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## 2 Corinthians

The book of 2 Corinthians is a letter written by the apostle Paul to the church in Corinth. It is one of the books of the New Testament and is considered to be an important part of the Christian canon.

The main theme of 2 Corinthians is the ministry of reconciliation, which involves reconciling people to God through Christ. Paul emphasizes that this ministry is not just his own, but that all Christians have been given this responsibility.

The letter also deals with some specific issues that had arisen in the Corinthian church, including false teachers who had infiltrated the church and were trying to undermine Paul's authority, as well as some moral and ethical problems among the members.

Throughout the book, Paul defends his own ministry and his authority as an apostle, and encourages the Corinthians to remain faithful to the gospel message. He also discusses the nature of Christian suffering and the hope that believers have in Christ.

In terms of structure, the book can be divided into four main parts: an introduction (chapters 1-2), a defense of Paul's ministry (chapters 3-7), instructions on giving (chapters 8-9), and a conclusion (chapters 10-13).

Overall, 2 Corinthians is a powerful and encouraging letter that emphasizes the importance of reconciliation, faithfulness to the gospel message, and trust in God's power and grace.

Here is a brief description of each chapter in 2 Corinthians:

Chapter 1: Paul introduces himself and his fellow workers and offers comfort and encouragement to the Corinthians, even in the midst of suffering.

Chapter 2: Paul urges the Corinthians to forgive a member who has been disciplined and reassures them of his love for them.

Chapter 3: Paul defends his ministry and emphasizes the glory of the new covenant.

Chapter 4: Paul highlights the contrast between the temporary nature of this world and the eternal glory that awaits believers.

Chapter 5: Paul emphasizes the hope of the resurrection and urges the Corinthians to live in a way that pleases God.

Chapter 6: Paul exhorts the Corinthians to not receive God's grace in vain and to separate themselves from sin and false teaching.

Chapter 7: Paul expresses his joy at the Corinthians' repentance and encourages them to continue growing in their faith.

Chapter 8: Paul encourages the Corinthians to give generously to support the work of the gospel and offers examples of other churches who have given generously.

Chapter 9: Paul continues his exhortation to give generously and emphasizes the blessings that come from giving.

Chapter 10: Paul defends his ministry and authority as an apostle, refuting false teachers who had infiltrated the church.

Chapter 11: Paul continues to refute false teachers and boasts about his own sufferings for the sake of the gospel.

Chapter 12: Paul recounts a vision he had and boasts about his weaknesses, emphasizing the power of Christ in his life.

Chapter 13: Paul warns the Corinthians to examine themselves and urges them to live in harmony with one another, ending with a benediction.

## 2 Corinthians 1

### New International Version

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise to the God of All Comfort

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.

7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, 11 as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

### Paul's Change of Plans

12 Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity[b] and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace. 13 For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that, 14 as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 Because I was confident of this, I wanted to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. 16 I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea. 17 Was I fickle when I intended to do this? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say both "Yes, yes" and "No, no"?

18 But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas[c] and Timothy—was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." 20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

23 I call God as my witness—and I stake my life on it—that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 1:8 The Greek word for brothers and sisters (adelphoi) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in 8:1; 13:11.

2 Corinthians 1:12 Many manuscripts holiness

2 Corinthians 1:19 Greek Silvanus, a variant of Silas

Here's a full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 1 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with a greeting from Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the church in Corinth and the surrounding regions. Paul gives thanks to God for the comfort and encouragement that he has received in the midst of his own suffering, and he encourages the Corinthians to find comfort in God as well.

Paul then explains that he had originally planned to visit the Corinthians on his way to Macedonia, but his plans had changed. He assures them, however, that he has not been unreliable in his promises and that his message to them has always been consistent.

Next, Paul defends his integrity as an apostle of Jesus Christ, insisting that he and his companions have conducted themselves with sincerity and godly sincerity in their dealings with the Corinthians. He reminds them that he has not preached a message of "yes" and "no," but rather a consistent message of God's promises in Christ.

Paul then turns his attention to the subject of suffering, which he has experienced greatly himself. He encourages the Corinthians to see their own suffering as an opportunity to share in Christ's sufferings and to receive comfort from God. He reminds them that just as Christ's sufferings have brought about salvation for many, their own sufferings can be used by God to bring about spiritual growth and ultimately, salvation.

Finally, Paul explains that he had originally intended to visit the Corinthians twice, but had changed his plans. He assures them, however, that his love for them has not changed and that he is committed to their spiritual growth and well-being.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 1 is a letter from the apostle Paul to the church in Corinth, in which he encourages them to find comfort in God in the midst of suffering, defends his own integrity as an apostle, and assures them of his love and commitment to their spiritual growth.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 1, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

Explanation: This passage emphasizes that God is a source of comfort and that he can comfort us in all of our afflictions. Furthermore, when we experience comfort from God, we are then able to comfort others who are going through similar difficulties.

Verse 7: "Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort."

Explanation: This verse expresses the hope and confidence that the author (Paul) has in the Corinthians. He believes that, just as they have shared in his sufferings, they will also experience the same comfort that he has received from God.

Verse 9: "Indeed, 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."

Explanation: This passage describes a difficult situation that the author and his companions faced, which caused them to rely on God's power rather than their own strength. The experience ultimately helped them to recognize their need for God and to trust in his ability to bring them through difficult circumstances.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 7, and 9.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 1 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Comfort in Affliction:** In this chapter, the Apostle Paul emphasizes the comfort that God provides to believers in times of affliction and suffering. He speaks about how God comforts us so that we can in turn comfort others who are going through difficult times. This reflects a theological thought of God's compassion and presence in the midst of human suffering, and how believers are called to extend that comfort to others.

Faithfulness of God: Paul highlights the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises. He states that all of God's promises find their "yes" in Christ, indicating that God is trustworthy and His promises are reliable. This theological thought underscores the faithfulness and reliability of God as a central theme in Christian theology.

The Role of Prayer: Paul also discusses the importance of prayer in this chapter. He mentions that the Corinthians were praying for him and that their prayers played a role in his deliverance from a perilous situation. This underscores the theological influence of prayer as a means through which believers can seek God's intervention and express their dependence on Him.

Unity and Mutual Support: There is a theological thought of unity and mutual support within the Christian community. Paul emphasizes the interconnectedness of believers and how they can support each other through prayer and encouragement. This reflects the biblical teaching of the Church as the body of Christ, where believers are called to care for one another.

Glorifying God: Throughout the chapter, Paul's ultimate goal is to emphasize that all things are for the glory of God. Whether in suffering or comfort, believers are to live their lives in a way that brings glory to God. This theological thought reflects the broader biblical theme of living for God's glory.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 1 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about suffering and comfort, the faithfulness of God, the importance of prayer, the role of the Church in supporting one another, and the overarching goal of glorifying God in all aspects of life. These themes continue to be foundational in Christian theology and are often drawn upon in sermons, teachings, and discussions within the Christian community.

