

Understanding 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 4:7-12 (p.1227)

Intro

I. Christian life and ministry are _____...

Paul's first letter to the Church in Corinth focused on the many _____ within the church; Paul's second letter focuses more on his _____ problems in ministry.

For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. (2 Cor. 1:8,9)

In 2 Corinthians Paul has to _____ himself against accusations of being unreliable and _____; he denies being unreliable but _____ to being weak.

I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea. Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to the flesh, ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? ... I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you.... For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.... do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation...? ... Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one....I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!— I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness... they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account".... Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge?I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing.

(1:16,17,23;2:1,17;3:1;7:2;10:1,2,10;11:5-7; 12:11)

Weakness and difficulty are _____ aspects of Christian life and ministry, because they force us to rely on the _____ and not upon ourselves.

...we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. (1:9)

The human heart is stubbornly _____-reliant (and therefore anti-_____); insurmountable _____ enable us to experience God's saving _____.

...we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. (1:9, 10)

II. To demonstrate that _____ and power belong to _____.

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. v.6

We know how _____ God is because we know Jesus; Jesus _____ the glory of God, so _____ Jesus is the greatest possible _____.

...we have this treasure in jars of clay... v.7

Our _____ are not the treasure; our bodies are not made of _____, silver, or precious stones; _____ is the treasure.

Our lives are a _____ display for the glorious treasure that is Jesus Christ; the purpose of our lives is to display the _____ of Jesus!

For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord...4:5

...he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. (Acts 9:15)

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Our lives are the _____ against which God displays His _____; Jesus gives weak people a certain gospel _____.

The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me....' So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch. And they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands (Judges 7:2,19)

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed... v.8,9

A righteous man falls seven times and rises again.... (Prov. 24:16)

_____ in you provides a certain gospel _____; _____ wants to pull you down, but God continues to _____ you up!

...always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies. v.10

As you _____ Christ's death and hold on to it by faith, you _____ the power of His resurrection and _____ it to the world.

For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. v.11,12

... be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.12:7-10

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