

*A Study on the  
Second Epistle  
to the  
Corinthians*

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## **Bible Study Guides for the New Testament**

Writing a book was not on my mind when this effort was initiated some years ago. In fact, it began when a member of my Sunday School class commented that his son had talked about committing suicide the previous week. As a result, I felt an urge to see what the Bible had to say about hope, with a view toward helping his son cope with his suicidal feelings. The result of that effort was an article entitled: “Hope and the Miraculous Three Pound Computer,” located in Chapter 6 of the book [After the Big Bang](#). My next writing endeavor was a fallout from a Sunday School class discussion about temptations, or trials, and their purpose in our lives. An article entitled “The Trials of Job” located in Chapter 7 of the same book resulted from that effort. After this I began to feel a prodding from the Lord to continue studying and writing. The chapters in this book document what I subsequently learned about two of God’s greatest and most marvelous creations: earth and mankind, who He made to exercise dominion over it.

Some of the material presented in these New Testament Bible Study Guides conflicts with commonly held viewpoints, and differs as well on the definitions

of some words used to explicate them. One thing I have learned through this effort is that the meaning of many of the words used in the Bible is not uniformly agreed to by expositors, and in many cases, not agreed to by the various versions of the Bible. For example, in the KJV of the old testament (OT), the word “soul” is used over 780 times. Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words notes that in over 400 of these uses, the Hebrew word used is misinterpreted. I mention this not to heap criticism on the KJV, for it is my personal Bible, and I love it dearly, but to point out the importance of consulting Hebrew and Greek sources, and good conservative lexicons, when trying to understand difficult scripture. The meaning of some words is not absolutely clear even then. Nevertheless, this is the process I have followed in this effort.

I am a retired engineer: my education and work experience sparked a great interest in details. I found that to understand the technical difficulties and problems that arise in the operation of complex machines, a good understanding of the details of the design is absolutely necessary. What is presented herein is an analysis of important details in God’s creation of the earth and man: his habitat and milieu. However, no description is completely

adequate to portray the unbelievable complexity and efficacy of tripartite man. Scientists and engineers have tried to duplicate the various subsystems in God's design of man for years, with limited success. Part of the problem is that we do not understand many of the operational details, but the greatest impediment is probably the fact that man is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body, two of which (spirit and soul) are immaterial, and are thus largely beyond the scope of scientific and medical analysis. The third part, the highly complex body, is strongly influenced by these two immaterial parts. God has given mankind a great challenge in trying to understand tripartite man. What better model could we find for our study than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: spirit, soul and body in perfect relationship. When Jesus came to earth He emptied Himself, and was formed in the likeness and fashion of a man. Like us, He was a tripartite being, but without a sin nature. Thus, He was the perfect man, the ideal for all to emulate.

I read a book several years ago by Watchman Nee in which he made the observation that one of the primary ways God speaks to us is through our intuition. After that I began to try to follow the guidance I received in this manner, and what is presented herein is largely a result of that attempt. I

hasten to add that all readers will not agree with my conclusions. I have learned much about God's creation, and His design of man through this effort: that may be the primary purpose He had in mind. My hope is that readers will find new ideas in these words that drive them to the absolute authority: God's Word - the Bible.

As references I have used the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the Revised Version (RV), and Recovery Versions of the bible, as well as the Interlinear NIV Hebrew - English Old Testament (OT), and the Interlinear Greek - English New Testament (GNT). I have also used Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Moulton's Analytical Greek Lexicon, the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, and Webster's New World Dictionary for word interpretation. Unless otherwise noted, scripture passages quoted are from the KJV.

The John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible and Dictionary, Authorized King James Version, Chicago 1950, was a primary reference source. This Bible was given to my wife and I in 1957, and is one of my dearest treasures. It has

been rebound once, and is in need of a repair job at the present time. Thus, the reader can appreciate the usage it has had over these 62 years, most of which has been during the last 25 years. The book introductions have been generally quoted from this source, with changes (mostly grammatical) made only when considered necessary.

