

2 Corinthians 8

1. As co-workers with God, does this mean that we choose the work and then ask God to help us?

-No.

-As co-workers with God, this means that it is God who chooses the work, and then, we ask if we may help Him.

2. What does it mean to “receive God’s grace in vain”?

-It means to refuse to work with God.

-It means to refuse to allow God to do His work through us.

3. How do we know that Christians are servants of God?

-A true Christian will endure troubles and difficulties because we know that our God has allowed these to help us to depend more on Christ.

4. Why should any Christian praise God while God considers them worthy of suffering for Christ?

-When we suffer for Christ, we can better understand how Christ’s suffered for us because of His great love for us.

-When we suffer for Christ, this brings us closer to Christ.

5. Why is there a difference in Christians?

-Because some Christians allow God to control their lives only a little while others allow God to control their lives very much.

6. What does it mean to not be yoked together with unbelievers?

-This means that God does not want Christians to be spiritually joined together with non Christians.

7. Can Christ be united with Satan?

-No.

8. Can the children of Christ be united with the children of Satan?

-No.

9. What was the reason why God wanted Israel to be separated from all other nations?

-To help Israel to understand that God is without sin, and that He wanted Israel to be without sin.

-To help all people to understand that God is without sin, and that He wants all people to be without sin.

-As these lessons are beginning lessons, we will not study chapters 7-9 & 11 at this time.

-This will be the last lesson in 2 Corinthians.

Let’s read 2 Corinthians 10:1

1-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!

-Some Christians in the church at Corinth thought that

Paul was a coward when he was with them, but spoke strong words to them when he was away.

-This was not true.

-Paul only taught the Word of God, and as teachers, we should also only teach the Word of God.

-Yet, Paul taught with humility and gentleness, and as teachers, we should also teach with humility and gentleness.

-Our greatest example is Christ and His teaching.

-Christ taught strongly the Word of God, yet in humility and gentleness.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 10:2

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.

-As Christians, we are not to live by the standards of this world or according to the flesh.

-To live according to the world or according to the flesh means that we live according to sin, and not according to God in us.

-For the Christian, we have many decisions every day.

-What are these decisions that we have every day?
-To live according to the flesh or according to God.

-We must continually be abandoned to God that God Himself would live His life out through us.

-We must continually ask our God to live His life out through us.

-This is the example of Christ who allowed the Father to live His life out through Christ.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 10:3

3-For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

-Life as a Christian is war against sin and our three enemies which are the world, the flesh, and Satan.

-All Christians are soldiers of the truth in the spiritual war against the lies of the world, the flesh, and Satan.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 10:4

4-The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

-Only God is stronger than sin and Satan.

-Before we are saved, only God is stronger than sin and Satan.

-After we are saved, only God is stronger than sin and Satan.

-Therefore, we must use the weapons of God.

-What are the weapons of God?

-Christ who is in all true Christians and the Word of God which is God Himself are the weapons of God.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 10:5

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.

-There are some Christians who think that we must fight Satan and his demons, but this is not true.

-Christ defeated Satan on the cross.

-The spiritual battle for Christians is against the lies of the world, the flesh, and Satan.

-The strongholds and arguments against the knowledge of God are lies that people believe.

-This is why we must read and study the Word of God to

know the truths of God.

-When people listen to, and understand, and believe the truths of God, then they can be saved.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:1-2

1-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.

-Who was this “man in Christ” who was caught up to the third heaven?

-As we learn in verse 7 below, it was Paul.

-Why did Paul not say immediately that it was he?
-Because Paul did not want to brag about himself.

-What is the third heaven?

-The first heaven is our sky.

-The second heaven is space above which has the sun, moon, and stars.

-The third heaven is heaven itself where God has His throne.

- How was Paul caught up to heaven?
- We cannot know as Paul himself did not know.

-We do know, however, that Paul was in heaven while he was still living on earth.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:3-4

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.

-While Paul does not say that he saw anything, he does say that he heard “inexpressible things.”

- What did Paul hear?
- For some reason, he was not permitted to tell others.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:5

5-I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses.

-False teachers boast about themselves, wanting people to praise them and follow them.

-A true teacher of the Word of God, will not boast about himself, except about his weaknesses.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:6

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,

-As Christians, we should not boast about ourselves.

-We Christians should understand that our salvation and all of our goodness are from Christ alone.

-If, however, a Christian wants to boast, then we should only boast that we are one with Christ.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:7

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.

-It was God who decided to allow Paul to have a thorn in his flesh.

-It was God who allowed a messenger of Satan to torment Paul.

-Although God does not nor cannot do evil, God allows Satan to do so.

-God also allowed Satan to give many problems to Job.

-Why does God allow Satan to give problems to people?

-For those who are not Christians, God uses Satan's work in their lives to help them to cry out to Christ to be saved.

-For Christians, God uses Satan's work to help us to depend completely on God.

-For Paul, God used a messenger of Satan to help Paul to not become proud.

-What was the thorn in his flesh that was given to Paul?

-We do not know for certain, but it may have been some sickness or weakness.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:8

8-Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

-Sometimes, our God does not do that which we ask Him.

-Paul begged God three times to take away the "thorn," but God did not do so.

-Even though God may not do that which we ask of Him, we can be sure that God will only do what is best for us.

-This is because our God is perfect, and all that He does is perfect.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:9

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.

-We understand that God's grace is sufficient for us only when we understand that we are insufficient.

-We understand that God's power in us is perfect only when we understand that we are weak.

-The beauty of boasting in our weaknesses is so that God's power can be with us.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:10

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.

-Why should we delight in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecution, and difficulties?

-If we allow our God to do His work in our lives, this is what can happen:

- Our weaknesses can bring the strength of God.
- Insults given to us can bring the praises of God.
- Hardships and difficulties can bring the ease of knowing God more than most.
- Persecutions can bring peace with Christ.
- How can we be strong when we are weak?
- When we are weak, it is Christ's strength that makes us strong.
- Christ's strength is far better than our own strength.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 12:11-12

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," even though I am nothing.

12-I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles.

-God used the problems in the church at Corinth to help us all to understand that when we are nothing, God is everything in us.

-Even though Paul was not with the first twelve apostles and persecuted Christians, God totally changed Paul's

life.

-This is our God who totally changes our lives when we believe in Christ.

Let's read 2 Corinthians 13:11-14

11-Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

12-Greet one another with a holy kiss.

13-All God's people here send their greetings.

14-May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

-At the end of this letter, God through Paul asks the Christians in Corinth to be completely restored to one another.

-God through His Word asks all Christians to be one in Christ.

-Satan is always trying to break up the church.

-Yet Jesus said this in Matthew 16:18:

-“I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”