

THE DAILY QUIET TIME REFLECTIONS SERIES

TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY

Reflections on the Books of 1 and 2 Corinthians

Eugene Han

Treasure in Jars of Clay: Reflections on the Books of 1 and 2 Corinthians

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The Introduction and the Part One and Part Two introductions draw on the introductory notes of Dr. Thomas L. Constable, used with gratitude for his lay-accessible scholarship on the text of Scripture.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Reading, Reflecting, Together

This book was not written to be read in a single sitting. It was written to be read one day at a time, the way it was first written — a chapter at a time, over the course of several weeks, alongside an open Bible rather than in place of one. The believers in Berea were commended not simply for their eagerness to hear the Word but for their habit of examining the Scriptures every day to see whether what they had been taught was true (Acts 17:11). That daily habit, sustained over years rather than compressed into a season, is the entire aim of this book and of the Quiet Time practice that produced it.

To help establish that rhythm, we have included, as an appendix at the back of this book, the same daily Bible reading plan we have used at dailyqt.org for well over a decade. It walks through the whole of Scripture in a year, a few chapters at a time, and it does not need to be started in January; you are free to begin on whatever date suits you and simply follow the sequence from there. Each of the eight chapters in this book lines up with exactly one day on that plan, from 1 Corinthians 1–4 on the first day to 2 Corinthians 10–13 on the last, so that this book and your own Bible can move through these two letters together, side by side, one day at a time.

First and Second Corinthians are, in an important sense, one continuous correspondence between the apostle Paul and a single troubled church, written perhaps six to nine months apart but addressing the same congregation, the same crises, and in some real measure the same conflict over Paul's own authority. We have kept the two letters in their

traditional canonical order and treated them as Part One and Part Two of this book. Each Part opens with a short introduction to help orient you to the distinct circumstances and tone of the letter you are about to read.

Whether you are reading on your own or working through this book with a group like one of our own Sunday School classes at First Baptist Church in Dallas, we would suggest the following simple rhythm for each day, or for each session if you are meeting weekly as a group:

- 1. Begin and end in prayer.** Ask God, before you open either Bible or book, to teach you something true about Himself that day, and thank Him, when you close both, for whatever He has shown you — even if it is smaller or slower than you expected.
- 2. Read the assigned Scripture.** Using the reading plan in the appendix, read the day's chapters directly from your own Bible before turning to our reflections on them. There is no substitute for reading the text itself first, in whatever translation you trust, and letting it raise its own questions before we offer our own.
- 3. Read the corresponding chapter in this book.** Each chapter walks through that day's reading in the order Scripture presents it, drawing out its major movements and, where it seemed useful, the historical or literary background behind them. Treat it as a conversation about the text you just read, not a replacement for it.
- 4. Answer the discussion questions.** Every chapter closes with four questions sized to fill a forty-five- to sixty-minute group discussion, though they work just as well as slower journaling prompts for a

reader working through the book alone. Some ask you to notice something in the text; most ask you to notice something in yourself.

If you are part of a group, we would encourage you to read both the day's Scripture and the corresponding chapter individually during the week, and then use your time together for the fourth step: praying together and working through the discussion questions as a group. This was, after all, how the material in this book first took shape — not in a study or a library, but in a room full of ordinary readers asking each other what a passage meant and why it mattered, week after week, for years. We hope it will do the same for you.

INTRODUCTION

Corinth was, by any ancient measure, an extraordinary place to plant a church. Rebuilt by Rome roughly a century after its Greek predecessor had been razed to the ground, the city sat astride the narrow isthmus connecting northern Greece to the Peloponnese, a natural crossroads where cargo, ideas, and money all changed hands constantly between the eastern and western halves of the Mediterranean world. That location made Corinth wealthy, cosmopolitan, and diverse — a mixture of Roman colonists, native Greeks, a sizable Jewish community, and transplants from every direction who came for opportunity and stayed for the trade. It also made Corinth notorious. Centuries before Paul ever arrived, the Greeks had already coined a verb from the city's name, *korinthiazo*, meaning simply "to act like a Corinthian" — that is, to live sexually promiscuously — and the enormous temple to Aphrodite that once crowned the mountain overlooking the city had, in the old Greek city's heyday, employed hundreds of temple prostitutes as an ordinary feature of local worship. One modern writer has aptly compared Paul's Corinth to a first-century combination of a great financial capital, a great entertainment capital, and a great vice capital all at once. A church planted here, in other words, was never going to have the luxury of quietly reflecting its surrounding culture. It would either resist the pull of "the city" or be swallowed by it, and both of the letters in this volume are, at bottom, Paul's sustained effort to keep that from happening.

Paul had planted the Corinthian church himself, spending eighteen months in the city on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–18), and both letters gathered in this volume were written a handful of years later, while Paul was based in Ephesus and then Macedonia on his third

journey, addressing a congregation that had grown, splintered, and repeatedly needed his direct intervention to hold together. First Corinthians responds to two separate streams of bad news — a report of factions and open scandal that had reached Paul through members of a household called "Chloe's people" (1:11), and a list of questions the church itself had written to ask him (7:1) — and Paul answers both in turn, first confronting the divisions and moral compromises the Corinthians had not thought to ask about, then working methodically through the questions they had. Second Corinthians was written under very different circumstances, some months later, after a painful personal visit to Corinth that had gone badly for Paul, a severe corrective letter (now lost to us) sent by the hand of Titus, and finally the relief of hearing from Titus in Macedonia that most of the church had repented and disciplined the ringleaders of the opposition against Paul — though a defiant minority, apparently influenced by traveling teachers who denied Paul's full apostolic authority, still had not.

Read together, these two letters trace something like a single extended pastoral crisis from its worst point toward its resolution, and they do so by returning again and again to two entities standing in tension with one another: "the church of God" and "the city" in which it lived (1 Corinthians 1:2). The church of God is a people who share God's own life, submit to His governing will, and cooperate in His work; the city of Corinth was ignorant of that life, governed by its own self-will, and indifferent or hostile to God's purposes. First Corinthians largely addresses what happens when the spirit of that city — its intellectual pride, its moral laxity, its relentless self-interest — invades the church from within: factions built around admired teachers rather than around Christ, tolerated sexual immorality, believers suing one another in

Roman courts, chaos in worship, confusion over spiritual gifts, and even doubt about the resurrection itself. Second Corinthians largely addresses what happens when the church, having begun to recover, must then define what genuine Christian ministry actually looks like against a background of continued opposition, personal suffering, and rival teachers offering the Corinthians a more impressive-sounding alternative to Paul's own weak, afflicted, unimpressive example. The two letters share Paul's conviction, made explicit at the center of both, that the church succeeds precisely to the degree that it resists conforming to its city and instead stands ready to bring the gospel into it — proclaiming, as Paul put it, nothing but "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2), and carrying that treasure, as he would later put it, in nothing more impressive than jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4:7).

PART ONE

1 Corinthians: Wisdom, Weakness, and a Divided Church

1 Corinthians 1–16

Paul wrote this letter from Ephesus, near the end of a three-year stay there on his third missionary journey, probably in the late winter or early spring of A.D. 56 — a handful of years after he had left Corinth for the last time. The letter's traditional title can mislead a modern reader: this is not the first letter Paul ever sent to Corinth. He mentions an earlier letter, now lost, in which he had already warned the church about associating with sexually immoral people (5:9); what we call "1 Corinthians" is simply the first of the two letters that survive in our Bibles.

