

The Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

SED Junior Quiz Material 2017-18

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- ¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother **Sosthenes**,
² To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and **ours**:
³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving

- ⁴ I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.
⁵ For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—
⁶ God **thus confirming** our testimony about Christ among you.
⁷ Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.
⁸ He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be **blameless** on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
⁹ God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Church Divided Over Leaders

- ¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you **agree** with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.
¹¹ My brothers and sisters, some from **Chloe's** household have **informed** me that there are **quarrels** among you.
¹² What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas”; still another, “I follow Christ.”
¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?
¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except **Crispus** and **Gaius**,
¹⁵ so no one can say that you were baptized in my name.
¹⁶ (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)
¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be **emptied** of its power.

Christ Crucified Is God's Power and Wisdom

- ¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
¹⁹ For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the **intelligence** of the **intelligent** I will **frustrate**.”
²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the **teacher** of the law? Where is the **philosopher** of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?
²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.
²² Jews **demand** signs and Greeks look for wisdom,
²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
²⁵ For the foolishness of God is **wiser** than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human **strength**.
²⁶ Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were **influential**; not many were of **noble birth**.
²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.
²⁸ God chose the **lowly** things of this world and the **despised** things—and the things that are not—to **nullify** the things that are,
²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.
³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and **redemption**.
³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

2¹ And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I **proclaimed** to you the testimony about God.

² For I **resolved** to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

³ I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.

⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and **persuasive** words, but with a **demonstration** of the **Spirit's power**,

⁵ so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

God's Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit

⁶ We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the **mature**, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

⁷ No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God **destined** for our glory before time **began**.

⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

⁹ However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has **conceived**"—the things God has **prepared** for those who love him—

¹⁰ these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit **searches** all things, even the deep things of God.

¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

¹² What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.

¹³ This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, **explaining** spiritual **realities** with **Spirit-taught** words.

¹⁴ The person without the Spirit does not **accept** the things that come from the Spirit of God but **considers** them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are **discerned** only through the Spirit.

¹⁵ The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments,

¹⁶ for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

The Church and Its Leaders

3¹ Brothers and sisters, I could not **address** you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ.

² I gave you milk, not **solid** food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.

³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and **quarreling** among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere **humans**?

⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

⁶ I **planted** the seed, Apollos **watered** it, but God has been making it grow.

⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be **rewarded** according to their own labor.

⁹ For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's **field**, God's building.

¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care.

¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² If anyone builds on this foundation **using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw**,

¹³ their work will be **shown** for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the **quality** of each person's work.

¹⁴ If what has been built **survives**, the builder will receive a reward.

¹⁵ If it is **burned** up, the builder will suffer **loss** but yet will be saved—even though only as one **escaping** through the **flames**.

¹⁶ Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit **dwells** in your midst?

¹⁷ If anyone **destroys** God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is **sacred**, and you together are that temple.

¹⁸ Do not **deceive** yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise.

¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He **catches** the wise in their **craftiness**";

²⁰ and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile."

²¹ So then, no more boasting about human **leaders**! All things are yours,

²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the **future**—all are yours,

²³ and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

The Nature of True Apostleship

4 ¹ This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those **entrusted** with the mysteries God has revealed.

² Now it is **required** that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself.

⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who **judges** me.

⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the **appointed** time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will **expose** the **motives** of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

⁶ Now, brothers and sisters, I have **applied** these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may **learn** from us the meaning of the saying, "Do not go beyond what is written." Then you will not be **puffed up** in being a **follower** of one of us over against the other.

⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

⁸ Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have begun to reign—and that without us! How I wish that you really had begun to reign so that we also might reign with you!

⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on **display** at the end of the procession, like those condemned to die in the **arena**. We have been made a **spectacle** to the whole **universe**, to angels as well as to human beings.

¹⁰ We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are **dishonored**!

¹¹ To this very hour we go hungry and **thirsty**, we are in **rags**, we are **brutally** treated, we are **homeless**.

¹² We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;

¹³ when we are **slandered**, we answer **kindly**. We have become the **scum** of the earth, the **garbage** of the world—right up to this **moment**.

Paul's Appeal and Warning

¹⁴ I am writing this not to shame you but to **warn** you as my dear children.

¹⁵ Even if you had ten thousand **guardians** in Christ, you do not have many **fathers**, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to **imitate** me.

¹⁷ For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which **agrees** with what I teach everywhere in every church.

¹⁸ Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you.

¹⁹ But I will come to you very **soon**, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have.

²⁰ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

²¹ What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a **rod** of **discipline**, or shall I come in love and with a **gentle** spirit?

Warnings From Israel's History

10¹ For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea.

² They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

³ They all ate the same spiritual food

⁴ and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry."

⁸ We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.

⁹ We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.

¹⁰ And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

¹¹ These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

¹² So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Idol Feasts and the Lord's Supper

¹⁴ Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

¹⁵ I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say.

¹⁶ Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

¹⁷ Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.

¹⁸ Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

¹⁹ Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything?

²⁰ No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.

²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

²² Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

The Believer's Freedom

²³ "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive.

²⁴ No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.

²⁵ Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience,

²⁶ for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."

²⁷ If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience.

²⁸ But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience.

²⁹ I am referring to the other person's conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience?

³⁰ If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?

³¹ So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

³² Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—

³³ even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Concerning Spiritual Gifts

12¹ Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.

² You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

³ Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.

⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,

¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Unity and Diversity in the Body

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be?

²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!”

²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,

²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it,

²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.

²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

³¹ Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Love Is Indispensable

And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

13 ¹ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a **resounding gong** or a **clanging cymbal**.

² If I have the gift of prophecy and can **fathom** all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move **mountains**, but do not have love, I am nothing.

³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to **hardship** that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not **self-seeking**, it is not easily **angered**, it keeps no record of wrongs.

⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

⁷ It always **protects**, always trusts, always hopes, always **perseveres**.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are **prophecies**, they will **cease**; where there are tongues, they will be **stilled**; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

¹⁰ but when **completeness** comes, what is in part **disappears**.

¹¹ When I was a child, I **talked** like a child, I thought like a child, I **reasoned** like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of **childhood** behind me.

¹² For now we see only a **reflection** as in a **mirror**; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the **greatest** of these is love.

2 Corinthians

1 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, 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 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 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.

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.

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 the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Present Weakness and Resurrection Life

4 ¹ 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," 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." Since we have that same spirit of 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.

Awaiting the New Body

5 ¹ 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: 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 for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Paul’s Defense of His Ministry

10 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!

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. 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.”

¹⁸ For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

Paul’s Vision and His Thorn

12 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.

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,” 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.

Final Warnings

13 ¹ This will be my third visit to you. “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

² I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others,

³ since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

⁴ For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him in our dealing with you.

⁵ Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

⁶ And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.

⁷ Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed.

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

⁹ We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is that you may be fully restored.

¹⁰ This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

Final Greetings

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.