

Spending Time with Jesus in 2 Corinthians Chapter 2-3

Invite Jesus to speak to you as you read this week.

1st: read I or II Corinthians (read the one you didn't read last week) all the way through, the whole book, imagining you are Paul saying this to the church in Corinth. To help you remember and ENJOY what you are reading, read out loud for at least 15 minutes each time (longer would be even better.)

2nd: read 2 Corinthians chapters 2 & 3 by themselves to remember what it is about.

3rd: read 2 Corinthians chapters 2 & 3 again and write down what stands out to you.

What do you notice?

1)

2)

3)

Third read through, answer questions as you go:

2 Corinthians 2:1-4

Paul is still explaining to the Corinthians how his travel plans changed. In 1:23 he said that it was in order to spare the Corinthians that he did not return to them when he'd planned to. What would the visit have been like if he had? _____ (2 Cor 2:1)

What did Paul do instead? He _____ to them (2:3).

Why was Paul confident that all of the Corinthians would share his joy? Because he wrote to them out of _____ and

_____ of _____ and

with _____ (2:4)

When would a person feel great distress?

When would a person feel anguish of heart?

When would a person shed many tears?

Why does Paul tell them he felt all of the above as he wrote them? So that they would know the depth of his _____. Do you remember other times Paul has talked about this? If so, where? _____ How important is love to Paul? _____

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

We know from this that someone in the church was doing something wrong and did not repent until the whole church did what Paul instructed in I Cor. 6: "Expel the wicked person from among you." But now this person has repented (changed their mind about what they were doing). Praise God!

What does verse 6 mean?

What does Paul tell the Corinthian church to do now? (2:7-8)

How has Paul forgiven anyone they have forgiven? In the _____ of _____ (2:10).

Why? For _____ sake...in order that _____ (2:10-11)

What does it mean to be outwitted?

Why is it important to be aware of Satan's schemes?

What scheme of Satan does Paul point out in this passage?

2 Corinthians 2:12-17

SO...now Paul goes back to explaining how his travel plans were changed. Instead of getting on a boat to head to Corinth, he heads to _____ to look for _____ but doesn't find him. How does Paul seem to feel about this? _____

So he heads to _____ (the northern half of what we call Greece.) Paul had started churches in 3 cities in this region that we studied in kids' quizzing. List any you remember: _____

Again, Paul uses this word picture of being led as captives in a procession. Do you remember in what book and chapter Paul uses this word picture before? _____

What does God use these captives to spread (2:14)? The _____ of the _____ of him...

Where? _____

When the Romans had a triumphant procession, their priests would burn a lot of incense all along the way. For the victors, this was a great smell of celebration. For the prisoners of war, this smell would make them think of death because they would pay for siding with the losing army.

Who is God honoring in this triumphant procession? _____ (2:14) These processions were for those who were victorious in battle. Who/what did Christ defeat? _____

Paul is using this as yet another word picture to explain his role as a servant of Christ. He is pointing out how those in the procession would smell like that incense. Everywhere they go, people will smell it on them and will automatically react to it. How they react to that aroma depends on if they want to serve and follow Christ (which means submitting to his lordship over them because he bought them with the price of his own blood) OR if they want to join with those who rebel against Jesus.

For whom does the aroma of the knowledge of Christ bring life?

For whom does the aroma of the knowledge of Christ bring death?

Does Paul seem to think he is worthy to carry this aroma? _____ Is it his to sell? _____

Are you picking up a theme about Paul, money and the Corinthians? If so, what is it? _____

What is the opposite of making money by using the word of God? (2:17) “On the contrary, _____”

“

2 Corinthians 3:1-6

What do you remember about letters of recommendation (introduction) from what we talked about in I Corinthians 16?

What does Paul mean that the Corinthians are a letter of recommendation to others about his credibility and the credibility of his ministry? How would everyone “read” them?

Who writes the “letter”, showing that God is at work transforming the Corinthians’ lives (3:3)? In other words, who is actually at work to change them?

What Old Testament story comes to mind when Paul says, “tablets of stone”? _____

Did Paul remind us of this on purpose?

What does competent mean?

What does new covenant mean? Who switched it from the old covenant to the new covenant? When?

What does it mean that God made Paul competent as a minister of the new covenant?

What does it mean that the new covenant is of the Spirit?

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Read Exodus 34:29-35. This was after the golden calf judgment, when Moses went back up Mt. Sinai for 40 days and nights to receive the second copy of the ten commandments. What did being in God's glory do to Moses' face?

What does "glorious" mean?

How was the old covenant glorious? (Think back to Exodus. How was that first covenant God invited them into so glorious...how did it make it possible for the Israelites to have a deep loyal relationship with God?)

Fill in the chart below to see how Paul describes the old and new covenants in 3 different ways.

| in verse(s) | Paul describes OLD covenant as: | Paul describes NEW covenant as: |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2 Cor 3:7-8 | ministry that brought _____ | ministry of the _____ |
| 2 Cor 3:9 | ministry that brought _____ | ministry that brings _____ |
| 2 Cor 3:11 | what was _____ | that which _____ |

How is the new covenant even more glorious than the old covenant?

When Paul talks about a veil over a person's heart, it blinds them. Jump to 4:3-4. Where does that veil come from?

What is the only way it can be taken away? (3:16 tells us when)

What happens as we, who have unveiled faces, contemplate the Lord's glory?

What are we being transformed into? Does this make you think of an important Old Testament story? If so, why would this be so important?