

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF SECOND CORINTHIANS

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INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul (1:1; 10:1)

DATE: AD 56, 57

PURPOSE: It is written to defend the ministry in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles; to make defense of his apostolic office and authority; to stir up the Corinthians in the exhortation they carry out their intention and promise to make up a contribution for the poor in Jerusalem.

CONTENT AND CHARACTER:

1. Autobiographical in nature which provides a glimpse into Paul's inner feelings about himself.
2. Very personal. The most personal letter in the canon. Paul dwells upon his own ministry and opens his heart, discloses his motives, his spiritual passion and his tender love for the church.
3. Consists of explanations, defense, protest, appeal, reproach and warnings.
4. Characterized by subtle irony.
5. Marked by boundless variety.
6. Contents shift rapidly.
7. A constant mixing of metaphors.
8. The least systematic of Paul's writings.
9. Clearly shows how much there was in the arduous life of the apostle (11:23-28).
10. Contains very important doctrinal teachings.
11. One of the most evangelistic books in the Bible.
12. "Written with a quill dipped in tears from an anguish of heart."
13. More human pathos than any of Paul's epistles.
14. "The impassioned self-defense of a wounded spirit to erring and ungrateful children."

BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE BOOK:

I. PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF HIS MINISTRY, (1-5) - Explanation: Paul, Minister

1. As to the motive (1,2)
2. As to the message (3-5)

II. PAUL'S APPEAL TO HIS CONVERTS, (6-9) - Exhortation: Paul, Father

1. Things spiritual (6,7)
2. Things material (8,9)

III. PAUL'S ANSWER TO HIS CRITICS, (10-13) - Vindication: Paul, Apostle

1. Critics and Pretensions
2. Apostle and Credentials

QUESTION OVER THE BOOK

1. Why are we comforted in tribulations?
2. What should be our attitude toward those who repent?
3. In what way are we "epistles" of Christ today?
4. What is the "treasure in earthen vessels?"
5. In chapter 5, Paul gives many reasons for a person to desire to be a child of God. What are some of them?
6. Describe in your own words some things the apostles had to face as they fulfilled their ministry.
7. What is repentance?
8. Why did God bestow blessings on the churches of Macedonia?
9. What are some guidelines for our giving?
10. Chapter 10 gives one of the charges brought against Paul. What is that charge? How does Paul answer it?
11. "Satan himself is transformed into an _____."
12. What were Paul's credentials of his apostleship?

"The style of the letter in its naturalness & vividness, as well as the character of its details, give strong proof of Paul's being its author."

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INTRODUCTION

175 A.D.

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul (1:1; 10:1) both external + internal evidence (Polycarp, Theophrastus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria)

DATE: AD 56, 57 (from Macedonia) Philippi or Thessalonica

PURPOSE: It is written to defend the ministry in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles; to make defense of his apostolic office and authority; to stir up the Corinthians in the exhortation they carry out their intention and promise to make up a contribution for the poor in Jerusalem.

Paul was attacked along three lines: his person, his teaching, and his character

CONTENT AND CHARACTER:

171 words which do not occur in any other of Paul's letters, and of these 91 do not occur again in the NT.

1. Autobiographical in nature which provides a glimpse into Paul's inner feelings about himself.
2. Very personal. The most personal letter in the canon. Paul dwells upon his own ministry and opens his heart, discloses his motives, his spiritual passion and his tender love for the church.
*chap 1-9 are jubilant and conciliatory
chap 10-13 are sad and severe*
3. Consists of explanations, defense, protest, appeal, reproach and warnings.
4. Characterized by subtle irony.
5. Marked by boundless variety.
6. Contents shift rapidly.
7. A constant mixing of metaphors.
8. The least systematic of Paul's writings.
9. Clearly shows how much there was in the arduous life of the apostle (11:23-28).
10. Contains very important doctrinal teachings.
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13. More human pathos than any of Paul's epistles.
14. "The impassioned self-defense of a wounded spirit to erring and ungrateful children."

*one key word is "comfort"
(encouragement)
used 29X*

Key word: "VINDICATION"

Key thought: Soteriological

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Introductory Notes to 2 Corinthians

I. Background

Review the introduction to 1 Corinthians for the background of the founding of the Corinthian church.

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus, where he had been ministering for three years. He sent this letter to the church by Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17), but problems in the church only grew worse. Perhaps it was young Timothy's timidity that made the believers at Corinth disobey Paul's words. At any rate, Paul then sent Titus to Corinth to make sure the church obeyed the apostolic orders Paul had given them (2 Cor. 7:13-15).

Meanwhile, the riot discussed in Acts 19:23-41 forced Paul to leave Ephesus. Paul had promised the Corinthians that he would visit them (1 Cor. 16:3-7), but circumstances were such that he was delayed along the way. He had hoped to meet Titus at Troas (2 Cor. 2:12-13), but this plan failed. As you read 2 Cor. 1-2, you feel the burden and heartache of Paul, suffering both physically and emotionally. While at Troas, Paul did some preaching, then made his way to Macedonia. He and Titus finally met, probably at Philippi (2 Cor. 7:5-6), and Titus gave Paul the good news that the majority at Corinth were behind him and would obey his word. It was this joy that prompted him to write this second letter to the Corinthians.

II. Purposes

Paul had several purposes in mind when he wrote this letter:

(1) To commend the church for disciplining the offender (1 Cor. 5), and to encourage them to forgive and receive him (2 Cor. 2:6-11).

(2) To explain why he had apparently “changed his plans” and not visited them as he had promised (1 Cor. 16:3-7, 2 Cor. 1:15-22).

(3) To answer those in the church who were questioning his apostolic authority (2 Cor. 10-12).

(4) To answer those who accused him of wrong motives (2 Cor. 4:1-2).

(5) To encourage the church to share in the offering for the Jerusalem saints (2 Cor. 8-9).

(6) To prepare them for his planned visit (2 Cor. 13).

This letter is in direct contrast to the tone of 1 Corinthians, for it is intensely personal and filled with the deep emotions of the dedicated apostle. If 1 Corinthians “takes the roof off” the church at Corinth and lets us look in, then 2 Corinthians “opens the heart” of Paul and lets us see his love and concern for the work of the Lord. In the first letter, Paul is the instructor, answering questions and setting matters right; in this second letter he is the loving pastor, the minister of Christ, pouring out his life that his spiritual children might be perfected in the faith.

No letter in the NT reveals the true character of the Christian ministry as does this one. No letter says so much about Christian giving, suffering, or spiritual triumph.