## 2 Corinthians 2

### New International Version

2 1 So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. 2 For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved? 3 I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. 4 For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

### Forgiveness for the Offender

5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. 9 Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for

your sake, 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

#### Ministers of the New Covenant

12 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, 13 I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? 17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.

#### Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 2 in the Christian Bible:

In the beginning of chapter 2, Paul expresses his decision to not visit the Corinthians again in sorrow, as he had originally intended. He explains that he had written a letter to them that caused them sorrow, but he now regrets having done so. He notes that he had written the letter out of concern for them, but now he wishes to ease their pain.

Paul goes on to explain that he had sent Titus to the Corinthians to check on their response to his previous letter, and he is relieved to hear that they have repented and turned away from their sinful behavior. He urges them to forgive and comfort the person who had caused them sorrow and to reaffirm their love for him.

Paul then describes his own experience of preaching the gospel, which he likens to a fragrance that is pleasing to God. He notes that to those who are being saved, the gospel is a sweet fragrance of life, but to those who are perishing, it is a foul smell of death. Paul acknowledges that some will reject the gospel message, but he insists that he and his fellow apostles are called by God to proclaim it regardless.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul explains that he has been traveling and preaching the gospel, but he is concerned about the believers in Corinth. He notes that when he arrived in Troas, he had an opportunity to preach the gospel there, but he was distracted by his concern for the Corinthians. He explains that he had gone to Macedonia to search for Titus, and when he found him, he was relieved to hear the good news about the Corinthians.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 2 describes Paul's regret for causing the Corinthians sorrow, his relief at their repentance, and his commitment to preaching the gospel regardless of the response. He also expresses concern for the Corinthians and describes his own struggles and distractions in carrying out his ministry.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 2, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 4: "For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is explaining why he wrote a previous letter to the Corinthians that caused them pain. He did it out of concern for their spiritual well-being, but he wants them to know that he loves them deeply and does not wish to cause them unnecessary suffering.

Verse 14: "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere."

Explanation: This verse expresses gratitude to God for leading believers in a triumphant procession and spreading knowledge of Christ through them.

Verse 17: "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."

Explanation: Paul is asserting his own sincerity and authenticity as a teacher of God's word, in contrast to others who may be motivated by financial gain or other selfish motives.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 2:4, 14, and 17.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 2 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Forgiveness and Reconciliation:** One prominent theological thought in this chapter is the theme of forgiveness and reconciliation. Paul refers to a situation in which a member of the Corinthian church had been disciplined for a sin but had since repented. Paul encourages the church to forgive and comfort the individual so as not to overwhelm him with excessive sorrow. This reflects the Christian doctrine of forgiveness and the emphasis on reconciling with those who have strayed from the faith.

**Spiritual Warfare:** Paul also alludes to the idea of spiritual warfare in this chapter. He mentions being aware of Satan's schemes and not being ignorant of them. This points to the theological concept of the spiritual battle that Christians face and the need to be vigilant against the forces of evil.

**Ministry and the Fragrance of Christ:** Paul uses the metaphor of believers being the "fragrance of Christ" to God. This theological thought underscores the idea that Christians are called to be representatives of Christ in the world, spreading the message of salvation and the knowledge of God. It also implies that the impact of their ministry is pleasing to God, like a sweet fragrance.

**Authority in Christ:** Paul talks about his own authority as an apostle and how it is exercised for building up the church. This raises theological questions about the authority of leaders in the church and how it should be used for the edification of believers.

**Triumph in Christ:** Paul expresses gratitude to God for leading him in triumph in Christ and manifesting the knowledge of Christ through him. This theological thought highlights the victory that believers have in Christ and the role of spreading the knowledge of Christ to others.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 2 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about forgiveness, reconciliation, spiritual warfare, the role of believers as representatives of Christ, the authority of church leaders, and the triumph that believers have in Christ. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand and live out their faith.

## 2 Corinthians 3

### New International Version

3 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3 You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

4 Such confidence we have through Christ before God. 5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. 6 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

### The Greater Glory of the New Covenant

7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9 If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10 For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11 And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13 We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. 14 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15 Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate[a] the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 3:18 Or reflect

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 3 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul comparing himself and his fellow apostles to letters of recommendation, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God. He notes that



their credentials are not based on their own abilities or achievements, but on the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, which has enabled them to minister to others. Paul goes on to contrast the new covenant in Christ with the old covenant of the law. He notes that the old covenant was written on stone tablets and led to condemnation, but the new covenant is written on the hearts of believers and leads to righteousness. He describes the glory of the new covenant as surpassing that of the old covenant, which was temporary and fading.

Paul then discusses the veil that covered the faces of the Israelites as they received the old covenant, and how it prevented them from fully seeing and understanding the glory of God. He explains that this veil remains over the hearts of those who reject Christ, but it is removed when a person turns to the Lord. Paul notes that believers are being transformed into the image of Christ, and this transformation is the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul describes the freedom that comes from being in Christ, and how it enables believers to reflect the glory of the Lord. He notes that the veil that once covered their hearts has been removed, and they are able to behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces. He encourages believers to continue in faith and to reflect the image of Christ to the world.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 3 contrasts the old covenant of the law with the new covenant in Christ, and describes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in believers. Paul notes that the veil that once covered the hearts of those who rejected Christ has been removed, and encourages believers to reflect the image of Christ to the world.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 3, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 3: "And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is using a metaphor to describe the Corinthians as a letter from Christ that he has delivered. This "letter" is not written with ink on physical objects, but rather with the Holy Spirit on the hearts of believers.

Verse 6: "who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

Explanation: Paul is explaining that he and his fellow ministers have been made capable of serving as ministers of a new covenant between God and humanity, which is not based solely on following a set of rules (the "letter"), but rather on the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 17: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Explanation: This verse asserts that the Holy Spirit brings freedom, presumably from sin and death.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6, and 17.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 3 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**The New Covenant:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the comparison between the old covenant (the law of Moses) and the new covenant (the ministry of the Spirit). Paul contrasts the letter of the law, which brings death, with the Spirit, which brings life. This chapter highlights the theological concept that believers are under a new covenant in Christ, marked by the Spirit's work in their lives and the freedom and life it brings.

**Transformation and Glory:** Paul discusses the idea of transformation in this chapter, emphasizing how believers are being transformed into the image of Christ through the work of the Spirit. He speaks of the glory of the new covenant surpassing the glory of the old covenant, symbolized by the radiance of Moses' face. This theological thought underscores the transformative power of the Spirit and the surpassing glory of the Christian life.

