



The Lighthouse

NEW TESTAMENT NOTES

2 Corinthians

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Introduction to the Second Letter to the Congregation at Corinth

Theme: Paul's defense of his apostolic office and gospel ministry. His enemies made personal attacks upon his office and ministry. They argued that if he were a true apostle, he would not have all the providential problems he experienced (Ch. 1:3-11). Accusers claimed that if he were a true apostle he would not be double-minded in his purposes (Chs. 1:12-2:17). They further argued that if he were God's apostle he would not oppose God's covenant with Moses (Chs. 3-5). Again, opposers claimed that if he were God's apostle he would not be so weak and plagued with difficulties (Chs. 6-7). Then, enemies claimed that if he were God's apostle he would not be asking for their money (Chs. 8-9), and if he were God's apostle he would manifest more supernatural evidences (Chs. 10-12).

Date: It was written about a year after the first epistle or around A.D. 51. The first epistle was written at Ephesus (Western Turkey) and brought to Corinth by the hand of Titus (Acts 19:22). The second letter was sent about a year later (A.D. 52) from Macedonia at Philippi (Ch. 13:14; Acts 20:4) after a short tumultuous visit in Greece (Acts 20:2-3 - Achaia).

Audience: The congregation of Christ at Corinth, with implications that they would share this letter with the congregation at Cenchrea, since it would be affected by the same arguments from his foes.

Outline:

- A. Providential Problems Have Good Purposes – Chs. 1-2**
- B. Power and Preeminence of the N.T. Covenant Gospel – Chs. 3-4**
- C. Proof of Genuine Salvation – Chs. 6-7**
- D. Providing for the Poor in Jerusalem – Chs. 8-9**
- E. Personal Proofs of Apostleship – Chs. 10-12**
- F. Power of Apostleship Intentionally Restrained – Ch. 13**

The Second Letter to the Congregation at Corinth

Chapter 1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the congregation of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints [set apart ones] which are in all Achaia¹ [southern Greece]:

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

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;²

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation [afflictions/troubles], that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is [is effectual; or, is wrought] for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.³

10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.⁴

¹ “**In Achaia**” – There was another congregation located very close in Cenchrea from which Phebe was a member (Rom. 16:1). No doubt Paul’s enemies had influenced this nearby assembly and this letter was written to be read among them as well.

² “**All comfort**” – In verses 3-11 Paul describes different ways that believers can draw comfort out of their troubles; (1) God’s comfort in tribulations enables us to comfort others in tribulation – vv. 3-4; (2) God provides comfort equal to our troubles – v. 5; (3) Our salvation is designed to endure tribulation (Rom. 5:3-4) – v. 6; (4) Tribulations for Christ evidence true salvation – v. 7; (5) Tribulations turn the believer from self-reliance to faith in God for deliverance – vv. 8-10; (6) Tribulation bring believers together in prayer to shoulder one another’s burdens. – v. 11

³ “**Sentence of death**” – Paul portrays a court room where all the evidence has been examined to see if personal abilities can deliver him, and finds that, if he depends upon himself for deliverance, the verdict/sentence is “death.” The circumstance described by Paul purposely exceeds his own abilities to deliver himself alive - “despaired even of life.” However, in contrast, God can do the impossible, because He “raiseth the dead.”

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12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

13 For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit;⁵

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.⁶

23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

⁴ **“Helping together”** – These two words translate one Greek term that provides a picture of two men squatting at opposing ends of a heavy object and jointly lifting it up together. Troubles bring believers together in lifting up their burdens in prayer.

⁵ **“Second benefit”** – Paul had intended to go first to southern Greece (Achaia) from Ephesus and then proceed to northern Greece, turn around and come back down through Corinth on his way to Jerusalem, giving them a second benefit of his presence at their congregation. However, God changed his plans, sending him to northern Greece (Macedonia) first and then to Corinth in southern Greece (Achaia). Paul’s intentions were good toward them, but God’s design was different. His enemies interpreted his change of plans as evidence of a double-minded man. Paul gives them a detailed explanation for his change of plans in 1:12-2:13.