Finally, I want to recognize the lady that takes everything I have written, and makes the necessary changes for placing it on the internet. Ms. Sandra Crosnoe is the daughter of two of my, and my deceased wife's, dearest friends, Ted and Jimmie Crosnoe (also deceased). When God moved us (my wife and I), to a Methodist Church in Pasadena, Texas, in 1962, Ted, Jimmie, and their two daughters were among the group of several families in the church that were touched by God in a mighty way that led to a weekly Bible study, that resulted in many changed lives. As the years passed by, and the families went in different directions, we were not able to maintain the close relationship we had in Pasadena. We settled in Lubbock, Texas, in 1982, and I got the call to start writing on the Bible. Sometime after that Sandra was in Lubbock and we got together for dinner. When she learned of my involvement in writing on the Bible she immediately volunteered to help in making it available by publishing

it on the internet. She may not have known what she was getting into, for God has not ceased from giving me Bible subjects to study and write about. This series on the New Testament has been our greatest undertaking, and Sandra's help (as always) has been essential. She has corrected my grammar, argued with me on interpretation, prepared the pictorial cover pages, and generally polished the appearance of the various books in ways that I could never have accomplished on my own. Without her help, this (and other) documents would never have been made available to the general public. I do so appreciate all her work. I believe Ted and Jimmie will give her a "well done" when she joins them in heaven. Her personal website is [Finding Gems and Sharing Them](#).

These bible study guides are available at no charge to read, print, download and share on a platform called Scribd (no membership is required to read/download). They are all listed and linked as a group in [Bible Study Guides by Jesse C. Jones on Scribd](#). Upon completion, most of them will contain study questions in the Appendix. Other works available are listed and linked with [Books for Believers and Seekers](#). If you hit a pop-up page on Scribd asking you to become a member to read free, simply click the 'x' in the upper right corner

to remove the pop-up and continue to our links on Scribd. My personal website is [Revealed by Fire - Jesse's Studies](#) if you wish to see my latest articles and updates.

It is my sincere hope that these works will guide you to a personal ongoing relationship with Jesus and a life led and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

*JESSE JONES*

## **A Study on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians**

From the John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible

Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church was plain and outspoken. He undoubtedly had misgivings as to its timely reception. The truth is not always willingly received, and not always an easy matter to convince them that it is the truth.

Leaving Ephesus Paul came to Macedonia. Here he met Titus returning from Corinth and learned from him how his letter had been received. It was a cheering and comforting report. It indicated that this church was open to spiritual guidance. They had followed the apostle's admonition in disciplining and excommunicating the offender.

Greatly encouraged by the kind attitude of this church Paul writes his second epistle. There is more instruction of which they are in need, and before again visiting this church there are things to be said with the same frankness which characterized his former letter. This letter was written from Macedonia doubtless shortly after receiving the report of Titus, in 57 or 58 AD.

## Paul Encourages The Corinthians

In this chapter Paul encourages the Corinthians and all God's people throughout Achaia, which was originally part of the Peloponnesus. The Romans applied the name to all Greece and Macedonia in 146 BC, and Augustus divided the whole into two provinces—Macedonia in the north and Achaia in the south, with Corinth as its capital.

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our savior, who encourages us in all our tribulations, who comforts us in all our trials so that we can comfort others in their trials. So if we are afflicted it is for your encouragement and deliverance, and if we are encouraged that should encourage you when you have to endure sufferings like those we are experiencing. For we want you to know about the trials we have experienced in the province of Asia. Things were so bad that in our hearts we felt that we were under a sentence of death. However, this was to get us to rely on God, and not ourselves. He rescued us from deadly peril, and the One in whom we have placed our hope will continue to rescue us. You must add your help by

praying for us; for the more people that are praying, the more people there will be to give thanks when the prayer is answered.

In confidence I had planned to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and visit again on the way back, but to spare you I didn't come to Corinth at that time in order not to come in a rebuking spirit, as I had at that time. Not that we have Lordship over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy: for by faith you stand.