**Freedom in Christ:** The chapter emphasizes the freedom that comes with the new covenant. Believers are no longer under the bondage of the law but are liberated by the Spirit to live in righteousness. This theological thought has influenced Christian teachings on freedom in Christ and the believer's relationship with the law.

**Veiled Hearts:** Paul speaks of the veil that covers the hearts of those who do not believe, preventing them from seeing the glory of Christ. This raises theological questions about the role of faith in perceiving spiritual truths and the need for spiritual insight to comprehend the gospel.

**Ministry and Boldness:** Paul discusses the boldness that comes from the new covenant ministry of the Spirit. This theological thought has influenced Christian teachings on the empowerment of believers by the Holy Spirit for effective ministry and witness.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 3 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about the new covenant in Christ, the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, freedom in Christ, the role of faith in understanding spiritual truths, and the empowerment of believers for ministry. These themes continue to be central in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand their relationship with God and their mission in the world.

## 2 Corinthians 4

### New International Version

#### Present Weakness and Resurrection Life

4 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said,

“Let light shine out of darkness,”[a] made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

13 It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.”[b] Since we have that same spirit of[c] faith, we also believe and therefore speak, 14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 4:6 Gen. 1:3

2 Corinthians 4:13 Psalm 116:10 (see Septuagint)

2 Corinthians 4:13 Or Spirit-given

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 4 in the Christian Bible:

In the beginning of chapter 4, Paul explains that he and his fellow apostles have been entrusted with the ministry of the gospel, and that they do not lose heart even in the face of difficulties and opposition. He notes that the gospel they preach is the message of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Paul goes on to describe the challenges that he and his fellow apostles face in their ministry. He notes that they are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. He explains that the reason they are able to persevere in the face of these challenges is because they carry the treasure of the gospel in earthen vessels, or fragile human bodies, so that the power of the gospel may be seen as coming from God and not from themselves.

Paul then describes the sufferings that he and his fellow apostles endure for the sake of the gospel, noting that they are willing to endure anything for the sake of those who may be saved. He notes that the suffering they endure is momentary and light, and that it is producing an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul encourages the Corinthians to fix their eyes not on what is seen, which is temporary, but on what is unseen, which is eternal. He notes that

their present afflictions are preparing them for an eternal weight of glory, and that they should not lose heart but continue to trust in God.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 4 describes the challenges that Paul and his fellow apostles face in their ministry, and how they are able to persevere through their faith in God. Paul notes that the treasure of the gospel is carried in fragile human bodies so that the power may be seen as coming from God. He encourages the Corinthians to focus on what is eternal and not lose heart in the face of temporary afflictions.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 4, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 4: "In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

Explanation: This verse explains that unbelievers are blinded by Satan (the "god of this world") and cannot see the truth of the gospel, which is centered around the glory of Christ.

Verse 7: "But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is describing himself and his fellow believers as being like fragile clay jars that hold a priceless treasure (the gospel message). This demonstrates that the power of the message comes from God and not from human beings.

Verse 16: "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

Explanation: Paul is encouraging the Corinthians (and by extension, all believers) not to give up or become discouraged, even though their physical bodies may be decaying. The inner self (presumably the soul or spirit) can be renewed each day through faith and the work of the Holy Spirit.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 4:4, 7, and 16.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 4 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**The Treasure in Jars of Clay:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the concept of believers as "jars of clay" containing the treasure of the gospel. Paul uses this imagery to emphasize that the power and glory of the gospel come from God and not from human vessels. This highlights the idea of the frailty of human beings and the supremacy of God's grace.

**The Light of the Gospel:** Paul speaks of the gospel as the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This theological thought underscores the central role of the gospel in revealing the glory of God through Jesus Christ. It highlights the transformative power of the gospel message.

**Suffering and Perseverance:** Throughout the chapter, Paul discusses the theme of suffering and how it is a common experience for believers. He emphasizes that even in the midst of suffering and affliction, believers are not crushed or destroyed but are

sustained by God's power. This theological thought has influenced Christian teachings on endurance and perseverance in the face of trials.

**Renewed Inwardly:** Paul speaks about the idea of being "renewed inwardly day by day." This highlights the ongoing process of spiritual transformation that believers undergo as they walk with Christ. It reflects the theological concept of sanctification, where believers are continually becoming more like Christ.

**Fixing Our Eyes on the Unseen:** Paul encourages believers to focus not on the visible, temporal things of this world but on the eternal and unseen realities. This theological thought emphasizes the importance of faith and the eternal perspective in the Christian life.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 4 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about the nature of the gospel, the role of believers as vessels of God's message, the relationship between suffering and faith, the process of spiritual renewal, and the importance of an eternal perspective. These themes continue to be central in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand their faith and navigate the challenges of life.

## 2 Corinthians 5

### New International Version

#### Awaiting the New Body

5 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 For we live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

#### The Ministry of Reconciliation

11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13 If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right

mind, it is for you. 14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:[a] The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 5:17 Or Christ, that person is a new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:21 Or be a sin offering

#### Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 5 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul discussing the new heavenly dwelling that believers will receive when their earthly bodies are destroyed. He notes that believers long for this new dwelling, and that God has prepared us for it by giving us the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come.

Paul then describes his desire to be clothed with his heavenly dwelling, rather than his earthly body. He notes that while we are in these earthly bodies, we are away from the Lord, but when we are clothed with our heavenly dwelling, we will be with Him. Paul explains that believers are confident in this hope, and that we walk by faith and not by sight.

Paul then speaks of the judgment seat of Christ, where all believers will stand before Him to give an account of their deeds. He notes that the fear of the Lord motivates us to live holy lives and to persuade others to believe in Him.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul discusses the ministry of reconciliation, which has been entrusted to believers. He notes that God reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and that we have been given the message of reconciliation to share with others. Paul explains that we are ambassadors for Christ, and that we implore others to be reconciled to God.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 5 describes the hope that believers have for a new heavenly dwelling, the motivation to live holy lives in light of the judgment seat of Christ, and the ministry of reconciliation that has been entrusted to us. Paul encourages believers to walk by faith, not by sight, and to share the message of reconciliation with others.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 5, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

Explanation: This verse is a well-known expression of the importance of faith in the Christian life. Paul is contrasting faith with relying on what can be seen with physical eyes, emphasizing the trust and confidence that believers must have in God's promises. Verse 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is emphasizing the importance of living a righteous life, because all believers will ultimately be judged by Christ for their actions on earth.

Verse 17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

Explanation: This verse expresses the transformational power of Christ's redemption, which makes believers new creations with a new nature and identity, freed from the power of sin.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 5:7, 10, and 17.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Eternal Dwelling:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the idea of the believer's hope for an eternal dwelling with God. Paul speaks about the earthly tent (our physical bodies) and the building from God, a heavenly dwelling. This chapter emphasizes the Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead and the hope of eternal life with Christ.

