

**Adult  
Bible Study  
in  
Simplified  
English**



**Teaching  
Guide**



# 2 Corinthians

*TAKING MINISTRY PERSONALLY*

**Bob  
Coder**

BAPTISTWAY PRESS  
Dallas, Texas

# **ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH**

## **Teaching Guide**

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### **2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally**

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# Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The teaching guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

**Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.**

## About the writer

*Bob Coder wrote all thirteen lessons of the teaching procedures for this study. He and his wife, Lenora, live in Allen, Texas, and are members of the First Baptist Church of Richardson. After taking early retirement, Bob and Lenora served more than four years on the mission field in London and Zimbabwe. Bob has previously written numerous lessons and teaching procedures for youth as well as for this Adult Bible Study in Basic English curriculum, and has been involved in teaching English as a second language. The Coders have four children and twelve grandchildren.*

# Suggestions for Teaching

## General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word Study before beginning the study. Provide page (see resources) for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

## Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

## Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide Study Sheets for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite verse until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the verse.
6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

## Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story). You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story
  - Focus on fluency, not just accuracy
  - Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar
  - Minimal error-correction as students tell the story
2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead cell.

## Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:
  - An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.
  - Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

## Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to

give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student’s turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)

8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).

9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

**Lesson Expansion**

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)
- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every n<sup>th</sup> word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- Ask students to write the story in their own words.

**Bible passage as content for reading**

*Procedure:*

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write

both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

**Checklist for Successful Classrooms**

*Right Kind of Input*

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
  - Realia or authentic materials
  - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
  - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
  - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

*Low Anxiety Environment*

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

*Checklist for Real-Life Interaction*

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known
7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 1: God Helps When You Suffer

### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to consider Paul’s approach to suffering as a way to comfort one another in times of trouble today. God comforts Christians when things go wrong for them.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 1:1-11

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 1:1-11 & Matthew 6:9-13

### Memory Verse

“As we have suffered much for Christ and have shared in His pain, we also share His great comfort”  
(2 Corinthians 1:5)

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### Connect with Life

1. Write the word: *suffer* on the left side of the chalkboard and the word: *comfort* on the right side. Ask class members to tell you what the two words mean. Use their responses or suggest simple definitions and write them under the words; for example:

<u>suffer</u>	<u>comfort</u>
to feel pain	to ease pain
to hurt	to make you feel better
to experience hardship	to help when you suffer
to have troubles	to give strength in times of trouble

2. Refer to the lesson title and comment that this lesson is about suffering, especially suffering because one is a Christian, and how Christians comfort one another when they suffer.

### Guide the Study

3. Identify 2 Corinthians as the book on which the Bible study is based for the study theme, “Taking

Ministry Personally”. Direct class members to look at the study introduction on page 3 and unit introduction on page 5 of the study guide.

4. Provide information about the city of Corinth and the First Century church there, as follows:

— The City. Corinth was a large city located on a narrow strip of land between two large land areas of Greece, with seaports on both the east and west sides of the city. Goods received into one seaport were transported across the land strip to the seaport on the other side. Thus, ships did not have to sail the longer route around the southern tip of Greece where dangerous storms in the open sea were a threat. The people of Corinth were widely known for their worship of false gods and their sex sins (immorality).

— The Church. Paul started the church in Corinth on his second missionary trip and remained there for 18 months. The believers did not all meet together in a church building as we do today, but met as small groups in different parts of the city. After Paul left, some false teachers came to Corinth and claimed that they were missionaries. They spoke against Paul, and said that he was not a real missionary. The Christians began to listen to these false teachers and believe what they said. The church began to divide into groups and have troubles.

Explain that Paul heard about the problems in the church and wrote the letter of 2 Corinthians to remind the Corinthians of certain facts: (1) it was he who first told them about Jesus and started the church, (2) he was a missionary chosen by God to preach to people who were not Jews, (3) he spoke, not for himself, but for God, (4) he had suffered much because he was a missionary, and (5) his suffering was so that believers could be saved from the punishment of sin.

5. Read 2 Corinthians 1:1-2 from the Bible text in the study guide. Compare the form of Paul’s letter to one written today, and remind the students that

Paul's letters were written on leather or rough, heavy paper rolled into a scroll and hand carried by a traveler to its destination. Also, mention that verse 2 includes both "loving-favor" (grace), the usual greeting of the Greeks and Romans, and "peace," the usual greeting of the Jews. See the section titled, "Nothing is better than loving-favor and peace," for additional comments on loving-favor (grace) and peace.

6. Request a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 from the Bible text. Note that the word "comfort" is used seven times in these verses. On the chalkboard, summarize Paul's way of thinking in the passage, as follows:

— As Christians, we sometimes suffer because of our faith. (verse 4a)

— When we suffer, we share in the pain of Jesus. (verse 5a)

— God gives comfort to those who suffer because of their faith. (verse 3b)

— Christians give comfort to other Christians who suffer. (verses 4b-7)

7. Read 1 Corinthians 1:8-11 from the Bible text as class members follow in the study guide. Comment that these verses tell how Paul faced a time when he thought for sure he would die, but that God somehow helped him live through the frightening troubles. State that, through this experience, Paul learned that when we suffer we should not trust in ourselves but in God who is able to raise even the dead. Use the study guide section, "Prayer makes all the difference," for additional comments. Refer especially to the second paragraph and verse 11, and note that Paul was certain it was the prayers of the Corinthians and other believers that comforted and helped him through his great suffering.

### Encourage Application

8. Refer to the "Things to Think About" in the study guide and encourage class members to take a minute or two to silently answer the questions.

9. Question class members as to how Paul's ideas about suffering can help us in our daily lives. If necessary, recall the summary of Paul's way of thinking in Step 6 above. Call attention to the

"Memory Verse," and allow someone to read it. Then look again at 1:3. Remark that we always have God's loving-favor (grace) and comfort to help us in times of trouble. Add that our prayers for others and their prayers for us will help us to comfort one another through times of suffering.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **A Letter from Paul** - Enlist someone to act as a post office delivery person and enter the classroom, greet you, hand you several items from the "mail bag," then leave the room. Pretend to sort through the mail, set the bills aside to pay later, trash the junk mail, etc., as you would do with a normal day's mail. Then announce: *Oh, here's a letter! It's from Paul! Let me read some of it to you.* Then proceed with Steps 5, 3, and 4 from above, in that order.

### Guide the Study

1. **Map Study** - Use a large map of ancient Greece (Achaia), or draw a simple map on the chalkboard, to illustrate the strategic location of Corinth. Refer to the map for Step 4 above or at other times when you mention the city.

2. Direct class members to look at the "Word List" in the study guide. Read each word and ask class members to pronounce it after you. Let a volunteer read each word and its definition, then clarify the meaning as needed.

### Encourage Application

1. **Model Prayer** - In the third paragraph under the section, "Prayer makes all the difference," mention is made of the Lord's Prayer (see Matthew 6:9-13). Read the entire prayer and describe it as an example of how to pray. Or, follow the lesson writer's comments on verse 13 about praying for delivery from sin ("Do not let us be tempted, but keep us from sin" in the New Life Version of the Bible, verse 13a). Emphasize the point that your prayers for other Christians and their prayers for you will help to keep you and them from sin.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 2: When Friendships Are Broken

### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to think about how they deal with broken friendships. We are to think and act in a Christian manner when friendships with other believers are broken.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 1:12-2:11

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 1:12-2:11

### Memory Verse

“God is the One Who makes our faith strong in Christ. He has set us apart for Himself.”  
(2 Corinthians 1:21)

### Connect with Life

1. Hold up your left and right forefingers three or four inches apart. Wiggle the left one slightly and say: *friend*. Then wiggle the right one and repeat: *friend*. Hold up a rubber band and identify it as: *love*. Place the rubber band between your two forefingers and pull it taut. Tug outward to stretch the rubber band slightly, then relax it to the taut position again three or four times in quick succession. Comment that this is the way a friendship works—two people held together by love. Gradually stretch the rubber band to an extended length and exclaim: *Uh, oh! This friendship is about to break*.

2. Refer to the lesson title and explain that today the class will talk about when friendships are stretched or made weak so that the friendship is about to break. Describe how this lesson relates to the study theme, especially as to how it deals with Paul’s troubled friendship with the Christians in the city of Corinth.

### Guide the Study

3. Direct class members to look at the “Word List” in the study guide. Read each word and ask class members to pronounce it after you. Let a volunteer read each word and its definition, then clarify the meaning as needed.

4. Recall from Lesson One how some false teachers came to Corinth after Paul left the city and how they began to say bad things about Paul. Describe how they caused trouble between the Corinthians and Paul, and how Paul wrote the letter of 2 Corinthians to try and make things right between them.