Though some had repented, others were attending pagan temples, some were grossly carnal, some were unscrupulous haters of Paul.

2 Cor 1:1

→ The very heart of the letter

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and → a declaration of his apostleship

Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, - a very strange place to find a church! (immorality; license; paganism) together with all the saints throughout Achaia: (modern Greece)

2 Cor 1:2

→ found at the beginning of all of Paul's writings

→ Salvation comes by grace, and the result of this is peace.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 1:3

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,

(9x=3-7) *Παρακλησις = "called to one's side to give help."*
First time as described in NT

Two Reasons For Thanksgiving:

1. Divine Comfort (3-7)

2. Divine Deliverance (8-11)

2 Cor 1:4

who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

2 Cor 1:5

For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

2 Cor 1:6

If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.

2 Cor 1:7

And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

2 Cor 1:8

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life.

2 Cor 1:9

Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

2 Cor 1:10

He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

2 Cor 1:11

as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

2 Cor 1:12

Based on what God HAS DONE THROUGH HIM - not in his own strength

Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but according to God's grace.

Beginning of
Paul's Defense

→ WITH INTEGRITY

2 Cor 1:13

For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that,

- "YOU DON'T HAVE TO READ
BETWEEN THE LINES"

2 Cor 1:14

as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus.

2 Cor 1:15

Because I was confident of this, I planned to visit you first so that you might benefit twice.

2 Cor 1:16

I planned to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea.

2 Cor 1:17

When I planned this, did I do it lightly? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say, "Yes, yes" and "No, no"?

charge that he said "Yes" and "No" at once, i.e.,
Yes changed to no arbitrarily at the
slightest whim

2 Cor 1:18

But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No."

Three-fold argument by Paul --

God is faithful

His word's to the Corinthians was true

Based on his preaching
on God's promises
the evidence of God's approval on his
ministry

2 Cor 1:19

For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes."

2 Cor 1:20

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

2 Cor 1:21

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us,

2 Cor 1:22

set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2 Cor 1:23

I call God as my witness that it was in order to spare you why Paul hadn't returned that I did not return to Corinth.

2 Cor 1:24

Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

"THE COMPASSIONATE HEART"

2 Cor 2:1

So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you.

2 Cor 2:2

For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved?

2 Cor 2:3

I wrote as I did so that when I came I should not be distressed by those who ought to make me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy.

2 Cor 2:4

For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

2 Cor 2:5

If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent--not to put it too severely.

2 Cor 2:6

The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him.

2 Cor 2:7

Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

2 Cor 2:8

I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

2 Cor 2:9

The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything.

2 Cor 2:10

If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven--if there was anything to forgive--I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,

The EVIDENCES OF PAUL'S LOVE (1-11)

1. Love puts OTHERS FIRST (1-4)

Love always considers the feelings of others

Love seeks to put their good ahead of everything else

2. Love forgives and encourages (7-11)

for his own sake (7,8)

for the Lord's sake (9,10)

for the church's sake (11)

"A CONQUERING FAITH" (12-17)

Paul had a conquering faith

2 Cor 2:11

in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2 Cor 2:12

Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me,

2 Cor 2:13

I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia.

2 Cor 2:14

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

Paul was sure God was in control,
leading him (14a)

Paul was sure God was leading him,
in triumph (14b)

Paul was sure God was using him as
He was leading him. (14c - 17)

2 Cor 2:15

For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

2 Cor 2:16

To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

2 Cor 2:17

Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.

Conclusion:

We don't have to fail!

Circumstances may discourage us -

People may oppose and misunderstand us -

But, we have in Christ the spiritual resources
to win!, i.e.,

a clear conscience

a compassionate heart

a conquering faith!

Consider Romans 8:31-37

"FROM GLORY TO GLORY"

contrasts and proving the superiority of the new covenant

2 Cor 3:1

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you?

2 Cor 3:2

You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. *The change in their character is the only commendation needed*

2 Cor 3:3

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. *Every man is an open letter*

2 Cor 3:4

Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. *"The greatest handicap the church has is the unsatisfactory lives of professed Christians" (DICK SHEPARD)*

2 Cor 3:5

Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. *never - "see what I have done!"*

2 Cor 3:6

He has made us competent as ministers of a new - not "new", but new in point of time covenant--not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor 3:7

Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was,

2 Cor 3:8

will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?

2 Cor 3:9

If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

2 Cor 3:10

For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory.

Contrasts of covenants (4-6)
Contrasts of ministrations (7-11)
Contrasts of courage (12-18)

I. (1-3)
Tables of Stone - Human Hearts

(The test of a ministry is changed lives - not press releases or statistics)

II. (4-6)
Death - Life

III. (7-11)
Fading Glory - Increasing Glory

1. Spiritual life \neq death (7,8)
2. The Old Law cannot --
 - (1) The lost sinner - Ga 2:16
 - (2) Give righteousness - Ga 2:13
 - (3) Give The Holy Spirit Ga 3:2
 - (4) Give an inheritance Ga 3:18
 - (5) Give life Ga 3:21
 - (6) Give freedom 4:8-10

IV. The New means Righteousness and not condemnation (9,10)

V. The New is Permanent, and not temporary (11)

VI. Concealment - Openness (12-18)

1. Historical (12,13)
2. National (14-17)
3. Personal (18)

BUT - "Kairos" - not only new in point of time, but also new in quality. A fresh element into a situation quite different from the old.

a relationship of love between a father & son. A changed heart brought power!

2 Cor 3:11

And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

2 Cor 3:12

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.

2 Cor 3:13

We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away.

2 Cor 3:14

But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

→ veiled BY prejudice
wishful thinking
fragmentary thinking
disobedience
unteachable spirit

2 Cor 3:15

Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.

2 Cor 3:16

But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

2 Cor 3:17

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Cor 3:18

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

The radiance of mature Christian living!
1 Jo 3:1,2 2 Pe 3:18

conclusion: when your ministry involves the glory of God - you cannot quit!

I. "BEHOLDING"

means - written word

manner - "with unveiled face"

complete readiness to seek, hear, understand
(unconfessed, unremoved, unforgiven sins dim
our vision and disqualifies us - Ps 24:3,4)

II. "BEING TRANSFORMED" - reflect the light of God's glory

Bear fruits of the Spirit

Pl 2:13

attitudes, words, actions and expressions
reveal our soul

GRADUAL - "ever increasing glory"
takes time and patience

COURAGE FOR THE CONFLICT
(4:1-5:8)

Paul did not quit! "why?" - Ans., He knew what he had in Christ;
You and I can do the same thing!

