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Notes from David Powell and Justin Reed.

I. Chapters 1 & 2 – Paul’s Triumphant Ministry

- a. Salutation 1-2
 - i. Paul claimed authorship and apostleship by the Will of God.
 - ii. Timothy – “a brother in Christ”
 - iii. Members of the church called saints
- b. Doxology of Praise 3-11 Paul praised God on accounts:
 - i. Because He is God, 3, Eph. 1:3, I Pet. 1:3
 - ii. Because He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 3
 - iii. Because He is the Father of all mercies, 3
To the Jewish mind, phrase “father of” means “originator of”
 - iv. Because He is the God of all comfort, 3
Comfort: Key word – Greek – “Called to one’s side to help.” Verb – 18x, Noun – 11x.
- c. The Way God Comforts Christians in Trials 4-11
 - i. Comforts in all our trials, 4.
Interestingly, there are 10 basic words for “suffering” in Greek, Paul used 5 in II Cor.
 - ii. God trains us through our trials to comfort others, 4-7
 - iii. God is in control of our trials, 8
 - iv. God enables us to bear our trials, 9 “He is able but we must be available.”
 - v. God delivers us from our trials, 10
 - vi. God is glorified through our trials, 11
 - vii. Example of Paul, 8-11. In Asia under a sentence of death. He trusted God to deliver him and He did, 9-11. Prayer is critical in overcoming trials, 11, Js. 1:1-12. Many in Corinth had prayed for Paul.
- d. Spiritual Resources to Handle Trials 1:12-2:17
 - i. Spiritual resources Paul used: clear conscience, 1:12-24; a compassionate heart, 2:1-11; a conquering faith, 2:12-17
 - ii. Paul’s remarks analyzed further, 1:12-2:17
 1. Paul’s clear conscience was based on at least five facts, 12-24
Note: “Why were the Corinthians accusing Paul of deception and carelessness? Because he had changed his travel plans. Paul initially

desired to make two visits to Corinth that that church might have 'a second benefit' (15). On his way to Macedonia from Ephesus and on his way from Macedonia to Jerusalem were the intended visits (16). Paul changed his plans to spare the church "sorrow" (1:23-2:1-4). Instead of a visit, he opted for a letter." (p. 71)

- a. He was sincere, 12. He did not "peddle the Word of God" (2:17). He did not make travels lightly; he made them carefully and prayerfully.
 - b. He lived in light of the return of Jesus, 14.
 - c. He was serious about doing the Will of God, 15-18; I Cor. 16:7
 - d. He sought to glorify Jesus, 19-20. According to Paul, Silas and Timothy helped him preach in Corinth, 19.
 - e. He was "Anointed" by God and "sealed" with the Holy Spirit, 21-24, Gal. 5:22-23. The Holy Spirit is the Christian's "seal" (guarantee, earnest) that he belongs to Jesus and he has been claimed by Him, 22, Eph. 1:13-14.
2. Paul's compassionate heart was evident by the following proof: 2:1-11. Note: "Who was the man accused of causing Paul a great deal of pain? Two major possibilities: (1) the incestuous man of I Cor. 5 or (2) someone who had publicly challenged Paul's apostolic authority in the Corinthian church, II Cor. 12:14-13:1. How Paul dealt with their situation proved the compassion of his heart for others." (p. 71)
- a. He put others first, 1-4. One reason for changing travel plans.
 - b. He sought to help others grow in Christ, 5-6.
 - c. He forgave the man who caused him great disappointment and encouraged the church to do the same on their account, 7-11.
3. Paul possessed a conquering faith, 12-16.
- a. Paul was confident that God had forgiven him, 12-13. At Troas, the Lord presented Paul with an opportunity to preach the Gospel, 12. Because he did not find Titus there, he left for Macedonia, 13. He did not avail himself of this opportunity; Paul was not perfect.
 - b. Paul was confident that God was leading him, 14. The analogy Paul recalled was the "Roman Triumph Parade," Rome's special tribute to her conquering generals and armies.
 - c. Paul was confident that God was using him as he led him, 14-16. "Paul continued his analogy by recalling the burning of incense by the priests during the parade. The odor affected different people in different ways. Using this image, Paul pictured the Christian ministry. He pictured Christians as incense, giving forth the fragrance of Jesus in their lives and labors (14). To God, Christians were the very fragrance of Jesus (15). To their fellow Christians, they were the fragrance of life (16). To unbelievers, Christians were the fragrance of death (16)." (p. 72)

