



Second Corinthians

“Paul-- A Minister of Christ”

A Brief Study of Paul’s Defense of His Apostleship

**With Introduction, Outline, and Questions
for Class Discussion**

By Reg Ginn

SECOND CORINTHIANS

“PAUL-- A MINISTER OF CHRIST”

A BRIEF STUDY OF PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP

**With Introduction, Outline, and
Questions for Class Discussion**

**BY
Reg Ginn**

SECOND CORINTHIANS-- “PAUL, A MINISTER OF CHRIST”

Contents

Introduction	1
Outline of Second Corinthians	2
Paul’s Introduction to the Corinthians	4
Paul’s Ministry: Defined (2Corinthians 1:1- 7:16)	4
Paul’s Ministry: Demonstrated (Second Corinthians 8:1- 9:15)	11
Paul’s Ministry: Defended (Second Corinthians 10:1- 13:10)	12
Paul’s Concluding Remarks	16
Class Questions: Chapters 1-13	18-30

SECOND CORINTHIANS

Introduction

First Corinthians was written by Paul about 56/57 A.D. from Ephesus. Titus was sent to Corinth soon afterward to observe the situation there and to try to adjust the problems in the church that had been reported to Paul. He was also charged with the task of helping to prepare the Corinthians for the collection that Paul would shortly come to receive and take to the saints in Jerusalem, as he had directed in 1Corinthians 16:1,2.

Paul awaited the coming of Titus to Troas and preached while he waited (2:12). He was concerned about Titus' delay and so departed to Macedonia (2:13), where he apparently thought to intercept Titus. They did meet in Macedonia, and Paul rejoiced at the report Titus gave him about conditions as he had left them at Corinth.

Second Corinthians was written by the apostle in response to the good report of Titus. Its origin was from somewhere in Macedonia about 57 A.D., about six months to a year after the first letter had been sent to Corinth.

Paul was aware that an influential faction in the Corinthian church opposed him: (1) they denied his apostleship; (2) they questioned his motives as a minister; (3) they attacked his character as a Christian.

Titus' report showed Paul that: (1) most of the church had accepted his letter as apostolic; (2) they had already made changes in the abuses he had condemned; (3) but-- the Judaizing faction was still determined to defeat his work by continuing to challenge his authority, by misrepresenting his motives in preaching, and by using his first letter against him. They charged that he had promised to come to Corinth and had not done so and that his personal appearance and behavior were different from the manner in which he presented himself in writing (10:10).

This letter was written by Paul to defend himself against the charges and misrepresentations by the false teachers and their followers at Corinth. Specific accusations made by these "false apostles" included such things as:

- (1) Paul lived according to the flesh (10:2);
- (2) His bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible (10:10);
- (3) He was domineering toward their faith (1:24);
- (4) He was untrained in public speaking (11:6);
- (5) He had refused their support in his preaching work (11:7);
- (6) He was possibly an embezzler of church funds (12:16-18).

The book's theme is: "Paul, a minister of Christ." Forms of "minister" appear 17 times. However, Paul is also called : "apostle" (1:1); "fellow worker" (1:24); "servant" (2:14); "earthen vessel" (4:17); "ambassador" (5:20); "worker" (6:1); and "parent" (12:14). But above all else, Paul was a MINISTER OF CHRIST!

SECOND CORINTHIANS Outline

Theme: Paul, a Minister of Christ

I. Introduction and appeal. 1:1-7

- A. Greeting. 1:1,2
- B. Thanksgiving for God's comfort. 1:3-5
- C. Priority of the Corinthians' welfare. 1:6,7

II. PAUL'S MINISTRY: DEFINED. 1:8- 7:16

- A. Paul's ministry: **Past.** 1:8- 2:17
 - 1. His *trouble* as a minister of Christ. 1:8-11
 - 2. His *sincerity* as a minister of Christ. 1:12-14
 - 3. His *changes* as a minister of Christ. 1:15- 2:2
 - 4. His *motivation* as a minister of Christ. 2:3-11
 - 5. His *duty* as a minister of Christ. 2:12-17
- B. Paul's ministry: **Present.** 3:1- 4:18
 - 1. His *work* as a minister of Christ. 3:1-4
 - 2. His *sufficiency* as a minister of Christ. 3:5-11
 - 3. His *boldness* as a minister of Christ. 3:12-18
 - 4. His *confidence* as a minister of Christ. 4:1-7
 - 5. His *courage* as a minister of Christ. 4:8-18
- C. Paul's ministry: **Future.** 5:1- 7:1
 - 1. His *goal* as a minister of Christ. 5:1-8
 - 2. His *dedication* as a minister of Christ. 5:9-11
 - 3. His *purpose* as a minister of Christ. 5:12- 6:2
 - 4. His *credentials* as a minister of Christ. 6:3-10
 - 5. His *challenge* as a minister of Christ. 6:11- 7:1
- D. Paul's ministry: **Its Benefits.** 7:2-16
 - 1. A minister's *love* and *compassion*. 7:2-3
 - 2. A minister's *encouragement*. 7:4-12
 - 3. A minister's *gratitude*. 7:13-16

III. PAUL'S MINISTRY: DEMONSTRATED. 8:1- 9:15

- A. A ministry of *sacrifice*: the Macedonians. 8:1-5
- B. A ministry of *fairness*: the Corinthians. 8:6-15
- C. A ministry of *honor*: Titus. 8:16-24

