

# **1 and 2 Corinthians**

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# BSB

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# 1 Corinthians

## Greetings from Paul and Sosthenes

**1** Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother **Sosthenes**,

**2**To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

**3**Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Thanksgiving

**4**I always thank my God for you because of the grace He has given you in Christ Jesus. **5**For in Him you have been enriched in every way, in all speech and all knowledge, **6**because our testimony about Christ was **confirmed** in you.

**7**Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly **await** the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. **8**He will **sustain** you to the end, so that you will be **blameless** on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9**God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

## Unity in the Church

**10**I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you **agree** together, so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be **united** in mind and

## 4 | 1 Corinthians 1:11

**conviction.** <sup>11</sup>My brothers, some from **Chloe's** household have informed me that there are **quarrels** among you. <sup>12</sup>What I mean is this: **Individuals** among you are saying, "I follow Paul," "I follow Apollos," "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ."

<sup>13</sup>Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup>I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except **Crispus** and **Gaius**, <sup>15</sup>so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. <sup>16</sup>Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that I do not remember if I baptized anyone else. <sup>17</sup>For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with words of wisdom, **lest** the cross of Christ be **emptied** of its power.

### **The Message of the Cross**

<sup>18</sup>For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;  
the **intelligence** of the **intelligent** I will **frustrate**."

<sup>20</sup>Where is the wise man? Where is the **scribe**? Where is the **philosopher** of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

<sup>22</sup>Jews **demand** signs and Greeks **search** for wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

<sup>25</sup>For the foolishness of God is **wiser** than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's **strength**.

### Wisdom from God

<sup>26</sup>Brothers, consider the time of your **calling**: Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were powerful; not many were of **noble** birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. <sup>28</sup>He chose the **lowly** and **despised** things of the world, and the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one may boast in His presence.

<sup>30</sup>It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God: our righteousness, holiness, and **redemption**. <sup>31</sup>Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

### Paul's Message by the Spirit's Power

**2** When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with **eloquence** or wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. <sup>2</sup>For I **resolved** to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup>I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. <sup>4</sup>My message and my preaching were not with **persuasive** words of wisdom, but with a **demonstration** of the **Spirit's** power, <sup>5</sup>so that your faith would not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

### Spiritual Wisdom

<sup>6</sup>Among the mature, however, we speak a message of wisdom—but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. <sup>7</sup>No, we speak of the

## 6 | 1 Corinthians 2:8

**mysterious** and hidden wisdom of God, which He **destined** for our glory before time **began**. <sup>8</sup>None of the rulers of this age understood it. For if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup>Rather, as it is written:

“No eye has seen,  
no ear has heard,  
no heart has **imagined**,  
what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

<sup>10</sup>But God has revealed it to us by the Spirit.

The Spirit **searches** all things, even the deep things of God.

<sup>11</sup>For who among men knows the thoughts of man except his own spirit within him? So too, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup>We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. <sup>13</sup>And this is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, **expressing** spiritual **truths** in spiritual words.

<sup>14</sup>The natural man does not **accept** the things that come from the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are **spiritually discerned**. <sup>15</sup>The spiritual man judges all things, but he himself is not subject to anyone’s judgment. <sup>16</sup>“For who has known the mind of the Lord, so as to instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

### God’s Fellow Workers

**3** Brothers, I could not **address** you as spiritual, but as worldly—as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for solid food. In fact, you are still not ready, <sup>3</sup>for you are still worldly. For since there is

jealousy and **dissension** among you, are you not worldly? Are you not **walking** in the way of man? <sup>4</sup>For when one of you says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not **mere** men?

<sup>5</sup>What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? They are servants through whom you believed, as the Lord has assigned to each his **role**. <sup>6</sup>I **planted** the seed and Apollos **watered** it, but God made it grow. <sup>7</sup>So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. <sup>8</sup>He who plants and he who waters are one in purpose, and each will be **rewarded** according to his own labor. <sup>9</sup>For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

### Christ Our Foundation

<sup>10</sup>By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an **expert builder**, and someone else is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds. <sup>11</sup>For no one can **lay** a foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

<sup>12</sup>If anyone builds on this foundation **using gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw**, <sup>13</sup>his workmanship will be **evident**, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will prove the **quality** of each man's work. <sup>14</sup>If what he has built **survives**, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If it is **burned** up, he will **suffer loss**. He himself will be saved, but only as if through the **flames**.

### God's Temple and God's Wisdom

<sup>16</sup>Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple, and that God's Spirit **dwells** in you? <sup>17</sup>If anyone **destroys** God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

## 8 | 1 Corinthians 3:18

18 Let no one **deceive** himself. If any of you thinks he is wise in this age, he should become a fool, so that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He **catches** the wise in their **craftiness**." 20 And again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile."

21 Therefore, stop boasting in men. All things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the **future**. All of them belong to you, 23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

### Servants of Christ

**4** So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Now it is **required** of stewards that they be found faithful.

3 I care very little, however, if I am judged by you or by any human **court**. In fact, I do not even judge myself. 4 My conscience is clear, but that does not **vindicate** me. It is the Lord who judges me.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will **expose** the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

6 Brothers, I have **applied** these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may **learn** from us not to go beyond what is written. Then you will not take pride in one man over another. 7 For who makes you so **superior**? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?



**8**Already you have all you want. Already you have become rich. Without us, you have become kings. How I wish you really were kings, so that we might be kings with you! **9**For it **seems** to me that God has **displayed** us apostles at the end of the **procession**, like **prisoners** appointed for death. We have become a **spectacle** to the whole world, to angels as well as to men.

**10**We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honored, but we are **dis-honored**. **11**To this very hour we are hungry and **thirsty**, we are **poorly** clothed, we are **brutally** treated, we are **homeless**. **12**We work hard with our own hands. When we are **vilified**, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; **13**when we are **slandered**, we answer **gently**. Up to this **moment** we have become the **scum** of the earth, the **refuse** of the world.

### Paul's Fatherly Warning

**14**I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children. **15**Even if you have ten thousand **guardians** in Christ, you do not have many **fathers**; for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. **16**Therefore I urge you to imitate me. **17**That is why I have sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which is **exactly** what I teach everywhere in every church.

**18**Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you. **19**But I will come to you **shortly**, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only what these arrogant people are saying, but what power they have. **20**For the kingdom of God is not a matter of **talk** but of power. **21**Which do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a **rod**, or in love and with a **gentle** spirit?

## Immorality Rebuked

**5** It is actually **reported** that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is **intolerable** even among pagans: A man has his **father's** wife. **2**And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been **stricken** with grief and have removed from your fellowship the man who did this?

**3**Although I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit, and I have already **pronounced** judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. **4**When you are **assembled** in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, along with the power of the Lord Jesus, **5**hand this man over to Satan for the **destruction** of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the Day of the Lord.