What prompted Paul to write was not one problem but a convergence of several. Members of a household belonging to a woman named Chloe had reported to Paul that the church had split into rival factions, each attaching itself to a different admired teacher — Paul, Apollos, Peter, or, more piously but no less divisively, "Christ" as a rival slogan of its own (1:12). Alongside this report of quarreling came word of far more serious tolerated sin: a man in the church was involved in a sexual relationship condemned even by Corinth's own famously permissive culture, and the church, rather than being grieved, was "proud" of its tolerance (5:1–2). Believers were dragging one another into pagan courts to settle disputes. And on top of all this, a letter had arrived from the Corinthians themselves, asking Paul's guidance on marriage, food sacrificed to idols, the use of spiritual gifts in worship, and the collection being gathered for the poor believers in Jerusalem (7:1). First Corinthians answers all of it in turn — first the oral reports of division and scandal (chapters 1–6),

then the Corinthians' own written questions (chapters 7–16) — making this, of all Paul's letters, perhaps the most practical and the most obviously "occasional," written to meet one real congregation's real and pressing needs rather than to offer a systematic exposition of doctrine.

What unifies this sprawling range of topics is a single underlying diagnosis. The Corinthian believers were, in Paul's own words, still "worldly," still "infants in Christ" (3:1) — genuinely saved, genuinely gifted, and genuinely in danger of losing their distinct witness because the values of their surrounding city had crept back into the church largely unchallenged: an intellectual culture that prized clever rhetoric and celebrity teachers over the plain message of a crucified Messiah, a moral culture that treated personal freedom as an end in itself rather than something to be surrendered in love, and a competitive culture that measured spiritual maturity by which impressive gift a person could display rather than by how much that person served others. Against every one of these instincts Paul sets a single corrective, developed differently in each section but always the same at its root: the cross of Christ, which the world calls foolishness and weakness, is in fact the wisdom and the power of God (1:18–25), and any church that has genuinely understood the cross has no more room left for the boasting, the rivalry, or the self-indulgence its surrounding culture takes for granted.

CHAPTER ONE

1 Corinthians 1–4

Paul opens with thanksgiving rather than rebuke, and it is worth noticing how deliberately he does it. In the letter's first ten verses, he can hardly go two sentences without mentioning "the Lord Jesus Christ" by name, and he thanks God specifically that the Corinthians have been "enriched in every way — with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge," so that they "do not lack any spiritual gift" (1:4–7). This is not incidental praise. The gifts Paul mentions here — speech and knowledge — are the same broad categories of spiritual gifts he will return to at length in chapters 12 through 14, and Paul's point in raising them so early is that these gifts were given by God to confirm the apostolic testimony about Christ among the Corinthians, much as the writer of Hebrews would later describe God "testifying" to the gospel message "by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Hebrews 2:4). Whatever else this letter will have to say about the misuse of spiritual gifts, it opens by affirming that the gifts themselves were never the problem. The problem, as the rest of the letter makes clear, was what the Corinthians had done with them.

That problem surfaces immediately in verse 10, where Paul appeals for unity: "that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." It is easy to read that appeal in isolation and apply it to almost any disagreement in almost any church, but Paul goes on to define exactly what kind of division he has in mind, and it is worth being precise about it. Members of Chloe's household had reported that the Corinthians had split into camps built around admired teachers — "I follow Paul," "I follow Apollos," "I follow Cephas," "I follow Christ" (1:12) — a personality-based rivalry closer to fandom than to doctrinal

conviction. Paul's response is a string of deflating rhetorical questions: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" (1:13). Later he will press the same point with an agricultural image — "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (3:6–7) — insisting that any church leader, however gifted, is nothing more than a servant through whom God works, never a figure worth organizing a faction around. The kind of division that genuinely damages a church, in other words, is not disagreement over what is true; it is loyalty to a person instead of loyalty to Christ and His Word.

Paul's deeper diagnosis of this rivalry runs through the heart of chapters 1 and 2: the Corinthians had absorbed their city's taste for clever, prestigious rhetoric, and they were quietly measuring the gospel — and the teachers who preached it — by that same worldly standard. Against this Paul sets what he calls "the message of the cross," which is "foolishness to those who are perishing" but "the power of God" to those being saved (1:18). He deliberately reminds the Corinthians that he had not come to them with eloquence or impressive wisdom but "in weakness with great fear and trembling," so that their faith "would not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power" (2:3–5). The point is not that intelligence or rhetorical skill are themselves sinful; it is that the cross of a crucified Messiah simply cannot be dressed up to satisfy worldly standards of wisdom or strength, and any church that tries to make it more palatable that way has misunderstood the very thing it is trying to proclaim. God, Paul says, deliberately chose what the world calls foolish and weak, "so that no one may boast before him" (1:29). A gospel that

flatters human wisdom leaves room for human boasting; a gospel that confounds it leaves room for nothing but grace.

This same principle — that nothing in ministry is ultimately the minister's own achievement — reappears in chapter 3, where Paul shifts from an agricultural image to a construction one. Every minister builds on the one foundation, Jesus Christ, and every minister's work will eventually be tested "with fire" to reveal its quality (3:12–13). It is easy to misread this image as a statement about an individual believer's personal holiness, but the context is still Paul's argument about factions and teachers: the "work" in view is the work of ministry itself, and what the fire tests is not a worker's character but the doctrinal soundness of what that worker actually built and taught. Sound teaching, rooted in Scripture, survives the fire; teaching that has strayed from it does not, "though the one who built the work will himself be saved, even though only as one escaping through the flames" (3:15). The passage functions less as a warning about personal sanctification and more as a warning to teachers and to the churches who follow them: build only on Christ, and build only with materials — doctrines, practices, priorities — that will still be standing when everything else has burned away.

Paul brings this whole opening section to a close with a single compact command that could serve as a summary of the entire letter: "Do not go beyond what is written" (4:6). Every other principle Paul has argued for so far — no boasting in human wisdom, no factions around human teachers, no ministry built on anything but Christ — ultimately rests on this one commitment to the sufficiency and final authority of Scripture. Whenever we, individually or as a church, begin treating a leader's opinion, a personal experience, or a cultural trend as carrying the same weight as the written Word, we have already begun to repeat the

Corinthians' mistake, however sincerely it may be intended. Paul's appeal to them is the same appeal every generation of the church needs to hear again: hold fast to what has been written, test everything else by it, and let that alone be the ground on which unity is finally built.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul reminds the Corinthians that their spiritual gifts were never the problem — how they used them was. Have you ever seen something genuinely good in a church, a gift or an ability, become a source of division rather than unity? What made the difference?
2. The Corinthians organized themselves around admired teachers rather than around Christ. Is there a modern equivalent of this kind of loyalty in your own experience of church — to a personality, a movement, or a particular voice — that this passage would call you to examine?
3. Paul insists that the cross, by its very nature, resists being dressed up to satisfy worldly standards of wisdom or impressiveness. Where in your own faith have you been tempted to make the gospel sound more sophisticated or more palatable than it actually is?
4. "Do not go beyond what is written" (4:6) is offered as a summary principle for the whole letter. What would it look like this week to test something you currently believe or practice — even something you feel strongly about — against this simple standard?