2. Chapter 3 – Paul’s Glorious Ministry

- a. Regarding Letters of Recommendation, 1-6a
 - i. One reason for the false allegations against Paul was his lack of a letter of recommendation, 1
 - ii. Paul’s critics analyzed: probably Judiazers (Jewish Christians who legalistically held onto the Law of Moses and attempted to make it binding for Christians). They peddled a “counterfeit” gospel, religious racketeers. Judiazers boasted they carried letters of recommendation from important persons and churches/ They said Paul didn’t have one, 1.
 - iii. Paul’s defense: 2-6 He needed no credentials from church leaders. Corinthian church was a “living epistle” and they were his letter of recommendation.
 - iv. Paul did not prohibit sending letters of recommendation to churches – see Philemon, I Cor. 16:10, II Cor. 8:23
- b. New Covenant is More Glorious than Old Covenant, 6b-18
 - i. God made Paul a minister of the new covenant, 6b. Old covenant is described as “the letter;” new covenant as “the spirit.” Note: the “ministry of death” killed and not the old law or covenant.
 - ii. Paul did not deny the glory of the old covenant, 7.
 - iii. In arguing from the lesser to the greater, Paul affirmed that the glory of the new covenant was better, 7-13. Why?
 1. Old covenant written on stone, new covenant engraved upon the heart, 7, Jer. 31:27-34, Ezek. 11:14-21, Heb. 8:10-13.
 2. Old covenant was glorious but new covenant was exceedingly glorious, 8, 10
 3. Glory of old covenant was fading while glory of new covenant is increasing, 7, 13, cf. Ex. 34:29-35
 4. Ministration of old covenant condemned while new covenant produces life, 6, 9
 5. Old covenant was abolished while new covenant is eternal, 11, 13
 - iv. Paul affirmed that boldness characterized his proclamation of the new covenant, 13. Courage was one distinguishing mark of a new testament preacher – Ac. 4:13, 29, 31
 - v. Paul interpreted the veiled face of Moses as an attempt by Moses to conceal from the Israelites the fading nature of the glory which accompanied the establishment of the old covenant at Mt. Sinai, 113, Ex. 24:29-35
 - vi. Paul taught that in the veiling of Moses’ face there was an analogy of the veil which laid presently over the minds of many of his Jewish brethren and particularly the Judiazers in Corinth when they read and interpreted the old covenant, 4-15, Mt. 13:13-17, Rm. 9:1-3
 - vii. Paul assured his readers the veil was taken away in Christ, 16. How?
 1. Turning to the Lord, 16
 2. Hiding nothing from him, 18
 3. Looking intently into the Word of God, 18

- viii. Mirror, a symbol of the Word of God, Js. 1:22-25. As we look into the mirror, we are changed – transfigured, Mt. 17, Mk. 9 – an outside change that comes from the inside – metamorphosis.

3. Chapters 4 & 5 – Paul’s Sincere Ministry

a. What Paul Possessed in Jesus, 4:1-5:8

- i. A glorious ministry, 1-6. The way a Christian looked at his ministry determined how he would fulfill it. Paul’s positive outlook resulted in the following positive outcomes:

1. Prevented him from being a quitter!
2. Prevented him from being a deceiver, 2-4
Note: the god of this world is Satan, 4, and he even uses religious people to deceive (“veil”) other people, 4, 3:14-16, Rm. 11:25
3. Prevented him from being a promoter of self, 5-6

Note what Paul refused:

- a. To trust in himself, 1:9
- b. To commend himself, 3:1-5
- c. To preach himself, 4:5

4. What did Paul preach? Jesus Christ, 5

- ii. A valuable treasure, 7-12. Paul used the analogy of the ordinary and familiar clay vessel to illustrate he was a simple vessel of clay. He also uses the tabernacle.

1. The apostles were afflicted (physically) in every way but not crushed (spiritually), 8-9
2. They also carried about “in the body the dying of Jesus” or were “constantly delivered over to death for Jesus,” 10-11

- iii. A confident faith, 13-18. Quotes from Ps. 116, cf. 20:9. Paul was confident of ultimate victory in his ministry because of the resurrection, 14

1. Though the physical man was dying daily, the spiritual man was getting stronger daily, 16
2. Paul’s trials were preparing him for Heaven, 17
3. Key was to focus on spiritual, not physical, 18. Confident Heaven is real.

- iv. A Future Hope, 5:1-8. Analogy of the “building of God” used here by Paul was a reference to the resurrection, glorified body (a body suitable for Heaven, I Cor. 15:35-54) and not the Christian’s Heavenly home promised in John 14:1-6. Why the tent analogy? (Paul was a tentmaker.)