D. A ministry of *preparedness*. 9:1-5

E. A ministry of *generosity*. 9:6-15

IV. PAUL'S MINISTRY: DEFENDED. 10:1- 13:10

A. Defense of its *spiritual nature*. 10:1-11

B. Defense of its *heavenly authority*. 10:12-18

C. Defense against *false charges*. 11:1-15

D. Defense against *false tactics*. 11:16-21

E. Defense by *accounts of sufferings*. 11:22-33

F. Defense by *claims of revelations*. 12:1-10

G. Defense by *possession of signs*. 12:11-13

H. Defense by *personal concern for brethren*. 12:14-21

I. Defense by *their own self-examination*. 13:1-10

V. Conclusion. 13:11-14

A. Various admonitions. 13:11-13

B. Benediction. 13:14

- I. Paul’s introduction and appeal to the Corinthians. Chapter 1:1- 7
- A. He offered them a typical greeting. vs.1-3
1. He introduced **himself** to them as an *apostle* of Jesus Christ.
 - a. This claim was especially appropriate to the recipients of the letter and the circumstances of its writing.
 2. He introduced **God** to them as *merciful* and *comforting*.
 - a. His previous letter dealt extensively with their “church trouble.”
 - b. This church, or any church, may expect God’s comfort about its problems if efforts to correct them are significant and sincere.
- B. He expressed thanks for God’s pervading comfort. vs. 3-5
1. Servants of Jesus will experience uncomfortable situations. See 2Timothy 3:12.
 - a. Mutual comfort about trouble is our **duty** and our **responsibility**. vs. 4
 - b. Note the references: “tribulation” (vs. 4); “trouble” (vs.4); “suffer/sufferings” (vs. 5, 6, 7); “afflicted” (vs. 6).
 - c. Both sufferings and consolation in sufferings “abound” in Christ. vs. 5
 2. Comfort for the Corinthians was a high priority for God and for Paul. vs. 6, 7

II. Paul’s Ministry: DEFINED Chapter 1:8- Chapter 7:16

- A. Paul’s ministry: Past. Chapter 1:8- Chapter 2:17
1. His **trouble** as a minister of Christ. 1:8- 11
 - a. Trouble in Asia made him despair of life. vs. 8
 - (1) Confrontation with the Ephesian silversmiths. Acts 19:23- 24
 - (2) His departure was hastened by the danger there. Acts 20:1
 - b. He believed that death was eminent. vs. 9
 - c. He trusted in the power of God over death. vs. 9, 10
 - d. He trusted in the power of prayer over death and suffering. vs. 11
 2. His **sincerity** as a minister of Christ. 1: 12- 14
 - a. Paul claimed to be sincere in : (1) behavior toward the Corinthians, vs. 12; (2) his writings to them, vs.13; and, (3) his feelings about them as brethren, vs. 14.
 - b. Sincerity fostered a good conscience toward the world (See Matthew 5:16.) and toward brethren whose trust he had not abused.
 - c. His writings to them held no hidden meanings. vs. 13
 - (1) He intended that all be understood and put into practice.
 - (2) They had not fully grasped the import of his earlier teaching (First Corinthians).
 - d. His relationship to them was genuine; he wanted theirs to him to be the same.

3. His **changes** as a minister of Christ. 1:15- 2: 2
 - a. His original plan to visit them had been made sincerely. vs. 17, 18
 - b. The change in the plan was not his doing, but God's. vs. 18, 19
 - c. God's changes are always made for our good and for the gospel. vs. 19, 20
 - d. The change allowed them to be spared any further rebuke. vs. 23, 24

4. His **motivation** as a minister of Christ. 2:3- 11
 - a. His behavior toward the Corinthians was always determined by love. vs. 3, 4
 - (1) Paul had condemned sin in the church not only to correct the sin but also to promote mutual joy when they were reunited. vs. 3, 4
 - (2) His hard words came for a "tough love." This sometimes is all that will do much to correct family (physical or spiritual) problems.
 - (3) Failure to attempt correction actually displays a lack of real love.
 - b. His goal was their *salvation*. vs. 5, 11
 - (1) The entire congregation may be affected by the sin of one member. vs. 5
 - (2) The church had responded as a body to the need for discipline. vs. 6
 - (3) The discipline cycle should be completed: punish-- forgive-- comfort-- love. vs. 6- 8
 - (4) Discipline proves where our true loyalties lie. vs. 9
 - (5) Salvation is involved both for those who *need* discipline and for those who are obligated to *administer* discipline.
 - (6) Salvation comes to those forgiven of sin and to those who are willing to extend their forgiveness to the penitent. See Matthew 6:12.

5. His **duty** as a minister of Christ. 2:12- 17
 - a. Paul always was driven by his duty to preach the gospel. See 1Corinthians 9:16.
 - b. He delighted to preach where others had not preached.. See Romans 15: 20.
 - c. Decisions about doing our duty are sometimes difficult to make. vs. 12, 13
 - d. Paul was always aware of the consequences of his preaching. vs. 14- 16
 - (1) Preaching is either life-giving or death-bearing to hearers. See John 9:39.
 - (a) Strong perfume may *smell* pleasant to some, offensive to others.
 - (b) Escargot (snails) may *taste* great to some, awful to others.
 - e. A strong character is required for bearing a strong responsibility. vs. 16b, 17
 - f. Weaker characters may use the gospel for personal gain: wealth, prestige,

B. Paul's ministry: *Present* Chapter 3:1- 4:18

1. His **work** as a minister of Christ. 3:1- 4
 - a. His labors spoke for themselves. vs. 1
 - (1) He needed no personal testimony about his apostleship.
 - (2) He needed no letters of commendation to or from them.

- b. Their conversion and spiritual progress were proof of the genuineness of his apostleship. 1Corinthians 6:9-11 shows how far they had come.
 - (1) The quality of the teacher is seen in the fruit of his labor. See Matthew 7:20.
 - (2) The fruits of Paul’s preaching testified of his motivation as a preacher. vs. 2, 3
 - (3) The motivation of false teachers was likewise obvious: they “peddled” (“corrupting”--ASV) the word of God. Chapter 2:17 Also, see 2Peter 2:3 (KJV; ASV).
- c. Paul’s work focused on writing Christ on human hearts. vs. 3
 - (1) Christ “in us” is our *only* hope of glory! See Colossians 1:27.

