

5-2018

## The Chapters of 2 Corinthians

Harold Willmington

*Liberty University*, [hwillmington@liberty.edu](mailto:hwillmington@liberty.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline\\_chapters\\_bible](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline_chapters_bible)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Chapters of 2 Corinthians" (2018). *An Alliterated Outline for the Chapters of the Bible*. 56.

[https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline\\_chapters\\_bible/56](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline_chapters_bible/56)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the A Guide to the Systematic Study of the Bible at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in An Alliterated Outline for the Chapters of the Bible by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

# 2 Corinthians

## SECTION OUTLINE ONE (2 CORINTHIANS 1)

Paul opens his second letter to the Corinthian church with consolation in the face of suffering and an explanation of his recent experiences.

### I. CONSOLATION (1:1-7)

- A. The person of consolation and comfort (1:1-3):** Paul describes the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as "the source of every mercy and the God who comforts us."
- B. The purpose of consolation and comfort (1:4-5)**
  - 1. The root (1:5): The more we suffer, the more God comforts us.
  - 2. The fruit (1:4): The more he comforts us, the more we can comfort others.
- C. The pattern of consolation and comfort (1:6-7):** Paul offers his own experiences as an example of this tremendous principle.

### II. EXPLANATION (1:8-24)

- A. Paul writes about his recent trip to Asia (1:8-14).**
  - 1. The apostle's trials in Asia (1:8): He suffered much hardship.
  - 2. The apostle's testimony in the hour of death (1:9-11)
    - a. He depended upon the God of life (1:9).
    - b. He was delivered by the God of life (1:10-11).
- B. Paul speaks of his planned trip to Macedonia (1:12-24):** Apparently the Corinthians accused Paul of lying when he did not visit them as promised. Paul declares both his and the Savior's truthfulness.
  - 1. Paul's truthfulness (1:12-18): Paul has always been straightforward with them.
  - 2. Jesus' truthfulness (1:19-24): Jesus is always truthful.

## SECTION OUTLINE TWO (2 CORINTHIANS 2)

Paul writes about forgiveness and about the effect the gospel is having on those he witnesses to.

### I. THE TEARS (2:1-4): Paul refers to his previous letter to the believers in Corinth—namely, 1 Corinthians.

- A. The purpose for this letter (2:1-3):** He wrote hoping the church would get some matters straightened out before he visited them.
- B. The pain behind this letter (2:4):** He penned it in great distress and anguish.

### II. THE TRANSGRESSOR (2:5-11)

- A. The individual (2:5-6):** The church previously ousted an immoral and unrepentant believer (see 1 Corinthians 5).
- B. The instructions (2:7-11):** The man repented, and Paul commands the church to restore him, lest Satan take advantage of their unforgiving spirit.

### III. THE TRIUMPH (2:12-17)

- A. Paul's concern (2:12-13):** He experiences some initial unrest when he does not find Titus in Troas.
- B. Paul's confidence (2:14-17):** Whatever his lot, Paul has the assurance of ultimate victory.
  - 1. The fragrance of the gospel message (2:14-16)
    - a. To the saved, it has the smell of life (2:14-15, 16b).
    - b. To the lost, it has the smell of death (2:16a).
  - 2. The faithfulness of the gospel messenger (2:17): Paul does not preach the gospel for profit

but in the power of God.

### **SECTION OUTLINE THREE (2 CORINTHIANS 3)**

Paul writes about the grace of God and the glory of the new covenant.

#### **I. THE UNWRITTEN GRACE OF GOD (3:1-6)**

- A. The Pharisees' written letters of recommendation (3:1):** Boastful Jewish leaders carry about with them long letters of recommendation.
- B. The apostle's living letters of recommendation (3:2-6):** Paul has no such need for dead and formal letters, as the transformed lives of his converts literally shout about his effectiveness and God's grace.

#### **II. THE UNVEILED GLORY OF GOD (3:7-18):** Paul contrasts the Law of Moses with the gospel of grace, showing the superiority of the latter over the former.

