



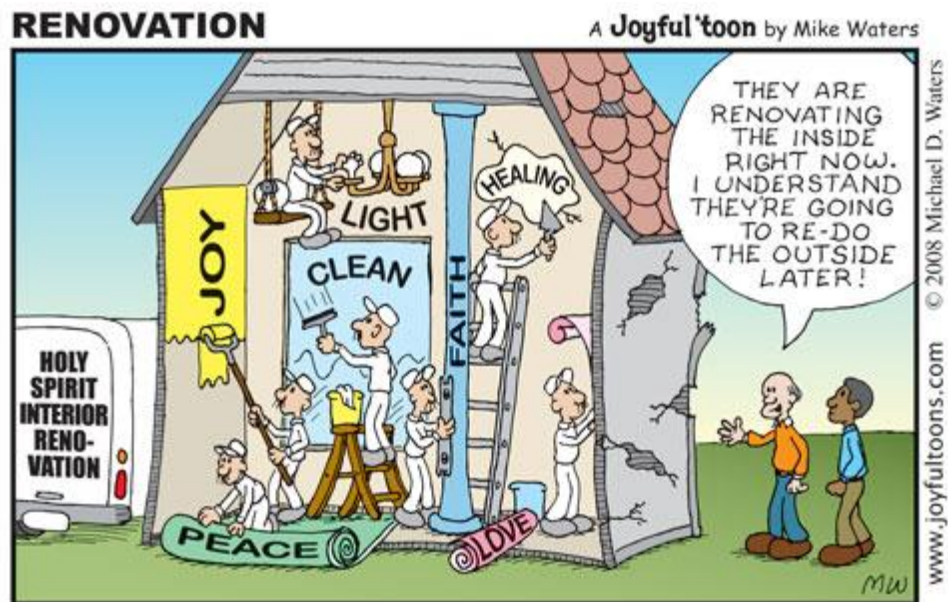
Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart."

Course Text: 2nd Corinthians

Question 1 on page 7 asks about Titus. You may want to take note of things that are said about Titus throughout 2nd Corinthians so you can answer that question when you get to it.

In 1st Corinthians Paul had said he intended to come to Corinth, as he passed through Macedonia (1st Corinthians 16:5), but, since he was not going to come for some time, he writes this second epistle to them about a year after the first. Apparently there are three main reasons for this. (1) The person he told them to throw out for bad behavior in the last letter is now sorry and should be let back in the church. (2) There was some funds being raised to help the persecuted Christians in Jerusalem and he wanted the Corinthians to have a chance to help. (3) Someone was attacking Paul's reputation and/or authority.

There are several points to notice in 2nd Corinthians. There is a report of Paul's successful missionary work elsewhere and some of the obstacles and trials faced by him and members of his team. He talks about how they stay motivated in the face of these troubles. Paul defends his apostleship, integrity and reputation. Paul makes some interesting comparisons between the Old Testament and the Gospel. Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of 2nd Corinthians talk about giving to God's work. God's work is carried out using the voluntary contributions of God's people.



Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16 NIV

Suggested methodology:

1. Let the students have a copy of the lesson well before the class meets. (Perhaps the previous meeting)
2. The students read the Bible book and answer the questions in this lesson before the group meets.
3. At the class meeting allow time for greetings and fellowship. (Save most of this for the end)
4. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
5. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
6. Discuss the questions on the page 7. Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers, when provided, are just one opinion; you may have a better answer. It might be good to establish the norm that only those who have actually read the book should discuss it aloud.
7. Discuss whatever other questions people have on their mind about the 2nd Corinthians.
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, this class is expected to take about two hours.

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2 CORINTHIANS Chapters 1 to 6

Please read Acts 18:1-18 and answer these questions:

[A] When he first got to Corinth how often did Paul go to the synagogue (A Jewish church).

[B] How long did Paul stay in Corinth? _____

Please read Corinthians Chapters 1 to 6 and answer these questions:

[1C] Who wrote 2nd Corinthians? _____

[1B] Who gives us comfort in our trouble, tribulation or afflictions? _____

[1C] Where has the Spirit been placed. _____

[2A] When someone has been punished for his crimes, as Christians, what should we do?

