V 7 – In ancient warfare, what weapon was held in the right hand? Sword (of Spirit)
-Define the sword of the Spirit: Word of God (Eph. 6.16)
-What was in the left hand? The shield of faith (Eph. 6.16)

V 8 – Two ways people looked upon Paul? Bad report and deceiver, or good report and the truth
-We can begin to appreciate the problems that Paul had faced

V 9 – Unknown? No standing in the world at large
-Dying? On many occasions death seemed certain

V 10 – Sorrowful…rejoicing
-Poor…yet making many rich
-How? With the gospel

V 1-10 – The trials of an ambassador of Christ
-What is the role of the ambassador of a country? He represents his home country

2 Corinthians 6.11-13
V 11 – Explain: "I have told you my innermost feelings" – Paul had laid it all "on the table"
-Paul had a deep and abiding love for the Christians at Corinth

V 12 – No lack of love from Paul's side
-If there were any problems between Paul and the Corinthians, whose fault was it? The Corinthians

V 13 – But love has to be a two-way street

2 Corinthians 6.14-18
V 14-16 – NASB 1995 ed. – Do not be bound together with unbelievers….
ASV: Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers...
RSV: Do not be mismated with unbelievers....
NEV: Do not unite yourselves with unbelievers....
KJV: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers....
NIV: Do not be yoked together with unbelievers....
ESV: Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers....
-A reference to Deut. 22.10 – You shall not plow an ox and a donkey together
-Why not? They do not work well together
-What 5 questions did Paul ask to emphasize his point?
-Righteousness and lawlessness?
-Light and darkness?
-Christ and Belial?
-What has a believer in common with an unbeliever?
-What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?
-**What is the answer to all of these questions?** There is no common ground between a believer and an unbeliever
-**What are some areas of life where this applies?**

1. **Marriage** (two are to become one flesh)
   - Paul in *1 Cor. 9.5* said that he had the right to take a believing wife
   - **What are some problems in a marriage of a Christian and a non-Christian?**
     1. Where will the children go to church?
        - *Eph. 6.4* – to raise children in the Lord
     2. Where will the adults go to church? (Frequently a third church is chosen)
     3. *1 Cor. 7* – Marriage partners are to help each other
   - We should encourage our young people to date and marry Christians
   - **Have you ever known a Christ wife married to a non-Christian husband who recommended that to her children?**
     - Even if by the grace of God the husband might someday be converted, she still would not recommend such a marriage to her children

2. **Business**
   - *Psalm 37.24* – The righteous will not be seen begging bread
   - Restaurant – to serve alcohol or not?
   - Drug store – to sell pornographic magazines, cigarettes, etc.?

3. **Social life**
   - **What problems arise in having a close friend who is not a Christian?**
     - What movies to see, what kind of entertainment will they participate in
   - We should urge Christians to marry Christians, but it is not a commandment
   - *1 Cor. 7.14-15* – those married to non-Christians were not commanded to separate
   - *1 Pet. 3.1* – Christian wives are to try to convert their husbands

**V 17-18 – Paul's conclusion?** Be separate from the world
   - *1 Cor. 5.10* – to be **in** the world, but not **of** the world

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 7

Remember 2 Corinthians 1-7 – the first division of the letter

2 Corinthians 7.1-4

V.1 – This really goes back to 2 Cor. 6.14

-What promises is Paul referring to? 2 Cor. 6.16b – that God would be with his people
-What promises is Paul referring to? 2 Cor. 6.16b – that God would be with his people

-Based on those promises, what are we to do? Stop compromising

-"Perfecting holiness" – 1 John 3.3 – to work toward it

V.2 – New thought here: he "opens his heart" to them

-Some lingering attacks on Paul from the Corinthians

-His reply? He had wronged no-one, including

1. The man who was disfellowshipped (Paul did not make a personal attack on this man, but did what was best in God's sight for this person)
2. Corrupted no-one (he had preached Christ)
3. Taken advantage of no-one (he had been open and honest in the money he collected for Jerusalem)

V.3 – Don’t we see the love Paul had for the Corinthians here? He was ready to live or die with them

V.4 – Paul was still optimistic about the work in Corinth (2 Cor. is certainly more pleasant than 1 Cor.)

-Why was he proud of the church there? It had been difficult ground to break

2 Corinthians 7.5-10

V.5 – Remember: 2 Corinthians was the most autobiographical of Paul's 13 letters

-Explain "our flesh had no rest" – A reference to 2 Cor. 2.12-13

-Two sources of trouble for Paul? Conflicts without and fears within

V.6 – What a tremendous verse!

