

COMMENTARY

II CORINTHIANS 1

vs. 1-11:

Paul, after his customary greeting (this one including Timothy) reminds that God is the source of compassion and comfort. He comforts us during times of trial. When others are hurting, we can then comfort them even as God comforted us.

Paul instructs the Corinthians that the reason for the persecution that they encountered in the province of Asia was that they might learn to trust and rely on God for the strength to endure, rather than on themselves. God has delivered so many times in the past and is totally capable of delivering and giving strength today.

vs. 12-24:

Paul reminds them that he and his co-workers have been faithful in their service to the Lord. They have always been fair and dealt in a proper manner with the Corinthians in the past. Paul's desire was that the Corinthians would reach a point of Christian maturity where they could fully appreciate all that Paul had tried to teach them.

Paul reminds them also, of his plans to visit them. When he spoke to them he was completely honest and forthright. The promises of God are sure and do not change (compared to the plans and promises of men). God will continue to help each of them remain faithful, having given them His Spirit to work in their lives and help them to serve the Lord faithfully.

Paul finally ends with the statement that they are working to help the Corinthians grow in their faithfulness and conform to the image of Christ.

COMMENTARY

II CORINTHIANS 2

vs. 1- 4:

It was out of concern for the Corinthians that Paul had decided not to return at a time where he would have to discipline. His hope is that they will get their lives straightened out and that when he does arrive, they will be able to rejoice in how God is at work and blessing His people. This was why he had written so harshly in the past, to motivate them to get things worked out.

vs. 5-11:

Paul instructs them to forgive and comfort the one that had caused them so much grief, whom they had, had to discipline. Paul reassures them that if they forgive the individual, he will also. By this show of love and forgiveness the individual will come back to the fellowship rather than become a permanent part of Satan's forces.

vs. 12-17:

Paul recounts how he went to Troas and a great opportunity was present. After a period, he moved on to Macedonia, that he might catch up with Titus and find peace of mind.

Paul is thankful that God has been able to effectively spread the message of Christ through him, and that people have been so receptive. Paul compares it to a sweet fragrance that God has made him, that people seek. His entire effort has been for the sake of the Kingdom and out of concern for men, rather than for profit.

II CORINTHIANS 3

vs. 1- 6:

Paul reminds them that there should be no need of justifying his ministry and explaining himself. They know what he did and how God has worked in the Corinthians lives, because of Paul's ministry. God is the one who has made Paul effective in the ministry of the new relationship in Christ. God's Spirit has worked through Paul and the Spirit gives life to the believer.

vs. 7-18:

Paul compares the Old Covenant (the Law of Moses that God gave) with the New Covenant (God's grace shown through Christ). Paul acknowledges that the Old Covenant was glorious despite the fact that it brought death, was fading, and condemned men. In contrast, the New Covenant brings righteousness, life and is unfading and is therefore, even more glorious through the ministry of the Spirit.

Paul teaches that since the Spirit of God gives man such hope, that they have the courage to be bold and they understand what God's will is (unlike Moses, whom the Israelites demanded wear a veil when he appeared to them, and the truth remains covered to their eyes). When one comes to accept Christ, the veil is taken away by the Spirit of the Lord and we now reflect God's glory as we grow to be more like Him.

COMMENTARY:

II CORINTHIANS 4

vs. 1-18:

Paul states that since God has given them this ministry of unveiling hearts and declaring God's mercy to the world, they persevere and simply and truthfully share it. If people fail to understand, it is because of the veil (their lack of desire to see God's teaching). Paul's message is simply Jesus Christ is Lord and we are to be His servants.

Even though we are mere mortals, we have been entrusted with this great eternal gift of God. God's great power is constantly on display as He gives His servants the strength to persevere despite the trials and persecutions that they face. His servants have given their lives over to Him.

Because of thier faith in God and the life He gives, they felt compelled to share it with others. No matter what ever happened to them, they knew that God would give them life and raise them up for all eternity. They trusted that God would keep His promise and grant them an eternal reward as He had promised, and they would serve Him because of that promise.