⁶ **“Sealed...earnest”** – In those days letters or documents were protected from unauthorized use by a wax seal representing the authority of the one sealing it. To break the seal was to defy the authority and power of the owner of that seal. This is a symbol of the protection and preservation of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Only someone greater in authority and power could break such a seal. This protection is reinforced by the use of the metaphor “earnest.” An earnest was a down payment that was subject to loss if the one providing the earnest did not complete his payment. The Holy Spirit Himself is the earnest that God has given to believers to assure them of final salvation. Failure of final salvation would require the loss of the Holy Spirit.

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Chapter 2

- B**ut I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.
- 2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?
- 3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.
- 4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.
- 5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.
- 6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.⁷
- 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.
- 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.
- 9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.
- 10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;
- 11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.⁸
- 12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,
- 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.
- 14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.⁹

⁷ **"Inflicted of many"** – Literally "of the many" or majority. This refers to the man in 1 Corinthians 5. The congregation had followed Paul's exhortation to remove this man from their congregation. This was done by majority vote in keeping with Matthew 18:17 rather than by any action by elders or any other smaller body of members in the congregation (Mt. 18:16). The congregation acted as a whole under the leadership of its elders through majority vote.

⁸ **"Satan's devices"** – The word "device" translates the Greek term "noema" and refers to the mind or thoughts. Satan attacks our mind with demonic thoughts. These are his "fiery darts" (Eph. 6:16). Congregational discipline is turning a man over to Satan for chastening (1 Cor. 5:5). Satan wished to completely destroy this man and would attempt to influence the thinking of the membership to refuse his repentance and/or receive him with visual skepticism and disdain. Just as children who respond correctly to punishment need to be reassured of your love and support, or else a wedge is driven between you and them that will create further problems.

⁹ **"Triumph in Christ"** – Whenever and wherever a believer shares the gospel of Christ he is always successful. God either uses it to eventually bring the hearer to salvation or uses it at judgment as evidence to justly condemn

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15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Chapter 3

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?¹⁰

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.¹¹

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.¹²

them for their rejection of Christ. God is glorified in salvation and judgment, as his justice is served either way. In salvation Christ satisfies his justice. By rejection of the gospel, the sinner satisfies His justice.

¹⁰ “**Letters of commendation**” – Congregations would write letters of commendation for their members when leaving and traveling to another congregation (Acts 18:27). However, no letter of commendation was necessary for Paul because he founded this congregation.

¹¹ “**Epistle of Christ ministered by us**” – Regeneration is likened by Paul to inspiration of the scriptures (2 Cor. 3:2-6) and as a creative act of God (2 Cor. 4:6). The change of heart by the Holy Spirit giving them a disposition for righteousness is so direct as though there was no human instrument involved. In salvation the gospel does not come in “word only” (1 Thess. 1:5) but it becomes the creative word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 4:6) so that we are “created in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:10a). Paul claims no personal credit when the Spirit “giveth life” (vv. 5-6). Just as the scriptures are the direct will of God and not the personal opinions of the writer (2 Pet. 1:20-21) so regeneration is the expression of the direct will power of God rather than any personal power of the one sharing the gospel. The ten commandments were the law written in stone which in principle represents the righteousness of God. The writing of it on the heart is a metaphor that represents God giving us a heart that loves righteousness (Rom. 7:22) unlike the unregenerated state (Rom. 8:7)

¹² “**Not of the letter, but of the Spirit**” – Paul’s argument is simple. The New Covenant is an internal work of God that changes the heart of man to love God’s righteousness (Rom. 7:22; Eph. 4:24; Col. 2:10). The Old Covenant was external and incapable of changing the heart of men and it is the heart that is the problem. If an Old Covenant was glorious, and it was, because it was an external revelation of the righteousness of God, then, this New Covenant is much more glorious as it actually provides the internal disposition for the righteousness of God and progressively changes men from glory to glory until the resurrection they are transformed to perfect righteousness. However, the old covenant could not change the heart and so the “veil” over their heart remained so that they could not perceive, see or hear (take heed) to God’s Word (Deut. 5:29; 29:4; Ezek. 26:26-27).