-God comforts the depressed (sometimes through human means)

-What comforted Paul on this occasion? The coming of Titus

-How would Titus have comforted Paul? Just the presence of another gospel preacher

V.7 – What news did Titus bring from Corinth? Their longing, their mourning, and their zeal for Paul

V.8 – What had been the first result of Paul's letter? Sorrow

V.9 – The second result? Sorrow leading to repentance

V.10 – Repentance without regret – a great lesson here
-Define Christian repentance: Sorrow because we had sinned and the willingness to do better in the future
-What is the difference between making a mistake as a Christian and making a mistake as a person in the world? Sorrow of the world produces death
- some of the richest people in the world have committed suicide

Optional: Edgar Allen Poe's short story "The Tell-Tale Heart" – shows how guilt catches up with a person

V 10 – An excellent description of true repentance
- Peter VS. Judas? Judas was sorry, but did not change his life and seek forgiveness
- Esau and Jacob? Esau never sought forgiveness (no true repentance)

2 Corinthians 7.11-13a
V 11 – This seems to be a reference to the man with his father's wife
- A list of good (though unpleasant) things to have occurred because of the action against this man

V 12 – Paul's main concern in this matter? He saw it as a test of the earnestness of the church at Corinth

V 13a – Paul was comforted by all of these things

2 Corinthians 7.13b-16
V 13b – What else comforted Paul? Seeing how well the Corinthians had treated Titus
- They had "refreshed" Titus (usually a reference to helping a missionary with financial assistance)

V 14 – Paul had bragged about Titus – it all turned out to be the truth

V 15 – Titus was impressed by the church at Corinth

V 16 – Paul expressed his confidence that the church at Corinth would do the right thing and be faithful to Christ

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 8

Review of 2 Corinthians 1-7

Why had Paul not returned to Corinth yet? To give the congregation time to work out the problem with the man who was living with his step-mother (1.23-24, 2.6 and following)

-What did Paul have to command concerning this man? That the church forgive him (2.6)

-What was the value of the New Testament over the Old Testament? The New Testament was "living," instead the dead Old Testament (Ch. 3)

-What should be the attitude of the Christian concerning death? To be absent in the body meant being at home with the Lord (Ch. 5.6)

-What was Paul's advice in Ch. 6 about making close ties with non-believers? A dangerous thing to do

-In Ch. 7, what did Paul continue to do? Defend his preaching at Corinth

2 Corinthians 8.1-15

-Chs. 8-9 are really a "pause" with an emphasis on the subject of giving

Background:

-When did money first become a problem in the early church? Acts 5.1-11 – Ananias and Sapphira had lied about how much they gave to the church

-Next occasion? Acts 6 – the neglect of the Greek-speaking widows

-Why was Paul collecting money? A famine, particularly hard in Jerusalem (Acts 11.27-30 – the prophecy of Agabus)

-Where did Paul command that we set aside money on the first day of every week? 1 Cor. 16.1-2

V.1 – Where is Macedonia? Northeast Greece

-What 3 congregations were located there? Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea

-In 1-2 Thessalonians and Philippians, there are no scriptures on the subject of giving

-Why? Because those congregations were faithful in their giving

-What was the source of their giving? The grace of God

-They didn't base their giving on personal glory, but on the grace they had received

V.2 – Was everything peaceful and quiet in Macedonia? No – While in Philippi, Paul and Silas spent a night in jail

-In Thessalonica, Jason was beaten, and Paul had to flee in the middle of the night

-What caused the 3 congregations to be so liberal in their giving? Their affliction!

-Who is more appreciative of God's blessings, a rich man or a poor man? The poor man

-The rich man hires a lawyer to help him find loopholes in the tax laws and get richer

-Therefore, Macedonians were poor, but had turned their love for the Lord into liberal giving

V.3 – How did Paul describe their giving? They gave beyond their ability

-Does this remind you of any incident in the life of Jesus? Mark 12.41-44 – the widow and her two mites (she gave all that she had)

V.4 – They were begging to be allowed to help!
-Is this characteristic of the church today? Not in most places – usually missionaries have to beg for more support