1. A tent was a weak, temporary structure, without much beauty; glorified body Christians will receive will be eternal, beautiful, and never show signs of weakness or decay (see Phil. 3:20-21).
2. “Dissolved” conveyed the idea of a tent “being taken down.” Greek meaning for death (II Tim. 4:6) is “to take down one’s tent and to move on.”

- v. Not groaning because he was human but because he longed to be with Jesus and possess a body that won’t decay, 2-4. Not afraid of death, Phil. 1:21.

1. Once more, the Holy Spirit was regarded as the “guarantee” NIV, “earnest” KJV, or “pledge” NASV, of the Christian’s glorified body, 5.
 2. Paul was always confident, 6-8.
 - b. The Sincere Motives for Paul’s Ministry, 9-21
 - i. To please the Lord, 9
 - ii. To be accountable to the Lord, 10-11
 1. Paul lived in light of the Judgment Day
 2. “We” 10a – judgment based on what we have or have not done.
 - iii. To maintain a clear conscience, 10b-13
 1. Critics took pride in their appearances
 2. Paul took pride in his clear conscience
 - iv. To share the love of Jesus, 14-16
 - v. To reconcile people to God through Jesus, 17-21
 1. In Christ, a “new creation,” 17
 2. In Christ, a person’s sins are not counted against him, 19. “Imputed” KJV is borrowed from the banking world – “to put to one’s account”
 - vi. To be a faithful ambassador of the Lord, 20-21
 1. Ambassador – highest representative of a foreign king or head of state
 2. The king of head of state here is Christ.
- 4. Chapters 6 & 7 – Paul’s Loving Ministry**
 - a. Intro
 - i. Summary of Ch. 1-7 & Paul’s explanation of his ministry: “Triumphant” 1-2 and “glorious” 3 ministry, proved to be “sincere” 4 and based on “faith” in God 5. He now assures them of his “love” for them 6-7.
 - ii. Quoting Isa. 49:8 – encouraged straying Corinthians to be reconciled to God “today” 1-2
 - b. The Hardships of Paul Showed His Love For The Lord & The Corinthians 6:3-13
 - i. Main objective – not to offend anyone or cause anyone to stumble, 3.
 - ii. The hardships Paul suffered as a servant of the lord proved his love for the Lord and the Corinthians, 3-10. Greek – “distress” – literally “pressed into a narrow place.”
 - iii. Consider the “tools” of Paul’s trade or ministry, 6-7: purity, knowledge, longsuffering and kindness, the Holy Spirit, unfeigned love, truth, the power of God, righteousness.
 - iv. Note the paradoxes of Paul’s ministry, 8-10.
 - c. Paul’s Appeal for Reconciliation 6:11-13
 - i. He lovingly addressed them as a father would speak to his children, 13, I Cor. 4:15.
 - ii. Paul was not withholding his love from them but they were withholding their love **from** him, 12. Paul wanted the Corinthians to judge him fairly.
 - d. Paul’s Exhortation 6:14-7:1
 - i. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to “not be unequally yoked with unbelievers” (meaning mismatched, fellowship, communion, concord, etc.), 14. Greek – concord – symphony.

- ii. Paul drew five analogies to stress the seriousness of his exhortation and to prove the incompatibility of believer and unbeliever, 14-16.
 - 1. Righteousness/Unrighteousness, 14
 - 2. Light/Darkness 14
 - 3. Jesus/Belial 15
 - 4. Belief/Unbelief 15
 - 5. God's temple/temple of idols 16
 - 6. Note: "you" is plural – local church as a whole not to the individual believer only as in I Cor. 6:19-20.
- iii. "Belial" is another name for Satan, 15, Deut. 13:13. It may mean "beliar or the worthless one."
- iv. Possible interpretations of "be not unequally yoked together"
 - 1. Marriage of a believer to an unbeliever, I Cor. 7:12-13
 - 2. A warning forbidding partnership in pagan practices, I Cor. 10:14-22
 - 3. Prohibiting of entering into business with an unbeliever.
 - 4. Solution: "Any relationship, whether in marriage, business or any other occasion, which interferes with one's duty to God is condemned here and from such all children of God are to remove themselves." Guy N. Woods
- v. The basis of Paul's exhortation was that Christians were the temple of God, 16. Quotes Ex. 29:45 to show that wherever God dwells is the true temple of God.
- vi. Paul concluded to holiness in life by encouraging the Corinthians to cleanse themselves from anything that contaminated body and soul. Holiness was perfected by fearing or respecting the Lord.
 - 1. Paul references Lev. 26:12, Ezek. 37:26-28, Zech. 8:8, Isa. 52:11, Ez. 20:34, Jer. 32:38, II Sam. 7:14, 7:8.
 - 2. One of the major demands of God in Scripture is holiness, 7:1.
- e. Paul's Forgiveness 7:2-16
 - i. Paul's meeting with Titus in Macedonia was recalled, 2-7.
 - 1. What began in 2:3 was broken off in order to defend the divine nature, integrity, and providence of his ministry (2:14-7:1).
 - 2. Characteristics of Paul's earlier visit to Corinth, 2: wronged, corrupted, defrauded no man.
 - 3. Macedonia – 5 – no rest, troubled on every side, fighting without and fears within.
 - 4. How did God comfort Paul at Macedonia? 6-7: by the coming of Titus (6) & positive responses of the Corinthians (7).
 - ii. The Corinthian's response to the "severe letter" is reiterated, 8-16.
 - 1. Paul regretted the "pain" caused by the letter. However, he did not regret the response it evoked, 8-9. An example of "tough love?"
 - 2. The "severe letter" led to "godliness" and repentance on the part of the Corinthian church, 10.
 - a. Godly sorrow leads to repentance which may ultimately lead to salvation.

