

## Welcome to Grace Christian Fellowship

### Jesus is Lord! (Romans 10:9)

Topic:

2 Corinthians 13  
- Paul concludes his letter

- All verses are from the *ESV* unless otherwise stated  
- [Brackets] are used to show other, alternative translations

1

## Last time ...

In chapter 12 Paul continued to defend himself from the false teachers who claimed to be apostles, sent forth from other churches with authority. Paul testifies, reluctantly, to his service and God's gifts, NOT his personal accomplishments or status. He claims he has true apostolic status.

He is concerned that his testifying might be seen as boasting arrogantly.

Paul makes the only mention of his revelation / out-of-body experience.

Paul prefers to focus on his personal weaknesses (like the 'thorn') that he copes with through the strength that Christ supplies. He faces challenges like insults, hardships and persecutions.

Paul appeals to his self-sacrifice for the sake of the Corinthians to show his Christian character.

2

## 2 Corinthians 13

Today's message will be from the *NLT (New Living Translation)*

<sup>1</sup> This is the third time I am coming to visit you (and as the Scriptures say, "The facts of every case must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses"). <sup>2</sup> **I have already warned those who had been sinning** when I was there on my second visit. Now I again warn them and all others, just as I did before, that next time I will not spare them.

The OT Law required two or three testifiers. Here Paul borrows from that and modifies it to say that he has warned the sinners twice and when he comes again they will not be spared the consequences of continued sin. This likely refers to the serious sins mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5 & 6.

3

## 2 Corinthians 13

<sup>3</sup> I will give you all the proof you want that Christ speaks through me. Christ is not weak when he deals with you; he is powerful among you. <sup>4</sup> Although he was crucified in weakness, he now lives by the power of God. We, too, are weak, just as Christ was, but when we deal with you we will be alive with him and will have God's power.

The proof of Paul being used by Christ will be apparent when arrives. He will speak powerful messages that correct the behavior of those in sin. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the Corinthians will be enabled to correct and conquer their wrong attitudes and know the peace that comes from walking in the Spirit.

4

## 2 Corinthians 13

<sup>5</sup> **Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves.** Surely you know that **Jesus Christ is among you** [or in y'all]; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith. <sup>6</sup> As you test yourselves, I hope you will recognize that we have not failed the test of apostolic authority.

Do you test your understanding of Scripture and your faith?  
Is your faith genuine?  
Do you navigate life while keeping your eyes on Jesus?  
Do you see Jesus in your life?  
You will be able to discern this reality if you truly pass this test.  
Do you recognize the authority of Scripture to guide your life?

5

## 2 Corinthians 13

<sup>7</sup> But we pray to God that you may not do wrong — not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. <sup>8</sup> For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. <sup>9</sup> For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. **Your restoration [or maturity] is what we pray for.** <sup>10</sup> For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of **the authority that the Lord has given me for building up** and not for tearing down.

Although Paul appeared weak and unsuccessful, he was faithful.  
We are not at all interested in appearing to be successful in the way the non-believers measure success.  
Our goal is to be found faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:2)

6

## 2 Corinthians 13

<sup>11</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: **Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace.** Then the God of love and peace will be with you.

Be joyful.

Focus on what is eternal, not what is temporary.  
You have a body waiting that is eternal, designed to have the heavenly nature like what Jesus had.

Continue to grow in your spirituality and be mature.

Encourage each other.  
Strive to be at peace with the whole fellowship.  
Then God will bless your path.

7

## 2 Corinthians 13

<sup>12</sup> Greet each other with a sacred kiss\*. <sup>13</sup> All of God's people here [in northern Greece] send you their greetings.

This form of greeting is mentioned 6 times in Scripture.  
It is strictly a cultural act, not mandated by Apostolic authority.  
\*Acts 20:37; Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14

<sup>14</sup> May the grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, the love of **God**, and the fellowship of the **Holy Spirit** be with you all.

... A Trinitarian form of blessing.

8

### **Concluding comments**

In chapters 1-7 Paul tries to reconcile any hurt feelings with the Corinthians. He gives some strong counsel along with words of encouragement, words to cope with tough times.

In chapters 8 & 9 Paul deals with the financial gift meant for the Jerusalem congregation.

In chapters 10 - 12, Paul has been examining the methods of the false teachers who are thought of as being 'apostles', being sent forth from another congregation. They have been influencing Corinth and likely other congregations with false teaching and attacking Paul.

9

### **Concluding comments**

From chapters 1-7:

- Have you experienced any adversities because of your devotion to the cause of Christ?
- Whatever hard times you endure are part of your testimony on the day of Christ's return.
- Your sufferings will enable you to comfort others in a similar situation.
- By your endurance and perseverance this is testimony to the reality of your faith.
- You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit as a possession of God.
- You belong in Christ's parade as his slave as well as a soldier.
- You are an ambassador for Christ and have an amazing message of reconciliation.

10

### **Concluding comments**

- You are an adopted child of God.
- You are a living letter that the Holy Spirit is continually writing.
- Trust in God who raises the dead to bodies that are immortal, designed to live anywhere in heaven or on earth.
- We do not fear the permanency of death so we have an eternal purpose and can make better choices.
- We walk, not by living in the moment but living in the assured hope that because we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit this is a guarantee that there is a perfect eternal body.
- We will receive a reward for our faithful service to Christ.
- You will be brought into God's presence.

11

### **Concluding comments**

- Although we were once enemies we are now acceptable and regarded as holy enough to be seated at God's dinner table.
- We will serve God as priests in his temple.
- This present affliction is temporary so look not to what is seen but to the unseen things that are eternal.
- We look at other people differently. We do not judge them nor esteem their attachment to this life.
- We no longer live for ourselves, but for Christ.
- So "cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God"

12