

**1208 God's comfort, Holy Spirit's leading in Bible study, and yes in Christ - 2Co(1)1-24
(by Whirlwind)**

First, we discussed the greetings and how the disciples were comforted by God amid their sufferings. We also explain why the Second Epistle was written by another person with his description and approval in Macedonia. Second, we addressed the reason why Paul planned to visit Corinth but ultimately did not go. From a single word in the text, we can discern many things. Therefore, from a human perspective, if we do not "let the Holy Spirit to lead the Bible study," it is simply impossible to understand what the Bible is telling us! We cited a previous article that outlined a practical and proven method for "letting the Holy Spirit lead the Bible study." Finally, we discussed the gospel that in Christ is yes in Him, and we explored the gift of the Holy Spirit as a pledge—which means that Christians truly have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them.

Please note that this article is an expansion of the topicwise Bible study held on Sunday (9/20/26). Unless otherwise specified, verses refer to those in NASB95. If this article refers previous articles, they can all be found on our website, '<https://a-christian-voice.com/>'; click on 'Understanding Spiritual Life'.

1. Greetings and God's comfort for suffering disciples

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; and our hope (G1680) for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort. For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us, you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many."(2 Corinthians 1:1-11)

First, we can be certain that 2 Corinthians was written after the first letter, for the first letter states, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come."(1 Corinthians 16:1-2) Thus, the first letter instructed them to be prepared, while the second letter explicitly states that they had indeed done so: "For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to

the saints; for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, namely, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them. But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, so that, as I was saying, you may be prepared."(2 Corinthians 9:1-3) Please note that there was a lost letter preceding the first letter, for the Scripture says, "I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people."(1 Corinthians 5:9)

Another point is that this letter was written in Macedonia, since when he wrote it, he commended the church in Corinth to the Macedonians. The Scripture also says, "After the uproar (in Ephesus) had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia. When he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece."(Acts 20:1-2) Therefore, he was engaged in missionary work at that time and would not have had the time to write this letter himself; consequently, there is no mention of a personal greeting throughout the entire book, so this letter was written by another person with his description and approval.

Let us now consider the greetings. Prior to 1 and 2 Corinthians, he had not emphasized that his apostleship came from God. Evidently, his apostleship had been questioned by the church in Corinth, so he had to clarify that he served as an apostle by God's will. It is clear that Paul and Timothy were writing not only to the church of God in Corinth but also to all the saints throughout Achaia.

From this greeting, we can see that God the Father is merciful and is the God who bestows every kind of comfort. This comfort is not just for us, but "...so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."(2 Corinthians 1:4) It is clear, then, that God does not comfort everyone; therefore, those who are comforted must fulfill their duty. The verses followed make this point very clear—please read them for yourself. His conclusion is simple: "and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort."(2 Corinthians 1:7) He can only have such hope, for it is not up to him; God has absolute sovereignty to decide whether or not to comfort a particular person. As for those whom God does not directly comfort, let them know that God has absolute sovereignty to make such decisions.

The text then gives a concrete example: "(God) who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us."(2 Corinthians 1:10) Looking at his later experiences, we can see that this is true. He ultimately died a martyr's death for the Lord; the Scripture makes this very clear: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."(2 Timothy 4:6) Therefore, until the time of his death, God's grace was upon him—a fact evident when he was compelled to recount some of his experiences (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

He concluded by saying, "you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many."(2 Corinthians 1:11). We see that no matter how spiritual a person may be, he still needs the prayers of others.

2. The reason Paul planned to go to Corinth but didn't go

"For our proud confidence (G2746, boasting) is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you. For we write nothing else to you than what you read and understand, and I hope (G1679, trust) you will understand until the end; just as you also partially did understand us, that we are your reason to be proud (G2745) as you also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus. In this confidence I intended at first to come to you, so that you might twice receive a blessing; that is, to pass your way into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be helped on my journey to Judea. Therefore, I was not vacillating when I intended to do this, was I? Or what I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, so that with me there will be yes, yes and no, no at the same time?"(2 Corinthians 1:12-17)

First, we note that the word "proud confidence" (G2746, boasting) is typically translated as in this verse, "Where then is boasting (G2746)? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith."(Romans 3:27) But it carries absolutely no connotation of "boastful" (G213). The word "boastful" (G213) appears only twice: once in this passage— "For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful (G213), arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy."(2 Timothy 3:2) The other occurrence is similar: "slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful (G213), inventors of evil, disobedient to parents."(Romans 1:30) Although the word is translated as "boast" in other passages as well, such as "so that no man may boast (G2744; G2745 and G2746 are derived from this) before God."(1 Corinthians 1:29) A look at the original text in Strong's Concordance makes it clear that a different word is used here. The word "boast" (G2744) appears in this passage: "so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts (G2744), boast (G2744) in the Lord."(1 Corinthians 1:31) Therefore, we cannot rely solely on the translated versions; we need to examine the original text—not for the sake of scholarship, but to gain a more accurate understanding of what the Bible is teaching.