- b. "Worldly sorrow" is merely remorse which ultimately leads to death. Remember Judas and Peter, Mt. 27:1-10, Ac. 1:15-26.
3. Note the fruits of repentance catalogued by the Apostle, 11, Mt. 3:8: complete forgiveness, righteous indignation, holy fear, hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Mt. 5:6), zeal for the work of the Lord, and avenging negative influences.
4. Paul concluded this section by affirming three confidences: 12-16
 - a. Both Paul and the church have been exonerated of any wrong doing, 12.
 - b. Titus had been graciously and respectfully received, fulfilling the wishes of Paul, 13-15.
 - c. The church will continue to strive to do what is right in the sight of God, 16.

5. Chapters 8 & 9 – The Grace of Giving

- a. Intro
 - i. One of the major objectives of Paul's third missionary journey was the taking up of a special "relief offering" for poor Christians in Jerusalem.
 - ii. Why so important? It would assist in meeting the material needs of the Jerusalem Christians. It would strengthen the unity between the Jewish and Gentile churches, Rm. 15:15-28, and it would silence Paul's critics who accused the Apostle of being an enemy of the Jews or Moses, Ac. 20:1, Gal. 2:6-10.
 - iii. Unfortunately, the Corinthians who had promised to contribute to the gift were not doing their part. As a matter of fact, an entire year had been wasted, 8:10.
 - iv. What were the reasons for not honoring their pledge to help? The low spiritual level of the church. "When a church is not spiritual, it is not generous." The invasion of false teachers who had siphoned off as much money as they could, 11:7-12:20, 12:14.
 - v. To persuade the Corinthians to participate. Paul taught them that giving was an act of grace.
- b. The Example of the Macedonian Churches 8:1-5
 - i. Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were at least 3 Macedonian churches known by Paul.
 - ii. The example of the Macedonian churches:
 1. They gave even though under "a great trial of affliction," 2
 2. They gave even though they were in "deep poverty," 2. The Greek word used here describes a beggar who has absolutely nothing and who has no hope of getting anything.
 3. They gave liberally, 2. They remind us of the paradox in Paul's ministry: "...poor, yet making many rich." (6:10)
 4. They gave willingly, 3. Needed no prompting or reminding as the Corinthians did. In fact, they begged to be included, 4. This was the only sense in which they were beggars!
 5. They first gave themselves to the service of the Lord and others, 5, Gal. 1:4, 2:20. "It is impossible to love God and ignore the needs of others."

