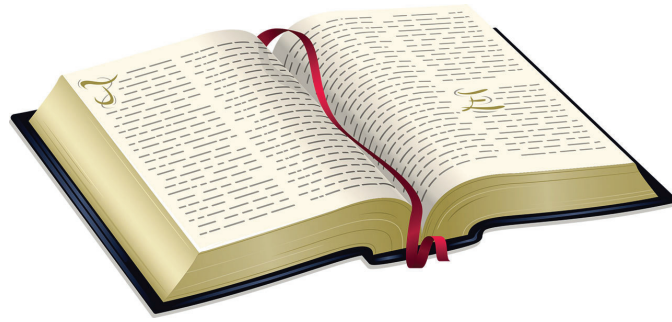


toServe Bible Study LP - 24



2 Corinthians - Lesson 1 of 3

Answer Sheet New King James Version (NKJV)

Chapters 1 - 4

Before beginning this study you should take time to read through 2 Corinthians from beginning to end. This will help you better understand each section in the context of the entire book. While doing the study, read each question carefully, using the given scripture reference to find your answer. May the Lord bless you as you study the book of 2 Corinthians.

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: The Apostle Paul

PLACE OF WRITING: Written from somewhere in Macedonia, perhaps Philippi.

DATE OF WRITING: 2 Corinthians was probably written at sometime between 54 and 58 A.D. while Paul was on his third missionary journey. It was probably written 4 to 5 months after 1 Corinthians.

PURPOSE, THEME AND SUBJECT MATTER OF THE LETTER: Corinth was the seat of government for Southern Greece or Achaia. It was noted for its wealth, and for the luxurious, immoral and vicious habits of the people. It had a large mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. Paul visited Corinth for the first time around the year 51 A.D.

Although Paul's coworker, Timothy, carried the first letter (1 Corinthians 4:17; 16:10), his other companion, Titus, had visited the city since it had been delivered, and reported back to the Apostle about how the church had responded to what Paul had written, and what the general condition of the church was. People had called into question Paul's sincerity because of his delay in visiting them.

2 Corinthians seems to have been written to inform the believers about the reason for Paul's change of plans to visit them. He commends the believers because they apparently had responded to his instructions regarding the man that had been in an immoral relationship (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). There were, however, a number of other concerns that had arisen. Paul defends the authority of his ministry, instructs the believers about financial giving and the collection for the believers in Jerusalem and warns the Corinthians against false apostles.

2 Corinthians has been described as the most personal and emotional of all of Paul's Letters (epistles). It is in this letter that we see a very human side of the great Apostle.

Please memorize the following verse and be prepared to write it out at the end of this lesson.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, **2 Corinthians 1:3 – ESV***

Chapter 1

Please read 2 Corinthians - Chapter 1 ☐ Check

1. (v. 1:1) Who is identified as the author of this letter? Paul
2. (v. 1:1) What was Paul's title ? apostle of Jesus Christ
How did he receive it? by the will of God
3. (v. 1:1) Who was with Paul when wrote this epistle / letter? Timothy
4. (v. 1:1) To whom was this letter addressed?
the church of God which is at Corinth

5. (v. 1:2) What does Paul wish upon the believers? Grace to you and peace from God
our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. (v. 1:3) How is God described in this verse?
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
7. (v. 1:4) What reason is given for why we are comforted by God?
that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble,
with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Understanding 2 Corinthians 1:5

Bible scholars offer several different views on what it means to "share...in Christ's sufferings." Christians may suffer persecution for faith in Christ or preaching about Him. Paul certainly experienced heavy consequences from non-believers. Perhaps this verse about abundant suffering and abundant comfort applies only to those kinds of experiences.

Another possible interpretation is that this verse should be translated differently: to read that as Christ suffered abundantly for us, God's comfort to us will be abundant, as well, through Christ.

Other scholars suggest the phrase means Christians will suffer as Christ suffered while on earth, specifically as He did during the crucifixion. This fits with Paul's teaching that every believer is baptized into Christ's death (Romans 6:3) and that we share in Christ's glory by sharing in His sufferings (Romans 8:17).

Of course, a very small percentage of believers will ever be crucified or even killed for faith in Christ. Instead, the idea is that every Christian lives right now "in Christ." When we suffer, we suffer in Christ. When we hurt, we hurt in Christ. We have opportunities to "suffer as He suffered" in the same way we have opportunities to think as He thought, to speak as He spoke, to become more and more like Him.

