



Acts to Revelation
Bible Course
Lesson 24

Name: _____

2 Corinthians

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to address major problems in the church. After he sent the letter, Paul wondered how they had received it. Had they accepted his rebukes and repented? Titus met Paul in Philippi and brought news from Corinth. Many of the Corinthians had repented but felt overwhelmed from the correction they received. Paul now sends a more encouraging, loving letter. Paul expresses his happiness that the Corinthians had heeded what he had to say in 1 Corinthians, but pressed them on, encouraging them to continue the necessary reforms.

2 Corinthians is the least systematic of Paul's letters, that is, full of digressions and meanderings, and less doctrinal than any other book of Paul besides his epistle to Philemon. Yet, this book shows more of the fiery personality of Paul than most and, at the same time, a very personal glimpse into his heart to see his love for the church and his loyalty to Christ.

Read 2 Corinthians 1

1. Paul starts with blessing God in Jesus Christ, for He is the God of _____ comfort. (2 Cor. 1:3) How true of Job regarding men, "_____ comforters are ye all" (Job 16:2).
2. The persecution was quite extensive, but God comforted them in tribulations...for what reason? (2 Cor. 1:3,4) _____

Why do Christians suffer?

- Increases Christian faithfulness: that we should not _____ in ourselves, but in _____ (v. 8,9).
- Increases Christian experience – fellowship and comfort: "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our _____ also aboundeth by Christ" (v. 5); "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the _____" (chapter 7:6)
- Increases thanksgiving: "Ye also helping together by prayer for us...by the means of many persons _____ may be given" (v. 11)
- Increases Christian usefulness: Some Corinthians were saying that suffering showed Paul was being punished for something he had done. Rather it was preparation for good – for someone else. Christians are most effective at helping each other when they have experienced the same thing. "And whether we be afflicted, it is for _____ (v. 6).

3. The persecution was so bad in Asia that they despaired even of _____. But Paul says, “We had the _____ of death in ourselves, that we should not _____ in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.” (2 Cor. 1:9,10)

Read 2 Corinthians 2

4. Persecution was very bad, but then Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. This was a lengthy list of things that were wrong in the church. Paul promised he would not come to the Corinthians again in _____. (2 Cor. 2:1)
5. Though Paul wrote it with many _____. He made them very _____ (mourning in the inward sense) (2 Cor. 2:4).
6. Later (2 Cor. 7:6-10), Paul speaks more specifically on this point, saying that this mourning was a good thing. “For though I made you _____ with a letter, I do not _____, though I did repent....now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to _____, for ye were made sorry after a _____ manner...for _____ sorrow worketh repentance to _____ not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh _____.”
7. This is what our Heidelberg Catechism so clearly teaches – we need this godly sorrow over our sin. We will never be sorry that, in using the means of grace, God through his Holy Spirit showed us what we really are. In being driven to the Lord Jesus and finding eternal life, how could one be sorry? Paul heard the news of their sorrow from _____ (See 2 Cor. 7:6-7) and was comforted. In contrast, the sorrow of the world, (e.g. being sad about the loss of material things, or even at God taking away a loved one), which does not bring us Christ, ends in our own death and destruction.
8. Remember the discipline case in 2 Corinthians 5? Here the mom and her son/stepson were proud about their sexual relationship (incest). Finally, after receiving the first letter from Paul, the church did excommunicate this couple for unrepentant fornication. The mother and son/stepson did finally repent, but now the church would not forgive them and let them back into the church. Paul now reminds them that this ‘unforgiving spirit’ is _____’s device (2 Cor. 2:10-11).
9. Every time we go to church, we are either hardened under the preaching of the gospel or softened. The preaching of Christ is a “_____ of life unto life or a savor of _____ unto death.” (2 Cor. 2:15-16).

Read 2 Corinthians 3

10. Paul next compares the Old Testament with the New Testament. In the giving of the law, God met with Moses and wrote with His finger on tables of stone. When Moses came down the mountain, they put a _____ over his face, because the glory of God shone from his face. This _____ still remains on the Jews till today in the _____ of the Old Testament. (2 Cor. 3:7, 12-18) Their rejection of the only Messiah continues.
11. When the Jews read Isaiah 53 and all of the Old Testament, they do not recognize that the Lord Jesus has fulfilled all this. How much more glorious is the New Testament. If the glory of the law made Moses' face to shine in blinding the people, how much more the gospel of the New Testament! Describe the glory of the Lord upon the mountain in Exodus 24:15-17. _____
- When and why did Moses put on this veil and when did he take it off?
- _____
- _____

Read 2 Corinthians 4

12. Paul emphasizes that he has this ministry by the mercy of God. A faithful ministry must renounce _____, not walk in _____, not handle the word of God _____ (2 Cor. 4: 2).
13. Yet in preaching, the gospel is hid to the _____, because the _____ of this world (the devil) hath blinded them (2 Cor. 2:3,4).
14. Paul did not preach man or about himself but Christ Jesus the _____. He takes no credit but rather notes that God commanded the _____ to shine out of _____ and into their hearts to give the _____ of the _____ of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:5,6).
15. A minister is a wonderful tool in God's hand, but Paul reminds the Corinthians that he is an _____ vessel, without excellency, that the excellency of the _____ may be of God (2 Cor. 4:7).

16. Paul in his ministry encounters trouble on every side, but this never brings Paul to distress; though sometimes he is perplexed, but never in _____ (this is Satan's desire). He is persecuted, but not _____ ; cast down, but not _____. Paul always bears in his body the _____ of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 4:8-12).
17. Paul knows that the day of the glorious _____ is coming (2 Cor. 4:14).
18. Affliction is called a _____ thing (2 Cor. 4:17). *'Affliction' = a cause of continued pain of body or mind.*
19. Why do you think Paul would say this? (Read 2 Cor. 4:17,18 to find the answer.)
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Evaluator: _____

Meditation:

The wounds of Christ were the greatest outlets of His glory that ever were. The divine glory shone more out of His wounds than out of all His life before. The veil was then rent in twain, and the full heart of God allowed to stream through. It was a human body that writhed, pale and racked, upon the accursed tree; they were human hands that were pierced so rudely by the nails; it was human flesh that bore that deadly gash upon the side; it was human blood that streamed from hands, and feet, and side; the eye that meekly turned to His Father was a human eye; the soul that yearned over His mother was a human soul. But oh, there was divine glory streaming through all; every wound was a mouth to speak of the grace and love of God. Divine holiness shone through. What infinite hatred of sin was there when He thus offered Himself a Sacrifice without spot unto God? Divine wisdom shone through. All created intelligences could not have devised a plan whereby God would have been just, and yet the Justifier. Divine love: every drop of blood that fell came as a messenger of love from His heart to tell the love of the Fountain. This was the love of God. He that hath seen a crucified Christ hath seen the Father.

Taken from "Gems of Robert Murray McCheyne"