- iii. Paul challenged the Corinthians to: follow the example of the Macedonian churches (1-5), to fulfill their power to contribute to the relief aid (6), to prove their sincerity (8), to prove their love (24), and to prove his confidence in them (24).
- iv. Jesus is the perfect example of giving, 9, Phil. 2:5-8. "rich" – preincarnate state in Heaven. Jesus was "rich" yet He came to Earth. "Poor" – incarnate on Earth or His humanity. He was "poor and yet He gave. Why? That we might be rich. Since this was true, how could the Corinthians refuse to give to others?
- v. Regarding the contribution, Paul was "careful" in the following areas:
 - 1. He was careful that the Corinthians understood that he was not "ordering" them to give, 8.
 - 2. He wanted the Corinthians to understand that there was a difference between "promise" and "performance" and "willing" and "doing," 10-12, Phil. 2:12-13.
 - 3. He was careful that the Corinthians realized that God was more concerned about the "heart" than the "gift," 12. "God sees not the portion, but the proportion."
 - 4. He desired that the Corinthians understood they were not alone in this effort of helping the Judean Christians, 13-15. Paul saw an "equality" in the contribution, 14. The lesson is this: gather what you need, share with others what you can, and don't try to hoard God's blessings.
 - 5. Paul wanted the Corinthians to understand that the men selected to handle the money were worthy to handle this task, 16-24.
 - a. Titus was mentioned because he had done such a good job in Corinth, 6. He possessed a good heart, 16. Paul didn't have to draft Titus for this work; he desired in his heart to assist in the gathering of this special gift. He was a good team player, 23-24.
 - b. The "brother" mentioned in verses 18-19 might have been Luke. He possessed a love for souls, 18. He was chosen by the churches to carry the gift, 19. He, along with others, sought to glorify God with his ministry, 19.
 - c. "Our brother" was probably one of the many people who often traveled with Paul, 22-23. He was responsible, 22. He was chosen by the church to carry the gift, 23. He was enthusiastic, 22.
 - 6. Paul urged the Corinthians "to show" all these brethren "the proof" of their love for the Lord as well as others, Jn. 14:15, I Jn. 3:13.
- c. God Prizes Cheerful Givers 9:1-15
 - i. Paul had boasted of the Corinthian's generosity. As Paul writes II Cor., he has turned the tables and uses the example of the Macedonian church to encourage the Corinthian church to fulfill its promise to give generously to the relief efforts, 1-2.
 - ii. Paul stresses the importance of "planning" in our giving, 3, I Cor. 16:1-2. Paul was sending a few men ahead of him to make sure their gift was ready, so it

- would be a real gift and not look like the people had to give under pressure at the last minute (“as a matter of bounty, not as of covetousness”), 5.
- iii. Our giving should be generously done and not grudgingly given.
 - iv. Note the principles of giving as stressed by Paul, 6-7: generosity, purpose, and joy. “Cheerful” is “Hilarion” (“hilarious”) in the Greek.
 - v. Remember that the law of “sowing and reaping” applies to giving as well as living, 8, Gal. 6:7-8. We reap in measure as we sow, Prov. 11:28, Lk. 6:38, Phil. 4:10-20.
 - vi. A Christian’s attitude in giving is more important than the amount he/she contributes, 7. God has always loved a cheerful giver, Mk. 12:41-44. According to this standard, the giving of the Macedonian churches was hard to beat.
 - vii. According to v. 10, Paul reminds us that God gives us resources to use and to invest for Him, Mt. 25:12-30. Paul uses the example of planting to explain that the resources God gives us are not to be hidden, foolishly devoured, or carelessly thrown away, but cultivated in order to produce more crops. You cannot out give God!
 - viii. In verses 12-14, Paul stresses the spiritual rewards for those who gave generously to God’s work. Eccl. 11:1
 - ix. God gave generously, purposefully, and cheerfully when He gave His only begotten Son, Jn. 3:16.
 - x. A summary of the blessings of giving generously, purposefully, and cheerfully to the Lord’s cause:
 1. Our giving encourages others to give, 1-5.
 2. Our giving blesses us, 6-11.
 3. Our giving will meet our needs, 12.
 4. Our giving will glorify God, 13.
 5. Our giving will unite God’s people, 14-15.

6. Chapters 10-13: Paul Defends His Ministry

- a. As a Warrior: Attacking the Opponent 10:1-18 “the weapons of our warfare” 4
 - i. Paul’s opponents questioned the validity of his authority. From 7:8-16 we know that the majority of Corinthian believers sided with Paul. However, a minority continued to slander him saying that he was bold in his letters but had no authority in person, 10. Chapters 10-13 are Paul’s response to this charge. Chapters 1-9 Paul is calm and serene, chapters 10-13 he becomes harsh and polemical. Note the criticism Paul suffered: these charges are degrading:
 1. Not a polished speaker, 10:10, 11:6
 2. Did not charge for his speaking, 11:7-9
 3. Not a true apostle like Peter and the others, 11, I Cor. 7:15, II Cor. 12:12
 4. He changed his travel plans, 1:17-2:4
 - ii. Paul responded to his critics “in the meekness” and gentleness exemplified by Jesus, Mt. 11:28-30, cf. Num. 12:3. Meekness is not a sign of weakness. Paul refused to respond to his critics the way a person of the world would respond, 1-4. Paul was in the world but not of the world, 3. The false teacher lives by the standard of the world and not the Bible, 2.