The Power of the ministry
The Suffering of the ministry
The Hope of the ministry
The Motivation of the ministry

2 Cor 4:1

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, "KIND OF"
we do not lose heart.

2 Cor 4:2

Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we
do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. → The Judaizers
On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we (see below)
commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight
of God.

WE HAVE A --

1. Glorious ministry (1-6)
2. Valuable treasure (7-12)
3. A confident faith (13-18)
4. A future hope (5:1-8)

WE HAVE A -

valuable treasure (7-12)
(the treasure is within
the vessel)

WE HAVE A --

confident faith (13-18)

2 Cor 4:3

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are
perishing.

2 Cor 4:4

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so
that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of
Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Cor 4:5

For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord,
and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

"The true test is not stars -
but scars!"

2 Cor 4:6

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made
his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the
knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

2 Cor 4:7

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this
all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

Paradoxes:

earthen vessels → Power of God
dying of Jesus → Life of Jesus
death working → life working

The Ministry -

1. The way you look at your work helps
to determine how you fulfill it, i.e.,
"burden vs privilege"
"punishment vs reward"



Paul's Positive ATTITUDE KEPT HIM
FROM BEING A quitter(s) - work not in vain
A deceiver (2:4) - open/honest
A self-promoter (5:6)
He had no "fan club!"

2 Cor 4:8

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed;
perplexed, but not in despair;

"not hemmed in"

2 Cor 4:9

persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not
destroyed. (never at hope's end) - "not knocked out"

(By God)

2 Cor 4:10

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so
that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

The "We Have's" -

1. This ministry (1)
2. This treasury (7)
3. This same spirit of faith (13)
4. A building from God (5:1)

"Judaizers"

1. Instead of winning souls, they stole Paul's converts
2. Instead of sacrificing, they made the people sacrifice for them - 2 Cor 11:20
3. No treasure to share

2 Cor 4:11

For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

2 Cor 4:12

So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

2 Cor 4:13

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak,
"attitude" or "outlook" of faith

2 Cor 4:14

because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

2 Cor 4:15

All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

2 Cor 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

2 Cor 4:17

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Cor 4:18

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

VERSE 12:

1. We focus on the treasure and not the vessel
2. We focus on the Master and not the servant

↓

Trials glorify Christ and God -
as we serve Christ, death works
in us,

But life works in those to whom
we minister

→ evangelism is based on
our faith in God

The Assurances of Paul's Faith:

1. Ultimate victory (14)
2. God would be glorified (15)
3. Trials were working for him, not against him (16, 17)
4. The invisible world was real (18)

Present Trials vs. Future Glory

"The right perspective of Suffering"

1. light afflictions - weight of glory
2. momentary - eternal
3. working against us - working for us

Paul's Confidence of Heaven (1-8)
Concern To Please Christ (9-13)
Constraint of Love (14-17)

"THE FUTURE HOPE"

what we believe, and how we believe, go
hand in hand, i.e., duty and doctrine.

2 Cor 5:1

(DISSOLVED)

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed,
we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven,
not built by human hands.

2 Cor 5:2

"Putting on" - Ga 3:27
Co 3:10

Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our
heavenly dwelling,

2 Cor 5:3

because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.

2 Cor 5:4

For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened,
because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed - WITH IMMORTALITY
with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be
swallowed up by life.

2 Cor 5:5

Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and
has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to
come.

2 Cor 5:6

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as
we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.

2 Cor 5:7

We live by faith, not by sight.

Parenthetical statement

confidence and conviction - "walking by faith"
(of the scripture) (regarding their
truthfulness)

2 Cor 5:8

We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from
the body and at home with the Lord.

2 Cor 5:9

"THE LIFE AIM OF PAUL"

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at
home in the body or away from it.

Ro 12^{1,2} 14¹⁸ Ep 5¹⁰
Pl 4¹⁸ Co 3²⁰ Hb 13^{20,21}

2 Cor 5:10

"shown as we are"
"show up; stand"

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,
that each one may receive what is due him for the things
done while in the body, whether good or bad.

"βημα" = A place of revelation
reckoning
reward
recognition
rejoicing

Paul's Testimony

1. "We Know" - How? (1)
2. "We Groan" - Why? (2-5)
3. "We are confident" - How? (6-8)

Motivation for ministry

1. What is our ministry? (To persuade sinners to reconciliation)
2. What is the right motive? (There are three acceptable motives for ministry)

Paul explains his motives
by three powerful
statements!

We have a joyful hope
(1-8)

I. THE FEAR OF THE LORD (9-13)

1. often lacking
2. "We Labor" - holy ambition, (9)
(Ga 1:10; Ro 15:20; 1 Th 4:11)
3. "Judgment" (10) - meet Him with
confidence, and not shame
1 Jo 2:28
4. "We persuade men" (11-13)
1 Pe 4:18

How can we prepare for the judgment?

- (1) Maintain clear conscience (11)
- (2) Not depend on praise of men (12)
- (3) Ignore criticisms of men (13)

(NEXT PAGE, CONT'D)

II. THE LOVE OF CHRIST (14-17)

1. How can the emotions of fear and love dwell in the same heart?
2. cf Ps 2:11 - Parents and children
3. Christ loved us when we were:
 - (1) Unlovely
 - (2) ungodly
 - (3) sinners
 - (4) enemies
 } Ro 5:6-10
4. When Christ died, He proved His Love
 - for the church, Ep 5:25
 - for the world, Jo 3:16
 - for individuals, Ga 2:20
5. The reason Christ died. He died that we might:
 - (1) Die - (14) - Ro 6:1-7
 - (2) Live - (15-17)
 - A. Through Him - 1Jo 4:9
 - B. For Him - 2Co 5:15
 - C. With Him - 1Th 5:10
 - (3) Share in the new creation - (16,17)

Reverence fear - Ep 4³⁰ Ps 19¹³

2 Cor 5:11

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

2 Cor 5:12

We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 2 Co 3:1

2 Cor 5:13

Mk 9:31; Ac 26:24

If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.

2 Cor 5:14

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

AS SEEN IN
HIS SACRIFICIAL DEATH
1 Jo 4:19

2 Cor 5:15

And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 Cor 5:16

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

as a mere human being

- no longer measure men by
human standards - race, natural
gifts, abilities, social standing,
possessions

2 Cor 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Prejudices, habits, attitudes, interests,
goals

no longer look at life like
we used to

a new view of Christ
of people around us

Gal 3:28

2 Cor 5:18

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

2 Cor 5:19

that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

A bank term

III. THE Commission of Christ (18-21)

1. Reconciliation
2. Imputation - put to His account at the cross, i.e., our sins were imputed, or put, to His account
3. Reconciliation is based on Imputation - (21)
Ps 32:1,2; Ro 4:1-8

"HOW DOES ALL OF THIS FIT TOGETHER?"

