



The **Second** Letter to the

CORINTHIANS

From the New Testament of the
New Jerusalem Bible.

Perfect for classrooms, homeschool,
and all studies.

Area for notes included

2 Corinthians - Chapter 1:1-8

1- Paul, by the will of God an apostle of Christ Jesus, and Timothy, our brother, to the church of God in Corinth and to all God's holy people in the whole of Achaia.

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

3- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father and the God who gives every possible encouragement;

4- he supports us in every hardship, so that we are able to come to the support of others, in every hardship of theirs because of the encouragement that we ourselves receive from God.

5- For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow into our lives; so too does the encouragement we receive through Christ.

6- So if we have hardships to undergo, this will contribute to your encouragement and your salvation; if we receive encouragement, this is to gain for you the encouragement which enables you to bear with perseverance the same sufferings as we do.

7- So our hope for you is secure in the knowledge that you share the encouragement we receive, no less than the sufferings we bear.

8- So in the hardships we underwent in Asia, we want you to be quite certain, brothers, that we were under extraordinary pressure, beyond our powers of endurance, so that we gave up all hope even of surviving.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 1:9-16

9- In fact we were carrying the sentence of death within our own selves, so that we should be forced to trust not in ourselves but in God, who raises the dead.

10- He did save us from such a death and will save us -- we are relying on him to do so.

11- Your prayer for us will contribute to this, so that, for God's favour shown to us as the result of the prayers of so many, thanks too may be given by many on our behalf.

12- There is one thing that we are proud of, namely our conscientious conviction that we have always behaved towards everyone, and especially towards you, with that unalloyed holiness that comes from God, relying not on human reasoning but on the grace of God.

13- In our writing, there is nothing that you cannot read clearly and understand;

14- and it is my hope that, just as you have already understood us partially, so you will understand fully that you can be as proud of us as we shall be of you when the Day of our Lord Jesus comes.

15- It was with this assurance that I had been meaning to come to you first, so that you would benefit doubly;

16- both to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and then to return to you again from Macedonia, so that you could set me on my way to Judaea.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 1:17-24

17- Since that was my purpose, do you think I lightly changed my mind? Or that my plans are based on ordinary human promptings and I have in my mind Yes, yes at the same time as No, no?

18- As surely as God is trustworthy, what we say to you is not both Yes and No.

19- The Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed to you by us, that is, by me and by Silvanus and Timothy, was never Yes-and-No; his nature is all Yes.

20- For in him is found the Yes to all God's promises and therefore it is 'through him' that we answer 'Amen' to give praise to God.

21- It is God who gives us, with you, a sure place in Christ

22- and has both anointed us and marked us with his seal, giving us as pledge the Spirit in our hearts.

23- By my life I call on God to be my witness that it was only to spare you that I did not come to Corinth again.

24- We have no wish to lord it over your faith, but to work with you for your joy; for your stand in the faith is firm.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 2:1-9

1- I made up my mind, then, that my next visit to you would not be a painful one,

2- for if I cause you distress I am causing distress to my only possible source of joy.

3- Indeed, I wrote as I did precisely to spare myself distress when I visited you, from the very people who should have given me joy, in the conviction that for all of you my joy was yours too.

4- I wrote to you in agony of mind, not meaning to cause you distress but to show you how very much love I have for you.

5- If anyone did cause distress, he caused it not to me, but -- not to exaggerate -- in some degree to all of you.

6- The punishment already imposed by the majority was quite enough for such a person;

7- and now by contrast you should forgive and encourage him all the more, or he may be overwhelmed by the extent of his distress.

8- That is why I urge you to give your love towards him definite expression.

9- This was in fact my reason for writing, to test your quality and whether you are completely obedient.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 2:10-17

10- But if you forgive anybody, then I too forgive that person; and whatever I have forgiven, if there is anything I have forgiven, I have done it for your sake in Christ's presence,

11- to avoid being outwitted by Satan, whose scheming we know only too well.