[2B] As Christians we should not be ignorant of the devices or schemes of whom? _____

[3A] The letter kills but the Spirit gives what? _____

[3B] Where can liberty or freedom be found? _____

[4A] What did Paul and Timothy preach? _____

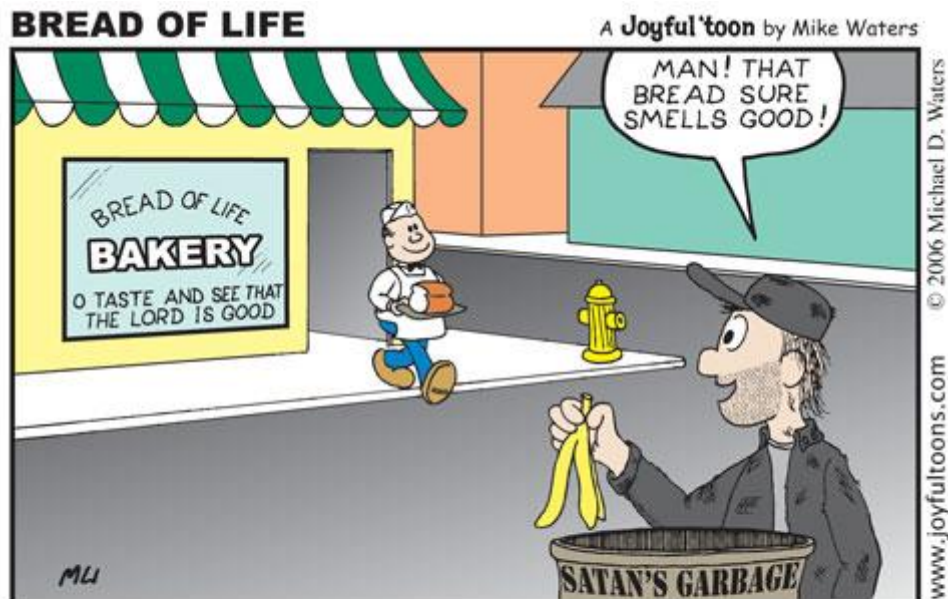
[4B] Who will raise us from the grave? _____

[5A] As Christians, instead of walking by sight, we walk by what? _____

[5B] What controls, constrains, or compels us? _____

[6A] When is the day of salvation? _____

[6B] Who are we not to be linked, matched, yoked, or bound together with? _____



But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. - 2 CORINTHIANS 2:14 NIV

2 CORINTHIANS Chapters 1 to 6

[A] When he first got to Corinth how often did Paul go to the synagogue (Jewish church).

He went every Sabbath (Saturday) Acts 18:4

[B] How long did Paul stay in Corinth? 18 months or a year and half Acts 18:11

[1C] Who wrote 2nd Corinthians? Paul & Timothy 2Cor 1:1

[1B] Who gives us comfort in our trouble, tribulation or afflictions? God 2Cor 1:4

[1C] Where has the Spirit been placed. In our hearts 2Cor 1:22

[2A] When someone has been punished for his crimes, as Christians, what should we do?

Comfort and forgive him. 2Cor 1:6-7

[2B] As Christians we should not be ignorant of the devices or schemes of whom? Satan 2Cor 2:11

[3A] The letter kills but the Spirit gives what? Life 2Cor 3:6

[3B] Where can liberty or freedom be found? Where ever the Spirit of the Lord is found. 2Cor 3:17

