

# Book of 2Corinthians

## Synopsis



## Introduction

Book No	47
Name	2Corinthians
Written By	Paul
Testament	New
Category	Epistles
Date Written	Approx. 55 – 57 A.D
Place Written	Macedonia
Audience	Church in Corinth
Purpose	To affirm Paul's ministry, defend his authority as an apostle, and refute the false teachers in Corinth
History Covered	NA
Chapters	13
Verses	257
Key Verse	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. (5:20)
Key People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Paul</li> <li>❖ Timothy</li> <li>❖ Titus</li> </ul>
Key Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Corinth</li> <li>❖ Macedonia</li> </ul>

## Purpose of the Book

Paul constantly struggled with those who would mislead God's people, and he poured his life into spreading the Good News to the uttermost parts of the world. During three missionary trips and other travels, he proclaimed Christ, made converts, and established churches. But often young believers were easy prey for false teachers. False teachers were a constant threat to the gospel and the early church. So Paul had to spend much time warning and correcting these new Christians.

The church at Corinth was weak. Surrounded by idolatry and immorality, they struggled with their Christian faith and life-style. Through personal visits and letters, Paul tried to instruct them in the faith, resolve their conflicts, and solve some of their problems. First Corinthians was sent to deal with specific moral issues in the church and to answer questions about sex, marriage, and tender consciences. That letter confronted the issues directly and was well received by most. But there were false teachers who denied Paul's authority and slandered him. Paul then wrote 2 Corinthians to defend his position and to denounce those who were twisting the truth.

Second Corinthians is the most autobiographical of Paul's letters, containing numerous references to the hardships he endured in the course of his ministry (see 11:23–33). Paul mentioned these to establish the legitimacy of his ministry and to illustrate the nature of true spirituality.

In defending his ministry, Paul opens his heart, showing his deep emotion. He reveals his strong love for the Corinthians, his ardent zeal for the glory of God, his uncompromising loyalty to the truth of the gospel, and his stern indignation in confronting those who disrupt the fellowship of the church. His life was bound up in the life of his converts, and he was not coldly professional in his ministry (see 1:6; 5:13; 7:3–7; 11:2; 12:14, 15).

Second Corinthians must have been a difficult letter for Paul to write because he had to list his credentials as an apostle. Paul was reluctant to do so as a humble servant of Christ, but he knew it was necessary. Paul also knew that most of the believers in Corinth had taken his previous words to heart and were beginning to mature in their faith. He affirmed their commitment to Christ.

Second Corinthians begins with Paul reminding his readers of

(1) his relationship to them—Paul had always been honest and straightforward with them (1:12-14),

(2) his itinerary—he was planning to visit them again (1:15–2:3), and

(3) his previous letter (2:4-11). Paul then moves directly to the subject of false teachers (2:17), and he reviews his ministry among the Corinthians to demonstrate the validity of his message and to urge them not to turn away from the truth (3:1–7:16).

Paul next turns to the issue of collecting money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. He tells them how others have given, and he urges them to show their love in a tangible way as well (8:1–9:15). Paul then gives a strong defense of his authority as a genuine apostle while pointing out the deceptive influence of the false apostles (10:1–13:10).

Second Corinthians is a valuable guide in examining our own motives for serving the Lord, whether as lay people or as ordained pastors and evangelists. As an instrument of the Holy Spirit, this letter can refine our motives until we reflect the kind of selfless giving best exemplified in Christ, but also found in His servant Paul. The instructions concerning the collection for Jerusalem (chs. 8 and 9) emphasize generosity in the area of financial resources, just as Paul emphasized generosity in self-giving throughout the book.

As you read this intensely personal letter, listen to Paul's words of love and exhortation, and be committed to the truth of God's Word and prepared to reject all false teaching.