12- When I came to Troas for the sake of the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me there in the Lord,

13- I had no relief from anxiety, not finding my brother Titus there, and I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

14- But, thanks be to God who always gives us in Christ a part in his triumphal procession, and through us is spreading everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of himself.

15- To God we are the fragrance of Christ, both among those who are being saved and among those who are on the way to destruction;

16- for these last, the smell of death leading to death, but for the first, the smell of life leading to life. Who is equal to such a task?

17- At least we do not adulterate the word of God, as so many do, but it is in all purity, as envoys of God and in God's presence, that we speak in Christ.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 3:1-9

1- Are we beginning to commend ourselves to you afresh -- as though we needed, like some others, to have letters of commendation either to you or from you?

2- You yourselves are our letter, written in our hearts, that everyone can read and understand;

3- and it is plain that you are a letter from Christ, entrusted to our care, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not on stone tablets but on the tablets of human hearts.

4- Such is the confidence we have through Christ in facing God;

5- it is not that we are so competent that we can claim any credit for ourselves; all our competence comes from God.

6- He has given us the competence to be ministers of a new covenant, a covenant which is not of written letters, but of the Spirit; for the written letters kill, but the Spirit gives life.

7- Now if the administering of death, engraved in letters on stone, occurred in such glory that the Israelites could not look Moses steadily in the face, because of its glory, transitory though this glory was,

8- how much more will the ministry of the Spirit occur in glory!

9- For if it is glorious to administer condemnation, to administer saving justice is far richer in glory.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 3:10-18

10- Indeed, what was once considered glorious has lost all claim to glory, by contrast with the glory which transcends it.

11- For if what was transitory had any glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts for ever.

12- With a hope like this, we can speak with complete fearlessness;

13- not like Moses who put a veil over his face so that the Israelites should not watch the end of what was transitory.

14- But their minds were closed; indeed, until this very day, the same veil remains over the reading of the Old Testament: it is not lifted, for only in Christ is it done away with.

15- As it is, to this day, whenever Moses is read, their hearts are covered with a veil,

16- and this veil will not be taken away till they turn to the Lord.

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

18- And all of us, with our unveiled faces like mirrors reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the image that we reflect in brighter and brighter glory; this is the working of the Lord who is the Spirit.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 4:1-9

1- Such by God's mercy is our ministry, and therefore we do not waver

2- but have renounced all shameful secrecy. It is not our way to be devious, or to falsify the word of God; instead, in God's sight we commend ourselves to every human being with a conscience by showing the truth openly.

3- If our gospel seems to be veiled at all, it is so to those who are on the way to destruction,

4- the unbelievers whose minds have been blinded by the god of this world, so that they cannot see shining the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

5- It is not ourselves that we are proclaiming, but Christ Jesus as the Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

6- It is God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' that has shone into our hearts to enlighten them with the knowledge of God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ.

7- But we hold this treasure in pots of earthenware, so that the immensity of the power is God's and not our own.

8- We are subjected to every kind of hardship, but never distressed; we see no way out but we never despair;

9- we are pursued but never cut off; knocked down, but still have some life in us;

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 4:10-18

10- always we carry with us in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our body.

11- Indeed, while we are still alive, we are continually being handed over to death, for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our mortal flesh.

12- In us, then, death is at work; in you, life.

13- But as we have the same spirit of faith as is described in scripture -- I believed and therefore I spoke -- we, too, believe and therefore we, too, speak,

14- realising that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up with Jesus in our turn, and bring us to himself -- and you as well.

15- You see, everything is for your benefit, so that as grace spreads, so, to the glory of God, thanksgiving may also overflow among more and more people.

16- That is why we do not waver; indeed, though this outer human nature of ours may be falling into decay, at the same time our inner human nature is renewed day by day.

17- The temporary, light burden of our hardships is earning us for ever an utterly incomparable, eternal weight of glory,

18- since what we aim for is not visible but invisible. Visible things are transitory, but invisible things eternal.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 5:1-8

1- For we are well aware that when the tent that houses us on earth is folded up, there is a house for us from God, not made by human hands but everlasting, in the heavens.