**The Ministry of Reconciliation:** Paul discusses the ministry of reconciliation, emphasizing that believers have been given the message and task of reconciling people to God through Christ. This theological thought underscores the central role of Christians in spreading the gospel and sharing the message of reconciliation.

**New Creation:** Paul speaks about believers being part of the "new creation" in Christ. This reflects the theological concept of regeneration, where believers are transformed spiritually and become new creations in Christ Jesus.

**Ambassadors for Christ:** Paul describes believers as ambassadors for Christ, representing Christ to the world and imploring others to be reconciled to God. This theological thought emphasizes the responsibility and privilege of believers in sharing the gospel.

**Judgment and Accountability:** Paul acknowledges that everyone will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive what is due for their deeds, whether good or bad. This reflects the theological concept of judgment and accountability in the Christian faith.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 5 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about the hope of eternal life, the ministry of reconciliation, the idea of being a new creation in Christ, the role of believers as ambassadors for Christ, and the understanding of judgment and accountability in the context of faith. These themes continue to be central in discussions

within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand their mission and purpose in the world.

## 2 Corinthians 6

New International Version

6 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 2 For he says,

“In the time of my favor I heard you,  
and in the day of salvation I helped you.”[a]

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

## Paul's Hardships

3 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. 4 Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; 5 in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; 6 in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; 7 in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; 8 through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; 9 known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; 10 sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. 12 We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. 13 As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

## Warning Against Idolatry

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial[b]? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will live with them  
and walk among them,  
and I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.”[c]

17 Therefore,

“Come out from them  
and be separate,  
says the Lord.  
Touch no unclean thing,



and I will receive you.”[d]

18 And,

“I will be a Father to you,  
and you will be my sons and daughters,  
says the Lord Almighty.”[e]

Footnotes

2 Corinthians 6:2 Isaiah 49:8

2 Corinthians 6:15 Greek Beliar, a variant of Belial

2 Corinthians 6:16 Lev. 26:12; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 37:27

2 Corinthians 6:17 Isaiah 52:11; Ezek. 20:34,41

2 Corinthians 6:18 2 Samuel 7:14; 7:8

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 6 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul and his fellow workers as God's fellow workers, urging the Corinthians not to receive the grace of God in vain. He notes that God's grace is available now and they should take advantage of it while they can. Paul then lists a series of hardships that he and his fellow workers have endured for the sake of the gospel, including afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, and hunger.

Paul goes on to explain that despite these hardships, they have demonstrated themselves as true ministers of God through their purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, and love. He notes that they have been truthful in their teaching, even when it has been difficult, and that they have been able to demonstrate God's power through the Holy Spirit.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul urges the Corinthians to separate themselves from anything that is unclean or impure, and to live as holy people. He notes that believers are the temple of the living God, and that God has promised to dwell with them and to be their God. Paul encourages the Corinthians to purify themselves from anything that might defile their bodies or their spirits.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 6 describes the hardships that Paul and his fellow workers have endured for the sake of the gospel, and their demonstration of being true ministers of God. Paul encourages the Corinthians to take advantage of the grace of God while they can, and to separate themselves from anything that might defile their bodies or their spirits. He reminds them that they are the temple of the living God, and that God has promised to dwell with them and to be their God.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 6, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 1: "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is encouraging the Corinthians (and by extension, all believers) to live out their faith and not to take the grace of God for granted.

Verse 2: "For he says, 'In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Explanation: Paul is quoting from the prophet Isaiah to emphasize that the time for salvation is now, and that people should not delay in turning to God.

Verse 14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is warning against believers forming close associations or relationships with non-believers who do not share their values or worldview.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2, and 14.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 6 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Paul's Ministry and Commendation:** In this chapter, Paul discusses his ministry and commendation as a servant of God. He emphasizes that he and his fellow workers have endured hardships, trials, and various challenges for the sake of the Gospel. This reflects the theological idea that Christian ministers and missionaries may face difficulties in their service to God but should remain steadfast and dedicated.

**The Call to Holiness:** Paul urges the Corinthians to live lives of holiness and purity, separating themselves from worldly influences and ungodly associations. This theological thought emphasizes the importance of personal holiness and sanctification in the Christian walk.

**Unequal Yoking:** Paul advises against being unequally yoked with unbelievers, suggesting that believers should not form close partnerships or associations with those who do not share their faith. This theological thought underlines the biblical principle of maintaining spiritual integrity and not compromising one's faith.

**God's Indwelling Presence:** Paul reminds the Corinthians that they are temples of the living God and that God dwells in them through His Spirit. This highlights the theological concept of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and the implications of this reality for holy living.

**Reconciliation and Ministry:** Paul speaks of the ministry of reconciliation, emphasizing the role of believers as ambassadors for Christ, imploring others to be reconciled to God. This echoes the theological thought from the previous chapter and underscores the Christian mission of spreading the message of reconciliation.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 6 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about the challenges and hardships that ministers and missionaries may face, the importance of personal holiness, the principle of not being unequally yoked with unbelievers, the doctrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the role of believers as ambassadors for Christ. These themes

continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand their ministry, relationships, and spiritual growth.

## 2 Corinthians 7

### New International Version

7 Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

### Paul's Joy Over the Church's Repentance

2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one. 3 I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you. 4 I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

5 For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within. 6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, 7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— 9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. 12 So even though I wrote to you, it was neither on account of the one who did the wrong nor on account of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are. 13 By all this we are encouraged.

In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. 14 I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well. 15 And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling. 16 I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.

### Description of 2 Corinthians chapter 7 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul encouraging the Corinthians to purify themselves from everything that defiles body and spirit, and to perfect holiness out of reverence for God.

He notes that he has not wronged or corrupted anyone, and that he is not saying this to condemn them, but rather to encourage them to live according to God's standards. Paul then goes on to discuss the sorrow that his previous letter caused the Corinthians, and the joy that their repentance has brought him. He explains that he had written a letter to them in sorrow, not to grieve them, but to make them realize the gravity of their sin. He notes that this letter caused them grief, but it also led to their repentance. Paul explains that godly sorrow leads to repentance, which leads to salvation and leaves no regret, while worldly sorrow leads to death. He notes that the Corinthians' repentance has brought them closer to God, and has also brought comfort to him and his fellow workers. Paul explains that he is proud of the Corinthians and their response to his previous letter.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul discusses his joy at being encouraged by Titus, who had brought him news of the Corinthians' repentance. He notes that Titus had been refreshed and encouraged by the Corinthians, and that he is confident in their willingness to do what is right.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 7 discusses the importance of purifying oneself and living according to God's standards. Paul also discusses the sorrow and joy that his previous letter caused the Corinthians, and the importance of godly sorrow that leads to repentance. He expresses his pride in the Corinthians for their response to his letter, and his joy at being encouraged by Titus.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 7, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 1: "Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is urging the Corinthians (and by extension, all believers) to pursue holiness and to live in a way that is pleasing to God, as a response to the promises that God has made to them.