1. We are ambassadors for Christ with a message
2. The world is in rebellion against God
3. What a great privilege to be heaven's Ambassadors to the rebellious sinners of this world!

2 Cor 5:20

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf. Be reconciled to God.

2 Cor 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Ministry is not easy! If we are to succeed, we must be motivated by the

1. fear of the Lord;
2. Love of Christ;
3. Commission He has given us.

HEART TO HEART!
(The assurance of Paul's love for
the Corinthian church)

chapters 6, 7 are the heart-felt conclusion by
Paul.

2 Cor 6:1

As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's
grace in vain.

Paul assures them of his love with three loving
Appeals -

1. An Appeal for appreciation (1-10)
2. An Appeal for separation (6:11-7:1)
3. An Appeal for reconciliation (7:2-16)

2 Cor 6:2

For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the
day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of
God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

ISAIAH 49:8 - There is no
guarantee for other opportunities
ISAIAH 55:6

2 Cor 6:3

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our
ministry will not be discredited. - one of the greatest obstacles of
the gospel.

2 Cor 6:4

Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every
way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and
distresses; ^{Patience} ^{Trials under} ^{every day}
(quality of) ^{pressure} ^{hardships}

Paul is saying these things
to assure them of his
love for them.

I. AN APPEAL FOR APPRECIATION (1-10)

Paul reminds them of his ministry
at Corinth

1. Paul, the evangelist - 1, 2
2. Paul, the example, 3-10

(Next Page, continued)

2 Cor 6:5

in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless
nights and hunger; - going w/o food

work resulting in weariness

2 Cor 6:6

in purity, understanding, ^{morally clean} ^{of the gospel} ^{patient with}
patience and kindness; in the Holy
Spirit and in sincere love;

"THE
SPIRITUAL
GRACES"

2 Cor 6:7

in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of
righteousness in the right hand and in the left;

2 Cor 6:8

through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report;
genuine, yet regarded as impostors;

A LIST OF PARADOXES

2 Cor 6:9

known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on;
beaten, and yet not killed;

what a price to pay!
They really didn't appreciate
Paul!

2 Cor 6:10

sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich;
having nothing, and yet possessing everything. ^{caused by the problems} ^{by the brethren} ^{when they bore fruit} ^{complete destitution of a beggar}
in Christ
by outward appearance

2 Cor 6:11

We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened
wide our hearts to you. ^{lays bare his heart} ^{cf v. 13}

In all of this, Paul was
refuting the malicious
accusations of the Judaizers!

II. AN APPEAL FOR SEPARATION (6:11-7:1)

Open your hearts to me!

Three arguments presented to convince them to separate themselves:

1. The Believer's Nature (14-16)
2. The Scripture's Command (17)
3. The Promises of God's blessings (6:17-7:1)

2 Cor 6:12

We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us.

"Why?" - they had divided hearts!

2 Cor 6:13

As a fair exchange--I speak as to my children--open wide your hearts also.

Some today have turned separation into isolation and their fellowship is too narrow.

The opposite is also true.

2 Cor 6:14 Deuteronomy 22:10

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

The ox was "clean"
The donkey not "clean"
They have two opposite natures, and do not work well together.

"Any union which places the Christian at a disadvantage in Christ's service should be avoided."

2 Cor 6:15

What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

only time in NT
16x in OT
"Bel" = not; "yal" = useful
(infidel) "useless"

The very nature demands that the Christian be separated from that which is unholy.

2 Cor 6:16

What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."

2 Cor 6:17

A definite act

Devoted to a special purpose

"Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the

Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." ISAIAH 52:11; EZEKIEL 20:34, 41

2 Cor 6:18

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

I. THE NATURE OF THE BELIEVER (14-16)

Christians possess a divine nature 2 Pe 1:3, 4

II. THE COMMAND OF SCRIPTURE (17)

We must not associate with that which will defile us, or lead us into disobedience. We must have doctrinal as well as personal purity

III. THE PROMISE OF GOD'S BLESSINGS (6:18-7:1)

Because of God's promises, we have spiritual responsibilities (7:1)

2 Cor 7:1

Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

*Because of God's blessings
and promises, we have
spiritual responsibilities*

2 Cor 7:2

Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one.

AN APPEAL TO RECONCILIATION

(2-16)

*The way God encouraged Paul after
great trials.*

The Three-fold encouragement:

2 Cor 7:3

I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you.

1. Paul encouraged the church - the
visit by Titus had been
successful (2-4)

2 Cor 7:4

I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

2. Titus encouraged Paul (5-10)

3. The Corinthians Encouraged
Titus (11-16)

2 Cor 7:5

For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn--conflicts on the outside, fears within.

2 Cor 7:6

But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

2 Cor 7:7

and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

2 Cor 7:8

Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it--I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while--

2 Cor 7:9

yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.

2 Cor 7:10

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Cor 7:11

See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

2 Cor 7:12

So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong or of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are.

2 Cor 7:13

By all this we are encouraged. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you.

2 Cor 7:14

I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well.

2 Cor 7:15

And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling.

2 Cor 7:16

I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.

one of the most difficult things to do is to rebuild a shattered relationship.

"How?"

1. Face the problem honestly;
2. Deal with it Biblically + Lovingly;
3. Seek to get right with God.

Lessons to learn:

As we examine our own life we must determine to be a part of the answer, and not part of the problem.

We must show appreciation, practice separation, and encourage reconciliation if God is to use us to restore broken relationships.

Chapter 8 - "The Grace of Giving, Part One"

This discussion of funds (collection) for the church is discussed only here in the New Testament

How To GIVE:

1. In spite of circumstances (1,2)
2. Enthusiastically (3,4)
3. As Jesus Gave (5-9)
4. WILLINGLY (10-12)
5. BY faith (13-24)

2 Cor 8:1

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. → (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea)

2 Cor 8:2

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

NO EXCUSE FOR NOT GIVING!

"Rock-bottom; destitution"

2 Cor 8:3

For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,

VOLUNTARILY AND SPONTANEOUS

when the Lord's people maintain an attitude toward their afflictions which characterized the Macedonian brethren no opportunity for doing good to others will be anything less than a source of joy!

2 Cor 8:4 "BEGGED TO GIVE!"

they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

2 Cor 8:5

And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.

The "correct" ORDER

2 Cor 8:6

So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part.