## The Reason For Paul's Not Visiting Corinth

Paul had made up his mind that he would not pay them another painful visit. During his first visit he had encountered wide-spread evil associated with morality, and divisiveness, with one faction declaring themselves to be followers of Paul, another of Apollo, and a third of Cephas. All this had precipitated the first letter from Paul, which was designed to correct many of these things. In this second letter Paul is trying to explain why he had not visited them before and offers some guidance about how to deal with an unnamed man that had caused much grief in the body. He tells them the punishment given by the body (apparently excommunication) was appropriate, but they should now forgive him, and restore him within the body. He states that to whom they forgive anything, he (through Christ) joins in their forgiveness. Although we have little information as to the procedure the Corinthian church went through in deciding to excommunicate this man, the procedure they should have followed is spelled out in Matthew 18:15-18. Verse 17 says: *“And if he shall neglect [refuse] to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily*

*I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*

Paul closes this chapter by giving thanks to God for always causing them to triumph in Christ, and by manifesting His knowledge through them in every place they ministered. To those being saved Paul and his companions were the sweet smell of life leading to more life, and to those being lost the smell of death leading only to more death. Those that are saved no longer fear death, for they have eternal life to look forward to; while those that are lost continue to fear death, and they have the second death, ministered at the Great White Throne, facing them as well.

## **The Old Testament Veil Removed By The Lord's Spirit**

Paul tells the Corinthians that they are a letter written by the Lord, known and read by everyone through the teaching of Paul and his companions. This is a letter not written with ink, but written by the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on human hearts. They were placed in the care of Paul and his companions and were their recommendation to all the people ministered to in their travels. They were careful to admit that their confidence was from God, and not from themselves. God qualified them as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Recognizing that they were blessed with great hope, they spoke boldly in their teaching, using plain speech. Now if the ministry of death engraved in letters on stone came with such glory that the Israelites could not look at Moses' face because of its receding glory, would not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? Even today many Israelites have the same veil blinding them in their understanding of the old covenant, which was superseded by the new covenant. Nevertheless, when they turn to the Lord, the veil shall be removed.

*“But we all, with open [unveiled] face beholding as in a glass [reflecting as in a mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed [transformed] into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18).*

## **Paul States How He Preached The Gospel Faithfully, And How He Was Persecuted As A Result**

Paul says they have renounced dishonesty and deceit in presenting the Word of God, not using craftiness but by manifesting the truth, by commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. He adds that if their gospel is veiled, or hidden, it is only hidden to those that are lost [perish], blinded by the god of this world. But God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory, shining in the face of our Savior Jesus Christ. *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, but not in despair; persecuted, but not destroyed; always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of the Lord Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."* So then death is at work in us, but life in you. We have the same spirit of faith spoken of in Psalms 116, therefore we speak; knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up also, and bring us together with you into His presence. This is why we do not lose courage; for though our outward man is perishing, the inward man is being renewed day

by day. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is earning for us an everlasting glory; while we look not on the things that are seen, but at the things which are unseen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

## Our House Not Made With Hands

Chapter 5 of 2 Corinthians introduces the subject of the Christian's death, and where he/she will live for eternity, and what form or shape their spiritual body will take. I wrote an article on this subject several years ago that addresses many of these questions, so I offer it here for the reader to consider in answer to some of the questions raised therein.

From a book entitled ["The Spiritual Life", by Jesse C. Jones](#). (See Chapter 6)

### **The Believer's Immortal Body**

The scripture from John 14:2 has led to considerable misunderstanding about the "*place*" Jesus has gone to prepare for believers at their rapture/resurrection. When Jesus goes to prepare a "*place*" for us He follows the ancient Jewish marriage rite in which the bridegroom goes to prepare a "chuppah", or wedding chamber, after the betrothal has been agreed to by the bride (Hosea 2:19-20). The wedding chamber, which is located in the Father's house, is the "*place*" where the marriage is consummated. In John 14:2 GNT, the "*place*" (wedding chamber) that Jesus has gone to prepare corresponds to the abode, or "*dwelling place*," in the Father's house. The New Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words indicates the Greek word interpreted as "*place*" in John 14:2 GNT is, "a place, indefinite; a portion of space viewed in reference to its occupancy, or as appropriated to itself." From this definition we assume that the "*place*" referred to is actually a "location" within the Father's house, that becomes identified with the ultimate occupant.

