



2 Corinthians

A 17 WEEK INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

By Lisa Hughes

Welcome

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?*

Nothing could be more true! There is no better foundation for a believer than the rock-solid Word of God. It's my prayer that your faith and love for the Lord will be strengthened as you study His Word in these lessons. I want your hunger for the Scriptures to grow as you study its truths. And more than anything else, I want you to know that you can live upon the Word of God.

Steadfastness, assurance, and hope are the characteristics of all those who build upon the unshakeable foundation of the Word of God. That's why I'm so thrilled you've found your way to this Bible study. Our Bibles contain all the wisdom and guidance we'll need for our daily life (2 Peter 1:3). God's Word is one of the primary means God uses to strengthen our faith and sanctify our hearts. That's why it's so important to dig in to the details of the Scriptures and mine the treasures tucked away for us there.

Scripture Paths Bible Studies are in-depth, inductive studies of the Scriptures. Each lesson endeavors to teach you how to feed yourself when you delve into God's Word. As you spend time on each lesson you will grow in Bible knowledge and understanding, learn how to apply the Scriptures to your life, and become more firmly convinced than ever that God's Word is authoritative, complete, without error, and sufficient for your life.

HELPFUL THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT *SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES*:

1. *Purposefully prepared.* Each lesson has a unique goal, whether it's to train you in the art of studying the Scriptures or to showcase the point of the passage. None of it is busywork—it's lifework for our souls.
2. *Plan ahead.* Adding a Bible study to an already busy life takes preparation. You'll need to figure out when you can complete your lessons. Do you like to set aside bits of time each day to work on the lesson or do you prefer to do it all in one sitting? Try experimenting with a method that works best for you.
3. *Persevere.* Keep going to the Lord for wisdom, for strength, and the desire to press on when life gets busy and you find it difficult to finish your lessons.
4. *Pray.* Ask the Lord to transform you through the study of His Word. Use your study time to get to know the Lord better.

5. *Prompt your memory.* Try to glean little nuggets of truth or application from each lesson, and then share them with someone. This will help solidify what you're learning and encourage someone else too.

6. *Put it into practice.* Nearly every lesson has questions for you to apply to your life. To study just to study is not our goal. Studying to grow in our understanding of the Scriptures, of the Lord, and how to live lives honoring to Him is what we're aiming at. Look for opportunities to apply God's Word.

There are treasures upon the surface of the Word which we may pick up very readily: even the casual reader will find himself able to understand the simplicities and elements of the gospel of God; but the Word of God yields most to the digger.

~Charles Spurgeon

THE GOAL AND PURPOSE OF THIS BIBLE STUDY

John Calvin wrote, “We owe to the Scripture the same reverence which we owe to God, because it has proceeded from Him alone, and has nothing of man mixed with it.” It’s that premise which propels me to write and study the Bible for myself and for anyone else who wants to study along with me. God has revealed Himself in the pages of Scripture. The Bible is complete and authoritative and contains everything we need to live for His glory. It’s in the study of the Scriptures that we grow in our knowledge of God and are transformed into His likeness. A commitment to lean on and live in God’s Word is a distinguishing characteristic of a Christian as Jesus explained to a crowd of His followers in John 8:31-32: “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

Because all “Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16) we study inductively in order to glean as much as we can from the Word of God. Inductive Bible study consists of observation, interpretation, and application. Simply put, *observation* is noticing what the author is saying; *interpretation* is finding out what he means; and *application* is utilizing those truths to your life.

As you study this book of the Bible it is my prayer that you will grow in your commitment to the Word of God as the source of life and godliness, and you will accept it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe (1 Thess. 2:13). As a young man Jonathan Edwards (one of America’s most famous theologians and preachers) made a list of resolutions he desired, by God’s grace, to do his best to live by. One of those commitments is resolution #28: “Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.” May you see the study of God’s Word making such a difference in your life that you bear the fruit of wisdom, knowledge, godly conduct, that you overcome sin and grow daily in your love for Christ.

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
Lisa Hughes*

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Feel free to tailor this study to your needs. Some have found it works best for them to complete the lesson in one sitting, while others find that breaking up the lesson by answering a few questions each day works the best for them. Try experimenting with different ways to complete each lesson, you'll soon discover what works for you and produces the most spiritual benefit.

Some of the lessons have what I call "Eager Beaver" questions. They're rabbit-trail questions. They don't really fit with the theme of the passage, but they're interesting nonetheless. They're there for your enjoyment and growth.

Another feature of the Bible studies is the opportunity to do word studies. Whenever I want you to study a word further I'll include the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance number with it. The Strong's number is basically a reference number attached to most words found in the Bible. That number allows you to search for it in different reference works easily—even when you don't know Hebrew or Greek. I explain how to use those resources in an Addendum at the end of the study. These tools are valuable for any Bible study student, yet not mandatory for completing these lessons.

If you're new to studying the Bible then you may feel a bit overwhelmed, but I want to encourage you to stick with the study. Studying the Bible takes planning on your part and commitment, but the spiritual blessing and personal growth in Christ makes any "hardship" worth it. Remember, the goal of studying the Bible is that you would grow more in Christ, so start each lesson with a time of prayer asking the Lord for wisdom and His grace to study His Word, then continue to seek the Lord as you complete the lesson.

If you're a leader and you're introducing this study to your ladies for the first time, be sure to encourage them a lot! Though each lesson was written to achieve a specific purpose, you may find your ladies would fare best if they take two weeks to complete each lesson. If that's the case, feel free to do so. You want the ladies to enjoy studying God's Word, so keep encouraging them. Pray together, memorize a chapter out of the book, and dig in to each lesson. As you work on the lessons each week you will all gain a clearer picture of our great God, His will for us, and how to live for Him.

And what could be better than that?

Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore, my soul observes them.
 The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.
 I opened my mouth wide and panted, for I longed for Your commandments.
 Turn to me and be gracious to me, after Your manner with those who love Your name.
 Establish my footsteps in Your word, and do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.
 Psalm 119:129-133

How to Do a Chapter Observation¹

Begin with prayer, asking God to show you how His Word fits together. Ask Him to reveal the gems of His Word as you approach it. Pray for a clear mind and the ability to see the truths in His Word.

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1. Read straight through the chapter using the *Bible Text Handout*. This will show you the flow of the chapter. *Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears.* This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Mark *repeated* words or phrases. Mark any other words that seem *important* to the chapter or are strongly *emphasized*.
 2. Next, *list* the phrase containing the key words on a separate sheet of paper. *This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words.* Be sure to *cite* the verse references when you list your key word information. For example, in James chapter 1, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time God is mentioned in James. For Chapter 1, it would start with a list like this: Vs. 1—James, a bond-servant of God or God has bond-servants Vs. 5—ask God for wisdom. Vs. 5—God gives wisdom generously, without reproach.
 3. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter and any actions that are required of the reader.
 4. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
 5. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find these words or phrases.
 6. Mark *contrasting* words: light/dark, love/hate; the word “but.” Look for phrases or thoughts that are being contrasted.
 7. Now list what you discovered from the comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using or at the side or bottom of the *Bible Text Handout*.