2 Cor 8:7

But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us --see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

they were devout believers → expression of what they believed in

enthusiasm for doing what is right

2 Cor 8:8 liberality cannot be commanded - springs from the single minded devotion to the Lord

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

MOTIVATED BY LOVE

2 Cor 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

sacrificial

2 Cor 8:10

And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so.

Promise and Performance

2 Cor 8:11

Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.

The willing
and Doing

2 Cor 8:12

For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

2 Cor 8:13

Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality.

2 Cor 8:14

At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality,

2 Cor 8:15

Ex 16:18

as it is written: "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little."

Lessons from the manna:
1. Gather what you need
2. Share what you can
3. Don't Hoard

2 Cor 8:16

I thank God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you.

The God-given desire to serve -
The heart is right with God
(16,17)

MOTIVE FOR GIVING -

GOD'S SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

MEASURE FOR GIVING -

GOD'S MATERIAL BLESSINGS

2 Cor 8:17

For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative.

2 Cor 8:18

And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel.

A burden for lost souls (18)

2 Cor 8:19

What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.

2 Cor 8:20

We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift.

Reputation for honesty
(20-22)

2 Cor 8:21

For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.

2 Cor 8:22

In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you. DILIGENCE

2 Cor 8:23

As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. COOPERATIVE SPIRIT (23,24)
IT IS NOT OUR MONEY, but the Lord's!

2 Cor 8:24

Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.

LESSONS:

1. GIVING PROPERLY IS AN EXCITING ADVENTURE!
2. Learn to give "by grace, through faith"—just the way we were saved.
3. Instead of things possessing you - you control things -
 - (1) New set of values
 - (2) New set of priorities

One of the major ministries of Paul's third missionary journey was the taking up of a special "relief offering" for the poor Christians in Judea.

It is significant that it was Paul who remembered the "forgotten beatitude" of our Lord - "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

But Paul had other blessings in mind besides the material assisting of the poor.

He wanted this offering to strengthen the unity of the church as the Gentile churches shared with the Jewish congregations across the sea.

Paul saw the Gentiles as "debtors" to the Jews (Romans 15:25-28), and the special collection was one way to pay that debt.

This offering was also evidence to the Jewish believers that Paul was not the enemy of the Jews or of Moses.

Early in his ministry, Paul had promised to remember the poor (Galatians 2:6-10).

He labored to keep that promise; but at the same time, he hoped that the generosity of the Gentiles would silence the jealousy of the Jews.

Unfortunately, the Corinthians were not doing their part. Like many people, they had made promises, but they failed to keep them.

An entire year had been wasted (2 Corinthians 8:10). What was the cause of this serious delay?

It would be the low spiritual level of the church. When a church is not spiritual, it is not generous.

Paul knew that it would be difficult to get the Corinthians to participate, so he lifted his appeal to the highest spiritual level possible - giving was an act of grace.

Paul uses nine different words to refer to the offering, but the one he used the most was "grace."

It is a wonderful thing when Christians really believe that giving is more blessed than receiving.

How can we tell when we are practicing "grace giving?" Paul indicated that there were a number of evidences that appear when our giving is motivated by grace.

Evidences of "grace-giving" --

1. When we give in spite of circumstances (1,2)
2. When we give enthusiastically (3,4)
3. When we give as Jesus gave (5-9)
4. When we give willingly (10-12)
5. When we give by faith (13-24)

Handling God's money--

1. A God-given desire to serve (16,17)
2. A burden for lost souls (18)
3. A desire to honor God (19)
4. A reputation for honesty (20-22)
5. A cooperative spirit (23,24)

(Hebrews 10:24)

Five Encouragements for Giving:

1. It will provoke others (1-5)
2. It will bless you (6-11)
3. It will meet needs (12)
4. It will glorify God (13)
5. It will unite God's people (14, 15)

2 Cor 9:1

There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the saints.

2 Cor 9:2

For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.

2 Cor 9:3

But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be.

2 Cor 9:4

For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we--not to say anything about you--would be ashamed of having been so confident.

our greatest encouragement
is that it pleases the Lord

2 Cor 9:5

So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

2 Cor 9:6

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

The principle of increase } Luke 6:38
(in measure as we sow) } Pt 4:10-20; Ro 8:32

It is not something
we do - but something
we are!

2 Cor 9:7

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

↙ sad givers
↘ "hilarious" - Glad givers

↘ mad givers

The principle of intent
(with the right motive)

2 Cor 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Adequate resources
within

verses 8-11

The principle of
IMMEDIACY

(reap even while sowing)

2 Cor 9:9

As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."



2 Cor 9:10

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

2 Cor 9:11

You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 Cor 9:12

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

→ Priestly Service
Spiritual Sacrifice

not to think of excuses
for not giving, but
opportunities for giving

cf. Ga 6:10
1Ti 6:18

2 Cor 9:13

Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

Matthew 5:16

2 Cor 9:14

And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

2 Cor 9:15

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

In Jesus, no distinction is made -
no longer Jew, Gentile, rich,
Poor - givers or recipients
Galatians 3:28

"How much do we believe in giving?"

1. The Accusation (1,2)
(not difficult to find!)
2. The Answer (3-6)
(what spiritual warfare is all about!)
3. How To Use Spiritual Authority (7-11)
(To build up - not tear down!)
4. How To Measure Spiritual Ministry (12-18) - "More problems caused by measuring the ministry."
(statistics - quantity (no guarantee of quality)

2 Cor 10:1
 But stern & angry when the occasion demanded it (Mt 15:1; MARK 11:15-17; Jo 2:13-16)
 True Spiritual Power!
 By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you--I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, —→ "Little" but "bold" when away!
 "Please don't force me to come and show how bold I can be!"

2 Cor 10:2
 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. (Their evaluation) Great religious personalities today - abilities, oratorical, commendations
 1 Co 2:1-5
 what was Paul's purpose in founding the church?

2 Cor 10:3
 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

2 Cor 10:4 cannot fight with carnal weapons!
 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.
 \ prayer, scripture, Spirit
 NOT personalities + human abilities!

2 Cor 10:5
 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Some "walls" -
 1. opposition to truth
 2. Pride of intelligence
 3. High-minded attitude (Ro 12:16)
 4. wisdom of men
 } These are doomed to fail!
 → Once the walls in the mind have been torn down, the door to the heart can be opened.

2 Cor 10:6
 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

2 Cor 10:7 The Corinthians were not spiritually-minded enough!
 You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he.