Comment that we don’t know all of the troubles between Paul and the Corinthians, but we do know that their friendship was hurting because of these troubles. State that Paul was willing to forgive and make things right, but that he needed to help the Corinthians want to make their friendship strong again. Suggest that the way Paul tried to make things right with the Corinthians can help us mend broken friendships today.

5. Invite the class to look with you at the Bible text to find seven rules for mending broken friendships. Either write on the chalkboard or display poster board strips of the rules **as they are identified** to create this list:

#### **Rules for Mending Broken Friendships**

- Always be honest with pure desires (2 Cor. 1:12).
- Write or talk openly and clearly (2 Cor. 1:15-20).
- Be guided by God’s Spirit to think and act like Christ (2 Cor. 1:21-22).
- Do things for the right reasons (2 Cor. 1:23).
- Work together and do not try to be boss (2 Cor. 1:24).
- Think about the feelings of others (2 Cor. 2:1-4).
- Be willing to forgive (2 Cor. 2:5-11).

6. Alternate reading of the Bible text listed below between class members, co-workers, and yourself. Then write or display the rule, and comment after each reading, as follows:



Bible Text

Teacher Comments or Action

- 2 Cor. 1:12-14 — (Rule 1) *What Paul said, what he wrote, and the way he lived were all the same. His honesty and pure desires came from God’s loving-kindness (grace), not from human wisdom.*
- 2 Cor. 1:15-20 — (Rule 2) *When Paul told the Corinthians he was coming, he said, “...if the Lord permits” (1 Cor. 16-7), so that he wanted to come, but it was not a sure thing. Thus, he did not break his word when he decided not to come at that time.*
- 2 Cor. 1:21-22 — (Rule 3) Read or put into your own words the last paragraph of “God changes our plans” in the study guide.
- 2 Cor. 1:23-24 — (Rule 4) Refer to the first few lines of “Thinking about what is best” in the study guide to explain why Paul changed his mind.
- (Rule 5) Emphasize the idea of teamwork suggested by verse 24 rather than one person wanting to be boss.
- 2 Cor. 2:1-4 — (Rule 6) *Paul didn’t want bad feelings between him and the Corinthians when he visited, so he decided to wait to visit until it could be a happy time for everyone.*
- 2 Cor. 2:5-11 — (Rule 7) Instruct class members to read the study-guide section, “Getting right with each other.” silently.

7. Involve three or four class members, one at a time, in reading aloud the “Memory Verse.” Then encourage anyone who can do so to say the verse from memory.

**Encourage Application**

8. Make the statement: *Good friends keep on being friends.* Comment that friendships are important and we should try to keep them strong. Ask class members to think of someone with whom they have

a broken or hurting friendship. Review the seven rules for mending broken friendships, and urge the group to consider how these could help them with any troubled friendships they have.

**Supplemental Teaching Ideas**  
**Connect with Life**

1. Make the statement: *Good friends keep on being friends.* Comment that friendships are important and we should try to keep them strong. Ask class members to think of someone with whom they have a broken or hurting friendship. Review the seven rules for mending broken friendships, and urge the group to consider how these could help them with any troubled friendships they have.

**2. Friendships** - Enlist two or three persons to take part in a demonstration of friendships. Direct the participants to first act out a **good** friendship, and then a **broken** friendship. Encourage them to greet one another, shake hands, or hug one another to show that they have a good friendship. Then instruct them to act angry, turn their backs to one another, and fold their arms across their chests to picture a broken friendship. With the demonstration complete, continue with Step 2 above of the teaching procedure.

**Guide the Study**

1. **Read and Report** - (Alternate for Steps 4 and 5) Divide the class into three groups:

**Group 1.** 2 Corinthians 1:12-22 and the study-guide section, “God changes our plans.”

**Group 2.** 2 Corinthians 1:23-2:4 and the study-guide section, “Thinking about what is best.”

**Group 3.** 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 and the study-guide section, “Getting right with each other.”

Direct each group to first read the Bible text assigned and then the study-guide section. Encourage each person to read to the rest of the group part of the Bible text or a paragraph from the study guide. If possible, assign a worker to monitor each group. When all groups are through reading, ask for a volunteer from each one to tell what they learned from the reading done by their group. Comment and summarize to bring out the main points of the study.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 3: All Christians Are Ministers

### Lesson Focus

To help class members know that all Christians are God's ministers to take the Good News to people who have not trusted in Christ. All Christians serve as God's ministers to tell the Good News of Jesus Christ to others.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 2:14-3:18

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 2:14-3:18

### Memory Verse

"We speak without fear because our trust is in Christ." (2 Corinthians 3:12)

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### Connect with Life

1. Write the word: *minister* on the chalkboard. Recall that "ministry" was in the "Word List" for Lesson One, but that we will talk more about it in its shorter (root) form today. Question the class about who or what a minister is. Then ask who in your church is a minister. Use the responses to explain that the word "minister" has the meaning of servant and is one who is given the trust to speak or act in some way for a high power, usually for a government or for God. Express the fact that since all Christians have the authority to speak for God, then all Christians are ministers. Conclude that the same way of thinking (logic) helps us to know that all members of the church are ministers because they are all Christians.

### Guide the Study

2. Review from previous lessons the situation that existed between Paul and the church at Corinth:

— Some false teachers had come to Corinth after Paul left the city. They spoke against Paul. They said that he was not a good leader. They claimed he did not have letters to prove that he was a real missionary (as they claimed to do). They did not think Paul could speak well (as they were sure they did). They said that if Paul was a real missionary, he would take money for his preaching (as they were so willing to do). They also said that Paul did not keep his promises (because he changed his mind about visiting Corinth).

— Paul had sent Titus to carry a strong letter to Corinth and to bring back news of how the Corinthians felt about Paul as their leader. Titus brought back the welcome news that the church members had changed their minds. They would again honor Paul as their leader.

3. Relate that Paul was so happy because of the good news Titus brought that he broke into words of praise for the way God had worked in their ministry. Advise the class to listen to the joy of Paul's words as you read from 2 Corinthians 2: 14-3:3 in the Bible text. Express this joy as you read. Refer to verse 2:14 and state that Paul was excited about his ministry. Ask: *Are you excited about your ministry?* Remark immediately that, as Christians, we ought to be. Then request someone to read the first paragraph of "The joy of speaking for God" in the study guide. Use the last two paragraphs of that same section to comment on the rest of the passage.

4. Ask for a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 3:4-11. Note that in verse 3:5, Paul answered the question he asked at the end of verse 2:16, "Who is able for such work?" Reread verse 3:5 as the answer to that question. Call attention to verse 3:6. Explain that the false teachers were proud of their Jewish background and thought that people who were not Jews should honor the Jewish Law the same as Jews in order to be Christians. Remind the class that Paul was also a Jew and studied the Jewish Law

under one of the best teachers of the Law. Emphasize that Paul knew, however, that the New Way of Worship (God’s loving-favor, or grace), took the place of the Old Way of Worship (keeping the Law).

5. Read (or ask a worker to read) 2 Corinthians 3:12-18. Comment briefly on this passage from the section, “God’s Spirit makes us free,” in the study guide. Emphasize that it is the New Way of Worship God gave us through Christ that makes it possible for us all to be God’s ministers.

### Encourage Application

6. Request the entire class to read the “Memory Verse” together (in unison) from the study guide. Discuss what this verse means to them. Remark that Paul was speaking as a minister of God when he said this. Comment that every Christian is a minister and has the power of Christ to tell the Good News without fear to those who have not trusted in Christ.

7. Ask a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 2:14. Remark that Paul was speaking as a minister of God when he said this. Comment that every Christian is a minister and has the power of Christ to tell the Good News and be the “sweet smell” to those who have not trusted in Christ.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

1. **A Sweet Smell** - Before the class begins, set out a lightly-scented candle or incense to simulate the “sweet smell” Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16. As class members arrive and notice the aroma, simply explain that this is like the sweet smell Paul talks about in the Bible study today. Suggest that they begin reading the Bible text in their study guide to learn about this sweet smell.

### Guide the Study

1. **Paul’s Victory Parade** - Explain the “sweet smell” of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 as a reference to Roman victory parades in which the winning general paraded the captives through the streets as proof of a victory over an enemy. The Romans burned incense during the parades to represent the “sweet smell” of victory. Comment that Paul pictured Christ as the General and himself as one taken captive by Christ’s saving power.

2. Direct class members to look at the “Word List” in the study guide. Read each word and ask class members to pronounce it after you. Let a volunteer read each word and its definition, then clarify the meaning as needed.