Verse 9: "As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us."

Explanation: Paul is referring to a previous letter he had written to the Corinthians (see 2 Corinthians 2:4), in which he had rebuked them for their behavior. In this verse, he is expressing his joy that they responded with genuine repentance and sorrow over their actions.

Verse 10: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."

Explanation: This verse is a continuation of the previous one, emphasizing the difference between true repentance (which leads to salvation and brings no regrets) and superficial or worldly grief (which leads to death and has no lasting value).

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 7:1, 9, and 10.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 7 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Repentance and Godly Sorrow:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the concept of repentance and godly sorrow. Paul writes about how his previous letter (1 Corinthians) had caused the Corinthians to experience sorrow that led to repentance. He emphasizes that godly sorrow produces a repentance that leads to salvation, whereas worldly sorrow leads to death. This chapter underscores the theological idea that genuine repentance is marked by a turning away from sin and a turning toward God.

**Comfort and Encouragement:** Paul discusses the comfort and encouragement he received from Titus when he arrived in Macedonia. He highlights how the presence and report of Titus brought relief and joy. This theological thought reflects the importance of Christian community and mutual encouragement in times of distress.

**Reconciliation and Restoration:** There is a theme of reconciliation and restoration in this chapter, as Paul mentions his joy at the reconciliation between himself and the Corinthians. He encourages the Corinthians to open their hearts to him and to be reconciled fully. This theological thought emphasizes the importance of reconciliation within the Christian community and the ministry of restoration.

**Godly Sorrow and Worldly Sorrow:** Paul draws a distinction between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow leads to repentance and salvation, while worldly sorrow leads to death. This theological concept highlights the transformative power of genuine repentance and the need for a deep, heartfelt sorrow over sin.

**Fulfillment of Promises:** Paul mentions how the Corinthians' response to his previous letter demonstrated their obedience and fulfillment of his instructions. This emphasizes the importance of living out one's faith and obeying the teachings of the apostles and leaders in the early Christian community.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 7 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about repentance, godly sorrow, reconciliation, mutual encouragement within the church, and the fulfillment of promises and instructions from church leaders. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand the process of repentance, reconciliation, and communal relationships within the church.

## 2 Corinthians 8

### New International Version

#### The Collection for the Lord's People

8 And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. 5 And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 6 So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7 But since you excel in

everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you[a]—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

10 And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. 11 Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. 12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.

13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, 15 as it is written: “The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little.”[b]

#### Titus Sent to Receive the Collection

16 Thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you. 17 For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. 18 And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. 19 What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. 20 We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. 21 For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.

22 In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you. 23 As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker among you; as for our brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. 24 Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 8:7 Some manuscripts and in your love for us

2 Corinthians 8:15 Exodus 16:18

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 8 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul commending the churches in Macedonia for their generosity in giving to support the believers in Jerusalem, even though they themselves were in a time of severe trial and extreme poverty. Paul notes that they gave beyond their

ability, and did so voluntarily, even pleading with Paul to allow them to participate in the offering.

Paul then goes on to encourage the Corinthians to also participate in this offering, as they had previously promised to do. He notes that the offering is for the benefit of the believers in Jerusalem, who are in need. He encourages the Corinthians to give generously, as the Macedonians had done, and notes that giving is a sign of their love and devotion to God.

Paul also explains that he is sending Titus and two other brothers to the Corinthians to collect their offering, and he encourages the Corinthians to welcome them and to complete their gift. He notes that he is sending them so that there will be no criticism of the Corinthians in their handling of the offering.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul discusses the importance of honesty and integrity in handling money. He notes that he and his fellow workers have been careful to handle the offering with integrity, and that they have been transparent in their handling of the funds. He encourages the Corinthians to do the same, so that there will be no criticism of them in their handling of the offering.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 8 discusses the generosity of the churches in Macedonia in giving to support the believers in Jerusalem, and Paul's encouragement of the Corinthians to also participate in this offering. He encourages them to give generously, as a sign of their love and devotion to God, and notes that he is sending Titus and others to collect their offering. Finally, Paul emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity in handling money, and encourages the Corinthians to be transparent in their handling of the funds.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 8, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 1: "We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is introducing the topic of the collection he is taking up for the poor in Jerusalem, and he is highlighting the generosity of the Macedonian churches in contributing to the cause.

Verse 7: "But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also."

Explanation: Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to also contribute to the collection and to do so generously, in keeping with the other areas of excellence he has seen in their lives.

Verse 9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is pointing to the example of Jesus, who gave up his own wealth and became poor for the sake of humanity. This is an example for believers to follow in their own generosity towards others.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 8:1, 7, and 9.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 8 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Generosity and Giving:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the concept of generosity and giving. Paul commends the churches in Macedonia for their abundant generosity in giving to support the needs of other believers. He uses their example to encourage the Corinthians to excel in the grace of giving. This chapter underscores the theological idea that Christians are called to be generous and willing to give to help those in need.

**The Example of Christ's Poverty:** Paul highlights the example of Christ's poverty, stating that though He was rich, He became poor for the sake of believers' spiritual wealth. This theological thought emphasizes the selflessness and sacrificial nature of Christ's work of salvation, serving as a model for Christian generosity and compassion.

**Equality in Giving:** Paul discusses the principle of equality in giving, suggesting that no believer should have an excessive burden while others are in need. This reflects the theological concept of fairness and equality within the Christian community and the importance of caring for the less fortunate.

**Willingness and Cheerful Giving:** Paul encourages the Corinthians to give willingly and cheerfully, not under compulsion. This theological thought emphasizes the attitude of the heart in giving and reflects the biblical principle that God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

**Thanksgiving and Grace:** Paul expresses thanksgiving for the Corinthians' willingness to participate in this act of grace (giving). This theological thought underscores the connection between gratitude, grace, and acts of kindness within the Christian community.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 8 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about generosity, sacrificial giving, the example of Christ's selflessness, the principles of equality and fairness within the church, and the importance of a willing and cheerful heart in giving. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand and practice stewardship, charity, and care for others in need.

## 2 Corinthians 9

### New International Version

9 There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the Lord's people. 2 For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. 3 But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. 4 For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the



arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

#### Generosity Encouraged

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9 As it is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;  
their righteousness endures forever.”[a]

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 9:9 Psalm 112:9

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 9 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul continuing his discussion of the offering for the believers in Jerusalem. He notes that he is sending Titus and other brothers to collect the offering, and encourages the Corinthians to be ready with their gift when they arrive.