CHAPTER TWO

1 Corinthians 5–8

Having dealt with factions built around personalities, Paul turns in chapter 5 to a much graver problem the Corinthians had not merely tolerated but taken pride in: a man in the church was living in a sexual relationship condemned even by pagan Corinth's own standards, "and you are proud!" Paul writes, "Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning?" (5:1–2). His remedy is startling — hand the man over to Satan, that is, remove him from the protective fellowship of the church, "so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord" (5:5). The purpose clause matters as much as the discipline itself. This is not banishment for its own sake, still less a way of washing the church's hands of an embarrassment; it is a severe mercy aimed at the man's own eventual restoration, the same purpose Paul will describe achieved when he later tells the Corinthians to welcome this same man back in love once he has repented (2 Corinthians 2:6–8). Church discipline, rightly practiced, is never a substitute for love. It is one of love's more difficult instruments.

This raises the question of judging that runs through the whole section, and Paul is careful to draw a distinction modern readers often miss. "What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church?" he asks. "Are you not to judge those inside?" (5:12). Christians have no standing to sit in judgment over the conduct of unbelievers, who share neither the church's covenant nor the Spirit's help in keeping it; but believers are commanded to hold one another accountable to the same Word of God by which all of us will ourselves be judged. This kind of judging is not the harsh, self-righteous condemnation Scripture elsewhere forbids — it is discernment exercised for the sake of healing, the same spirit found in Jesus's own instructions for confronting a sinning brother (Matthew

18:15–20) and in Paul's later charge to "restore that person gently" (Galatians 6:1). A church that refuses to practice it at all, out of a misplaced fear of seeming judgmental, has not become more loving. It has simply become less willing to do the hard work love sometimes requires.

Chapter 6 extends the same principle of care for the church's witness into the civil courts. Corinthian believers, apparently confident in the justice of their own grievances, had begun suing one another before pagan judges, and Paul's response is blunt: "The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already" (6:7). His argument is not primarily about the merits of any particular case but about what such lawsuits communicate to a watching city — that the church's love for its own members runs no deeper than any other legal dispute between strangers. Better, Paul says, to accept being wronged than to let a temporal grievance fracture an eternal bond between brothers and sisters in Christ. The chapter closes with a reminder of what these same believers had been before their conversion — "and that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (6:11) — a reminder meant to press the question of why people so thoroughly transformed by grace would still handle their own disputes exactly as the unconverted world does.

Chapters 7 and 8 then turn to the specific questions the Corinthians had written to ask Paul, beginning with marriage, celibacy, and divorce, and moving into the church's first major dispute about Christian freedom: whether believers could eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols before being sold in the marketplace. Paul's answer is neither a flat "yes" nor a flat "no." Knowledgeable believers understood that "an idol is nothing at

all in the world" and that "there is no God but one" (8:4), so the food itself carried no spiritual danger for them; but not every believer in Corinth had that same settled confidence, and some, still shaped by their own former idolatry, could not eat such food without feeling they were participating again in the worship of a false god. Paul's counsel to the stronger believer is not to abandon what he knows to be true but to hold that freedom loosely enough to set it aside for a weaker brother's sake: "Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak" (8:9). Knowledge, Paul says, "puffs up," but love "builds up" (8:1) — and a church that has correct theology but no willingness to restrain its own freedom for the sake of others has, in Paul's estimation, understood only half the gospel it claims to believe.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul's purpose in church discipline was the offender's eventual restoration, not merely the church's own comfort or reputation. Have you seen accountability practiced in a way that aimed at healing rather than punishment? What made it feel redemptive rather than merely harsh?
2. Paul distinguishes sharply between judging outsiders, which is not the church's business, and holding fellow believers accountable, which is. Where might you be avoiding a hard but loving conversation with someone inside the church out of fear of seeming judgmental?
3. Paul argues that Christians taking each other to court damages the church's witness more than any individual grievance is worth. Has protecting your own rights or reputation ever cost you something more valuable — a relationship, a witness, a peace — that you only recognized afterward?

4. The "weaker brother" principle asks stronger believers to voluntarily limit their freedom for someone else's sake. Is there a freedom you currently exercise without a second thought that this principle would call you to reconsider, not because it is wrong in itself, but because of its effect on someone else?

CHAPTER THREE

1 Corinthians 9–11

Chapters 9 through 11 continue a single argument that begins back in chapter 8 and runs through to 11:1, and it helps to see the whole arc at once: this entire section is about the proper boundaries of Christian freedom, not — as it is sometimes misread — a simple celebration of that freedom. Chapter 9 applies the principle to Paul's own ministry. Though he had every right as an apostle to receive financial support from the churches he served, he chose not to exercise that right, "so that we would not put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ" (9:12). He became, by his own description, "all things to all people, that by all possible means" he might save some (9:22), voluntarily surrendering privileges he was entitled to for the sake of a greater good — the same self-restraint he had just asked of the "stronger" Corinthian believers in chapter 8, now demonstrated in his own life as the pattern he wants them to imitate.

Chapter 10 grounds this warning in Israel's own wilderness history. The generation that came out of Egypt, Paul reminds the Corinthians, had experienced remarkable spiritual privileges of its own — passing through the sea, eating manna, drinking water from the rock, all of which Paul describes in strikingly Christian terms as spiritual food, spiritual drink, "for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ" (10:4) — and yet most of that generation still fell into idolatry, sexual immorality, and grumbling, and were struck down in the wilderness as a result. "These things happened to them as examples," Paul warns, "and were written down as warnings for us" (10:11). Having spiritual privilege, in other words, is never a guarantee against spiritual failure; if anything, it raises the stakes. The chapter's warning culminates in a call to flee idolatry altogether (10:14) before Paul returns, in its

closing verses, to the specific question of food sacrificed to idols and lands on a broader principle that could summarize this whole three-chapter section: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God... just as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved" (10:31–33).

Chapter 11 opens with one of the more debated passages in the New Testament: Paul's instructions about head coverings during prayer and prophecy (11:2–16). Whatever else is uncertain about this passage, its basic shape is not: Paul commends the Corinthians for holding to what he had originally taught them, in the face of pressure from some "contentious" party to adopt a different practice (11:16), and he grounds his teaching not in Corinthian custom but in the order of creation itself — God, Christ, man, and woman (11:3) — and in the pattern of nature, where "if a woman has long hair, it is her glory" (11:15). Because the passage never actually specifies, until its final verses, what the required "covering" consists of, careful readers have long divided over whether Paul has an external garment in mind or a woman's own hair, given as a natural covering. What both readings agree on, and what is easy to miss amid the debate over particulars, is Paul's underlying point: a woman's covered head, whatever its precise form, functioned as a visible sign of a divinely established order, "and for this reason, and because of the angels," Paul says a woman ought to have this sign of authority on her head (11:10) — language suggesting the principle reaches beyond the walls of any one church meeting into how believers, seen even by unseen witnesses, honor the order God has established between men and women. Whichever side of this debate a reader finally lands on, Paul's closing appeal is worth taking to heart on its own terms: "If anyone wants

to be contentious about this, we have no other practice — nor do the churches of God" (11:16). Whatever else this passage teaches, it does not appear to have been intended as grounds for quarreling.

