

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

April 23: 2 Corinthians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

April 23

2 Corinthians 1 & 2 & 3

Just as Christ has shown His love for us in helping us through tough times, so are we there for each other during the good times and bad times.

Paul speak of their great testing while in Asia. This testing tried them so much so that he didn't think they would make it through. It was God's protection and their prayer that helped Paul through this time. Paul truly shows his love and excitement for the Corinthian people here!

Paul tells the people of Corinth that his message if truly from God. Paul did not make it to see them as he did not want to make things awkward between them. He did not want them to feel he was watching their every action but wanted to remind them we are all on the same mission for the Lord.

Ch 2

Paul shows his deep love for them that he is writing this letter to them instead of visiting him. The Corinthians were a benefit to him as well to help encourage and cheer him along on his work for God. This letter brought him great pain to write as he loved them so much.

Paul states the purpose of his letter is regarding a wrong done in their midst. A man has caused them grief from his sin and needed forgiveness. Paul states he forgive him like they were forgiving him as well. He encouraged them not to be overly harsh to this man but to show love to him through their forgiveness. Paul informs them that as they forgive, he forgives, as does Christ. Paul strongly encourages this as he didn't want to give Satan another stronghold.

Paul states he went to Troas to preach God's word to a very welcoming crowd. However, he was wanting to meet Titus there so he could get word on how things were going with the Corinthians he left to go to Macedonia.

Paul goes on to say that Christ's message that is told to those who hear it and are righteous, to them it is a sweet and pleasing aroma to them. But to those who are evil it is like a horrible stench. Paul states that he does not peddle in God's word for profiting himself but he earnestly seeks to please God by sharing His truth.

Ch 3

Paul tells of the new law that Christ brought to us. The old law which Moses brought to God's people is now past and over with. This new law is from the Spirit of God and will last for eternity. Paul mentions how bold he is with this new exciting message! He is excited like a child who is in a candy shop with a twenty dollar bill...but even more excited then that! This message is to save many people through Christ's death.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! It's a great blessing the church has the example from 2 Corinthians 2. Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians - and us - that a brother whom church discipline has imposed can lovingly be restored to fellowship if they show genuine sorrow and repentance. I

am curious... I have always had in my mind this set of passage is in reference to the incident recorded in 1 Corinthians 5. I'm curious if this is our 7 Bible Studies Group thought as well?

Comment:

Charles Fry:

Yes, Ginger, I do think Paul's reference to sorrow and repentance is in regard to the problem described in 1 Cor 5. I think the resumption of the theme of sorrow and repentance coming up in chapter 7 is in view of the same situation and the difficulty it had created for the church.

April 30: 2 Corinthians 4-5 (Ryan Ingle)

April 30 ~ 2 Corinthians 4 - 5

Paul's mission was to edify those he was preaching to about Christ and the new law. This was not well received as we have had multiple instances where Paul's trenching were met with great resistance and persecution. Paul states his message is from God for everyone to see. They don't use deception or trickery like others of this time. The gods of this world have blinded many to the truth that Paul is preaching.

Paul continues to state they aren't extraordinary in looks but just your average person carry around this blessed message from God. The death of Christ continues to encourage and strengthen Paul and the others in their work! Many trials he has been through but he continues no matter what he has to face in adversity.

Ch 5

Paul, like us, are excited about moving out of this earthly tent into an everlasting building Made from God where we will never have to relocate again.

Paul continues to say that while we are in this body, we know that we are separate from God so we are living by faith at this point. Since we are away from him while living in this tent, we aim to please God while away so we will receive the desired reward at the end. No one will escape the judgement of God!!

Everything Paul did was for the Lord God. He is showing the Corinthians also his love for them as well. He is hopeful through his actions that those who see him will understand he does what he does for God and as an example for others. Christ's death was for all.

"And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." 5:15

We should in turn be willing to live for Christ.

Paul states he is not there to make himself look good to others but to help them to become more "Christ-like". They once evaluated Christ through a worldly view but no longer. Paul understands now that the message of Christ is reconciliation. He wishes all to see and understand this message.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan! It's been a busy weekend for your family but you persevered! You are a very good example to all of us! <3 These chapters assigned today gives a wonderful account of the apostle's courage and patience under all their sufferings. "Therefore we do not lose heart!"