- A. The law of Moses (3:7, 9a, 10a, 11a, 13-15)**
  - 1. It was accompanied by a fading glory (3:7, 10a).
  - 2. It was temporary (3:11a).
  - 3. It led to death (3:9a).
  - 4. It functioned as a veil, restricting God's glory (3:13-14a, 15).
  - 5. It prevented Christlikeness in the lives of unsaved Jews and Gentiles (3:14b).
- B. The gospel of grace (3:8, 9b, 10b, 11b-12, 16-18)**
  - 1. It is accompanied by an unfading glory (3:10b).
  - 2. It is eternal (3:11b).
  - 3. It leads to life (3:8).
  - 4. It functions as a mirror, reflecting God's glory (3:16-18).
  - 5. It produces Christlikeness in the lives of saved Jews and Gentiles (3:9b).
  - 6. It produces boldness (3:12).

### **SECTION OUTLINE FOUR (2 CORINTHIANS 4)**

Paul writes about appropriate attitudes toward the Scriptures and toward suffering.

#### **I. HOW TO HANDLE THE SCRIPTURES (4:1-7)**

- A. As practiced by Paul the apostle (4:1-2, 5-7)**
  - 1. His approach in regard to the divine message (4:1-2, 5)
    - a. He does not use secret and shameful methods (4:1-2a).
    - b. He does not distort the Word of God (4:2b).
    - c. He preaches Jesus and not himself (4:5).
  - 2. His attitude in regard to the human messenger (4:6-7)
    - a. The illustration (4:6-7a): Paul pictures our body as a jar of clay, into which God has placed the treasure of the gospel.
    - b. The implication (4:7b): This is done "so everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own."
- B. As practiced by Satan, the adversary (4:3-4):** He blinds the minds of unbelievers, preventing them from seeing the light of the gospel.

#### **II. HOW TO HANDLE SUFFERING (4:8-18):** Paul discusses the reality of suffering and the desired reaction to it in the lives of believers.

- A. The reality of suffering (4:8-9):** Paul says he is:
  - 1. Pressed on every side by troubles (4:8a)
  - 2. Perplexed but not giving up (4:8b)
  - 3. Hunted down but not abandoned (4:9a)
  - 4. Knocked down but able to keep going (4:9b)
- B. The (desired) reaction to suffering (4:10-13)**
  - 1. Paul shares in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may be seen (4:10).
  - 2. He lives under constant danger so that Jesus will be obvious to them (4:11-12).
  - 3. He continues to preach (4:13).

**C. The rewards of suffering (4:14-18)**

1. Concerning the future (4:14): A resurrected body.
2. Concerning the present (4:16-18): A renewed body.

**SECTION OUTLINE FIVE (2 CORINTHIANS 5)**

Paul writes about the new bodies believers will one day receive and about the duty of believers as ambassadors for Christ.

I. THE REASSURANCE (5:1-8): Paul speaks concerning our new bodies.

**A. The old body (5:1a, 2a, 3-4a, 6-8)**

1. Referred to as an earthly tent (5:1a)
2. Filled with groans and sighs (5:2a)
3. Dying (3-4a)
4. Unable to see Jesus face-to-face (5:6-8)

**B. The new body (5:1b, 2b, 4b-5)**

1. Referred to as a home in heaven (5:1b)
2. Without groans or sighs (5:4b)
3. Eternal (5:2b)
4. Able to see Jesus face-to-face (5:5)

II. THE RESOLVE (5:9): Paul determines to please God in both bodies.

III. THE RECKONING (5:10): The apostle reminds his readers of a sober truth.

**A. The place (5:10a):** It is the judgment seat of Christ.

**B. The purpose (5:10b):** Here the quality (or lack of quality) of our life will be tested.

IV. THE RECONCILING (5:11-21)

**A. God's special ministry (5:14-15, 18-19, 21a)**

1. He has reconciled all sinners (5:14-15): This he has accomplished by the death of Christ on the cross.
2. He has regenerated all repenting sinners (5:18-19, 21a): Each new believer receives a new nature.

**B. Our special ministry (5:11-13, 16-17, 20, 21b)**

1. The task (5:11-13, 21b): We have been given the ministry of reconciliation.
2. The title (5:16-17, 20): God looks upon us as his earthly ambassadors!

**SECTION OUTLINE SIX (2 CORINTHIANS 6)**

Paul writes about the hardships he has endured and warns the Corinthians not to marry, or "team up with," unbelievers.