V.5 – What was the key to their giving? They gave themselves first! These are amazing words from Paul
-Too many churches are always hitting people over the head to give more, but that is not the right approach
-Rather, the members should be truly converted, and good giving will follow
-At some denominational churches, people get worked up into a frenzy – they mortgage their houses, sell their cars, etc., but that is really not Christian giving either

V.6 – What had Paul told Titus to do? Finish collecting the money for the poor saints in Jerusalem

V.7 – Paul is complimenting them (remembering their spiritual gifts and talents)

V.8 – Can the church dictate how much each person is to give? Not really, although elders might need to encourage people who are giving far below their potential
-The basis of giving, according to Paul? The sincerity of their love
-Who could refuse to give more, after reading this verse? No-one

V.9 – How was Christ rich? He lived in heaven
-How did he become poor? He gave it up to come to the earth

V.10 – It seems as if the Corinthians were the first to give for this project (a year back)

V.11 – But what did they need to do now? Complete their plans and what they had promised

V.12 – Very interesting: Regular, systematic giving is what Paul had in mind
-We can't give what we don't have

V.13 – It was no use to help others if it would make the Corinthians poor
-But a certain measure of equality should exist in the church (see 1 John 3.17)
-There should not be one family overflowing with money, while another family is starving

V.14 – Another reason for good giving? You yourself may need help some day!

V.15 – Exodus 16.13-21 – The manna worked out just fine

2 Corinthians 8.16-24

V.16 – Titus was concerned about the Corinthians also

V.17 – Titus didn't have to be asked – he had already seen the need to go to Corinth and had gone there
V 18-22 – The identity of this "brother"
- **Characteristics of this brother?**
  - V 18 – Famous among the churches of Asia
  - V 19 – Was appointed to travel with Paul to Jerusalem

**Best theories?**
1. Luke – most likely candidate
   - Very modest – Remember the 4 "we" passages in *Acts* when Luke did not even want to mention his name
2. Barnabas – But in *Acts 15.39*, they argued about John Mark
3. Silas
4. Timothy, but he was with Paul at this time
5. Aristarchus (*Acts 19.29*)

V 20 – Paul was always cautious about things

V 21 – Why? To be honorable in the sight of all

V 22 – Titus and Luke, plus another brother (either Timothy or Silas probably, or Apollos)

V 23 – The preachers are called "messengers," so they are not to change the message, but to deliver it just as it was delivered to them in the gospel of Christ

V 24 – Conclusion? Give freely

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 9

Note: "Achaia" refers to the Roman province we know today as Greece

2 Corinthians 9.1-5
V 1-5 – An introduction to the principle of generous giving
V 1 – Why was it not necessary for Paul to describe the need for money? They knew about the need already
-Note: The word "ministry" refers to a special talent a Christian might have, and some Christians have the talent of making money
-They are to devote themselves to helping their fellow saints

V 2 – Were the Corinthians antagonistic to helping the poor saints in Jerusalem? No, they were ready
-What had Paul bragged about to others? The liberality of the Corinthians
-What had this bragging done? It had caused other congregations to give more!

V 3 – Why had Paul sent brethren to Corinth? To make sure that his boasting was not in vain

V 4 – That would have been embarrassing

V 5 – Did Paul use any psychology on the Corinthians? "Bountiful" gift, not affected by covetousness

2 Corinthians 9.6-9
V 6 – First principle? Sow sparingly results in reaping sparingly (and vice-versa)
-Read Prov. 11.24-25, 19.17, 22.9, Matt. 10.42, Matt. 25.34ff
-Is this principle true in farming? Yes
-And for Christians also? Yes
-For those who have been treasurers of a congregation (as this writer has been), the ones who give the least are the unhappiest, the grumblers, the spiritually sick, etc.
-And those who are the most generous are the happiest members of the congregation
-Note: We don't give just to make more money, but v 6 is an assurance that God will bless us

V 7 – Second principle? We purpose in our hearts
-The writer of these notes is not in favor of "purpose cards" to be given to the elders
-We purpose in our own hearts to God to give a certain amount
-Should we give God the leftovers? Absolutely not
-Should we publish the contributions (who gave what)? No
-Summarize the proper attitude toward generous giving: A generous heart (not because of public opinion, or from being forced to give)
-Why should it be a joy to give to the church? There is no-one else to do it; the work depends on us to keep it going

V 8 – The promise of God? He will take care of us
-Read Psalm 37.25 – no begging bread
-Miser” – sometimes in the news we will read of a "miser" who dies, and huge amounts of money are found that he has saved over the years
-What a miserable way to die