### Overview

- ❖ 47<sup>th</sup> book of the BIBLE, 8<sup>th</sup> in the New Testament, 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 21 epistles and 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 14 epistles written by Paul
- ❖ Paul established the church in Corinth on his second missionary journey.
- ❖ Two of Paul's letters are written to the church at Corinth.
  - 1 Corinthians
  - 2 Corinthians
- ❖ After 1 Corinthians had been received the church in Corinth, false teachers had entered in and stirred the people up against Paul. They claimed he was:
  - Fickle
  - Proud
  - Unimpressive in appearance

- Unqualified as an apostle of Jesus Christ
- ❖ Paul penned 2 Corinthians in order to:
  - Express his thanksgiving for the repentant attitude that resulted from their having received 1 Corinthians.
  - To appeal to the rebellious members among them to accept his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Titus and another brother carried 2 Corinthians to the church at Corinth.
- ❖ When Paul made his third trip to Corinth, he wrote the Roman letter to the brethren in Rome.
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 8-9 is the longest discussion of the principles and practice of giving found in the New Testament.
- ❖ The city of Corinth:
  - After Corinth was destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C., the city was rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.
  - The capital of Achaia.
  - Its official language was Latin.
  - Its common language was Greek.
  - In Paul's day the population was about 7000,000 people.
  - 2/3 of the population were slaves.
  - Was filled with shrines and temples.
  - Temple of Aphrodite, located on top of the 1,800 foot tall promontory called the Acrocorinthus, had some 1,000 temple prostitutes

### Hebrew Names of GOD used in 2Corinthians

- ❖ ALMIGHTY

### Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the focus of our relationship with God. All God's promises to us are Yes in Jesus, and we say "Amen" to God's promises in Jesus (1:19, 20). Jesus is God's Yes to us and our Yes to God. Only in Christ do we see the glory of God, and only in Him are we transformed by that glory (3:14, 18), for Christ is the very image of God (4:4-6). God came to us in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (5:19). Thus, it is "in Christ" that we have become new creatures (5:17). This change was accomplished

through the marvelous act of God's grace in which Christ, "who knew no sin," became "sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (5:21).

Jesus is also the focus of our service to God. We proclaim Jesus as Lord and ourselves as servants for His sake (4:5). We willingly share not only Christ's life and glory but also His dying (4:10–12), His willingness to be weak so that others might experience the power of God (13:3, 4, 9), and His willingness to be impoverished so that others might be enriched (8:9). We experience His weakness but also His strength as we seek to bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (10:5).

Again, Jesus is the focus of our present life in this world, where we simultaneously experience in our mortal bodies both "the dying of the Lord Jesus" and His life (4:10, 11).

Finally, Jesus is the focus of our future life, for we will be raised up with Jesus (4:14), who is the "betrothed . . . husband" of the church (11:2) and the judge of all men (5:10).

### Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the power of the New Covenant (3:6), because He makes real to us the present and future provisions of our salvation in Christ. By the gift of "the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee," we are assured that all God's promises are Yes in Christ, and that we are anointed and "sealed" as belonging to Him (1:20–22). The present experience of the Spirit is specifically "a guarantee" of the glorified bodies we will one day receive (5:1–5).

We do not merely read about the will of God in the "letter" of Scripture, for "the letter [alone] kills." The Spirit who gives life (3:6) changes our way of living by opening our eyes to the living reality of what we read. Thus, we progressively experience and embody the will of God, and we ourselves become epistles of Christ, "known and read by all men" (3:2).

When we submit ourselves to the work of the Spirit, we experience a miracle. We find that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (3:17). There is liberty to behold the unveiled glory of the Lord and to be changed more and more into the likeness of what we behold. The Holy Spirit gives us freedom to see and freedom to be what God wants us to be (3:16–18).

The work of the Holy Spirit is evident in daily inward renewal (4:16), spiritual warfare (10:3–5), and the “signs and wonders and mighty deeds” of Paul’s ministry in Corinth (12:12). Paul ended his letter with a blessing, which included “the communion [fellowship] of the Holy Spirit” (13:14). This could indicate a sense of the Spirit’s presence or, more likely, an enjoyment of the fellowship the Spirit gives us with Christ and with all people who love Christ.

