

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE

2 Corinthians

Replying to questions and issues
relating to the evangel as presented
by Paul in Romans

BOB EVELY

2011.

“For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of
God entreating through us. We are beseeching for
Christ’s sake, ‘Be conciliated to God!’”
2 Corinthians 5:20

*All Scriptures taken from the Concordant Literal New Testament
and the Concordant Version of the Old Testament unless otherwise noted.
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About the Author

Paul begins by identifying himself as the writer of this letter (1:1) Let us recall the commission Paul received on the road to Damascus: *He is a choice instrument of Mine, to bear My name before both the nations and kings, besides the sons of Israel.* (Acts 9:15-16) And we know from Acts that Paul did go first to the synagogues to proclaim Christ to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. Peter, John, James and other New Testament writers had a commission to Israel only. Paul alone was commissioned to go to the Gentiles.

We cannot assume Paul's message to the Gentiles was the same as the message proclaimed by the others unto Israel. Paul stressed that the gospel he proclaimed was not received from man, *but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.* (Galatians 1:11-12) If he preached the same gospel, why would he not have studied under the Twelve who had heard and observed Christ Himself during His earthly ministry? And why would Paul refer to his proclamation as "my evangel" instead of "the evangel?" (Romans 2:16; 16:25-26). Paul notes that he had been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, and Peter had been trusted with the evangel of the Circumcision. (Galatians 2:7). He did not say that his was the evangel to the Uncircumcision; but of the Uncircumcision. It was a different message, and this can be clearly seen if we examine the details. Paul is the only one to have mentioned the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, or the expectation of the body of Christ in the celestials in Ephesians 2:6. Israels' expectation was always upon the earth, not in the celestials or heavens.

Paul was abandoned by nearly all at the end of his ministry (see 2 Timothy 1:15; 4:16; Acts 21:20). Note in the Acts passage that when Paul returned to Jerusalem he was opposed not by unbelieving Jews, but by believing Jews who were zealous for the law – a clear signal that Paul's message was different than that of the Twelve, and as a result Paul was opposed by Jewish *believers*.

Paul, in his writings, refers to a mystery that had been previously concealed, but which he was now revealing as God had instructed him. ... *His body, which is the ecclesia of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, **to complete the word of God** ... the **secret** which has been **concealed** from the eons and from the generations, yet now was **made manifest** to His saints ...* (Colossians 1:24-16) ... *by revelation the secret is made known to me ... the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity ...* (Ephesians 3:3-5)

Clearly Paul was commissioned to address a group not previously addressed by the Twelve (the Gentiles), with a different message that had been revealed to him not by man but by Christ Himself.

Introduction: Author, Address

2 CORINTHIANS 1:1

Paul begins by identifying himself as the author of this letter. *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, through the will of God, and brother Timothy.* (1:1) The letter is directed to: *The ecclesia of God which is in Corinth, together with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia.* (1:1)

God consoles, and enables us to console

2 CORINTHIANS 1:4

God's consolation enables us to console others. ... *consoling us in our every affliction to enable us to be consoling those in every affliction, through the consolation with which we ourselves are being consoled by God...* (1:4) ... *as you are participants of the sufferings, thus of the consolation also.* (1:7)

There was great affliction. *We were inordinantly burdened, over our ability, so that we were despairing of life also.* (1:8)

Confidence in God, not in self. *But we have the rescript of death in ourselves, that we may be having no confidence in ourselves, but in God, Who rouses the dead, Who rescues us from a death of such proportions, and will be rescuing; on Whom we rely that He will still be rescuing also...* (1:9)

Prayer assisted those in affliction. ... *you also assisting together by a petition for us, in order that, from many faces He may be thanked by many for us for the gracious gift given to us.* (1:11)

Our example to the world

2 CORINTHIANS 1:12

... *in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves in the world, yet more superabundantly toward you.* (1:12)

Had intended to come to you

2 CORINTHIANS 1:15

Paul had previously intended to come to Corinth. But, **it is not Paul's plans, but God's will that will come to pass.** *Am I planning according to flesh, that it may be with me 'Yes, yes,' and 'No, no?'* (1:17) ... *Whatever promises are of God, are in Him 'Yes.'* (1:20)