2. His **sufficiency** as a minister of Christ. 3:5- 11

- a. He was unable to succeed alone in a great work; God’s strength was essential.
 - (1) The “chief of sinners” could never become overconfident. See 1Timothy 1:15.
 - (2) God gave him a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble. See 2Corinthians 12:7.
- b. Still, Paul was *sufficient* as a minister of Christ through the gospel. vs. 5
 - (1) He had no doubt about his ability to accomplish his assigned task-- saving the souls of the lost. vs. 6
 - (2) He had abandoned an Old Testament ministry for New Testament service.
 - (3) Sufficiency is from *God*, not man. See 1Corinthians 15:10 and Galatians 1:11-16.
 - (4) Sufficiency is from the *gospel*, not the Law.
- c. Paul’s contrast between the **Law** and the **Gospel**:

THE LAW:

- [1] Of the letter; vs. 6
- [2] A ministry of death; vs. 7
- [3] Kills; vs. 6
- [4] A ministry of condemnation; vs.9
- [5] Had (limited) glory; vs. 9, 11
- [6] Not (comparatively) glorious; vs.10
- [7] Passing away. vs. 11

THE GOSPEL:

- [1] Of the Spirit; vs. 6
- [2] A ministry of the Spirit; vs.7
- [3] Gives life; vs. 6
- [4] A ministry of righteousness; vs 9
- [5] Had much more glory; vs.9, 11
- [6] Excelling in glory; vs. 10
- [7] Remains. vs. 11

3. His **boldness** as a minister of Christ. 3:12- 18

- a. Boldness came from Paul’s hope of a reward for faithfulness. vs. 12
 - (1) He was the source of “life to life” for the lost. Chapter 2: 16
- b. He spoke openly without doubt or compromise. vs. 12
- c. Moses’ veil illustrates the folly of having faith in those who erect barriers to a clear understanding of Christ as the Savior. See 1Peter 1:10-12.

OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW:

- [1] The complete truth is veiled; vs 14
- [2] Cannot see the Savior clearly; vs. 14
- [3] Hearts are hardened; vs. 14
- [4] Moses is the authority; vs. 15
- [5] Suffer bondage (implied); vs. 17
- [6] No transformation (implied); vs. 18

OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL:

- [1] The complete truth is unveiled; vs. 16
- [2] Can see the Savior clearly; vs. 14
- [3] Hearts are receptive; vs. 16
- [4] Christ is the Lord; vs. 16
- [5] Enjoy liberty; vs. 17
- [6] Transformed to glory; vs. 18

4. His **confidence** as a minister of Christ. 4:1- 7
 - a. He was confident because of the significance of his ministry (See chapter three). vs.1
 - (1) God is faithful to support to His faithful supporters! See Hebrews 6:18.
 - b. He was confident because he had confidence in consciences of brethren. vs.2
 - (1) Good men will respect the work of other good men. See 1Thessalonians 5:13.
 - c. He was confident of his preaching even when others were not. vs. 3, 4
 - d. He was confident because of his own pure motives. vs. 5
 - e. He was confident because he recognized the source of his power to preach. vs. 6, 7
 - f. He was confident because he was a *useful* tool (“vessel”) in the hand of God. vs. 7

5. His **courage** as a minister of Christ. 4:8- 18
 - a. We must marvel at his courage!
 - (1) He continued preaching even after being stoned for preaching. See Acts 14.
 - (2) He displayed no fear of a mob made angry by his preaching. See Acts 19:30.
 - (3) He rebuked sin openly even in a guilty church leader (Peter) See Galatians 2:11.
 - (a) Perhaps this act required the most courage of all!

Apostolic Courage in the Face of Difficulties: vs. 8- 11

<i>Paul’s Sufferings:</i>	<i>Paul’s Reactions:</i>
Hard pressed on every side	but he was not crushed!
Perplexed	but he did not despair!
Persecuted	but he was not forsaken!
Struck down	but he was not destroyed!
The Dying Jesus was displayed	but the Living Jesus was portrayed!
Delivered to death personally ...	but the life of Jesus was manifested!
Death worked in him	but life worked in his converts!

- b. How timid we are in handling the gospel! How *ashamed* we should be! See Romans 1:16, 17.
- c. Whence came Paul’s courage? It sprang from:
 - (1) The knowledge that others were depending on his work. vs. 12
 - (2) The example of other faithful spokesmen. vs. 13
 - (3) The realization that death is only a temporary matter for a faithful preacher. vs.14
 - (4) Faith that his suffering and death would strengthen others’ faith. vs.15 See Philippians 1:12- 17.
 - (5) A spiritually mature discernment of the relative value of things. vs. 16- 18. See Hebrews 5:14.

<u>Less Value</u>	<u>More Value</u>
The outward man	The inner man
Perishing of the outward man	Renewing of the inner man
Temporary affliction	Eternal glory

Less Value

Things that can be seen
Things that are temporary

More Value

Things that cannot be seen
Things that are eternal

C. Paul's ministry: *Future* Chapter 5:1- 7:1

1. His **goal** as a minister of Christ. 5:1- 8
 - a. *To go to heaven!* vs. 1, 2
 - (1) This is the ultimate goal of every Christian. See John 14:1- 3.
 - (2) Some would settle for a lesser destination (the earth)--Jehovah's Witnesses.
 - b. To die was his earnest desire ("we groan"). vs. 2
 - c. Death would have been "far better" for Paul. See Philippians 1:23, 24.
 - d. The *fear* of death grips most men; hospitals are filled with people on life support desperately striving to avoid physical death.
 - (1) Such people haven't learned that "this world is not our home."
 - (2) Most want to go to heaven-- but-- *not today!*
 - e. Why was it Paul's great goal to leave this world?
 - (1) He **knew** (by faith, vs. 7) that he had a heavenly body (a permanent "building") when he left his earthly body (a temporary "tent"). vs. 1
 - (2) His goal was secure whether his body was "dissolved" (KJV, ASV) or "destroyed" (NKJ) by human or non-human enemies. See chapter 4:8 11.
 - (3) He was aware of the problems of the earthly life-- a series of problems to solved-- *if we can*. Meanwhile, we "groan" and are "burdened." vs. 4
 - (4) He recognized that choices between the two goals must be made. vs. 6
 - (a) Life at its *best* is *far worse* than to "be present" with the Lord. See Revelation 21, 22.
 - (b) Our desire is not for annihilation and freedom from trials ("unclothed") but for eternal life without trials ("further clothed"). vs. 4
 - (5) Paul had God's own guarantee of eternal life. vs. 5
 - (a) Ordinary assurance came to him through the word of the Spirit.
 - (b) He had extraordinary assurance through miraculous gifts from the Spirit.
2. His **dedication** as minister of Christ. 5:9- 11
 - a. *Dedication*: "...setting aside for a particular purpose."
 - b. Paul took "aim" ("we labor"-KJV) at pleasing the Lord. vs. 9
 - (1) What pleased Paul was relatively unimportant to him. vs. 8
 - (2) Paul's first aim was to be personally acceptable ("be accepted"-KJV). vs. 9
 - (3) He also preached to persuade others to please God. vs. 11
 - (4) Why?? Because all men will be judged by "things done in the body" whether or not they have pleased God. vs. 10
 - (5) The terror of the Lord awaits those who are not pleasing to God. vs. 11