## Mega Themes of 2Corinthians

### TRIALS

Paul experienced great suffering, persecution, and opposition in his ministry. He even struggled with a personal weakness—a “thorn” in the flesh. Through it all, Paul affirmed God’s faithfulness.

God is faithful. His strength is sufficient for any trial. When trials come, they keep us from pride and teach us dependence on God. He comforts us so we can comfort others.

### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Paul defends his role in church discipline. Neither immorality nor false teaching could be ignored. The church was to be neither too lax nor too severe in administering discipline. The church was to restore the corrected person when he or she repented.

The goal of all discipline in the church should be correction, not vengeance. For churches to be effective, they must confront and solve problems, not ignore them. In everything, we must act in love.

### HOPE

To encourage the Corinthians as they faced trials, Paul reminded them that they would receive new bodies in heaven. This would be a great victory in contrast to their present suffering.

To know we will receive new bodies offers us hope. No matter what adversity we face, we can keep going. Our faithful service will result in triumph.

### GIVING

Paul organized a collection of funds for the poor in the Jerusalem church. Many of the Asian churches gave money. Paul explains and defends his beliefs about giving, and he urges the Corinthians to follow through on their previous commitment.

Like the Corinthians, we should follow through on our financial commitments. Our giving must be generous, sacrificial, well planned, and based on need. Our generosity

not only helps those in need but enables them to thank God.

### SOUND DOCTRINE

False teachers were challenging Paul's ministry and authority as an apostle. Paul asserts his authority in order to preserve correct Christian doctrine. His sincerity, his love for Christ, and his concern for the people were his defense.

We should share Paul's concern for correct teaching in our churches. But in so doing, we must share his motivation—love for Christ and people—and his sincerity.

## Life Lessons in 2Corinthians

<b>Truth</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
<p><b>Growing in Godliness</b></p> <p>Paul's life demonstrates godly living. He openly shared the hardships and the triumphs of following Jesus and living a life of godliness. Imitate godly examples even as they imitate Jesus (1 Cor. 11:1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Preach the gospel with a sincere heart. Be prepared for both negative and positive responses to your godly life and your preaching. Thank God that He always leads you in triumph.</li> <li>❖ Recognize that the ability and power to minister come from God alone.</li> <li>❖ Let the life of Jesus be manifested in your body.</li> <li>❖ Be compelled by the love of Christ. Know and proclaim that by faith in Christ, we are a new creation.</li> <li>❖ Follow the example of those willing to suffer for the sake of the gospel. Live your life in godliness and blamelessness by the power of God.</li> <li>❖ Ask God to give you a deep love for His people.</li> <li>❖ Conduct yourself with a clean conscious so that you will not be easily shaken by people's reactions</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Realize that righteousness also sometimes triggers negative reaction</li> <li>❖ Know and understand that you will give an account to JESUS as judge for every thought word and deed. Let this influence your conduct</li> <li>❖ Appropriate the fact that GOD has called you to live for HIM</li> <li>❖ Avoid any selfishness or personal ambition</li> <li>❖ Practice diligence in everything</li> <li>❖ Do what is right</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</b></p> <p>Worship Jesus, your Reconciler. In Christ, God says, “Yes” to all of His promises to you. In the face of Jesus, we see the glory of God. His glory is brightly reflected in our faces like in a mirror, because Jesus has removed the veil of sin from us. Spend time in worship and prayer in the liberty and freedom of the Spirit, knowing that He is transforming you increasingly into the image of the glorious Son.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Believe that all of the promises of God to you are “Yes” and “Amen”—affirmed and confirmed.</li> <li>❖ Receive God’s anointing by the Holy Spirit, not as a “feeling,” but as a steadfast guarantee.</li> <li>❖ Acknowledge that the Lord is the Spirit.</li> <li>❖ Welcome the Holy Spirit in all you do. Spend time in the presence of the Lord. Ask the Spirit to transform you continually from glory to glory. Understand that your face, like a mirror, reflects the glory of Jesus.</li> <li>❖ Live in peace with God through Jesus Christ, your Reconciler. Be one who helps others find peace and relationship with God.</li> <li>❖ Give GOD the glory and let any commendation be from HIM</li> <li>❖ Practice regular diligent self examination</li> </ul>