Paul did not come so as to spare the Corinthians (1:24). ... *Not that we are lording it over your faith, but are fellow workers of your joy, for you stand fast in the faith.* (1:24)

Paul is not writing or desiring to come again in sorrow (2:1). *Out of much affliction and pressure of heart I write to you, through many tears, not that you may be made sorrowful but that you may know the love which I have for you more superabundantly.* (2:4)

Deal graciously with offenders

2 CORINTHIANS 2:5

In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul had instructed the ecclesia to expel the one who had immoral behavior. Now he gives further instructions for dealing with offenders in the ecclesia. ... *deal graciously and console, lest somehow such may be swallowed up by the more excessive sorrow.* (2:7) ... **ratify your love to him.** (2:7) ... *For in what I also have dealt graciously ... it is because of you in the face of Christ, **lest we may be overreached by Satan**, for we are not ignorant of the things he apprehends.* (2:10) The enemy is Satan, not the fallen brother.

We are a fragrance of Christ to God

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14

God manifests His knowledge thru us. *Now thanks be to God, Who always gives us a triumph in Christ, and is manifesting the odor of His knowledge through us in every place...* (2:14) Here is a hint as to the purpose of the ecclesia ... to bring a knowledge of God wherever we go.

We are Christ's fragrance to God (2:15) in those being saved (an odor of life for life) and in those perishing (an odor of death for death).

God makes us competent dispensers

2 CORINTHIANS 2:17

Unlike those who were “peddling” the word of God, Paul notes his sincerity; and the fact that his competency comes from God (since apart from God no man is competent to dispense the evangel).

For we are not as the majority, who are peddling the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God in Christ, are we speaking. (2:17) Could it be that the same is still true today – that the majority within the organized church are “peddling” the word of God?

Need we not, even as some, commendatory letters...? (3:1) ... *You are our letter ... read by all men...* (3:2) Could it be that this is still a problem today? Much weight is given to the commendations of man (degrees, experience).

God MAKES us competent dispensers. *Not that we are competent of ourselves ... but our competency is of God ... Who also makes us competent dispensers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying.* (3:5)

The dispensation of righteousness; not law. *If the dispensation of death, by letters chiseled in stone, came in glory ... how shall not rather the dispensation of the spirit be in glory? For if in the dispensation of condemnation is glory, much rather the dispensation of righteousness is exceeding in glory.* (3:7) Could it be that the organized church today still needs this reminder ... that the dispensation we are given is not of the law? Much weight seems to be given to adherence to certain aspects of the law (sabbath observance, tithing, do's and don'ts from the law).

Israel is calloused ... truth is veiled

2 CORINTHIANS 3:12

As Moses covered his face ... so that Israel could not look intently upon that which is being nullified; **Israel's apprehensions are veiled.** *But their apprehensions were calloused, for until this very day the same covering is remaining at the reading of the old covenant, not being uncovered, for only in Christ is it being nullified.* (3:14)

The veil will be lifted at a turning back to the Lord. *Yet if ever it should reach a turning back to the Lord, the covering is taken from about it.* (3:16)

But we are being transformed

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17

The spirit of the Lord brings freedom. (3:17)

*Now we all, with uncovered face, mirroring the Lord's glory, **are being transformed** into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the spirit.* (3:18)

We manifest the truth

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1

*Therefore, having this dispensation, according **as we were shown mercy, we are not despondent.*** (4:1)

*We spurn the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, **[not] adulterating the word of God** ...* (4:2) That is; we are not to contaminate the word of God by proclaiming something other than our commission. We

are not to mix the law with grace, as those in Paul's day were guilty of doing; thereby "adulterating" the word of God entrusted to us.