I. THE PLEA (6:1-2): Both Paul and Isaiah implore us not to receive God's grace in vain.

**A. Paul's pleading (6:1):** We are not to reject God's kindness.

**B. Isaiah's pleading (6:2):** See Isaiah 49:8.

II. THE PRIORITY (6:3): Paul feels that it is all-important not to put a stumbling block in anyone's way.

III. THE PAIN (6:4-5): Paul reviews his sufferings.

**A. He has been beaten and imprisoned (6:4-5a).**

**B. He has faced angry mobs (6:5b).**

**C. He was worked to exhaustion (6:5c).**

**D. He has endured sleepless nights and hunger (6:5d).**

IV. THE PATIENCE (6:6-7): He has endured all these things through God's love and power.

V. THE PARADOX (6:8-10): A paradox is an apparent but not real contradiction.

- A. Paul is honest yet has been called a liar (6:8).**
- B. He is known yet unknown (6:9a).**
- C. He is dying, yet he lives (6:9b).**
- D. He is sorrowful yet always rejoices (6:10a).**
- E. He is poor yet makes many rich (6:10b).**
- F. He has nothing yet possesses everything (6:10c).**

VI. THE PARENT (6:11-13): Paul speaks to the Corinthians as a loving father would address his children.

VII. THE PROHIBITION (6:14-18)

- A. The restriction (6:14a):** Don't be yoked with unbelievers.
- B. The reasons (6:14b-16a):** Paul asks what possible fellowship could exist between three groups:
  1. Light and darkness (6:14b)
  2. Christ and Satan (6:15)
  3. The true God and a false idol (6:16a)
- C. The rewards (6:16b-18):** Three rewards are promised to all who obey and who separate themselves from the unclean.
  1. God will live in them (6:16b).
  2. God will walk among them (6:16c-17).
  3. God will be a Father to them (6:18).

### **SECTION OUTLINE SEVEN (2 CORINTHIANS 7)**

Paul expresses his joy over the Corinthian church's repentance.

I. THE RESOLUTION (7:1): Paul urges the Corinthians to turn from the unclean and to seek God's holiness.

II. THE REQUEST (7:2-4)

- A. What the apostle asks (7:2a):** He asks that they make room for him in their hearts.
- B. Why the apostle asks (7:2b-4)**
  1. He has never wronged them (7:2b).
  2. He has them in his heart (7:3-4).

III. THE RELIEF (7:5-7): Paul expresses a twofold relief.

- A. Upon seeing Titus the man (6:5-6):** Paul has been beside himself worrying about Titus's safety.
- B. Upon hearing Titus the messenger (6:7):** Paul is overjoyed to hear from Titus that the Corinthians warmly received both Titus himself and Paul's rebuke, which resulted in their repentance.

IV. THE REPENTANCE (7:8-11): Paul contrasts godly repentance with worldly repentance.

- A. The first is brought about by genuine sorrow over one's sin and leads to salvation (7:8-10a, 11).**
- B. The second is false and leads to death (7:10b).**

V. THE REAFFIRMATION (7:12-16): Paul's faith in the Corinthian church is reaffirmed by two factors.

- A. They received Titus (7:13b-16).**
- B. They repented of their sin (7:12-13a).**

### **SECTION OUTLINE EIGHT (2 CORINTHIANS 8)**

Paul writes concerning the financial offering the Corinthian church is taking for the destitute believers in Jerusalem.

I. GODLY GIVING-ILLUSTRATIONS (8:1-5, 9): Paul offers two examples of sacrificial giving.

- A. The Macedonian believers (8:1-5)**

1. First they surrendered their will to the Savior (8:5).
  2. Then they sacrificially shared their wealth with the saints (8:1-4).
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ (8:9)**
1. What he was (8:9a): Very rich.
  2. What he became (8:9b): Very poor.
  3. Why he did it (8:9c): So he could make spiritually poor people rich.

