

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v92

Second Corinthians

Copyright & Licensing

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

Copyright © 2026 by unfoldingWord

This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

unfoldingWord® is a registered trademark of unfoldingWord. Use of the unfoldingWord name or logo requires the written permission of unfoldingWord. Under the terms of the CC BY-SA license, you may copy and redistribute this unmodified work as long as you keep the unfoldingWord® trademark intact. If you modify a copy or translate this work, thereby creating a derivative work, you must remove the unfoldingWord® trademark.

On the derivative work, you must indicate what changes you have made and attribute the work as follows: “The original work by unfoldingWord is available from unfoldingword.org/ust”. You must also make your derivative work available under the same license (CC BY-SA).

If you would like to notify unfoldingWord regarding your translation of this work, please contact us at unfoldingword.org/contact/.

The unfoldingWord® Simplified Text is based on *A Translation For Translators* by Ellis W. Deibler, Jr., which is licensed CC BY-SA 4.0 (https://git.door43.org/Door43/T4T).

Table of Contents

Second Corinthians 1
Chapter 1 1
Chapter 2 1
Chapter 3 2
Chapter 4 2
Chapter 5 3
Chapter 6 3
Chapter 7 4
Chapter 8 4
Chapter 9 5
Chapter 10 5
Chapter 11 6
Chapter 12 7
Chapter 13 7

2 Corinthians

1 *I,* Paul, *write this letter to you,* and Timothy, our fellow
believer, *is with me*. God chose to send me to represent the
Messiah Jesus, because that is what God wanted. *I send this
letter* to *you who are part of* the group of believers belonging
to God, which is in the city of Corinth. *I* also *send this letter*
to all the believers who live throughout the region of Achaia.
2 *May* God, *who is* our Father, and the Lord Jesus the Messiah
continue to be kind to you and *make you* peaceful.

3 May we always praise the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus the Messiah—he is our merciful Father and our God who
always comforts us. 4 God comforts us whenever we suffer. He
does that so that we can comfort others who are suffering in
any way. God enables us to comfort them in the very same
way as he comforts us. 5 You see, the Messiah suffered a lot for
us, and now we continue to suffer as the Messiah did because
we belong to him. But now the Messiah also comforts us in
the same abundant amount. 6 So whenever people cause us
to suffer, it is so that God may comfort you and protect you
spiritually. Whenever God comforts us, it is so that he may
also comfort you. God does this as you patiently endure when
people cause you to suffer just as people cause us to suffer.
7 We know that God will also comfort you as you suffer like we
suffer. Therefore, we are very confident that you will continue
trusting in Jesus.

8 For example, fellow believers, we want you to know about
the bad things that happened to us in the province of Asia.
They were so difficult that we felt that we could not endure
them. We felt certain that we were going to die. 9 We felt like
a person feels when he has heard a judge say, "I condemn you
to die." But God allowed us to feel that way so that we would
learn to not rely on ourselves but, instead, to rely on God.
He causes people who have died to live again. 10 Even though
it seemed to us that we would certainly die, God rescued us
from the people who wanted to kill us, and he will continue
to rescue us *from similar people*. We confidently expect that he
will rescue us again 11 as you help us by praying for us. Please
do pray for us so that many people will thank God for what he
will graciously do for us because many people prayed for us.

12 We are proud that we can honestly say that we have
behaved toward all people in a holy and sincere way, as God
has enabled us to do. We do not behave in the way that
unbelievers think is wise. Instead, God graciously guides us,
especially *as we interact* with you. 13 To see this, look at my
letters. In all of my letters to you I have written only what
you can *easily* read and understand. I hope that *soon* you will
understand *us* completely 14 just as you partially understand
us *already*. Then when our Lord Jesus returns, you will be just
as proud of us as we will be proud of you.