2 Cor 10:8
 For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.

2 Cor 10:9
 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters.

using spiritual authority -
 1. Not to "lord" over (MK 10:35-45)
 2. Example of Christ (Servant/Minister)

Authority of Ministry -
 1. Immature person swells
 2. Mature person grows

2 Cor 10:10

For some say, "His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing."

No matter what course Paul took, they were bound to condemn him!

2 Cor 10:11

Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

no contradiction

2 Cor 10:12

We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.

a mutual admiration society!

False measurements:
External activities versus
internal transformation

2 Cor 10:13

We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you.

→ "sanctified sarcasm!"
→ Apostle to the Gentiles
Ac 9:15; 22:21

1 KINGS 19:11 "What Makes A Good Sermon?"
"The Lord was not in the wind!"
1. Impressive, Long words?
2. Quotations?
3. Knowledge of world events?

"Am I where God wants me to be?" (13, 14)

2 Cor 10:14

We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ.

True Measurement (13-18)

"Churches and ministries are not competing with each other!"

2 Cor 10:15

Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand,

"Is God glorified by my ministry?" (15-17)

"In-fighting destroys outreach."

2 Cor 10:16

so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory.

What kept Paul from this was their lack of faith + their problems.

TESTED BY--

1. Financial losses
2. Invasion of false doctrines
3. "Proud" leaders who want to run the church
4. Challenge of change

Results:

1. Fall apart
2. Almost die

OR--

1. Grow because of these things
2. Made purer and stronger by these trials.

2 Cor 10:17

But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

Jer 9:24
1 Co 1:31

2 Cor 10:18

For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

"can the Lord commend my work?" (18)

"to approve by testing"

conclusion:

God will measure us by the work
by what is assigned

God requires faithfulness above all else -
1 Co 4:2

NOTES ON 2 CORINTHIANS 10

As we read Paul's next chapters we discover the lies the people were telling about Paul:

1. He was not a true apostle since he lacked credentials from the Jerusalem church;
2. His motives were insincere;
3. His physical presence was so weak that he deserved no respect;
4. His letters were bold, but he would never back them up in person;
5. His promise could not be depended upon.

Paul was defending his apostolic office - not himself in these chapters.

These lies were being furthered by the false teachers who had visited Corinth and had won over part of the church to their false doctrine.

When Paul speaks of "boasting" it is with a touch of sarcasm. Of course, Paul was boasting in the Lord and not in himself.

In chapter 10, Paul gives several answers to the accusation that his presence was weak while his letters were powerful.

1. "I follow Christ's example" (1) - let us not be guilty of judging by outward appearances. Some powerhouse preacher is not necessarily displaying the power of God.
2. "I use spiritual weapons" (2-6) - church problems are not changed simply by changing things, but by confronting the problems with God's word.
3. "I don't judge by appearance (7-11) - not a manpleaser - not to compare one servant with another.
4. "I let God do the commending" (12-18) - they thought very highly of themselves because they compared themselves with themselves.

SEVERAL LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM 2 CORINTHIANS 10--

- I. Don't be influenced by physical matters.
- II. The most lasting work is done when we use spiritual weapons and tools.
- III. Don't judge before the time. Let God do the commending.

- IV. The greatest servants are not always the most handsome or strongest, humanly speaking. We should not be awed by a "Hollywood-style" worker who sweeps people off their feet with imposing looks or hypnotic oratory. God has made each of us differently, and we must use all that He gives us for His glory.
- V. It is one thing to build a crowd, and something else to build a church. Theatrical programs, Madison Avenue promotional schemes, man-honoring displays that depend on the efforts of the flesh - all may grab popular attention, but will never receive God's approval. We build through prayer and God's word. this takes time, dedication and sacrifice.
- VI. Live for God's approval and you will be blessed. You may seem to be a failure in your eyes and the eyes of others, but God may see you and your work as a great success for His glory.

"FATHER KNOWS BEST"

How do we go about convincing the people that you really love them?

Paul uses a beautiful image - he was their father (spiritual) caring for his family

1 Corinthians 4: 14-21

They were his beloved spiritual children, and he wanted the very best for them.

2 Cor 11:1

I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness; but you are already doing that.

2 Cor 11:2

Picture of a loving father

I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. A daughter to be married - The church likewise must keep pure

2 Cor 11:3

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. The peril is that of unfaithfulness. The person behind the peril.

1. Satan questioned God's word 2. Satan denied God's word 3. Satan substituted a lie for God's word

2 Cor 11:4

For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

Counterfeit Gospel

2 Cor 11:5

But I do not think I am in the least inferior to those —→ "super-apostles." - see vv 13, 14, 15

Their motives were not to glorify God, but personal gains

2 Cor 11:6

I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way.

2 Cor 11:7

Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? —→ "for nothing; WITHOUT CHARGE" see v. 20

2 Cor 11:8

I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. —→ The use of irony

2 Cor 11:9

And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.

Paul's ministry had cost them nothing!

Did they appreciate it? No

↳ "to grow numb"
(electric eel)

I. HIS JEALOUSY OVER THE CHURCH (1-6; 13-15)

He proved his love by protecting it from attacks of false teachers

II. HIS GENEROSITY TO THE CHURCH (7-12)

A father provides for the needs of his family. He does not lay his burden on his children

III. HIS ANXIETY FOR THE CHURCH (16-33)

cf. v 28 (key vs)

"We may never know the love of our parents for us until we become parents."

2 Cor 11:10

As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine.

2 Cor 11:11

Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

cf. the African missionary, and
Roosevelt's home coming.

2 Cor 11:12

And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about.

2 Cor 11:13

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. "to disguise"

The Preachers of this false
gospel.

They claimed to have
1. divine authority (bogus)
2. true servants of God
(imposters)
3. "super-apostles"

2 Cor 11:14

And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

"The nut does not fall far from
the tree"

never appears in his
true character

↓
They mesmerized the
ignorant brethren.

2 Cor 11:15

It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

2 Cor 11:16

I repeat: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you do, then receive me just as you would a fool, so that I may do a little boasting.

very unlike the Lord Paul says!
Proverbs 26⁵

2 Cor 11:17

In this self-confident boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool.

2 Cor 11:18

Since many are boasting in the way the world does, I too will boast.

2 Cor 11:19

You gladly put up with fools since you are so wise!

2 Cor 11:20

In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or pushes himself forward or slaps you in the face. → "fools you"- fish caught on a hook

The false teacher robbed the church!
The various ways of the Judaizers:
1. Bondage
2. Devour
3. Take advantage of
4. Exalt themselves
5. Slaps you

↓
"Loves to be honored"

↓
"embarrass by verbal abuse"

2 Cor 11:21

To my shame I admit that we were too weak for that! What - inspired irony again!
anyone else dares to boast about--I am speaking as a fool--I
also dare to boast about.

