

2 Corinthians

Cracked Pots and Crazy Love

Week Seven

Do you have friends you know so well that you can finish their sentences for them? You've spent so much time with them over the years, talked and listened, and shared life together, that you know how they think. You know what they mean, even when other people don't. You share inside jokes and sometimes talk to each other in a kind of private shorthand conversation that you have to explain to others. It takes time to develop that kind of intimacy, but it's so rich, isn't it?

*In a way, Bible Study is like that. The more of the Bible we know...the more time we've spent listening to God in different contexts, the better we know how He thinks and understand what He means. On the other hand, if we try to understand what God means based on one passage (or even one book) we'll be at a disadvantage. The Bible is God's Word—His letter to us. All of it. We understand what He says best when we consider all that He has said. In other words, if we encounter something that we don't understand in our Bible Study, we can often find an explanation by in another part of the Bible. Bible Scholars call this tool **Comparison**. We are letting Scripture Interpret Scripture—clearer passages explain confusing ones. The good news is we have a number of ways to find those other passages (called cross references) even if we don't know where they are on our own. Here are three:*

- *Many Bibles include cross references (sometimes labeled "cf") in the margin of the text.*
- *You can often find a concordance in the back of your Bible. This is like a glossary, and lists the important passages that use a particular word.*
- *Websites like biblegateway.com and blueletterbible.org have keyword search functions that let us find every verse that uses a particular word or set of words. (A caution, this option can yield so many passages that we're overwhelmed with "too much" information.)*

Week Seven Homework

Observe (What Do I SEE?)

Pray...Read...Mark up the passage...List one observation per verse.

2 Corinthians 10:1-11:15 (NIV)

Observations

¹ By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” when away! ² I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. ³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

⁷ You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he. ⁸ For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it. ⁹ I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my

letters. ¹⁰ For some say, "His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing." ¹¹ Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

¹² We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. ¹³ We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you. ¹⁴ We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. ¹⁵ Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, ¹⁶ so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory. ¹⁷ But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." ¹⁸ For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

2 Corinthians 11

¹ I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness; but you are already doing that. ² I am jealous for you

with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. ³ But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ⁴ For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough. ⁵ But I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles." ⁶ I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way.

⁷ Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? ⁸ I robbed other churches by receiving support from them so as to serve you. ⁹ And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. ¹⁰ As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. ¹¹ Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! ¹² And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about.

¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

“Lump and Label” ...Go back over the passage and look for 2-4 “lumps” of content that each express one idea. Give each “lump” a “label.” Try to make your labels as brief as possible.

<i>Lump (verses)</i>	<i>Label</i>

List any questions you have about this passage.

Use Cross References to gain insight...Use one of these methods to find other passages that may further explain a word or phrase from our focus passage.

- Cross references are often listed in the margins of your Bible's text.
- Concordances are found at the back of many Bibles and list passages that use a particular word.
- Websites like biblegateway.com and blueletterbible.org allow us to search for every occurrence of a given word, or set of words.

Record what you find.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to record their findings from the cross-referencing process.

Apply (How Does it WORK?)

Make it practical. Now that you have spent some time looking in detail at God's Word, don't stop! Ask yourself, "How does this work...in general...and for ME?" You may find it helpful to look for...

S—a SIN to avoid

P—a PROMISE to claim

E—an EXAMPLE to follow

C—a COMMAND to obey

K—KNOWLEDGE of God to believe

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