**6**Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven works through the whole batch of **dough**? **7**Get **rid** of the old leaven, that you may be a new unleavened batch, as you really are. For Christ, our **Passover lamb**, has been sacrificed. **8**Therefore let us keep the **feast**, not with the old bread, **leavened** with **malice** and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and of truth.

## Expel the Immoral Brother

**9**I wrote you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. **10**I was not **including** the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to **leave** this world. **11**But now I am writing you not to associate with anyone who **claims** to be a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an **idolater** or a verbal **abuser**, a **drunkard** or a **swindler**. With such a man do not even eat.

<sup>12</sup>What **business** of mine is it to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those **inside**? <sup>13</sup>God will judge those outside. “**Expel** the wicked man from among you.”

### Lawsuits among Believers

**6** If any of you has a **grievance** against another, how dare he go to law before the **unrighteous** instead of before the saints! <sup>2</sup>Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge **trivial** cases? <sup>3</sup>Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!

<sup>4</sup>So if you need to **settle everyday** matters, do you **appoint** as judges those of no standing in the church? <sup>5</sup>I say this to your shame. Is there really no one among you wise enough to **arbitrate** between his brothers? <sup>6</sup>Instead, one brother goes to law against another, and this in **front** of unbelievers!

<sup>7</sup>The very fact that you have **lawsuits** among you means that you are **thoroughly defeated** already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be **cheated**? <sup>8</sup>Instead, you yourselves **cheat** and do wrong, even against your own brothers!

### Members of Christ

<sup>9</sup>Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor **adulterers**, nor men who submit to or **perform homosexual** acts, <sup>10</sup>nor **thieves**, nor the greedy, nor **drunkards**, nor verbal **abusers**, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup>And that is what some of you were. But you were **washed**, you were sanctified, you were **justified**, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

## 12 | 1 Corinthians 6:12

12“Everything is permissible for me,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be **mastered** by anything. 13“Food for the stomach and the stomach for food,” but God will destroy them both. The body is not intended for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14By His power God raised the Lord from the dead, and He will raise us also.

15Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and **unite** them with a prostitute? Never! 16Or don’t you know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” 17But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with Him in spirit.

### The Temple of the Holy Spirit

18Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a man can commit is outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 19Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

### Principles of Marriage

**7** Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good to **abstain** from sexual **relations**. 2But because there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.

3The husband should **fulfill** his **marital duty** to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife.

5 Do not **deprive** each other, except by mutual **consent** and for a time, so you may **devote** yourselves to prayer. Then come together again, so that Satan will not **tempt** you through your lack of **self-control**. 6 I say this as a **concession**, not as a command. 7 I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

8 Now to the unmarried and **widows** I say this: It is good for them to remain unmarried, as I am. 9 But if they cannot control themselves, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with **passion**.

10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11 But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

12 To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If a brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 And if a woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

15 But if the unbeliever **leaves**, let him go. The believing brother or **sister** is not bound in such cases. God has called you to live in peace. 16 How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

### **Live Your Calling**

17 **Regardless**, each one should **lead** the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is what

## 14 | 1 Corinthians 7:18

I **prescribe** in all the churches. **18**Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man still uncircumcised when called? He should not be circumcised. **19Circumcision** is nothing and **uncircumcision** is nothing. Keeping God's **commandments** is what **counts**.

**20**Each one should remain in the situation he was in when he was called. **21**Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let it concern you—but if you can gain your freedom, take the opportunity. **22**For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's **freedman**. **Conversely**, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave.

**23**You were bought at a price; do not become **slaves** of men. **24**Brothers, each one should remain in the situation he was in when God called him.

### The Unmarried and Widowed

**25**Now about **virgins**, I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is **trustworthy**. **26**Because of the present **crisis**, I think it is good for a man to remain as he is. **27**Are you committed to a wife? Do not seek to be **released**. Are you free of **commitment**? Do not **look** for a wife. **28**But if you do marry, you have not sinned. And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

**29**What I am saying, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have **wives** should live as if they had none; **30**those who **weep**, as if they did not; those who are **joyful**, as if they were not; those who make a **purchase**, as if they

had nothing; <sup>31</sup>and those who use the things of this world, as if not **dependent** on them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

<sup>32</sup>I want you to be free from concern. The unmarried man is concerned about the work of the Lord, how he can please the Lord. <sup>33</sup>But the married man is concerned about the affairs of this world, how he can please his wife, <sup>34</sup>and his **interests** are divided. The unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the work of the Lord, how she can be holy in both body and spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world, how she can please her husband.

<sup>35</sup>I am saying this for your own good, not to **restrict** you, but in order to **promote** proper **decorum** and **undivided** devotion to the Lord.

<sup>36</sup>However, if someone thinks he is **acting inappropriately** toward his **betrothed**, and if she is beyond her **youth** and they ought to marry, let him do as he wishes; he is not sinning; they should get married. <sup>37</sup>But the man who is firmly established in his heart and under no **constraint**, with control over his will and **resolve** in his heart not to marry the virgin, he will do well.

<sup>38</sup>So then, he who marries the virgin does well, but he who does not marry her does even better.

<sup>39</sup>A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, as long as he belongs to the Lord. <sup>40</sup>In my judgment, however, she is **happier** if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

## Food Sacrificed to Idols

**8** Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge **puffs** up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>The one who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. <sup>3</sup>But the one who loves God is known by God.

<sup>4</sup>So about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world, and that there is no God but one. <sup>5</sup>For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many so-called gods and **lords**), <sup>6</sup>yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we exist. And there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we exist.

<sup>7</sup>But not everyone has this knowledge. Some people are still so **accustomed** to idols that they eat such food as if it were sacrificed to an idol. And since their conscience is weak, it is **defiled**. <sup>8</sup>But food does not bring us **closer** to God: We are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

<sup>9</sup>Be careful, however, that your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if someone with a weak conscience sees you who are well informed eating in an **idol's** temple, will he not be encouraged to eat food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup>So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. <sup>12</sup>By sinning against your brothers in this way and **wounding** their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

<sup>13</sup>Therefore, if what I eat **causes** my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to stumble.



## The Rights of an Apostle

**9** Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you yourselves not my workmanship in the Lord? **2** Even if I am not an apostle to others, surely I am to you. For you are the seal of my **apostleship** in the Lord.

**3** This is my defense to those who **scrutinize** me: **4** Have we no right to food and to drink? **5** Have we no right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? **6** Or are **Barnabas** and I the only apostles who must work for a living?

**7** Who **serves** as a **soldier** at his own **expense**? Who plants a **vineyard** and does not eat of its **fruit**? Who **tends** a **flock** and does not drink of its milk?

**8** Do I say this from a human **perspective**? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? **9** For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not **muzzle** an **ox** while it is **treading** out the **grain**." Is it about **oxen** that God is concerned? **10** **Isn't** He actually speaking on our behalf? Indeed, this was written for us, because when the **plowman plows** and the **thresher threshes**, they should also expect to share in the harvest.