Manifesting the truth. ... *by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in God's sight. (4:2)*

The evangel is covered

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3

Unbelievers are blinded by the god of this eon. *If our evangel is covered, also, it is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them. (4:4)*

To the believer God illuminates. ... *the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He Who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God... (4:6)*

Those who are unbelievers are blinded by the god of this eon, and cannot apprehend (understand) the evangel. All of mankind would be such, had God not chosen to reveal and enlighten the ecclesia (called-out-ones). With the god of this eon blinding the apprehensions of man, who can believe except those God has called and enlightened?

This treasure in earthen vessels

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7

That the power is of God and not of us. *Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us. (4:7)*

Given up to death ... that life may be manifested in us. *For we who are living are ever being given up to death because of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So that death is operating in us, yet life in you. (4:11)*

Speaking what we believe. ... *we also are believing, wherefore we are speaking also... (4:13)*

As Jesus was roused, we will be roused. ... *being aware that He Who rouses the Lord Jesus will be rousing us also, through Jesus, and will be presenting us together with you. (4:14)*

The outward decays ... the inward is being renewed. *Wherefore we are not despondent, but even if our outward man is decaying, nevertheless that within us is being renewed day by day. (4:16)*

Taking note of what is not being observed. *For the momentary lightness of our affliction is producing for us a transcendently transcendent eonian burden of glory, at our not noting what is being observed, but what is not being observed, for what is being observed is temporary, yet what is not being observed is eonian. (4:17)*

Some will point to this passage to prove that eonian means “endless,” since eonian is contrasted with temporary. But by examining every usage of the word “aion” and “aionian” in Scripture we clearly see that the word cannot refer to endlessness, but is a finite period of time. Here the contrast made by Paul is between that which is short term (in the present eon only - temporary) and that which will endure for a longer period of time (in the coming eons - eonian).

Groaning in these earthly tabernacles

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1

Here we see a discussion very similar to that found in Romans 8. We groan in this temporal condition, as all creation groans ... awaiting redemption. And the spirit helps us in our infirmity (Romans 8:26).

We have a building of God in the heavens. *For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens. (5:1)*

We are groaning. *We also, who are in the tabernacle, are groaning, being burdened, on which we are not wanting to be stripped, but to be dressed, that the mortal may be swallowed up by life. (5:4)*

We have the earnest of the spirit. *Now He Who produces us for this same longing is God, Who is also giving us the earnest of the spirit. (5:5)*

We long to be at home with the Lord. *Being at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord (for by faith are we walking, not by perception), yet we are encouraged and are delighting rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord. (5:6)* This passage is often used to support the thinking that upon death the believer immediately goes to heaven. Note, though, that Paul mentions three states; in the body, at home with the Lord, and naked/stripped/undressed (5:4). Paul is in the body, and he longs to be with the Lord, and as he writes to the Corinthians he is thinking the time is short before the resurrection occurs. But until the resurrection those who have died are “naked,” or without a body. The

Scriptures teach that upon death, we sleep in hades (unseen state) with no consciousness until the Lord calls and we are resurrected.

We seek to please God whether at home or away. *Wherefore we are ambitious, also, whether at home or away from home, to be well pleasing to Him. (5:9)*

We will give an account to God

2 CORINTHIANS 5:10

The actions of believers, good or bad, do not go un-judged. **Believers will appear before the dais of Christ.** *For all of us must be manifested in front of the dais of Christ, that each should be requited for that which he puts into practice through the body, whether good or bad. Being aware, then, of the fear of the Lord, we are persuading men, yet we are manifest to God. (5:10)* Works do not affect salvation, but they are judged when determining reward or loss of reward in the ages to come.

Any in Christ are a new creation

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14

If One died for the sake of all, consequently all died. *And He died for the sake of all that those who are living should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes. (5:14)*

*So that we, from now on, are **acquainted with no one according to flesh.** (5:16) Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. (5:16) **Even Christ** is no longer known “according to flesh,” yet most in the church today look primarily to Christ’s teachings according to flesh as found in the “kingdom evangel” He proclaimed in His earthly ministry ... His message that the kingdom to be restored unto Israel was near, and repentance was required to enter.*

*So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is **a new creation**: the primitive passed by. Lo! There has come new! (5:17)*

God conciliated the world

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18

Note the one-sided nature of what God has done. Regardless of man’s actions or beliefs, God was, in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself ... not reckoning man’s offenses to Him. Upon believing and becoming conciliated to God on our part, we have a two-sided “reconciliation.” But we see here that even with respect to unbelievers, God is conciliated and not reckoning, or counting, their offenses.

