



FAITH
BAPTIST CHURCH

BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP
INTRODUCTION TO 2 CORINTHIANS
SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

April 30 | 1 Chron 1-2 May 1 | 1 Chron 3-5 May 2 | 1 Chron 6 May 3 | 1 Chron 7-8
May 4 | 1 Chron 9-11 May 5 | 1 Chron 12-14 May 6 | 1 Chron 15-17 May 7 | 1 Chron 18-21

BIBLE PROJECT



[Book of 2 Corinthians Summary](#) | [Watch an Overview Video \(bibleproject.com\)](#)

Next week Sunday School in your regular classes, no special introductory session.

2 CORINTHIANS

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By the Book™ A Chapter by Chapter Bible Study Series from Jerry Vines Ministries
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For the Teacher

Comfort from Second Corinthians

As we learned studying the first letter Paul wrote to Corinth, the city of Corinth was one of the most significant cities of the ancient world. The capital of the Roman province of Achaia, the 700,000 plus citizens possessed two seaports, a gigantic shopping center, and even the legendary Greek stadium, where the Olympic games were held. And, Greek religion saturated the city so much, it was said it was easier to find a god than a man in Corinth. Truly a thriving metropolis, Corinth was Paul's object of evangelistic passion and church planting endeavors (Acts 19). He preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ boldly and confidently. The result was the church at Corinth. Just a tiny mustard seed congregation at first, now the church had broadened its borders, becoming a thriving New Testament church.

In Paul's first letter, his diagnosis of the problems and difficulties which the church had developed is rehearsed. There we observe the Apostle taking the roof off the church, so to speak, peering down into its community and examining up close its problematic life. In 2 Corinthians, however, we get a glimpse into Paul's personality. Indeed, 2 Corinthians opens up for us to peer deeply into the Apostle's heart. Hence, we may understand better the obvious emotional tones Paul exudes as he writes with power and passion to the church a second time.

Many references exist documenting Paul's personal suffering (1:3-11; 4:8-10; 6:4; 7:9; 11:23-28; 12:7-10). Yet, the words do not solicit pity from Paul's readers. Instead Paul's suffering powerfully instills comfort and deep encouragement to hurting people. God's grace drips from his pen as he writes to the Corinthians—indeed, as he writes to us.

The letter naturally follows a three-fold division:

I. Paul's Explanation of his Ministry (chapters 1-5)

In this section, the focus is on Paul as a *minister*. He begins by defending his motives (1:1-2:17). A small but very influential sect had imposed their views upon the congregation. Naturally, they planted seeds of doubt about Paul's beliefs. Even more, they attacked him personally, questioning his call as an apostle. Hence, Paul's initial words are deeply personal. Subsequently, Paul defends his message (3:1-5:21).

II. Paul's Exhortation of the Church (chapters 6-9).

While Paul's focus is as the minister in the first section, his focus is as a *father* in the second section. The *faithful partnership* in the Gospel which he and the Corinthians experienced could not be forgotten (6:1-7:16). Not only so, neither could their financial partnership in the Gospel be easily overlooked (8:1-9:15). While Paul has not been afraid to deal with the problems at Corinth, he balanced such correction out with equal encouragement to the believers.



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III. Paul's Vindication of his Apostleship (chapters 10-13)

Finally, Paul the *minister* and Paul the *father* becomes Paul the *Apostle*. In this section, his heart closes, so to speak, and the authority of God's call on his life becomes clear. Commissioned by Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, Paul was sent to the Gentiles to preach the good news of the Gospel and establish Christ's church on apostolic witness. Hence, Paul rehearses his *personal experience* as an apostle (10:1-18), followed by his *proven apostleship* (11:1-12:13). Finally, with the authority of heaven backing him as an apostle, he extends a *passionate appeal* to follow hard after Christ (12:14-13:14).

Second Corinthians exists as one of the most exciting manuscripts of the ancient sacred text. God's inerrant Word comes alive as we observe Paul's heart and feel the weight of his passion, not only for lost souls, but also for God's church. No Christian can remain the same after an in-depth look at 2 Corinthians. May the Lord Jesus guide you as your group studies Paul's second letter to Corinth.

Recommended Reading:

Journey Through the Bible (available through <http://www.jerryvines.com/store/>)

Warren Wiersbe, *Be Encouraged*

David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians, The New American Commentary*

John Phillips, *Exploring 2 Corinthians*