**11** If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much for us to reap a **material** harvest from you? **12** If others have this right to your support, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not **exercise** this right. Instead, we put up with anything rather than **hinder** the gospel of Christ.

**13** Do you not know that those who work in the temple eat of its food, and those who serve at the altar partake of its **offerings**? **14** In the same way, the Lord has **prescribed** that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the

## 18 | 1 Corinthians 9:15

gospel. <sup>15</sup>But I have not **used** any of these rights. And I am not writing this to **suggest** that something be done for me. Indeed, I would rather die than let anyone nullify my boast.

<sup>16</sup>Yet when I preach the gospel, I have no reason to boast, because I am **obligated** to preach. **Woe** to me if I do not preach the gospel! <sup>17</sup>If my preaching is voluntary, I have a reward. But if it is not voluntary, I am still **entrusted** with a **responsibility**. <sup>18</sup>What then is my reward? That in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not use up my rights in preaching it.

### Paul the Servant to All

<sup>19</sup>Though I am free of **obligation** to anyone, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. <sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became like a **Jew**, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), to win those under the law. <sup>21</sup>To those without the law I became like one without the law (though I am not outside the law of God but am under the law of Christ), to win those without the law. <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.

<sup>23</sup>I do all this for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its **blessings**.

### Run Your Race to Win

<sup>24</sup>Do you not know that in a **race** all the **runners** run, but only one **receives** the prize? Run in such a way as to take the prize. <sup>25</sup>Everyone who **competes** in the **games trains** with **strict** discipline. They do it for a crown that is perishable, but we do it for a crown that is imperishable. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I do

not run **aimlessly**; I do not **fight** like I am **beating** the air. <sup>27</sup>No, I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be **disqualified**.

### Warnings from Israel's Past

**10** I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our **forefathers** were all under the cloud, and that they all passed through the sea. <sup>2</sup>They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. <sup>3</sup>They all **ate** the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup>and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that **accompanied** them, and that rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>**Nevertheless**, God was not pleased with most of them, for they were struck down in the **wilderness**.

<sup>6</sup>These things took **place** as examples to keep us from **craving** evil things as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not be idolaters, as some of them were. As it is written: "The people **sat** down to eat and drink and **got** up to **indulge** in **revelry**." <sup>8</sup>We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day **twenty-three** thousand of them died. <sup>9</sup>We should not test Christ, as some of them did, and were killed by **snakes**. <sup>10</sup>And do not **complain**, as some of them did, and were killed by the **destroying** angel.

<sup>11</sup>Now these things **happened** to them as examples and were written down as **warnings** for us, on whom the **fulfillment** of the **ages** has come. <sup>12</sup>So the one who thinks he is standing firm should be careful not to fall. <sup>13</sup>No **temptation** has **seized** you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also **provide** an **escape**, so that you can stand up under it.

## Flee from Idolatry

14Therefore, my beloved, flee from **idolatry**. 15I speak to **reasonable** people; judge for yourselves what I say. 16Is not the cup of blessing that we bless a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we **break** a participation in the body of Christ? 17Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf.

18Consider the people of **Israel**: Are not those who eat the sacrifices fellow **partakers** in the altar? 19Am I **suggesting**, then, that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God. And I do not want you to be **participants** with demons. 21You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot partake in the table of the Lord and the table of demons too. 22Are we trying to **provoke** the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

## All to God's Glory

23“Everything is permissible,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is **edifying**. 24No one should seek his own good, but the good of others.

25Eat anything **sold** in the meat **market** without raising questions of conscience, 26for, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the **fullness thereof**.”

27If an unbeliever **invites** you to a meal and you want to go, eat anything set before you without raising questions of conscience. 28But if someone **tells** you, “This food was offered to idols,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience— 29the other **one’s**

conscience, I mean, not your own. For why should my freedom be **determined** by someone **else's** conscience? <sup>30</sup>If I partake in the meal with **thankfulness**, why am I **denounced** because of that for which I give thanks?

<sup>31</sup>So whether you eat or drink or **whatever** you do, do it all to the glory of God. <sup>32</sup>Do not become a stumbling block, whether to Jews or Greeks or the church of God— <sup>33</sup>as I also try to please everyone in all I do. For I am not seeking my own good, but the good of many, that they may be saved.

### Roles in Worship

**11** You are to imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.

<sup>2</sup>Now I commend you for **remembering** me in everything and for **maintaining** the **traditions**, just as I passed them on to you. <sup>3</sup>But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

<sup>4</sup>Every man who prays or prophesies with his head **covered** dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup>And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for it is just as if her head were shaved. <sup>6</sup>If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off. And if it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head.

<sup>7</sup>A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. <sup>8</sup>For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. <sup>9</sup>Neither was man **created** for woman, but woman for man. <sup>10</sup>For this reason a woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels.

## 22 | 1 Corinthians 11:11

11In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12For just as woman came from man, so also man is **born** of woman. But everything comes from God.

13Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14Doesn't **nature itself** teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a **disgrace** to him, 15but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a **covering**. 16If anyone is inclined to **dispute** this, we have no other practice, nor do the churches of God.

### Sharing in the Lord's Supper

17In the **following** instructions I have no praise to offer, because your **gatherings** do more **harm** than good. 18First of all, I **hear** that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. 19And indeed, there must be **differences** among you to show which of you are approved.

20Now then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat. 21For as you eat, each of you goes **ahead** without sharing his meal. While one remains hungry, another **gets drunk**. 22Don't you have your own **homes** in which to eat and drink? Or do you **despise** the church of God and **humiliate** those who have nothing? What can I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? No, I will not!

23For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was **betrayed**, took bread, 24and when He had given thanks, He **broke** it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you

drink it, in remembrance of Me.”<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be **guilty** of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> Each one must examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For anyone who eats and drinks without **recognizing** the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. <sup>30</sup> That is why many among you are weak and **sick**, and a **number** of you have fallen asleep.

<sup>31</sup> Now if we judged ourselves **properly**, we would not come under judgment. <sup>32</sup> But when we are judged by the Lord, we are being **disciplined** so that we will not be **condemned** with the world.

<sup>33</sup> So, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. <sup>34</sup> If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you come together it will not result in judgment. And when I come, I will give instructions about the **remaining** matters.

### Spiritual Gifts

**12** Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be **uninformed**. <sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, you were **influenced** and led astray to **mute** idols. <sup>3</sup> Therefore I **inform** you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be **cursed**,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> There are different gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are different **ministries**, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different

## 24 | 1 Corinthians 12:7

ways of working, but the same God works all things in all people.

<sup>7</sup>Now to each one the **manifestation** of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup>To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another **distinguishing** between spirits, to another speaking in various tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, who **apportions** them to each one as He **determines**.

### The Body of Christ

<sup>12</sup>The body is a **unit**, though it is composed of many parts. And although its parts are many, they all form one body. So it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink.