[4A] What did Paul and Timothy preach? Christ Jesus as Lord. 2Cor 4:5

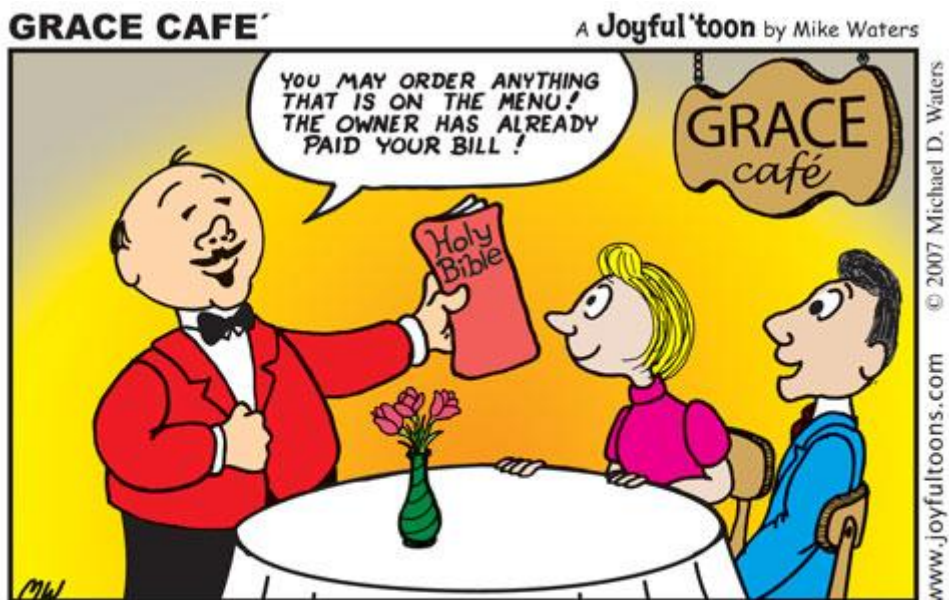
[4B] Who will raise us from the grave? The One who raised Jesus, that is God. 2Cor 4:14

[5A] As Christians, instead of walking by sight, we walk by what? Faith 2Cor 5:7

[5B] What controls, constrains, or compels us? The love of Christ 2Cor 5:14

[6A] When is the day of salvation? Now 2Cor 6:2

[6B] Who are we not to be linked, matched, yoked, or bound together with? Unbelievers 2Cor 6:14-16



For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20 NIV

2 CORINTHIANS Chapters 7 to 13

Please read 2 Corinthians Chapter 7-13 and answer these questions:

[7A] Why should we cleanse ourselves from sinfulness? _____

[7B] How did Paul's confidence in the Corinthians make him feel? _____

[8A] Jesus became poor for the sake of whom? _____

[8B] True or false? Paul was only interested in doing what was right or honorable in God's eyes. _____

[9A] Paul boasted to the Macedonians about whom? _____

[9B] What kind of giver does God love? _____

[10A] What did Paul NOT want to do with his letters? _____

[10B] How are we to boast or give glory to ourselves? _____

[11A] Who does Paul call our husband? _____

[11B] What does Satan disguise himself as? _____

[12A] What did Paul pray three times to have removed without success? _____

[12B] What did Paul say would make him mourn, grieve, or bewail? _____

[13A] How does Jesus Christ live? _____

[13B] Paul said we are to test or examine ourselves to make sure of what? _____

UNWANTED INTRUDER



A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 10:5 NIV

2 CORINTHIANS Chapters 7 to 13

[7A] Why should we cleanse ourselves from sinfulness? Because we have God's promises 2Cor 7:1

[7B] How did Paul's confidence in the Corinthians make him feel? Glad or rejoicing 2Cor 7:16

[8A] Jesus became poor for the sake of whom? Christians 2Cor 8:9

[8B] True or false? Paul was only interested in doing what was right or honorable in God's eyes.

False 2Cor 8:21

[9A] Paul boasted to the Macedonians about whom? The Corinthians. 2Cor 9:2

[9B] What kind of giver does God love? Cheerful 2Cor 9:7

[10A] What did Paul NOT want to do with his letters? Frighten or terrify 2Cor 10:9

[10B] How are we to boast or give glory to ourselves? In the Lord 2Cor 10:17

[11A] Who does Paul call our husband? Christ 2Cor 11:2

[11B] What does Satan disguise himself as? An angel of light 2Cor 11:14

[12A] What did Paul pray three times to have removed without success?

A thorn in the flesh 2Cor 12:7-8

[12B] What did Paul say would make him mourn, grieve, or bewail? Unrepentant sinners 2Cor 12:21

[13A] How does Jesus Christ live? By the power of God 2Cor 13:3-4

[13B] Paul said we are to test or examine ourselves to make sure of what?