<p><b>Pursuing Holiness</b></p> <p>Jesus took our sin upon Himself, making it possible for us to become the righteousness of God. The way we live our lives should be motivated by what Christ has done for us. God calls us to live differently from the world because He saved us from sin and death. In grateful acknowledgment of all He has done, consecrate yourself to God to live a life of holiness in the fear of God.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Keep a clear conscience. Live honestly, and be authentically godly by the grace of God.</li> <li>❖ Do not enter into binding or covenant relationships with those involved in ungodly behavior.</li> <li>❖ Remember that you are the dwelling place of the living God. Live your life and conduct your relationships to honor and glorify God.</li> <li>❖ Cleanse yourself from all that degrades or corrupts your body and spirit. Do this by asking Jesus for forgiveness and turning from sin. Live in holiness in sincere respect for God.</li> <li>❖ Conduct yourself in the sincerity and holiness that come by GOD's grace</li> <li>❖ Turn from worldly wisdom toward which you may naturally incline</li> <li>❖ Know and observe the necessity of obedience in Christian living</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Walk of Faith</b></p> <p>Paul gives us some important keys to continuing in faith and not losing heart as we follow the Lord. We must learn to see our weaknesses as a means by which God perfects His strength in us. In our weakness, He receives all the glory when He moves through us with His power. We must learn that trials and difficulties will seem light and temporary when viewed from the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Do not give up or be discouraged. Set your focus and faith on unseen and eternal things.</li> <li>❖ See the present from the perspective of the future. Look forward to God's great and eternal glory.</li> <li>❖ Walk by faith, living according to the truth of God's Word.</li> <li>❖ Thank God that strength and ability are not the criteria by which He chooses to use people.</li> <li>❖ Embrace the truth that God's strength is perfected in your weakness. This truth will</li> </ul>

<p>perspective of the immeasurable glory that awaits us in eternity. We must learn to live by faith and not by what we can or cannot see with our natural eyes. Remember that His grace is sufficient in all situations.</p>	<p>set you free to be used powerfully by God. Receive His grace; it is all you need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Live according to the truth of GOD's Word and the testimony of HIS SPIRIT</li> <li>❖ Identify as evil any who would prevent the Word of GOD</li> <li>❖ Do not accept distortions of the gospel's truth</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guidelines for growth in the SPIRIT</b></p> <p>We must be determined to grow spiritually. Such growth is painful because one undergoes stretching, molding and refining by the HOLY SPIRIT, spiritual people deal ruthlessly with any carnal thoughts in their own minds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Be shaped by the HOLY SPIRIT so that people can come to know JESUS through what they see</li> <li>❖ Spend time in GOD's presence</li> <li>❖ Expect the SPIRIT to transform you into the image of HIS glorious son</li> <li>❖ Recognize the spiritual war in your mind. Take captive every thought that is hostile to GOD</li> <li>❖ Memorize scripture and meditate as a military discipline</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lessons for leaders</b></p> <p>GOD's leaders depend entirely on HIM for their direction and empowering in the ministry. They never exalt or glorify themselves acknowledging their lack of power and ability to fulfil any mission alone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Leaders depend on the SPIRIT as your only true source of ability</li> <li>❖ Beware building your ministry on mere human training or ability alone</li> <li>❖ Leaders handle GOD's Word diligently and with great care</li> <li>❖ Be careful not to read your own ideas into GOD's Word</li> <li>❖ Ask GOD to enlighten HIS Word</li> <li>❖ Leaders never lose sight of your weakness</li> <li>❖ Give room for the power of JESUS dying to work in you so that HIS life power can result in others</li> </ul>

## Praise Points in 2Corinthians

- ❖ Giving us mercy and comfort through Christ (1:3-5)
- ❖ Providing us with prayer warriors and answering their prayers (1:11)
- ❖ Placing the Holy Spirit in our heart (1:22)
- ❖ Using us to bear the fragrance of his love to the world (2:14-16)
- ❖ Giving us freedom to boldly enter his holy presence (3:12-17)
- ❖ Making us more like him so that others will see his glory (3:18-19)
- ❖ Never abandoning us no matter what trials we face (4:9)
- ❖ Being more concerned with who we are than what we can do (5:12)
- ❖ Encouraging those who are discouraged (7:6)
- ❖ Sending his Son, Jesus Christ, who became poor that we might become rich (8:9)
- ❖ Giving us weapons to knock down the Devil's strongholds (10:3-5)
- ❖ Giving us his all-sufficient, gracious favor—in our weakness, he is strong (12:9).