2- And in this earthly state we do indeed groan,

3- longing to put on our heavenly home over the present one; if indeed we are to be found clothed rather than stripped bare.

4- Yes, indeed, in this present tent, we groan under the burden, not that we want to be stripped of our covering, but because we want to be covered with a second garment on top, so that what is mortal in us may be swallowed up by life.

5- It is God who designed us for this very purpose, and he has given us the Spirit as a pledge.

6- We are always full of confidence, then, realising that as long as we are at home in the body we are exiled from the Lord,

7- guided by faith and not yet by sight;

8- we are full of confidence, then, and long instead to be exiled from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 5:9-15

9- And so whether at home or exiled, we make it our ambition to please him.

10- For at the judgement seat of Christ we are all to be seen for what we are, so that each of us may receive what he has deserved in the body, matched to whatever he has done, good or bad.

11- And so it is with the fear of the Lord always in mind that we try to win people over. But God sees us for what we are, and I hope your consciences do too.

12- Again we are saying this not to commend ourselves to you, but simply to give you the opportunity to take pride in us, so that you may have an answer for those who take pride in appearances and not inner reality.

13- If we have been unreasonable, it was for God; if reasonable, for you.

14- For the love of Christ overwhelms us when we consider that if one man died for all, then all have died;

15- his purpose in dying for all humanity was that those who live should live not any more for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 5:16-21

16- From now onwards, then, we will not consider anyone by human standards: even if we were once familiar with Christ according to human standards, we do not know him in that way any longer.

17- So for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old order is gone and a new being is there to see.

18- It is all God's work; he reconciled us to himself through Christ and he gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

19- I mean, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not holding anyone's faults against them, but entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

20- So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were urging you through us, and in the name of Christ we appeal to you to be reconciled to God.

21- For our sake he made the sinless one a victim for sin, so that in him we might become the uprightness of God.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 6:1-9

1- As his fellow-workers, we urge you not to let your acceptance of his grace come to nothing.

2- As he said, 'At the time of my favour I have answered you; on the day of salvation I have helped you'; well, now is the real time of favour, now the day of salvation is here.

3- We avoid putting obstacles in anyone's way, so that no blame may attach to our work of service;

4- but in everything we prove ourselves authentic servants of God; by resolute perseverance in times of hardships, difficulties and distress;

5- when we are flogged or sent to prison or mobbed; labouring, sleepless, starving;

6- in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness; in the Holy Spirit, in a love free of affectation;

7- in the word of truth and in the power of God; by using the weapons of uprightness for attack and for defense:

8- in times of honour or disgrace, blame or praise; taken for impostors and yet we are genuine;

9- unknown and yet we are acknowledged; dying, and yet here we are, alive; scourged but not executed;

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 6:10-18

10- in pain yet always full of joy; poor and yet making many people rich; having nothing, and yet owning everything.

11- People of Corinth, we have spoken frankly and opened our heart to you.

12- Any distress you feel is not on our side; the distress is in your own selves.

13- In fair exchange -- I speak as though to children of mine -- you must open your hearts too.

14- Do not harness yourselves in an uneven team with unbelievers; how can uprightness and law-breaking be partners, or what can light and darkness have in common?

15- How can Christ come to an agreement with Beliar and what sharing can there be between a believer and an unbeliever?

16- The temple of God cannot compromise with false gods, and that is what we are -- the temple of the living God. We have God's word for it: I shall fix my home among them and live among them; I will be their God and they will be my people.

17- Get away from them, purify yourselves, says the Lord. Do not touch anything unclean, and then I shall welcome you.

18- I shall be father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me, says the almighty Lord.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 7:1-8

1- Since these promises have been made to us, my dear friends, we should wash ourselves clean of everything that pollutes either body or spirit, bringing our sanctification to completion in the fear of God.

