

2 Corinthians: Chapters 12-13

Opening Question: What is Paul's final warning to the Corinthian church at the end of his letter?

Key Takeaways:

1. Paul is referring to himself in chapter 12 when he discusses the experience of being caught up into Paradise.
2. Paul is referencing Deuteronomy 10:14 "the heaven, heavens of heavens" or the presence of the Lord, when he describes "the third heaven."
3. The "we and us" group in this letter is Paul, Timothy, and Titus.
4. The "you" group in this letter is the believing Corinthians.
5. Paul wants the Corinthians to share in his theology and desires and not in the theology and desires of the antagonists.
6. The antagonists in this letter are unbelieving Jews who are accusing Paul of being a false teacher and who wrongly boast in their physical well-being as blessing from God.
7. The problem facing the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians is different from the problem they faced in 1 Corinthians.

Discussion Questions:

1. What was the situation that caused Paul to write this letter? Together recap each chapter of 2 Corinthians and discuss how each part contributes to Paul's message and argument.
2. How do 1 and 2 Corinthians fit together? What was Paul's history with the Corinthians and what was his hope for this church?
3. Identify language and concepts that Paul repeats in both of his letters to the Corinthians. How does understanding Paul's consistent use in both letters of the terms he chose aid you in understanding Paul's argument for his letter?

Practical Application:

1. Reread 2 Corinthians and explain Paul's reason for writing this letter to his original audience.
2. What things have you learned about 2 Corinthians from this study? In what ways, if any, has this study challenged your earlier understanding of this letter?
3. How do 1 and 2 Corinthians fit together? How do both of these letters fit into the larger context of the story of the Bible?

Closing Prayer:

Father, We are grateful to You for Your servant Paul and his willingness to suffer persecution at every turn so that the gospel would go forth. May we hold in high regard the apostles who faithfully wrote their eyewitness accounts of Your Son so that we might believe in Him. May we be fortified and stand firm in our own times for the sake of the gospel. Amen.