- iii. Paul's "weapons" against his enemies were spiritual (prayer, faith, hope, love, God's Word, etc., Eph. 6:18), not "carnal," 4. These "weapons" enable the man of God to tear down the "strong holds" (schemes, Eph. 6:11) of Satan, 5-6. "Imaginations" refer to "speculation" or "human arguments against God." Only God's word or methods can pull down these barriers.
 - iv. These spiritual weapons also enable the child of God to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 5, MT. 15:10-20, Prov. 4:23, 23:7. The heart of the matter has always been a matter of heart.
 - v. "To revenge all disobedience" points to the fact that error will be punished by God and therefore must be confronted, 6.
 - vi. Regarding the folly of judging someone solely on his/her outward appearance, see I Sam. 16:7, Jn. 7:24, Rm. 2:28-29.
 - vii. Paul possessed Apostolic authority but he used it carefully, 7-8. As a matter of fact, he used it to "edify" the church and not to "destroy" it.
 - viii. Paul assures the people that he will be as "bold" and "courageous" in person when he arrive-s as he is now in his letter, 11, 12:20. Do they really want to see this side of Paul? I Cor. 4:18-20.
 - ix. Paul criticized the false teachers on at least two major fronts, 12-18:
 - 1. They measured themselves by themselves instead of by an objective standard like the Word, which Paul measured himself by, 12-14. Paul said this practice of the false teachers was not wise, 12.
 - 2. They commended themselves, 12.
 - 3. They "boasted" (bragged) as if Paul's labor among the Corinthians was their own, 14-18.
 - 4. Paul was honest and refused to take credit for another man's work, 15-16. He actually commended the work of others in the Lord, I Cor. 3:11-23.
 - x. Paul attributed the turmoil in the Corinthian church to the lack of mature faith on the part of the members, 15. "When your faith is increased" indicates faith must continue to grow. When it ceases to grow, problems certainly arise.
 - xi. Paul's only boast or brag was in the Lord, 17. What really mattered was commendation of God not man, including these "super apostles," 18.
- b. As a Spiritual Father: Protecting the Church 11:1-15 "...for I have espoused (promised) you to one husband" 2
- i. "In my folly" refers to Paul's request for the Corinthians to allow him to speak "like a fool," 1. After all, they had permitted the "super apostles" the same courtesy, 4.
 - ii. Verse 2 could be translated thus, "I am anxious that your love should be for Christ alone, just as a pure maiden saves her love for one man only." There is a "godly jealousy," Ex. 20:5, Hosea.
 - iii. As Satan "beguiled" Eve in the beginning, so now many in the Corinthian church have been misled by the "subtlety" of these false teachers, 3, Gen. 3:1-12. "Simplicity" denotes the "purity of devotion" necessary to follow Jesus.

- iv. The following objectional doctrines characterized the preaching of these “super apostles,” 4: “Another Jesus,” “a different Spirit” – not the Holy Spirit, and “a different Gospel,” cf. Gal. 1:6-8, different plan of salvation.
 - v. In v. 5, Paul labels these false teachers “false apostles.” Really “pseudo apostles” Greek – transform – to disguise, to masquerade.
 - vi. Paul’s generosity toward the church at Corinth proved the sincerity of his love for them, 7-12. Paul labored as a tentmaker, Ac. 18:1-3. Paul uses irony in v. 8 when he said “he robbed (took from) other churches” (probably Macedonian churches, Phil. 4:20) so he would not have to “rob them.” On the other hand, “super apostles” were guilty of peddling the Gospel for personal benefit.
- c. As a Fool: Boasting of Suffering 11:16-12:10 “receive me as a fool” 16
- i. Paul presents 3 proofs of the honesty of his love for the church at Corinth:
 - 1. His religious jealousy over the church, 1-6.
 - 2. His generosity to the church, 7-12.
 - 3. His anxiety for the church, 16-33. V. 28 is key; they all didn’t appreciate his sacrifices for them.
 - ii. Before Paul recounted his trials, he felt it necessary to explain why he was “boasting,” 16-17.
 - 1. Remember that Paul admitted he purposefully spoke as a fool, 1.
 - 2. The immature and unspiritual attitude of some of the Corinthians forced Paul to write about himself, see Pr. 26:5.
 - 3. He had to do it to prove his love for them and to protect them from those who would lead them astray.
 - iii. V. 20 – Paul lists the ways these “super apostles” had taken advantage of the church:
 - 1. Bondage – taught doctrine of legalism that was contrary to the Gospel
 - 2. Devour – they “ate up” all they could get
 - 3. Take of you – “took the Corinthians in, fooled them”
 - 4. Exalt – exalted themselves
 - 5. Smite you – verbally attacked them, “slapped them in the face publicly”
 - iv. Consider what Paul endured for the cause of Christ and the cause of the Lord’s church everywhere, 25-33:
 - 1. Far more labors – 23 – trips to preach in various provinces
 - 2. Far more imprisonments – 23, Ac. 16:22-30
 - 3. Beaten times without number – 23, Ac. 16:23
 - 4. Often in danger of death – 23, Ac. 14:18
 - 5. 5x received 39 stripes – 24 – 40 was the limit, Deut. 25:3
 - 6. 3x beaten with rods – 25, Ac. 16:22 – Roman punishment administered to Paul unknowingly and illegally (Paul was a Roman citizen).
 - 7. Stoned once – 25, Ac. 14:19
 - 8. 3x shipwrecked, day & night in the deep – 25, Ac. 27:4-44 records a 4th endured after writing II Cor.
 - 9. In dangers – 26
 - 10. Been in hardship – 27