Paul vindicates their ministry from the accusation of false teachers & those who charged them as deceitful workers. Their constancy and perseverance in their work are declared: "We faint not under the difficulty of our work, nor do we desist from our labor." And their steadfastness was owing to the mercy of God. From the same mercy and grace from which they received the apostleship, they received strength to persevere in the work of the office (Rom. 1:5). In chapter 5 Paul shows the reasons why they did not faint under their afflictions. Namely, a happy life after this present life is ended in that everlasting blessedness of the unseen world!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

May 7: 2 Corinthians 6-8 (Ryan Ingle)

2 Corinthians 6 - 8 ~ May 7

Paul instructs the Corinthians not to take for granted the gift of salvation God has blessed them with (words of great wisdom!)

Paul lists several tribulations here the He and others have endured to bring the message of God to the message.

How many of us complain when we have to do something that gets us out of our comfort zone...especially if it possibly entails talking with others about Christ...and yet Paul did what he did. Kinda makes you feel a little non worthy of Christ death!

Paul reminds them to have no part with evil, those who God.

“What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” And, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.””

We, as Christians, need to keep in mind our bodies are a living temple for God. When we go out into the community we need to remember we are being watched.

Ch 7

Paul encourages the Corinthians that with God's eternal promise of salvation, that they should all purify themselves for God.

Paul tells them again of his love for them and wishing that they would accept his message of repentance. He is also longing for their love towards him as well as they are an encouragement for him on his difficult journey. He isn't trying to lay a guilt trip on them.

He continues by telling them how he was greatly encouraged in his trip to Macedonia in finding Good comforting him through Titus. Titus brought news of the Corinthians concern and longing for Paul and how that greatly encouraged Paul and how appreciative he was of their concern. Paul admits he was not sorry for the grief his previous let brought the Corinthians as the sorrow it brought led to their repentance.

This letter reminds me of when a parent corrects a child. Yes they may be sad at first but then the parent pours on the love to show them that they are still loved even after they had been corrected. "Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter." (9-11)

Paul admits that he wrote the letter to them to show also how dedicated they were to Paul and the others and his teachings about God.

Titus was greatly encouraged as well by them. Paul was excited to see that his boasting to Titus about them was not in vain, that they received him well.

“I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.” (7:16)

I will post later this afternoon on chapter 8.

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Thanks brother!

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thanks, Ryan! Paul has always been completely open and sincere in his relations with Christians in Corinth but false prophets have been trying to persuade them that he does not really love them. These chapters display Paul's true love and tenderly appeals them to stay away from false teachers and believers. The Corinthians are benefactors of his love and affection. The letter's purpose was not to deal with the offender but to test their loyalty and devotion to Paul as their apostle. They did not disappoint, for their sorrow did not leave them bitter and hostile, but led to repentance. They became sorrowful as God desired and were benefited instead of harmed by the letter. Great verse in chapter 8, "they (Macedonians) gave themselves first to the Lord." This was a good encouragement to Corinth to finish the charity they had started in sincere willingness and love.

Cont'd:

Happy Mother's Day to all those lovely mother's who have tried so hard to raise their family up in the Lord!

First off. I truly and sincerely apologize! I missed reporting on chapter 8 from last week. I've been so occupied with home repairs for selling our old home I totally spaced it. So I will make a quick recap on that chapter before proceeding with today's lessons.

Romans 15:26 makes mention of the Macedonians and their generous giving to those in need in Jerusalem. "For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem."

The Christians in Jerusalem were poor due to war and famine at this time. Also, keep in mind the gentiles were not well received by the Jews either as God's new law also showed favor to the gentiles as well.

Titus is being sent to collect the charity from the Corinthians for those Christians in Jerusalem who are in desperate need. Paul really shows his appreciation for the Macedonians and uses them as an example to help encourage the Corinthians. "But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving." (8:7)

Paul continues to encourage in verses 8 - 15 by telling them to finish their work... For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has.. and continues to remind them they have plenty now and later, when they don't have so much, they will be repaid by others abundance.