II. GODLY GIVING-INSTRUCTIONS (8:6-8, 10-15)

- A. Give knowingly (8:6-8):** Paul says financial giving is related to the other spiritual gifts.
- B. Give willingly (8:10-11).**
- C. Give realistically (8:12).**
- D. Give confidently (8:13-15).**

III. GODLY GIVING-INDIVIDUALS (8:16-24): Paul promises to send three men who will receive the offering at Corinth.

- A. The names of these three men (8:16-19):** One is Titus; the other two are not named.
- B. The need for these three men (8:20-24):** This will guard against any suspicion.

**SECTION OUTLINE NINE (2 CORINTHIANS 9)**

Paul completes a subject he began in the previous chapter-namely, the grace of giving.

I. THE MONETARY GIFT BY THE CORINTHIANS (9:1-14)

**A. The review (9:1-5)**

1. Paul's confidence in the church at Corinth (9:1-2): He brags about their past enthusiasm to collect an offering for the saints at Jerusalem.
2. Paul's charge to the church at Corinth (9:3-5): He urges them to complete this task, for he is sending some men to receive the offering.

**B. The reminder (9:6-9)**

1. The principle (9:6, 8-9)
  - a. To sow little is to reap little (9:6a).
  - b. To sow much is to reap much (9:6b, 8-9).
2. The participant (9:7): Each person should determine the amount of his or her gift freely, not in response to pressure.

**C. The rewards (9:10-14)**

1. The giver will be blessed by the Lord (9:10, 13).
2. The giver will be blessed by the recipient (9:11-12, 14).

II. THE MAGNIFICENT GIFT BY THE FATHER (9:15): He gave us his own Son, Jesus Christ!

**SECTION OUTLINE TEN (2 CORINTHIANS 10)**

Paul defends his apostleship against the lies of the wicked Judaizers.

I. THE APOSTLE'S DEFENSE (10:1-13)

**A. His meekness (10:1):** He appeals with the meekness and gentleness of Christ to the Corinthian believers.

**B. His methodology (10:2-6)**

1. What Paul does not do (10:2-3): He does not depend upon the tactics of this world.
2. What Paul does (10:4-6): He uses God's mighty weapons to knock down Satan's strongholds.

**C. His militancy (10:7-11)**

1. The ridicule (10:7a, 10): What Paul's enemies say about him.
  - a. He possesses no power or authority (10:7a).
  - b. He writes like a lion but in person is weak as a lamb (10:10).
2. The response (10:7b-9, 11): What Paul says about himself.
  - a. He possesses the power and authority of Christ himself (10:7b).
  - b. They will soon discover he is as a lion both in pen and in person (10:9, 11).

**D. His measure** (10:12-13)

1. He does not compare himself to other men (10:12).
2. He does conform himself to Jesus Christ (10:13).

**II. THE APOSTLE'S DESIRE** (10:14-18)

**A. His desire for them** (10:14-15): Paul prays that their faith will grow.

**B. His desire for himself** (10:16-18)

1. That he be allowed to preach the gospel to the regions beyond (10:16-17)
2. That he be approved by God himself (10:18)

**SECTION OUTLINE ELEVEN** (2 CORINTHIANS 11)

Paul warns against false apostles and talks more about the many trials he has endured for the gospel.

**I. PAUL'S JEALOUSY OVER THE CHURCH** (11:1-2)

**A. It is a godly jealousy** (11:1-2a).

**B. It is a goal-oriented jealousy** (11:2b): He desires to present the church as a pure virgin bride to Christ.

**II. PAUL'S CONCERN REGARDING THE CHURCH** (11:3-4)

**A. What he fears** (11:3): He is concerned lest Satan deceive the Corinthian church as he once deceived Eve.

**B. Why he fears** (11:4) They are so gullible, ready to believe anything they hear about Jesus and the gospel.

**III. PAUL'S SERVICE TO THE CHURCH** (11:5-12)

**A. He is not a "super" apostle, but knows what he is talking about** (11:5-6).

**B. He "robbed" other churches, receiving their support so he could minister in Corinth at no cost** (11:7-8).

**C. He earned his own keep, receiving nothing from the Corinthians when he ministered there** (11:9-12).

**IV. PAUL'S WARNING TO THE CHURCH** (11:13-15): Paul describes their enemies-namely, the Judaizers.

**A. What they are able to do** (11:13): The Judaizers deceive the church into accepting them as true apostles of Christ.