In that sense, as we endure abundant suffering as Christ did, we have opportunity to be abundantly comforted as He was comforted by God in His suffering. Whatever specific nuance Paul intended here, none of the above views are anti-biblical. All of them are truthful even independently from this verse, and Paul may have meant any one or more of them.

8. (vs. 1:6-7) What do Paul and the Corinthian believers share / partake?
we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings,
so also you will partake of the consolation.

9. (v. 1:8) What troubles / affliction did Paul and his companions face in Asia?

that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength,
so that we despaired even of life.

10. (v. 1:9) Why did Paul experience these trials?

that we should not trust in ourselves but in God

11. (v. 1:10) What did Paul trust that God will do for them?

in whom we trust that He will still deliver us,

12. (v. 1:11) What help did Paul receive from the Corinthian believers?

prayer for us,

13. (v. 1:11) What happens when prayers are answered?

by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.

PAUL'S CHANGE OF PLANS

Note: Paul told the Corinthians in his first letter that he planned to visit them (1 Corinthians 4:19), however, he felt it necessary to change his plans because he knew that he would have to be harsh with them because of the many problems that were in the church. Because he did not come as he said he would, there were some that questioned his integrity and accused him of not being true to his word. In this section Paul defends his character.

15. (vs. 1:15-16) Describe Paul's plan to visit Corinth?

to pass by way of you to Macedonia, to come again from Macedonia to you,

16. (v. 1:17) What do you think the Corinthians might have been saying about Paul based on this verse?

Do I plan according to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No?

17. (v. 1:19) Who are the three that are mentioned that preached to the Corinthians?

1. me (Paul) 2. Silvanus 3. Timothy

18. (v. 1:21) Who is it that enables us / makes us / anointed us with Christ?

God

19. (v. 1:22) (Read Ephesians 1:13-14) **In your own words**, what are some of the descriptions given of the work of the Holy Spirit in these passages?

20. (v. 1:23) Why does Paul say he did not go to Corinth at the original time?

that to spare you I came no more to Corinth.

21. (v. 1:24) How does Paul tell the Corinthian believers that they will stand firm?

for by faith you stand.

Chapter 2

Please read 2 Corinthians - Chapter 2 ☐ Check

1. (v. 2:3) When writing to the Corinthians, what does Paul say where his joy comes from?

that my joy is the joy of you all.

2. (v. 2:4) What was Paul's intention for writing the Corinthians?

that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

FORGIVENESS OF THE SINNER

Note: Although Paul does not say specifically, many believe that 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 is referring to the individual that had sinned by living with his father's wife, as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5. Please read 1 Corinthians 5 again to remind yourself of the circumstances regarding that situation.

3. (v. 2:5) Who does Paul say has been grieving the most?

all of you.

4. (v. 2:6) Assuming that Paul is referring in this verse to the instructions he gave the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 5, what is he saying about the punishment that the individual received?

This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,

5. (v. 2:7) What further instructions does Paul give the Corinthian believers?

you ought rather to forgive and comfort him,

6. (v. 2:8) What more does Paul say regarding the treatment of the repentant sinner?

I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

7. (v. 2:9) Why else did Paul write to the Corinthians?

I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

8. (v. 2:10) What was Paul's response to the man's repentance? I also forgive.
-

9. (v. 2:11) **In your own words**, explain what you think Paul means in this verse?

10. (v. 2:12) What did Paul find in Troas? a door was opened to me by the Lord,
-

11. (v. 2:13) Why did Paul not have peace of mind / spirit was not at rest about staying in Troas? because I (Paul) did not find Titus my brother;

12. (v. 2:13) What did Paul do, since he was not at peace, when he could not find his brother Titus?

I (Paul) departed for Macedonia.

Note: This brief comment by Paul shows us that it is often not easy to determine God's specific will for us in every situation. Since a door had been opened for Paul to preach the gospel in Troas it would only make sense to believe it was God's desire for him to stay there and take advantage of the opportunity. Yet because he felt uneasy about not knowing the well-being of his friend and fellow minister, Titus, he decided to move on. If even Paul found himself wondering and unsettled about God's specific will for his life, we should not be surprised if we find ourselves faced with similar questions and uncertainties. After we have determined if a particular decision is within the revealed will of God, e.g. God will never ask us to lie, steal or disobey one of His commandments, we are then left to determine the best choice based on our circumstances and feelings.