II CORINTHIANS 5

vs. 1-10:

Paul taught the Christians that this body here on earth is just temporary and will be replaced by an eternal one which will not face the difficulties that we now face. God's Spirit is our assurance that God will keep these promises and give us life eternal. Death is not to be feared, therefore, since we will go on to a better and more glorious life with the Lord. Because of this promise, we accept it in faith and seek to live for Christ at all times so that when we appear before the judgement seat, we will be rewarded for our faithfulness to Christ.

vs. 11-21:

Paul knew the power of God and had a healthy respect and fear for that power (the Corinthians could take pride in the faithfulness of Paul and be challenged by it). Paul was convinced that Jesus died for all and paid the price that we might have life and was therefore compelled to share this good news with others.

Those who believe the message should now live for the one who died for them. They should also be looked upon as new creatures who have a new life in Christ. Jesus made things right between God and man (according to God's will and desire) and has now entrusted His people with the task of sharing this message of reconciliation with others.

STUDY GUIDE

II CORINTHIANS 1

1. Who was sending the letter to the Corinthians?
2. Why does God comfort us in all our troubles?
3. What is the result of Paul being distressed? comforted?
4. What caused Paul to despair, even of life?
5. Why did they feel in their hearts, the sentence of death?
6. How had Paul conducted himself in the world?
7. What did Paul hope, in regard to their understanding?
8. Why had Paul planned to result from his visit?
9. Who is faithful?
10. What are "YES" in Christ, no matter how many?
11. What does God do in the life of a Christian? (vs. 21,22)
12. Why did Paul work with them?

BONUS:

1. How has God provided comfort in the past, for you? How did it help you to comfort others.
2. How do trials help Christians to have faith in God?
3. What do verses 21 and 22 mean to you?

STUDY GUIDE

II CORINTHIANS 2:

1. What type of a visit did Paul not want to have?
2. What did Paul hope the visit with the Corinthians would do for him?
3. From what emotion did Paul write?
4. Why did Paul write in this way?
5. How were the Corinthians to now treat the one who had grieved them?
6. Why were they to treat the offender in this way?
7. What were the Christians to reaffirm?
8. What was Paul aware of?
9. What did Paul find at Troas?
10. Why did Paul go on to Macedonia?
11. What does God lead us in?
12. How did Paul speak?

BONUS:

1. What does verse 4 teach us about discipline?
2. When should the forgiveness of the sinner be extended?
3. Is God leading in triumph today? Explain.

Study Guide

II Corinthians 3:

1. What were the Corinthians in relationship to Paul?
2. How were the results of Pauls' ministry written?
3. Who makes us competent?
4. What are we ministers of?
5. What did the ministry which was ingraved on stone, bring?
6. What will be more glorious than the old covenant?
7. Why was Paul bold?
8. Why did Moses wear a veil?
9. How can the veil be removed?
10. Where can one find freedom?
11. What are Christians to reflect?
12. What are we being transformed into?

BONUS

1. What are ways that people fail to depend on God to be competent?
2. How is the New Covenant greater than the old?
3. What does it mean to reflect the Lord's glory?

STUDY GUIDE

II Corinthians 4:

1. Why did Paul not lose heart?
2. To whom is the gospel veiled?
3. Who has blinded the minds of unbelievers?
4. What did Paul preach?
5. Why was the treasure placed in the jars of clay?
6. What was Paul facing and how did he respond? (vs 8,9)
7. Why did Paul carry around in his body, the death of Jesus?
8. Why are those alive, always being given over to death for Jesus?
9. What did Paul know of the one who raised Jesus?
10. What was happening day to day with Paul?
11. What were Paul's troubles achieving?
12. What did Paul fix his eyes on?

BONUS:

1. How are people "blinded" today?
2. What does it mean to: "carry around in our body the death of Jesus?"
3. What does Paul mean: "we fix our eyes on what is unseen"? How does that apply today?

STUDY GUIDE

II Corinthians 5:

1. What do we have if our earthly tent is destroyed?
2. Why do we groan and are burdened?
3. Why has God given His Spirit?
4. When are we away from the Lord?
5. How do we live? (see vs. 7)
6. What is our goal as Christians?
7. Why did Paul try to persuade men?
8. What did Paul find compelling?
9. What should those that Christ died for, do?
10. What has God given those reconciled?
11. What are we according to vs. 20?
12. Why did Jesus become sin for us?

BONUS:

1. Are you looking forward to death? Explain.
2. Why would Paul find Christ's love compelling?
3. What is the significance of being Christ's ambassadors?