2 Cor 11:22

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I.
Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I.

2 Cor 11:23

Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk
like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in
prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and
been exposed to death again and again.

suffering for Christ (23-25a)

2 Cor 11:24

Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus
one.

2 Cor 11:25

Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned,
three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in
the open sea,

natural hardships (25b-33)

2 Cor 11:26

I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger
from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own
countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city,
in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger
from false brothers.

2 Cor 11:27

I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep;
I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without
food; I have been cold and naked.

Personal consequences

2 Cor 11:28

Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my → "stress; anxiety" (The pressure within!)
concern for all the churches.

2 Cor 11:29

Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, → Paul identified with the believer -
and I do not inwardly burn?

*whatever happened to his children
touched his own heart!*

2 Cor 11:30

If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

2 Cor 11:31

The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.

2 Cor 11:32

In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me.

2 Cor 11:33

But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

a humiliating experience!
(22, 33)

LESSONS:

1. Paul certainly proved his love for the church - now the church had to prove its love for Paul.
2. May we never take for granted the sacrifices that others have made so that we might enjoy the blessings of the gospel today.
3. We cannot read these words without admiring the courage and devotion of Paul.
4. Each trial left its mark on his life, and yet, he kept moving on! - serving the Lord.
5. Consider: "None of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear unto myself." - Acts 20:24

"THE CLIMAX OF PAUL'S DEFENSE"

(VV 1-10)

Three experiences from God:

1. Glory - God honored him (1-6)
2. Goodness - God humbled him (7,8)
3. Grace - God helped him (9,10)

2 Cor 12:1

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.

2 Cor 12:2 *Rabbinic custom - use of third person*

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know--God knows.

→ About AD 43 - no record of this event

→ Where God dwells
Paradise

VISIONS & REVELATIONS

1. Acts 9:3; 22:6; 9:12; 22:17
2. Guidance and Encouragement
Ac 16:9; 18:9,10; 28:11; 27:23
3. Divine Truth. cf. Cp 3:1-6

Not only visions + taking to heaven,
but also permitted to hear
"unspeakable words"

2 Cor 12:3

And I know that this man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows--

2 Cor 12:4

was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

2 Cor 12:5

I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses.

could Judaizers boast
of such?

2 Cor 12:6

Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say.

Paul did not become
proud. He simply told
the truth.

2 Cor 12:7

To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. "To beat with the fists"

→ A SHARP STAKE used
for torturing or impalement

Don't know what it is - it did bring pain
and distress (Ga 6:11)

2 Cor 12:8

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

2 Cor 12:9 → "once for all"

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. → "To spread a tent over"

GOD'S PROVISIONS FOR OUR NEEDS
We do not live on explanations, but
on promises!

(VV 7,8)

"FROM Paradise To Pain!"

(God allows burdens as well as blessings)

2 Cor 12:10

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in → To Rise above;
insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For not simply endure
when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Cor 12:11

I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the "super-apostles," even though I am nothing.

2 Cor 12:12

The things that mark an apostle--signs, wonders and miracles--were done among you with great perseverance.

2 Cor 12:13

How were you inferior to the other churches, except that I was never a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

irony! one danger is getting used to our blessings!

2 Cor 12:14

Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

instead of being grateful, they had criticized him for changing his plans!

2 Cor 12:15

So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less?

2 Cor 12:16

Be that as it may, I have not been a burden to you. Yet, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you by trickery!

Paul disarmed them so that they could not accuse him of being interested only in money.

2 Cor 12:17

Did I exploit you through any of the men I sent you?

2 Cor 12:18

I urged Titus to go to you and I sent our brother with him. Titus did not exploit you, did he? Did we not act in the same spirit and follow the same course?

2 Cor 12:19

Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening.

VV 12:11 - 13:14

ONE LAST APPEAL, THREE APPROACHES TO MOTIVATE "GET READY!"

1. He shamed them (11-21)
(1) LACK OF COMMENDATION (11-13)
(2) LACK OF APPRECIATION (14-18)
(3) LACK OF CONSECRATION (19-21)
2. He warned them (13:1-8)
(1) PREPARE (1-4)
(2) EXAMINE (5-8)
3. He encouraged them (13:9-14)

2 Cor 12:20

For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.

earnest intrigues backbiting whispering Pride & exaggerated sense of importance.

"SOCIAL" SINS

debates
→ sudden explosions

↓
Shows lack of love
1 Co 13

2 Cor 12:21

I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have → "as for the dead"
sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.

"SEXUAL" SINS - 1 Co 6

↓
what began as factions (1 Co 1:10) had now grown into debates, strife & tumults.
Satan was in control

WHY SUFFERING:

1. We are human - grow old
2. We are foolish & disobedient
3. A TOOL that God uses for building Godly character (Ro 5:1-5)
4. Permitted by God to Satan to afflict

FOUR PROOFS OF PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP

1. His Revelation from Christ (1-6)
2. His Thorn in the flesh (7-10)
3. His Apostolic signs (11-18)
4. His courage in dealing with sin (19-21)

LESSONS FROM PAUL'S THORN

1. Spiritual blessings are more important than physical blessings
2. Unanswered prayer does not mean that the need is not met
3. Weakness is strength if Christ is in it (Moses Rod; David's slings)
4. There is grace to meet every need
5. God knows how to balance burdens/ blessings; sufferings/ glory

Lessons From The Chapter

1. False teaching leads to false living
2. We all must have grace to endure sufferings
3. There dare not be any love of money, or any fear of man, that would hinder us from dealing with sin.
4. May God help us to be the kind of servants that God can commend and bless!

"Explain II Cor. 12:1-4. Who is the 'man in Christ' there designated? Where is the 'third heaven?' 'Paradise?' Why unlawful to relate?

"I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (II Cor. 12:2-4.) *Visions* were miraculous experiences wherein matters were made to appear before the mind as vividly as if they were actually seen with the physical eyes. *Revelations* involved the supernatural unveiling of truth not formerly known to the individual involved. It seems certain that Paul was the person to whom reference is made, though, in these verses, he is not directly identified. In II Cor. 12:1, he said, "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." Obviously, there would have been no occasion for Paul to glory (boast) of the divine revelations of others. The visions and revelations were Paul's; each series was divinely bestowed; and both evidenced his heavenly calling, since men not thus commissioned would not have been thus empowered. The apostle's purpose, in citing these remarkable experiences, was to establish his apostleship, and to exhibit his superiority to the false apostles then plaguing the church in Corinth (II Cor. 11:13.)