The chapter closes with Paul's correction of a much less ambiguous abuse: the Corinthians' observance of the Lord's Supper had become an occasion for exactly the kind of self-interest the rest of the letter has been correcting. Wealthier members were apparently eating and drinking without waiting for poorer believers, who arrived later from work and went hungry while others grew drunk (11:20–22), turning a meal meant to proclaim the Lord's death and unite the church into another arena for the same social divisions Paul had already confronted in chapter 1. His corrective calls the church back to the meal's original meaning and warns that eating and drinking "in an unworthy manner" — without regard for fellow believers or for the weight of what the meal represents — invites God's own discipline (11:27–30). Read across the whole section, chapters 9 through 11 press a single, consistent claim from three very different angles: genuine Christian freedom is never freedom to serve yourself. It is freedom, willingly surrendered again and again, for the sake of others.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul voluntarily gave up a right he was entitled to — financial support — for the sake of the gospel's advance. Is there a right or privilege you hold that you might need to set aside, not because it's wrong, but for the sake of a greater good?
2. Israel's wilderness generation had remarkable spiritual privileges and still fell into serious failure. Where might spiritual privilege or long

familiarity with the faith be making you less alert to temptation rather than more protected from it?

3. Whatever your own view of the head covering passage, Paul closes it by refusing to let it become a source of quarreling. Is there a secondary issue in your own church experience that has generated more conflict than the text itself seems to warrant?
4. The Corinthians' observance of the Lord's Supper had become divided along the same social lines Paul confronts throughout the letter. What would it look like for your own church's shared meals or gatherings to more visibly close, rather than reflect, the social divisions in the wider culture around you?

CHAPTER FOUR

1 Corinthians 12–14

Chapter 12 opens a new section with a telling admission: the Corinthians did not lack spiritual gifts, but they were, in Paul's word, "ignorant" about them (12:1) — uncertain about their nature, their purpose, and how they were meant to be used. Paul traces that ignorance to its root before he ever lists a single gift. Many of the Corinthian believers had come out of pagan idolatry, where ecstatic experience and mystical union with a god were the whole point of religious practice, and Paul's first concern is to draw a sharp line between that counterfeit and the true work of the Holy Spirit: "no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed,' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (12:3). Only then does he turn to the gifts themselves, insisting that however varied they are, they come from "the same Spirit," are given for "the common good" (12:4, 7), and unite believers into a single body in which every part, however humble it may seem, is genuinely necessary (12:12–26). The chapter's logic is worth sitting with: a gift's value was never meant to be measured by how impressive it looked to others, but by how faithfully it served the whole body.

Chapter 13 interrupts the discussion of gifts with what may be the most familiar passage in either letter, and its placement is not incidental. Paul has just spent an entire chapter insisting that every gift exists for the common good; now he supplies the standard by which that service is actually measured. Without love, he says, even the most spectacular gifts — tongues, prophecy, knowledge, even sacrificial generosity — amount to nothing (13:1–3). What follows is not primarily a wedding reading, however often it is used as one, but a description of the kind of patient, others-focused character that alone makes any spiritual gift genuinely

useful to the church: love that is "patient," "kind," that "does not envy," "does not boast," "is not self-seeking," that "always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (13:4–7). Every gift the Corinthians were competing over — tongues, prophecy, knowledge — will one day pass away, Paul says, because each is partial and provisional; but "love never fails" (13:8), and so it alone deserves to be called, as Paul introduces it, "the most excellent way" (12:31).

That standard governs everything Paul says about specific gifts in chapter 14, especially tongues, which had apparently become a point of particular pride in Corinth. Paul's own understanding of this gift, throughout the New Testament, is that it refers to the miraculous ability to speak a real, unlearned human language, given as a confirming sign — most clearly displayed at Pentecost, where a diverse crowd of Jews from across the empire each heard the gospel "in our own language" (Acts 2:6–8), and echoed at the handful of other turning points in Acts where the gospel formally crossed a boundary, to Samaritans, to Gentiles, and to disciples of John the Baptist. Whatever the gift's origin, Paul does not deny its genuineness in Corinth, but he consistently subordinates it to prophecy — intelligible, Spirit-given speech that the whole congregation can understand and be built up by — because "anyone who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified" (14:5). His reasoning throughout the chapter returns again and again to this single test: does it edify the church, or only the individual speaker? Tongues spoken without interpretation, he says, "will speak into the air" (14:9) and benefit no one, however moving the experience may feel to the person exercising the gift; worse, an outsider or unbeliever wandering into a service full of unintelligible speech would reasonably conclude the whole

congregation had lost its mind (14:23). Paul's solution is neither to forbid tongues outright nor to celebrate them uncritically, but to insist on order: at most two or three speakers, each taking turns, always with interpretation, and complete silence otherwise (14:27–28). The chapter's closing summary could stand over the whole three-chapter section: "everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (14:40) — because a God who is not a God of disorder cannot be honored by worship that has descended into competitive chaos, however spiritually impressive that chaos might feel from the inside.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul insists a gift's value lies in how it serves the whole body, not in how impressive it appears. Is there a gift, skill, or role in your own life you have measured more by visibility than by actual usefulness to others?
2. First Corinthians 13 describes love primarily as patient, others-focused action rather than as a feeling. Which specific quality in that description — patience, not being easily angered, not keeping a record of wrongs — is hardest for you to practice consistently right now?
3. Paul's repeated test throughout chapter 14 is whether a practice edifies the whole church or only the individual. Where in your own spiritual life might you be prioritizing a personally meaningful experience over something that would actually build up others around you?
4. Paul closes this section by insisting that worship be done "in a fitting and orderly way." Have you experienced a season of spiritual

enthusiasm, in yourself or in a church you were part of, that would have benefited from more of this kind of order?

CHAPTER FIVE

1 Corinthians 15–16

After three chapters spent correcting disorder in worship, Paul turns in chapter 15 to a doctrinal crisis at the very center of the Christian faith: some in Corinth were apparently denying any future bodily resurrection of the dead. Paul's response begins by restating the gospel itself in its most compressed, creedal form — a summary he says he had received and simply passed on, "of first importance," that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared" to Peter, to the Twelve, to more than five hundred believers at once, most of whom were still alive and could be asked directly, and finally to Paul himself (15:3–8). This is among the earliest and most tightly formulated statements of the gospel anywhere in the New Testament, and Paul's appeal to living eyewitnesses is deliberate: the resurrection he is defending is not a symbol or a private conviction but a claimed historical event, open in principle to verification by anyone willing to ask the people who were there.

Paul then presses the logical stakes of denying this event. If there is no resurrection of the dead in general, he argues, then Christ himself was not raised either, since he too was a dead man; and if Christ was not raised, the whole Christian message collapses with it — "your faith is futile; you are still in your sins," and even believers who have already died "are lost" (15:14, 17–18). "If only for this life we have hope in Christ," Paul concludes, "we are of all people most to be pitied" (15:19). Having shown what is lost if the resurrection is false, Paul spends the rest of the chapter describing what is true because it is not: Christ's resurrection is "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (15:20), the first

installment of a harvest that guarantees the rest will follow in exactly the same way. He describes the resurrection body itself through a series of contrasts — sown perishable, raised imperishable; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual one (15:42–44) — not a resuscitated corpse returning to its old limitations, but a genuinely transformed body suited for a life no longer subject to decay or death. The chapter's triumphant close, "Death has been swallowed up in victory... thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:54, 57), is not wishful thinking layered over an uncertain hope. It is the direct, logical consequence of an event Paul has just spent an entire chapter insisting really happened, in space and time, before witnesses who were still available to be questioned.