¹ This process for Bible study originated from the Precept Inductive Bible Studies method. Through the years, other people have adapted it or come up with similar methods on their own, just as I have for my studies. The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider every one of His recorded Words, in their context, during Bible study.

8. Mark *transition* terms: *therefore, for, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms.
9. Mark expressions of *time*. Look for words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. Look for *lists* of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in James 1:5-6 we find a list about how God responds when we ask him for wisdom. We discover 1) He gives wisdom generously; 2) He gives wisdom without reproach; 3) He desires that we ask in faith, without doubting. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in this chapter. You aren't making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this stage is to look for the treasures that God has put in the chapter.

How To Do a Word Study

There's a couple ways you can do this. You can do your Bible word study using the internet or a Bible program like Logos. There are quite a few good Bible study websites available on the internet like www.net.bible.org; www.blueletterbible.org; www.biblestudytools.com; or www.biblegateway.com. Each site is set up a little different but you should find a section on "word studies" for each of them.

Or you can do your Bible word study in the time-honored tradition of using books! Below you'll find a step-by-step guide in how to do a word study from the Bible.

Starting with the basics

You will need an *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* [Strong's or Holman's] that matches the Bible you study out of – like NASB or KJV. Then you will need *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*.

Now what?

1. In the main part of the Concordance find the word you wish to define. Example: *consider* from Hebrews 3:1.
2. Write down the number assigned to it. You will need this number for the dictionary. In our example *consider* from Hebrews 3:1 is Greek word #2657.
3. Now flip to the back of the Concordance. This section of the concordance is divided into Hebrew words from the Old Testament and Greek words from the New Testament. You will need to make sure you are in the Greek section so you can find #2657. Once you locate the right number then you can see the Greek spelling of the word as well as the English transliteration of the word. You will need to write down the English transliteration of the word [for our example it is *katanoeo*. You will also find a short definition of the word here in the concordance.

2657 κατανοέω [*katanoeo* /kat·an·o·eh·o/] v. From 2596 and 3539; **TDNT** 4:973; **TDNTA** 636; **GK** 2917; 14 occurrences; **AV** translates as "consider" seven times, "behold" four times, "perceive" twice, and "discover" once. 1 to perceive, remark, observe, understand. 2 to consider attentively, fix one's eyes or mind upon.

4. Now you are ready to look up your word in *Vine's Dictionary of Biblical Words*. Make sure you are in the Greek section if you are looking up New Testament words or the Hebrew section if you are looking up Old Testament words. Go to the back of the dictionary and look up your word using the English transliteration of the word, in our example it is *katanoeo*. This step will show you the different English words the Greek word has been translated into. For example: *katanoeo* has been translated into *behold*, *consider*, *discover*, or *perceive*.

5. Now, look up the English version of the word. In our example we look up *consider*. Find the right definition for the word by checking the English transliteration and the Strong's number assigned to it. Check to make sure that the Greek number is the same and then read away. Remember, that context is what gives a word its meaning and variation of meaning. The dictionary will supply you with all the meanings and translations of the word and how it is used differently in different verses.

CONSIDER [from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words]

1. *eidon* (Aor. of ὀράω, 3708), used as the aorist tense of *horaō*, "to see," is translated "to consider" in [Acts 15:6](#), of the gathering of the apostles and elders regarding the question of circumcision in relation to the gospel.

2. *suneidon* (συνειδῶ, 4894), *sun*, with, and No. 1, used as the aorist tense of *sunoraō*, to see with one view, to be aware, conscious, as the result of mental perception, is translated "considered" in [Acts 12:12](#), of Peter's consideration of the circumstances of his deliverance from. See KNOW, PRIVY.

3. *katamanthano* (καταμανθάνω, 2648), lit., "to learn thoroughly" (*kata*, "down," intensive, *manthano*, "to learn"), hence, "to note accurately, consider well," is used in the Lord's exhortation to "consider" the lilies. [Matt. 6:28](#).¶

4. *noeo* (νοιέω, 3539), "to perceive with the mind" (*nous*), "think about, ponder," is translated "consider," only in Paul's exhortation to Timothy in [2 Tim. 2:7](#). See PERCEIVE, THINK, UNDERSTAND.

5. *katanoeo* (κατανοέω, 2657), "to perceive clearly" (*kata*, intensive, and No. 4), "to understand fully, consider closely," is used of not "considering" thoroughly the beam in one's own eye, [Matt. 7:3](#) and [Luke 6:41](#) (KJV, "perceivest"); of carefully "considering" the ravens, [Luke 12:24](#); the lilies, v. 27; of Peter's full "consideration" of his vision, [Acts 11:6](#); of Abraham's careful "consideration" of his own body, and Sarah's womb, as dead, and yet accepting by faith God's promise, [Rom. 4:19](#) (RV); of "considering" fully the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, [Heb. 3:1](#); of thoughtfully "considering" one another to provoke unto love and good works, [Heb. 10:24](#). It is translated by the verbs "behold," [Acts 7:31-32](#); [Jas. 1:23-24](#); "perceive," [Luke 20:23](#); "discover," [Acts 27:39](#). See BEHOLD, DISCOVER, PERCEIVE.¶

6. *logizomai* (λογίζομαι, 3049) signifies "to take account of," [2 Cor. 10:7](#) (RV, "consider," KJV, "think"), the only place where the RV translates it "consider." See ACCOUNT.

Companion Volumes

Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament. This is arranged by book and moves through the text explaining and defining key words along the way.

Wuest's Word Studies in the Greek New Testament. Wuest died before he finished all the New Testament, but what is completed is a treasure for word studies. This is arranged in the same way as Vincent's book is arranged.

2 Corinthians

Lesson #1, Overview

First, read through the book 2 times before beginning this study.

Next, using only 2 Corinthians from your Bible try to answer the following questions. Cite Scripture references to show where you found your answers. At this point you won't be able to answer every question using only your Bible. The good news is you'll have an opportunity later in the study to complete your answers using other study tools.

1. Who wrote the book?
2. To whom is it written?
3. When was it written?
4. Where was it written?
5. What was the author's purpose in writing the book?
6. What general subjects are covered in the book?
7. What are some of the key words in the book?

8. What is the general atmosphere or tone of the book?

Now you can consult your Study Bible notes, Bible dictionaries/encyclopedias, or commentaries to complete your answers to the questions above.

9. At this point in your study of 2 Corinthians what questions do you have?
10. After previewing 2 Corinthians what do you think you are going to learn from this study in the coming months?

Eager Beaver: Read about Paul's missionary journey's beginning in Acts 13. See if you can keep track of his journeys as you read. For our purposes, remember that Corinth is in Achaia/Greece; Phillippi is in Macedonia, while Ephesus is in Asia.

Eager Beaver: As you read through the following time line of events, look up each of the verse references to gain a better understanding the background of 2 Corinthians.