3. His **purpose** as a minister of Christ. 5:12- 6:2
 - a. He wanted to help *reconcile* men to their God. vs. 20b
 - (1) *Reconcile*: "...to make friendly again"-- man by his sin shows hatred for God. See James 4:4.
 - (2) Man befriends God through faith and repentance, a change of mind and will.
 - (a) Paul always preached a message of reconciliation. See Acts 17:23, 24, 30.
 - b. He wanted to help men to appreciate:
 - (1) The *need* for reconciliation-- "all died" (by sin). vs. 14
 - (2) The *narrowness* of reconciliation-- "regard no one in the flesh." There is **no** other Savior on earth. Jesus is no longer on earth and in the flesh. vs. 16
 - (3) The *price* of reconciliation-- live for Christ only. vs. 15
 - (4) The *reward* of reconciliation-- our sins are not imputed. vs. 19
 - (a) All things become new in our lives. vs. 17
 - (5) The *plan* of reconciliation-- "all things are of God." vs. 18
 - (a) No man was involved in formulating the plan for man's salvation.
 - (b) God's plan is centered in Jesus Christ. vs. 18
 - (c) The plan is revealed by the word of God. vs.19
 - (d) It was committed to Christ's "ambassadors" (the apostles). vs. 20
 - [1] "Ambassador"-- an "official representative." He can make treaties on behalf of the one he represents. vs. 18
 - (e) It was delivered with "pleading" and "imploring." vs. 20
 - [1] This demonstrated how much God loves the lost!
 - (f) It demands a reaction from men-- "be reconciled." vs. 20
 - (6) The *urgency* of reconciliation-- NOW is the time (any time). Chapter 6:2
 - (7) The *tragedy* of reconciliation-- receiving the grace of God "in vain." vs. 6:1
4. His **credentials** as a minister of Christ. 6:3- 10
 - a. Paul's credentials were not personal but Christ-centered. vs.3 See Philippians 3:4-6.
 - b. His credentials were demonstrated plainly. vs. 4
 - (1) By what he had suffered for others' good. vs. 4,5
 - (2) By the moral standard he followed in his life. vs.6
 - (3) By his relationship to heavenly things. vs. 7
 - (a) Paul described the "Christian armor" in Ephesians 6:13ff.
 - (4) By his steadfastness in every circumstance. vs. 8- 10
 - (a) These contrasts perhaps highlight his advantage over false teachers.
5. His **challenges** as a minister of Christ. 6:11- 7:1
 - a. He challenged the Corinthians (vs. 11a) because of deep feelings for them. vs. 11b
 - b. His challenge to them was a charge to:
 - (1) Be open and honest with him by discarding their prejudices. vs.12, 13
 - (2) Not be yoked unequally with unbelievers. vs. 14
 - (a) Probably focused on their connection with false teachers who were teaching error about the Law and the Gospel. vs. 14

- (3) Recognize the error and inconsistency of compromising the truth. vs. 14- 16

The pure gospel:

- (a) Righteousness
- (b) Light
- (c) Christ
- (d) Believer
- (e) Temple of God

A corrupted gospel:

- (a) Lawlessness
- (b) Darkness
- (c) Belial (Satan)
- (d) Unbeliever
- (e) Idols

(This principle is valid for any relationship that puts Christians at a disadvantage leading to a compromise of the truth-- marriage, business, political office, etc.)

- (4) Accept Paul's challenge as if it were God's-- it was! vs. 16- 18
- (a) Man's duty was to "come out," "be separate," "touch not the unclean."
 - (b) God's reward: He would "receive you," "dwell in" and "walk among them," "be their God," "be My people," "be a Father to you," "be sons and daughters."
- (5) Pay the price required by the challenge. 7:1
- (a) Cleanse yourselves in body (outwardly) and spirit (inwardly).
 - (b) Perfect holiness-- keep working to become complete. See Matthew 5: 48.
- (6) Consider this challenge "in the fear of God" because He will reward or punish us according to our response to His challenge. vs.1

D. Paul's ministry: *Its Benefits to Others* 7:2- 9:15

1. A minister's **love and compassion.** 7:2, 3
 - a. Paul had done nothing to hinder their love toward him. vs. 2
 - b. His love toward them abounded. vs. 3
 - (1) Joy came to him from their well-being and their feelings for him.
 - c. His words were always intended to help, not harm.
2. A minister's **encouragement.** 7:4- 12
 - a. His pride about them should encourage them. vs. 4
 - b. Their "father in the gospel" was pleased with his "children in the gospel." See 3John 4
 - (1) Every good son wishes to please his father.
 - c. Paul was "comforted" about the Corinthians. vs. 4
 - (1) Good children try not to concern their parents. vs. 5- 7
 - d. The credit he gave them should encourage them. vs.7
 - (1) He acknowledged all their improvements and ignored none.
 - e. Knowing they had done the right thing should encourage them. vs. 8- 11
 - (1) Students are encouraged when they have performed well.
 - (2) Christians are encouraged by God's approval. See Matthew 25:21, 23.
 - (3) We should encourage one another when we do well in the Lord's work!