John 2:15-16 says that the earthly Father's house is the temple, and John 2:21 further identifies the Father's house as the temple of His (Christ's) body (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). We know that through Christ's death and resurrection His earthly body is now made up of the church, which includes believers who have been baptized into His body (1 Corinthians 12:13). However, it is also important to recognize that the Lord is sanctifying and cleansing

this body while it remains on earth so that He can present it in heaven as a glorious church, not having spot nor wrinkle, but that it be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:26-27): we are His body on earth as well as in heaven. 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 says, *“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. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 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.”*

We see from this passage of scripture that we are in Christ’s body, whether on earth or in heaven, and this “house” is the spiritual body with which we will be clothed when our marriage with Christ is consummated. Notes on John 14:2 from the Recovery Version of the New Testament say, “According to the interpretation in John 2:16, 21, *My Father’s house* refers to the temple, the body of Christ, as God’s dwelling place. At first the body of Christ was only His individual body, but through Christ’s death and resurrection the body of Christ has become His corporate body, which is the church, including all believers who have been regenerated through His resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). In Jesus’ resurrection the church is the body of Christ, which is the house of God (1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 3:6), God’s habitation (Ephesians 2:21-22), God’s temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). The many abodes are the many members of the body of Christ (Romans 12:5), which is God’s temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). This is adequately proven by John 14:23, which says that the Lord and the Father will make an abode with the one who loves Him.” The conclusion we are drawn to here is that the many “*dwelling places*” in John 14:2 GNT represent the eternal bodies we receive at rapture/resurrection, and the “*place*” He goes to prepare represents the particular location (and possibly authority/responsibility) within the body of Christ (God’s temple). In an interesting response to James and John when they asked for a “*place*” of authority in His glory, Jesus replied *“But to sit off My right and off My left is not mine to give, but for whom it has been prepared”* (Mark 10:37-40 GNT). It would seem from this that the “*places*” in the Father’s house for risen believers has already been assigned by God the Father.

Two of the three parts of man, viz. spirit and soul, are immaterial, formed and implanted by God and destined to return to Him in heaven at physical death or, in the case of unbelievers, to descend into the Abyss (Hell) to join Satan’s other slaves. The body is the third constituent of man, and God creates it through ordained natural processes within the womb of the expectant mother’s body. It is material in nature, and is formed by programmed physical processes, whereas the spirit and soul are formed by direct action of God, and given to man in the womb. At death, the earthly body cannot enter God’s Kingdom of Heaven since it is not totally holy (still retains sin). It must return to the earth as a seed to die, and give life to the spiritual body that will arise at the resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:35-50 provides a wonderful description of the mortal (natural) body that we sow in death, and the immortal (spiritual) body that we are given by God at resurrection.

*"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is the glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

This passage of scripture likens our natural body to a seed placed in the ground. The new life, the (embryo) contained within the seed, rises only after the seed (husk) dies. Our resurrected bodies take the form God chooses (1 Corinthians 15:38), but He seems to base His choice, at least in part, on the pattern contained within the embryo (DNA?) that rises when the last trumpet sounds. We know that our spiritual body retains something that identifies us as the person we were on earth, for the Bible indicates that we will recognize people in heaven. Further, the apostles and many others recognized Christ when He appeared to them after resurrection. Even though His appearance was altered there was something about Christ's immortal body that caused His friends to recognize Him. The wording in the above scripture states that each spiritual body is unique, and the glory of one differs from that of another.