The letter closes, almost abruptly, with practical matters: instructions for a collection being gathered for poor believers in the Jerusalem church, Paul's travel plans, and a series of personal greetings (16:1–24). The transition can feel jarring after the heights of chapter 15, but it is worth noticing rather than skipping past. A letter that has just spent an entire chapter defending the reality of the resurrection and the hope it secures closes not with more theology but with an ordinary act of generosity toward believers the Corinthians would likely never meet. That sequence is itself a kind of quiet argument: the resurrection is not meant to produce Christians who are so fixed on the world to come that they neglect practical love in this one. It is meant to produce exactly the opposite — believers so secure in what has already been guaranteed to them that they can give freely, plan carefully, and love concretely in the present, precisely because the future is no longer in doubt.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul grounds the resurrection in verifiable eyewitness testimony rather than private religious experience. How does thinking of the resurrection as a claimed historical event, rather than primarily a matter of personal faith, change how you would explain or defend it to someone who doubts it?
2. Paul argues that if the resurrection is false, Christian faith is not simply incomplete but "futile," and believers "of all people most to be pitied." Have you ever treated the resurrection as one important doctrine among many, rather than as the foundation everything else in your faith actually rests on?
3. The resurrection body is described as genuinely transformed, not merely resuscitated — imperishable, powerful, spiritual. How does a clearer picture of what you are actually promised change the way you think about aging, illness, or your own eventual death?
4. The letter moves from the height of resurrection hope directly into practical instructions about a financial collection for other believers. Where in your own life might a deeper confidence in what is secured for your future free you to be more generous or less anxious in the present?

PART TWO

2 Corinthians: Treasure in Jars of Clay

2 Corinthians 1–13

First Corinthians did not resolve the conflict between Paul and the Corinthian church so much as begin it. Sometime after that letter arrived, opposition to Paul's authority hardened rather than dissolved, apparently rallying around a single vocal ringleader (2:5–11; 7:12) and a group of traveling teachers who claimed a standing equal or superior to Paul's own. Paul made a brief, personal visit to Corinth to address the situation directly; it went badly, leaving him publicly insulted and, by his own account, in real anguish (2:1; 7:8). He followed that painful visit with a severe corrective letter, now lost to us, sent by the hand of Titus, and then waited anxiously for word of how it had been received — so anxiously that he left an open door for ministry in Troas to go find Titus in Macedonia instead (2:12–13). What Titus finally reported, once the two men met, was largely good news: most of the Corinthian church had repented, had disciplined the offending party as Paul had asked, and had genuinely longed to see Paul reconciled to them (7:6–7, 11); but an unrepentant minority, seemingly still under the influence of those same traveling teachers, continued to reject Paul's authority outright.

Second Corinthians was written in the immediate aftermath of that relief, probably from somewhere in Macedonia in the fall or winter of A.D. 56, and it carries the emotional texture of everything Paul had just been through — writers across the centuries have called it the most personal, most unguarded of all his letters, one written, as an old description has it, "with a quill dipped in tears." Its structure follows Paul's own shifting concerns in sequence: chapters 1 through 7 largely

address the majority who had repented, explaining and defending his own conduct and offering a sustained meditation on what genuine Christian ministry actually looks like; chapters 8 and 9 turn to practical instructions for completing the Jerusalem collection first raised at the end of 1 Corinthians; and chapters 10 through 13 turn, in noticeably sharper tones, to answer the unrepentant minority directly, defending Paul's apostolic credentials against the "super-apostles" who had been undermining them (11:5; 12:11). Readers have long noticed how different these final four chapters feel from the first nine, and some have wondered whether they originally belonged to a separate letter; the more likely explanation, and the one this volume follows, is that Paul wrote chapters 10 through 13 after chapters 1 through 9, addressing a different audience within the same congregation with the same pen but a different tone, the way any pastor might write warmly to a reconciled majority and firmly to a defiant remnant within a single letter.

Where 1 Corinthians is occupied chiefly with correcting the church's internal disorder, 2 Corinthians is occupied chiefly with defining the nature of genuine Christian ministry — its true source of authority, the resources that sustain it, and the paradoxical shape it actually takes in a fallen world. Paul's answer, worked out across all thirteen chapters but distilled most memorably in a single image at the letter's center, is that the treasure of the gospel is always carried by ordinary, breakable people, "so that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (4:7). Where the Corinthians, and the rival teachers courting them, wanted a ministry that looked impressive, Paul offers a ministry that looks weak, afflicted, and unremarkable on the outside — and insists, against every instinct the surrounding culture had trained into the Corinthians, that this is not a defect in his ministry but its entire point.

CHAPTER SIX

2 Corinthians 1–4

Paul opens this letter not with a defense but with worship, blessing God as "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles" (1:3–4) — and then immediately turns that comfort outward, explaining that God comforts His people precisely so that they, in turn, can comfort others going through similar trials. The logic runs in an unexpected direction. "If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation," Paul writes, resisting the more natural expectation that his own suffering should call for the Corinthians' sympathy rather than deliver them a benefit of their own (1:6). Ministry, on this account, is never self-focused even in its hardest moments; whatever affliction Paul endures, and whatever comfort God supplies him in the middle of it, exists ultimately to be passed along to someone else who needs it.

Paul then turns to defend a specific, painful decision: he had promised an earlier visit to Corinth and changed his plans, and his critics had seized on the change as proof of fickleness, someone who says "Yes, yes" and means "No, no" (1:17). His answer reframes the whole question around God's own faithfulness rather than his personal travel itinerary — "for no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ" (1:20) — and explains that he had actually postponed the visit out of mercy, not caprice, wanting to spare the church another painful confrontation so soon after the last one (1:23–2:1). This leads directly into Paul's instructions concerning the man whose discipline he had called for in his earlier letters: now that the man had genuinely repented, Paul urges the church to "forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2:7), warning that unresolved grief,

left to fester past its purpose, becomes its own kind of danger. Discipline that never ends in restoration was never truly discipline in the first place; it has become something closer to punishment for its own sake, which Scripture nowhere commends.

Chapters 3 and 4 then move into some of the richest theological material in either letter, contrasting the ministry of the old covenant, given through Moses on tablets of stone, with the ministry of the new covenant, written by the Spirit on human hearts (3:3, 6). Moses had to veil his face after meeting with God because the glory, however real, was fading and could not be looked at directly by a sinful people (3:13; Exodus 34:29–35); believers under the new covenant, by contrast, "with unveiled faces" behold the Lord's glory directly and are being progressively transformed into his likeness, "with ever-increasing glory" (3:18). This surpassing glory, however, is entrusted to remarkably unglamorous vessels. "We have this treasure in jars of clay," Paul writes, using an image drawn from the cheap, disposable earthenware pots common in every Corinthian household, "to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (4:7). The chapter's famous catalog of afflictions that follows — hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, struck down (4:8–9) — is not a list of unfortunate obstacles to genuine ministry. It is, Paul insists, the very shape genuine ministry is meant to take, because a treasure this valuable, carried in a container this fragile, can only be explained by the power of the One who put it there.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul describes the comfort he receives from God as something meant to be passed on to others, not kept for himself. Has a difficulty you

have walked through ever become, later, a specific way you were able to comfort someone else going through the same thing?