<sup>14</sup>For the body does not **consist** of one part, but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the **foot** should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of **hearing** be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of **smell** be?

<sup>18</sup>But in fact, God has **arranged** the members of the body, every one of them, according to His **design**. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, but one body.



<sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you.” Nor can the head say to the feet, “I do not need you.” <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be **weaker** are **indispensable**, <sup>23</sup>and the parts we consider less **honorable**, we treat with greater honor. And our **unpresentable** parts are treated with **special modesty**, <sup>24</sup>**whereas** our **presentable** parts have no such need.

But God has composed the body and has given greater honor to the parts that **lacked** it, <sup>25</sup>so that there should be no **division** in the body, but that its members should have mutual concern for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

### The Greater Gifts

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ, and each of you is a **member** of it. <sup>28</sup>And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, and those with gifts of healing, **helping, administration**, and various tongues. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

And now I will show you the most **excellent** way.

### Love

**13** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a **ringing gong** or a **clanging cymbal**. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy and can **fathom** all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have **absolute** faith so as to **move mountains**, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give all I **possess** to the poor and **exult** in the **surrender** of my body, but have not love, I gain nothing.

## 26 | 1 Corinthians 13:4

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not **envy**, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It is not **rude**, it is not **self-seeking**, it is not easily **angered**, it **keeps** no account of **wrongs**. <sup>6</sup>Love takes no **pleasure** in evil, but rejoices in the truth. <sup>7</sup>It **bears** all things, **believes** all things, **hopes** all things, endures all things.

<sup>8</sup>Love never **fails**. But where there are **prophecies**, they **will cease**; where there are tongues, they will be restrained; where there is knowledge, it will be **dismissed**. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup>but when the perfect comes, the **partial passes** away.

<sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I **talked** like a child, I thought like a child, I **reasoned** like a child. When I became a man, I set aside childish ways. <sup>12</sup>Now we see but a **dim reflection** as in a **mirror**; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

<sup>13</sup>And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love; but the **greatest** of these is love.

### Prophecy and Tongues

**14** Earnestly **pursue** love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. <sup>2</sup>For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God. Indeed, no one **understands** him; he **utters** mysteries in the Spirit. <sup>3</sup>But he who prophesies speaks to men for their **edification**, encouragement, and comfort. <sup>4</sup>The one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.

<sup>5</sup>I wish that all of you could speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he **interprets** so that the church may be edified.

**6**Now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? **7**Even in the case of **lifeless instruments**, such as the **flute** or **harp**, how will anyone **recognize** the **tune** they are **playing** unless the **notes** are **distinct**? **8**Again, if the trumpet **sounds** a **muffled** call, who will **prepare** for **battle**? **9**So it is with you. Unless you speak **intelligible** words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air.

**10****Assuredly**, there are many different **languages** in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. **11**If, then, I do not know the meaning of **someone's language**, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me.

**12**It is the same with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, **strive** to excel in gifts that build up the church. **13**Therefore, the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret. **14**For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is **unfruitful**.

**15**What then shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. **16**Otherwise, if you speak a blessing in spirit, how can someone who is uninstructed say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? **17**You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other one is not edified.

**18**I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. **19**But in the church, I would rather speak five **coherent** words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.

**20**Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature. **21**It is written in the Law:

## 28 | 1 Corinthians 14:22

“By **strange** tongues and **foreign lips**  
I will speak to this people,  
but even then they will not listen to Me,  
says the Lord.”

22 Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers. Prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers.

23 So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who are uninstructed or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your minds? 24 But if an unbeliever or uninstructed person comes in while everyone is **prophesying**, he will be **convicted** and called to account by all, 25 and the **secrets** of his heart will be made known. So he will fall **facedown** and **worship** God, **proclaiming**, “God is **truly** among you!”

### Orderly Worship

26 What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a **psalm** or a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. All of these must be done to build up the church.

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, two, or at most three, should speak in turn, and someone must interpret. 28 But if there is no **interpreter**, he should remain silent in the church and speak only to himself and God.

29 Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should **weigh carefully** what is said. 30 And if a revelation comes to someone who is **seated**, the first speaker should stop. 31 For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be **instructed** and encouraged. 32 The spirits of prophets are

subject to prophets. <sup>33</sup>For God is not a God of disorder, but of peace—as in all the churches of the saints.

<sup>34</sup>**Women** are to be silent in the churches. They are not permitted to speak, but must be in **submission**, as the law says. <sup>35</sup>If they wish to **inquire** about something, they are to ask their own **husbands** at home; for it is **dishonorable** for a woman to speak in the church.

<sup>36</sup>Did the word of God **originate** with you? Or are you the only **ones** it has **reached**? <sup>37</sup>If anyone **considers** himself a **prophet** or spiritual person, let him **acknowledge** that what I am writing you is the Lord's command. <sup>38</sup>But if anyone **ignores** this, he himself will be **ignored**.

<sup>39</sup>So, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not **forbid** speaking in tongues. <sup>40</sup>But everything must be done in a proper and **orderly** manner.

### The Resurrection of Christ

**15** Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, and in which you stand firm. <sup>2</sup>By this gospel you are saved, if you **hold** firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup>For what I received I passed on to you as of first **importance**: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that He was **buried**, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that He appeared to Cephas and then to the **Twelve**. <sup>6</sup>After that, He appeared to more than five **hundred** brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>Then He appeared to **James**, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>And last of all He appeared to me also, as to one of **untimely** birth.

## 30 | 1 Corinthians 15:9

<sup>9</sup>For I am the **least** of the apostles and am unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup>But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not in vain. No, I **worked** harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. <sup>11</sup>Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

### The Resurrection of the Dead

<sup>12</sup>But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup>If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is **worthless**, and so is your faith. <sup>15</sup>In that case, we are also **exposed** as false witnesses about God. For we have **testified** about God that He raised Christ from the dead, but He did not raise Him if in fact the dead are not raised.

<sup>16</sup>For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>17</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup>Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have **perished**. <sup>19</sup>If our hope in Christ is for this life **alone**, we are to be **pitied** more than all men.

### The Order of Resurrection

<sup>20</sup>But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup>For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. <sup>22</sup>For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup>But each in his own turn: Christ the firstfruits; then at His coming, those who belong to Him.

24 Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all **dominion**, authority, and power. 25 For He must **reign** until He has put all His **enemies** under His feet. 26 The last **enemy** to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put everything under His feet.” Now when it says that everything has been put under Him, this **clearly** does not **include** the One who put everything under Him. 28 And when all things have been **subjected** to Him, then the Son Himself will be made subject to Him who put all things under Him, so that God may be all in all.

29 If these things are not so, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? 30 And why do we **endanger** ourselves every hour? 31 I face death every day, brothers, as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32 If I **fought wild beasts** in Ephesus for human motives, what did I gain? If the dead are not raised,

“Let us eat and drink,  
for **tomorrow** we die.”