All is of God (5:18). Note here that it is not just things that are good that are of God, but *all* is of God.

God conciliated the world to Himself. ... *Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation.* (5:18)

For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, *as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God! For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him.* (5:20-21)

The message given to Christ's ambassadors to proclaim is simply, *Be conciliated to God.* God is conciliated to the world, not reckoning man's offenses against Him ... therefore, *Be conciliated to God.* Today we hear a much different message proclaimed by most churches. The kingdom is being proclaimed, based upon Jesus' words in the four gospels. But this message pertained to Israel. We hear a mixture of law with grace. But this is the "different" gospel that Paul warns about in Galatians 1:7. And many of Christ's ambassadors today are concocting their own message, or proclaiming a message from somewhere in Scripture that pertains to a different group of people. Christ's ambassadors need to take care to proclaim the correct message for this present era.

Don't receive God's grace for naught

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1

The ecclesia had received God's grace. It should not be misused, abused, or taken for granted. And the manner in which the believer lives should be in response to the grace of God.

Don't receive God's grace for naught. (6:1)

*For He is saying, 'In a season acceptable I reply to you, and **in a day of salvation I help you.**'* (6:2 ... from Isaiah 49:8)

*Lo! Now is a most acceptable era! Lo! **Now is a day of salvation!*** (6:2)
What a wonderful era this is ... as God has brought salvation to the ecclesia despite any man's ability to be righteous on his own!

Give no one cause to stumble

2 CORINTHIANS 6:3

We see this repeated often in Paul's writings. There is freedom granted to the ecclesia through God's grace. We are freed from the law. But we must take

care that we do not exercise our freedom in such a way as to cause others to stumble. *We are giving no one cause to stumble in anything, lest flaws be found with the service, but in everything we are commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance...* (6:3)

Not yoked with unbelievers

2 CORINTHIANS 6:24

Do not become diversely yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness? (6:14)

For you are the temple of the living God... (6:16)

*Wherefore, Come out of their midst and **be severed**, the Lord is saying. And touch not the unclean, and I will admit you, and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty.* (6:17)

These comments are in reference to a believer yoking himself to an unbeliever in a partnership. This does not infer a total removal from those of the world (see 1 Corinthians 5:9-13).

Be holy

2 CORINTHIANS 7:1

Cleanse yourselves from every pollution. *Having, then, these promises, beloved, we should be cleansing ourselves from every pollution of flesh and spirit, completing holiness in the fear of God.* (7:1)

Joy in affliction

2 CORINTHIANS 7:2

*I am filled full with consolation, I am superexceeding in **joy in all our affliction**. For even at our coming into Macedonia, our flesh has no ease, but we are afflicted in everything: outside fightings; inside fears.* (7:4)

God consoles us (by the presence of Titus). *But God, Who is consoling the humble, consoles us by the presence of Titus, yet not only by his presence, but by the consolation also with which he was consoled over you, informing us of your longing, your anguish, your zeal for my sake...* (7:6) Here we see God using man to provide consolation to others.

Glad you were sorry to repentance

2 CORINTHIANS 7:8

Paul had previously written to the Corinthians, and his letter had made them sorry. Paul rejoiced not that he caused the Corinthians to have sorrow ... but that it led to their repentance. *For I am observing that that epistle makes you sorry, even if it is for an hour. Now I am **rejoicing, not that you were made sorry, but that you were made sorry to repentance.** For you were made sorry according to God ... For sorrow according to God is producing repentance for unregretted salvation, yet the sorrow of the world is producing death.* (7:9-10)

*Consequently, even if I write to you it is not on account of the one who injures, but neither on account of the one being injured, but on account of **manifesting to you your diligence** for our sake in God's sight.* (7:12)
Paul's purpose in writing is not simply to address a single episode, but to encourage diligence in the life of the believers at Corinth.