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7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:¹³

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.¹⁴

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Chapter 4

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.¹⁵

¹³ "**Look to the end**" – The law set forth God's standard of righteousness – sinless perfection. Sin is coming short of that standard. The law was designed to reveal sin in them and frustrate any attempt by them to be justified under the law by their own personal obedience. However, the same law pointed them to God's provision for justification by faith in Christ through the ceremonial offerings. Christ was "the end" of righteousness to all who looked to him by faith (Rom. 10:4). The offerings provided Old Testament symbols of the gospel.

¹⁴ "**The veil**" – When Moses came down from the mountain his face was so bright that the people could not look upon him and so he covered his face with a veil. The veil represents the inability of the depraved human heart to see beyond the letter of the law. They cannot see Christ in reading the Old Testament. This "veil" is synonymous with the phrase "blinded the minds" in 2 Cor. 4:4 and the "darkness" in 2 Cor. 4:6. As the veil hid the glory on the face of Moses, so the veil over the unregenerated heart prevents them from seeing the gospel or the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ "**Manifestation of the truth**" – True gospel ministers do not pervert the gospel of grace but preach it clearly as it is revealed in the scriptures. It is Satan and his ministry that attempts to pervert and conceal it through deceitful handling of God's Word. Paul is referring to his enemies who were Judaizers and taught justification by faith in

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- 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:
- 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
- 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.
- 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.¹⁶
- 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
- 8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;
- 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;
- 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.
- 11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.
- 12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.
- 13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;
- 14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.
- 15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.
- 16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.
- 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;
- 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Christ plus good works in keeping with God's law. Satan blinds the minds of the lost preventing them from seeing the glory of the gospel (vv. 3-4) and he fights God's servants (vv. 8-15) who strive to preach the gospel. Nevertheless, God dispels the darkness at His command (v. 6) when the gospel comes to his elect (1 Thess. 1:4) not in word only but in power, in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance (1 Thess. 1:5).

¹⁶ **“Who commanded”** – Paul likens the dispelling of darkness in the human heart that separates one from the life of God (Eph. 4:18) to the creative command in Genesis 1:3 which called light into existence dispelling the darkness. In Romans 10:17 the Greek word translated “word” is *rhema* and means word of command. Faith comes by God's creative word of command, is the fabric of the new heart, and it is “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness” (Rom. 10:10). The new heart is described in 2 Cor. 3:3.

Chapter 5

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.¹⁷

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.¹⁸

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.¹⁹

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

¹⁷ **“We have a building”** – Paul has in view the glorified body at the resurrection. This building ultimately comes from heaven (v. 2), not from the grave, because the grave provides only dust. But Christ, who comes from heaven, will transform that dust through his creative Word into a new glorified body. Christ is now in heaven in such a glorified body, and is our hope of eternal life to come in the body. Paul would rather not die but be alive when Christ returned so that he would not be unclothed (v. 3) or without this body between his death and the second coming of Christ (vv. 4-5). Those now in heaven are “spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. 12:23) without that heavenly body. However, in our present state, in this unglorified body we have the “earnest of the Spirit” (v. 5; Rom. 8:23-25).

¹⁸ **“To be absent...to be present”** – These terms are aorist infinitives that demand simultaneous action without any time gap between leaving the body and being present with the Lord. The body is called a “tabernacle,” or literally a “tent,” in which something called “I” now indwells. Whatever, is now dwelling in this “tent” body will leave it and be with the Lord at the precise time when the bodies dies so that “I” is always with the Lord whether “in the body” or out of the body. This text denies the doctrines of annihilation or soul sleeping following the death of the body.