V 9 – A quote from Psalm 112.9 – describing the righteous man
-Did the Jews in the Old Testament have an obligation to help the poor? Yes: by not harvesting the corners of the fields, no going through the fields twice, etc.
Read Lev. 19.9-10

2 Corinthians 9.10-15
V 10 – What will God do for a liberal giver? Give him more seed for sowing and more blessings (everything comes from God anyway)

V 11 – The Corinthians' giving was causing people to be more thankful
-"Through us" – Paul was sort of a middleman in this project

V 12 – Two benefits of this collection?
1. Physical (food to eat)
2. Spiritual (a thankful attitude)

V 13 – Because of the liberality of the Corinthians, their "confession" was proven
-In other words, liberal giving is part of being a Christian
-Maybe word of problems at Corinth had gotten to Jerusalem; many doubts there were cleared up

V 14 – What did the Jerusalem Christians do to repay the Corinthian Christians? They prayed for them

V 15 – The gift? The grace of God (or Jesus Christ)

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 10

2 Corinthians 10.1-10
There is a drastic change of tone at this point in the letter
-Possible explanations:
1. Maybe he had received word between Chs. 9-10 of a deterioration of the conditions at Corinth, and he had to respond immediately
2. Maybe he had laid the letter aside for a few weeks or months
3. Maybe he saved the harsh parts of the letter to the last (after preparing them for it in Chs. 1-9)
4. Maybe this section is directed to the false teachers at Corinth, not to the general members (the idea that best explains this section)

V 1 – An affectionate opening to the chapter
-the meekness and gentleness of Christ (as in the crucifixion)
-Paul then quotes his accusers:
-What were they saying about Paul? Meek when present, fierce when away

V 2 – How do you explain this verse?
-Paul hopes that when he comes in person, he won't have to be fierce, as he is about to be in this letter
-Another charge against Paul? He was walking "according to the flesh"
-Explain: Preaching to make money or for his own advantage

V 3 – Paul was a human being, but he didn’t wage human warfare
-There are very serious implications here concerning the Christian and carnal warfare
-Christians are not to be involved with physical warfare
-This doesn't mean that we cannot love our country, or even be in the military (chaplain, medic, etc.) – We can be in the diplomatic corps, the Peace Corps, or teaching, or serving the country in some other way
-But we are forbidden to be involved with killing in carnal (fleshly) warfare

Read Ephesians 6.10-17 – Where are physical weapons of warfare found in that passage? There is no mention of them!
-We can go on mission trips to other parts of the world and serve the Kingdom of God in many ways, but we have no example of any New Testament Christian ever killing someone in warfare

Cornelius: Was he killing anyone in Acts 9-10?
-What did he do after he was baptized? He brought his life into conformity with the gospel of Christ (as it was being slowly revealed in the First Century)
-Remember the harlot Rahab in Joshua 2 – Does the Bible ever tell us that she got out of prostitution when she entered the nation of Israel? No
-What is safe to assume? That as she learned the Law of Moses, she left prostitution
-On the Day of Pentecost, does the Bible tell us that the Jews with unscriptural marriages left those marriage? No, but we assume that as the laws of marriage were revealed in the course of the First Century, they brought their lives into conformity with those laws
-What about homosexuals who heard Peter preach and obeyed the gospel? We assume (correctly) that they left that sinful lifestyle as they learned the gospel and as the New Testament was put into written form.
-We know that as Cornelius learned obeyed the gospel and learned more about the will of God for the lives of Christians, he came to understand the words of Paul here about Christians and physical warfare.
-The meaning of these verses in the life of Paul: he would not fight these false teachers in a fleshly way (he wouldn't try to kill them).

V.4 – Our warfare today? It is against Satan.
-Being humans, we are sorely tempted to fight Satan with physical weapons and to make the church a secular organization.
-But what is our sword to be? The Bible (Eph. 6.14ff)

V.5 – Paul is referring to fighting human systems of thought.
-Many philosophies today are trying to replace God with a cheap substitute.
-Examples:
  -Transcendental meditation.
  -Assertiveness training.
  -The Church of Scientology.
  -The New Age Movement.
-Many other examples (that go by different names in each generation – there is always a new philosophy on the horizon).
-In church work, there is always a new "method" of evangelization.
-But only Christianity can capture these systems of thought and liberate the individual.
-Real warfare, therefore, is a battle of philosophies and systems of thought.
Our answer to Islam and terrorism is Christianity, not in Christians taking up physical arms and waging warfare against our national enemies – Read Romans 1.16.
Read Matt. 26.52 and John 18.36.