1 Corinthians 3:9-12 refers to our earthly bodies as the house (building), with Christ as the foundation, which is built with gold, silver, and precious stones, or with wood, hay, and stubble. Verses 13-15 go on to say that every man's works will be subjected to the refiner's fire, and will "abide" or be "burned." If our works survive we will receive a reward, whereas, if they are consumed we will suffer loss. It seems clear that these "works" will, in some way, be manifested in the house (building, or immortal body) that we inherit at resurrection. If our immortal body in some way manifests the righteous acts (works) accomplished by the Holy Spirit within us while we were on earth, it would seem perfectly logical (see Romans 2:6;

1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Revelation 22:12). Like the seed, our old house dies, and decays while we are in the ground, but we receive a new house upon resurrection. Just as the seed contains the embryo, our old house contains the pattern for new life (possibly DNA). God fashions a new immortal body (abode) using the building materials we have sent up to Him (1 Corinthians 3:12), and in accordance with the pattern (embryo) derived from the seed in a way somewhat similar to the way our original earthly bodies were formed in the womb (Psalm 139:15-16). He then clothes our spirit/soul with this new body at rapture/resurrection. Our new house is designed by God to reflect the image of our earthly and our heavenly bodies (1 Corinthians 15:49). Our spirit (through the guidance of the Holy Spirit), is the source of inspiration for the works done in our body while on earth, and these works make up the spiritual building materials with which our heavenly house is constructed.

Those whose works are totally “*consumed*,” by the refiner’s fire will not have any gold, silver, or precious stones with which to construct a spiritual dwelling place: they only provided wood, hay and stubble, which are all consumed by the refiners fire. Although they will still be “*saved*,” they will apparently be “*naked*” since they provided only building materials that were consumed by the refiner’s fire (1 Corinthians 3:13-15). They presented no “*works*” that survived the refiner’s fire because the Holy Spirit was unable to accomplish anything spiritually useful through them while on earth.

Paul, in commenting on the events that transpire above, reminds the Corinthians that God has given them the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore, they should be confident and of good courage, knowing that while they are at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord. But he admits they would probably much prefer to leave their home in the body, and come to their home with the Lord. We continue to labor, whether at home, or absent from the body, we try to be well-pleasing to Him, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that He

died for all, they that now live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, and all things become new. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but committing unto us the ministry of reconciliation. For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

## **Our Bodies Are Members of Christ**

Paul urges them to not receive the grace of God and do nothing with it.

Hebrews 4:2 says that some who hear the gospel preached do not receive salvation for they do not mix the Word of God with faith. We know that faith comes from God (Ephesians 2:8), and He gives us saving faith as we are being drawn by God (John 6:44). Ministers of the gospel should look upon themselves as God's servants, and act in every way to encourage interest in the Word of God, which is essential to the “drawing” process. Paul did this by showing great patience during afflictions; in distresses; in stripes; in imprisonments; in tumults; in labors; in watchings; in fasting; by pureness; by knowledge; by long-suffering; by kindness; by the Holy Spirit; by unfeigned love; by the word of truth; by the power of God; by the amour of righteousness; by honor and dishonor; by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; and as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Dear friends in Corinth, we have spoken frankly to you, and we have opened our hearts widely. Any constraint you feel has not been imposed by us, but by your own selves. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship does righteousness have with unrighteousness? And what communion does light have with darkness? And what concord does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does he that believes have with an infidel [unbeliever]? And what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you. And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

## **Paul Responds to Titus' Report About The Corinthian Church**

Paul tells the Corinthians that he is filled with comfort, and exceedingly joyful about their spiritual condition, in spite of all the tribulations he and his co-workers experienced in Macedonia. For when they were in Macedonia their bodies had no rest. On the contrary, they faced all kinds of troubles—altercations without, apprehensions within. But God encouraged us with the arrival of Titus, and his report about you. He told us how you longed for me, and how distressed you were over our situation in Macedonia. I was especially blessed by your strong defense of me during these trials.

Paul goes on to say that if his letter caused them any pain he did not regret it. He did not rejoice because of their pain, but because that pain caused them to turn back to God. You handled the pain in God's way: turning from sin to salvation, and there is nothing to regret in that. What earnest diligence, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what readiness to put things right. In everything you have proved yourselves blameless in the matter of disciplining.

Besides our own encouragement, we had great joy in seeing how happy Titus was because you set his mind at rest. Paul had boasted about the Corinthians to Titus and they had proved themselves worthy of his praise. His regard for you is all the greater because you received him with reverence and respect. I am glad you have proved that my confidence in you was valid.