Titus and possibly Luke and Apollos I think were the ones being sent out to collect the charity Paul is asking them to give.

“Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.” (8:24)

May 14: 2 Corinthians 9-10 (Ryan Ingle)

Ch. 9

Paul continues to encourage them by basically saying I have really built up this image with others of how great the Corinthians are and how eager they are to help. Now, since I've built you up in the eyes of others, Paul basically says don't screw it up as I'm sending additional men to help you in your generosity giving.

It's kinda funny here as Paul says I have complete confidence in you guys but I think giving you more incentive will help you follow through on your great generosity.

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” (9:6-8)

I think this group of verses is one of the most read/quoted verses in the Bible! God really does provide what we need! Verse 8 says, "... Having all that you need..." This reminds me of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. If we don't have an essential need met, it is very difficult for us to move to the next level. If we don't need to worry about where our next meal is coming from, we can focus more on our spiritual life. God does provide for us!!

At the end of this chapter Paul really helps to send those message home to the Corinthians on their generosity being rewarded! "Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you."

(9:13-14)

Ch. 10

Paul really did have to drive the message home with the Corinthians that his message was true. There was so much false teachings going on that it was difficult to always have the truth and not stay away from it.

Now Paul was bold in his last letter to them but really has been kind and loving here in this letter. He starts off by warning them that they need to stay on the righteous path so he doesn't have to be bold with them when he is able to be with them as it is unpleasant for both Paul and the Corinthians. We are separate from the world even though we live in it.

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (4-5)

Our strength and power is not of this world but of a greater force from God!

Paul continues to make his case here in 7 - 11 to the Corinthians against those who opposed Paul and his teachings. Paul's intent was to keep them on the right path towards Christ in his letters. Some may think Paul, in person, was not bold in his demeanor. Paul here states he will be bold with all of need be at the time of his arrival at Corinth.

Verses 12 - 18

Paul helps the Corinthians to know he is not being prideful here in his message. He is not competing with others. He's not going outside God's boundaries in his message to them. Paul's message has always been since Christ's teachings and not these newly made-up teachings others are teaching. Some would say that Paul is just trying to teach a message like their message of Christ but house message was not from their teachings but from God.

Paul ends this chapter by saying his message is intended to reach far beyond Corinth and is hopeful the Corinthians will continue sharing and teaching God's word. He encouraged them not to get boastful in sharing the message but to boast in Christ and be encouraged through God's approval in them.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:
This surely was a time of furious activity for Paul, mending fences, dealing with fierce opposition, hastening from church to church and region to region, all for the the sake of the Lord, the gospel, the churches.

The Romans connection is good to notice, as Paul wrote that letter shortly after this one, and from Corinth. The final list of travelers for the trip taking the contribution to Jerusalem is in Acts 20:4, which does include Luke in the "we" of the next verse.

2 Corinthians 9:15 (CSB)
15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thanks for your faithfulness to the study despite so many physical needs in your life right now, Ryan! We sincerely appreciate your posts. I really love 2 Cor. 9:15. God is the ultimate example of giving. He selflessly gave His Son. All true Christian giving is in response of eternal gratitude for this gift which is beyond description.

May 21: 2 Corinthians 11-12 (Ryan Ingle)

2 Corinthians 11 - 13 ~ May 21, 2017

Paul continues his message of grave concern towards the Corinthians and how some are being misled by false teachings. He states in verses 1 - 4 of his great love for them and how, just like Eve being deceived, they are being deceived as well by those who are trying to cloud the truth and speak evil of Paul.

Verses 5 - 15 Paul admits he isn't a polished speaker like those "super-apostles" but at least Paul has the knowledge that they don't possess as he is truly being sent out for Christ's sake. Paul states he has never charged nor will he ever for his teachings giving to the Corinthians. He states even when he did have needs while with them, other churches supported him so he was not a burden to them. Paul is really expressing his frustration and discouragement here with them! Paul is trying to get this out in the open with them before his planned arrival so things aren't so awkward.