1. During his second missionary journey Paul establishes the church at Corinth. Acts 18:1-7.
2. Paul receives a letter from Corinth asking questions. He writes 1 Corinthians.
3. Paul stays at Ephesus, but sends Timothy and Erastus ahead. Acts 19:21-22; 1 Corinthians 16:10-11.
4. Paul hears bad news about the church. He has a "sorrowful or painful" visit in Corinth. 2 Corinthians 2:1.
5. Paul returns to Ephesus and writes a severe letter to the Corinthians. This letter is not recorded in the Bible, but came between 1 and 2 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 2:4, 9.

6. After the riot at Ephesus, Paul goes to Troas to wait for Titus. Titus doesn't show as planned, so Paul leaves to go find him in Macedonia. 2 Corinthians 2:12, 13.
7. By going to Macedonia, Paul breaks an agreement he made to visit the Corinthians again, but he doesn't want to visit them until he hears how they received his letter. 2 Corinthians 1:15-17, 23.
8. Paul encourages the churches and collects money for the Jerusalem church. Acts 20:1, 2 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.
9. Paul and Titus finally meet. Titus shares the good news about the Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 7:5-16.
10. Paul writes 2 Corinthians. He reminds them to complete their giving to the Jerusalem church and that he will come to visit them soon. 2 Corinthians 8:10-24.
11. Paul stays in Achaia 3 months. Acts 20:3.

2 Corinthians

Lesson #2, Chapter 1:1-11

Read through Chapter 1 before beginning this study. Make sure you spend time in prayer asking the Lord for His help and insight before you dive into the lesson.

1. How does Paul describe himself in verse 1?
2. Notice in verse 1 that Paul calls himself “an apostle by the will of God.” The Greek word for apostle means “one who is sent.” Paul is sent to preach and teach about Jesus Christ because it is God’s will for him. How would knowing that it is God’s will help Paul to persevere when things are difficult?
3. Define *comfort*, *affliction*, and *sufferings*. What do you learn?
4. What character qualities do you observe about God from verse 3?
5. Explain the terms *Father of Mercies* and *God of all comfort*. What is so significant about how they are phrased?
6. List at least 5 observations about comfort from verses 3-4.

7. According to verses 3-4, when we comfort others do we have to be going through the same trouble as they are? What does that tell you about God's comfort?

8. What else do you learn about comfort from the following verses: Ps. 86:17; Is. 51:12; Matt. 5:4; 2 Cor. 7:6; Eph. 6:22; 1 Thess. 3:7-8; 4:18; 2 Thess. 2:16-17; Philem. 7?

9. What is the correlation between sufferings and comfort from verse 5?

10. What does Paul mean when he says the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance? See Rom. 6:5-7; 8:17; Phil. 3:10 and 1 Pet. 4:12-13.

11. What do you learn about Paul's attitude toward suffering from verses 6-7?

12. How does learning about the wider scope of our trials and comforts (from verses 6-7) help you when you're going through difficulty?

13. Why did Paul want the Corinthians to know about the affliction that came to him in Asia (verses 8-11)?

14. What does Paul mean *we had the sentence of death within ourselves*? What was the purpose of that trial (verse 9)?

15. What qualities about God did Paul focus on in the midst of his trials (verses 9-10)?

16. From this section in verses 3-11 we see that there is purpose in trials. Review what you have learned, then answer, "What is God's purpose for allowing trials in my life?"

17. We also see from these verses the unity of the body of Christ. How is the unity of the body to be a comfort to you in trials?

18. What are some practical ways that you can find comfort from God?

God is God; He see and hears
All our troubles, all our tears.
Soul forget not, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

Fear not death, nor Satan's thrusts,
God defends who in Him trusts;
Soul, remember, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

For this life's long night of sadness
He will give us peace and gladness.
Soul, remember, in thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

C. H. Spurgeon

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Lesson #3, Chapter 1:12-22

Read through Chapter 1 before beginning this study. Make sure you spend time in prayer asking the Lord for His help and insight before you dive into the lesson.

1. Summarize Paul's defense of himself in verses 12-22.
2. How are verses 12-14 related to the previous paragraph (verses 3-11)?
3. What is Paul's *proud confidence* as stated in verse 12?
4. Who were the recipients of their conduct (verse 12)?
5. Verse 12 also states an opposite way Paul and Timothy could have conducted themselves. What is it? See also James 3:15-16. Can you give any present-day examples of this kind of ministry?
6. Think about your conduct from day to day. Do you walk in holiness and godly sincerity? Is there a difference in your conduct toward believers and unbelievers (the world)?
7. What is the difference between Paul's proud confidence and the pride that God hates? Compare the following sets of verses:

- a. Jer. 9:23-24; Rom. 15:17; 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 7:4, 14; 8:24
- b. 1 Sam. 2:3; Prov. 8:13; 11:2; 16:18; 29:23; Mark 7:20-23; 1 Jn. 2:16
8. In conjunction with #7 look up the following verses and explain how they fit in the *boasting/not boasting* argument: Acts 24:16; Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 15:9-10.
9. After answering #7 and #8 explain how you can move from having the wrong kind of pride to having the right kind of pride that is pleasing to God.
10. We all struggle with prideful areas of our life. Pinpoint areas that you need to deal with and write down 1 or more verses from questions 7 and 8 that you want to use to help you overcome that area of pride.
- When the devil cannot stay us from a good work,
then he laboureth by all means to make us proud of it. ~ Henry Smith
11. Please summarize the contents of verses 12-14. What point does Paul want to communicate to the Corinthians?
12. According to verses 12-14, why will we be proud of each other in the day of our Lord Jesus (when He returns and we stand before Him)?

13. Verse 15 begins *“And in this confidence I intended at first to come to you...”* What confidence is Paul referring to (see verses 12-14)?

14. Paul’s intended visit to the Corinthian church is postponed. His reason for doing so isn’t immediately given, but look ahead to verse 23-2:4 to find out why. What do you learn?

15. In verses 15-19 Paul addresses for the first time in this letter one of the things his enemies were saying about him. What is it?

16. What is Paul’s response to the accusations that he was fickle (verses 17-22)?

17. It’s obvious it grieves Paul that others may see him as vacillating and not to be counted upon. What about you? Are you faithful to keep your word, to follow through on your commitments? How does your faithfulness or lack of it affect others?

18. Look again at Paul’s response to accusations about his character in verses 12-22. What attitudes characterize his response? What kinds of attitudes characterize your response when others falsely accuse you?

19. Look up the following verses to see what truths shaped Paul’s thinking: Matt. 5:10-12; Rom. 8:35-39; 2 Tim. 3:12; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 2:20-21. How will they help you the next time you find yourself in a similar situation as Paul?

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Lesson #4, Chapter 1:23-2:13

Read Chapter 1:12-22, then follow up with 1:23-2:17 before beginning this lesson.

1. Chapter 2 will be better understood if you remember where it fits in the chronological history of the Corinthians.
 - a. *Paul visited Corinth.*
 - b. *After his visit, Paul wrote his first letter to Corinth (now lost).*
 - c. *Paul then wrote a second letter to Corinth – 1 Corinthians.*
 - d. *Paul made a second visit to Corinth – a painful visit.*
 - e. *After that visit, Paul wrote a third letter to Corinth (now lost).*
 - f. *Paul wrote his fourth letter to Corinth – 2 Corinthians.*
 - g. *Then Paul made his third visit to Corinth.*
 - h. Where do the events mentioned in this chapter fit in the above sequence of events?