2. Paul urges the church to forgive and restore a repentant man quickly, warning that prolonged, unresolved discipline becomes its own danger. Is there someone you have been slow to fully forgive or welcome back, even after genuine repentance, because the process of restoration has simply gone on too long?
3. The new covenant is described as offering unveiled, direct access to God's glory that the old covenant, for all its real glory, could not provide. How does this comparison change your sense of what you have been given, compared to believers who lived before Christ?
4. Paul insists that the "jars of clay" image — treasure carried in fragile, unimpressive containers — is not a defect in ministry but its entire point. Where in your own life have you tried to hide or minimize your own weakness, when it might actually be the very thing that makes God's power visible?

CHAPTER SEVEN

2 Corinthians 5–9

Paul opens chapter 5 by looking past the "jars of clay" language of chapter 4 toward what lies on the other side of their eventual breaking: a permanent, heavenly dwelling to replace this present "earthly tent" (5:1). He is careful to clarify what Christians should hope for and what we should not. The goal is not to be unclothed, as though the body itself were the problem, but to be further clothed, "so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life" (5:4) — a hope of resurrection and transformation, not escape from embodiment altogether. Paul's confidence rests on the Spirit given as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come (5:5), and it is this confidence that lets him say plainly that to be "away from the body" is to be "at home with the Lord" (5:8), a promise as immediate and direct as the one Jesus made to the criminal on the cross beside him: "today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

This settled hope about the future becomes the engine for everything Paul says about ministry in the present. "For Christ's love compels us," he writes, "because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again" (5:14–15). Out of this compulsion comes the letter's central description of what conversion actually accomplishes — "if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (5:17) — and the equally central description of what ministry now consists of: "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ... and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation... we are therefore Christ's ambassadors" (5:19–20). An ambassador speaks for someone else, under someone else's authority, and Paul's entire self-understanding as a minister flows from

this single image: not a self-appointed authority defending his own reputation, as his critics accused him of doing, but a representative pleading, on Christ's behalf, "be reconciled to God" (5:20).

Chapters 6 and 7 continue this appeal directly to the Corinthians, urging them not to receive God's grace in vain (6:1) and pleading for the same wide-open affection from them that Paul has shown toward them — "we have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you... open wide your hearts also" (6:11, 13). Chapters 8 and 9 then turn to entirely practical matters: instructions for completing the collection for the Jerusalem church that had first been raised back in 1 Corinthians 16. Paul holds up the example of the Macedonian churches, who gave generously "even beyond their ability" out of "their extreme poverty," entirely of their own accord (8:1–5), and grounds the entire appeal in the pattern of Christ himself: "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (8:9). Paul is careful throughout not to command a specific amount — "each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (9:7) — but he is equally clear that generosity, rightly understood, is not a peripheral spiritual discipline. It is the direct, visible fruit of having genuinely grasped the reconciliation Christ purchased at his own far greater cost.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul's hope for the future is resurrection and transformation, not escape from bodily life altogether. How does this distinction shape the way you think about what you are actually hoping for beyond this life?

2. Paul describes believers as "Christ's ambassadors," representing someone else rather than defending their own reputation. Where in your own life do you find it hardest to represent Christ rather than yourself — in a conversation, a conflict, or a decision?
3. Paul points to the Macedonian churches, who gave generously out of genuine poverty, entirely of their own accord. What has kept you from giving as freely as you might, and is it really a matter of ability, or something else?
4. Paul grounds Christian generosity in the pattern of Christ, who became poor so that others might become rich. How would remembering that pattern specifically change a financial decision you are currently facing?

CHAPTER EIGHT

2 Corinthians 10–13

The letter's tone shifts noticeably at chapter 10, turning from warm appeal to direct confrontation, as Paul addresses the unrepentant minority still resisting his authority. His opponents had apparently mocked him for being "timid" in person while "bold" in his letters (10:1), and had held him up against a group of impressive-sounding traveling teachers Paul sarcastically calls "super-apostles" (11:5; 12:11) — polished speakers who, unlike Paul, accepted payment for their ministry and apparently carried themselves with a confidence the Corinthians found more persuasive than Paul's own weakness and suffering. Paul refuses to compete with them on their own terms. "We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves," he writes; "when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise" (10:12).

Chapters 11 and 12 contain what Paul himself calls "a little foolishness" (11:1) — a reluctant, almost embarrassed boast, forced on him only because the Corinthians had let themselves be so impressed by his rivals' self-promotion that Paul saw no other way to expose the comparison for what it was. If his opponents want to boast in their credentials, Paul will boast too, but he inverts the entire category of what is worth boasting about: instead of listing honors, he lists beatings, imprisonments, shipwrecks, sleepless nights, hunger, and constant anxiety for all the churches (11:23–28). When he finally does mention a genuine spiritual privilege — a man, almost certainly himself though he speaks of it in the third person out of evident discomfort, "caught up to the third heaven" and shown things "that no one is permitted to tell" (12:2–4) — he immediately undercuts any pride the experience might have supplied

him by describing the "thorn in my flesh" God gave him to keep him from becoming conceited over it (12:7). Three times he pleaded with the Lord to remove it; three times the answer was the same: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (12:9). Paul's response to that answer is the theological center of the entire letter, and arguably of both letters together: "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me... For when I am weak, then I am strong" (12:9–10).

The letter closes with warnings rather than warm farewells — Paul anticipates a third visit and promises he will not spare those who have refused to repent (12:14; 13:1–2), while urging the whole church, one final time, to "examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith" (13:5). The final benediction, familiar from countless church services since, is worth reading in light of everything that came before it: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (13:14). It is not a generic close. It is the last word of a letter that has just spent thirteen chapters insisting that genuine ministry looks like grace poured into weakness, love proven through suffering endured for others' sake, and fellowship maintained even through painful visits, severe letters, and a congregation's slow, hard-won repentance. A treasure carried the whole way through in nothing more impressive than a jar of clay — and shown, precisely because of that, to have come from God all along.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

1. Paul refuses to compete with his opponents by their own standard of self-promotion and credentials. Where in your own life are you

tempted to measure your worth by comparison with others rather than by faithfulness to what God has actually called you to do?

2. God's answer to Paul's repeated prayer for relief was not removal of the thorn but sufficient grace to endure it. Is there a persistent weakness or hardship in your own life you have been asking God to remove, that he may instead be asking you to carry with his sufficient grace?
3. Paul says he will boast in his weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on him. What would it look like, practically, for you to be more honest about a weakness rather than hiding it — and to trust that honesty as the very place God's strength might be most visible?
4. The letter closes urging the Corinthians to examine themselves to see whether they are genuinely in the faith. When was the last time you gave your own faith this kind of honest, unhurried self-examination, rather than simply assuming it?