Paul then goes on to encourage the Corinthians to give generously and cheerfully, as God loves a cheerful giver. He notes that giving generously will result in God's blessings, both materially and spiritually. Paul also emphasizes that the offering is for the benefit of the believers in Jerusalem, and encourages the Corinthians to give with that in mind.

In the next section of the chapter, Paul discusses the importance of sowing and reaping. He notes that whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, but whoever sows generously will also reap generously. He encourages the Corinthians to give generously, as it will result in a bountiful harvest of blessings from God.

Paul also emphasizes the importance of giving without compulsion or pressure, but rather from a willing heart. He notes that God loves a cheerful giver, and that giving should be done out of gratitude for God's blessings and grace.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul discusses the impact of the Corinthians' generosity on the wider Christian community. He notes that their gift will not only provide for the needs of the believers in Jerusalem, but will also result in thanksgiving to God from many people. He emphasizes that the offering is a tangible expression of their unity with the wider body of Christ.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 9 discusses the importance of giving generously and cheerfully, as a sign of gratitude for God's blessings and grace. Paul emphasizes the impact of the Corinthians' generosity on the wider Christian community, and encourages them to give without compulsion, but from a willing heart. Finally, he emphasizes the importance of sowing and reaping, and notes that giving generously will result in God's blessings, both materially and spiritually.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 9, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 6: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

Explanation: In this verse, Paul is emphasizing the importance of giving generously, pointing out that those who give generously will also receive generously in return.

Verse 7: "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Explanation: Paul is encouraging the Corinthians (and all believers) to give freely and willingly, without feeling pressured or forced to give. God desires cheerful and voluntary giving, not begrudging or forced contributions.

Verse 10: "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness."

Explanation: Here, Paul is reminding the Corinthians that God is the ultimate provider and that he will bless their giving and multiply their resources, resulting in a greater harvest of righteousness.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7, and 10.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 9 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Sowing and Reaping:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the concept of sowing and reaping. Paul uses agricultural imagery to explain the principle that those who sow generously will also reap generously. This emphasizes the idea that God rewards generosity and that our actions have consequences in the spiritual realm.

**Cheerful Giving:** Paul reiterates the importance of cheerful and voluntary giving. He encourages the Corinthians to give with a willing heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion. This theological thought emphasizes the attitude of joy and willingness in giving, reflecting the biblical principle that God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

**God's Provision:** Paul emphasizes that God is the ultimate source of all provision and that He enriches believers in every way so that they can be generous in their giving. This reflects the theological concept of God as the provider of all resources and blessings.

**Thanksgiving to God:** Paul highlights that the Corinthians' generosity not only meets the needs of the saints but also overflows in thanksgiving to God. This theological thought underscores the connection between acts of charity and gratitude to God for His blessings.

**Ministry and Service:** The chapter discusses the impact of generous giving on the ministry of the saints and the service of believers. It emphasizes how the Corinthians' generosity supports and furthers the work of spreading the gospel and meeting the needs of fellow believers.

**The Abundance of Grace:** Paul speaks of the "abundance of grace" that results from their giving, highlighting the interconnectedness of grace and acts of kindness within the Christian community.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 9 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about sowing and reaping, cheerful and voluntary giving, God's provision, gratitude, ministry and service, and the relationship between grace and generosity. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand and practice stewardship, charity, and their role in supporting the work of the Church and helping those in need.

## 2 Corinthians 10

### New International Version

#### Paul's Defense of His Ministry

10 By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away! 2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. 3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

7 You are judging by appearances.[a] If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do. 8 So even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it. 9 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. 10 For some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing.” 11 Such people

should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. 13 We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you. 14 We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. 15 Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand, 16 so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in someone else's territory. 17 But, "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."<sup>[b]</sup> 18 For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 10:7 Or Look at the obvious facts

2 Corinthians 10:17 Jer. 9:24

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 10 in the Christian Bible:

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 10, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 3-5: "For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ."

Explanation: In these verses, Paul is explaining that although we live in the physical realm, our battles are not physical, but spiritual. He emphasizes that our weapons are spiritual and come from God, and that through these weapons we can defeat arguments and ideas that go against God's truth, bringing every thought into submission to Christ.

Verse 12: "Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding."

Explanation: Here, Paul is warning against the danger of comparing ourselves with others, particularly in matters of spiritual maturity or status. He argues that such comparisons are futile and misguided, as they do not take into account the unique callings and purposes that God has for each individual.

Verse 17-18: "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends."

Explanation: Paul concludes this chapter by reminding the Corinthians that true approval and commendation comes from the Lord, not from our own efforts or self-promotion. He encourages them to boast only in the Lord and his work in their lives.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 12, and 17-18.

sphere of influence, and that comparing oneself to others is not helpful or productive.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul challenges the Corinthians to examine their own hearts and motives. He notes that true spiritual authority comes from humility and obedience to Christ, not from boasting or self-promotion. He encourages them to submit themselves to Christ and to use their spiritual gifts for the benefit of others.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 10 focuses on Paul's defense of his authority as an apostle and his engagement in a spiritual battle against false teachings. He challenges the Corinthians to focus on the Lord rather than boasting about themselves or comparing themselves to others, and encourages them to examine their hearts and motives and submit themselves to Christ.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 10, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 3-5: "For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ."

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Explanation: Paul concludes this chapter by reminding the Corinthians that true approval and commendation comes from the Lord, not from our own efforts or self-promotion. He encourages them to boast only in the Lord and his work in their lives.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 12, and 17-18.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 10 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Spiritual Warfare:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the concept of spiritual warfare. Paul speaks about the weapons of his warfare being spiritual, not of the flesh. He emphasizes the need for believers to engage in spiritual battles and to take captive every thought to obey Christ. This reflects the biblical understanding of the ongoing spiritual struggle in the Christian life and the need for believers to rely on God's strength and spiritual weapons.

**The Authority of Apostleship:** Paul defends his authority as an apostle of Christ. He mentions that he has been given authority for building up, not tearing down. This

theological thought underscores the importance of recognizing and respecting the authority of apostles and leaders in the early Christian church.

**Boasting in the Lord:** Paul discusses the idea of boasting in the Lord rather than in oneself. He emphasizes that any boasting he does is not based on human achievements but on what the Lord has done through him. This reflects the theological concept of humility and giving glory to God for any success or ministry effectiveness.

**Spiritual Strongholds:** Paul mentions the idea of tearing down strongholds and arguments that set themselves up against the knowledge of God. This underscores the theological idea of confronting false teachings and ideologies that oppose the truth of God's Word.

**Spiritual Authenticity:** Paul encourages the Corinthians to examine themselves and their ministry, making sure they are authentic and aligned with the truth. This theological thought emphasizes the importance of living and ministering in a manner consistent with the teachings of Christ.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 10 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about spiritual warfare, the authority of apostles and church leaders, humility, boasting in the Lord, confronting false teachings, and the importance of authenticity in Christian ministry. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand their role in spiritual battles, leadership in the church, and the need for humility and authenticity in their faith.