¹⁹ **“Must all appear”** – He is talking about “all” Christians. This is not a context dealing with the lost or with lost and saved. Christians receive according to what good and bad they have done. Lost people have nothing to receive for “good” as they are not capable of doing good. This is the judgment of the saved for rewards in heaven (1 Cor. 3:11-15) or the “bema seat” judgment. It is a fearful thing to stand and give an account unto Christ for everything you have done, and time will demonstrate it to be so.

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13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:²⁰

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.²¹

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.²²

²⁰ **“Then were all dead”** – Literally the Greek text says “consequently therefore [ara] those ones [tois] died.” “Died” translates the aorist tense but the KJV translates it as though it were an imperfect tense “were dead.” Neither does the Greek text supply a second “all.” Paul’s point is, “all” for whom Christ died “in the place of” (huper) “these ones” must be reckoned by substitution as dead. He uses the preposition “huper” to mean that Christ died in their “behalf” or in their place and therefore, if Christ died in their place, then they are “dead” in regard to substitution. These are not potentially dead but actually dead in the sense of substitution. He continues to use the preposition “huper” in verse 15 demanding that “all” which are physically alive for whom Christ acted as their substitute in death ought to glorify Christ because they are no longer to be regarded “after the flesh” (which has been put to death) but new creations in Christ Jesus (vv. 16-17).

²¹ **“The world”** – In the Greek text, Paul omits the definite article “the” and provides it in the anarthrous construction which conveys characterization. The “kosmos” is inclusive of everything characteristic of God’s creation which has been affected by sin and which will be reconciled (Rom. 8:22-25) to God. In regard to the humanity aspect of the kosmos, Paul has already declared that “all” for whom Christ acted as a substitute in his death “died” when he died (v. 14). That is, actual reconciliation was accomplished by his death because it was substitutionary (Gr. huper) in nature. Paul reaffirms that when he says “not imputing their trespasses unto them.” This is no “potential” atonement, but an actual substitutionary (“huper”) atonement further confirmed by verse 19 - “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

²² **“Made him to be sin for us”** – We are made righteous in the same sense Christ was made sin for us. He knew no sin, did not sin and neither was sin found in him. He was “made to be sin” by imputation not by nature or practice. Our sin was imputed to him legally and His righteousness was imputed to us legally (Rom. 4:5-6).

Chapter 6

We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; 6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened [restricted] in us, but ye are straitened [restricted] in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged.

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?²³

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

²³ “**Unequally yoked together**” – The yoke was used to harness together two animals to pull a plow or cart. To be unequally yoked would be harnessing two different kinds of animals under one yoke that were not equal in their ability to pull the plow or cart, so that both would suffer injury. There are many different applications of this principle: marriage, business, congregation with state, religious unions with secular, unions with false denominations and religions. The direct application of this context is with Christians attending pagan temples (1 Cor. 10).

Chapter 7

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.²⁴

2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

3 I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.²⁵

11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

²⁴ **“Filthiness of...spirit”** – Man is basically a dichotomy of “flesh and spirit,” but the “spirit” is further divided by the Word of God into “spirit” and “soul” (Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:23). The “soul” is spirit in essence and needs to be cleansed daily. However, it is the “spirit” that has been born of God (Jn. 3:6) and created in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10) and which is the “inward man” that delights in the law of God (Rom. 7:22).

²⁵ **“Godly sorrow....sorrow of the world”** – These have their source in two different types of repentance and terminate in two different types of conclusions. Repentance that leads to salvation (godly sorrow) is “metanoia” whereas the repentance that leads to death (sorrow of the world) is “metamelomai” (Mt. 27:4). Worldly sorrow characterizes the natural convicting power of the Word of God with conscience apart from quickening by the Spirit of God. Such worldly sorrow characterizes all who are under the general convicting power of God’s word and their own conscience prior to being quickened by the Spirit of God. Both Judas and Peter betrayed Christ. Judas is a prime example of repentance that produced worldly sorrow unto death. Peter is an example of repentance to salvation. Godly sorrow works as described in verses 9 and 11.

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13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his inward [Gr. bowels] affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

Chapter 8

Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the congregations of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace [gift] also.

