

Slow Food Bible Studies – 2 Corinthians 1:1-7:1

(32 studies)

For an Introduction to 2 Corinthians see *Slow Paul: 2 Corinthians* elsewhere on the TISCA website. For *Slow Food: 2 Corinthians 7-13* see the set of studies following this one.

Introduction. Using any commentary or Bible dictionary to hand, find out as much as you can about how 2 Corinthians came to be written. Note particularly any points that resonate with your own work/home situation or church scene. *Acts 18:1-18; 1 Cor 2:1-5; 16:5-7.* Note. Kruse's account (Tyndale NTC or New Bible Commentary) seems reasonable.

1:1-2 If the God I believe in is addressing me in this letter, what is he trying to tell me at the very outset? *Ps 16:3; Ps 139:17; Mt 17:5.*

1:3-7 What sort of 'comfort' is Paul talking about? Is it so that I can feel comfortable? *Ps 23:4; Jn 14:16-17 (TNIV/ESV); Heb 12:11.*

1:8-11 If I am feeling more than ordinarily stressed out, does God have a purpose in this? Whether I am or not, how can I help others who are? *Ps 34:6; 2 Cor 12:10; Phil 1:19.*

1:12-14 If, like Paul, I am accused of a lack of sincerity (or saying one thing and doing another), how true is this and what can I do about it? *Acts 23:1; Heb 4:12-13; James 4:8.*

1:15-17 Do I pray before making plans? When those plans have to be scrapped, was I guided wrongly in the first place? *Job 23:8-14; Prov 16:3, 9; Acts 16:6-10.*

1:18-22 If I have committed my life to Christ, how sure can I be that he will keep his side of the bargain? *Isa 44:1-5; Isa 49:14-16; Eph 1:13-14.*

1:23 – 2:4 When I have to discipline someone, do I act the bully? *Ezek 34:4; Hos 11:8-9; 1 Pet 5:3.* Note. The 'distressing' letter referred to in v4 seems to be a lost one, written between 1 and 2 Cor. Aimed at clearing up the mess, it had only made matters worse.

2:5-11 How does a judgmental attitude, or a failure to forgive, play into the hands of the enemy? *Matt 7:1-2; Rom 14:4; Heb 12:15.* Note on v5. The exact nature of the 'grief' caused by this individual at Corinth is unknown: it seems to have involved a personal attack on Paul himself.

2:12-13 Should I always have peace of mind? Should I allow the absence of it to affect the Lord's work? *Isa 26:3; Isa 50:10; 2 Cor 7:5ff.*

2:14-17 Do people react against me because I stand for the gospel? What can I do about this? *Rom 8:10; 1 Pet 4:11; 1 Jn 4:4-6.*

3:1-3 Which matters more to me: what other people think and say about me, or what I am in the sight of God? *1 Cor 4:3-4; Job 23:10; Rom 8:33.*

3:4-6 Is my ministry (i.e. the work God has given me to do for him, whether 'sacred' or 'secular') lifegiving? *Ezek 36:26; John 15:5; Jude 23.*

3:7-11 Have I got to look permanently radiant? *Ps 34:5; Isa 60:1-5.* The story of Moses and the veil is in *Exod 34:29-35.*

3:12-18 When I read the Bible, what should be happening? *Ps 27:4, 8, 13; John 5:39-40; Rom 12:2.*

4:1-2 When teaching the Bible, or trying in other ways to persuade people to accept God's Word, what temptations do I face and how do I deal with them?

Matt 13:52; 2 Tim 2:15; 1 Tim 6:3-5.

4:3-6 Why do some people come to a knowledge of God while others don't?

Isa 9:2, 6; 1 Cor 2:14; 2 Tim 2:25-26.

4:7-12 Can a Christian teacher (or any Christian) expect to be spared the normal trials and tribulations of life? If not, what is the difference between Christians and others?

Ps 18:29; 1 Cor 1:18-25; 2 Cor 13:3-4.

4:13-15 Am I tempted to keep quiet about the gospel because it gets such a bad press?

Ps 116:10-11; 1 Cor 15:19; Rev 7:9-12.

4:16-18 If I feel tired and frayed, is that the full account of my current existence? *Rom 8:17-18; Eph 3:16; Rev 2:10.* Note. All the verbs here are in the present tense.

5:1-5 What does Paul teach us here about our new, 'resurrection' bodies?

1 Cor 15:42ff; 1 Pet 1:4; Eph 1:13-14; Phil 3:20-21.

5:6-10 'Sooner or later we'll all have to face God' (*The Message*). Are we supposed to frighten ourselves (and others) with this prospect?

Ps 7:15; Phil 1:21-23; Rom 14:10-12; Rev 20:11-12.

5:11-13 If I start talking/preaching about 'the fear of the Lord', will people think I'm mad; and if they do, does that matter? *Prov 16:6; Acts 24:24-25; 26:24-26; Mark 3:21-22.*

5:14-15 What difference does the death of Christ make to the life I now live?

Gal 2:20; Rom 6:3-4; Rev 12:11.

5:16-17 How will 'regarding no one (including myself) from a worldly point of view' affect what I plan and do today? *Gal 2:6; Eph 4:23; 1 Tim 5:1-2.*

5:17-20 What part can I play in 'the ministry of reconciliation'?

Isa 52:7; Mal 2:6-7; Rom 5:10-11.

5:21 What has God done for me in Christ? What is he doing in me?

Isa 53:10; Gal 3:13; Rom 8:3-4.

6:1-2 Have I stopped believing in the grace of God for any reason?

Isa 49:8; 1 Cor 15:10; Gal 3:3-4, cf 2:20-21.

6:3-10 If I find things or people going against me, should I assume that God is telling me to give up? *Isa 50:4-7; Hab 3:17-19; Phil 3:18-20.*

6:11-13 When I feel let down, am I prepared to keep the avenues of friendship open?

Prov 27:6, 9-10a; 1 Cor 4:14-15; 2 Cor 12:15.

6:14-16 In what sense am I supposed to disassociate myself from unbelievers? Does this apply to my work and social life? *Ps 1:1; Lk 7:34; 1 Cor 3:16, 5:9, 10:27; 1 Pet 2:9; 1 Jn 2:15.*

6:17-7:1 Holiness or worldliness – is it a straight choice? *John 15:19; 17:16-19; Jas 4:4.*