CONCLUSION

We opened this book by describing Corinth as a city that a young church could either resist or be swallowed by, and the two letters gathered here show us both possibilities at once — a congregation genuinely, repeatedly swallowed by its city's factions, its moral compromises, its taste for impressive rhetoric and impressive teachers, and yet, by the patient, often painful work of a founding apostle who refused to give up on them, a congregation slowly learning to resist it instead. First Corinthians diagnosed the disease with unflinching specificity: division built around personalities rather than Christ, immorality tolerated rather than mourned, lawsuits and chaos in worship, confusion about spiritual gifts, and even doubt about the resurrection itself, all of it traceable to a single root, a church that had let the values of its surrounding culture quietly displace the wisdom of the cross. Second Corinthians showed us the harder, slower work of actual restoration — a painful visit, a severe letter, months of anxious waiting, and finally the relief of hearing that most, though not all, of the church had turned back toward the apostle and the gospel he had first brought them.

If a single image had to summarize what both letters teach about the church's calling, it would be the one Paul offers at the center of the second: treasure carried in jars of clay, "to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). The whole Corinthian crisis, in one sense, was a crisis over which of these two things the congregation actually valued — the treasure or the container. The Corinthians wanted teachers with more polish than Paul had, spiritual gifts with more visible impressiveness than genuine usefulness, and a version of Christian freedom that looked more like self-indulgence than

love. Paul's answer, patiently worked out across sixteen chapters and then thirteen more, was always the same: the container was never supposed to be impressive. The cross itself, foolish and weak by every worldly measure, was the very place God's wisdom and power were most fully displayed, and any church, any ministry, any individual life that has genuinely understood the cross will stop being surprised or embarrassed when its own weakness turns out to be exactly where God's power shows up most clearly too.

We hope these eight chapters have left you with more than a survey of two ancient letters to a troubled church. We hope they have left you asking, as honestly as the Corinthians were eventually made to ask, whether the treasure of the gospel in your own life is still recognizable underneath whatever jar of clay happens to be carrying it — your own weaknesses, your own limitations, the ordinary and sometimes disappointing shape of your own actual life — or whether, like the Corinthians in their worst moments, you have started measuring yourself, your church, and your ministry by the shine of the container instead. Paul's thorn was never removed. Neither, in all likelihood, will yours be. But the grace that answered him is the same grace on offer to us: sufficient, and made perfect, precisely in weakness.

APPENDIX

Daily Bible Reading Plan

This is the same daily Bible reading plan we use at dailyqt.org, covering the entire Bible — Old and New Testaments alike — in three hundred sixty-five daily readings. It does not begin on January 1st, and neither must you; begin on whatever date suits you and simply follow the sequence from there. The eight readings that correspond to the chapters of this book — 1 Corinthians 1–4 through 2 Corinthians 10–13 — are marked below with an asterisk, but the complete year-long plan is reprinted here, as it is in every volume of this series, so that wherever you are in your reading you always have the whole plan close at hand. Check off each day's passage as you complete it, and feel no need to catch up if you fall behind by a day or a week. The goal was never a perfect record. It was a daily habit of opening God's Word, kept up faithfully enough, and long enough, that it becomes less a task to complete than simply the shape of an ordinary day.

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
1/10	Gen 1-3	1/11	Gen 4-7
1/12	Gen 8-11	1/13	Gen 12-15
1/14	Gen 16-18	1/15	Gen 19-21
1/16	Gen 22-24	1/17	Gen 25-26
1/18	Gen 27-29	1/19	Gen 30-31
1/20	Gen 32-34	1/21	Gen 35-37
1/22	Gen 38-40	1/23	Gen 41-42
1/24	Gen 43-45	1/25	Gen 46-47
1/26	Gen 48-50	1/27	Ex 1-3
1/28	Ex 4-6	1/29	Ex 7-9
1/30	Ex 10-12	1/31	Ex 13-15
2/1	Ex 16-18	2/2	Ex 19-21

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
2/3	Ex 22-24	2/4	Ex 25-27
2/5	Ex 28-29	2/6	Ex 30-32
2/7	Ex 33-35	2/8	Ex 36-38
2/9	Ex 39-40	2/10	Lev 1-4
2/11	Lev 5-7	2/12	Lev 8-10
2/13	Lev 11-13	2/14	Lev 14-15
2/15	Lev 16-18	2/16	Lev 19-21
2/17	Lev 22-23	2/18	Lev 24-25
2/19	Lev 26-27	2/20	Nu 1-2
2/21	Nu 3-4	2/22	Nu 5-6
2/23	Nu 7	2/24	Nu 8-10
2/25	Nu 11-13	2/26	Nu 14-15
2/27	Nu 16-17	2/28	Nu 18-20
3/1	Nu 21-22	3/2	Nu 23-25
3/3	Nu 26-27	3/4	Nu 28-30
3/5	Nu 31-32	3/6	Nu 33-34
3/7	Nu 35-36	3/8	Dt 1-2
3/9	Dt 3-4	3/10	Dt 5-7
3/11	Dt 8-10	3/12	Dt 11-13
3/13	Dt 14-16	3/14	Dt 17-20
3/15	Dt 21-23	3/16	Dt 24-27
3/17	Dt 28-29	3/18	Dt 30-31
3/19	Dt 32-34	3/20	Jos 1-4
3/21	Jos 5-8	3/22	Jos 9-11
3/23	Jos 12-15	3/24	Jos 16-18
3/25	Jos 19-21	3/26	Jos 22-24
3/27	Jdg 1-2	3/28	Jdg 3-5
3/29	Jdg 6-7	3/30	Jdg 8-9
3/31	Jdg 10-12	4/1	Jdg 13-15
4/2	Jdg 16-18	4/3	Jdg 19-21
4/4	Ruth	4/5	1 Sa 1-3
4/6	1 Sa 4-8	4/7	1 Sa 9-12
4/8	1 Sa 13-14	4/9	1 Sa 15-17

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
4/10	1 Sa 18-20	4/11	1 Sa 21-24
4/12	1 Sa 25-27	4/13	1 Sa 28-31
4/14	2 Sa 1-3	4/15	2 Sa 4-7
4/16	2 Sa 8-12	4/17	2 Sa 13-15
4/18	2 Sa 16-18	4/19	2 Sa 19-21
4/20	2 Sa 22-24	4/21	1 Ki 1-2
4/22	1 Ki 3-5	4/23	1 Ki 6-7
4/24	1 Ki 8-9	4/25	1 Ki 10-11
4/26	1 Ki 12-14	4/27	1 Ki 15-17
4/28	1 Ki 18-20	4/29	1 Ki 21-22
4/30	2 Ki 1-3	5/1	2 Ki 4-5
5/2	2 Ki 6-8	5/3	2 Ki 9-11
5/4	2 Ki 12-14	5/5	2 Ki 15-17
5/6	2 Ki 18-19	5/7	2 Ki 20-22
5/8	2 Ki 23-25	5/9	1 Ch 1-2
5/10	1 Ch 3-5	5/11	1 Ch 6
5/12	1 Ch 7-8	5/13	1 Ch 9-11
5/14	1 Ch 12-14	5/15	1 Ch 15-17
5/16	1 Ch 18-21	5/17	1 Ch 22-24
5/18	1 Ch 25-27	5/19	1 Ch 28-2 Ch 1
5/20	2 Ch 2-5	5/21	2 Ch 6-8
5/22	2 Ch 9-12	5/23	2 Ch 13-17
5/24	2 Ch 18-20	5/25	2 Ch 21-24
5/26	2 Ch 25-27	5/27	2 Ch 28-31
5/28	2 Ch 32-34	5/29	2 Ch 35-36
5/30	Ezr 1-3	5/31	Ezr 4-7
6/1	Ezr 8-10	6/2	Neh 1-3
6/3	Neh 4-6	6/4	Neh 7
6/5	Neh 8-9	6/6	Neh 10-11
6/7	Neh 12-13	6/8	Esth 1-5
6/9	Esth 6-10	6/10	Job 1-4
6/11	Job 5-7	6/12	Job 8-10
6/13	Job 11-13	6/14	Job 14-16