V.6 – Remember 2 Cor. 1.23-24.
-Paul will punish the false teachers when he arrives and will arrive as soon as they get their house in order.
-Point? "You are self-confident because you are Christians, but remember that I too am a Christian."
-They should have remembered that Paul started the church at Corinth.
-The charge? That they were better Christians than Paul.

V.8 – What authority? As an apostle.
-Why was Paul made an apostle? To build up the Gentiles.
-"Not put to shame" – They will see his authority as an apostle.

V.9 – Paul did not want to be guilty of the charge in v 1 – not to terrify them by letters and then make a weak appearance.

V.10 – Another charge against Paul? Strong in letters, but still weak in appearance.
2 Corinthians 10.11-18

V 11 – Paul: "I will show you that I can be as strong in person as I am in my letters"

V 12 – Such an indictment of humanism
    - Some sang their own praises (great in their own eyes)
    - Paul: I am not going to compare myself with them and stoop to their tactics
    - A note of sarcasm here!
    Did Paul have a high opinion of himself? No – Very low – Read 1 Tim. 1.15 – chief of all sinners and least of all the apostles

V 13 – Paul would not exceed his authority, but Corinth was in his authority
    - Where did Paul get the authority to preach in Corinth? Acts 16.9 – The Macedonian Call

V 14 – Paul and others were the first to preach the gospel in Corinth; they had been commissioned to go there

V 15 – Paul didn't want to offend the other apostles by working where they were working
    - Paul's goal: To receive aid to preach the gospel in other areas

V 16 – "regions beyond you" – maybe other parts of Greece
    - Paul's ultimate goal? Spain (Romans 15.24)
    - Paul was not bragging about his works thus far
    - Why? V 17 – He wanted to give the glory to God

V 18 – It does not matter if we compliment ourselves; the important thing is be complimented by the Lord
    - To have the approval of false teachers meant nothing, and to be criticized by them absolutely meant nothing!

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 11

2 Corinthians 11.1-5

V. 1 – A little foolishness
- Paul hates to do this, but he will have to defend himself in this chapter
- He will have to stoop to their level of folly and will do so, only because of his love for the church at Corinth
- It is a distasteful thing to do, but he will do it
- Therefore, 2 Cor. 11 is Paul's defense of himself

V. 2 – What is the relationship of the church to Christ? Like a wife to her husband
- The church at Corinth started out in the proper way (a pure virgin)

V. 3 – How did the serpent deceive Eve? By force? No, with words, incorrect statements, etc.
- The serpent slipped into Eve's life, just as false teachers had done at Corinth
- How would false teachers slip into the church at your location?
- Notice v 3c – the simplicity and purity of the gospel

V. 4 – The false teachers were telling of a different Jesus, a different Holy Spirit, and a different gospel
- Paul was being sarcastic – How do they treat false teachers? Beautifully! (The KJV and ASV miss the sarcasm and irony here)
- What message should we get from v 4? To actively oppose false teachers!

V. 5 – Most modern commentaries believe that the "eminent apostles" refers to the false teachers at Corinth
- See v 13 – "false apostles"

2 Corinthians 11.6-12

V. 6 – Paul was charged with being a poor speaker
- His reply? At least I know the truth – that is the important thing

V. 7 – Paul was criticized for preaching for free at Corinth
- Paul's answer? Was that a sin?

V. 8 – How was Paul supported at Corinth? Other congregations were "robbed" (an exaggeration to make a point)
- We get the idea that Paul was a little worked up here!

V. 9 – When Paul was in need, who helped him? The Macedonian Christians, especially Philippi
- Why did Paul not ask for help from Corinth? He didn't want to be a burden on the church at Corinth
V 10 – Why would Paul continue not to accept help from Corinth? It was his policy

V 11 – Does he not accept their help because he doesn't love them? No
-He does love them – this was a real cry from his heart

V 12 – Why doesn't he want their money? Because they would only boast about that, and the false teachers would just have something else to brag about

2 Corinthians 11.13-15
V 13-15 – One of the most frightening passages in the New Testament
V 13 – The "false apostles" at Corinth