33 Do not be deceived: “Bad **company corrupts** good **character**.” 34 **Sober** up as you ought, and stop sinning; for some of you are **ignorant** of God. I say this to your shame.

### The Resurrection Body

35 But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” 36 You fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of **wheat** or something else. 38 But God gives it a body as He has **designed**, and to each kind of seed He gives its own body.

## 32 | 1 Corinthians 15:39

**39**Not all flesh is the same: Men have one kind of flesh, **animals** have another, **birds** another, and **fish** another. **40**There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the splendor of the heavenly bodies is of one degree, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is of another. **41**The **sun** has one degree of splendor, the **moon** another, and the **stars** another; and star **differs** from star in splendor.

**42**So will it be with the resurrection of the dead: What is sown is perishable; it is raised imperishable. **43**It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. **44**It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. **45**So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam a **life-giving** spirit.

**46**The spiritual, however, was not first, but the natural, and then the spiritual. **47**The first man was of the **dust** of the earth, the second man from heaven. **48**As was the earthly man, so also are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. **49**And just as we have **borne** the likeness of the earthly man, so also shall we bear the likeness of the heavenly man.

### **Where, O Death, Is Your Victory?**

**50**Now I **declare** to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

**51**Listen, I tell you a **mystery**: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— **52**in an **instant**, in the **twinkling** of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53**For the perishable must be clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.



54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come to **pass**: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

55 “Where, O Death, is your victory?  
Where, O Death, is your sting?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be **steadfast** and **immovable**. Always excel in the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

### The Collection for the Saints

**16** Now about the **collection** for the saints, you are to do as I **directed** the churches of **Galatia**: <sup>2</sup>On the first day of every **week**, each of you should set aside a **portion** of his **income**, **saving** it up, so that when I come no **collections** will be **needed**. <sup>3</sup>Then, on my arrival, I will send letters with those you **recommend** to carry your gift to **Jerusalem**. <sup>4</sup>And if it is **advisable** for me to go also, they can **travel** with me.

### Paul’s Travel Plans

<sup>5</sup>After I go through Macedonia, however, I will come to you; for I will be **going** through Macedonia. <sup>6</sup>Perhaps I will stay with you **awhile**, or even spend the **winter**, so that you can help me on my **journey**, **wherever** I go. <sup>7</sup>For I do not want to see you now only in passing; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord **permits**. <sup>8</sup>But I will stay in Ephesus until **Pentecost**, <sup>9</sup>because a great door for **effective** work has **opened** to me, even though many **oppose** me.

## Timothy and Apollos

10 If Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, just as I am. 11 No one, then, should treat him with **contempt**. Send him on his way in peace so that he can return to me, for I am **expecting** him along with the brothers.

12 Now about our brother Apollos: I **strongly** urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was not at all inclined to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity.

## Concluding Exhortations

13 Be on the **alert**. Stand firm in the faith. Be men of **courage**. Be strong. 14 Do everything in love.

15 You know that Stephanas and his household were the first **converts** in Achaia, and they have **devoted** themselves to the service of the saints. Now I urge you, brothers, 16 to submit to such as these, and to every fellow worker and **laborer**.

17 I am **glad** that Stephanas, **Fortunatus**, and **Achaicus** have arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours as well. Show your **appreciation**, therefore, to such men.

## Signature and Final Greetings

19 The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings.

**Aquila** and **Prisca** greet you **warmly** in the Lord, and so does the church that **meets** at their house.

20 All the brothers **here** send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

21 This **greeting** is in my own hand—Paul.

**22** If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be under a **curse**.  
Come, O Lord!

**23** The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

**24** My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

# 2 Corinthians

## Paul Greet the Corinthians

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints **throughout** Achaia:

**2** Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The God of All Comfort

**3** **Blessed** be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of **compassion** and the God of all comfort, **4** who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any **trouble** with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. **5** For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

**6** If we are **afflicted**, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which **accomplishes** in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we **experience**.

**7** And our hope for you is **sure**, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you will share in our comfort.

**8** We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the hardships we **encountered** in the province of Asia. We were under a burden far beyond our ability to endure, so that we

**despaired** even of life. <sup>9</sup>Indeed, we felt we were under the **sentence** of death, in order that we would not **trust** in ourselves, but in God, who **raises** the dead.

<sup>10</sup>He has **delivered** us from such a **deadly peril**, and He will deliver us. In Him we have placed our hope that He will yet again deliver us, <sup>11</sup>as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the favor **shown** us in answer to their prayers.

### **Paul's Change of Plans**

<sup>12</sup>For this is our boast: Our conscience **testifies** that we have **conducted** ourselves in the world, and especially in **relation** to you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God—not in worldly wisdom, but in the grace of God. <sup>13</sup>For we do not write you anything that is beyond your ability to read and understand. And I hope that you will understand us **completely**, <sup>14</sup>as you have already understood us in part, that you may boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of our Lord Jesus.

<sup>15</sup>Confident of this, I planned to visit you first, so that you might receive a **double** blessing. <sup>16</sup>I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to return to you from Macedonia, and then to have you help me on my way to **Judea**.

<sup>17</sup>When I planned this, did I do it **carelessly**? Or do I make my **plans** by human standards, so as to say “Yes, yes” and also “No, no”? <sup>18</sup>But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” <sup>19</sup>For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed among you by me and **Silvanus** and Timothy, was not “Yes” and “No,” but in Him it has always been “Yes.” <sup>20</sup>For all the promises of God are “Yes” in Christ. And so through Him, our “Amen” is spoken to the glory of God.

## 38 | 2 Corinthians 1:21

**21** Now it is God who **establishes** both us and you in Christ. He **anointed** us, **22** placed His seal on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a pledge of what is to come. **23** I call God as my **witness** that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. **24** Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers with you for your joy, because it is by faith that you stand firm.

### Reaffirm Your Love

**2** So I made up my mind not to make another **painful** visit to you. **2** For if I grieve you, who is left to **cheer** me but those whom I have grieved? **3** I wrote as I did so that on my arrival I would not be grieved by those who ought to make me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would share my joy. **4** For through many **tears** I wrote you out of great **distress** and **anguish** of heart, not to grieve you but to let you know how much I love you.

**5** Now if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me but all of you—to some degree, not to **overstate** it. **6** The **punishment imposed** on him by the **majority** is sufficient for him. **7** So instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be **overwhelmed** by **excessive** sorrow. **8** Therefore I urge you to **reaffirm** your love for him.

**9** My purpose in writing you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. **10** If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And if I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven it in the presence of Christ for your sake, **11** in order that Satan should not **outwit** us. For we are not unaware of his **schemes**.

## Triumph in Christ

12 Now when I went to **Troas** to preach the gospel of Christ and a door stood open for me in the Lord, 13 I had no peace in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said **goodbye** to them and went on to Macedonia.