## 2 Corinthians 11

New International Version

Paul and the False Apostles

11 I hope you will put up with me in a little foolishness. Yes, please put up with me! 2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. 3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

5 I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles."<sup>[a]</sup> 6 I may indeed be untrained as a speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way. 7 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? 8 I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. 10 As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions

of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

12 And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. 13 For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

#### Paul Boasts About His Sufferings

16 I repeat: Let no one take me for a fool. But if you do, then tolerate me just as you would a fool, so that I may do a little boasting. 17 In this self-confident boasting I am not talking as the Lord would, but as a fool. 18 Since many are boasting in the way the world does, I too will boast. 19 You gladly put up with fools since you are so wise! 20 In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or puts on airs or slaps you in the face. 21 To my shame I admit that we were too weak for that!

Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. 22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. 23 Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. 28 Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me. 33 But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 11:5 Or to the most eminent apostles

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 11 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul addressing the issue of false teachers who have infiltrated the Corinthian church. He notes that these false teachers are proclaiming a different gospel, and that he is concerned that the Corinthians are being led astray.

Paul then goes on to defend his own ministry and apostleship. He notes that he has suffered greatly for the sake of the gospel, including beatings, imprisonments, and other hardships. He points out that he has not asked the Corinthians for financial support, and that he has preached the gospel to them free of charge.

Paul also notes that he has resisted the temptation to boast about his accomplishments, and that he has preached the truth even when it has been difficult or unpopular. He warns the Corinthians against false teachers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ, and encourages them to remain faithful to the truth.

In the next section of the chapter, Paul speaks sarcastically about those who have been criticizing him. He notes that they are boasting about themselves and their accomplishments, but that he is only boasting about his weaknesses. He notes that he has had many visions and revelations from God, but that he has also been given a thorn in the flesh to keep him humble.

Paul also notes that he has worked hard to support himself and his companions, and that he has not burdened the Corinthians with his needs. He encourages the Corinthians to imitate his example of hard work and self-sufficiency, and warns them against false teachers who are only interested in taking advantage of them.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul challenges the Corinthians to examine their own beliefs and actions. He notes that even Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light, and that false teachers often masquerade as ministers of righteousness. He encourages the Corinthians to remain vigilant and to test everything against the truth of the gospel.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 11 focuses on Paul's defense of his own ministry and apostleship, and his warning against false teachers who are trying to lead the Corinthians astray. He encourages them to remain faithful to the truth of the gospel, to imitate his example of hard work and self-sufficiency, and to remain vigilant against false teaching.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 11, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 3: "But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

Explanation: Here, Paul expresses concern that the Corinthians will be deceived by false teachings and will turn away from a genuine devotion to Christ.

Verse 14-15: "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."

Explanation: Paul warns that false teachers and leaders can appear righteous and even claim to serve God, but in reality, they are servants of Satan and their true intentions will eventually be revealed.

Verse 23: "Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death."



Explanation: Here, Paul is responding to false teachers who have been boasting about their own credentials and accomplishments. He contrasts their boasts with his own experiences of suffering and persecution for the sake of the gospel.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 11:3, 14-15, and 23.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 11 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**False Apostles and Deception:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is Paul's concern about false apostles who were deceiving the Corinthians. He warns about the danger of being led astray by those who preach a different Jesus, a different gospel, or a different spirit. This reflects the biblical theme of discerning false teachers and holding fast to the true gospel.

**Suffering for the Sake of Christ:** Paul discusses his own sufferings and hardships endured for the sake of Christ and the gospel. He sees his sufferings as a mark of his authenticity as an apostle. This theological thought underscores the idea that suffering and persecution are part of the Christian journey, and it has influenced Christian teachings on perseverance in the face of adversity.

**Boasting in Weakness:** Paul engages in what might seem like a paradoxical boast, highlighting his weaknesses and hardships. This reflects the theological concept of boasting in weakness, where believers acknowledge their dependence on God's strength rather than their own abilities.

**Protecting the Corinthians:** Paul expresses his concern for the Corinthians, wanting to protect them from being deceived by false apostles and false teachings. This reflects the pastoral care and responsibility of church leaders to guard the flock against doctrinal error.

**Paul's Love for the Corinthians:** Throughout the chapter, Paul expresses his deep love and concern for the Corinthian church, even in the face of challenges and opposition. This underscores the theological principle of love and care within the Christian community.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 11 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about discernment in the face of false teachings, the willingness to endure suffering for the sake of the gospel, boasting in weakness, pastoral care and protection of the church, and the importance of love and concern for fellow believers. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians navigate challenges, protect the purity of their faith, and care for one another in the body of Christ.

2 Corinthians 12

New International Version

Paul's Vision and His Thorn

12 I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. 3 And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— 4 was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. 5 I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. 6 Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, 7 or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

#### Paul’s Concern for the Corinthians

11 I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the “super-apostles,”[a] even though I am nothing. 12 I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles. 13 How were you inferior to the other churches, except that I was never a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

14 Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. 15 So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less? 16 Be that as it may, I have not been a burden to you. Yet, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you by trickery! 17 Did I exploit you through any of the men I sent to you? 18 I urged Titus to go to you and I sent our brother with him. Titus did not exploit you, did he? Did we not walk in the same footsteps by the same Spirit?

19 Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening. 20 For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. 21 I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.

#### Footnotes

2 Corinthians 12:11 Or the most eminent apostles

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 12 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul continuing his defense of his ministry and apostleship. He notes that he has been given many revelations from God, but that he has also been given a thorn in the flesh to keep him humble. He does not specify what this thorn is, but he notes that he has prayed three times for it to be removed, and that God has not removed it. Paul then notes that he has been given a special grace to deal with his weakness, and that he has learned to boast in his weakness so that the power of Christ may rest upon him. He encourages the Corinthians to do the same, and notes that he has not been a burden to them in any way.

In the next section of the chapter, Paul speaks about a vision he had of paradise. He notes that he was caught up to the third heaven, and that he heard things that cannot be expressed in words. He also notes that he was given a thorn in the flesh to keep him from becoming conceited about the revelations he had received.

Paul then notes that he has worked hard to establish his ministry among the Corinthians, and that he has not taken advantage of them in any way. He warns them against false teachers who are only interested in taking advantage of them, and encourages them to test everything against the truth of the gospel.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul speaks about his upcoming visit to the Corinthians. He notes that he is afraid that he will find them in a state of sin, and that he will have to discipline them when he arrives. He encourages them to examine themselves and to repent of any sin before he arrives.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 12 focuses on Paul's defense of his ministry and apostleship, and his discussion of the thorn in the flesh that has been given to him. He encourages the Corinthians to boast in their weakness so that the power of Christ may rest upon them, and warns them against false teachers who are only interested in taking advantage of them. He also speaks about his upcoming visit to the Corinthians, and encourages them to examine themselves and to repent of any sin before he arrives.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 12, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 7: "So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited."