- (4) The Corinthians had chosen one of two options: godly sorrow or worldly sorrow. vs. 9, 10
 - (5) Their choice of *godly sorrow* produced in them: vs. 11
 - (a) Diligence (to follow Paul’s command);
 - (b) Cleansing (of the sinful situation);
 - (c) Indignation (at the defensiveness of some brethren);
 - (d) Fear (of reprisal from God and Paul);
 - (e) Vehement desire (to do what was right about the matter);
 - (f) Zeal (to act quickly and effectively);
 - (g) Vindication (of their action toward the sinner).
 - g. Realizing that Paul considered them to be important should encourage them. vs. 12
 - (1) Discipline was intended not only for the good of the father and the son
 - (2) But also for the good of every member of the congregation. See chapter 2:9.
3. A minister’s **gratitude**. 7:13- 16
- a. He was grateful that they had given him comfort. vs. 13a
 - b. He was grateful that they had comforted Titus. vs.13b
 - c. He was grateful that they had fulfilled his hopes for them. vs. 14
 - d. He was grateful for their attitude toward authority. vs. 15
 - e. He was grateful that he could trust them without reservation. vs. 16

III. Paul’s Ministry: **DEMONSTRATED** Chapter 8:1- Chapter 9:15

- A. His was a ministry of **sacrifice**: The Macedonians as examples. 8:1- 9:15
- 1. The particular churches were unidentified (but likely were Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Amphipolis, and/or other congregations nearby).
 - 2. The “affliction” and the “deep poverty” of these churches were not allowed to interfere with the exercise of their great generosity. vs. 2
 - 3. The Macedonians in their generosity imitated Paul’s own character:
 - a. They had genuine concern for the welfare of those who were in distress.
 - b. They were willing to make personal sacrifices to assist those in distress.
 - 4. The Macedonians in their responsiveness demonstrated the results of Paul’s work:
 - a. Their commitment to liberality moved them past their ability to give. vs. 3, 4
 - b. Their totality of commitment motivated them to exercise their generosity. vs. 5
- B. His was a ministry of **fairness**: The Corinthians as examples. 8:6- 15
- 1. He had been *fair* to give them the opportunity to become *complete* Christians. vs. 7
 - 2. He had been *fair* to give them the opportunity to *show love* toward God. vs. 8
 - 3. He had been *fair* in giving them *responsibility* according to *ability*. vs. 11, 12
 - a. He measured their generosity by what they “had” to give.
 - 4. He had been *fair* in expecting them to share burdens *equally* with brethren. vs. 13, 14
 - a. God supplies the needs of others through us! vs. 15

- C. His was a ministry of **honor**: Titus and others as examples. 8:16- 24
1. The danger of the minister and his ministry being criticized always exists. vs. 20
 2. Paul was ever concerned that his ministry not be justly criticized. vs. 21 Also, look again at chapter 6:3.
 3. Careful steps were taken to avoid criticism: brethren (plural) were sent to go with Paul, among whom were Titus and other unidentified but well-known men; the senders, not Paul, selected them to serve as messengers. vs. 19, 23
- D. His was a ministry of **preparedness**.
1. Preparedness is always a great advantage in achieving our goals. See chapter 8:10.
 2. Preparedness is the outcome of a genuine desire to serve Christ. vs. 2
 - a. These Christians were ready to participate in a good work. See 8:10.
 3. Preparedness avoids embarrassment and disappointments. vs. 3, 4
 4. Preparedness fosters better responses from those who participate. vs. 5
- E. His was a ministry of **generosity**. 9:6- 15
1. Generosity springs from trust in the law of *sowing and reaping*. vs. 6
 2. Generosity springs from good *planning*. vs. 7
 3. Generosity springs from *faith* in God's grace-- He will furnish the sufficiency and abundance necessary for success. vs. 8, 9
 4. Generosity springs from *confidence* in how the gift will be *used*-- the benefits both to givers and to receivers. vs. 10, 11
 - a. From this collection for the saints, the needs of the receivers would be met, but deep gratitude for the gift would return to the givers as well. vs. 12
 5. Generosity fulfilled the purpose of Paul's ministry to the saints. vs. 13
 - a. God was glorified when his children *obeyed* Him. vs. 13
 - b. Jews and Gentiles thus learned to share as members of *the same family!* vs. 14
 6. Generosity among God's people reflects His generosity toward God's people!
 - a. This is Paul's basic lesson throughout chapters 8 and 9. See especially 8:9.

IV. Paul's Ministry: **DEFENDED** Chapter 10:1- Chapter 13:10

- A. Paul's defense of the **spiritual nature** of his ministry. 10:1- 11
1. It had been marked by *meekness, gentleness* and *boldness*. vs. 1, 2
 - a. He imitated the behavior of Jesus in meekness toward some. See 1Corinthians 11:1; John 11:35.
 - b. He acted like the same Jesus in boldness toward others. See Matthew 23:33.
 - (1) Drastic actions are sometimes needed. See Acts 13:10; 1Timothy 1:20.
 - c. Paul's behavior was dictated by the behavior of those he tried to teach. vs. 2
 2. It had been marked by *mighty weaponry*. vs. 3, 4a
 - a. "Super powers" possess "super" weapons of war.
 - b. Paul's weapons were not worldly in nature.
 - c. Nevertheless, they were "mighty in God."
 - (1) God supported Paul's use of His mighty weapons against the enemies of truth.
 - d. Fighting against Paul was fighting against God. See Acts 5:29.

3. It had been marked by *awesome power*. vs. 4b- 6
 - a. The power was directed toward “pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...”
 - b. Every unworthy behavior would be destroyed by God’s power. vs. 5
 - c. Every disobedience would be punished in due time. vs. 6
 4. It had been marked by *significant credentials*. vs. 7, 8
 - a. The outward credentials of Paul’s ministry were obvious to all. vs. 7
 - (1) They would compare favorably with any other ministry among them.
 - (2) Paul would soon deal with facts proving his ministry to be far superior to any other they had been associated with (chapters 11 and 12). See Matthew 7:20.
 - b. The heaven-sent credentials of his ministry could not be challenged. vs. 8
 - (1) Any contest of those credentials might bring “destruction” to challengers.
 5. It had been marked by *unwavering consistency*. vs. 9- 11
 - a. It is ironic that Paul’s detractors were likely as “weak” (compromising and patronizing) in their speech and actions as they accused Paul of being. They would resort to anything to draw away as many as they could from Paul’s influence. This was surely a case of “the pot calling the kettle black.”
 - b. The apostle warned these detractors that he would deal with them sternly when he met them in person at some time in the future.
- B. Paul’s defense of the **heavenly authority** of his ministry. 10: 12- 18
1. His work should be measured by a heavenly standard. vs. 12
 - a. Other ways of evaluating it were “not wise.” See 1Corinthians 1:20, 21.
 2. His authority to work there was within limits set by God, not man. vs. 13, 14
 - a. Paul came to Corinth by God’s appointment, not his own. vs. 13
 - b. He had not “bitten off more than he could chew” in coming there; God had fully equipped him for success in preaching the gospel in that city.
 - c. False teachers had *no* divine commission to preach there (or anywhere).
 3. His authority was used to accomplish *lawful* goals. 15- 17
 - a. He reveled in preaching where the gospel had not gone before. vs. 15
 - (1) This had come to be a driving force in his preaching life. See Romans 15:20.
 - b. He expected their help in carrying apostolic authority into other places. vs. 15, 16
 - (1) Churches “did well” when they shared with Paul in his service to Christ. See Philippians 4: 14- 17.
 4. His authority was exercised only in ways that pleased the Lord. vs. 18
 - a. The false teachers boosted themselves; their “booster club” was altogether composed of and controlled by themselves.
 - b. Paul’s ministry was “boosted” by Christ Himself. See Hebrews 2:4.
- C. Paul’s defense against **charges made by false teachers**. 11:1- 15
1. He was willing to indulge in uncharacteristic argumentation of his own personal behavior and credentials, since that was the basis upon which the Corinthians seemed to make decisions about who deserved to be followed as teachers. vs. 1, 2
 2. His concession in that respect was for their spritual protection. vs. 3