*Therefore **we are consoled** ... I am encouraged in you.* (7:13)

Giving gleefully

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1

The Macedonians gave of their own accord. *According to their ability ... and beyond their ability, of their own accord ... they give first to the Lord, and to us through the will of God.* (8:3)

That you also may superabound in this grace. *But, even as you are superabounding in everything – in faith and word and knowledge and all diligence and the love that flows out of you into us – that you may be superabounding in this grace also.* (8:7)

Not a requirement ... genuineness. God does not require a tithe as He did of Israel under the law. Giving should be voluntary, and is an expression of genuine love. *I am not saying this as an injunction, but, through the diligence of others, testing also the genuineness of this love of yours.* (8:8)

Christ's example of giving ... He became poor because of you. *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor...* (8:9)

Equality in the ecclesia thru giving. *For it is not, that, to others ease, yet to you affliction, but by an equality, in the current occasion, your superabundance is for their want, that their superabundance also may be coming to be for your want, so that there may be coming to be an equality, according as it is written: the one with much increases not, and the one with few lessens not.* (8:13)

Doing the ideal before all men. ... *that no one should find flaws in us in this exuberance which is being dispensed by us, for we are providing the ideal, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men also. (8:20)*

God loves the gleeful giver. ... *who is sowing sparingly, sparingly shall be reaping also, and who is sowing bountifully, bountifully shall be reaping also, each according as he has proposed in his heart, not sorrowfully, nor of compulsion, for the gleeful giver is loved by God. (9:6)*

Contentment ... superabound in good work. *Now God is able to lavish all grace on you, that, having all contentment in everything always, you may be superabounding in every good work... (9:8)*

May He cause your righteousness to grow. *Now may He Who is supplying seed to the sower, and bread for food, be furnishing and multiplying your seed and be making the product of your righteousness grow, being enriched in everything, for all the generosity which is producing through us thanksgiving to God... (9:10)*

Subjection to the evangel

2 CORINTHIANS 9:12

Paul notes that providing for the needs of the saints is not the *only* purpose of his ministry (implying that it is a *part* of his purpose). *Subjection* to the evangel is a part of Paul's purpose. Note God's intent that *all* become subjected to Christ (1 Corinthians 15:27) in order that all will then become subjected to God (1 Corinthians 15:28). Christ is therefore assigned the commission of bringing all in subjection to God. This subjection is brought about thru the evangel. Therefore Paul gives thanks when the ecclesia subjects itself to the evangel.

Christ is the one bringing all in subjection to God ... that God becomes All in all. And the ecclesia is Christ's complement (Ephesians 1:23). By proclaiming the correct evangel for our day (*Be conciliated to God*) we act as Christ's complement, and ultimately ALL will become subjected to Christ through the evangel ... and subjected ultimately to God.

Paul's ministry not only to replenish wants of the saints. ... *for the dispensation of this ministry not only is replenishing the wants of the saints... (9:12)*

Glorifying God at your subjection to the evangel. ... *but is superabounding also through much thanksgiving, to God, through the testedness of this dispensation, glorifying God at the subjection of your avowal to the evangel of Christ, and in the generosity of the contribution for them and for all... (9:12)*

Thanks to God for His gratuity. *Now thanks be to God for His indescribable gratuity. (9:15)*

Dealing with criticism and misunderstanding

2 CORINTHIANS 10:1

Not warring according to the flesh. *For, walking in flesh, we are not warring according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful to God ... (10:3)*

Pulling down bulwarks of misunderstanding. *... toward the pulling down of bulwarks; pulling down reckonings and every height elevating itself against the knowledge of God, and leading into captivity every apprehension into the obedience of Christ, and having all in readiness to avenge every disobedience, whenever your obedience may be completed. (10:4)*

Dealing with self confidence. *If anyone is presuming to have confidence in himself to be Christ's, let him be reckoning again with himself, that, according as he is Christ's, thus also are we. (10:7)*

Some criticized Paul. *... he is averring, 'His epistles, indeed, are weighty and strong, yet his bodily presence is weak and his expression to be scorned. (10:10)*

They do not understand. *For we are not daring to judge ourselves by, or compare ourselves with, some who are commending themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, do not understand. (10:12)*

The Lord commends, not man. *For not he who is commending himself is qualified, but whom the Lord is commending. (10:18)* The commendation of man is found everywhere within the organized church today ... emphasis is placed upon degrees, titles, ordinations, popularity, eloquence, ability to grown in number. We must remember that it is only the commendation of the Lord that matters.