That we are in the faith, that we know Jesus is in us 2Cor 13:5

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of 2nd Corinthians talk about giving to God's work. Giving to God's work is an important part of our Christian walk. It reminds us that everything we have belongs to Him. It allows us to have a share in the spiritual fruit of others labors. It provides the means for God's work to be done. However, make no mistake about it, God does not need you to give Him money. It is you who need to shoulder the responsibility of spending God's money wisely. Many people say, "You can not out give God." But they do not all mean the same thing. Some understand it to mean that if you give to God he will make you wealthy, with a large bank account and many luxuries.

He might, if you are responsible enough to have such things. Most of us are not that responsible. What it means is that everything you have including your body and your life are from God. Since you have already consumed much of it on your lust and comfort you will never be able to give it all back to Him. If you are God's child, He will take care of you. You can demonstrate that you come from the very wealthy family of God by giving generously. The ability to give is a blessing from God. Giving is a blessing. You can participate in giving no matter what your income or resources. Every penny you spend should be spent based on your best understanding of how God would have you to spend it. If it is not possible for you to give to a church than use your money as if you are a church. Spend it to promote God's Kingdom.

Paul says, in Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

(1) What does this book tell us about Titus?

Think & Pray _____

(2) What does 2nd Corinthians 3:2-3 mean to you?

Think & Pray _____

(3) In 2nd Corinthians 12:1-6, many people believe that Paul was referring to John, and the book of Revelations. What do you think and why?

Think & Pray _____

(4) In 2nd Corinthians 12:7-9, Paul talks about a thorn in the flesh that God allowed to stay with him, to keep Paul humble, and to demonstrate God's grace. Do you have something like this? Explain

Think & Pray _____

(5) What do you think are the most important things to remember about 2nd Corinthians?

Think & Pray _____

(6) What verse or passage from 2nd Corinthians would you recommend memorizing?

Think & Pray _____

(7) What questions do you have for your classmates?

Think & Pray _____

2 CORINTHIANS Think & Pray Questions

(Question 1) **TITUS:** In 2 Cor 2:13 Paul was disappointed he did not meet with Titus on his way to Macedonia. In 2 Cor 7 he finally meets with Titus and receives an encouraging report. That suggests Titus was the one who brought the message that Paul is responding to in this letter. In 2 Cor 8 Paul is apparently encouraging Titus to continue to minister to the Corinthians. Titus may have been the one who delivered this letter to them. Certainly Paul was deliberately trying to lift him up to a position of influence with the Corinthians. In chapter 12 he points out that Titus behaved with honesty and integrity while he was with them.

(2) **THE MESSAGE:** Jesus Christ was a message to humanity from God of His love. I believe Paul is encouraging us to imitate Jesus Christ by also being this kind of message. You may be the only "real" Christian some people meet. What will they remember about Jesus Christ after having been with you? The contrast is between the Ten Commandments written on tables of stone (Deut. 4:13), which is external; and the Law of the Spirit written in the heart (II Cor. 3:2,3), which is internal. The external Law brought death, and the internal Law brought life.

(3) **THE VISION:** It is possible that Paul is referring to John (and his book of Revelations) but it is very unlikely. It is generally believed that 2nd Corinthians was written some 30 or 40 years before the book of Revelations. The experience or vision Paul mentions in 2nd Corinthians 12:1-6 happened another fourteen years in the past from that. Maybe John told Paul about the vision 50 years before he wrote it down for others to read, but that seems improbable to me. I think it was Barnabus or one of the other disciples he hung around with a lot. No one really knows.

(4) **THE THORN:** So far my body seems to be holding together pretty good. No major thorns. I make a lot of mistakes that keeps me pretty humble, but I think that is true of everybody, except for arrogant people, who think they make no mistakes. Paul does not specifically state what the "thorn" was. There is much speculation about it. I think it was the infirmities, reproaches, persecutions, etc. that reminded him that he was still mortal, and kept him humbly depending upon God's grace.

(5) **2nd CORINTHIANS:** I think two of the most important parts of 2nd Corinthians to remember are Paul's teachings on forgiveness and stewardship. We are to imitate Jesus Christ. In this book he also reaffirms Paul's apostolic authorship.

(6) **SCRIPTURE BY HEART:** There are two quotes from 2nd Corinthians that I really like. 2nd Corinthians 4:17-18 "For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2nd Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."