11. Daily pressure for all the churches – 28
12. When the brethren in these churches were “led into sin” or “weak,” he was so concerned that it was as if he was weak – 29, I Cor. 8:9, 9:22.
13. An example: 32-33
 - a. Took place in Damascus, Syria, about 39AD or just months after his conversion.
 - b. Jews (now saw Paul as a traitor) pressed the governor under “Aretas the king” (he served as king of the Nabatean Arabs from 9BC to 39AD) to kill Paul, Ac. 9:23-26.
 - c. The governor was guarding the city gates in order to capture Paul.
 - d. Damascus was a walled city, probably containing 6-10 gates (Edwards)
 - e. Christians befriended Paul and saved his life when they “let him down in a basket” through a window in their home located in the wall of the city.
 - f. Paul was made to feel “weak” and in danger.
- v. In Ch. 12, Paul continues “boasting” because it is necessary; he feels “compelled” to do so, 12:1.
- vi. Paul now speaks of his “visions” (a specific type of revelation), 1. Revelation – “revealing, uncovering” of knowledge previously unknown but revealed through God’s power, Ac. 9:19, 18:9, 23:11, 27:23 are revelations to Paul.
 1. “I knew a man” is a reference to himself, 2, Jn. 21:20. One more indication of his humility. “In Christ” is a reference to being a Christian, Rm. 6:3-7.
 2. “14 years ago” – 14 years ago he had this vision probably at Troas, Ac. 11:25
 3. The experience was so moving that Paul was not sure if he was “in the spirit” or “in the body.” Paul implies that either is possible. “This means the real person can exist outside the body which contradicts the Jehovah Witness’ theory that says the total person is made up of only body and breath (they endeavor to prove this from Gen. 2:7). Was it just Paul’s breath that was called up? Obviously, that is not the case.” (Edwards)
 4. Paul says he was “caught up into the third heaven,” 4. Jews taught 3 heavens: first – where birds fly; second – where stars are; third – where God dwells. The purpose of this visit was probably to strengthen and encourage Paul.
 5. Paul could have “boasted” in this vision and others. But, he chose to “boast” about his weakness – the negative side – his thorn in the flesh, 5-7. Reason for the thorn: “to keep him from exalting himself.” Satan seeks to use this opportunity to cause Paul great discomfort (remember Job). However, God will use it for a positive purpose.