## **Contribution to the Brethren in Jerusalem**

Paul makes them aware of the liberality of the churches in Macedonia, who gave out of poverty to help those in need in Jerusalem. They prayed with us to receive the gift, and take upon ourselves the ministering of the gift to the saints in Jerusalem. All this led us to urge Titus to bring this gracious gift to completion among you.

Now I thank God for making Titus as devoted to you as we are, for he not only responded to our urging, but being so devoted, he is coming to you on his own initiative. I am also sending Barnabas with Titus, so the three of us can administer this charitable work in a way that brings honor and respect to the church. We will take pains to do what is right in the eyes of God, as well as other people.

## **Paul Stirs Up The Corinthians To Be Bountiful**

Paul continues to encourage the Corinthians to give bountifully. He has boasted to the Macedonians by telling them Achaia has been ready for this opportunity since last year. It was your (the Corinthians) zeal that stirred up most of them. He tells them that he is sending the brethren ahead, to insure that his boasting about them will not be proven incorrect, and so their promised gift would be ready when Paul comes. He reminds them that “He that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall reap bountifully.” Let every man give as he purposes in his heart; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you will have sufficiency in all things. In making this offering you glorify God by doing what the gospel requires: sharing generously with those in need. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

## **Paul Explains His Boldness In Absence, Meekness When Present**

Paul appeals to the Corinthians with the meekness and forbearance of Christ, that when he comes he may be bold with confidence toward some who believe that he and his co-workers live according to the flesh. Paul responds that although they do live in the world, the weapons of their warfare are not fleshly, but powerful unto God, in order to pull down strongholds (an opposing bulwark of error or vice). We demolish arguments and every arrogance that raises itself against the knowledge of God: we take every thought captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ, and when you are completely obedient we are ready to avenge every disobedient act or thought. Do you look at things according to their appearance? If you belong to Christ you must remember that you are “in Christ,” and He is “in you.” Things that are observed are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.

If I, Paul, should boast about our authority, which the Lord gave us for building up and not for tearing down, I will not be put to shame. We dare not compare ourselves with some of those commending themselves, but they compare themselves to each other, and are thus not perceptive. But we will

not boast beyond the measure God has given us. But God has sent us to you with the gospel message hoping that the growing faith among you will be magnified to overflowing. For the one who commends himself is not the one approved, but the one whom the Lord recommends.

## Paul's Concern For The Corinthian Church

Paul says he is jealous over the Corinthian church with the jealousy of God, for he has promised to deliver them as a pure virgin to Christ (Ephesians 5:27). He fears that just as the serpent deceived Eve in the garden, their thoughts might be corrupted from the purity which is due to Christ. For if one comes proclaiming another Savior, another spirit, or another gospel, they might entertain such false teaching. We have made the gospel clear to you in every way and in every circumstance, and I pray that our teaching has penetrated your hearts, for the truthfulness of the Messiah is within us. I have accepted no support from you, for my strong desire is to distinguish our ministry from false teachers who try to boast that they work in the same way we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. Did not Satan transform himself into an angel of light? It is not a great thing then if his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. Are these men Hebrews? I am also. Are they Israelites? I am also. Are they Abraham's seed? I am also. Are they ministers of Christ? In labors I am beyond them

more abundantly; in stripes, beyond measure; in prisons, much more; in deaths, many times. Five times I received forty stripes, minus one from the Jews. I was flogged three times; I was stoned once; I was shipwrecked three times; I have spent a night and a day in the deep. I have traveled often in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own race, in danger from nations, in danger in the cities, in danger in the desert, in danger in the sea, in danger among false brothers, in hardship and toil, often in watches, in hunger and thirst, often fasting, in cold and nakedness. Apart from the things outside conspiring against me day by day, I must care for the churches. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city under the guard of a garrison desiring to seize me. I escaped through a window by being let down in a basket.