**B. How they are able to do it** (11:14-15)

1. The root of this ability (11:14): Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.
2. The fruit of this ability (11:15): Satan is then able to transform his followers in similar fashion.

**V. PAUL'S CREDENTIALS AND THE CHURCH** (11:16-22)

**A. The Judaizers and their false credentials** (11:16-21a): These foes of the church use their credentials to harm believers.

**B. The apostle and his valid credentials** (11:21b-22): This friend of the church uses his credentials to help believers.

**VI. PAUL'S SUFFERINGS FOR THE CHURCH** (11:23-33): The pain and persecution Paul endured are almost inconceivable.

**A. He was imprisoned often** (11:23a).

**B. He was whipped times without number** (11:23b).

1. He received 39 lashes from the Jews on five occasions (11:24).
2. He was beaten with rods on three occasions (11:25a).

**C. He faced death time and again** (11:23c).

1. He faced danger from flooded rivers (11:26b).
2. He faced danger from robbers (11:26c).
3. He faced danger from both Jewish and Gentile mobs (11:26d).

**D. He was stoned once** (11:25b).

- E. He was shipwrecked three times (11:25c).
- F. He spent a terror-filled night and day on the open sea (11:25d).
- G. He traveled many weary miles (11:26a).
- H. He spent sleepless nights (11:27a).
- I. He knew constant hunger and thirst (11:27b).
- J. He was often cold and ill-clothed (11:27c).
- K. He experienced harrowing escapes (11:32-33).
- L. He bore daily the burden for the many churches he had started (11:28-31).

## SECTION OUTLINE TWELVE (2 CORINTHIANS 12)

Paul describes his experience of being "caught up into the third heaven" and talks about his thorn in the flesh God allowed to keep him humble. He writes about some of his concerns for the Corinthians.

### I. PAUL AND THE THIRD HEAVEN (12:1-10)

#### A. The vision of the apostle (12:1-6)

1. Where he went (12:1-3): He was suddenly transported to paradise.
2. What he heard (12:4-6): He heard things so astounding that he cannot describe them in earthly language.

#### B. The vexation of the apostle (12:7)

1. What he received (12:7a): Satan inflicted Paul with a thorn in the flesh to torment him.
2. Why he received it (12:7b): God permitted the Devil to do this to keep Paul from pride.

#### C. The victory of the apostle (12:8-10)

1. Paul's request (12:8): Three times he begged the Lord to take the thorn in his flesh away.
2. God's refusal (12:9): Each time the Lord responded, "My gracious favor is all you need."
3. Paul's realization (12:10): "When I am weak, then I am strong."

### II. PAUL AND THE THIRD TRIP (12:11-21): Paul talks about his planned third visit to the Corinthian church.

#### A. His reminder (12:11-13): Contrary to what his enemies say, Paul reminds the Corinthians that his previous miracles performed among them demonstrate that he is a true apostle.

#### B. His relationship (12:14-19): Paul likens himself to a loving father and the Corinthian believers to unloving children.

#### C. His regret (12:20-21): Paul is apprehensive that he will find the church still filled with pride, gossip, division, and disorder upon his arrival.

## SECTION OUTLINE THIRTEEN (2 CORINTHIANS 13)

Paul talks about his coming visit to Corinth and gives a few closing words.

### I. PAUL'S COMING VISIT (13:1-10)

#### A. The number (13:1a): This will be his third visit.

#### B. The need (13:1b-10): The apostle feels this trip is necessary for several reasons.

1. Paul's witness against them (13:1b-4): He reminds the church of Deuteronomy 19:15, which says that every truth must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses; thus, Paul's third trip.
2. Paul's warning to them (13:5-6): He urges the Corinthians to examine themselves to determine whether they are actually saved.
3. Paul's wish for them (13:7-10): He hopes to find them mature, having no need for further chastisement.

### II. PAUL'S CLOSING WORDS (13:11-13)

#### A. His fourfold admonition (13:11)

1. Rejoice (13:11a).
2. Change your ways (13:11b).
3. Encourage each other (13:11c).
4. Live in harmony and peace (13:11d).

#### B. His threefold benediction (13:12-13)

1. "May the love of the Father be with you" (13:12, 13b).
2. "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (13:13a).
3. "May the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you" (13:13c).