### Encourage Application

1. **The Old and the New** - In 2 Corinthians 2:16-18, Paul talks about differences between the Old Way of Worship and the New Way of Worship. Explain to the class the differences between the two ways of worship in three ways:

- (1) The old way was written in stone (see verse 7). It was the Law which no person could keep all the time. The new way is written in people’s hearts when they trust in Christ. It gives them God’s Spirit to tell them what is right.
- (2) The old way gave punishment for those who did not keep the Law. The new way gives immediate forgiveness for sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- (3) The old way let people go to God only through the priests and gifts given on the altar in worship (sacrifices). The new way lets all Christians go directly to God and calls all believers in Christ to be God’s ministers.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 4: God Can Use Weak People

### Lesson Focus

To lead the class to identify the source of Paul's courage in ministry and to access Christ's power in their own ministries. God uses weak people to do his ministry and gives them strength and **courage** through Christ to do the job.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 4:1-15

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 4:1-15; 2 Corinthians 4:7 NIV or other version

### Memory Verse

"Through God's loving-kindness, He has given us this job to do. So we do not give up."  
(2 Corinthians 4:1)

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### Connect with Life

1. Ask class members to look at the "Memory Verse" in the study guide. Let someone read the verse to the class. Then, write on the chalkboard: *A job to do*. Underline the word: *job*, and ask: *What is a job?* Lead the class to understand that a job is simply some work you must do. Explain that you may work for a company or business and get paid for doing a job, or you may have a small job to do at home, like mowing the grass or washing dishes. Tell about a job you have to do. Then ask for two or three volunteers to tell about one they have to do.

2. Comment that some jobs are easy and some are hard to do. Remark that if a job is really hard, we often want to give up or quit and not finish the job. State that today we will learn about a hard job God gave Paul to do. Ask: *Do you think Paul gave up and quit?* Request a show of hands, first for those

who believe Paul gave up, then for the ones who think he didn't.

### Guide the Study

3. Introduce two new words not in the "Word List" in this manner:

On the chalkboard, write the word: *courage*. Look at the meaning of this word in the "Word List" as being able to have less fear in danger, pain, or trouble; being brave. Add (if appropriate): *like a soldier going into battle (or a different example)*. Write the prefix: *dis* in front of *courage* to make the new word *discourage*. Explain that to **discourage** means to take away one's **courage** or desire to do something. Then write the word: *encourage* just above *discourage*, and underline the root word: *courage*, in both words. Lead the class to understand that **encourage** has the opposite meaning of **discourage**, and means to increase or strengthen one's **courage**. Use these three words often during the session, stressing the words slightly each time.

4. Call on five different class members to read from 2 Corinthians 4, one at a time. The reading assignments are as follows: (1) verse 4:1, (2) verse 4:2, (3) verses 4:3-4, (4) verse 4:5, and (5) verse 4:6. After each person reads, comment on the verse or verses, as follows:

*Verse 1. Paul was very happy that God had given him "this job to do." What was this job? The job was for Paul to tell the Good News to people who were not Jews (Gentiles).*

*Verse 2. Paul was open and truthful in what he said. He did not try to hide anything. And he did not change the Good News in any way just to please people. Paul needed much **courage** for this job.*

*Verse 3-4. Paul knew that not everyone would listen to the Good News. He knew that Satan had made some people blind to the truth. He did this to **discourage** people from becoming*

*Christians. These people could not see the shining-greatness (glory) of Christ because Satan hid it from them. Still, Paul encouraged everyone to trust in Christ.*

*Verse 5. Paul made himself the same as a lowly slave of those to whom he preached. He did this so he could tell them about Jesus. He encouraged them to trust in Jesus.*

*Verse 6. The quote in the Bible text is from Genesis 1:3 when God made the heavens and the earth. There was nothing but darkness over the deep waters. Then God made light. The God who created light now makes it shine in the hearts of those who trust in Him. This light is the light that Christ puts into our hearts. We are encouraged when this light shines within us.*

5. Direct class members to follow in the study guide as you (or a co-worker) read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12. State that Christians are often **discouraged** because they feel weak and helpless. Note that Paul knew his body was weak, but did not let that **discourage** him, Direct class members to look back over verses 7-12, and ask them to find things that could have **discouraged** Paul. Then request someone to look back at verse 7 and tell what gave Paul the **courage** to keep his ministry going through all the troubles he had (he had the light from God, Christ, shining within him). **Note:** Be prepared with a different version of the Bible since the discussion in the study guide requires a reading of 4:7 in another version of the Bible because of extensive use of “jars of clay” which is not stated in the NLV.

6. Request that someone read 2 Corinthians 4:13-15 from the Bible text. Use the section of the study guide, “We will follow Jesus in living forever,” to comment on this passage. Mention that we will talk more about life that lasts forever in the next lesson. **Encourage** everyone to be sure and be in class for that lesson.

### Encourage Application

7. Go back to the question of Step 2 above. Ask: *Did Paul give up?* and answer emphatically: *No!* Then ask: *Do we give up?* **Encourage** class

members to be like Paul and never give up in their ministry.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **Never Give Up** - Prepare several sentence strips and display them around the classroom before the session begins. Write phrases such as: *Never say die, Keep on keeping on, Hang in there, Keep up the good work, Don't stop now, Keep on trying, Don't lose heart, and Keep going strong* on the strips. Begin the class by asking class members what the statements mean and how the statements are supposed to help people. Lead them to understand that the common idea of these phrases is: *Don't give up!* and that they are intended to **encourage** people.

### Guide the Study

1. **A Heart for Ministry** - (Alternate for Step 4) Ask one class member to read 2 Corinthians 4:1-6 from the Bible text. Then choose three other class members to each read a paragraph from the study-guide section, “We don't lose heart in tough times,” to the class. Add comments from Step 4 as you feel appropriate.

### Encourage Application

1. **Memory Verse** - Ask someone to read the Memory Verse. Then write on the chalkboard: *Paul never gave up!* Remind the students that “this job to do” Paul had been given was to take the Good News to people who were not Jews. Emphasize that he never stopped trying to do this even when he suffered, was **discouraged**, or even faced death. Repeat that: *Paul never gave up trying to tell others about Jesus.* Comment that the clear teaching in this lesson to the Corinthians and to us today is that God has given Christians “this job to do,” and Paul **encouraged** us to keep a strong desire for this ministry even when we face troubles or become **discouraged**.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 5: Our Faith Gives Us Hope Forever

### Lesson Focus

To encourage class members to live their lives in a way that will give them hope forever. Through faith in God and with the help of His Spirit, we have hope for life that lasts forever.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

### Memory Verse

“Our life is lived by faith. We do not live by what we see in front of us.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

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### Connect with Life

1. Question class members about long trips they have taken or when they have been away from home for long periods of time. Allow a few volunteers to tell about these experiences. After each story, ask the person what it felt like to come back “home.”
2. Comment that the lesson today looks at the difference between life in our present bodies and life that lasts forever (eternal life). Suggest that life in our present body is much like a trip away from home, and life that lasts forever (eternal life) will be like returning at last to the comforts of home.

### Guide the Study

3. Recall that in the previous lesson, Paul talked about the job God had given him to do. Question class members about what that job was (to take the Good News to people who were not Jews). Remind

the class how, because of the job God had given him to do, Paul said, “So we do not give up.” (2 Corinthians 4:1). Indicate that in the Bible text today, we will learn the main reason Paul did not give up. State that he did not give up because he was sure that God’s loving-favor (grace) gave him hope for life that lasts forever. Add that God also had given Paul the job of helping other people find this hope.

4. Instruct class members to look in the Bible text at 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. Read these verses aloud. Then present this chart (prepared in advance on newsprint or poster board) of how Paul looked at the two ways of life:

<u><i>This Life</i></u>	<u><i>Life that Lasts Forever</i></u>
<i>body growing weaker</i>	<i>spirit growing stronger</i>
<i>things now</i>	<i>things to come</i>
<i>little troubles</i>	<i>great things</i>
<i>short time</i>	<i>forever</i>
<i>things that can be seen</i>	<i>things that cannot be seen</i>

Suggest that this shows how Paul felt about the troubles we have in this life; that is, they are small and not important because of the hope that we as Christians have for the future.

5. Let a class member read 2 Corinthians 5:1-5. Comment that we do not like to think about dying. But offer that the thought of having a new body that will last forever makes us feel better. Use the last two paragraphs of “Hope in spite of hurts” in the study guide to relate how the Christian should take joy in this life, but look ahead to life that lasts forever.
6. Ask the question: *If you had the choice right now, would you keep on living in this world or would you go to be with the Lord in heaven?* Advise class members to think about the question but not to answer. Then request someone to read 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 to the class. After the reading, ask if Paul’s words in these verses change their answer to the above question.

7. Instruct class members to read over the study-guide section, “Looking to heaven,” especially the third paragraph. Allow a minute or two, and then open up a time for questions and answers about the lesson.