2. Summarize what Paul is saying in 1:23-2:4. How does this section tie in with 1:15-22?

3. What was Paul careful not to lord over them (verse 24)? What do you observe about ministry in this verse?

4. Why didn't Paul want to come see the Corinthians (verses 1-3)?

5. What was Paul's purpose in writing the sorrowful letter (verse 4)?

6. Was it easy for Paul to write that sorrowful letter? So why did he do it if it was so miserable? What does that tell you about your own responsibility to your brothers and sisters in Christ?

7. Verses 5-11 reveal the dynamics of church discipline. Review the process of church discipline and list what you learn. See also Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; 1 Tim. 5:1-2, 19-21; Titus 3:10-11.

8. What is happening or has happened to the offender (verses 5-11)?

9. Verse 9 reveals part of Paul's purpose in writing the sorrowful letter. What did he want to see? Why would disciplining a sinning brother reveal that?

10. Look up the following verses to see what else the Bible says about testing someone's obedience: Gen. 12:1 and 4; Gen. 17:13-14 and 22:1-19; Ex. 4:24-26; Deut. 8:2, 16-18; Heb. 5:8; James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 4:12.

11. What is the purpose of testing someone's obedience? How has your willingness to obey God been tested? How did you respond?

12. In verses 5-11 we see that after a sinning brother has repented they are to be restored to the body of Christ. What principles about restoration do you glean from this section? Is there anyone in your life who would benefit from you restoring them to a right relationship?

13. How do we prevent ourselves from being taken advantage of by Satan (verses 10-11)? See also Eph. 4:26-27; 6:10-17; James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9.

14. Read 2 Cor. 7:6-16 in conjunction with verses 12-13. Why did Paul have no rest in his spirit?

15. How did the Corinthians respond to the sorrowful letter (7:6-16)? Did the Corinthians respond obediently to the test as mentioned in 2:9?

16. Explain what you're to do and why when you have someone in the body of Christ who will not repent of their sin.

17. Explain what you have to do and why when you have someone who repented of their ongoing sin.

18. Take a moment to examine your life. Do you have any areas of ongoing, unrepentant sin that you need to turn away from right now?

19. Knowing that this area is a test of your obedience to God, if you know of someone who claims they are a Christian yet practices or continues in sin, what do you need to do and in what way?

There is more evil in a drop of sin than in a sea of affliction.

– Thomas Watson

When God smites us with the rod of chastisement, it is faithfulness which wields it. To acknowledge this means that we humble ourselves before Him, own that we fully deserve His correction, and instead of murmuring, thank Him for it. God never afflicts without reason.... God is not only faithful not withstanding afflictions, but faithful in sending them.

– A.W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*

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Lesson #5, Chapter 2:14-17

Read Chapter 2 and 7:6-16.

1. How do verses 14-17 relate to the preceding verses? What's the connection in Paul's thought? (Hint: It might help to remember that Paul finishes his thoughts on verses 12-13 in Ch. 7:6-16).
2. Define *aroma* [NIV, NKJV, ESV *fragrance* (Strong's #3744)]:
3. Define *fragrance* [NIV, ESV *aroma* (Strong's #2175)]:
4. Define *manifest* [ESV, NIV *spreads*, NKJV *diffuses* (Strong's #5319)]:
5. In verse 14 notice who leads us, how often, and whose triumph it is. Who does the manifesting? What kind of fragrance is it? What does the fragrance tell others about us?
6. From verse 14, what kind of God do we follow? Look up the following verses to add to your understanding: Zephaniah 3:17; Matt. 16:18; Rom. 8:37; Rev. 19:11-16.
7. How can those verses give you hope when you are facing discouraging, desperate, or even dangerous situations?

8. What do you learn about being a fragrance of Christ in verses 15-16?

9. What other things are a fragrant aroma in the Scriptures: Ex. 29:18; Ezek. 20:41; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 4:18?

10. Explain the terms *death to death* and *life to life*. What does Paul mean when he uses them?

11. Paul ends verse 16 remarking, “Who is adequate for these things?” Define *adequate* [ESV, NKJV *sufficient*; NIV *equal to* (Strong’s #2425)].

12. What “things” does the question, “who is adequate for these things?” refer to (verses 15-17)?

13. Paul rhetorically asks, “Who is adequate for these things?” What is the implied answer? Whether adequate or not, Paul had a ministry entrusted to him by God. How does he describe that ministry (verse 17)?

14. Look ahead to 3:5-6 to see how Paul answers the question, “Who is adequate for these things?” What do you learn?

15. Compare verse 17 with 1:12. What are the hallmarks of Paul’s ministry?

16. What does it mean to “peddle the word of God”? See also 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:3. Why is that such a bad thing?

17. Notice the layers of authority and accountability that Paul heaps upon himself in verse 17. What 4 ways does Paul conduct his ministry?

18. Paul truly understood his calling to preach and teach, to give his life, and to live in holiness. How does the zeal and single-mindedness of Paul’s life encourage and motivate you to live more wholly for the Lord?

19. Read verses 14-17 again. Now consider 3 things you want to remember the next time you find yourself in a difficult situation.

2 Corinthians

Lesson #6, Chapter 3:1-11

Read Chapter 3 before beginning this lesson. Take time to seek the Lord, asking Him for His help as you study His Word.

1. Trace Paul's train of thought for this paragraph (verses 1-11).
2. What thought links 2:14-17 to 3:1-11?
3. The Greek word for *commendation* here means "introduction." What is a letter of commendation/introduction and what is it used for?
4. What does Paul consider commendation enough (verses 2-3)?
5. What do you learn about being a *letter* (verses 2-3)?
6. Eager beaver: Look up Ex. 31:18; 32:15; Deut. 9:10-11; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26. What do you learn from those verses?
7. What letter of introduction would you like to carry with you? What would it say?

8. As you think about the kind of woman you'd like to be known as, what do you need to begin, continue, or stop doing so those things could be true of you?

9. Where does the assurance of the truths that Paul writes about in verses 2-3 come from? See verse 4.

10. In verses 4-5, Paul contrasts his statements about being confident with his inadequacy. What is the common denominator between confidence and adequacy?

11. What do you observe about being adequate from verses 5-6? Define *adequate* (you already did this in the previous lesson, so you can peek at your answer if you'd like).

12. What task did God make Paul adequate to do (verse 6)?

13. The world speaks a great deal about self-sufficiency and self-confidence. Even our own flesh desires to have the acclaim from saying, "I did it myself," yet the Scriptures make it very clear that if we are to be adequate as servants, we must recognize that our sufficiency comes from God. What mindset must we cultivate? See 1 Cor. 15:10; Eph. 1:19; 2:10; Phil. 2:13; Col. 1:29; 2 Pet. 1:3.