Be not deluded

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1

Others were proclaiming an incorrect evangel. This will be the primary reason Paul writes Galatians. Here we get a small taste of his warning against being deluded by an incorrect evangel.

I fear your being deluded. *I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deludes Eve by its craftiness, your apprehensions should be corrupted from the singleness and pureness which is in Christ. (11:3)*

Some heralding a different evangel. *For if, indeed, he who is coming is heralding another Jesus whom we do not herald, or you are obtaining a different spirit, which you did not obtain, or a different evangel, which you do not receive, you are bearing with him ideally. (11:4)*

Paul defends his apostleship

2 CORINTHIANS 11:5

Not less than the paramount apostles. *For I am reckoning to be deficient in nothing pertaining to the paramount apostles. Yet even if I am plain in expression, nevertheless I am not in knowledge, but in everything being made manifest in all for you. (11:5)*

Am I less because I bring the evangel gratuitously? *Or do I sin in humbling myself that you may be exalted, seeing that I bring the evangel of God to you gratuitously? Other ecclesias I despoil, getting rations for dispensing to you. And, being present with you and in want, I am not an encumbrance to anyone (for the brethren coming from Macedonia replenish my wants), and in everything I keep and shall be keeping myself that I be not burdensome to you. (11:7)*

False apostles. *For such are false apostles, fraudulent workers, being transfigured into apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is being transfigured into a messenger of light. It is no great thing, then, if his servants also are being transfigured as dispensers of righteousness – whose consummation shall be according to their acts. (11:13)*

As they boast according to flesh, I will also. *Since many are boasting according to the flesh, I also shall be boasting ... Hebrews are they? I also! Isaelites are they? I also! The seed of Abraham are they? I also! Servants of Christ are they? ... Above them am I! (11:18)* We see that Paul's primary opposition was from the Jewish element within the ecclesia that was resting upon things of the flesh – their genealogy and the law.

Paul's trials. Paul gives an account of that which he has suffered for the sake of the evangel (11:23)

- *In weariness more exceedingly*
- *In jails more exceedingly*
- *In blows inordinately*
- *In deaths often*
- *By Jews five times I got forty save one*
- *Thrice am I flogged with rods*

- *Once am I stoned*
- *Thrice am I shipwrecked*
- *A night and a day have I spent in a swamp*
- *In journeys often*
- *In dangers of rivers*
- *In dangers of robbers*
- *In dangers of my race*
- *In dangers of the nations*
- *In dangers of the city*
- *In dangers in the wilderness*
- *In dangers in the sea*
- *In dangers among false brethren*
- *In toil and labor*
- *In vigils often*
- *In famine and thirst*
- *In fasts often*
- *In cold and nakedness...*
- *In Damascus the ethnarch of Aretas, the king, garrisoned the city of the Damascenes, wanting to arrest me, and I am lowered through a window through the wall, and escaped his hands*

Paul's apparitions and revelations. *If boasting must be, though it is not expedient, indeed, yet I shall also be coming to apparitions and revelations of the Lord. I am acquainted with a man in Christ, fourteen years before this (whether in a body I am not aware, or outside of the body, I am not aware – God is aware) such a one was snatched away to the third heaven. And I am acquainted with such a man ... that he was snatched away into paradise and hears ineffable declarations, which it is not allowed a man to speak. Over such a one I shall be boasting; yet over myself I shall not be boasting, except in my infirmities. (12:1)*

Consider only what you see and hear from me. *No one should be reckoning me to be above what he is observing of me or anything he is hearing of me. (12:6)*

Grace is sufficient

2 CORINTHIANS 12:7

How different this is from the “name it and claim it” theology, or those purporting to have a miraculous healing ministry. Healings and miracles may have accompanied the proclamation of the kingdom evangel, for it pertained to earthly things ... the kingdom to be restored upon the earth. But Paul’s ministry pertains to the heavenly realm. The Body of Christ has no expectation upon this earth. Grace is sufficient ... there is no need for miracles. God’s power is perfected in man’s weakness.