3. A close comparison would show that Paul was the superior minister. vs. 4
 - a. They should “bear with him”-- hear him out as he talks about himself.
 - b. Truth never fears an honest investigation by honest people.
4. Charges made against Paul called for candid answers from him.

Their charges against Paul:

Paul’s answers to their charges:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Paul was inferior to other apostles (See 1Corinthians 1:12). b. Paul was untrained in speech (oratory and sophistication). c. He had refused support from the church at Corinth. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. He was <u>not</u> inferior to the most eminent among the apostles. vs. 5 b. His inspired knowledge was unquestioned by those who knew him. vs. 6 c. There were good reasons for that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) His self-denial was for <u>their</u> spiritual good. vs. 7 (2) Other churches considered him worthy of support. vs. 8, 9 (3) It was not because of a lack of love for them. vs. 11 (4) Other teachers were unwilling to be compared to Paul in things that <i>really</i> mattered. vs. 12 |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d. Other ministers were equal to or better than Paul. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d. Other “ministers” were <i>false</i> apostles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) They were not sent by heaven but pretended to be. vs. 13 (2) They followed Satan as Paul followed Jesus Christ. See 1Corinthians 11:1. (3) God is not deceived by their “transformation” though men may be. vs. 15 |

D. Paul’s defense against the **tactics of false teachers.** 11:16- 22

1. Paul resorted to tactics not employed by Christ when he contrasted his own physical qualifications with those of the false teachers who challenged his apostleship. vs.16, 17
2. He sought to expose their tactics by means of his own tactics:

Tactics of False teachers

Paul’s counter tactics

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Boasting- vs. 18 b. Using converts to their own advantage- vs. 20 c. Boldness in claims and behavior- vs.21 d. Appeals to Jewish heritage and mindset- vs. 22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Godly boasting- vs. 18 b. He was too “weak” for that practice- vs.21 c. Heavenly-generated boldness- vs. 21 d. Equal in Jewish credentials of the flesh- vs. 22 |
|---|---|

- E. Paul's defense by **citations of his sufferings for the gospel.** 11:23- 33
1. The real issue was---*who really is a minister of Christ?* vs. 23
 2. The ultimate proof of any ministry is the sacrifices made for it!
 3. Paul could recite 23 kinds of things he had suffered for the gospel he preached: vs.23-28 a. Labors; b. stripes; c. prisons; d. (in danger of) deaths; e. scourging; f. beatings with rods; g. stonings; h. shipwreck; i. journeys; j. perils of waters; k. perils of robbers; l. perils from Jews; m. perils from Gentiles; n. perils in the city; o. perils in the wilderness; p. perils in the sea; q. perils among false brethren; r. weariness and toil; s. sleeplessness often; t. hunger and thirst; u. fastings; v. cold and nakedness; w. deep concern for *all* the churches.
 4. Paul's implication was: how much have the others sacrificed for their ministry? *Little, if any!*
 5. Paul's greatest burden was his "deep concern" for all the churches. vs. 28
 - a. Elders care for *one* flock--Paul cared for *many!* He bore a very great mental and emotional load as a part of his apostleship.
 6. His suffering had begun immediately following his conversion to Christ and had continued over the years until that present time. vs. 32, 33
- F. Paul's defense by **claims of revelations.** 12:1- 10
1. Physical claims might not convince, but claims of inspiration and revelation should.
 - a. He would deal with *visions* (how received) and *revelations* (what received). vs. 1
 2. One outstanding example of his apostolic empowerment is cited. vs. 2- 6
 - a. He heard "unutterable words" in his trip to Paradise. vs. 4
 - b. Ellen G. White (founder of Seventh Day Adventism) claimed a similar experience, but she "told all" to further her new religion.
 - c. This special treatment for Paul might generate pride in him except he should exercise extreme caution. vs. 5, 6
 3. Paul was subjected to a "thorn in the flesh" to keep him humble despite his special treatment by the Lord. vs. 7
 - a. His humanity asked God for release from this affliction. vs. 8
 - b. This duplicated the cries for release from Jesus' own humanity. (See Matthew 26:39.)
 - c. Weakness was valuable to both Paul and Jesus as a source of strength. vs. 9, 10
- G. Paul's defense by **possession of miraculous signs.** 12:11- 13
1. The original apostles had been sent out possessing signs. See Mark 16:17, 18.
 2. Paul was not behind any one of them in this ministry of miracles. vs. 11, 12
- H. Paul's defense by **personal concern for the brethren.** 12:14- 21
1. His concern for them was like that of a *parent for a child*-- PROVISION for their needs. vs. 14, 15
 2. His concern for them was like that of a *guardian for a ward*-- PROTECTION from any who might take advantage of them. vs. 17- 19
 3. His concern for them was like that of a *trustee for his trust*-- PROBITY ("tried and proved honesty to a trust") that required fair treatment of their relationship. vs. 20, 21
 - a. Each "wish" could be fulfilled only if *God's* wish for all of them prevailed. vs. 20, 21