14. Note the different names Paul uses to describe the Old and New Covenants in verses 6-18.

15. Contrast the Old and New Covenants from verses 6-18.

16. Compare the glory of the Old Covenant with the glory of the New Covenant.

17. What does the Holy Spirit do for the believer here in verses 1-11?

18. From 2:14-3:11 we read about the great privilege and responsibility the ministry is for Paul. From those verses, what do you see Paul finding comfort and refuge in knowing?

19. What truths found in this passage will be a help to you when life grows burdensome?

Love is the incense that makes all our services fragrant and acceptable to God.
– Thomas Watson

It is not our holding to God, but His holding to us that preserves us.
A little boat tied fast to a rock is safe, and so are we,
when we are tied to the “rock of ages.”
– Thomas Watson

2 Corinthians

Lesson #7, Chapter 3:12-18

Read Chapter 3 again before beginning this lesson. Take time to seek the Lord, asking Him for His help as you study His Word.

1. Referring to the preceding verses, what is the hope Paul mentions in verse 12?
2. What does the hope cause him to do (verse 12)? What does he speak about?
3. Who does Paul contrast himself with and what were the circumstances (verse 13)? See also Ex. 34:29-35.
4. What is the contrast between Paul's boldness and Moses' veiling?
5. Eager Beaver: What do you learn about the glory of the Lord from these verses? See Ex. 16:10; 24:16-17; 33:17-23 (also 1 Tim. 6:16 and Is. 6:1-5); 34:29-35; 40:34-35.
6. Verses 13-16 refer to the children of Israel. What is their response to the gospel?

7. What do you observe about unbelievers from the following verses? See Rom. 3:10-12; 1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Eph. 4:17-18.

8. How can a person be saved then? See Jn. 6:37, 44, 65; Acts 16:14, 31; 17:30; 26:20; Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Thess. 2:13. Summarize what you find in these verses.

9. In verse 17, Paul includes a mini lesson about the work of the Holy Spirit. First, what does the Holy Spirit do? Second, according to the context of verses 12-16, what is Paul's purpose in doing so?

10. Define *liberty* [ESV, NIV *freedom* (Strong's #1657)].

11. What liberty does the Lord give us? See Jn. 8:31-36; Acts. 15:10; Rom. 7:6; 8:15, 21; Gal. 5:1, 13; 1 Pet. 2:16.

12. In verse 18 who does the transforming? What are we being transformed into (See also Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:10)? How does that transformation take place?

13. What promises do we have that the Lord will be faithful to change us as He said? See 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:10; 2 Pet. 1:2-4.

14. God is faithful to transform us, to not leave us as we are now. As He is faithfully working in us we can make daily choices that will speed us on our way to being made like Him. Look at 2 Pet. 1:2-11. What do you learn about the daily choices we need to make?

The will is like a garrison which holds out against God: the Spirit with sweet violence conquers, or rather changes it; making the sinner willing to have Christ upon any terms; to be ruled by Him as well as saved by Him.

– Thomas Watson

2 Corinthians

Lesson #8, Chapter 4:1-6

Read Chapter 4 before beginning this lesson. Ask the Lord for insights into His powerful Word.

1. Since verse 1 begins with “therefore,” we know that we need to search the preceding verses to find out what Paul is elaborating on. How does chapter 4:1 connect to the previous verses in chapter 3?

2. What comparison is Paul making in verse 1? What is the point of the comparison?

3. In what ways might Paul lose heart in the ministry? For examples see 2:15-16; 4:3-4, 8-10, 16.

4. What characteristics do you notice about Paul’s ministry (verses 1-5)?

5. Define *renounced* (Strong’s #550).
 - a. Define *manifest* [ESV *open statement*; NIV *setting forth plainly* (Strong’s #5321)].

 - b. Define *adulterating* [ESV *tamper with*; NKJV *handle deceitfully*; NIV *distort* (Strong’s #1389)].

6. Why doesn't Paul lose heart in the ministry? See 2:14; 3:5; 4:1, 16, 18.

7. What principle(s) can you glean from Paul to help you not lose heart in this endurance race called the Christian life?

8. Why did Paul renounce the hidden things (verse 2)?

9. Please explain what it means to not walk in craftiness, not adulterate the word of God, *and* to commend yourself to every man's conscience.

10. Two other characteristics of Paul's ministry are found in verse 5. What principles of evangelism and life/ministry can you glean from Paul's example?

11. Who is the god of this world (verses 3-4)? See Jn. 12:31; Eph. 2:2; 6:11-12; 1 Jn. 5:19.

12. What has the god of this world done to the unbelieving and for what purpose?

13. Note the contrast between Satan and God in verses 4 and 6. What does God do for the believer and for what purpose?

14. What is the significance of the quote in verse 6? See also Is. 9:2-7; 49:6 and Matt. 4:14-17. Why is it inserted there?

15. Look at verse 6. What does the light do in our hearts?

16. Every passage has a path, which is the point the writer wants to make. What is the path Paul has been leading us on from Chapter 1 to our present position here at 4:6?

17. If you didn't mention it in your answer above, please discuss the work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry and the life of a believer.

18. Verse 6 says that God has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. How has your knowledge of the glory of God grown?

We glorify God, when we are God-admirers; admire His attributes, which are the glistening beams by which the divine nature shines forth; His promises which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where the pearl of price is hid; the noble effects of His power and wisdom in making the world which is called "the work of His fingers" (Ps. 8:3). To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem Him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.

—Thomas Watson

2 Corinthians

Lesson #9, Chapter 4:7-18

Read Chapter 4 before beginning this lesson. Ask the Lord for insights into His powerful Word.

1. What is the treasure Paul is talking about in verse 7? See the preceding verses for the answer.
2. What are the earthen vessels referring to? What is the purpose of treasure in earthen vessels (verse 7)?
3. In verses 8-9 Paul states things 4 things he is and 4 things he is not. List them below.
4. What does it mean to “carry about in the body the dying of Jesus?” See verses 8-9; also Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:21-24.
5. What kind of life is Paul referring to in verses 10-11? See also Jn. 14:19; Rom. 6:8-10; 2 Cor. 13:4.
6. What is the purpose of carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus and being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake in verses 10-12?

7. Paul relates his afflictions in verse 13 to David's trials in Ps. 116:10. What kind of faith did David exhibit in the midst of his troubles and how is that similar to Paul?

8. What conclusion does Paul's faith take him to in verses 14-15?

9. How is verse 16 tied to the preceding verses?

10. Why doesn't Paul lose heart?

11. How is it being renewed (verses 17-18)? See Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:20-23; Col. 3:10.

12. Paul says his afflictions are momentary and light compared to what in verse 17? For an example of Paul's "momentary and light" afflictions see 11:23-29.

13. *Afflictions producing an eternal weight of glory.* The verb is present tense, indicative mood and middle voice. This means it is a continuous action, a certainty, and the subject (afflictions) initiates the action and participates in the results of the action! Wow! Look up the following verses to note how God uses affliction in our lives: Matt. 5:12; Rom. 8:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:6-7 and 4:13.

14. While affliction is doing its work in us, what are we to do (verse 18)? See also Rom. 8:24; 2 Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:2; Heb. 11:1.

15. Are you choosing to live a resurrected life in the midst of your trials? Are the things which are not seen (i.e., your hope of heaven, God's plan in your life, His working in you, our Lord Himself) more dear to you than the things which are seen? If not, pray that God would align your attitudes with His and saturate yourself in the Word of God—read it, listen to it, meditate on it and memorize it.

When God lays men upon their backs, then they look up to heaven. God's smiting His people is like the musician's striking upon the violin, which makes it put forth melodious sound. How much good comes to the saints by afflictions! When they are pounded they send forth their sweetest smell. Affliction is a bitter root, but it bears sweet fruit.

– Thomas Watson

2 Corinthians

Lesson #10, Chapter 5:1-10

Read Chapter 4 verses 16-18 and all of Chapter 5 before beginning this lesson.

1. What thoughts from 4:16-18 are continued into 5:1-10?
2. What terms does Paul use to describe his earthly body in verses 1-10? What terms does he use to describe his heavenly body in verses 1-10?
3. What do you learn about our earthly tent and our building from God (verses 1-10)? List what you learn.
4. What does Paul mean when he says his earthly house can be torn down in verse 1?
5. If (and when) our earthly house is torn down, what has God provided for us (verse 1)?
6. Verses 2 and 4 say that Paul groans while he is in this earthly tent. Why? See verses 1-4 and 4:16-18.
7. What does Paul want to be clothed with in verses 2 and 4?

8. Read through 4:16 to 5:4. What is the desire of Paul's heart as stated in this paragraph?

9. Do you find your desires for heaven similar to Paul's? What are some things that get in the way of our longing for heaven?

10. Verse 5 reads, "Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God." What purpose is Paul referring to? There is the purpose as seen in verses 4:16-5:4 and then there is the more encompassing purpose that Paul has been discussing since he began writing his letter to the Corinthians (hint: the word begins with an M).

11. Verse 5 is the pivotal statement of the paragraph (4:16-5:10). It explains the motivation for Paul's *therefore* and *for* statements in verses 6-10. Because God has prepared Paul for eternal life and given him the ministry, and even though Paul longs to be in Heaven and have his heavenly body, how does Paul respond in verses 6-10?

12. How is walking by faith and not by sight key to Paul's being of good courage (verses 6-8)?

13. What are some practical ways you can walk by faith so that you can be of good cheer when you are facing difficulties in life?

14. How are verses 9 and 10 connected in thought?

15. Paul says in verse 10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Who are the *we* and *all* referring to here? Remember, who is Paul writing to (i.e., what is the context)?

16. Define *recompensed* [ESV, NKJV, NIV *receive what is due* (Strong's #2865)].

17. Summarize what you learn about the judgment day for the believer from the following verses: verse 10; Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:8, 12-15; 4:5; Eph. 6:8; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jude 24; Rev. 20:11-15.

18. Judgment day for a believer is to be an encouragement of their faithfulness while on earth. It can also be a motivation for change for a believer. How can understanding "judgment day" for a believer help you live more for Christ each day?

19. We all long to hear the Lord say on that day, "Well done, good and faithful servant." What are some areas you would like to grow in or work on so that your deeds will be found faithful on that Day?

Like as sundry vessels, whereof some are bigger and some less, if they all be cast into the sea, some will receive more water and some less, and yet all shall be full and no want in any: so likewise, among the saints of God in heaven, some shall have more glory, some less, and yet all, without exception, full of glory.

– Daniel Cawdray

Nothing is more contrary to a heavenly hope than an earthly heart.

– William Gurnall

2 Corinthians

Lesson #11, Chapter 5:11-21

Reread 4:16-18 and all of Chapter 5 before beginning this lesson.

There are three strands of thought that you must keep in mind as you read this section of 2 Corinthians, and they are woven in and out of these verses.

First, there is the purpose of the book, which is to encourage the faithful; bring the dissenters to repentance; and reveal the hypocrisy of the false teachers;

second, there is the commendation issue that Paul dealt with in Chapter 3 is picked up again here;

and *finally*, the continuing theme of Paul's God-given ministry which we have seen from Chapter 1 on.

As you study then, remember to whom Paul was writing, the commendation issue, and that ministry is always on his mind.

1. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 with the above thoughts in mind. How is verse 11 tied to the previous verses?
2. What action does Paul's fear (reverence, respect, holy fear mingled with love for God) of the Lord produce (verse 11)?
3. Paul persuades men as he shares the good news with them, but what limits the extent of his persuasion (verse 11)?
4. How is Paul giving the Corinthians an opportunity to be proud of him (verses 11-13)?

5. Verse 13 is a difficult verse; however, as you ponder it take into account 2 things: 1) Paul has just said in verse 12 that he wanted to give the Corinthians a reason to be proud of him and 2) he wanted to give them an answer for those who were discrediting him. So in light of the surrounding verses, how does verse 13 make them proud of Paul and provide an answer to those who are attacking him?

6. What is Paul's train of thought in verses 11-15?

7. What are the results of being controlled (also translated constrained, compelled) by Christ's love (verses 14-15)?

8. What theology (truth about Christ) precedes Paul's response from verses 14-15?

9. How does Christ's great love compel you? Does it constrain you to live in obedience? Does it control your desires and move you to want His desires when they are not in agreement?

10. Verses 16 and 17 need to be dealt with together. It may help if you read verse 17 first and then verse 16 as you are working on this question. "According to the flesh" means the way the world regards things. What point is Paul making here?

11. Think about Paul's statement "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." What kind of implications does this hold for your walk with the Lord?

12. Define *reconcile/reconciliation* (Strong's #2644).
13. In verses 18-21 who did the reconciling and what were the results?
14. What is an ambassador? How does Paul define his role as an ambassador from verse 20?
15. This paragraph is rich with phrases that describe the result of reconciliation with God: *new creature, controlled by Christ's love, become the righteousness of God in Him*. How does your life reveal the results of reconciliation with God?
16. Write a prayer of thanks for all that God has done for you in reconciling you to Himself.

When the wheels of a clock move within, the hands on the dial will move without. When the heart of a man is sound in conversion, then the life will be fair in profession.

– William Secker

O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Vast, unmeasured, boundless free;

Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me.

Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love;

Leading onward, leading homeward, to Thy glorious rest above.

–Samuel T. Francis

2 Corinthians

Lesson #12, Chapter 6:1-7:16

Read Chapters 6 and 7 together.

1. Please summarize the essence of these 2 chapters.
2. How is Chapter 6 connected in thought to the preceding verses in Chapter 5?
3. As he has done often in this book, Paul is defending his ministry from the slandering, Word-adulterating false teachers. In this section, he urges those who have not repented of their sin to be reconciled to God and to him (Paul). In 6:1 Paul urges the Corinthians not to receive the grace of God in vain. *Vain* means “empty, the hollowness of anything, the absence of that which might be possessed.” Look up the following references to see how Paul uses the word *vain* in other places: 1 Cor. 15:10, 14, 58; Gal. 2:2; Phil. 2:16; 1 Thess. 2:1; 3:5.
4. How does Paul use *vain* here in 6:1?
5. When is the best time to repent and be reconciled to God according to verse 2? Why?
6. Paul spends the next 7 verses explaining and defending his ministry to the Corinthians, sandwiched between his appeals for their repentance and reconciliation with him. Paul worked hard in his ministry to make sure nothing would be “in vain” so that the Corinthians would have no excuse for

- reconciling with God and with Paul. What do you observe about Paul's ministry from verses 3-10?
7. In 6:11-13, what happens in a relationship without reconciliation?
 8. Chapter 6:14-18 reveals one of the reasons the Corinthians needed to be reconciled to God and to Paul. What is the issue and why is it so important?
 9. What action does Paul urge the Corinthians toward in chapter 7 verse 1 after discussing not being bound with unbelievers in verses 14-18 of chapter 6?
 10. How do the promises of 6:16-18 help you to apply the exhortation of 7:1 in your own life?
 11. Define *cleanse* [NIV *purify* (Strong's #2511)].
 - a. Define *defilement* [NKJV *filthiness*; NIV *everything that contaminates* (Strong's #3436)].
 - b. Define *perfecting* [ESV *bringing* (Strong's #2005)].

12. What are some things that defile the flesh and spirit? What are some concrete ways you can cleanse or rid yourself of them?

13. Chapter 7:2-4 is not introducing a new topic, but ties in with everything Paul has written from 5:20 on. Explain how it all fits together.

14. How does Paul encourage the Corinthians in the reconciliation/repentance process (verses 2-4)?

15. Paul writes 7:5-16 to illustrate his joy in his affliction. What did the Corinthians do that gave Paul such joy?

16. What are the characteristics of the sorrow that leads to repentance and the characteristics of the sorrow that is not repentant (verses 5-16)?

17. How would knowing these characteristics of godly sorrow help you in dealing with someone (or even yourself!) who says they have repented of some sin? What do you do if their “sorrow” doesn’t match the characteristics of godly sorrow listed here? (Hint: begin at 5:20 and list the process Paul takes the Corinthians through).

18. Please recognize that anytime you sin, the message of this study is for you. Just to make sure you’ve “got it” please answer the following questions based on 5:20-7:16.

2 Corinthians

Lesson #13, Chapter 8:1-9:15

Read Chapters 8 and 9. Take some time to ask the Lord for His help as you study His Word.

1. What does Paul want the Corinthians to know (8:1)?
2. Describe the churches of Macedonia from 8:1-5.
3. Why didn't Paul expect the churches of Macedonia to give (8:1-5)?
4. How does giving yourself first to the Lord make you a better giver?
5. What had the Corinthians started that they needed to finish? See 8:6 and following; see also 9:1-5.
6. Why is giving proof of the sincerity of our love (8:8, 24)?
7. Christ is shown as an example of giving. What is said about Christ that would help the believers give (8:9)?

8. What is the principle of equality that Paul discusses in 8:11-15?

9. What safeguards for financial accountability does Paul submit himself to in 8:16-22? Why is that so necessary in the ministry?

10. Nothing humbles us more than when we take an account of ourselves in the areas of prayer and giving. Most people feel that they don't do enough of either. What keeps you from giving generously? What are some ways you can cultivate a generous spirit?

11. In Chapters 8 and 9, specifically 9:1-5, note Paul's diplomatic skills as he brings up this matter of the Corinthians completing their giving. How does he encourage, yet still deal with the issue at hand? What principles can you glean from his example of discreet diplomacy?

12. Why is it important to be prepared to give (9:5-15)?

13. Explain how one might give grudgingly or under compulsion (9:7).

14. What is the personal result of liberal giving? See 9:10, 11.

15. What are the results of the Corinthians' giving in verses 12-15?

16. Why are you to give to the body of Christ? What are some specific ways you can give to the saints?

17. Think of someone you consider generous. Write down the ways they have ministered to you and to others. What do you learn from their example?

18. Throughout this study we have seen that doctrine precedes practice. How does what you know of God and Christ's example move you toward generosity?

I wish the whole church of Christ would realize that her greatest victories have usually been accomplished by those who did not seem, from the human standpoint, competent for the task.
– Charles Spurgeon

When the world calls us fanatics we are nearing the point of ardour which is our Lord's due.
– Spurgeon

2 Corinthians

Lesson #14, Chapter 10:1-18

Read Chapter 10 in preparation for this lesson.

1. Who is Paul's targeted audience for this chapter?

2. Who is Paul comparing or defending himself against in this chapter?

3. What are Paul's detractors saying about him?

4. How does Paul defend himself against their false accusations?

5. Why does Paul prize meekness so much (verse 1)?

6. Define *meekness* (Strong's #4240).
 - a. Define *gentleness* (Strong's #1932).

7. What does Paul tell the Corinthians he hopes to be or not be when he comes (verse 2)?

8. When does Paul think it necessary to be bold? Why (verses 2-4)?

9. How is Paul bold toward them when absent, i.e. how is his boldness manifested? See verses 9 and 10.

10. What's the distinction that Paul makes in verses 2 and 3 between walking *in* the flesh versus walking *according* to the flesh?
 - a. To learn more about what Paul means when he talks about walking "in the flesh" look up Phil. 1:22, 24; Col. 1:24; 1 Tim. 3:16. Summarize what you learn.

 - b. To learn more about what Paul means when he talks about walking "according to the flesh" look up Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 2:3.

11. What kind of war will Paul wage according to verses 3-6? Where is the battle fought? How is it fought?

12. What weapons were used to battle fortresses of ancient times? How successful were they?

13. What weapons of warfare do we have according to Eph. 6:10-20? What does Paul say about the effectiveness of our weapons from 10:4 and Eph. 6?

14. We are all subject at times to marauding thoughts that lay siege to our minds. What should we do? How do you take every thought captive that is disobedient to Christ? See also Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:6-8; Col. 2:6-8; 3:1-4.

15. Verses 8 and 9 give us the purpose of apostolic authority. What is it?

16. There are those who have thought that verse 10 refers to Paul's looks, but the best interpretation is that the verse is not referring to his appearance, but of his deportment—how he acted while among them. If we take into account verse 11, that there is no disparity between the "Paul of his letters" and the "Paul in person" then we learn something quite significant about Paul. What do you learn (see also 10:1)?

17. How does Paul measure himself? How do the false teachers measure themselves according to verses 12-16? What is the problem of comparing yourself with yourself?

18. What does Paul boast about in verses 12-16?

19. What was Paul's ministry goal in verse 16? See also Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 2:1-5; Eph. 6:19.

20. Paul uses the word *boast* in Chapter 10 as a way to defend his ministry from the accusations of the false teachers. Now in verses 17 and 18 he reminds his readers of the proper way to boast. What do you learn? See also Rom. 15:17-18 and Acts 14:27.

21. How would your conversation and daily life change if you determined, as Paul did, to speak only of what Christ accomplished through you?

22. What lessons from Paul did you learn from this study that you want to apply in your life?

The great Master Gardener, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a wonderful providence, with His own hand, planted me here, where by His grace, in this part of His vineyard, I grow; and here I will abide till the great Master of the vineyard think fit to transplant me.
— Samuel Rutherford

2 Corinthians

Lesson #15, Chapter 11:1-33

Read Chapter 11 and as you do ask the Lord for His help in studying His Word.