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
6/15	Job 17-20	6/16	Job 21-23
6/17	Job 24-28	6/18	Job 29-31
6/19	Job 32-34	6/20	Job 35-37
6/21	Job 38-39	6/22	Job 40-42
6/23	Ps 1-8	6/24	Ps 9-16
6/25	Ps 17-20	6/26	Ps 21-25
6/27	Ps 26-31	6/28	Ps 32-35
6/29	Ps 36-39	6/30	Ps 40-45
7/1	Ps 46-50	7/2	Ps 51-57
7/3	Ps 58-65	7/4	Ps 66-69
7/5	Ps 70-73	7/6	Ps 74-77
7/7	Ps 78-79	7/8	Ps 80-85
7/9	Ps 86-89	7/10	Ps 90-95
7/11	Ps 96-102	7/12	Ps 103-105
7/13	Ps 106-107	7/14	Ps 108-114
7/15	Ps 115-118	7/16	Ps 119:1-88
7/17	Ps 119:89-176	7/18	Ps 120-132
7/19	Ps 133-139	7/20	Ps 140-145
7/21	Ps 146-150	7/22	Prov 1-3
7/23	Prov 4-6	7/24	Prov 7-9
7/25	Prov 10-12	7/26	Prov 13-15
7/27	Prov 16-18	7/28	Prov 19-21
7/29	Prov 22-23	7/30	Prov 24-26
7/31	Prov 27-29	8/1	Prov 30-31
8/2	Ecc 1-4	8/3	Ecc 5-8
8/4	Ecc 9-12	8/5	Ss 1-8
8/6	Isa 1-4	8/7	Isa 5-8
8/8	Isa 9-12	8/9	Isa 13-17
8/10	Isa 18-22	8/11	Isa 23-27
8/12	Isa 28-30	8/13	Isa 31-35
8/14	Isa 36-41	8/15	Isa 42-44
8/16	Isa 45-48	8/17	Isa 49-53
8/18	Isa 54-58	8/19	Isa 59-63

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
8/20	Isa 64-66	8/21	Jer 1-3
8/22	Jer 4-6	8/23	Jer 7-9
8/24	Jer 10-13	8/25	Jer 14-17
8/26	Jer 18-22	8/27	Jer 23-25
8/28	Jer 26-29	8/29	Jer 30-31
8/30	Jer 32-34	8/31	Jer 35-37
9/1	Jer 38-41	9/2	Jer 42-45
9/3	Jer 46-48	9/4	Jer 49-50
9/5	Jer 51-52	9/6	Lam 1:1-3:36
9/7	Lam 3:37-5:22	9/8	Eze 1-4
9/9	Eze 5-8	9/10	Eze 9-12
9/11	Eze 13-15	9/12	Eze 16-17
9/13	Eze 18-20	9/14	Eze 21-22
9/15	Eze 23-24	9/16	Eze 25-27
9/17	Eze 28-30	9/18	Eze 31-33
9/19	Eze 34-36	9/20	Eze 37-39
9/21	Eze 40-42	9/22	Eze 43-45
9/23	Eze 46-48	9/24	Dan 1-3
9/25	Dan 4-6	9/26	Dan 7-9
9/27	Dan 10-12	9/28	Hos 1-7
9/29	Hos 8-14	9/30	Joel
10/1	Amos 1-5	10/2	Amos 6-9
10/3	Ob-Jonah	10/4	Micah
10/5	Nahum	10/6	Hab-Zeph
10/7	Haggai 1-2	10/8	Zech 1-7
10/9	Zech 8-14	10/10	Mal 1-4
10/11	Mat 1-4	10/12	Mat 5-6
10/13	Mat 7-8	10/14	Mat 9-10
10/15	Mat 11-12	10/16	Mat 13-14
10/17	Mat 15-17	10/18	Mat 18-19
10/19	Mat 20-21	10/20	Mat 22-23
10/21	Mat 24-25	10/22	Mat 26
10/23	Mat 27-28	10/24	Mark 1-3

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
10/25	Mark 4-5	10/26	Mark 6-7
10/27	Mark 8-9	10/28	Mark 10-11
10/29	Mark 12-13	10/30	Mark 14
10/31	Mark 15-16	11/1	Luke 1
11/2	Luke 2-3	11/3	Luke 4-5
11/4	Luke 6-7	11/5	Luke 8-9
11/6	Luke 10-11	11/7	Luke 12-13
11/8	Luke 14-16	11/9	Luke 17-18
11/10	Luke 19-20	11/11	Luke 21-22
11/12	Luke 23-24	11/13	John 1-2
11/14	John 3-4	11/15	John 5-6
11/16	John 7-8	11/17	John 9-10
11/18	John 11-12	11/19	John 13-15
11/20	John 16-18	11/21	John 19-21
11/22	Acts 1-3	11/23	Acts 4-6
11/24	Acts 7-8	11/25	Acts 9-10
11/26	Acts 11-13	11/27	Acts 14-15
11/28	Acts 16-17	11/29	Acts 18-20
11/30	Acts 21-23	12/1	Acts 24-26
12/2	Acts 27-28	12/3	Rom 1-3
12/4	Rom 4-7	12/5	Rom 8-10
12/6	Rom 11-13	12/7	Rom 14-16
12/8	1 Cor 1-4	12/9	1 Cor 5-8
12/10	1 Cor 9-11	12/11	1 Cor 12-14
12/12	1 Cor 15-16	12/13	2 Cor 1-4
12/14	2 Cor 5-9	12/15	2 Cor 10-13
12/16	Gal 1-3	12/17	Gal 4-6
12/18	Eph 1-3	12/19	Eph 4-6
12/20	Phi 1-4	12/21	Col 1-4
12/22	1 Thess 1-5	12/23	2 Thess 1-3
12/24	1 Tim 1-6	12/25	2 Tim 1-4
12/26	Titus-Phm	12/27	Heb 1-6
12/28	Heb 7-10	12/29	Heb 11-13

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
12/30	James	12/31	1 Pe
1/1	2 Pe	1/2	1 John
1/3	2 John-Jude	1/4	Rev 1-3
1/5	Rev 4-8	1/6	Rev 9-12
1/7	Rev 13-16	1/8	Rev 17-19
1/9	Rev 20-22		

** denotes the eight daily readings covered by this volume*