

<p>Bible Text English Standard Version</p>	<p>Observations What does the text say?</p>	<p>Interpretations & Questions What does it mean to all Christians?</p>	<p>Applications What does it mean to me?</p>
<p>2 Corinthians 12:1-10</p> <p>Paul’s Visions and His Thorn</p> <p>1 I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. 3 And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— 4 and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. 5 On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— 6 though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. 7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, [a] a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave 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 of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.</p>			

First Love

Lesson 22

2 Corinthians 12:1-13:14

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Footnotes: a: 2 Corinthians 12:7 <i>Or hears from me, even because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations. So to keep me from becoming conceited</i>			
Summary: 			
2 Corinthians 12:11-21 Concern for the Corinthian Church 11 I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. 12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works. 13 For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong! 14 Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. 15 I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? 16 But granting that I myself did not burden you, I was crafty, you say, and got the better of you by deceit. 17 Did I take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you? 18 I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?			

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2 Corinthians 12:1-13:14

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<p>19 Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved. 20 For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish—that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. 21 I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.</p>			
<p>Summary:</p>			
<p>2 Corinthians 13:1-14</p> <p>Final Warnings</p> <p>1 This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 2 I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them— 3 since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. 4 For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.</p> <p>5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus</p>			

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2 Corinthians 12:1-13:14

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<p>Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! 6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. 7 But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. 8 For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for. 10 For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.</p> <p>Final Greetings</p> <p>11 Finally, brothers,[a] rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another,[b] agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. 13 All the saints greet you.</p> <p>14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.</p>			
<p>Footnotes:</p> <p>a: 2 Corinthians 13:11 Or <i>brothers and sisters</i></p> <p>b: 2 Corinthians 13:11 Or <i>listen to my appeal</i></p>			
<p>Summary:</p>			

Carrying Our Burdens into the Arms of Christ

“My burden carries me.” We usually think of the difficulty of carrying our burdens. In reality, as Christians, our burdens carry us right into the open arms of Christ by showing us that we are not self-sufficient. Consider these verses. Which one speaks to you this week?

Psalm 18:1-3

I love you, O Lord, my strength. **2** The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. **3** I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

Romans 5:3-5

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Ephesians 3:16-19

16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19** and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Hebrews 4:15-16

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Space for Grace

Consider one of the following prompts to further reflect upon this lesson, or follow where the Spirit leads.

- Tell about a time when you felt you had a “thorn in the flesh”. How did God use it to manifest His grace and power for His glory and for your good?
- Instead of drifting along and taking your faith for granted, reflect on ways you examine yourself spiritually.

Prayer Requests