## Encourage Application

8. Instruct the class to look back at 2 Corinthians 5:4 in the middle of the Bible text. Reread that verse. Comment that most Christians think a lot like Paul. Explain that sometimes we are happy and feel good and really enjoy this life. Say that we also sometimes get sick, or our bodies hurt, or we get tired or feel sad. Lament that, when that happens, we are ready to live in our new bodies, we are ready for that body that lasts forever. Ask someone to read verse 9 again. Emphasize that wherever we are, on earth or in heaven, we should try to please God in all that we do. Conclude that we want to be ready for that day when we stand before God and “He says who is guilty or not guilty.” (verse 10)

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **Hope Forever.** Speak directly to one class member. Address the person by name, and say: *I want to go to heaven. Can you tell me how to get there?* Without waiting, turn to someone else, call them by name and ask: *How long is forever?* Speak to a third person by name and ask: *How can we get nice new bodies to replace these weak bodies we have now?* Advise the class that we are going to talk about these things in the class today.

## Guide the Study

1. **Keeping Strong.** (Alternate procedure for Step 4) Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 from the Bible text. Comment that Christians often feel sad because their bodies are weak, things go wrong, or people

disappoint them. Note that Paul had these same troubles, but didn’t give up. Question the class about what things they see in these three verses that would help them be strong and faithful to Christ.

## Encourage Application

1. **Faith.** On the chalkboard, draw a short line near the left edge of the board. Indicate that this is our life on earth—very short. Place a distinct dot (period) at the end of the line and say: *life on earth ends*. Then draw a continuous line from the left edge of the board to the right edge. Explain that this is life that lasts forever. Comment that: *We can live our life on earth... (point to the short line, then continue: and die (press the chalk on the period to emphasize die)*. Then point to the long line and say: *Or we can put our trust in Christ and have life that lasts forever*. Refer to 2 Corinthians 5:7 (the Memory Verse) in the Bible text and remark that Paul said, “Our life is lived by faith.” Conclude that by living the life of faith, we have God’s promise of life that lasts forever. State to the class that you encourage each one of them to live a life of faith that will give them that hope.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 6: Motivated to Ministry

### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to think about what will motivate them to act as God’s ministers. What God has done for us in Christ should motivate us to minister in His name.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

### Memory Verse

“For if a man belongs to Christ, he is a new person. The old life is gone. New life has begun.”  
2 Corinthians 5:17

### Connect with Life

1. Ask: *What does it take to get you motivated?* Hold up a ten or twenty-dollar bill, ask: *Would this motivate you?* Refer to the definition of motivate under the “Word List” in the study guide and lead them to understand that to be motivated is to be made to want to do something, or to be **encouraged** to do a thing.
2. Involve class members in naming ways people can be motivated other than by money; for example, in school (to please parents, to be smart, or to be able to find a job later); at work (to please the boss, to be successful, or to get a better job); at home (to have a happy family, to help each other, or to show your love.)
3. Observe that the title of this lesson is “Motivated to Minister.” Mention that we have talked about some of the ways we are motivated in life and that we will now learn from Paul how to be motivated to minister.

### Guide the Study

4. Advise the class that you would like for them to help you identify some of the ways Paul was motivated to minister. Write at the top of the chalkboard: *Paul was motivated to minister because...*

5. Instruct the class to look at the Bible text in the study guide. Explain that it will be read in two parts, and that after each part is read, you will ask them to help you complete the list on the chalkboard. Let one class member read 2 Corinthians 5:11-15, then encourage the class to find ways Paul was motivated to minister (reasons he wanted to do God’s work) in these five verses. Suggest that they also look for reasons in the study guide under “God’s love moves us.” (Some ways Paul was motivated are suggested in the sample chart under Step 6 below, although your list may look entirely different.)

6. Continue the activity by allowing another class member to read 2 Corinthians 5:16-18 from the Bible text. Again, encourage class members to find ways suggested in these three verses by which Paul was motivated to minister. Some motivating factors are listed by verse in the chart below as possibilities:

<i>Paul was motivated to minister because...</i>	
<u>Reason</u>	<u>Verse</u>
<i>He feared God</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>He cared what was in people’s hearts</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>He wanted people to trust in Christ</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>He had the love of Christ</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>He knew that Christ died for <u>all</u> people</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>He was sorry for his past sins</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>He had a new way of looking at life</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>He had been called by God to tell the</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Good News</i>	

7. Reread the last sentence of verse 18 and recount how God gave Paul “the work of bringing others to



Him” (as told in Acts 9:1-16). Remark that, because of this call, Paul knew he had the ministry that God had given him, and he was motivated to do it. Then read 2 Corinthians 5:19-21 from the Bible text. Comment that, in these verses, Paul told the Good News (Gospel) in just a few words. Also tell how he as Christ’s missionary felt the need to tell the Good News to others.

## Encourage Application

1. Comment that ministry is not easy and that, if we are to succeed, we must be motivated (refer to the chart created in Steps 6 and 7 above) for some of the same reasons Paul was motivated. Recall that at the beginning of the session you asked: *What does it take to get you motivated?* Suggest that we change the question now to: *What will motivate you to minister, to do the work God calls you to do?* Encourage class members to think about that question this week.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. **Motivation.** Question different class members by asking questions such as: *Why do you eat? Why do you go to work? or Why do you comb your hair?* However the person answers, turn the response into a statement using the word “motivate.” For example: *You eat because you are motivated by hunger, You go to work because you are motivated by the need for money, or You comb your hair because you are motivated by the desire to look nice.* After three or four such exchanges, refer to the use of the word “motivated” in the lesson title. Then review the definitions of this and other words in the “Word List” section of the study guide.

## Guide the Study

1. **Study and Report.** (Alternate teaching plan for Steps 4-7) Divide the class into four small groups with these written assignments:

*Group 1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-13 and the first two paragraphs of “God’s love moves us” in the study guide. Be ready to tell (1) what “the fear of God” means, and (2) why Paul said he was making himself sound important and talking crazy.*

*Group 2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 and the last paragraph of “God’s love moves us” in the study guide. Be ready to tell (1) what Paul said motivated him to be a missionary, (2) why Christ died, and (3) who Christ died for.*

*Group 3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-18 and the first three paragraphs of “With Christ, we are new and different” in the study guide. Be ready to tell (1) what happens to a person who belongs to Christ, and (2) what the work is of those who follow Christ.*

*Group 4. Read 2 Corinthians 5: 19-21 and the last five paragraphs of “With Christ, we are new and different” in the study guide. Be ready to tell (1) what God was working through Christ to do, (2) what Paul said people must do to come to God, and (3) how we are made right with God.*

Allow 10-12 minutes study time, then call for reports from each group in group-number order.

## Encourage Application

1. **Personal Motivation.** Write on the chalkboard or repeat two or three times the statement: *What God has done for me should motivate me to do something for God.* State that God allowed His Son to die on the cross to pay for our sins. Affirm that if God did that for me and you, then we for sure should be **motivated** to do something in return for Him. Recall the lesson title, and encourage class members to be **motivated to minister** for God in the name of Jesus Christ.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree Lesson 7: Open Up Your Heart

### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to look at Paul as an example of honesty and truth for Christians to follow. Personal example and honest relationships are the right way to do ministry.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 6:1-13; 7:2-4

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 6:1-7:4

### Memory Verse

“We are full of sorrow and yet we are always happy. We are poor and yet we make many people rich. We have nothing and yet we have everything.”  
(2 Corinthians 6:10)

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### Connect with Life

1. Involve class members in a discussion of what it means to be a good example to others. Mention such persons as a parent, teacher, boss, or pastor of a church. Suggest that they think of someone they know who is a good example, a leader or person others might want to be more like. Lead them to identify some of the things (qualities) that make that person a good example for others to follow, such as being honest, truthful, fair, kind, helpful, etc.
2. Comment that we have been studying about the missionary, Paul, and his ministry to the Corinthians. State that today we will look at the kind of example Paul became to the Corinthian church and still is to people today.

### Guide the Study

3. Read 2 Corinthians 6:1-3 aloud, as usual urging the students to follow the Bible text in the study guide as you read. Pause briefly after the first sentence to explain that “we” at the beginning of this verse means Paul, and possibly Timothy, Titus, and other co-workers, and perhaps even the Corinthians, but that all Christians need to be “working together with God” to do His work. Explain that God puts the desire to be saved in a person’s heart, but that one of His ministers must help the person know how to be saved. Conclude, then, that the minister is working together with God to help that person be saved.
4. Continue reading verses 1-3, stressing the last part of verse 2. Observe that Paul wrote this letter to Corinthians who were already Christians. Suggest that (1) He thought some of them may not really have been saved, or (2) he was telling them to put all of their trust in God and give their lives fully to Him. To use this as an evangelistic opportunity for those who are not Christians, ask: *Why did Paul say now ‘is the day to be saved?’* Follow immediately with the question: *Why not wait until tomorrow, or next week, or a year from now, or why not wait until you are old and wise?* Pause for any responses, then add your own emphasis that no sinner knows for sure that he or she will have the opportunity to be saved from the punishment of sin even as soon as tomorrow! Quote Isaiah 55:6: *“Look for the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near.”*
5. Ask a class member to read 2 Corinthians 6:4-10 from the Bible text. Comment that Paul told about three types of pressures he had suffered. Let three class members each read about one of these pressures from the study guide, in paragraphs three, four, and five of “Having everything while owning

nothing.” After the readings, offer the thought that Paul was not asking for praise or honor from the Corinthians, but that he simply wanted to remind his friends of how hard it had been on him to minister to them.

6. Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-13 to the class. Summarize briefly to say that (1) Paul was open and honest with the Corinthians, (2) it was them, not himself, who was being “unfriendly,” and (3) the only pay he wanted was that they open their hearts to him with friendships and love.

7. Indicate that Paul now began to soften his words and to ask the Corinthians to make things right between them. Ask class members to listen to the care and love in Paul’s words as you read 2 Corinthians 7:2-4 from the Bible text. After a short pause, summarize Paul’s words: *Open your hearts to me. Let me back into your lives. I have done nothing to hurt you. We are friends, so let’s act like friends.* Refer to the lesson title and add that what Paul was saying was: *Open up your heart.*

### Encourage Application

1. Ask for a volunteer to tell in a few words how Paul described his ministry to the Corinthian Christians, using the Bible text if needed. Allow other class members to add information if time permits. Comment that Paul lived more than 2,000 years ago, and ask how his example first helped the Corinthians, then how it still helps Christians today.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **God’s Missionary** - Ask the question: *Why do you think God chose Paul to be His missionary to the people who were not Jews?* Affirm positively any responses, and add to them as needed to bring out that Paul was both a Jew and a Roman citizen by birth, had perhaps the best education in Jewish Law possible at that time, was already a leader as a young man, and stood up for what he believed in.

### Guide the Study

1. **Synonyms** - Write these words on the chalkboard: *faithful, real, true, honest, sincere, pure, genuine.* Comment that all of these words could be used to describe Paul and his ministry. Ask if anyone knows the meaning of one or more of the words. State that all of them have **about** the same meaning, so that if you know any one of the words, you have some idea of what each of the other words means. To illustrate the basic idea of the words, use an open space on the chalkboard to draw a long, straight line. Explain that this line will help them understand the meaning of all seven words; that is, to be *faithful, real, true, etc.*, is to go straight or follow a straight line. Draw a short, wavy or zigzag line and emphasize that none of the words would be pictured like this (draw a large X through the wavy line).

### Encourage Application

1. **Memory Verse** - Write the “Memory Verse” on the chalkboard (or poster board) in three columns underlining the key words, as follows:

*We are full of sorrow and yet we are always happy.  
We are poor and yet we make many people rich.  
We have nothing and yet we have everything.*

Direct class members to first read the “Memory Verse” from the study guide all together (in unison). Then read it yourself from the board, pausing between each phrase, and stressing the underlined words. Lead the class in reading it together in the same manner once or twice. Next, challenge volunteers to say the verse from memory while looking away from the board. Finally, ask class members to explain (using the Bible text or study guide, if needed) what Paul meant by each of the underlined words and how it applied to his ministry.

# Teaching Guide

2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally

Unit 1: Ministry to People Who Disagree

## Lesson 8: Sorrow that Leads to Joy

### Lesson Focus

To encourage class members to use loving-criticism to correct those who do wrong and turn them back to God. Loving-criticism is the Christian way to resolve differences between God's people.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 7:5-16

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 7:5-16

### Memory Verse

"But God gives comfort to those whose hearts are heavy." (2 Corinthians 7:6a)

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### Connect with Life

1. Enlist two people for a skit demonstrating criticism, first the harsh kind and then loving-criticism. Provide a broom, and prearrange for one actor to pretend to be sweeping the floor, but holding the broom awkwardly, with hand positions switched, or sweeping outward to the front rather than from side to side across the front of the body. Direct the other actor to walk up and begin criticizing the one sweeping, saying something like: *You're doing that all wrong! Don't you know how to use a broom? Here (grabbing the broom), this is how you sweep the floor!* At this point, the first actor should show signs of looking hurt or sad, then angry. Afterwards, advise the class that the second actor (by name) was **criticizing** the first (by name), and question them about the results of the criticism. Explain that criticism is when you say that what someone else says or does is wrong. (Note: **criticize** is not used in the study guide for this lesson and is not a vocabulary word until lesson 11. However, it is an important concept in helping

students to understand the difference between correcting and criticizing.)

2. Next, present the second part of the skit to demonstrate constructive criticism. Instruct the first actor to take the same awkward position as before while pretending to sweep the floor. But this time, the second actor will offer helpful, positive criticism (correct), saying something like: *Hello, I see that you are sweeping, but it looks like you're having a hard time. Would you mind if I show you an easier way (gently accepting the broom and beginning to sweep in a normal manner)?* Here, the first actor should begin smiling and say: *Thank you. I believe you're right. That does work better.* This time, advise the class that the second actor was giving loving-criticism (correcting) rather than the strong criticism of the first scene.

### Guide the Study

3. Advise the class that we will be talking today about giving and receiving criticism. Recall that in the skit at the beginning of the class, you saw that there are both good and bad ways to give and receive criticism. Ask: *Which of these two ways gets the best results?* Instruct the class members to look now at the Bible text in the study guide to see how Paul and the Corinthians gave and received criticism, and the results of it.

4. Let a class member read 2 Corinthians 7:5-9 aloud. Use the section, "God comforts those who have sorrow" in the study guide to comment on this passage.

5. Draw a large triangle on the chalkboard. At the top point of the triangle, write: *Paul*; by the bottom-left point, write: *Titus*, and at the bottom-right point, *The Corinthians*. Mention that Paul sent Titus to take Paul's "strong" letter to the believers in Corinth trying to make things right between them. State that Titus was probably not sure how the Corinthians would treat him and may have been

worried that they would not be friendly to him. Continue the explanation, telling how Titus returned to Paul with the news that the Corinthians received Paul's criticism well and wanted to be friendly with Paul again. Then describe how Paul's letter, along with the visit by Titus, made the Corinthians happy; the response by the Corinthians made Titus happy; and, the news of how the Corinthians had received Paul's criticism made Paul happy. In summary, say that even though Paul's letter was very hard on the Corinthians, it helped them to see that they were wrong about Paul and to make peace with him and with God.

6. Request a class member to read 2 Corinthians 7:10-16 aloud. Call attention to how Paul talked about two kinds of sorrow, the sorrow that God uses and the sorrow of this world. Use the study-guide section "God gives us strength" to explain the difference between the two. Remark that Paul's loving-criticism of the Corinthians had led them to have the kind of sorrow that God uses to make them sorry for their sin. State that Paul was very happy about the change his loving-criticism had brought about in the Corinthians. Add that he was happy too because he knew that he could once again put his complete trust in his friends.

### Encourage Application

7. Direct class members to look back to the lesson introduction in the study guide. Read the introduction to them. Encourage them to use Paul's example of loving-criticism as the way to correct those who do wrong and turn them back to God.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **Memory Verse** - Write the "Memory Verse" onto strips of poster board and cut out each individual word. Shuffle the words into random order, and then involve class members in putting the words into the correct order in one of two ways. One method would be to lay them out on a table or the floor and let one person at a time try to try to arrange them in order. The second method would be to give one word to each of ten persons and instruct each participant to find his or her place to

form the "Memory Verse." You may want to urge class members to study the verse in the study guide as they arrive, but do not allow them to look at it during the activity.

### Guide the Study

- Question and Answer** - As an alternate learning method for Step 4, use a series of questions for class members to answer. After reading 2 Corinthians 7:5-9 from the Bible text, either divide into three groups and assign one question to each group, or allow all class members to respond on a voluntary basis to these questions:
  - How did Paul feel in the country of Macedonia while waiting for Titus?*
  - How did Paul feel after hearing from Titus how the Corinthians had felt about Paul's strong letter?*
  - How did the Corinthians feel about Paul after receiving his strong letter?*
- Map** - Display a large map of Biblical lands and locate Macedonia (northern Greece) as the place where Paul was when he wrote the letter of 2 Corinthians. Also, point out the location of Corinth where the Christians to whom Paul wrote the letter lived. (Note: southern Greece at that time was called Achaia but, because of the limited vocabulary, is called Greece in the New Life Version of the Bible, from which the Bible texts for these lessons are taken.)

### Encourage Application

1. **Unit Review** - Mention that this is the last lesson of the unit, "Ministering to people who disagree." Request that class members try to recall from the eight lessons all they can about Paul and his ministry to the Corinthian church. Ask them to tell you what they remember about this ministry and friendship. (It may help to circulate a few copies of previous lessons or the unit introduction listing the lesson titles.)

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally

### Unit 2: Learning to Give

#### Lesson 9: Be a Good Giver

#### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to understand why Christians give money and time to God's work, and to evaluate the importance of giving in their own lives. The love of Christ and fellow Christians will help us decide to give money to God's work.

#### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 8:1-21

#### Background Text

2 Corinthians 8:1-21

#### Memory Verse

"If a man is ready and willing to give, he should give of what he has, not of what he does not have."  
(2 Corinthians 8:12)

#### Connect with Life

1. Write on the chalkboard: *We are more happy when we give than when we receive (Acts 20:35b)*. Let someone read the statement aloud, then question class members as to their thoughts about it. After a few responses, express that giving may sometimes be hard when you have little to give, but that it makes you feel good inside to know that you have helped someone in need, and it pleases God as well.
2. Introduce the new unit, "Learning to Give." Note that there are only two lessons in the unit; "Reasons for Giving," will be studied today, and "Blessings of Giving" will be studied in the next session.

#### Guide the Study

3. Before reading the Bible text, provide some background information about the three areas mentioned in the lesson today. If possible, identify them on a map of Paul's travels, as follows:

*Jerusalem. The church in Jerusalem was made up of Jews who had changed over from the Jewish religion. The Jewish leaders treated the Christians badly, so that many of them could not find work and were very poor.*

*Macedonia. Believers in the country of Macedonia were also treated very badly by the Jews. No one would buy things from them in their shops, so they too were also poor. Yet they were rich in the joy of Christ. Their joy made them want to help others.*

*Corinth. The city of Corinth had much business and the people lived in comfort. The Christians in this city had been treated well and had not suffered like those in Jerusalem and Macedonia. They had enough to help those who suffered, and they should have been happy to give it.*

4. Comment that the Corinthian believers were like many Christians today in that they needed to be **encouraged** to give of their money, time or things even when they had enough to give. Suggest that Paul knew this, and tried to get them ready for his request one step at a time. Quote 2 Corinthians 7:1: "*since we have these promises, dear friends, let us turn away from every sin of the body or of the spirit. Let us honor God with love and fear by giving ourselves to him in every way.*" Then explain that he began to tell them about the example of giving by the believers in the country of Macedonia. Finally, refer to the Bible text and let someone read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 to the class. Use the section of the study guide, "Begin to be a great giver," to comment on this passage.
5. Select a class member to read 2 Corinthians 8:8-9. After the reading, remark that Paul: (1) *did not want the Corinthians to think he was ordering them to give, but encouraged them to give out of the love they had already shown they had, and (2) that he used the greatest example of giving, that of Christ giving his life for those who put their trust in Him.*

6. Read 2 Corinthians 8: 10-12 to the class. State that the Corinthians were first to want to give to the poor in Jerusalem, but still had not done so. Explain that Paul now wanted them to finish what they had started because he knew they were able.

7. Request a class member to read 2 Corinthians 8:13-15. Explain that the verse Paul quoted from the Holy Writings comes from Exodus 16:18, where Moses and the Jews were in the place where nobody lives (desert, or wilderness) and God gave them just enough bread (manna) every day to last just one day. Assert that the important thing in these verses is that Christians should help one another as they are able, or receive help from other Christians when they are in need.

8. Read 2 Corinthians 8:16-21 yourself, making these comments as you read or in summary afterwards:

- *Titus seems to have become a good friend of the Corinthians, and would have been trusted by them.*
- *Verses 16-17 bring out the idea of giving your time to God. Titus was happy to give his time to go to Corinth to help with the collection. Giving of your time is just as important as giving of your money. Add comments as appropriate from “Giving your time to the church” in the study guide.*
- *The preacher (possibly Luke) would have been trusted by the Corinthians because he was well-known and was sent by the churches of Macedonia, not by Paul.*
- *A third trusted “brother” (2 Corinthians 8:22, not in the Bible text for this lesson) was also sent by the Macedonian churches.*

Note that the three were trusted for different reasons, but together would have made sure that the gifts given by the churches would get to the poor Jerusalem Christians.

### Encourage Application

9. Observe that it is only because of God’s loving-favor (grace) that we have anything at all, and it is by giving that we show loving-favor to others. Encourage class members to think about their part in giving money and time to God’s work.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. Resource Person. Invite someone involved in the financial aspects of your church to give a five-minute talk on why money is needed by the church, how it is used, and the safeguards that keep the money from being spent unwisely.

### Guide the Study

1. Panel Discussion. Choose three class members to serve on a panel to talk about “Why some people give money to the church and others don’t,” with you as moderator. If possible, select the panel members the week before, provide them with a copy of the study guide and Bible text for this lesson, and advise them of the topic for the panel discussion. After Step 3 of the Teaching Plan, introduce the panelists and seat them at the front facing the rest of the class. Identify the discussion topic, then direct the entire class to read silently 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 from the Bible text. After two or three minutes, encourage the panelists to name some of the reasons people do or do not give money to the church (these may be from the Bible text or from their own feelings, observations, or experience). After the panelists run out of ideas, ask the other class members to contribute.

### Encourage Application

1. Giving or Needy? Mention that we have talked today about churches in three cities. Identify the churches and recall their need or ability to give, as described in Step 3 of these procedures. Question the class as to which of these three churches your church is most like in its spirit of giving .

2. Read the “Memory Verse” and encourage class members to be willing givers to the church of time and money.

# Teaching Guide

2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally

Unit 2: Learning to Give

## Lesson 10: We Can Give Since God Gives

### Lesson Focus

To encourage class members to honor God's great gift of His Son by giving of themselves to help others. We honor God with giving because of His great gift of Christ.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

### Memory Verse

"God can give you all you need. He will give you more than enough. You will have everything you need for yourselves. And you will have enough left over to give when there is a need."

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

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### Connect with Life

1. Ask these questions: (1) *If a man plants ten seeds, will the plants he grows make enough grain for him to have bread for his family for a whole year?* (2) *If a man plants a hundred seeds, will he have enough grain to feed his animals all winter?* (3) *How many seeds will the man need to plant to feed his family and his animals?* After each question, ask: *Why?* and encourage the students to explain their answers.

### Guide the Study

2. Direct class members to find the Bible text in their copy of the study guide and follow as you read what Paul said about planting. Read aloud 2 Corinthians 9:6. Remark that Paul used planting and gathering grain as a way to begin talking about giving. Direct class members to look at the lesson

title, "We can give since God gives." Then ask: *Who gave first?* Confirm or bring out that it was God Who gave first, and that this lesson will help us know why we should now be giving back to Him.

3. Divide the class into three groups and have each group form a small circle. Give each group one of these written assignments:

Group 1 - Read 2 Corinthians 9:7 and paragraphs 3-5 of "Being happy in giving" in the study guide. Decide as a group what the verse means. Choose one person from your group to read the Bible verse to the class. Choose another person to tell what the verse means.

Group 2 - Read 2 Corinthians 9:8 and paragraphs 6-8 of "Being happy in giving" in the study guide. Decide as a group what the verse means. Choose one person from your group to read the Bible verse to the class. Choose another person to tell what the verse means.

Group 3 - Read 2 Corinthians 9:9 and the last three paragraphs of "Being happy in giving" in the study guide. Decide as a group what the verse means. Choose one person from your group to read the Bible verse to the class. Choose another person to tell what the verse means.

Be sure each group understands the assignment. Allow 8-10 minutes for the reading assignments to be completed. Then request groups 1, 2, and then 3 to read and report as directed.

4. Instruct everyone to move their chairs back into place. Recall the discussion of seeds at the beginning of the class. Then question class members about where the first seeds came from. Refer to verse 10 in the Bible text to find or confirm the answer. State that God made the earth from nothing, and that He then made the Garden of Eden. Quote Genesis 1:11: "*Then God said, let plants grow from the earth, plants that have seeds.*" Explain that all of what God did when He made the earth from nothing is part of what He has given to us. Refer again to the lesson title and comment that



it is because God gives to us that we have anything to give back to Him.

5. Assign one of the verses from 2 Corinthians 9:10-14 to each of five class members. Direct one of these persons at a time to read her or his verse, and comment as follows:

*Verse 10. If you plant the seeds of giving and helping people in need, God will keep on giving you even more of those seeds.*

*Verse 11. When you give because you want to give, God will make you happy inside. He will show you more ways to give. And more people will thank God for how you have helped them.*

*Verse 12. What you give will for sure help the people in need. But it will do more than that. It will make them praise God for the kindness of the people who helped them. They will be happy. God will be happy. And you will be happy.*

*Verse 13. When you give from the heart, it tells the people you help something. The people of Macedonia and Corinth were not Jews. They sent money to the people in Jerusalem who were Jews. Many Jewish Christians did not think people who were not Jews could be Christians. How do you think it made them feel when they received this gift of love from people who were not Jews? Maybe they understood then that the people who were not Jews loved and obeyed Christ just as they did.*

*Verse 14. What a wonderful picture! Jewish Christians praying for Christians who were not Jews...and knowing that the Christians who were not Jews had God's loving-favor too.*

## Encourage Application

6. Ask: *But Who was it Who gave first? Reply: it was God Who put giving into our hearts by the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ!* Then read verse 15 stressing the words "God" and "gift." Challenge class members to honor God for His great Gift by giving of themselves to others.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

1. **Growing** - Ask a class member to read the lesson introduction in the study guide. Comment that a seed of faith is planted by God when we first

become Christians. Explain that the seed of faith grows within as we become more like Christ. Conclude that part of this growing is that we want to give back more to God from what He has given us.