## Worship Insights in 2Corinthians

The letter he sent to the Corinthians reveals to all Christians the demands that accompany true worship, from giving money to enduring hardship. Yet Paul also made it clear that true worship was worth the price.

- ❖ Aspects of worship are illustrated by Paul's metaphor of a triumphal victory parade (2:14).
- ❖ It is more important to have a sincere heart before God than a spectacular ministry (5:12).
- ❖ Worship is not tied to a building, since we are the temple of the living God (6:16).
- ❖ Giving what we have to God is an important part of worship (8:5-8; 9:11-13).
- ❖ Our worship in both word and deed brings glory to God (8:19, 23).
- ❖ In worship we enter into an activity that has existed since time began and will last for all eternity (11:31; see also 4:17-18).

## An Outline of 2Corinthians

### I. Leadership With Integrity: [2Co\\_1:1-24](#)

A. The Fellowship of Suffering: [2Co\\_1:1-11](#)

B. Making Clear Where You Stand: [2Co\\_1:12-24](#)

### II. The Sweet Smell of Victory: [2Co\\_2:1-17](#)

A. When Things Go from Bad to Worse: [2Co\\_2:1-4](#)

**B. Learning to Forgive and Restore:** [2Co\\_2:5-11](#)

**C. Learning to Live with a Sense of Winning:** [2Co\\_2:12-17](#)

**III. The Religion of the Spirit:** [2Co\\_3:1-18](#)

**A. Based on Superior Credentials:** [2Co\\_3:1-6](#)

**B. Based on a Superior Covenant:** [2Co\\_3:7-18](#)

**IV. The Unconquerable Spirit:** [2Co\\_4:1-18](#)

**A. The Gospel We Share:** [2Co\\_4:1-6](#)

**B. The Unconquerable Life:** [2Co\\_4:7-18](#)

**V. The Hope that Motivates:** [2Co\\_5:1-21](#)

**A. Looking at Life After Death:** [2Co\\_5:1-11](#)

**B. The Motive for Ministry:** [2Co\\_5:12-21](#)

**VI. The Consistent Life:** [2Co\\_6:1-18](#)

**A. The High Cost of Ministry:** [2Co\\_6:1-13](#)

**B. The Separated Life:** [2Co\\_6:14-18](#)

**VII. When Pain Produces Joy:** [2Co\\_7:1-16](#)

**VIII. Learning to Enjoy Giving:** [2Co\\_8:1-24](#)

**A. Learning from the Giving of Others:** [2Co\\_8:1-15](#)

**B. Managing Well What is Given:** [2Co\\_8:16-24](#)

**IX. Seeing the Spiritual in the Secular:** [2Co\\_9:1-15](#)

**X. How to Deal with Critics:** [2Co\\_10:1-18](#)

**A. Authority that is Real:** [2Co\\_10:1-11](#)

**B. Boasting in the Lord:** [2Co\\_10:12-18](#)

**XI. The High Cost of Caring:** [2Co\\_11:1-33](#)

**A. The Parenting Concern:** [2Co\\_11:1-21](#)

**B. Suffering for the Cause:** [2Co\\_11:22-33](#)

**XII. The Basis for Glorifying:** [2Co\\_12:1-21](#)

**A. A Vision of God:** [2Co\\_12:1-10](#)

**B. Learning to Relate to People:** [2Co\\_12:11-21](#)

**XIII. A Warning and a Blessing:** [2Co\\_13:1-14](#)