7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace [gift] also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

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

10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.²⁶

²⁶ “**Willing mind**” – Paul is not dealing with the tithe or the principle of tithing in these two chapters. He is dealing with the principles that characterize free will offerings (Ex. 25:2). This is a special free will offering taken up for the saints in Jerusalem that were undergoing a famine at that time. The free will offering does not replace the tithe but is in addition to the tithe. Free will offerings are not determined by a percentage of income but according to what you have to give as the Lord lays it upon your heart to freely give (9:7).

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13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

16 But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the congregations;

19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the congregations to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind.²⁷

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

23 Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow helper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the congregations, and the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the congregations, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.²⁸

Chapter 9

For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

F² For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

²⁷ “**Chosen of the congregations**” – It would seem that each congregation chose its own delegate to (v. 23) represent it and bring its own individual freewill offering to the poor at Jerusalem. These congregations acted independent from each other but cooperatively with each other without coming under, or going through, any other agency, board, or association outside of their own congregation.

²⁸ “**Before the congregations**” – Paul is referring to the congregations as represented by their authorized delegates which formed the party that travelled with Paul to bring the freewill offerings to Jerusalem. These congregational representatives would come with Paul to the congregation at Corinth, and would observe their attitude and giving in this matter.

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4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful [Gr. *hilarious*] giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Chapter 10

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)²⁹

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;³⁰

²⁹ “**Weapons of our warfare**” – The weapons used by the saints are spiritual (prayer, the Word of God, the influence and example of a holy and obedient life). Satan uses people but our real enemy is Satan.

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6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Chapter 11

Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.³¹

³⁰ **“Casting down imaginations”** – Christians and the ministry are engaged in a spiritual battle for the minds of men. For “as he thinketh in his heart so is he” (Prov. 23:7). The “knowledge of God” is revealed in the Word of God and it is God's Word that is the weapon of our warfare to engage the minds of men in order to convince their minds by sound doctrine, so as to bring “every thought” in conformity with the revelation of scriptures, and thereby into obedience of Christ.

³¹ **“Espoused you”** – According to Jewish customs, the groom would send a chosen friend to establish the espousal terms with the bride and her family. The Great Commission is the espousal terms in the establishment or constitution of a congregation of Christ. Paul went about preaching the gospel and those who received the gospel were baptized and gathered together in order to be taught how to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded, and then given a charge to continue steadfastly in “the faith” that was once delivered (Jude 3) unto them. This faithfulness is presented under the metaphor of “a chaste virgin,” and the wedding dress of the bride (see Rev. 19:6-7).

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3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds [see 2 Cor. 10:5] should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.³²

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.³³

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other congregations, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.³⁴

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.³⁵

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

³² “**Corrupted**” – A metaphorical “chaste virgin” (v. 2) that became “corrupted” by false doctrine (v. 4) would be a metaphorical “harlot” (Rev. 17:5; 18:4).

³³ “**Might well bare with him**” – They had accepted false apostles and rejected God’s true apostle (vv. 5-12) and so with sarcasm Paul tells them if they are going to swallow their false doctrine they might just as well accept false apostles along with it. Even at that time, there were those who preached “another gospel,” “another Jesus,” and “another spirit.”

³⁴ “**False apostles**” – They were false for a variety of reasons. First, apostles must measure up to certain Biblical qualifications (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 15:5-11). Second, apostles were confirmed by signs (12:12) that confirmed their doctrine as “the faith” once delivered and therefore they would not preach “another gospel” (Gal. 1:8-9), “another Jesus” (2 Jn. 9-11), or be empowered by “another spirit” (1 Jn. 4:1, 5-6).

³⁵ “**Transformed into an angel of light**” – [transformed – external appearance] God’s messengers bring God’s message and that is precisely how one discerns true apostles and ministers of Christ (Isa. 8:20; 1 Jn. 4:6). False ministers have only a superficial likeness to God’s ministry. Satan’s ministers are supernaturally empowered to perform miracles, signs and wonders (Mt. 24:24-25; 2 Thess. 2:9) but they are “lying” wonders because they do not confirm the truth (1 Jn. 4:6) but doctrinal errors. Today, there are many claims about seeing “angels.” However, the “angels” of God do not confirm doctrinal errors about God, salvation, heaven, or hell.