2- Keep a place for us in your hearts. We have not injured anyone, or ruined anyone, or taken advantage of anyone.

3- I am not saying this to condemn anybody; as I have already told you, you are in our hearts -- so that together we live and together we die.

4- I can speak with the greatest frankness to you; and I can speak with the greatest pride about you: in all our hardship, I am filled with encouragement and overflowing with joy.

5- Even after we had come to Macedonia, there was no rest for this body of ours. Far from it; we were beset by hardship on all sides, there were quarrels all around us and misgivings within us.

6- But God, who encourages all those who are distressed, encouraged us through the arrival of Titus;

7- and not simply by his arrival only, but also by means of the encouragement that you had given him, as he told us of your desire to see us, how sorry you were and how concerned for us; so that I was all the more joyful.

8- So now, though I did distress you with my letter, I do not regret it. Even if I did regret it -- and I realise that the letter distressed you, even though not for long-

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 7:9-16

9- I am glad now, not because you were made to feel distress, but because the distress that you were caused led to repentance; your distress was the kind that God approves and so you have come to no kind of harm through us.

10- For to be distressed in a way that God approves leads to repentance and then to salvation with no regrets; it is the world's kind of distress that ends in death.

11- Just look at this present case: at what the result has been of your being made to feel distress in the way that God approves -- what concern, what defence, what indignation and what alarm; what yearning, and what enthusiasm, and what justice done. In every way you have cleared yourselves of blame in this matter.

12- So although I wrote a letter to you, it was not for the sake of the offender, nor for the one offended, but only so that you yourselves should fully realise in the sight of God what concern you have for us.

13- That is what I have found encouraging. In addition to all this to encourage us, we were made all the more joyful by Titus' joy, now that his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

14- And if I boasted about you to him in any way, then I have not been made to look foolish; indeed, our boast to Titus has been proved to be as true as anything we said to you.

15- His personal affection for you is all the stronger when he remembers how obedient you have all been, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

16- I am glad that I have every confidence in you.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 8:1-8

1- Next, brothers, we will tell you of the grace of God which has been granted to the churches of Macedonia,

2- and how, throughout continual ordeals of hardship, their unfailing joy and their intense poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.

3- I can testify that it was of their own accord that they made their gift, which was not merely as far as their resources would allow, but well beyond their resources;

4- and they had kept imploring us most insistently for the privilege of a share in the fellowship of service to God's holy people-

5- it was not something that we expected of them, but it began by their offering themselves to the Lord and to us at the prompting of the will of God.

6- In the end we urged Titus, since he had already made a beginning, also to bring this work of generosity to completion among you.

7- More, as you are rich in everything-faith, eloquence, understanding, concern for everything, and love for us too -- then make sure that you excel in this work of generosity too.

8- I am not saying this as an order, but testing the genuineness of your love against the concern of others.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 8:9-16

9- You are well aware of the generosity which our Lord Jesus Christ had, that, although he was rich, he became poor for your sake, so that you should become rich through his poverty.

10- I will give you my considered opinion in the matter; this will be the right course for you as you were the first, a year ago, not only to take any action but also even to conceive the project.

11- Now, then, complete the action as well, so that the fulfilment may -- so far as your resources permit -- be proportionate to your enthusiasm for the project.

12- As long as the enthusiasm is there, the basis on which it is acceptable is what someone has, not what someone does not have.

13- It is not that you ought to relieve other people's needs and leave yourselves in hardship; but there should be a fair balance-

14- your surplus at present may fill their deficit, and another time their surplus may fill your deficit. So there may be a fair balance;

15- as scripture says: No one who had collected more had too much, no one who collected less had too little.

16- Thank God for putting into Titus' heart the same sincere concern for you.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 8:17-24

17- He certainly took our urging to heart; but greater still was his own enthusiasm, and he went off to you of his own accord.

18- We have sent with him the brother who is praised as an evangelist in all the churches

19- and who, what is more, was elected by the churches to be our travelling companion in this work of generosity, a work to be administered by us for the glory of the Lord and our complete satisfaction.