15–16 Because I was confident that you were proud of me,
I planned to visit you once on my way to the province of
Macedonia, and then to visit you again as I returned from
there. In that way, you would benefit twice from having me
with you. Also, you could help supply what I would need to
go from your city to the province of Judea. 17 I intended to
visit you those two times*, but then I did not come the second
time*. That does not mean that I changed my plan lightly. I
do not make or change my plans according to what I might
desire at the time. I do not say, "Yes, I will do that" and then
quickly say, "No, I will not do it." 18 Just as God is faithful, we
are completely sincere in everything that we say to you. We
would never say, "Yes" when we really think, "No." 19 I and
Silvanus and Timothy taught you about the Son of God, Jesus
the Messiah. *You know that* he would never say, "Yes" if what
he meant was, "No." Because of who he is, our message about
him has also remained consistent and dependable. 20 Because
of Jesus, we can rely on all of the promises of God. Jesus
fulfills them all. Therefore, Jesus is also the one who enables
us to say, "Yes, it is true" when we praise God. 21 It is God
who causes us, along with you, to keep on believing strongly
in the Messiah. God is also the one who has given us his Spirit
so that we can serve him. 22 God gave us the Holy Spirit to live
within us. That shows both that we belong to him and that he
will also do for us everything else that he has promised to do
for us.

23 So now I will tell you why I changed my mind and did
not visit you again as I intended to do. May God strike me
dead if I am lying, but he knows that what I am telling you is
true. The reason that I did not return to Corinth was so that I
might not grieve you by having to speak to you severely about
the wrong things that you have done. 24 When I say that, I do
not mean that we are your masters who give you orders about
what to believe and do. Instead, everything that we tell you
about living for God is so that you will be joyful. We do not
need to command you, because God himself tells you what to
believe and do.

2 *I have not visited you* because I have chosen to avoid visiting
you if it hurts you and me like it did last time *I visited you*.
2 *I chose not to visit you again* because, when I hurt you, I have
hurt the only people who can make me glad. 3 I already wrote
in my previous letter what I am now saying *to you*. *I wrote those
things* so that, when I next visited you, you would not hurt me,
and I would be glad about you as I should. *I wrote those things
because* I was sure about all of you that you would be glad
when I was glad. 4 I suffered greatly and hurt inside when I
wrote *that previous letter* to you. In fact, I wept *while I wrote it*.
I sent it to you so that you would realize how much I care for
you. I did not intend to hurt you.

5 However, the person who has hurt others did not really
hurt me. Rather, that person hurt some *of you*. *I use the word
"some"* so that I do not include all of you *as those whom that
person hurt*. 6 Most of you together have disciplined that person.
You do not need to do anything more. 7 So then, instead *of
disciplining that person*, you should now forgive and encourage
that person. Otherwise, the person will become very sad and
give up.

8 Therefore, I encourage you to show publicly that you care
for that person. 9 Another reason for which I wrote *that previous
letter* was in order that I could find out for sure if you would
do everything that I asked *you to do*. 10 In the end, when you
forgive any person for anything, I too forgive that person. In
fact, I have forgiven *that person* for what *that person did*, even

though it was basically nothing. *I did that* to help you, as the Messiah desires. 11 *We should forgive others* so that Satan will not control us. Indeed, we know all about his plans *to control us*.

12 *To return to how I traveled,* when I arrived in the city of Troas, the Lord Jesus made it possible for me to proclaim the good news about the Messiah effectively. 13 However, since my fellow believer Titus was not *in the city of Troas*, I continued to be anxious about *what happened when he visited you*. Therefore, I said goodbye to the believers there and left to travel to the region of Macedonia.

14 Now we praise God! *He is the one* who, because he has united us to the Messiah, continually includes us as he conquers *his enemies*. Further, he uses us to reveal to people in many places what God is like. 15 In fact, we are like a pleasant smell that comes from Christ and that pleases God. *We are like this smell* when we are with people whom God is rescuing and when we are with people who are passing away. 16 Those *who are passing away think that we are like* a smell that comes from a dead body and that causes people to die. On the other hand, those *whom God is rescuing think that we are like* a smell that comes from a living thing and that causes people to live. No one can perfectly *proclaim the good news in that way*! 17 *You can tell that we do not do so perfectly* because we do not sell the message that God has given us for money, like many other people do. Rather, we only want to serve God, not to gain something. Indeed, *we proclaim the good news* because that is what God sent us *to do*. So, as those whom God has united to the Messiah, we proclaim *the good news* to please God*, not people*.