Paul states he plans on never charging them monies like the false teachers do. He states their actions are from the devil as the devil is very much about to masquerade as something he isn't in order to deceive anyone. Paul warns these false teachers will not get away with it, God will hold them accountable.

16 - 21

Paul is on his "soap box" now in telling them not to treat him like a fool, but if they do, let him have his time here for boasting a little about himself. Vs 20 "In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or puts on airs or slaps you in the face."

21 - 29

Paul admits this kind of talk he is writing is out of his norm...but emphasizes how ridiculous these false teachers are in their message and the Corinthians for accepting their teachings. In the next group here of verses it is a good reminder of how difficult Paul's life was as a Christian and what he went through!!!

"Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches." (23-28) WOW!!! Paul finishes up this chapter on how he really has done a lot for Christ's sake. He shows more of what makes him human, that he has slipped out of places to keep from being torched/killed. Paul shows that he has truly done a lot for Christ and for the Corinthians!!

Ch 12

Paul continue his boasting to the Corinthians. Now he goes into talking about a man who he knew, I believe he is speaking of himself here, who went up into the third heaven. He is one who describes different degrees or level of heaven in his writings. I would be happy to hear thought of others here but I believe he is speaking of his time on the road to Damascus. It states in verse 4, " was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell." If this is true, then obviously we don't have a full account of Paul's vision in Acts 9.

Paul mentions hear as well, he was given a "thorn in his flesh". This is a result of God allowing a messenger of Satan to keep him humble in him being tempted. We know through many cases in time Paul considers himself to be the least apostle due to his constant remembrance of he prior times before his conversion.

Paul Howe Ed hear makes a good point in terms that this burden was great for him to handle so he prayed three times to God to remove it from him. God's response was, my grace is sufficient. Paul figured out that his weakness was what made him stronger. There are times where our trials are meant to persist to help us learn a lesson. Perhaps our dependence on God!! But we also know, Gods grace covers our sins!

"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (12:9-10)

Vs 11 - 13

Paul lays into them by saying you have driven me to this point as instead of them speaking good will of Paul and holding fast to his teachings, they have taken to the false teachers doctrines instead. He treated them as he did the other churches and even didn't require

support from them like he needed from other and yet he is having to chastise them here for their following other doctrines.

Vs 14 - 18

Paul states he is ready to come see them again and reassures them that he won't be a burden to them. In fact, he will again selflessly give of himself for them. He feels however, the more he loves and shows love towards them, the less he is loved in return. Paul has heard rumors of trickery he is alleged of using on the Corinthians and calls them out on it. He even bring Titus and the others he has sent to them as examples of the same spirit being used through all of them to edify the Corinthians.

Vs 19 - 21

Paul has made known he true and earnest desire to see them! However, he is leery of what he will find and how he will be received. He states as well he is not being judged for his action by the Corinthian people but from God. He does not want tensions between them but is trying to encourage them that his trip will go well.

Ch 13

I should start this chapter out with remind us of the famous passage often referenced in Matthew 18:15-17. "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

One could also reference Deut. 19:15 as well which states the same message as well.

That being said, Paul reminds them of the two prior times he was with them and the correction that was made regarding the sinning and continuation of it amongst some members.

Paul makes a firm commitment to deal with the sin that is causing problems with the Corinthians. He is reassuring them that Christ is speaking through him regarding this issue with sin plaguing them. There will be no "weakness" shown here as the power of God will be shown.

Paul encourages them to examine themselves to see if Christ is in them. This is a good passage for reminding ourselves to also examine ourselves as well that we don't get stagnant in our own spiritual lives!

Paul reaffirms that his weaknesses here help him instead of hindering him. It's that weakness that keeps him humble and allows God to work in him. Paul is very hopeful in this letter helping change the Corinthians before he comes as he doesn't want to be harsh towards them.

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, Ryan Ingle! I've been behind on posts this week. Getting studies in thankfully. Just want you to know how grateful we are for your earnest efforts! You put a lot of time in these posts and have encouraged us! Tonight we had a good review of 2 Corinthians @ the Phill bible study. These studies are a great blessing. ❤️