20- We arranged it this way so that no one should be able to make any accusation against us about this large sum we are administering.

21- And so we have been careful to do right not only in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of people.

22- Along with these, we have sent a brother of ours whose eagerness we have tested over and over again in many ways and who is now all the more eager because he has so much faith in you.

23- If Titus is in question -- he is my own partner and fellow-worker in your interests; and if our brothers -- they are the emissaries of the churches and the glory of Christ.

24- So then, in full view of all the churches, give proof that you love them, and that we were right to boast of you to them.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 9:1-8

1- About the help to God's holy people, there is really no need for me to write to you;

2- for I am well aware of your enthusiasm, and I have been boasting of it to the Macedonians that 'Achaia has been ready for a year'; your enthusiasm has been a spur to many others.

3- All the same, I have sent the brothers, to make sure that our boast about you may not prove hollow in this respect and that you may be ready, as I said you would be;

4- so that if by chance some of the Macedonians came with me and found you unprepared we -- to say nothing of yourselves -- would not be put to shame by our confidence in you.

5- So I have thought it necessary to encourage the brothers to go to you ahead of us and make sure in advance of the gift that you have already promised, so that it is all at hand as a real gift and not an imposition.

6- But remember: anyone who sows sparsely will reap sparsely as well -- and anyone who sows generously will reap generously as well.

7- Each one should give as much as he has decided on his own initiative, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8- God is perfectly able to enrich you with every grace, so that you always have enough for every conceivable need, and your resources overflow in all kinds of good work.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 9:9-15

9- As scripture says: To the needy he gave without stint, his uprightness stands firm for ever.

10- The one who so freely provides seed for the sower and food to eat will provide you with ample store of seed for sowing and make the harvest of your uprightness a bigger one:

11- you will be rich enough in every way for every kind of generosity that makes people thank God for what we have done.

12- For the help provided by this contribution not only satisfies the needs of God's holy people, but also overflows into widespread thanksgiving to God;

13- because when you have proved your quality by this help, they will give glory to God for the obedience which you show in professing the gospel of Christ, as well as for the generosity of your fellowship towards them and towards all.

14- At the same time, their prayer for you will express the affection they feel for you because of the unbounded grace God has given you.

15- Thanks be to God for his gift that is beyond all telling!

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 10:1-9

1- I urge you by the gentleness and forbearance of Christ -- this is Paul now speaking personally-I, the one who is so humble when he is facing you but full of boldness at a distance.

2- Yes, my appeal to you is that I should not have to be bold when I am actually with you, or show the same self-assurance as I reckon to use when I am challenging those who reckon that we are guided by human motives.

3- For although we are human, it is not by human methods that we do battle.

4- The weapons with which we do battle are not those of human nature, but they have the power, in God's cause, to demolish fortresses. It is ideas that we demolish,

5- every presumptuous notion that is set up against the knowledge of God, and we bring every thought into captivity and obedience to Christ;

6- once you have given your complete obedience, we are prepared to punish any disobedience.

7- Look at the evidence of your eyes. Anybody who is convinced that he belongs to Christ should go on to reflect that we belong to Christ no less than he does.

8- Maybe I have taken rather too much pride in our authority, but the Lord gave us that for building you up, not for knocking you down, and I am not going to be shamed

9- into letting you think that I can put fear into you only by letter.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 10:10-18

10- Someone said, 'His letters are weighty enough, and full of strength, but when you see him in person, he makes no impression and his powers of speaking are negligible.'

11- I should like that sort of person to take note that our deeds when we are present will show the same qualities as our letters when we were at a distance.

12- We are not venturing to rank ourselves, or even to compare ourselves with certain people who provide their own commendations. By measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves to themselves, they only show their folly.

13- By contrast we do not intend to boast beyond measure, but will measure ourselves by the standard which God laid down for us, namely that of having come all the way to you.

14- We are not overreaching ourselves as we would be if we had not come all the way to you; in fact we were the first to come as far as you with the good news of Christ.