V 14 – Paul: Don’t be surprised at this – they are just like Satan

V 15 – False teachers in the church = Satan's workers
- What will be the eternal fate of these false teachers? Hell
- Read Acts 20.29-30 – Paul's warning to the elders at Ephesus
- Paul was really laying it on them, wasn't he?
- This was his strongest attack ever on the false teachers

2 Corinthians 11.16-22
V 16 – More boasting from Paul (for the sake of the church)

V 17 – Did Paul believe it was right for him to boast? No, just necessary here

V 18 – He will get down on their level

V 19 – More irony: They listen to the foolish people, so they shouldn't mind listening to Paul

V 20 – Reread this verse – What an attack!
- The Corinthians seemed to enjoy being abused!
- They didn't like someone unless he was mistreating them!

V 21 – Paul: "Maybe I haven't been vicious enough in attacking these false teachers"

V 22 – What basic "standards" did Paul match with these false teachers? Hebrews, Israelites, children of Abraham

2 Corinthians 11.23-33
V 23 – Paul moved to a higher category
- He now surpasses them
Four areas:
- Labors, imprisonments (Philippi, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Rome), beatings, danger of death (Lystra)

V 24 – Jewish punishment: Remember the Old Testament allowed 40 stripes – Jews stopped at 39 just to be safe
- Roman punishment: 5 lashings (mostly not recorded in Acts)

V 25 – 3 times beaten with rods
- 1 time stoned and left for dead
- 3 times shipwrecked

V 26 – Dangers
- From rivers (floods, no bridges in the ancient world)
- Robbers (remember the Good Samaritan)
- Countrymen
- Gentiles
- In cities
- In the wilderness
- On the sea, with storms (Acts 27)
- Among false brethren

V 27 – In addition: the loss of sleep, hunger, and thirst

V 28 – In addition to physical hardships, Paul suffered what else? Mental anguish and concern for all the churches

V 29 – Paul was always concerned for the Christians
- Think of the worry he had just about Corinth, plus many other congregations (such as the churches of Galatia)

V 30 – If Paul was going to brag, what would he brag about? His weakness

V 31 – God knew that Paul was not lying
- Why would the false teachers have thought he was lying? Because what Paul had written about was almost more than one person could endure

V 32–33 – He was let down from the walls of Damascus in a basket - Read Acts 9.22-25
- That event showed his weakness as a man and a Christian

Revised 2013-01-22
2 Corinthians 12

2 Corinthians 12.1-6

V 1 – Why was boasting necessary? Because the false teachers were boasting and bragging about visions
   -But why is boasting not a good thing? Because it is not "profitable"

V 2 – Paul switches to third person – Why? To make it seem less egotistical
   -Before his baptism or after? After ("in Christ")
   -14 years ago – about when Paul and Barnabas were working at the church in Antioch of Syria

V 3 – A very important verse
   -Is it possible to be "in the body" and be in Paradise? Yes – 1 Cor. 15 – the resurrected body Paul spoke of so much
   -Is it possible to be "in the Spirit" or apart from the body and be in Paradise? Yes
   -Otherwise, Paul would have known whether or not he was in the body
   -Would either state be a conscious state? Yes
   -Would the soul be conscious? Yes
   -Luke 16.19ff – The rich man and Lazarus were both conscious
   -Luke 23.43 – Jesus to the thief on the cross: Today you shall be with me in Paradise
   -2 Cor. 5.8 – To be absent from the body was to be at home with the Lord
   -Phil. 1.23 – To die was to be with Jesus
   -3 heavens (according to the Jews):
     1. Birds and clouds
     2. Stars and sun
     3. The dwelling place of God
   -Paradise is the intermediate place for saved people – Hades holds both Paradise and Torment

V 4 – Paul could not put into human language what he heard in Paradise
   -Remember that the rich man was not allowed to speak to his 5 brothers on the earth

V 5 – The only bragging Paul would do was about his weaknesses

V 6 – Paul was just an ordinary man – he didn't boast because people would not have believed him anyway

2 Corinthians 12.7-10

V 7 – Why was Paul given this thorn in the flesh? To keep him from bragging about his vision (v 1-6)
   -God allowed Satan to afflict Paul
   -How is this similar to the Old Testament hero Job? Very similar
   -Is there any clue concerning what the thorn in the flesh was? Gal. 4.15 – possibly eye
problems

V8 – How hard had Paul asked God to remove the thorn? He prayed 3 times about it

V9 – Power is perfected in weakness – What is the meaning of that statement? The less we rely on ourselves, the more we rely on God and his grace
-If so, then he will again brag about his weaknesses
-Remember Jesus washing the feet of the apostles