Let us now examine the meaning of the word "boasting" (G2746). It appears 12 times in total, with 7 of those occurrences in 2 Corinthians. Let us look at two representative passages. The first is: "As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting (G2746) of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia."(2 Corinthians 11:10)—which conveys the sense of boasting. Another passage reads: "But as it is, you boast (G212) in your arrogance; all such boasting (G2746, rejoicing, KJV) is evil."(James 4:16) We see that the word "boast" (G2746) conveys the meaning of taking pride and boasting. That is why it (G2746) in 2 Corinthians 1:12 is translated as "proud confidence."

This passage also introduces the word "boast" (G212), and we find that this word also appears only twice. The other instance is: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride (G212) of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."(1 John 2:16) So it is pride that leads to boasting.

Just from a single word—"boasting" (G2746)—we can see so much; how much more, then, can we see what the entire Bible is telling us! From a human perspective, if we do not "letting the Holy Spirit to lead our Bible study," this is simply impossible to achieve! This is

like Paul's second missionary journey, where the Holy Spirit was leading them, not merely guiding them, for the Scripture says, "They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them." (Acts 16:6-7) Ultimately, it was through a vision that He led them westward to Macedonia. We previously discussed a method for "letting the Holy Spirit lead Bible study"—one that anyone can practice and that has been tested—in "250823 1 A method for having life by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead Bible study." Since God is infinite and humans are finite, this is by no means the only method. For example, you can combine this method with your current approach until the Holy Spirit leads you in your Bible study.

If your current method isn't reaching the point of "letting the Holy Spirit to lead your Bible study," I suggest you try this one, because it will ultimately lead you to surrender yourself completely into the Holy Spirit's hands. This method doesn't produce immediate results; as far as I know, it takes at least five years, and you must completely submit yourself to God's absolute sovereignty. Think about it: Paul's knowledge came from revelation. Some say he had to spend three years in the wilderness to receive his revelation. We won't spend any less time than Paul did, so five years—or more—is not a long time. We must learn to wait.

In fact, even when we "letting the Holy Spirit to lead our Bible study," we cannot possibly see everything the entire Bible intends to reveal to us. But we trust in God's absolute sovereignty; He will open our eyes at the right time, allowing us to see what we have not seen before. Of course, this presupposes that we are truly willing—we must not be like the church in Laodicea, which thought it had done many things but had shut the Lord out without even realizing it. Yet the Lord says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Revelation 3:20-22) We truly need ears to hear and a heart to open the door; only then will He not only sit at the table with us but also work within us. Otherwise, how could there be any overcomers?

3. The Gospel that in Christ is yes in Him and Holy Spirit given as pledge

"But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no. For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth. Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm." (2 Corinthians 1:18-24)

From the very beginning, Paul spoke of the faithful God, saying, "...the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are

yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us."(2 Corinthians 1:18-20) It is clear, then, that the gospel is all about Jesus Christ. Why does it say that God is glorified through us? Think about it: God is infinite, while humans are finite—how could God be glorified through us? It is because, as we walk the path of sanctification, we are being transformed step by step into the image of Jesus. With every step, as we manifest a portion of Jesus' image in Christ, that portion brings glory to God.

"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge (G728)."(2 Corinthians 1:21-22) The word "pledge (G728)" appears only three times; the other two instances have the same meaning and are found in these two passages: "Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge (G278)."(2 Corinthians 5:5) and "...the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge (G278) of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."(Ephesians 1:13-14) Some may not be entirely clear on the meaning of the word "pledge (G728)." One way to understand it is to compare it to a mortgage for buying a house. When taking out a mortgage, we often pay a down payment, and the remaining balance, plus interest, is gradually paid off over time; the down payment is equivalent to the pledge.

Christians do indeed have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them, as the Scriptures clearly state: "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, ..." (1 Corinthians 6:19) This was also prophesied long ago in the Old Testament: "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."(Ezekiel 36:26-27)

We have already discussed what he said: "But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth."(2 Corinthians 1:23) At this point, he went on to say, "Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy (G5479); for in your faith (G4102) you are standing firm."(2 Corinthians 1:24) He wanted them to have joy "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy (G5479) in the Holy Spirit."(Romans 14:17) We know that, "...the righteousness of God is revealed from faith (G4102) to faith (G4102); ..." (Romans 1:17) Without faith, it is impossible to have from faith to faith.