15- So we are not boasting beyond measure, about other men's work; in fact, we hope, as your faith increases, to grow greater and greater by this standard of ours,

16- by preaching the gospel to regions beyond you, rather than boasting about work already done in someone else's province.

17- Let anyone who wants to boast, boast of the Lord.

18- For it is not through self-commendation that recognition is won, but through commendation.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 11:1-8

1- I wish you would put up with a little foolishness from me -- not that you don't do this already.

2- The jealousy that I feel for you is, you see, God's own jealousy: I gave you all in marriage to a single husband, a virgin pure for presentation to Christ.

3- But I am afraid that, just as the snake with his cunning seduced Eve, your minds may be led astray from single-minded devotion to Christ.

4- Because any chance comer has only to preach a Jesus other than the one we preached, or you have only to receive a spirit different from the one you received, or a gospel different from the one you accepted -- and you put up with that only too willingly.

5- Now, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to the super-apostles.

6- Even if there is something lacking in my public speaking, this is not the case with my knowledge, as we have openly shown to you at all times and before everyone.

7- Have I done wrong, then, humbling myself so that you might be raised up, by preaching the gospel of God to you for nothing?

8- I was robbing other churches, taking wages from them in order to work for you.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 11:9-16

9- When I was with you and needed money, I was no burden to anybody, for the brothers from Macedonia brought me as much as I needed when they came; I have always been careful not to let myself be a burden to you in any way, and I shall continue to be so.

10- And as Christ's truth is in me, this boast of mine is not going to be silenced in the regions of Achaia.

11- Why should it be? Because I do not love you? God knows that I do.

12- I will go on acting as I do at present, to cut the ground from under the feet of those who are looking for a chance to be proved my equals in grounds for boasting.

13- These people are counterfeit apostles, dishonest workers disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

14- There is nothing astonishing in this; even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15- It is nothing extraordinary, then, when his servants disguise themselves as the servants of uprightness. They will come to the end appropriate to what they have done.

16- To repeat: let no one take me for a fool, but if you do, then treat me as a fool, so that I, too, can do a little boasting.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 11:17-25

17- I shall not be following the Lord's way in what I say now, but will be speaking out of foolishness in the conviction that I have something to boast about.

18- So many people boast on merely human grounds that I shall too.

19- I know how happy you are to put up with fools, being so wise yourselves;

20- and how you will still go on putting up with a man who enslaves you, eats up all you possess, keeps you under his orders and sets himself above you, or even slaps you in the face.

21- I say it to your shame; perhaps we have been too weak. Whatever bold claims anyone makes -- now I am talking as a fool -- I can make them too.

22- Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

23- Are they servants of Christ? I speak in utter folly -- I am too, and more than they are: I have done more work, I have been in prison more, I have been flogged more severely, many times exposed to death.

24- Five times I have been given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews;

25- three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned; three times I have been shipwrecked, and once I have been in the open sea for a night and a day;

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 11:26-33

26- continually travelling, I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from brigands, in danger from my own people and in danger from the gentiles, in danger in the towns and in danger in the open country, in danger at sea and in danger from people masquerading as brothers;

27- I have worked with unsparing energy, for many nights without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty, and often altogether without food or drink; I have been cold and lacked clothing.

28- And, besides all the external things, there is, day in day out, the pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

29- If anyone weakens, I am weakened as well; and when anyone is made to fall, I burn in agony myself.

30- If I have to boast, I will boast of all the ways in which I am weak.

31- The God and Father of the Lord Jesus -- who is for ever to be blessed -- knows that I am not lying.

32- When I was in Damascus, the governor who was under King Aretas put guards round Damascus city to catch me,

33- and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and that was how I escaped from his hands.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 12:1-8

1- I am boasting because I have to. Not that it does any good, but I will move on to visions and revelations from the Lord.

2- I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago -- still in the body? I do not know; or out of the body? I do not know: God knows -- was caught up right into the third heaven.