1. Who is Paul's target audience in this chapter?
2. Summarize the contents of 2 Corinthians 10 to remind yourself of Paul's train of thought as it leads into this chapter.
3. Why does Paul decide to engage in "foolishness" in this chapter (verses 2-3)?
4. From verses 3-4, make 5 or more observations about being led astray.
5. Chapter 11 contains many references to the accusations and rumors Paul battles in this letter. List 3 or more accusations/rumors from Chapter 11.
6. One of the accusations against Paul was that he didn't need monetary support because he "robbed" other churches. What's the truth in the matter? Explain why Paul does what he does after examining Acts 18:3; 20:33-35; 1 Cor. 9:3-15; 2 Cor. 12:13-18; and 2 Thess. 3:7-8.
7. Why won't Paul stop his boasting or foolishness (verses 11-12)?

8. In verses 12-22, what do you learn about the false apostles?

9. Looking only at Paul's letters, what else do you learn about the method, motive, and resulting mayhem of the false teachers? See Rom. 16:18; 2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2; Gal. 1:7; 2:4; 4:17; 6:12; Eph. 4:14; Phil. 1:15-17; Col. 2:4, 8; 1 Tim. 1:4-7; 4:1-3; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:17-19; 3:5-9; 4:3, 4.

10. In verses 16-21, what does Paul reprove the Corinthians for doing?

11. How do verses 23-29 prove that Paul's message is true and that he is sincere in his ministry to the Corinthians?

12. What else do you learn about Paul's ministry as a servant of Christ from these verses? See 1 Cor. 3:5; 4:1; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:6.

13. How do Paul's actions and attitudes (from Questions 11 and 12) contrast with the false teachers' actions and attitudes (from Questions 8 and 9)?

14. What internal pressure did Paul face as a servant of Christ according to verses 28-29?

15. How did Paul exhibit his care and concern for the Corinthians? See 2 Cor. 2:4-5; 7:5-6; and 13:9?

16. Paul ends this chapter by revealing what he considered to be his weakest moment. What happened? See verses 32-33 and Acts 9:1-25. Why do you think Paul considered that to such a time of weakness?

17. As you think back over this chapter, what is it that Paul wants the Corinthians to understand?

18. How can the truths from this chapter protect you from false teachers who will come into the church?

19. As you think about the weak moment(s) in your life, consider your response to them. Have you chosen to “boast” about them like Paul did to reveal God’s work in you? How has God taken your weak moments and brought glory to Himself?

2 Corinthians

Lesson #16, Chapter 12:1-21

Prepare your heart for this lesson through prayer and reading chapters 11 and 12.

1. Who is Paul addressing in Chapter 12?
2. What is Paul's purpose in writing as he does in Chapters 11 and 12? See 11:12 and 12:19.
3. What does Paul boast about in Chapter 11?
4. After reviewing Chapter 11, please answer why Paul says in 12:1 that boasting is necessary, though not profitable.
5. In 12:1-10 Paul continues with his boasting. What does he boast about in these verses?
6. Who is the man Paul is talking about in verses 2-4? For a hint, keep reading to verses 7-9.
7. What happened to that man in verses 2-4?

8. What is the purpose of Paul's thorn in the flesh according to verse 7?

9. The phrase "messenger of Satan" has had many interpretations assigned to it. Yet we can discover what this phrase means when we examine every occurrence of the word *messenger* (*angelos*), which appears 186 times in the New Testament. The basic meaning is "a messenger, envoy, one who is sent, an angel, a messenger from God." In every occurrence, it is used of a messenger, whether angelic or human. Thinking back over the chapters we've studied, especially Chapters 10-13, who might fit the description of someone angelic or human who might be used to afflict Paul?

10. Initially, how did Paul deal with his thorn in the flesh (12:8)?

11. What is God's response to Paul's petition (12:9)?

12. How does Paul respond to God's answer (12:9-10)?

13. How do you respond in times of weakness, distress, persecution, and difficulty?

14. Not only is Paul content, but he is also *well* content with weakness. Why? How can you grow to be well content in your weaknesses and difficulties?

15. How does knowing weakness' purpose help you to be content in the midst of it according to verses 9-10?

16. In Chapters 11 and 12 Paul defends himself about not being a burden to the Corinthian church (see 11:7-9 and 12:13-18). What are the issues surrounding this controversy?

17. In not being a financial burden to the church Paul was exercising a freedom he did not need to make. What do you learn from 1 Cor. 9:3-18?

18. Why does Paul choose the path that he does (see again 11:7-9 and 12:13-18)? For further insight read 2 Thess. 3:7-11, what other reason is given there?

19. What do you learn about Titus in verse 18?

20. Paul concludes his boasting section in 12:19-21. How has his boasting been for the Corinthians' up-building?

21. What does Paul fear about his third visit to Corinth (12:20-21)?

22. What is Paul's great motivation and longing as manifested in this chapter? How does Paul's example encourage and motivate you to build up others in the faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ?

A contented Christian is like the chamomile, the more it is trodden, the more it grows.

A contented spirit is a cheerful spirit. Contentment is something more than patience; for patience denotes only submission, contentment denotes cheerfulness.

A gracious heart spies mercy in every condition, therefore hath his heart screwed up to thankfulness; others will bless God for prosperity, he blesseth Him for affliction.

– Thomas Watson

2 Corinthians

Lesson #17, Chapter 13:1-14

Read Chapter 12:11-12 and Chapter 13 as you prepare for this last lesson from 2 Corinthians. Ask the Lord to use His Word to deeply work on your soul.

1. As Paul prepares for his third visit to Corinth, what is he afraid he will discover when he arrives there? See 12:20-21. Why?
2. What is his plan if he arrives and finds that those areas have not been dealt with? See 10:6; 13:1-3.
3. What is Paul referring to when he quotes Deut. 19:15? Look up that verse as well as Matt. 18:16. What does Paul intend to do when he comes to Corinth?
4. Explain the importance of having 2 or more witnesses to a reported wrongdoing.
5. Explain Paul's reasoning in verses 2-4. What does all the talk about weakness and power have to do with dealing with sin in the church?
6. Because Paul is ready to deal with disobedience in the church what does Paul urge the people to do in verse 5?

7. Remember, this urging to examine their lives comes in the middle of Paul telling the church that when he comes he will discipline those who have not repented of their sin, like the sins mentioned in 12:20-21. What is the purpose of the examination?

8. What does Paul have to say about his own test according to verse 6?

9. Verses 7-9 reveal Paul's great desire to see his beloved Corinthians doing what is right. What does he tell them?

10. Paul says in verse 9 that he prays that the Corinthians would be made complete. Look up the following verses to explain what he means by that: verse 11; Luke 6:40; Eph. 4:12-13; 2 Tim. 3:17.

11. Verse 10 reveals once again the care Paul shows to the Corinthians. What do you learn?

12. Do a quick review of each chapter of this book. Write down one thing that you learned or were impacted by from each chapter.

13. Write down 1-3 lessons, principles, or exhortations from 2 Corinthians that you want to keep in the forefront of your mind.

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.*