

OUTLINE OF 2 CORINTHIANS
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Purpose of the book: The defence of Paul's apostleship in anticipation of his third visit to Corinth.

I. Introduction (1:1-11).

A. Salutation (1:1; 2).

B. Thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness in times of suffering and for the way this suffering has been used for the Corinthians (1:3-11).

II. Paul explains his recent actions and attitude toward the Corinthians (1:12-2:17).

A. Paul's conscience is clear concerning his change in plans, not to go to Corinth ~~and then return (1:12-2:1)~~ again as he had planned, but to write instead (1:12-2:4).

B. Paul's exhortation to forgive any who had attacked him, since he had already forgiven such a person (2:5-11).

C. Paul's praise to God for the ministry he had had ~~in Macedonia~~ even though he had left Troas, where he had had an open door, to ~~find Titus~~ to go to Macedonia to find Titus (2:12-17).

III. Paul's defence of his ministry (3:1-7:16).

A. The Spirit of God had enabled him to have a ministry which had transformed many Corinthians. Therefore, the results proved that his work was of God (3:1-6).

B. It is reasonable to believe that if a covenant which produced death was ^(the Law) glorious, then one (the Gospel) which produced life would be even more glorious. So the Law is still inferior to the Gospel because it acts as a veil while the Gospel is a revelation and through it men are transformed by the Spirit (3:7-18).

In this way Paul shows the superiority of his message over that of the Judaizers.

C. Consequently, it had been Paul's desire to forsake anything that would detract from preaching Christ (the Gospel) because God had given this ministry and He was the One who must be pleased. To keep him reminded of this he was not given exemption from suffering, but he had a human body which was continually exposed to death itself (4:1-15).

D. The glory of the future had kept Paul from losing heart in all of his sufferings (4:16-5:10). In this way also his message was superior to that of the legalists.

E. Paul's boldness was not conceit, but a fervent desire under the constraining love of Christ to see men reconciled to God, and to do anything and to endure everything that would achieve that goal (5:11-6:10).

F. Paul's appeal for the restoration of fellowship with the Corinthian believers (6:11-7:16).

1. Paul's deep concern for them was the reason for his earnest entreaty for them to forsake sin and to be holy (6:11-7:1).
2. Paul's assurance to them that he had not taken advantage of anyone and that he was overjoyed in learning of their concern for him and that there had been genuine grief over their sin (7:2-16).

IV. Paul's encouragement for the Corinthians to complete their offering, started a year previously, for the needy saints in Jerusalem (8:1-9:15). This is actually a continuation of 1 Cor. 16:1-4.

- A. In view of what the Macedonian believers had done in spite of their poverty, the Corinthians should seek to excel in the grace of giving also (8:1-7).
- B. The example of the Lord Jesus and the will of God concerning the gathering of food by the Israelites in the wilderness teach us that those who have (food, etc.) should share with those who have none (8:8-15).
- C. The plan for Titus and two others to precede Paul in coming to Corinth (8:16-9:5).
 1. Titus and two others ~~were~~ coming to Corinth and Paul was concerned that they find the Corinthians Church as Paul had boasted to them that it was: a generous church, and a loving church (8:16-24).
 2. Paul was sending the three men (mentioned in the preceding paragraph) to prepare the Corinthians to give so that the gift would be ready when Paul came, and so that he would not be embarrassed if some Macedonians came with him and the gift was not ready (9:1-5).
- D. The divine principle of giving is here explained, and the blessings which will come to one who gives from his heart are enumerated (9:6-15).

V. Paul, with reluctance, considering it somewhat foolish (2 Cor. 11:1), defended his apostleship to refute those who were attacking him (10:1-13:10).

- A. Paul rejected the charge that he is strong when away but weak when present with them, claiming he is the same at both times--concerned about obedience to Christ, exercising his authority as an Apostle only for their sakes, hoping that his ministry to them would open the door in other areas (10:1-18).
- B. Paul's "boasting" about himself to expose those who opposed him (11:1-12:13).
 1. Paul fears that his accusers are actually deceivers and that their motives are to ensnare the people (11:1-21).
 2. Paul can claim all that his accusers claim plus sufferings which they had not experienced (11:22-33).
 3. In addition to his sufferings, Paul had had revelations which could have led to pride, but which God prohibited by giving Paul a "thorn in the flesh" (12:1-10).
 4. Paul concludes his "boasting" by reminding them that he had done all of the works of an Apostle while with them, and that they should not have forced him to say all of these things about himself (12:11-13).

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C. Paul proposed a third visit (12:14-13:10).

1. When he came, he did not want to be a (financial) burdern to them because he was concerned about them, not what they had (12:14-18).
2. He had defended himself, not for himself, but so that they would respect him, and so that when he came he would not find them living in sins of various kinds (12:19-21).
3. When Paul arrived he would not accept false charges but would deal with problems which were attested to by witnesses. Consequently, they were to examine themselves and to prepare for his visit, realizing that he was coming to build them up, not to tear them down (13:1-10).

VI. Conclusion (13:11-14).