3 We are not going to prove to you a second time that we are trustworthy. As you know, you do not need to write or receive a note that proves that we are trustworthy, even though *you might need to do those things* for other people. 2 It is you all who function like a note *that proves that we are trustworthy*. When we care for each other, all people realize that we are trustworthy, just as if they read *a note from you*. 3 Everyone knows that you are like a note that the Messiah wrote and that we delivered. *The Messiah* did not write *this note* on stone slabs using dye. Rather, *it is as if he wrote it* inside you by working through the Holy Spirit, *who is* the only real God.

4 I say those things because we are sure about *what* God *thinks of us*. *We are sure* because the Messiah makes *us sure*. 5 Of course, we cannot *proclaim the good news* well on our own, and we do not think that anything we do well is because of us. Rather, God enables us *to proclaim the good news* well. 6 He has also enabled us to act on behalf of the new agreement. The Holy Spirit gives *this new agreement*, so it is not just words that someone wrote down. *This is important* because *people who rely on* the Holy Spirit will live, but *people who rely on* words that someone wrote down will die.

7 Further, when Moses acted on behalf of *the old agreement that condemned people* to die, God carved the words *of the agreement* onto stone slabs. What Moses did was glorious enough that the Israelites could not gaze at his face afterwards because it *reflected how* glorious *God is*, although that would eventually go away. 8 So then, when people act on behalf of *the new agreement that gives* the Holy Spirit, that is even more glorious. 9 Indeed, when Moses acted on behalf of *the old agreement that led to God* condemning people, it was glorious. So then, when people act on behalf of *the new agreement that leads to people becoming* righteous, it is even more glorious! 10 In fact, the glorious *old agreement* does not look glorious at all because of how glorious *the new agreement* is. 11 Indeed, *the old agreement* that is going away was glorious. So then, *the new agreement* that will last forever is even more glorious!

12 So then, since we confidently expect *to receive* these *glorious* things, we behave very boldly. 13 *We are* not like Moses, who wore a cloth that hid his face. That way, the Israelites could not gaze at how his face stopped reflecting how glorious God is. 14 In fact, the Israelites did not understand *what God revealed*. Indeed, even now, when someone reads *the Scriptures that contain* the old agreement, *it is as if* the cloth that Moses wore keeps people from understanding *it*. That is because no one can understand *these Scriptures* until God unites them to the Messiah. 15 Indeed, even now, when someone reads the Law of Moses, it is as if that cloth keeps people from understanding it. 16 However, when people begin to trust the Lord *God*, God enables them to understand *the Law of Moses*, just as if he removed that cloth. 17 When I speak of the Lord *God*, I mean the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who enables *people to understand the Scriptures*. 18 So, all of us *who believe* show how glorious the Lord *God* is, and *we do so* without a cloth covering our faces. God is changing us so that we are like *the Messiah*. In this way, the glorious Lord, who is the Holy Spirit, makes us glorious.

4 Because of those things, and because God mercifully enabled us to act on behalf of *the new agreement*, we do not give up. 2 Rather, we refuse to do anything that we would hide because it is disgraceful. We do not try to deceive others, and we do not change the message from God. Instead, we proclaim the true *message*, and we prove to everyone that God considers us trustworthy. 3 In fact, the only people who do not understood the good news that we proclaim are people who are passing away. 4 Satan, who rules the world right now, has kept these people who do not believe from understanding. That way, the good news about the glorious Messiah, who shows what God is like, does not change them. 5 *I say that the good news is about the Messiah* because we do not tell other people about ourselves. Rather, *we tell them* about Jesus the Messiah, the Lord, and about how we serve you because of him. 6 *We do that* because it is God who spoke these words: “What is dark will become bright.” He has enabled us to understand what is true about how glorious he is, just as if he had shined a light on us. *God has revealed this* in Jesus the Messiah.