A "man in Christ," is a Christian (Gal. 3:26, 27.) The event the apostle describes occurred fourteen years earlier. II Corinthians was written in the fall of A.D. 57. It occurred, therefore, in A. D. 43. This falls within the period when the apostle was in the last portion of his labors in Tarsus, or the first part of his stay in Antioch. In view of the fact that these remarkable experiences were given to him to strengthen him for exceptional suffering and painful persecution, and inasmuch as this was to characterize him throughout his missionary efforts, it is reasonable to conclude that the events he mentions occurred in either Tarsus or Antioch shortly before the beginning of these historic travels (Acts 9:26-30; 11:25, 26.)

The apostle did not know whether he was "in the body," or "out of the body," when these supernatural occurrences were experienced. It was therefore possible for him to have been "out of the body" when they occurred. This remarkable concession on the part of the apostle is especially revealing and significant in the illumination which it sheds on the nature of man. It demonstrates, by implication, that (1) there is an entity of man, separate from the body, which can exist "out of the body;" (2) inasmuch as consciousness is an attribute of the spirit of man, and not of the body (I Cor. 2:11), it follows (3) that the doctrine of soul-sleeping (that all there is of man is material substance and that nothing survives death) is false; and (4) the spirit does not die when the body does. Moreover, since the spirit of man is the "knowing" part of man (I Cor. 2:11), it is positively shown in these words of Paul that the spirit is capable of functioning "out of the body."

It should be noted that the apostle, while in the state which he describes, both *saw* and *heard*; he could have been "out of the body;" therefore, he teaches us that it is possible for one *to see* and *to hear* when "out of the body" as well as "in the body." Were it impossible for consciousness to exist when the spirit leaves the body as materialists urge, Paul would have known this and would have concluded that he was *in the body* when the events to which he alludes occurred! Paul's concession, that he may have been "out of the body" when he *saw and heard*, demolishes the doctrine of materialism as taught by Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, The Armstrongs, and all other materialistic religious bodies.

The apostle was caught up "even to the third heaven," and "into paradise." "Heaven" is spoken of in three different senses in the sacred writings: (1) where birds fly (Luke 9:58); (2) where the moon, the sun and the stars are (Psalm 19:1-6); and (3) where God is (Deut. 4:39). "Paradise," literally, a *pleasure garden*, is used here to designate a place of great blessing. The original paradise was the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:28); it is applied to the place of abode for the righteous dead (Luke 23:43), between death and the resurrection, and heaven (Rev. 2:7). It emphasizes the *state* of things prevailing, and is used, in the scriptures, to denote more than one place. As the word "heaven" is variously used therein, so is the word Paradise. Here it most likely refers to the final abode of the soul.

During the apostle's supernatural journey, he heard "unspeakable words," not "lawful for a man to utter." "Unspeakable" is from the Greek word *arrhetos*, defined by Arndt-Gingrich, as beyond the power of human beings to utter, but this definition appears too restricted in the light of the context. In the clause following, the apostle said that the words describing what the apostle heard were not "lawful" for a man to utter. This strongly suggests that they were "unspeakable" in the sense that it was not permissible to repeat them. *Why rule that to be unlawful which is impossible?* They were therefore unspeakable in the sense of not being allowed—being too sacred far for utterance by man. Why was Paul thus restrained from revealing what he said and heard? There are many possible reasons: (1) These experiences were for the apostle's benefit alone—to strengthen him in his trials; (2) the scriptures provide all the information we need to prepare for heaven (II Tim. 3:16, 17); and (3) to reveal these supernatural matters would have served only to satisfy curiosity and it is noteworthy that God never does this.

Paul's Admonition In Closing

1. Be ready for my visit (1-4)
2. Be sure you are saved (5-7)
3. Be obedient to God's word (8-10)
4. Be mature in your faith (11-14)

WARNINGS (1-8)

1. Prepare yourselves (1-4)

"I WILL NOT SPARE"

2. EXAMINE yourselves (5-8)

"Test yourselves"

3. ENCOURAGE yourselves (9-14)

2 Cor 13:1

This will be my third visit to you. "Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."

2 Cor 13:2

I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others,

Declaring War!

2 Cor 13:3

since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

2 Cor 13:4

For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.

By standards of the world, both were weak

How do people measure ministry today?

oratory or Biblical truth?

Press releases or Christian character?

2 Cor 13:5

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you--unless, of course, you fail the test?

TEST:

1. Really born again?
2. Holy Spirit? Ro 8:9,16
3. Love the brethren? 1 Jo 3:14
4. Practice righteousness? 1 Jo 2:9,10
5. Godly life? 1 Jo 5:4

MANY problems are caused by people who are not really converted!

2 Cor 13:6

And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.

2 Cor 13:7

Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong. Not that people will see that we have stood the test but that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed.

2 Cor 13:8

For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.

TRUTH IS TO PREVAIL

The Important thing!

Pv 21:30

2 Cor 13:9

We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is for your perfection.

Spiritual Maturity

"To Be Equipped"

Paul encouraged them by

Personal Prayer

2 Cor 13:10

This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority--the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

Paul encouraged them
By word of God

2 Cor 13:11

^{"rejoice"} Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. ^{"Grow up in the faith"} a needed admonition!

Paul encouraged them to
cultivate grace, love and peace

2 Cor 13:12

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

oriental custom - a form of greeting
a gesture of friendship
a gesture of fellowship
an evidence of affection
and concern

"Can the outside world tell that from the way we live and the way we conduct ourselves, we are Christians?"

2 Cor 13:13

All the saints send their greetings.

2 Cor 13:14

^{2 co 8:9} May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. ^{calvary}

Pentecost / Salvation

Paul was hitting at one of their most serious problems, i.e., division and lack of concern for one another!

The greatest of all Bible benedictions
Emphasizes the Trinity

How fitting for this divided + unspiritual church!
Many still need this today!

"Grace" - reminds us of His birth
2 co 8:9

"Love" - God gave His Son - Jo 3:16

"Fellowship" - spirit of God came / formed the church

LESSONS:

1. No amount of human skill, talent or programs can make the church what it ought to be - only God can do that
2. Let us be a part of the answer - not part of the problem
3. Ask God to make you that type of Christian
4. Be encouraged - and then, encourage others!
5. It is when we ignore or oppose the word of God that we bring trouble upon ourselves
6. There are times when we show God's power in us by our seeming weakness
7. The warning of discipline is never for the purpose of exaltation, but always for the leading of the offender to repentance.