6. What was the thorn? Many possibilities: epilepsy, malaria, attacks of depression, the suffering of constant persecutions, the agony caused by his memory of how he once persecuted the church, etc. poor eyesight may be the best and most logical answer, Ac. 22:11, 9:18, Gal. 4:13-15, 6:11. This may explain why Paul employed an amanuensis to write his letters.
 7. God reminded Paul that his strength is “perfected” by his “weakness,” 9. Remember Moses, Job, Gideon, etc. therefore Paul boasted in his weakness because then the power of Christ worked through him. Paul made his adversity stepping stones to success in Christ.
- d. As an Apostle: Exercising Loving Authority 12:11-13:10 “for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles” 12:11
- i. Paul should have been commended by the Corinthians because he was indeed an apostle, 11, Ac. 2:22, Heb. 2:1-4.
 - ii. God’s “signs, wonders, and mighty deeds” worked through him proved Paul’s apostleship, 12.
 - iii. Paul had cost the church nothing financially, 3.
 - iv. In spite of the difficulties in Corinth, Paul had been faithful to visit them; now he was about to make his 3rd visit, 14, 13:1, Ac. 18:1, II Cor. 2:1-4. Paul continued not “to be a burden” to them financially. Paul was their parent – father, I Cor. 4:15-21 – spiritually speaking they were his children.
 - v. Paul’s deep love for the Corinthians is evident in his promise that “he would most gladly spend” and “be expended” to save their souls, 15.
 - vi. The “super apostles” accused Paul of being “crafty” (deceptive) with his financial policy and his associates, 16. Paul affirms that none of them took advantage of the Corinthians, 17-18. Important to practice what they preach.
 - vii. Calling God and Jesus at witnesses, Paul declared that he had boasted in these last few verses not to “defend” himself but to “edify” the Corinthians, 19. Note: dearly beloved.
 - viii. Paul addressed his fear that when he visited for the 3rd time he would be made “sorrowful” again like his last visit, 20-21, 2:1. “Such as I would” indicates the repentance Paul hoped to find in the Corinthians. Debates – quarreling, envying – jealousy, strifes – factions, whisperings – gossip, swellings – arrogance, tumults – disorder, lasciviousness – unbridled lust – are all works of the flesh, Gal. 5:19-21. Unless they listened to Paul’s words and repent, Paul would be “humbled” – ashamed – and would be forced to be stern – “bewail” – with the impenitent Christians.
 - ix. Paul began Ch. 13 by continuing warning of the “super apostles” and all those who followed them by saying that “every word” would be established by 2 or 3 witnesses, Deut. 19:15, Mt. 18:15-16. Paul warned that this visit will be like the “second time” if they refused to repent, 2.
 - x. Nevertheless, if the Corinthians needed further proof of “Christ speaking in Paul,” when he arrived he would “powerfully” remove all doubt. He would be “mighty” in the “power of God” when he came the 3rd time, 3. The example

used to illustrate this point is Jesus Christ, 4. The world said the cross revealed Jesus' weaknesses, I Cor. 1:23; on the other hand, His resurrection should clearly demonstrate the power of God. The same power worked through Paul.

- x. Paul demanded that the erring Corinthians "examine themselves," 5-6. How? Through the Word, I Jn. 4:1. For what purposes?
 - 1. To determine if they are in the faith – or – to see if Jesus Christ is on you.
 - 2. To prove they are not reprobates (counterfeit, hypocrites, literally "those who have failed the test of faithfulness).
 - 3. To come to realize the Paul and his co-workers are not reprobates.
- xii. Paul prayed for 3 things as he began to close II Cor., 7-9.
 - 1. That erring Christians would do what is right – repent.
 - 2. They might be "perfect" (complete, whole, mature, etc. spiritually), Wish – KJV – Pray, 9.
- xiii. Paul culminates his warning began at 13:1 by reminding his erring brethren that he possessed from God the necessary "authority" to discipline them, 10. He did not want to use it.
- e. Final Remarks 13:11-14
 - i. Paul concluded his letter with a series of admonitions for his brethren, 11.
 - 1. Farewell – probably better translated "rejoice."
 - 2. Be perfect – to be made complete by the Word.
 - 3. Be of good comfort – be comforted, 1:3-4.
 - 4. Be of one mind – be like-minded, I Cor. 1:10.
 - 5. Live in peace, Mt. 5:9, Heb. 12:14. Reward: the "God of love and peace" will be with you, Rm. 15:33, Phil. 4:9.
 - ii. Holy kiss greeting once more promoted by Paul as hopefully an encouragement to the congregation – including the erring ones – to do what is right, 13.
 - iii. Paul again refers to the Christians as saints, 13. Here Christians in Macedonia, probably Philippi, where Paul wrote II Cor.
 - iv. Paul closes his great polemical letter by recalling the Trinity & 3 wishes for his brethren, 14.
 - 1. Grace of the Lord Jesus
 - 2. Love (agape) of God (Father)
 - 3. Communion (fellowship) of the Holy Spirit
 - v. "Did the minority ever repent and reunite with the majority and repair its relationship with Paul? We don't know for sure but possibly it did. At least about three years later (in 58 AD) when Paul wrote Romans from Corinth he says nothing of the difficulties there. This is not a certain conclusion but seems to carry some weight. However, about four decades later (in 95 AD) the uninspired letter called I Clement indicated the Corinthian church was in great turmoil again. In fact, the congregation had deposed its leaders. (Edwards)