V10 – The more problems, the more that we need the grace of God
-So Paul lists his problems:
  -weaknesses
  -insults
  -distresses
  -persecutions
  -difficulties
-What was his answer to dealing with these problems? Rely more on God for strength

2 Corinthians 12.11-13
V11 – Paul has been bragging, but they should have been bragging about him
  -Why? Because he was a "nobody" – and he was as good as the false apostles at Corinth

V12 – Paul worked miracles at Corinth – the sign of a true apostle

V13 – Paul is using sarcasm – quoting his critics – "Forgive me for not accepting your money!"

2 Corinthians 12.14-18
V14 – Paul was planning to go to Corinth – apparently he had planned to go there before, but was not able to (1 Thess. 2.18)
-Will he charge them this time? No
-Why? He doesn't want their money - he wants them!
-Do parents charge their children for being in the family?

V15 – Paul was ready to give even more to work at Corinth, but will they love him less just because he loves them more?

V16 – Maybe a reference to money he had collected for the saints in Jerusalem (more sarcasm)
  -The false teachers were embarrassed that Paul had not taken any money
  -Their answer? He was planning to!

V17-18 – Had Titus or the unknown brother stolen from them? No

2 Corinthians 12.19-21
V 19 – Why has Paul boasted and used sarcasm in 2 Cor. 10-12? To help the Corinthians see the truth about these false teachers

V 20 – What did Paul suspect still existed at Corinth? Inner turmoil

V 21 – He will cry over them (a form of humiliation)
   - The false teachers had secret sins!

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2 Corinthians 13

2 Corinthians 13.1-4

V 1 – What is Paul's next step? To visit Corinth
   - How many times had he already been there? Two
   - There is a limit to our patience with some people
   - We have to take action eventually; we cannot let a situation continue indefinitely
   - We are required to take action when no repentance is shown
   - There has to be peace in the church, but not peace at any price
   - What action will Paul take when he arrives there?
     - v 1 – Gather witnesses (Matt. 18.16)
     - v 2 – Disfellowship the troublemakers

V 2 – The offenders will be punished
   - Paul hoped they would repent before he arrived, but otherwise they would be disfellowshipped

V 3 – They kept saying that Paul was weak
   - They wanted to see his strength
   - They were about to see it, because to challenge Paul was to challenge Jesus Christ

V 4 – What comparison was Paul making between himself and Christ? Parallel – Christ was "weak" at the crucifixion, yet he had the power of God afterwards
   - Paul was coming to visit Corinth
   - "Our Christianity will be shown when we arrive in Corinth"

2 Corinthians 13.5-10

V 5 – Who had the Corinthians been testing? Paul and others
   - Whom should they have been testing? Themselves!
   - Paul took the spotlight off of himself and put it on them
   - Would they pass or fail the test? (Only they could answer that question)

V 6 – Paul knew he was sincere and right

V 7 – Did Paul want them to repent just so he would look good (since he established the church there)? No, he didn't care how he looked – he wanted what was best for the church at Corinth

V 8 – Paul's motives were only for good (the Truth)

V 9 – Paul was "weak" when he did not have to discipline the church at Corinth, so he wanted to be weak
   - Paul's goal? A strong congregation at Corinth
**2 Corinthians 13.11-14** – The conclusion of the letter

V 11 - Paul's advice:
- Rejoice (not just to be jovial, but to be happy and content)
- Be made complete (functioning properly as a congregation)
- Be comforted (remember 2 Cor. 1 – the God of all comfort)
- Be like-minded (back to 1 Cor. 1 and the four divisions there)
- Have love and peace toward one another

V 12 – The holy kiss

V 13 – Paul sent greetings from the members of other congregations

V 14 – The three persons of the Godhead
- Three different aspects of Deity – three, but unified
- The same principle should apply to a congregation
- There was a fellowship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Other references to the Trinity
- Matt. 28.19 – To be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- Matt. 3.16-17 – Baptism of the Jesus (the Father and the Holy Spirit were present)
- Jude 20-21
- 1 Thessalonians 1.2-5
- Other similar passages – See: Zondervan Bible Encyclopedia, V, 823, bottom of the page)

Many Pentecostal churches teach that there is only one person in the godhead: Jesus Christ
- They are badly mistaken in that belief!

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