

Joyful Life Bible Studies

II CORINTHIANS 1:12-24


Lesson 3

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. In response to your study last week of II Corinthians 1:1-11, share a thought, phrase or verse that especially ministered to you.

2. Have you ever been misunderstood or misjudged by people you love? Paul experienced this when some of the people in the church at Corinth became critical of him. They accused him of being fickle and unreliable simply because he changed his plans to visit them. This week we will discover practical principles for resolving conflict and establishing trust in our relationships with other believers. We will also be blessed through our study of what the Lord has done for us. Read II Corinthians 1:12-24 and record a verse that stands out to you today.

3. Prayerful study of God's Word is indispensable for Christian growth. Begin your verse by verse study of II Corinthians 1:12-24 with prayer asking the Lord to open your understanding. Ask Him also to help you apply what you learn to your life. Write your prayer here.

*Open my eyes,
that I may see glimpses of truth
Thou hast for me.
-selected *

SECOND DAY: Read II Corinthians 1:12-14

1. Spiritual opposition against Paul and those ministering with him had surfaced in Corinth. This undermined Paul's character and apostolic authority within the church. The problem was so serious Paul was compelled to answer his critics. Read II Corinthians 1:12. With a sense of *rejoicing* and a clear *conscience* Paul could point to the time they were among the Corinthian believers. In your own words describe the *conversation* (behavior) of Paul and his companions. Use other versions to help you with your answer if you desire.

a. According to this verse how were they able to live this kind of life?

b. Read Acts 24:16. What was Paul's desire and commitment concerning his *conscience*?

(1.) How is Paul an example for you?

2. Paul assured these believers he did not have a hidden agenda in his communication with them. Notice this from II Corinthians 1:13a NLT: *My letters have been straightforward, and there is nothing written between the lines . . .* Choose one word to describe this kind of openness.

a. What guidelines for communication do you see in this for us today?

3. Sense Paul's attitude as you read II Corinthians 1:14 from the New English Bible: *Partial as your present knowledge of us is, you will, I hope, come to understand fully that you have as much reason to be proud of us, as we of you, on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ.* How should this have helped disarm his accusers?

4. How would II Corinthians 1:13,14 help resolve conflict among believers?

a. What additional help does Philippians 2:1-4 provide?

THIRD DAY: Read II Corinthians 1:15-18

1. In today's study of II Corinthians 1:15-18 we will observe Paul's attempt to resolve the misunderstanding concerning his plan to visit the church at Corinth. He was accused of being unreliable because he said he would come at a certain time and did not. II Corinthians 1:15,16 reveals Paul's original intention to visit, but his plans changed. In II Corinthians 1:17 the accusations against Paul are exposed by his two rhetorical questions. Observe this from the Amplified version of verse 17: *Now because I changed my original plan, was I being unstable and capricious? Or what I plan, do I plan according to the flesh (like a worldly man), ready to say Yes, yes, (when it may mean) No, no?* Record Paul's firm answer to these accusations from II Corinthians 1:18.

2. Paul needed to respond to the charges made against him. He wrote to clarify any misunderstanding between them. Why do you think he did this?
 - a. Why is it important for Christians to establish and maintain a loving, trusting relationship with one another?

3. Consider II Corinthians 1:18 NKJV: *But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No.* As a means of defense Paul directed them to an aspect of God's character. The Corinthian believers could trust God to keep His promises and they could trust Paul to keep his. Although his visit was delayed, Paul did return to Corinth. What does this reveal about Paul?

FOURTH DAY: Read II Corinthians 1:19-22

1. Read II Corinthians 1:19,20 concentrating on what these verses reveal about Jesus. Record key phrases about Him from these verses.
 - a. What speaks to you the most from these two verses?

 - b. Use verse 19 to identify Paul's companions in ministry.

2. *For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Him* (II Corinthians 1:20a NLT). Verse 20b NIV reads: *And so through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Amen means so let it be. An Amen declares a firm belief in God's ability and power to do whatever He has promised or planned. Our Amen also affirms our agreement and cooperation with Him as our God. Choose and record a promise from the Bible to share with your group and let them offer a joyful Amen to the glory of God.*

3. Read II Corinthians 1:21,22. Selah! These verses hold a treasury of riches describing God's extraordinary blessings for every believer. Rejoice as you list what God has done for you!

Optional: Give a brief definition for each of these.

4. What does it mean to you to know that God has:
 - a. *established* you

 - b. *anointed* you

 - c. *sealed* you

 - d. given you the *earnest of the Spirit*

5. In response to God's love and grace, write a sentence expressing your thanksgiving and praise.

FIFTH DAY: Read II Corinthians 1:23,24

1. Chapter One of II Corinthians closes with Paul's explanation for not going to Corinth as he had intended. What reason did he give? Answer from II Corinthians 1:23b. (The next chapter of II Corinthians will provide additional understanding concerning this.)
 - a. The phrase *to spare you* might have seemed too strong and authoritative. How did Paul soften this in II Corinthians 1:24a?
 - (1.) What does I Peter 5:3 add to this?

2. Paul was committed to build an even greater relationship of love and trust with these believers. His approach was to work with them for their growth and joy. From II Corinthians 1:24 describe this?
 - a. Focus on the phrase *helpers of your joy*. If you experience conflict with another believer, how could you be a helper of their joy? Be specific.

 - b. Suggest other ways you can be a *helper of joy* to another believer.

3. Read the following translation of II Corinthians 1:23,24. What link do you see between *joy* and *faith*?

*Now I call upon God as my witness that I am telling the truth.
The reason I didn't return to Corinth was to spare you from a severe rebuke.
But that does not mean we want to tell you exactly how to put your faith into practice.
We want to work together with you so you will be full of joy as you stand firm in your faith.
II Corinthians 1:23,24 NLT*

SIXTH DAY: Review II Corinthians 1:12-24

1. With the study of II Corinthians 1:12-24 fresh in your mind, write a comment about the following phrases:
 - a. *godly sincerity* (verse 12)
 - b. *by the grace of God* (verse 12)
 - c. *God is true/faithful* (verse 18)
 - d. *all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen* (verse 20)
 - e. *helpers of your joy* (verse 24)
2. Recall one or two practical principles from II Corinthians 1:12-24 that will help resolve conflicts and establish trust in our relationships with other believers.
3. If you were asked to write a title for II Corinthians 1:12-24 what would it be?
4. Choose a verse from this lesson to meditate on and memorize if possible. Write it here.

Amen!