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16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.³⁶

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.³⁷

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the congregations.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities [weaknesses].

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.³⁸

³⁶ “**Foolishly**” – Paul considered it foolish to be required to boast as part of his credentials as an apostle. However, he does so for their sakes in order to dispel the false accusations of his enemies and defend the office given him by Christ.

³⁸ “**In a basket I was let down**” – This concludes the series of humiliating circumstances that characterize the ministry of the best of God’s saints (vv. 24-32). God’s servants are not “name it and claim it” wealthy successful charismatic TV personalities with great followings. The secular and religious world despises true ministers of Christ because of the doctrine they preach. The more truth a minister or congregation proclaims, the more despised and

Chapter 12

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.³⁹

3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.⁴⁰

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

separated it will be from the secular and religious world. Truth offends and separates, and the more truth you teach the more offensive and separated from the secular and religious world you become (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7).

³⁹ “**Above fourteen years ago**” – If this letter was written in AD 51 then this would place this vision at Jerusalem in the year AD 37. If he was saved in about A.D. 34 and if he spent three years in Damascus and Arabia (11:32-33; Gal. 1:17-18) before coming to Jerusalem to see the apostles, then, this vision occurred in Acts 9:28 at Jerusalem. The Hebrew and Greek words translated “heaven” are plural. Paul identifies the place where God dwells to be in the “**third heaven**” and “**paradise**.” The first heaven is the atmosphere around the earth while the second heaven is the space between earth’s atmosphere and the third heaven. Beyond the starry heavens is God’s dwelling place (the third heaven). David writing of the space between earth and where God dwells, declares, “the heavens declare thy glory” (Psa. 19:1). In Genesis chapter one, God speaks of various firmaments (lit. expansion – space) in connection with planet earth (Gen. 1:6-7). There is a firmament (expansion of space) below waters and one above it. The expansion below the waters is the atmosphere surrounding the earth while the firmament above the waters was the space where the sun and stars existed.

⁴⁰ “**I besought the Lord thrice**” – Healing is not always God’s will for his saints. God uses disease for the good of his people at times (v. 7; Job 1-2). God is more glorified by his people’s faithfulness in spite of disease than in removing the disease (v. 9).

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12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.⁴¹

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other congregations, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates [contentions, strife, arguing], envyings, wraths [heated/fierce anger], strifes [power struggles], backbitings, whisperings [secretly slandering], swellings [prideful boasts], tumults [disorderly disturbances]:

21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

⁴¹ “**Signs of an apostle**” – If such “signs, wonders and mighty deeds” were for all saints then they could hardly be “signs of an apostle” (Heb. 2:3-4, 12) but rather they would be signs of being a Christian or a “spiritual” Christian. Other saints received these signs through the laying on of apostolic hands (Rom. 1:11; Acts 6:6; 19:6; etc.). When the last apostle died, these signs died out with the last saints on whom the apostles had laid their hands.

Chapter 13

This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.⁴²

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect [mature], be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. [The second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.]⁴³

⁴² “**Third time**” – Physically, Paul had only been to Corinth one time before this. However, he came a second time to them by way of his first letter. In that letter he told them that he was absent in body but was present in spirit with them (I Cor. 5:4). This present letter represents the “second time” he was physically absent from them but came to them by letter as though he were present with them again “as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write” (v. 2). His letters were as much his “witnesses” as his very presence.

⁴³ “**The Lord Jesus Christ...of God...of the Holy Ghost**” – Here Paul presents the Triune God as Three Persons in relationship with God’s saints. Grace is seen most clearly in the Son as he is the basis for our salvation. Love is seen most clearly in the Father as He gave up His only Son for our redemption. Our communion with God is through the indwelling Holy Spirit.