14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us **triumphantly** as **captives** in Christ and through us **spreads** everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. 15 For we are to God the **sweet aroma** of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are an **odor** that brings death, to the other a fragrance that brings life. And who is qualified for such a **task**?

17 For we are not like so many others, who **peddle** the word of God for **profit**. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as men sent from God.

## Ministers of a New Covenant

**3** Are we **beginning** to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of **recommendation** to you or from you? **2** You yourselves are our letter, **inscribed** on our hearts, known and read by everyone. **3** It is clear that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with **ink** but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

**4** Such confidence before God is ours through Christ. **5** Not that we are competent in ourselves to **claim** that anything comes from us, but our **competence** comes from God. **6** And He has qualified us as **ministers** of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter **kills**, but the Spirit gives life.

## The Glory of the New Covenant

7 Now if the ministry of death, which was **engraved** in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not **gaze** at the face of Moses because of its **fleeting** glory, <sup>8</sup> will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? <sup>9</sup> For if the ministry of **condemnation** was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry of righteousness! <sup>10</sup> Indeed, what was once glorious has no glory now in comparison to the glory that **surpasses** it. <sup>11</sup> For if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which endures!

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. <sup>13</sup> We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from **gazing** at the end of what was fading away.

<sup>14</sup> But their minds were **closed**. For to this day the same veil remains at the **reading** of the old covenant. It has not been **lifted**, because only in Christ can it be removed. <sup>15</sup> And even to this day when Moses is read, a veil **covers** their hearts. <sup>16</sup> But **whenever** anyone **turns** to the Lord, the veil is **taken** away.

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we, who with **unveiled faces** all **reflect** the glory of the Lord, are being **transformed** into His image with **intensifying** glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

## The Light of the Gospel

**4** Therefore, since God in His mercy has given us this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> Instead, we have **renounced** secret and shameful ways. We do not practice



**deceit**, nor do we **distort** the word of God. On the contrary, by open **proclamation** of the truth, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

<sup>4</sup>The god of this age has **blinded** the minds of unbelievers, so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup>For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

### Treasure in Jars of Clay

<sup>7</sup>Now we have this **treasure in jars of clay** to show that this surpassingly great power is from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup>We are hard pressed on all **sides**, but not **crushed**; **perplexed**, but not in **despair**; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not **forsaken**; struck down, but not destroyed.

<sup>10</sup>We always carry **around** in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. <sup>11</sup>For we who are alive are always **consigned** to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal body. <sup>12</sup>So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

<sup>13</sup>And in keeping with what is written, "I believed, therefore I have spoken," we who have the same spirit of faith also believe and therefore speak, <sup>14</sup>**knowing** that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in His presence. <sup>15</sup>All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is **extending** to more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow, to the glory of God.

16Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our **outer** self is **wasting** away, yet our **inner** self is being **renewed** day by day. 17For our light and **momentary affliction** is **producing** for us an eternal **weight** of glory that is far beyond comparison. 18So we **fix** our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is **temporary**, but what is unseen is eternal.

### Our Eternal Dwelling

**5** For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is **dismantled**, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly **dwelling**, 3because when we are clothed, we will not be found **naked**. 4For while we are in this tent, we groan under our **burdens**, because we do not wish to be **unclothed** but clothed, so that our **mortality** may be swallowed up by life. 5And it is God who has prepared us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a pledge of what is to come.

6Therefore we are always confident, although we know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. 7For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8We are confident, then, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9So we **aspire** to please Him, whether we are at home in this body or away from it. 10For we must all appear before the judgment **seat** of Christ, that each one may receive his **due** for the things done in the body, whether good or bad.

### Ambassadors for Christ

11Therefore, since we know what it means to fear the Lord, we try to **persuade** men. What we are is clear to God, and I hope it is clear to your conscience as well. 12We are not **commending** ourselves to you again. Instead, we are giving you

an occasion to be proud of us, so that you can answer those who take pride in appearances rather than in the heart.

**13**If we are out of our mind, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. **14**For Christ's love **compels** us, because we are **convinced** that One died for all, therefore all died. **15**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.

**16**So from now on we regard no one according to the flesh. Although we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. **17**Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new **creation**. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!

**18**All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19**that God was **reconciling** the world to Himself in Christ, not **counting** men's **trespasses** against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

**20**Therefore we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were making His appeal through us. We **implore** you on behalf of Christ: Be reconciled to God. **21**God made Him who **knew** no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

### Paul's Hardships and God's Grace

**6** As God's fellow workers, then, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. **2**For He says:

"In the time of favor I heard you,  
and in the day of salvation I **helped** you."

Behold, now is the time of favor; now is the day of salvation!

## 44 | 2 Corinthians 6:3

<sup>3</sup>We put no **obstacle** in anyone's way, so that no one can **discredit** our ministry.

<sup>4</sup>Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships, and **calamities**; <sup>5</sup>in beatings, imprisonments, and **riots**; in labor, **sleepless nights**, and hunger; <sup>6</sup>in **purity**, knowledge, **patience**, and **kindness**; in the Holy Spirit and in **sincere** love; <sup>7</sup>in **truthful** speech and in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; <sup>8</sup>through glory and dishonor, slander and praise; **viewed** as **imposters**, yet **genuine**; <sup>9</sup>**unknown**, yet **well-known**; **dying**, and yet we live on; **punished**, yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>sorrowful, yet always **rejoicing**; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet **possessing** everything.

<sup>11</sup>We have spoken freely to you, **Corinthians**. Our hearts are open wide. <sup>12</sup>It is not our affection, but yours, that is restrained. <sup>13</sup>As a **fair exchange**—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

### Do Not Be Unequally Yoked

<sup>14</sup>Do not be **unequally yoked** with unbelievers. For what **partnership** can righteousness have with wickedness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? <sup>15</sup>What harmony is there between Christ and **Belial**? Or what does a **believer** have in common with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup>What **agreement** can exist between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will  **dwell** with them  
and walk among them,  
and I will be their God,  
and they will be My people.”

17 “Therefore come out from among them  
and be separate, says the Lord.

**Touch** no unclean thing,  
and I will receive you.”

18 And:

“I will be a Father to you,  
and you will be My **sons** and **daughters**,  
says the Lord **Almighty**.”

### Paul's Joy in the Corinthians

**7** Therefore, beloved, since we have these promises, let us **cleanse** ourselves from everything that **defiles** body and spirit, **perfecting** holiness in the fear of God.

2 Make **room** for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have **corrupted** no one, we have **exploited** no one. <sup>3</sup>I do not say this to **condemn** you. I have said before that you so **occupy** our hearts that we live and die together with you. <sup>4</sup>Great is my confidence in you; great is my pride in you; I am **filled** with encouragement; in all our troubles my joy overflows.