I. Paul's defense by their **self-examination**. 13:1- 10

1. The ultimate value of his ministry to them was found within themselves. vs. 3
2. His ministry toward them was enhanced by a "weakness" of personality that dictated a patient response to their weakness of faith toward his apostleship. vs. 4- 6
3. This was the repetition of the same "weakness" in Jesus that permitted His triumph over death for our salvation. vs. 4
 - a. The triumph of Jesus can be repeated in *us* as it was in Paul!
4. Paul was the one responsible for Christ being in them. It was his preaching that had led them out of pagan darkness into the bright light of gospel truth. vs. 5
5. *Honesty* on their part will surely result in Paul's vindication as a minister of Christ. vs. 6
6. His genuineness can be measured by his self-abasement. vs. 7- 9
 - a. Their assessment of him was relatively unimportant to Paul; their obedience to the truth was very important. vs. 7, 8
 - b. Their "completeness" was the thing of most importance to him. vs. 9

V. CONCLUSION. 13: 11- 13

A. Various admonitions. vs. 11- 13

B. Benediction. vs. 14

1. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will help in the efforts of the Corinthian Christians to become "complete." vs. 11

--- Reg Ginn

SECOND CORINTHIANS

“Paul-- A Minister of Christ”

CLASS QUESTIONS

Chapters 1- 13

1. How does Paul identify himself to the Corinthians? (1:1)
2. How many times does Paul use forms of "comfort" and "consolation" in his opening remarks? (1:3- 7)
3. What kind of trouble in Asia did Paul refer to? (1:8) See Acts 19.
4. By what word does Paul describe the dangers he had faced for the gospel? (1:9, 10)
5. Paul was concerned about his conduct among what two classes of people? (1:12)
6. What change had Paul made in his plan to come again to Corinth? (1:15, 16)
7. What personal reason had deterred Paul from coming to Corinth? (1:23)

NOTES:

Second Corinthians-- Questions

Chapter Two

1. Paul's first letter to this church had been intended to express what feeling toward them? (2:4)
2. Who was the "man" mentioned in verse 6 of chapter two? (See 1Corinthians 5.)
3. Withholding forgiveness might have what effect on this "man"? (2:7)
4. A basic trait of the Corinthians would be revealed in their attitude toward discipline by the congregation. What was this trait? (2:9)
5. What might happen to those who refused to follow instructions about discipline? (2:11)
6. Paul had hope to meet _____ at _____. When he didn't, what action did he take? (2:12, 13)
7. Paul's preaching had different effects on different people. What were these differences? (2:15, 16)
8. What were some teachers at Corinth doing with the word of God? (2:17)

NOTES:

1. What kind of epistle (letter) testified about the nature of Paul's work among the people at Corinth? (3:1- 3)
2. Paul was sufficient to do what kind of work at Corinth and elsewhere? (3: 6)
3. What different goals (ends) were accomplished by the "letter" and the "Spirit"? (3:6)
4. Paul attaches two names each to the old law and the new law. What are they? (3:7- 9)
5. What does Paul say about the duration of these two laws? (3:11)
6. What did Moses do to illustrate the temporary nature of the old law? (3:13)
7. What happened (figuratively) "until this day" when Moses (the old law) was read? (3:15)
8. When is the "veil" taken away from the hearts of readers of the old law? (3:16)
9. What is the effect on Christians when they behold the Lord's glory? (3:18)

NOTES:

1. How did Paul commend himself to other men? (4:2)
2. Why were many perishing in spite of preaching by Paul and others? (4:3, 4)
3. What did Paul preach about his own role and that of Jesus Christ? (4:5)
4. Paul's confidence as a preacher sprang from the fact that God had done what for him? (4:6)
5. Paul recites several negative pressures on him as a minister of Christ along with his positive responses to these pressures. List them. (4:8-11)
6. What was "working" in Paul and in the Corinthians? (4:12)
7. With whom did Paul share faith and courage? About what? (4:13, 14)
8. Despite many obstacles, Paul had what assurance about his work as an apostle? (4:14)
9. Why was his affliction considered by Paul to be only "light"? (4:16- 18)

NOTES:

1. What words does Paul use to emphasize the impermanence of earthly things and the permanence of heavenly things? (5:1)
2. Paul's supreme goal as a minister of Christ is expressed in verse two. What was it? (5:2)
3. What guarantee does the Christian have of his eternal reward? What additional guarantee did Paul have? (5:5, 7)
4. Why is it important that men be persuaded to live so as to please the Lord? (5:9- 11)
5. How great was the scope of Christ's love for man, and how did that affect Paul's behavior? (5:14)
6. How should our behavior be affected by the knowledge of Christ's love for us?
7. What great change should take place in the lives of "new creatures" in Christ? (5:17)
8. Identify as many as you can of the things necessary to the process of man's reconciliation to God. (5:18- 20)
9. The apostles had a special relationship to Christ that is sometimes erroneously claimed by men today. What is it? (5:20)
10. Jesus became (was made) to be sin for us that we might enjoy what special relationship with God? (5:21)

NOTES:

1. With whom did Paul work jointly in trying to save souls? (6:1)
2. What could cause any Christian to be lost? When should this be of concern to him? (6:1, 2)
3. Why was Paul so careful about his personal behavior before others? (6:3)
4. List the specific things that Paul suffered for the cause of the Lord. (6:4,5)
5. What personal qualities enabled Paul to be patient and to survive his troubles? (6:6)
6. What defenses did God provide to Paul during his tribulations? (6:7)
7. List the false opinions that some men had of Paul while he worked as an apostle. Also, list the true evaluation of Paul and his work despite those opinions. (6:8- 10)
8. Who was at fault when some of the Corinthians felt estranged from Paul? (6:12, 13)
9. The attitude of the doubters at Corinth could be traced to their too close association with whom? (6:14)
10. What are some “unequal yokings” cited by Paul that are obviously inappropriate? (6:14-16)
11. In what ways can Christians be “unequally yoked” with unbelievers today? Think!
12. Upon what terms will God be our Father and we will be his true children? (6:16-18)

NOTES:

1. What should be the Christians's response to God's promises of Fatherhood? (7:1)
2. What had been Paul's behavior toward the Corinthians, and what was his present attitude toward them? (7:2, 3)
3. Was Paul discouraged about the spiritual prospects of the church at Corinth? Why? (7:4, 7)
4. When Paul first came to Macedonia, what frame of mind was he in? What changed his mental state? (7:5- 7)
5. Why did Paul not regret having caused the Corinthians to sorrow because of his first letter to them? (7:9)
6. Two kinds of sorrow are cited by Paul. What are they and how do they differ? (7:10)
7. The Corinthians' sorrow led them to some important actions. What? (7:11)
8. What had been Paul's main reason for rebuking the church about their sinful member? (7:12)
9. Was Titus favorably impressed with the church at Corinth? Why or why not? (7:15)
10. How did Paul describe his own attitude toward that obedient church? (7:16)

NOTES:

1. What was so unusual about the liberality of the Macedonian Christians? (8:1- 4)
2. What was the “secret” behind this kind of liberality? (8:5)
3. What instruction had Paul given to Titus about the church at Corinth? (8:6)
4. In what did the Corinthians “abound,” and in what did they need to “abound”? (8:7)
5. By what standard did Paul measure the love for Christ of the Corinthian Christians? (8:8)
6. For how long had the church at Corinth planned to assist needy saints at Jerusalem? What action did they need to take about their plan? (8:10, 11)
7. How was “equality” among the churches to be assured? (8:13- 15)
8. How were the messengers chosen who would accompany Paul with the collection? (8:18- 19)
9. What was Paul’s practice concerning financial dealings with the churches? (8:20, 21)
10. What role did Titus fill regarding this collection? The other “brethren” mentioned by Paul? (8: 23)

NOTES:

1. What had Paul told the Macedonians about the Corinthians' plans for the collection to assist the saints at Jerusalem? (9:2)
2. What fear did Paul entertain about the status of the Corinthians' plan? (9:3, 4)
3. Generous giving by the Corinthians could spring from one of two motivations. What were they, and which one did Paul desire from them? (9:5)
4. What are God's requirements for giving with respect to: (1) amount; (2) planning; (3) attitude of the giver? (9:6, 7)
5. A basic promise from God attends liberal giving. What is it? (9:8- 11)
6. What illustration or comparison does Paul offer as an encouragement to liberality? (9:10, 11)
7. What two results could the Corinthians expect from their gift to needy saints? (9:12- 14)
8. What is the "indescribable gift" for which Paul gave thanks to God? (9:15)

NOTES:

1. What reputation did Paul have with some about the consistency of his behavior? (10:1)
2. What two relationships to “the flesh” characterized Paul’s ministry? (10:3)
3. Paul’s spiritual warfare had spiritual, not carnal, goals? What were they? (10:4- 6)
4. What great mistake had Paul’s adversaries made in forming their opinions about his claims of being an apostle and a minister of Christ? (10:7)
5. What difference did some claim to see between Paul’s physical presence and his literary presence? (10:10)
6. Paul refused to judge the success of his work in the same way that the false teachers did. How did they measure their success, and by what would Paul measure his? (10:12,13)
7. Paul’s work at Corinth had been a “pioneer effort” on his part. He could be confident that the progress there was the result of his own labors. Apparently, this was different from the boasting of the false teachers about the “results” they had achieved. How was it different? (10:15, 16)
8. Any “boasting” about the Lord’s work should spring from what motivation? (10:17)
9. Whose commendation did Paul desire for the work he had done at Corinth and elsewhere? (10:18)

NOTES:

1. How and why was Paul “jealous” for the Corinthians? (11:1)
2. What fear did Paul have about the minds of the Corinthians? (11:3)
3. Why do you think Paul’s instructions to the Corinthians are different from those he gave to the Galatians (See Galatians 1:8.) (11:4)
4. In what practice had Paul made an exception when he first preached the gospel at Corinth? (11:7- 9)
5. While preaching at Corinth, Paul had received help from where? (11:9)
6. What things do Satan and his servants do that might prove dangerous to the security of the servants of Christ? (11:13- 15)
7. Why did Paul tell these people not to think of him as a fool and then tell them to receive him as a fool? (11:16)
8. What three physical qualifications did Paul cite to establish his Jewish background? (11:22)
9. List some of the sufferings endured by Paul that lent validation to his claims of apostleship and ministry for Christ. (11:23-27)
10. What great mental burden did Paul bear for the cause of Jesus? (11:28)
11. What specific historical example did Paul give to emphasize the longevity of his sufferings for the ministry of the Lord? (11:32,33)

NOTES:

1. Paul tells of an unusual event that occurred “fourteen years ago.” What was it? (12:2- 4)
2. Why couldn’t Paul report what was heard by “the man” involved in this experience? (12:4)
3. How did Paul wish to be perceived by others? (12:6)
4. What was done to (for) Paul to prevent him from becoming proud of himself? (12:7)
5. What request did Paul make of the Lord, and what answer did he receive? (12:8, 9)
6. When did Paul feel that he had the greatest spiritual strength? (12:10)
7. What benefit had Paul withheld from the Corinthians? How did he now feel about what he had done? (12:13)
8. What response did Paul receive from some to whom he had shown great love? (12:15)
9. Which three people did Paul claim had not taken advantage of the Corinthians? (12:17, 18)
10. Paul threatened action against those who might be found guilty of certain practices when he came again to Corinth. What were those practices? (12:20, 21)

NOTES:

1. The first verse of this chapter discloses an otherwise undocumented event. What was it? (13:1)
2. What kind of proof about Paul were some at Corinth seeking? (13:3)
3. Paul's relationship to "weakness" and "power" was very similar to that of another individual. Who? (13:4)
4. Three steps should be taken by the Corinthians to assure that Christ was "in them." What were these steps? (13:5)
5. Paul was confident that he was "qualified" as a minister of Christ because of his attitude toward the truth. What attitude did he have? (13:6, 8)
6. Paul's main concern for the future obedience of the Corinthians was not to benefit his reputation as an apostle but for what reason that would be to their benefit? (13:7)
7. The apostle prayed for the Corinthian Christians that they might reach what spiritual goal? (13:9)
8. What was the basic purpose for which apostolic power (miraculous) had been given to Paul by the Lord? (13:10)
9. Paul's final wish for the church at Corinth proposed four fundamental responsibilities for them to meet. What were they? (13:11)
10. If these saints met their responsibilities as a church, what all-important blessing would be given to them? (13:11)

NOTES: