

~ACTS~

Lesson 65- An Overview of 2nd Corinthians

2 Corinthians 1-13

Written while in Macedonia in fall 57ad, **Acts 20:1**.

- 1-1/2 yrs after 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians is the 4th letter Paul has written to the Corinthians
 - 1st “Previous letter,” fall 54ad, 1 Cor 5:9
 - 2nd 1 Corinthians, spring 56ad, 1 Cor 16:8 (response from Chloe’s letter)
 - 3rd “Severe letter,” summer 56ad, 2 Cor 2:1-3; 7:8 (response from Timothy’s return)
 - 4th 2 Corinthians,” fall 57ad, 7:5-7 (response from Titus return to Macedonia and good report)
 - 2 Corinthians- split letter? No, central theme and flow throughout, plus the ending salutation, **2 Cor 13:14**

2nd Corinthians bears the heart of Paul more than any other of his other epistles.

- Letter of love, humility, comfort, and it exposes his heart and character, **2 Cor 6:11**
- Paul’s heart for over a year has been to come visit them, Acts 19:21; 1 Cor 16:5-9; **2 Cor 1:15-16, 23; 2:1-4**
 - **2 Corinthians 2:4** is the heart of Paul toward the Corinthians, along with **6:11**.
- In Paul’s deep concern for this church during the course of his three year stay in Ephesus, he sent Timothy to Corinth on several occasions to strengthen them in the faith
 - And now notice who is writing this epistle with Paul... brother Timothy, **2 Cor 1:1**.

Three major themes throughout this epistle:

- 1) Comfort of God
- 2) Warning of false teachers
- 3) Defense of Paul’s Apostleship

Comfort of God

- παρακαλέω used 29 times throughout this epistle... to call alongside, exhort, comfort, encourage
 - 18x verb, παρακαλέω ... 11x noun, παράκλησις. 2 Cor 1:3-7; 2:7-8; 5:20; 7:4-7, 13; 8:4, 6, 17; 9:5; 10:1; 12:8, 18; 13:11
 - 10x in the opening chapter, **2 Cor 1:3-7** speaking of the comfort of God in suffering

The Comfort of a good report

- When Titus met Paul in Macedonia, he gave him a good report that comforted Paul greatly, **2 Cor 7:5-7, 13-16**.
 - Paul’s sever letter had led them to repentance and a changed heart, **2 Cor 7:8-10**.
 - Because of this change, Paul now decides he will be coming to them again the third time and he tells them to get the contribution ready, **2 Cor 8:1-6; 9:1-5**.
 - Within these two chapters, 8-9, Paul gives some spiritual principles about giving within the New Covenant, **2 Cor 9:6-8**.
 - With Titus’ good report Paul sees that the Corinthian church was heading in the right direction, but a major stumbling block for them was the infiltration of false teachers. So a large part of this letter is warning of these false teachers.

Warning of False Teachers

- Corinth had several false teachers, Philosophers, Gnostics, and Judaizers
 - The false teachers Paul mainly refers to in 2 Corinthians are the Judaizers.
 - Those who were claiming to preach Jesus as the Christ, but in addition to the works of the Law.
 - But this is no gospel at all. They were preaching a different gospel and another Jesus, **2 Cor 11:1-4, 13-23**... ministers of Christ?
 - These Judaizers hated Paul and made him out to be an enemy... Galatians 4:16
 - But they were preaching another Jesus, a false gospel trying to bring the Corinthians under the Law, **2 Cor 3:1-7**,
 - Paul makes the contrast saying the Judaizers are ministers of death, but we are ministers of Righteousness and reconciliation, **2 Cor 3:12-18; 4:1-6**
 - This righteousness will lead us unto eternal glory, **2 Cor 4:16-18; 5:1-10**. Our Blessed Hope
 - In six verses, Paul explains the plan of Redemption, the vicarious substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and our participation with God as a result, **2 Cor 5:17-6:1**.
 - Plea to separate from the false teachers, **6:11-7:4**.

Defense of Paul's Apostleship against false teachers

- The testimony to this calling is the suffering he endures (the suffering is the witness that he is called to be an Apostle and he preaches Truth), **2 Cor 1:5; 4:10-11**. (1 Pet 2:21; 4:13; Matt 5:11-12)
 - False teachers were blaspheming and disparaging Paul's character and his Apostolic calling, **2 Cor 10:1-2, 7-11**
- 4x throughout this epistle Paul gives a list of his tribulations... bearing testimony of his Apostleship
 - **1:8-11; 4:7-12; 6:3-10; 11:22-33; 12:10**
 - Paul goes on to boast in his infirmities by describing his experience when he was stoned to death in Lystra 14 years ago and went to heaven, **2 Cor 12:1-5**.
 - Another example of his sufferings is his thorn in the flesh which has caused much confusion among Christians, **2 Cor 12:7-9**.
 - After boasting of his tribulations, he gives another proof of his Apostleship, **2 Cor 12:11-12**.
 - I think it is very interesting that he doesn't use these signs and wonders and miracles as his major proof of his calling. Instead he spends the majority of his time talking about his persecutions. He does this to remain humble.
 - But he feels compelled to boast in these things because the Corinthians were wanting a proof of Christ within him, **2 Cor 13:3**.

Warnings of false teachers and admonitions of his 3rd visit in chapters 10-13, **2 Cor 10:1-2, 8-10; 12:14; 13:1-3**.

- Because of the good report from Titus, his hope is that the church remains strong at his coming to them, **2 Cor 12:19-21**; admonition to examine themselves, **2 Cor 13:5-10**.

Paul ends his letter with a final admonition and salutation, **2 Cor 13:11-14**.