## Paul Talks About His Visit To The Third Heaven

In this Chapter Paul describes his vision concerning the third heaven that apparently occurred 14-years earlier. The timing of this vision is difficult to identify in what we know about Paul's life. In my opinion it most likely occurred not long after his Damascus Road encounter with Jesus. I say this because I believe Paul, who knew Jewish religious law well, had a lot to learn about Jesus Christ and "the way." In regard to the comments Paul makes in Verse 2 of this chapter, there appears to be no doubt that Paul is describing himself when he refers to the "*man in Christ*." I also believe that he received the vision while he remained in some earthly location, rather than some element of his senses being transported to heaven as suggested by many sources. The knowledge Paul had to receive from God was significant, for he wrote a major portion of the New Testament based on it. And on that foundation the church was built, and on that we place our faith and hope.

In Verse 4 Paul says that he was caught up into Paradise, where he heard unspeakable words, not lawful for a man to utter. It seems to be generally agreed that Paradise and the third heaven describe the same location or place.

Paradise is also referred to as Abraham's Bosom in Luke 16:22, where Lazarus, the beggar, was carried when he died. When a rich man who was an acquaintance of Lazarus died, he went to hell (Hades), as opposed to Paradise, and from there he could see Lazarus afar in Abraham's Bosom. This seems to add confusion as to where Paradise is located: heaven or hell? We know that Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in Paradise this day, but it is difficult to imagine the location of Paradise being in hell. We also know that when Christ died He descended into the lower parts of the earth and preached to the OT saints, who were apparently in Paradise. Wow, there is a lot of confusion here that we need to try to understand. I would like to offer a solution that seems to provide a logical answer to these questions, while (at the same time), recognizing that we will not have God's total perspective on this until we get there, and can ask Him. We know that there are many, many individuals that belonged to God from the OT times to the coming of Jesus, and His introduction of the gospel, including baptism of the Holy Spirit. These individuals are described in Hebrews 11:13 which says: *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* The only thing they lacked was forgiveness of their sins

and receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior, and sanctifier. I think these multitudes were waiting in Abraham's Bosom (or Paradise) for Jesus to come and preach to them so they could receive Him as Savior. When Christ died He descended into the lower parts of the earth, and led "*captivity captive*" when He ascended up on high (Ephesians 4:8-10). We understand this to say that Jesus took the captives (actually their spirit/souls), with Him on His way to heaven. Matthew 27:52-53 indicates that when Jesus died on the cross that graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints that slept arose, and came out of their graves when Jesus called them as he ascended into heaven after resurrection. Thus, these OT saints followed the same procedure we NT believers will follow at rapture/resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). Like the OT bodies that came out of their graves when Jesus was resurrected, our new bodies will rise from the grave to join our spirit/souls that return in the clouds with Christ, and our complete tripartite heavenly body will then return with Christ to heaven to be with Him forever.

Paul was sensitive to the likelihood that the Corinthians might think he was "something special" for all the wonderful things God had done in his life. He was determined to not let pride get a foothold in his life, so God gave him a "thorn in the flesh," a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be

exalted above measure. Paul had asked to be delivered from this plague three times, but the Lord's answer was that His grace was sufficient for His strength is made perfect in weakness. Paul gladly responded by glorifying in his infirmity, and letting the power of Christ provide strength when he was weak. We do not know for certain what Paul's infirmity was. There are some indications that it was a defect in his eyes, that made his appearance somewhat objectionable, but there is no positive assurance of this.

In Verse 13 Paul apologizes for not being a burden to the church at Corinth. He thought they felt inferior to other churches because they supported their ministers and Paul had refused to burden the Corinthian church in the same way. He goes on to tell them that he will continue to refrain from being a burden to them on his next visit. His love for them keeps him from being a burden to them, for he believes that the parents in the church should be laying up for the children, and not using resources that otherwise would help provide for the children in the future. He also asks if those he has sent to them were following the same policy: refusing to be a burden to the church. And he closes his letter by reminding them that both he and those he has sent speak before God in Christ, and they do everything for the edifying of the body.