Explanation: Here, Paul explains that despite receiving incredible revelations from God, he was given a "thorn in the flesh" to keep him humble. Scholars have debated what exactly this "thorn" was, but it is clear that it was a source of pain and weakness for Paul.

Verse 9: "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Explanation: Here, Paul recounts how he pleaded with God to remove his "thorn" but received the response that God's grace was sufficient for him. Paul recognizes that his weakness actually serves to highlight God's power and strength.

Verse 10: "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."

Explanation: Here, Paul expresses his willingness to endure any suffering or hardship for the sake of Christ. He recognizes that when he is weak, he is actually made strong by the power of Christ.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 12:7, 9, and 10.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 12 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Paul's Vision of Heaven:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is Paul's mention of a man who was caught up to the third heaven and heard inexpressible things that he is not permitted to tell. This account has generated theological discussions about heavenly visions and experiences, although Paul does not provide specific details about the content of the vision.

**The Thorn in the Flesh:** Paul discusses a "thorn in the flesh" that was given to him to keep him from becoming conceited. While the nature of this thorn is not explicitly stated, it is often interpreted as some form of physical or spiritual affliction. This theological thought highlights the idea that God's grace is sufficient, even in times of personal weakness and suffering.

**Boasting in Weakness:** Paul again emphasizes the concept of boasting in weakness, as he acknowledges his limitations and the need for God's strength. This reflects the theological principle that God's power is made perfect in human weakness.

**Signs and Wonders:** Paul mentions that the signs of an apostle were performed among the Corinthians, indicating that he had demonstrated the authenticity of his apostleship through signs, wonders, and miracles. This has theological implications for the role of miraculous signs in confirming the authority of apostles and the spread of the gospel.

**The Call to Examine Ourselves:** Paul encourages the Corinthians to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith. This theological thought emphasizes the importance of self-examination and self-reflection in the context of faith and spiritual growth.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 12 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about heavenly visions, the sufficiency of God's grace in weakness, the role of signs and wonders in the early church, and the importance of self-examination in the Christian life. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand and navigate their faith in light of personal challenges and experiences.

Full description of 2 Corinthians chapter 13 in the Christian Bible:

The chapter begins with Paul warning the Corinthians that he is coming to visit them for the third time, and that he will not spare those who are in sin. He reminds them of the authority that Christ has given him as an apostle, and notes that he has already given them ample warning of his coming.

Paul then encourages the Corinthians to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith, and to test themselves to see if they are living according to the gospel. He notes that Christ is in them, unless they have failed the test.

Paul then expresses his hope that the Corinthians will do what is right, not so that he can prove his authority to them, but so that they can be established in the faith. He notes that he cannot do anything against the truth, but can only work for the truth.

In the final section of the chapter, Paul greets the Corinthians and notes that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with them all. He encourages them to greet one another with a holy kiss, and notes that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them all.

In summary, 2 Corinthians chapter 13 focuses on Paul's warning to the Corinthians that he is coming to visit them for the third time, and his encouragement for them to examine themselves and to test themselves to see if they are living according to the gospel. He expresses his hope that they will do what is right, not so that he can prove his authority to them, but so that they can be established in the faith. He then greets the Corinthians and encourages them to greet one another with a holy kiss, and notes that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them all.

Here are some important verses from 2 Corinthians 13, along with a brief explanation and where to find them in the chapter:

Verse 5: "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!"

Explanation: Here, Paul encourages the Corinthians to examine themselves and make sure that they are truly following Christ. He reminds them that if they are truly in the faith, Christ is in them and they should be able to pass the test.

Verse 8: "For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth."

Explanation: Here, Paul emphasizes that he is only able to do what is right and true, even if it may be difficult or unpopular.

Verse 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

Explanation: Here, Paul offers a benediction, a blessing or prayer for the Corinthians. He asks for them to experience the grace of Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

These verses can all be found in 2 Corinthians 13:5, 8, and 14.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 13 of the New Testament, there are several theological thoughts and influences that can be identified. Here are some key points:

**Examine Yourself:** One of the central theological thoughts in this chapter is the call for self-examination. Paul encourages the Corinthians to examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith and to test themselves. This theological thought underscores the importance of self-assessment in matters of faith and personal spiritual growth.

**The Trinity:** In this chapter, there is a reference to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Paul mentions them together in the context of a blessing, which reflects the theological concept of the Trinity—the belief that God is one Being in three Persons.

**The Authority of Apostleship:** Paul reaffirms his apostolic authority in this chapter. He asserts that he will not be weak in dealing with the Corinthians but will exercise his authority to build them up. This has theological implications for the role of apostles and church leaders in guiding and shepherding the church.

**Reconciliation and Restoration:** Paul expresses his desire for the Corinthians to be reconciled and restored. He encourages them to mend their ways, seek unity, and live in peace. This reflects the theological concept of reconciliation and the importance of restoring broken relationships within the Christian community.

**Strength in Weakness:** Paul mentions that Christ was crucified in weakness but lives by the power of God. He emphasizes that believers, too, should recognize their own weakness and find their strength in Christ. This theological thought underscores the principle that God's power is made perfect in human weakness.

The theological influence of 2 Corinthians 13 can be seen in its impact on Christian theology and practice. It has influenced Christian thinking about self-examination, the doctrine of the Trinity, apostolic authority, reconciliation and restoration within the church, and the principle of finding strength in weakness through reliance on Christ. These themes continue to be relevant in discussions within the Christian community and inform how Christians understand and live out their faith in daily life.

Notes:

In 2 Corinthians, there are a few passages that have been difficult for scholars and theologians to fully understand and interpret. These include:

1. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 - This passage is difficult because it uses imagery that is not fully explained, such as the metaphor of being a "fragrance of Christ." Additionally, there is debate about whether Paul is talking about his own ministry or the ministry of other believers.
2. 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 - In this passage, Paul talks about the concept of believers receiving a new body in heaven. The details of this concept are not fully clear, and there are different interpretations among scholars and theologians.
3. 2 Corinthians 10:1-18 - In this chapter, Paul defends his apostleship and ministry against those who are challenging him. There are questions about who these challengers were and what their specific criticisms were.
4. 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 - This passage is particularly difficult because Paul describes a mystical experience he had, but does not give many specific details about what he saw or heard. There is also debate about what he means by his "thorn in the flesh," which he says was given to him to keep him humble.

While these passages are difficult, it is important to remember that the overall message of 2 Corinthians is one of encouragement, perseverance, and faith in Christ.