*Wherefore also, lest I should be lifted up by the transcendence of the revelations, there was given to me a splinter in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he may be buffeting me, lest I may be lifted up. For this I entreat the Lord thrice, that it should withdraw from me. And He has protested to me, **Sufficient for you is My grace**, for My power in infirmity is being perfected.’ (12:7)*

*Wherefore **I delight in infirmities**, in outrages, in necessities, in persecutions, in distress, for Christ’s sake, for, whenever I may be weak, then I am powerful. (12:10)*

*I have become imprudent; you compel me. For I ought to be commended by you, for **I am not deficient in anything pertaining to the paramount apostles**, even if I am nothing. (12:11)*

Signs and miracles. Even though God’s power is perfected in man’s weakness, and grace is sufficient ... Paul’s ministry as an apostle was validated by signs and miracles, that none could doubt the validity of his apostleship. *Indeed, the signs of an apostle are produced among you in all endurance, besides in signs and miracles and powerful deeds. (12:12)*

All for your edification

2 CORINTHIANS 12:14

I will not be an encumbrance when I come. *Lo! This third time I hold myself ready to come to you and I shall not be an encumbrance... (12:14)*

I will spend myself for your sakes. *Yet with the greatest relish shall I spend and be bankrupted for the sake of your souls, even if loving you more exceedingly diminishes your love for me. (12:15)*

All for your edification. *Again, you are presuming that we are defending ourselves to you. Facing God, in Christ, are we speaking, yet all, beloved, for the sake of your edification. (12:19)*

As for those who have sinned and are not repenting. *Not again at my coming will my God be humbling me toward you, and I shall be mourning for many who have sinned before and are not repenting of the uncleanness and prostitution and wantonness which they commit. (12:21)*

Need for “adjustment”

2 CORINTHIANS 13:4

Weak, but living by the power of God. *Even if He was crucified out of weakness, nevertheless He is living by the power of God. For we also are*

weak together with Him, but we shall be living together with Him by the power of God for you. (13:4)

Test yourselves. *Try yourselves, if you are in the faith; test yourselves. Or are you not recognizing yourselves that Christ Jesus is in you, except you are somewhat disqualified? Now I am expecting that you will know that we are not disqualified! (13:5)*

Doing that which is ideal. *Now we are wishing to God that you do not do anything evil ... that you may be doing that which is ideal... (13:7)*

Writing for your “adjustment.” *Now this we are wishing also: your adjustment. Therefore I am writing these things, being absent, that, being present, I should not be using severity, according to the authority which the Lord gives me for building up and not for pulling down. (13:9)*

Closing

2 CORINTHIANS 13:11

Closing admonitions. *Furthermore, brethren, rejoice, adjust, be entreated, be mutually disposed, be at peace, and the God of love and of peace will be with you. (13:11)*

EPILOGUE.

As was the case with 1 Corinthians, this letter responds to questions and issues within the Corinthian ecclesia. In Romans, Paul presented the evangel entrusted to him. Despite man’s inability to be righteous, God imparts His righteousness. The believer is justified and reckoned righteous. Doctrine was presented in Romans ... the evangel revealed to Paul and entrusted to him. But the ecclesia at Corinth had issues they were dealing with.

- Some were afflicted and needed consolation
- The ecclesia was not dealing graciously with offenders
- God’s grace was being misused
- Other ecclesias were in need
- There were misunderstandings
- Others were proclaiming a different evangel, deluding some
- Some attacked the legitimacy of Paul’s apostleship

We might say that Romans presents doctrine, and 2 Corinthians (like 1 Corinthians) elaborates on that doctrine and addresses practical issues and questions concerning that doctrine.

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