## Paul Cautions The Corinthians

Paul tells them that he is coming to deal with those that have sinned, and with the others as well. Since they are looking for proof that Jesus Christ speaks through him he will not spare them when he ministers. Though Christ was crucified on a stake in weakness he now rules from heaven with God's power. Examine yourselves to see whether you are members of the faith, prove that Jesus Christ is in you unless you are a reprobate. For we cannot act against the truth in any way. We are glad when we are weak, and you are strong; we even wish for your perfection. Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected (sanctified), be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the peace of God be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all, Amen.

## APPENDIX

### Questions from 2 Corinthians

#### Chapter 1

1. Describe the situation in Corinth that caused Paul to write these two letters.
2. What spiritual principle is Paul referring to verse 12?
3. What is the point Paul is trying to make in vs. 17-20?
4. Explain verse 22.

#### Chapter 2

1. Explain Paul's meaning in verse 4. Refer to Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 27:6; 1 Corinthians 4:15, and 9:2 in explaining this.
2. Who is Paul referring to in verse 5?
3. Explain verse 10 (refer to Matthew 18:15-25 in answering this question).
4. Explain verse 16.

#### Chapter 3

1. Explain verse 3.
2. Define the word "glory."
3. Explain the use of the word "veil" in vs. 13-15.
4. Explain verse 18.

## Chapter 4

1. What is meant by the phrase “handling the Word of God deceitfully”?

Consider 1 Thessalonians 2:5, and define the word “guile”.

2. What is the treasure referred to in verse 7? (see 1 Corinthians 2:5)
3. Explain how vs. 8-11 apply to you personally.
4. What is the spirit of faith referred to in verse 13? (see 2 Peter 1:1)

## Chapter 5

1. Describe this building of God, not made with hands, that we long to be clothed with so we will not be found naked. Is this the mansion referred to in John 14:2?
2. Explain verse 4.
3. Explain vs. 6-9.
4. List some of the good (led by Holy Spirit) things you have done in your life.
5. Explain verse 14.

## Chapter 6

1. Define the “grace” of God.
2. Verses 4 through 10 list the things that approve the ministers of God. Define what each of these characteristics signify.
3. Do these characteristics just apply to preachers?
4. Explain verse 12.
5. If we are not to be unequally yoked to unbelievers, how are we to win them to Christ?
6. How are we to be the temple of God if we still commit sins?

## **Chapter 7**

1. What promises is Paul referring to in verse 1?
2. How can we cleanse ourselves of filthiness of flesh and spirit?
3. Explain the meaning of the word “repentance” in verse 9 and 10.
4. Does repentance generate the things listed verse 11 in your life?

## **Chapter 8**

1. Explain verse 15 (refer to Exodus 16:16-18).
2. Compare what Paul says in verse 21 with Matthew 6:1-4.

## **Chapter 9**

1. Define spiritual zeal.
2. How does giving bless those who give?
3. How does giving bless God?

## **Chapter 10**

1. Explain verse 4.
2. Are you guilty of looking on things after the outward appearance? If so, how can you change this?
3. Explain verse 12.

## **Chapter 11**

1. In the first few verses of this chapter Paul is describing those that are shortsighted and easily persuaded. How can Christians combat this weakness?
2. How can we root out and expose ministers who are leading people astray by disguising the light?
3. List all the tribulations Paul suffered that he withstood in Christ.
4. Paul states that he boasts in his weaknesses many times that when he is weak, then he is strong. What does he mean?

## **Chapter 12**

1. Who is Paul referring to in verse 2-4, and where did the vision take the man?
2. Paul refers to those that have sinned by fornication, and lasciviousness, and have not repented of their uncleanness. Describe what they need to do to get right with God.

## **Chapter 13**

1. Explain verse 5.
2. Can we be perfect as in verse 9?

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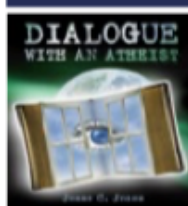


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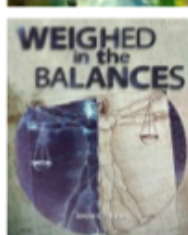
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