



Walking Thru The Bible

2 CORINTHIANS

Introduction

Author: The Apostle Paul

Date: A.D. 57

Occasion: After writing 1 Corinthians, Paul found it necessary to make a hurried, painful visit to Corinth, since the problems that occasioned the first letter had not been resolved (2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1-2). Following this visit, he wrote the church a severe and sorrowful letter, to which he refers in 2:4 but which has not been preserved for us by the Holy Spirit. Titus delivered that letter.

Paul was unable to wait for Titus' return and proceeded to Macedonia where Titus met him with the good news that the church had accepted Paul's letter with positive results. From Macedonia Paul wrote 2 Corinthians and followed it up with his final recorded visit to the church (Acts 20:1-4).

Purpose: The purpose of this letter was threefold: [1] to express joy at the favorable response of the church to Paul's ministry (ch. 1-7); [2] to remind the disciples of their commitment to make an offering for the Christians in Judea (ch. 8-9); and [3] to defend Paul's apostolic authority (ch. 10-13).

Basic Message of Paul's "Second Corinthians"

1. The Ministration of Righteousness vs. Ministration of Death

In chapter three, Paul set forth a section of teaching which contrasts the ministration of righteousness (the new covenant) with the ministration of death (the old covenant).

2. Gospel in Earthen Vessels

In chapter four, Paul set forth the principle which pertains to the means by which the gospel is communicated. He said: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not of ourselves." This is illustrated in Acts 9:11 when the Lord sent Ananias to tell Saul what to do to have his sins forgiven rather than the Lord telling Saul Himself.

3. The Unequal Yoke

In chapter six, Paul called for the Corinthian Christians to break with heathenism, and he set forth the teaching on being "unequally yoked." He

asked: "...What fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols?..."

4. Things Honest

In chapter eight, Paul set an example of how every Christian must provide for things honest in the sight of all men.

5. The Grace of the Macedonian Churches

In chapters eight and nine, Paul paid tribute to the gracious giving of the churches of Macedonia and shared the great principle of sowing and reaping. Those churches of Macedonia were overwhelmed with afflictions and deep poverty, yet they gave liberally to help their brethren in Judea.

6. Observations Relative to Charges Against Paul

Second Corinthians gives more details and greater insight into the personality and integrity of the apostle Paul than is given any other apostle or disciple of the entire New Testament. A person has but to read Second Corinthians to know that Paul traveled more, suffered more, and sacrificed more than any other apostle.

7. Conclusion

Second Corinthians has been difficult for many to understand, but the difficulty is removed when we realize that Paul wrote for the benefit of three parties--the loyal party, the license party, and the Judaizing party.

In no place are more church problems raised and settled than are raised and settled in Paul's two epistles to the Corinthians.

Charges Against Paul

The opposition parties filed certain charges against Paul:

1. The opposition parties charged Paul with cowardice in not coming to Corinth as he said he would do. Paul answered this charge in 2 Corinthians 1:15-17.

2. The opposition parties charged that Paul's letters were weighty and terrifying, but that his physical appearance was weak and uninviting. (II Cor. 10:10). Paul was prepared to demonstrate his superior power not only by letter, but also in presence as well.

3. The opposition parties charged that Paul had great boldness, but that his speech was rude and simple. (II Cor. 11:6). Paul admitted he was not eloquent but emphasized that he was not simple in knowledge.

4. Those in opposition to Paul charged that he was consciously inferior, and for this reason he abstained from taking support from Corinth for his labors. (II Cor. 11:7, 8). Paul knew by whom he had been called to the apostleship; and he knew why he had abstained from accepting support from the Corinthians.

5. The opposition parties charged that Paul's descent as a true Hebrew was a matter to be questioned. Paul's defense: "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft" (II Cor. 11:22,23). In short, this charge against Paul was ridiculous (2 Cor. 11:22,23).

6. The opposition parties charged that Paul's alleged escape from Damascus was preposterous. In his defense Paul called upon God as a witness: (II Cor. 11:31-33). This charge, too, was ridiculous

An Outline of 2 Corinthians

	Salutation	1:1-2
I.	The Personal Concerns of the Apostle	1:3-2:13
1.	The Purpose of His Suffering in Asia	1:3-11
2.	The Reasons for His Change of Plans	1:12-2:4
3.	The Advice Concerning the Offender	2:5-11
4.	The Apostle's Anxiety about News from Corinth	2:12, 13
II.	The Glory of the Gospel and Its Ministry	2:14-6:10
1.	The Seal of His Apostleship	2:14-17
2.	Superiority of the New Ministration to the Old	3:1-11
3.	The Consequent Boldness of the New Ministers	3:12-4:6
4.	The Trials and Triumphs of the Apostle	4:7-5:10
5.	The Apostle's Motives, Message & Ministration	5:11-6:10
III.	The Appeal for Separation and Reconciliation	6:11-7:16
1.	For Separation	6:11-7:1
2.	For Reconciliation	7:2-4
3.	Be Assured of his joy over their repentance?	7:5-16
IV.	The Collection for the Poor Christians at Jerusalem	Ch 8,9
1.	Principles for Giving	8:1-6
2.	Purposes for Giving	8:7-15
3.	Policies in Giving	8:16-9:5
4.	Promises in Giving	9:6-15
V.	The Vindication of Paul's Apostolic Authority	10:1-12:18
1.	Paul's Conduct	11:1-15
2.	Paul's Sufferings	11:16-33
3.	Paul's Vision	12:1-10
4.	Paul's Unselfishness	12:11-18

VI. Concluding Remarks

12:19-13:14

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| 1. Appeal for Repentance | 12:19-21 |
| 2. Statement of Plans | 13:1-10 |
| 3. Greetings and Benediction | 13:11-14 |

If Any Man Be In Christ

2 Corinthians 5:17

I. IN CHRIST We Have Some Initial Blessings--

1. We have the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7)
2. There is sanctification in Christ (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor. 6:17)
3. There is salvation in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10).
4. There is blessings of being a "new creature" 2 Cor. 5:17.

II. The Continuous Blessings of Being IN CHRIST--

1. The cleansing blood of Christ (I John 1:7-9)
2. Joy in Christ in midst of suffering (Acts 5:42)
3. Consolation in Christ (Phil. 2:1)
4. Blessing of new home when this one is over (2 Cor. 5:1)

III. If Any Man Be IN CHRIST,

He Has Been Baptized Into Christ--

1. Galatians 3:26, 27
2. I Cor. 12:13
3. Romans 6:4-6

To turn this around, if we are not baptized into Christ, then we are not in Christ!

IV. After Being Baptized INTO CHRIST,

We Have The Responsibility of Staying In Christ--

1. The one baptized into Christ Has the responsibility of *abiding* in Christ. John 15:1, 14.
2. We have the responsibility of faithfully observing all His commandments (Matthew 28:20; James 1:22).

CONCLUSION

1. If any man be in Christ he has the hope of heaven when he dies. (2 Cor. 1:7; 3:17; Colossians 1:5; 1:23).
2. Many think they are in Christ when they are not. They have never been "born" into him. (John 3:1-7; 1 Peter 1:23).
3. Many think they are "still" in Christ, but they're not. They are not abiding faithfully in him (2 John 9).