13. (v. 2:14) In this verse, what does Paul say God uses us for?

through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

14. (v. 2:15) How are Christians described to God in this verse?

we are to God the fragrance of Christ

15. (v. 2:16) Describe **in your own words** why Paul would say that to one group "we are the aroma of life" and to the other "the aroma of death."

16. (v. 2:17) How does Paul describe his motivation for preaching the gospel?

as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

Chapter 3

Please read 2 Corinthians - Chapter 3 ☐ Check

1. (vs 3:1-3) How does Paul describe the believers as evidence of the effectiveness of his ministry?

you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us,
written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God,
not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

2. (v. 3:6) Into what has God made Paul and his companions?

us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit;

3. (v. 3:6) How does Paul describe the work of the Spirit? the Spirit gives life.

To understand this passage, please read Exodus 34: 29-35.

4. (vs. 3:7-10) Use **your own words** to describe the difference between the Old and New Covenants as described in these verses.

5. (v. 3:13) What did Moses do so that the Israelites could not see the glory of the Lord fading from his face? put a veil over his face

6. (vs. 3:14-15) Describe **in your own words** what Paul means by “a veil covering their hearts.”

7. (v. 3:16) When is the veil taken away?

when one turns to the Lord,

8. (v. 3:17) What does the Spirit of the Lord give us?

where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty

9. (v. 3:18) This verse uses imagery to help us understand a spiritual truth. Try to explain **in your own words** what Paul is trying to communicate in this verse.

Chapter 4

Please read 2 Corinthians - Chapter 4 ☐

What is the meaning of 2 Corinthians 4:1

In the previous chapter, Paul described the remarkable covenant God has made with those who come to Him through faith in Christ. This new covenant allows human beings to see the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Without Christ, a veil remains between the sin-hardened minds of humans and the ability to see God's glory. Those forgiven for their sin by God's grace, though, are freed from this veil by God's Spirit. As a result, they can look at God's glory with "unveiled faces" and begin to be transformed into the image of Christ as His glory becomes theirs (2 Corinthians 3:17–18).

Paul now returns to defending his ministry to the Corinthians and others. His role is to carry the message of the new covenant to people around the world. Paul insists that he and his co-workers have this ministry, this purpose, by God's mercy.

1. (v. 4:2) What has Paul rejected / renounced?

the hidden things of shame,

not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully,

2. (v. 4:2) How does Paul describe the way he conducts his ministry?
by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's
conscience in the sight of God.
3. (v. 4:3) To whom is Paul's preaching hidden?
veiled to those who are perishing,
4. (v. 4:4) What has the god of this age / world done to those that do not believe the
gospel? has blinded, who do not believe,
5. (v. 4:4) How is Christ described in this verse?
who is the image of God,
6. (v. 4:5) What is the message that Paul preaches?
we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.
7. (v. 4:6) Why did God say / command, "Let light shine out of darkness"?
to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
8. (v. 4:7) What does having these treasures in these jars of clay show?
that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.
9. (vs. 4:8-9) Paul lists several things which happened to him and his companions, but
also describes how they are not affected by those hardships. List the hardships and the
discouragements they do not experience.

We are...

hardpressed

perplexed

persecuted

stuck down

But not...

crushed

despair

forsaken

destroyed

10. In verse 4:11, why does Paul say, *"We who are alive are always being given over / delivered to death for Jesus' sake?"*
that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
-
11. (v. 4:14) What do we know regarding our resurrection?
He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus,
-
12. (v. 4:15) What may it cause when the grace of God reaches more and more people?
may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.
-
13. (v. 4:16) What is happening outwardly and inwardly to us?
our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.
-
14. (v. 4:17) What do our light and temporary (small and won't last long) trouble gain for us?
for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,
-
15. (v. 4:18) Why should we fix our eyes on things eternal rather than the things we can see?
For the things which are seen are temporary,
but the things which are not seen are eternal.
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ESV ☐, KJV ☐, NIV ☐, NKJV ☐, NLT ☐, Other: _____

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