3- And I know that this man -- still in the body? or outside the body? I do not know, God knows-

4- was caught up into Paradise and heard words said that cannot and may not be spoken by any human being.

5- On behalf of someone like that I am willing to boast, but I am not going to boast on my own behalf except of my weaknesses;

6- and then, if I do choose to boast I shall not be talking like a fool because I shall be speaking the truth. But I will not go on in case anybody should rate me higher than he sees and hears me to be, because of the exceptional greatness of the revelations.

7- Wherefore, so that I should not get above myself, I was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan to batter me and prevent me from getting above myself.

8- About this, I have three times pleaded with the Lord that it might leave me;

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 12:9-15

9- but he has answered me, 'My grace is enough for you: for power is at full stretch in weakness.' It is, then, about my weaknesses that I am happiest of all to boast, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me;

10- and that is why I am glad of weaknesses, insults, constraints, persecutions and distress for Christ's sake. For it is when I am weak that I am strong.

11- I have turned into a fool, but you forced me to it. It is you that should have been commending me; those super-apostles had no advantage over me, even if I am nothing at all.

12- All the marks characteristic of a true apostle have been at work among you: complete perseverance, signs, marvels, demonstrations of power.

13- Is there any way in which you have been given less than the rest of the churches, except that I did not make myself a burden to you? Forgive me for this unfairness!

14- Here I am, ready to come to you for the third time and I am not going to be a burden on you: it is not your possessions that I want, but yourselves. Children are not expected to save up for their parents, but parents for their children,

15- and I am more than glad to spend what I have and to be spent for the sake of your souls. Is it because I love you so much more, that I am loved the less?

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 12:16-21

16- All right, then; I did not make myself a burden to you, but, trickster that I am, I caught you by trickery.

17- Have I taken advantage of you through any of the people I have sent to you?

18- Titus came at my urging, and I sent his companion with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Can you deny that he and I were following the guidance of the same Spirit and were on the same tracks?

19- All this time you have been thinking that we have been pleading our own cause before you; no, we have been speaking in Christ and in the presence of God -- and all, dear friends, to build you up.

20- I am afraid that in one way or another, when I come, I may find you different from what I should like you to be, and you may find me what you would not like me to be; so that in one way or the other there will be rivalry, jealousy, bad temper, quarrels, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorders;

21- and when I come again, my God may humiliate me in front of you and I shall be grieved by all those who sinned in the past and have still not repented of the impurities and sexual immorality and debauchery that they have committed.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 13:1-7

1- This will be the third time I have confronted you. Whatever the misdemeanor, the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain a charge.

2- I gave you notice once, and now, though I am not with you, I give notice again, just as when I was with you for a second time, to those who sinned before, and to all others; and it is to this effect, that when I do come next time, I shall have no mercy.

3- Since you are asking for a proof that it is Christ who speaks in me; he is not weak with you but his power is at work among you;

4- for, though it was out of weakness that he was crucified, he is alive now with the power of God. We, too, are weak in him, but with regard to you we shall live with him by the power of God.

5- Put yourselves to the test to make sure you are in the faith. Examine yourselves. Do you not recognise yourselves as people in whom Jesus Christ is present? - unless, that is, you fail the test.

6- But we, as I hope you will come to recognise, do not fail the test.

7- It is our prayer to God that you may do nothing wrong -- not so that we have the credit of passing a test, but because you will be doing what is right, even if we do not pass the test.

Notes:

2 Corinthians - Chapter 13:8-13

8- We have no power to resist the truth; only to further the truth;

9- and we are delighted to be weak if only you are strong. What we ask in our prayers is that you should be made perfect.

10- That is why I am writing this while still far away, so that when I am with you I shall not have to be harsh, with the authority that the Lord has given me, an authority that is for building up and not for breaking down.

11- To end then, brothers, we wish you joy; try to grow perfect; encourage one another; have a common mind and live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

12- Greet one another with the holy kiss. All God's holy people send you their greetings.

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

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