## Guide the Study

1. **Alms** - Write the word: *alms* on the chalkboard. Explain the practice of Jewish alms giving, as follows: The Jewish people gave alms to the poor. Alms were small amounts of money or food. The poor would wait outside the Jewish places of worship to receive the alms. They had no other way to get money or food. The Jews thought their sins would be forgiven if they gave alms to the poor. The money that Paul collected from the Christians in Corinth would be much more than alms. It would for sure help the poor people of Jerusalem.

## Encourage Application

1. **Memory Verse** - Give class members a minute or two to study the "Memory Verse." While they are doing that, write approximately half of each sentence of the verse on the chalkboard, with each half-sentence on a separate line. Leave the last half to be filled in from memory. Then lead the class in reading the complete verse together (in unison) from the study guide a time or two. Next, ask for volunteers to stand and say the verse, completing each sentence from memory. Finally, erase the board and challenge someone to say the verse entirely from memory.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 3: Doing Better Than the Usual Lesson 11: Boast in God, Not in Yourself

### Lesson Focus

To lead class members to put their pride in Christ, not themselves, when working through problems or disagreements with others. Christians should let pride in Christ, not themselves, guide them when faced with problems or disagreements in the church.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 10: 1 - 18

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 10: 1 - 18

### Memory Verse

“If anyone wants to be proud, he should be proud of what the Lord has done.” 2 Corinthians 10:17

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### Connect with Life

1. Make the statement that: *Since every member of the church is a Christian, there should never be any problems or disagreements among church members.* Repeat or write the statement on the chalkboard to be sure everyone understands the issue. Then ask if the statement is true, partly true, or not true at all. Guide the class to understand that none of us want such troubles, but that there will be times of disagreement in the church. Explain that even Christians have different ideas on what they believe, what the church does, and who should be boss and have power.

2. Recall that we have been studying the book of 2 Corinthians. Remind the class of how the false teachers had caused troubles between Paul and the Corinthian Christians. Mention that this lesson begins a new unit of study, “Doing Better Than The Usual,” that is just three lessons long. Introduce the title of today’s lesson, “Boast in God, Not in

Yourself.” Comment that we will look at how we should let pride in Christ, not in ourselves, guide our words and actions when there are troubles with other people.

### Guide the Study

3. Divide the class into two listening teams, (1) the Paul Group and (2) the People Against Paul Group. Tell the Paul Group to listen as you read from the Bible text for what Paul wanted to be like to the Corinthians. Ask the second group to listen for what the people who talked against Paul said about him. First, read 2 Corinthians 10:1-6 from the Bible text as the students listen and follow the text silently. Then allow a minute or two for them to study the text silently. Encourage them to also look for help under, “Paul answers his critics” in the study guide. Request a volunteer from each listening team to respond to the assignment.

4. Call on a class member to read 2 Corinthians 10:7-11 from the Bible text. Ask the class if they know the story of how James and John came to Jesus and asked to sit at his right and left sides when He received His great honor in heaven. Relate the essential facts of the story as told in Mark 10:35-45. Explain that Jesus did not want His followers to be like the leaders of the world and try to be boss or act important, but that He wanted them to be servant leaders to others. Remark that Paul followed the example of Jesus as a servant leader while the false teachers tried to make themselves important. Add that Paul wanted to build up the church, not break it down as the false teachers were doing. Assert that the false teachers were wrong to think that Paul was weak, and Paul made it clear that he would be strong if necessary when he came to Corinth.

5. Read 2 Corinthians 10:12 yourself. Then question the class as to who these people are that “think they are good” and “compare themselves to

themselves.” Help them identify these people as the false teachers who caused troubles in the Corinthian church. Write the word: *standard* on the chalkboard. Define a standard as an example to which we compare other things. Comment that the false teachers used themselves as the standard for good preaching, but that Paul used a better standard. Refer to verse 10:5 and ask what standard Paul used. Confirm or bring out that Christ was the standard to which Paul compared himself as a leader.

6. Allow a worker or class member to read 2 Corinthians 10:13-18 from the Bible text. Mention these points that Paul made:
- *He would follow the plan of work God had given him. That plan included ministry to the Corinthians.*
  - *He would go only to those places God sent him. He would not go into another missionary’s place of work and take honor for the work they had done (as the false teachers had tried to take over Paul’s work in Corinth).*
  - *It was okay for a person to boast, not of himself, but of what the Lord had done through him.*
  - *What people say about a person doesn’t matter much. What is important is what God says about that person.*

### Encourage Application

7. Direct class members to look at the “Memory Verse” in the study guide. Advise them that you will read the first part of the verse, and everyone else should read the last part together. Begin reading, “If anyone wants to be proud...” Then lift your hand as a cue for the class to read the last part of the verse. Repeat this three or four times to end the session.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

1. **Speaking or Writing** - Comment that some people can say things better when they talk than when they write, and some can say things better when they write them on paper so they can think about what to say. Conduct a survey of the class to see which class members believe they say things better when talking and which ones do better writing them on paper. Point out that the false teachers and

some of the Corinthian church members said that Paul wrote strong letters when he was away, but that he was gentle and quiet when with them. Suggest that Paul may have been like those class members who feel more comfortable writing things on paper.

### Guide the Study

1. **Discussion Group** - Rather than “teach” the class, involve them in a time of learning by questions and discussion. Use this method for one section of the study or for the entire lesson. First, read a portion of the Bible text, then request class members to look back at the text verse by verse along with the corresponding section of the study guide. Encourage them to ask questions or tell what they think Paul is trying to say. Let other group members add their thoughts or suggest how the verses apply in some way to life today. The idea is to get them to put thought into the lesson and improve their language skills. If the discussion fails to develop, simply ask questions or interpret that section yourself. Then move on to the next step of the teaching plan.
2. **Spiritual Weapons** - In 2 Corinthians 10:11, Paul says that he does not “use those things to fight with that the world uses.” Question the class as to what these weapons of the world might be. Lead them to identify such things as guns, tanks and bombs today, or swords and spears in Bible times. Point out that people also use weapons you can’t touch or hold, such as boasting, lying, or cheating to gain power and control. Then ask, “What are ‘the things God fights with’ that Paul said he used?” Help them identify prayer, kindness, love, forgiveness, and loving-kindness (mercy) as the weapons Paul used that help to destroy the strong-places of the devil.

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 3: Doing Better Than The Usual Lesson 12: Jesus' Help Is All We Need

### Lesson Focus

To help the class see how Christian leaders can use God's love and encouragement to change people to be more like Christ. Our strength is not in what we do, but in what Christ does through us.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 11:16-12:10

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 11:16-12:10

### Memory Verse

"He answered me, 'I am all you need. I give you my loving-favor. My power works best in weak people.'" 2 Corinthians 12:11a

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### Connect with Life

1. Recall the word: *boast* from the previous lesson. Ask: *What are some things people boast about?* Lead the class to mention such things as a new baby, a better job, a pay raise, a good grade in school, winning a game, losing weight, how smart their children are, and so on. Point out that these are all good things that people do, and question them as to why no one ever boasts about causing an automobile accident, having no money, not being very smart, going hungry for many days, losing a game badly, gaining weight, making a bad grade in school, or losing their job. Emphasize that boasting is generally thought of as telling things we are proud of, good things we have done, or our successes. Then mention that in today's lesson, Paul does boast, not about good things, but about all the **bad** things he has suffered through in his ministry.

### Guide the Study

2. Recall that the class has in recent weeks studied about the false teachers who came to Corinth after Paul left to tell the Good News in other cities. Remind them how these false teachers had boasted that they were from the family of Israel (Jews), were better preachers than Paul, that Paul was not a real missionary like them, and that they had special dreams about heaven. State that Paul turned their words around and made fun of their boasting by telling about all the bad things that had happened to him, that he was not a good speaker and had been beaten, stoned, put in prison, whipped many times, shipwrecked and adrift at sea, hungry, made to work hard, without water to drink, cold, without money, and in all kinds of danger. Mention that all of this is talked about in 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, but that it would take too much time to read all of these verses during the class time. Encourage them to read these verses and the study-guide section, "Suffering for Jesus," at home.

3. Advise class members to look at the Bible text, beginning with 2 Corinthians 12:1. Question them about why Paul said, "I have to talk about myself..." Explain that the false teachers had said things about Paul that weren't true, so that Paul had to talk about himself to prove that what the false teachers had said about him was not true. Read verses 12:1-4 to the class.

4. Call attention to verse 2, where Paul said, "I know a man who belongs to Christ." Ask: *Who was this man?* Explain that it was Paul himself talking as if he were another man. Comment that the Jewish holy men (Rabbis) often spoke about themselves in this way. Then suggest that perhaps he just felt like a different person in this special dream than the Paul of his everyday life. Point out that Paul didn't tell very much about his special dream, but only enough to show that he too could boast about having such things happen to him. Note

also that in verse 4 Paul saw and heard some things that God wouldn't allow him to tell.

5. Request a class member to read 2 Corinthians 12:5-6. Question the class as to what Paul meant in verse 5, affirm any response, then offer the possibility that he was saying simply that the special dream was God's gift to him, that he himself had done nothing to boast about. Add for verse 6, that Paul simply wanted the Corinthians to see him as he was, weak in body but strong in Christ. State that Jesus' help was all that Paul needed.

6. Remark that Paul talked much about how his body was weak, but that in these next verses of the Bible text he began to talk about a special kind of trouble in his body. Ask a class member or worker to read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Remark that people who study the Bible and history have talked much about what Paul's "trouble in the body" could have been. Refer to the study guide under "A pain that brings Paul to God" for some troubles that have been suggested. Add that no one really knows, though, what the problem was. Emphasize that when Paul asked the Lord to take the trouble away, he always got the answer, "I am all you need."

### Encourage Application

7. Remark that the Lord told Paul, "I am all you need" (verse 12:9). Ask a class member to read the lesson title. Indicate that we too may be weak in our bodies, but that Jesus' help is still all we need to do God's work in the world.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **Third-person Story** - In 2 Corinthians 12:2, Paul told a story about himself by speaking in the third person. To introduce this method of speaking, begin the session by telling a simple story or sequence of events about yourself. Speak as if you were another person, but try to make it clear that you are talking about yourself. For example: *I know a woman who got up this morning. She had bacon and eggs for breakfast. She drank a cup of coffee, then got dressed and came to church. When she got to the church, she went to her Bible-study class. It*

*was a class for people who are learning English. She was the teacher.* Then ask the class who this person is. Lead them to identify you as the person, then explain that this was the way Paul spoke about himself in the lesson today.

### Guide the Study

1. **Grace** - Question class members about the meaning of "loving-favor" as used in verse 12:9 of the Bible text. Offer this explanation: It is the words "love" and "favor" put together. Favor is a special act of kindness. The word "grace" used in most Bibles means the same thing as loving-favor. Both grace and loving-favor mean the great love, favor, kindness, and forgiveness that God shows to people who are sinners. Grace is a free gift to Christians as help, strength and wisdom for doing God's work in the world.

### Encourage Application

1. **Strength in Weakness** - (Use in place of or in addition to Step 6) Ask a class member to read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 to the class. Follow with these comments: *God gave Paul special dreams and much encouragement. But God taught Paul not to boast about these favors, and to thank God even for his weakness. People today exercise to make their bodies strong. It seems strange that anyone would be proud to be weak. But Paul said, "I receive joy when I am weak" (verse 12:10a) He also said, "I am happy to be weak and have troubles so I can have Christ's power in me" (verse 12:9b). Paul had strength in weakness because of God's loving-favor and the power he received through Christ. Whatever weaknesses we have, God can give us strength to be strong to do His work.*

# Teaching Guide

## 2 Corinthians: Taking Ministry Personally Unit 3: Doing Better Than The Usual Lesson 13: God's Love Helps People Change

### Lesson Focus

To lead the class to see how Christians need to change their lives to become more like Christ. Trying to change people for whom we care requires a delicate combination of love and wisdom.

### Focal Text

2 Corinthians 12:14-13:11

### Background Text

2 Corinthians 12:14-13:11

### Memory Verse

“We cannot work against the truth of God. We only work for it.” (2 Corinthians 13:8)

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### Connect with Life

1. Before the class members arrive, arrange the chairs to face one side of the classroom rather than the front. Also, on the wall the class will face, place several poster-board strips on which you have written the word: *change*. As they arrive, involve the class members in small talk about change with comments about rearrangement of the room, what change is (something new or different), whether change is good or bad, or what has changed in their lives recently.

2. To begin the session, take your usual position at the front of the classroom. Announce that the lesson today is about **change**. State that you have **changed** your mind about the seats and ask everyone to **change** them back to face the front of the classroom. Note that the discussion about change so far has been mostly about changing “things.” Turn the subject to talking about “people;” specifically, how Paul wanted to change the Christians back to the way of Christ.

### Guide the Study

3. Recall that Paul had changed these people before, from people who did not know God (pagans or heathens) to people who put their trust in Christ. Suggest that if Paul had ever done anything to boast about, surely it was that he had helped these people who lived in the sinful city of Corinth become Christians. Express Paul’s sadness that some of the Corinthians had turned back to their old ways, were dividing into groups believing different things, and were listening to the false teachers. Emphasize that he now wanted to change them back so that they once again honored Christ.

4. Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 12:14-18 to the class. Direct the class to look in the study guide under “Paul wanted people, not money.” Give them a minute or two to scan through that section. Then explain that as you say these words, you want them to use the Bible text and the study-guide to tell how these words relate to the lesson. Call out these words in order: (1) *money*, (2) *parents and children*, (3) *love*, (4) *Paul’s helpers* (Titus and others), and (5) *actions* (see last paragraph in study-guide section). Help as needed to identify how these words tie in to the lesson.

5. Read 2 Corinthians 12:19-21 yourself. Question the class as follows:

(1) *What was the purpose of Paul’s letter and planned visit to Corinth?* (To help the Corinthians. Verse 12:19)

(2) *What did Paul fear he would find when he got to Corinth?* (A church with many troubles and much sin, and of which he could not be proud. Verses 12:20-21)

(3) *What do you think Paul hoped to find when he got to Corinth?* (A church in which all the members had turned away from sin, in which the members were working together for Christ, and in which God would give him much pride.)

The desirable answers are shown in parentheses for the teacher, and you should try to bring out these ideas from the student responses.)

6. Remark that in the next nine verses, Paul did two things (1) he gave a strong warning to those who kept on sinning and (2) he told the Corinthians to test themselves to see if they were really following Christ. Write on the chalkboard:

*The Warning* (verses 13:1-4)

*The Test* (verses 5-9)

Let a class member read verses 13:1-4, then make these points:

*Paul talked about the law in the Old Way of Worship that said, "One person will not prove the guilt of a sin another man may have done. It will take two or three people who know about the sin to prove the man's guilt." (Deuteronomy 19:15) Paul meant that his second and third visits would be like the two or three people who could prove a person's guilt. So he had better not catch them still sinning! Paul talked again about weak people being strong through the power of Christ. Just as Christ may have looked weak when He died on the cross, His strength was shown when God gave Him new life in the resurrection.*

7. Point to: *The Test* on the board and enlist another class member to read 2 Corinthians 13:5-9. Recall the word: *standard* from Lesson Eleven, and remind students that this word means "an example to which we compare other things." Ask what the standard is to which Christians should always compare themselves. Confirm or supply that Christ is that standard. Use the study-guide section, "Give yourself the test," for additional comments.

8. Read 2 Corinthians 13:10. Comment only to say that when he arrived in Corinth Paul hoped to build up the church, that he did not want to have to use God's power to punish the Christians who kept on sinning.

## Encourage Application

9. Call to the front five persons enlisted before the class to do a reading of 2 Corinthians 13:11. Arrange them in order to read as follows: (1) "*Last*

*of all, Christian brothers, good-bye,"* (2) "*Do that which makes you complete,"* (3) "*Be comforted,"* (4) "*Work to get along with others,"* (5) "*Live in peace."* Recite the last line yourself: "*The God of love and peace will be with you.*" (For added effectiveness, print the words of each reader on a strip of poster board and have them reveal their parts as they begin to read.)

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

1. **Change** - Question class members about change. Ask what change is, whether it is good or bad, why it is necessary, why they like or do not like change, what changes have been made in their lives recently, etc. Comment that today's lesson is about how "God's Love Helps People Change" (lesson title), and that we will learn how Christians need to change their lives to become more like Christ.

## Guide the Study

1. **Study Theme Review** - Involve the class in a brief review of the book of 2 Corinthians. To do this, mention a word or phrase from the list below and encourage class members to tell what they remember about that subject from the study of this book:

*The city of Corinth*

*The Christians in Corinth*

*The false teachers*

*Paul's friendship with the Corinthians*

*How Paul felt about suffering*

*The gift of money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem*

*How Paul felt about boasting*

*Paul's strength in weakness*

*Ministers*

## Encourage Application

1. **Quick Recall** - Call for a volunteer to come to the front without explaining why. Give this person a copy of the "Memory Verse" printed on a sheet of paper (or in the study guide). Instruct the volunteer to read the verse aloud one time and then, without looking at the verse, to say it three more times.