<sup>5</sup>For when we arrived in Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were pressed from every **direction—conflicts** on the outside, **fears** within. <sup>6</sup>But God, who comforts the **downcast**, comforted us by the arrival of Titus, <sup>7</sup>and not only by his arrival, but also by the comfort he had received from you. He told us about your longing, your **mourning**, and your zeal for me, so that I **rejoiced** all the more.

<sup>8</sup>Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Although I did regret it—for I see that my letter caused you sorrow, but only for a short time— <sup>9</sup>yet now I rejoice, not

## 46 | 2 Corinthians 7:10

because you were made sorrowful, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you felt the sorrow that God had intended, and so were not harmed in any way by us. **10** Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation without regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

**11** Consider what this godly sorrow has **produced** in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what **indignation**, what **alarm**, what longing, what zeal, what **vindication**! In every way you have proved yourselves to be **innocent** in this matter. **12** So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did wrong or the one who was harmed, but rather that your earnestness on our behalf would be made clear to you in the sight of God. **13** On account of this, we are encouraged.

In **addition** to our own encouragement, we were even more **delighted** by the joy of Titus. For his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. **14** Indeed, I was not **embarrassed** by anything I had **boasted** to him about you. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved to be true as well. **15** And his affection for you is even greater when he **remembers** that you were all obedient as you **welcomed** him with fear and trembling. **16** I rejoice that I can have complete confidence in you.

### Generosity Commended

**8** Now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the churches of Macedonia. **2** In the **terrible ordeal** they **suffered**, their **abundant** joy and deep poverty **overflowed** into rich generosity. **3** For I **testify** that they gave according to their ability and even beyond it. Of their own **accord**, **4** they earnestly pleaded with us for the

**privilege** of sharing in this service to the saints. <sup>5</sup>And not only did they do as we **expected**, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us, through the will of God.

<sup>6</sup>So we urged Titus to help complete your act of grace, just as he had **started** it. <sup>7</sup>But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness, and in the love we **inspired** in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. <sup>8</sup>I am not giving a command, but I am **testing** the sincerity of your love through the earnestness of others.

<sup>9</sup>For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich. <sup>10</sup>And this is my **opinion** about what is **helpful** for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give, but even to have such a desire. <sup>11</sup>Now **finish** the work, so that you may complete it with the same eager desire, according to your means. <sup>12</sup>For if the eagerness is there, the gift is **acceptable** according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

<sup>13</sup>It is not our **intention** that others may be **relieved** while you are **burdened**, but that there may be equality. <sup>14</sup>At the present time, your surplus will meet their need, so that in turn their surplus will meet your need. This way there will be equality. <sup>15</sup>As it is written:

“He who gathered much had no **excess**,  
and he who gathered little had no **shortfall**.”

### Titus Commended

<sup>16</sup>But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same devotion I have for you. <sup>17</sup>For not only did he **welcome** our appeal, but he is eagerly coming to you of his own **volition**.

## 48 | 2 Corinthians 8:18

18 Along with Titus we are sending the brother who is **praised** by all the churches for his work in the gospel.

19 More than that, this brother was **chosen** by the churches to **accompany** us with the **gracious offering** we administer to honor the Lord Himself and to show our eagerness to help.

20 We want to **avoid** any **criticism** of the way we administer this generous gift. 21 For we are **taking** great care to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of men.

22 And we are sending along with them our brother who has **proven** his earnestness to us many times and in many ways, and now even more so by his great confidence in you. 23 As for Titus, he is my **partner** and fellow worker among you. As for our brothers, they are **messengers** of the churches, the glory of Christ. 24 In **full view** of the churches, then, show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our boasting about you.

### God Loves a Cheerful Giver

**9** Now about the service to the saints, there is no need for me to write to you. 2 For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting to the Macedonians that since last year you in Achaia were prepared to give. And your zeal has **stirred** most of them to do likewise.

3 But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove **empty**, but that you will be prepared, just as I said. 4 Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you **unprepared**, we—to say nothing of you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. 5 So I thought it **necessary** to urge the brothers to visit you **beforehand** and make **arrangements** for the



generous gift you had promised. This way, your gift will be prepared generously and not **begrudgingly**.

**6**Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **7**Each one should give what he has **decided** in his heart to give, not out of regret or **compulsion**. For God loves a **cheerful giver**. **8**And God is **able** to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. **9**As it is written:

“He has **scattered abroad** His gifts to the poor;  
His righteousness endures forever.”

**10**Now He who **supplies** seed to the **sower** and bread for food will **supply** and **multiply** your **store** of seed and will increase the harvest of your righteousness. **11**You will be enriched in every way to be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will **produce** thanksgiving to God. **12**For this ministry of service is not only **supplying** the needs of the saints but is also **overflowing** in many **expressions** of thanksgiving to God.

**13**Because of the proof this ministry **provides**, the saints will glorify God for your obedient **confession** of the gospel of Christ, and for the generosity of your **contribution** to them and to all the others. **14**And their prayers for you will **express** their affection for you, because of the **surpassing** grace God has given you. **15**Thanks be to God for His **indescribable** gift!

### Paul's Apostolic Authority

**10** Now by the **mildness** and **gentleness** of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am humble when face to face with you, but bold when away. **2**I **beg** you that when I

## 50 | 2 Corinthians 10:3

come I may not need to be as bold as I expect toward those who **presume** that we live according to the flesh.

<sup>3</sup>For though we live in the flesh, we do not **wage war** according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup>The weapons of our **warfare** are not the weapons of the flesh. Instead, they have **divine** power to demolish **strongholds**. <sup>5</sup>We demolish **arguments** and every **presumption** set up against the knowledge of God; and we take **captive** every thought to make it obedient to Christ. <sup>6</sup>And we will be ready to **punish** every act of **disobedience**, as **soon** as your **obedience** is complete.

<sup>7</sup>You are **looking** at **outward** appearances. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should remind himself that we belong to Christ just as much as he does. <sup>8</sup>For even if I boast **somewhat excessively** about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed.

<sup>9</sup>I do not want to seem to be trying to **frighten** you by my letters. <sup>10</sup>For some say, “His letters are **weighty** and **forceful**, but his **physical** presence is **unimpressive**, and his speaking is of no account.” <sup>11</sup>Such people should consider that what we are in our letters when absent, we will be in our actions when present.

<sup>12</sup>We do not dare to **classify** or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they **measure** themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they show their **ignorance**. <sup>13</sup>We, however, will not boast beyond our limits, but only within the field of influence that God has assigned to us—a field that **reaches** even to you. <sup>14</sup>We are not **overstepping** our **bounds**, as if we had not come to you. Indeed, we were the first to **reach** you with the gospel of Christ.

<sup>15</sup>Neither do we boast beyond our limits in the **labors** of others. But we hope that as your faith **increases**, our **area** of influence among you will **greatly** increase as well, <sup>16</sup>so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. Then we will not be boasting in the work already done in another man's **territory**.

