

**Reading Together**  
**New Testament Bible Reading**  
**April 11 – April 17**

**Monday, April 11 – 2 Corinthians 1: 1 - 11**

The book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is a follow up letter to the church in Corinth. The Corinthian church had dealt with some of the issues that Paul had addressed in his first letter, but some of the theological issues still remained unaddressed. In fact, those who were teaching the false doctrines had begun to attack Paul and question his authority. In this letter Paul continues to address the specific theological and moral issues that plagued the Corinthian church as well as defend his calling as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verses 3 to 6 of chapter 1, Paul gives praise to God as the God of all comfort. Notice how Paul points out that God comforts us in our troubles so that we can comfort others in their times of trouble. As Christians we will all endure times of suffering, but because we belong to Christ we have a source of heavenly comfort available to us that gives us hope no matter how difficult the circumstances of our lives might be. In verses 8-11, Paul drives this point home by telling the Corinthians how desperate his situation is, and how these difficulties have made Paul rely on God rather than himself for deliverance.

**Tuesday, April 12 – 2 Corinthians 1: 12 – 2:11**

Apparently, Paul's accusers were making claims that Paul was insincere and untrustworthy in the way he dealt with the church in Corinth. Paul answers those critics in verse 12 by saying his conscience is clear, and he believes he has been sincere and holy in the way he has dealt with everybody. Furthermore, Paul says that he has lived his life according to Godly wisdom and not worldly wisdom. After Paul makes sure that they understand how he makes his decisions he goes on in verses 15-22 to

explain that even though he had to change his plans he was standing firm in Christ. Paul was confident of his ability to stand firm because he was confident in the Holy Spirit, which God placed in his heart as a deposit guaranteeing all that is to come (verse 22).

Paul goes on to say that he was glad that he had to change his plans because he did not want to have another confrontational face to face visit with them. He was glad that he was able to write and express his heart, so that they could read the letter and makes changes, and when he did come to visit them all of that would be behind them.

In verses 5 - 11 we find out the outcome of the church discipline problem that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians 5 where one of the members of the Corinthian church was sleeping with his father's wife. The man had repented and now Paul urged the church to welcome him back into their fellowship once again. The goal of church discipline is repentance and restoration.

### **Wednesday, April 13 – 2 Corinthians 2: 12 - 3: 6**

This is a beautiful passage where Paul first speaks about his own ministry and how his ministry is the fragrant aroma of life to those who receive the message and it is the stench of death to those who reject Christ. Paul goes on to explain that he doesn't do what he does for profit, he does it because God has called him to do it.

What Paul says next is really amazing. Paul says he doesn't need letters of recommendation because the people of the church in Corinth serve as his letter. In verse 3 Paul calls them a letter from Christ written by the Spirit not by the pen, and on the heart rather than a tablet. In other words, their testimony as a Christian is all the letter of recommendation that Paul needs.

## **Thursday, April 14 – 2 Corinthians 3: 7 - 18**

In this passage Paul draws a comparison between the Old Covenant that God made with Israel and Moses and the New Covenant in Christ. Paul reminds us of the gloriousness of the Old Covenant. When Moses received the law from God on the mountain it had a profound effect on him. The Bible tells us that when Moses came down from the mountain his face glowed so brightly that it scared the Israelites to death, so Moses had to wear a veil to cover his face whenever he was in public. Paul says that just as the veil covered Moses' face and hid the glory of God, there is a veil that covers the hearts of those who live under the law; because they can't keep the law and so the glory of God is hidden in their lives. Because Christ has fulfilled the law for us that veil is removed, and as Christ's love transforms our hearts, the glory of God is able to shine more and more through our lives.

## **Friday, April 15 – 2 Corinthians 4: 1 – 18**

Because of the glory Paul has in Christ, he doesn't lose heart even in the midst of the terrible circumstances he is going through. In the midst of great difficulties and unbelief Paul perseveres and keeps speaking the truth plainly. Paul says that some can't receive the truth because their minds are blinded by the god of this age. The only way we can receive the truth is when God allows the light of his truth to shine in our lives, so that we are clearly able to see his glory.

In verses 7 – 18 Paul clearly spells out all that he has endured for the sake of the gospel. Paul realized that in his fragile body (the jar of clay) lives a treasure that is indestructible. No matter what troubles Paul may face, Paul knows that none of those troubles can destroy him, so Paul keeps his eyes on that which is eternal, and indestructible. As Paul does this it makes him aware that whatever he is dealing with in the present doesn't

begin to compare to the glorious future that lies ahead of him if he will be faithful to what he has been called to do.

### **Saturday, April 16 – 2 Corinthians 5: 1 - 21**

In chapter 5 Paul continues his theme from chapter 4. Paul knows his body will one day be destroyed but his spirit will live on in Christ. Because of this, Paul can live his life in confidence knowing that even if or when his earthly body is destroyed a better heavenly body awaits him. In verse 5 Paul once again stresses the point that the Holy Spirit we have now is a deposit that guarantees all that awaits us in the future. What drives Paul in this life is knowing that one day he will have to give an account to Christ for what has been entrusted to him. It is Christ's love that compels Paul to seek to bring the gospel to all men, and not write anyone off. Paul doesn't see people the way the world sees people. What someone is today doesn't matter, what matters is what can happen when Christ takes hold of their life. Anyone can be a new creation in Christ, so Paul will keep working as Christ's ambassador to bring the message that all men can be reconciled to God and become the righteousness of God.

### **Sunday, April 17 – 2 Corinthians 6: 1 - 18**

In verses 3 to 13 of this chapter Paul again catalogues all that he has been through and tells the Corinthians that he has given himself completely to them, but Paul laments the fact that the Corinthians have not shown him the love that he has shown to them.

In verses 14 to 18 Paul exhorts the Corinthians not to be united with unbelievers. We have to be in the world but we are not supposed to be part of the world's system or the world's way of thinking. It is a difficult balance for us to maintain, but if we are united with unbelievers then we cannot work for God's glory.