<sup>17</sup>Rather, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." <sup>18</sup>For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

### Paul and the False Apostles

**11** I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness, but you are already doing that. <sup>2</sup>I am **jealous** for you with a godly jealousy. For I promised you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

<sup>3</sup>I am afraid, however, that just as **Eve** was deceived by the **serpent's cunning**, your minds may be led astray from your **simple** and pure devotion to Christ. <sup>4</sup>For if someone comes and **proclaims** a Jesus other than the One we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit than the One you received, or a different gospel than the one you **accepted**, you put up with it very easily.

<sup>5</sup>I consider myself in no way inferior to those "super-apostles." <sup>6</sup>Although I am not a **polished** speaker, I am **certainly** not lacking in knowledge. We have made this clear to you in every way possible.

<sup>7</sup>Was it a sin for me to humble myself in order to **exalt** you, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? <sup>8</sup>I **robbed** other churches by **accepting** their support in order to serve you. <sup>9</sup>And when I was with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for the brothers who

## 52 | 2 Corinthians 11:10

came from Macedonia supplied my needs. I have **refrained** from being a burden to you in any way, and I will **continue** to do so. **10**As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be **silenced** in the regions of Achaia. **11**Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

**12**But I will keep on doing what I am doing, in order to **undercut** those who want an opportunity to be regarded as our **equals** in the things of which they boast. **13**For such men are false apostles, **deceitful** workers, **masquerading** as apostles of Christ. **14**And no **wonder**, for Satan himself **masquerades** as an angel of light. **15**It is not **surprising**, then, if his servants **masquerade** as servants of righteousness. Their end will **correspond** to their actions.

### Paul's Suffering and Service

**16**I **repeat**: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you do, then receive me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. **17**In this confident boasting of mine, I am not speaking as the Lord would, but as a fool. **18**Since many are boasting according to the flesh, I too will boast. **19**For you gladly put up with fools, since you are so wise. **20**In fact, you even put up with anyone who **enslaves** you or **exploits** you or takes **advantage** of you or **exalts** himself or **strikes** you in the face. **21**To my shame I **concede** that we were too weak for that!

Speaking as a fool, however, I can **match** what anyone else **dares** to boast about. **22**Are they **Hebrews**? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they **descendants** of **Abraham**? So am I. **23**Are they servants of Christ? (I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.) I am so much more: in harder labor, in more imprisonments, in worse beatings, in frequent danger of death. **24**Five times I received from the Jews the **forty lashes minus** one. **25**Three times I was **beaten** with **rods**, once I was

**stoned**, three times I was **shipwrecked**. I **spent** a night and a day in the open sea.

**26**In my frequent **journeys**, I have been in danger from **rivers** and from **bandits**, in danger from my **countrymen** and from the Gentiles, in danger in the city and in the **country**, in danger on the sea and among false brothers, **27**in labor and **toil** and often without sleep, in hunger and **thirst** and often without food, in **cold** and **exposure**.

**28****Apart** from these **external trials**, I face **daily** the **pressure** of my concern for all the churches. **29**Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not burn with grief?

**30**If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. **31**The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is forever **worthy** of praise, knows that I am not **lying**. **32**In **Damascus**, the **governor** under **King Aretas** **secured** the city of the **Damascenes** in order to **arrest** me. **33**But I was **lowered** in a **basket** through a **window** in the **wall** and **escaped** his **grasp**.

### Paul's Revelation

**12** I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to gain, I will go on to **visions** and revelations from the Lord. **2**I know a man in Christ who **fourteen years ago** was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of it I do not know, but God knows. **3**And I know that this man—whether in the body or out of it I do not know, but God knows— **4**was caught up to **Paradise**. The things he heard were **inexpressible**, things that man is not permitted to tell.

### Paul's Thorn and God's Grace

**5**I will boast about such a man, but I will not boast about myself, except in my weaknesses. **6**Even if I wanted to boast, I

would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I **refrain**, so no one will **credit** me with more than he sees in me or **hears** from me, <sup>7</sup>or because of these surpassingly great revelations.

So to keep me from **becoming conceited**, I was given a **thorn** in my flesh, a **messenger** of Satan, to **torment** me. <sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. <sup>9</sup>But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is **perfected** in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me. <sup>10</sup>That is why, for the sake of Christ, I **delight** in weaknesses, in **insults**, in hardships, in **persecutions**, in **difficulties**. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

### Paul’s Concern for the Corinthians

<sup>11</sup>I have become a fool, but you **drove** me to it. In fact, you should have **commended** me, since I am in no way inferior to those “super-apostles,” even though I am nothing. <sup>12</sup>The **marks** of a true apostle—signs, **wonders**, and miracles—were **performed** among you with great **perseverance**. <sup>13</sup>In what way were you inferior to the other churches, except that I was not a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

<sup>14</sup>See, I am ready to come to you a third time, and I will not be a burden, because I am not seeking your **possessions**, but you. For children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. <sup>15</sup>And for the sake of your **souls**, I will most gladly spend my **money** and myself. If I love you more, will you love me less?

<sup>16</sup>Be that as it may, I was not a burden to you; but **crafty** as I am, I caught you by **trickery**. <sup>17</sup>Did I exploit you by anyone I sent you? <sup>18</sup>I urged Titus to visit you, and I sent our brother

with him. Did Titus exploit you in any way? Did we not walk in the same Spirit and follow in the same **footsteps**?

**19**Have you been thinking all along that we were making a defense to you? We speak before God in Christ, and all of this, beloved, is to build you up. **20**For I am afraid that when I come, I may not find you as I wish, and you may not find me as you wish. I fear that there may be **quarreling**, jealousy, **rage**, **rivalry**, slander, **gossip**, **arrogance**, and disorder. **21**I am afraid that when I come again, my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not **repented** of their acts of **impurity**, sexual immorality, and **debauchery**.

### Examine Yourselves

**13** This is the third time I am coming to you. “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

**2**I already **warned** you the second time I was with you. So now in my **absence** I warn those who sinned earlier and everyone else: If I return, I will not spare anyone, **3**since you are **demanding** proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in **dealing** with you but is powerful among you. **4**For He was indeed crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God’s power. For we are also weak in Him, yet by God’s power we will live with Him **concerning** you.

**5**Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you—unless you **fail** the test? **6**And I hope you will realize that we have not failed the test.

**7**Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not that we will appear to have stood the test, but that you

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will do what is right, even if we appear to have failed. **8**For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. **9**In fact, we rejoice when we are weak but you are strong, and our prayer is for your **perfection**.

**10**This is why I write these things while absent, so that when I am present I will not need to be **severe** in my use of the authority that the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

### **Benediction and Farewell**

**11****Finally**, brothers, rejoice! **Aim** for perfect harmony, **encourage** one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

**12**Greet one another with a holy kiss.

**13**All the saints send you greetings.

**14**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.