7 We experience and proclaim these wonderful things, but we ourselves are weak and worthless. That way, *it is clear that* God causes these things to be so powerful, not we. 8 *We experience* many *difficult things*. People persecute us, but they do not overcome us. We are not sure what to do, but we do not give up. 9 People try to hurt us, but God does not abandon us. People act against us, but they do not defeat us. 10 We continually suffer physically, like Jesus did. That way, God will make us live again, just like he made Jesus live again. 11 Indeed, while we are living, God allows us to suffer continually because of Jesus. That way, even though we will die, God will make us live again, just like he made Jesus live

again. 12 As you can see, God allows us to suffer, but he will
make you live.
13 Now we are those who trust *God*, just like the person
who wrote *in the psalm*, "I trusted *God*, so I spoke." We too
trust *God*, so we too speak. 14 *We do that because* we realize
that God made Jesus alive again, so he will also make us alive
again. Then we will be with Jesus and with you before God.
15 We do each of those things to help you. That way, God will
act graciously to more people. Then, people will thank God
more, which honors God.
16 Therefore, we do not give up. Instead, even though the
part of us that people can see is perishing, every day God is
strengthening the part of us that people cannot see. 17 *We do not
give up,* because when we suffer in temporary and unimportant
ways, that will cause us to become glorious forever and in
important ways, ways that we cannot even imagine. 18 So, we
pay attention to what we do not see rather than to what we
see. *That is* because what we do not see will last forever, but
what we see will pass away.

5 Indeed, we realize that the bodies we have on this earth
will die. They are like tents that people destroy. However,
God will give us new bodies that will live forever. They will
be like buildings that God creates in the heavenly places. 2 In
fact, we mourn how we live in these bodies. We want God to
give us new bodies, just as if he was putting new clothes on
us. *These new bodies will be like* buildings *that God gives us* from
heaven. 3 Whenever we receive our new bodies, they will be
like clothes that keep us from being naked.
4 Even further, while we have these bodies that are like tents,
we mourn, and these bodies make living difficult. Because
of that, it is not that we want to be without bodies, which
would be like having no clothes. Rather, *we want* to receive
new bodies, which will be like putting on new clothes. That
way, we will live forever instead of expecting to die. 5 God is
the one who makes us ready for these new bodies. He gave
the Holy Spirit to us, which shows that he will also give us
everything else that he has promised.
6 So then, we are confident at all times *about what God will
give us*. Also, we realize that while we have these bodies, we
are not with the Lord *Jesus*. 7 Indeed, we act as we do because
we trust *the Lord Jesus*, not because we see *him*. 8 As I said,
we are confident *about what God will give us*. Also, we would
choose instead to be without our bodies and with the Lord
Jesus. 9 So then, we strive to please the Lord Jesus whether we
are with him or not. 10 *We do that* because all of us will have
to appear before the Messiah and he will decide whether each
one of us has done what is right or what is wrong. Then, he
will give us what we deserve in proportion to what we did
while we had these bodies.
11 So then, because we experience what it means to fear
the Lord *Jesus*, we convince others *to fear him also*. God knows
that we are trustworthy, and I want you also to know *that we
are trustworthy*. 12 We are not proving to you a second time
that we are trustworthy. Rather, we are enabling you to say
great things about us. That way, you can respond to anybody
who says great things about how people appear on the outside
and not about who those people really are on the inside. 13 So,
when we seem crazy, we are serving God. When we seem to
think normally, we are serving you. 14 *Those things are true*
because the Messiah loves us, and that directs us *to act in
certain ways*. Here is how we think about it: one person*, the
Messiah,* died to rescue all people. Because of that, *it is as if* all
people died. 15 Further, *this is why* he died to rescue all people:
that way, those who live spiritually will not do whatever they
want anymore. Instead, *they will do* what the Messiah wants,
since he died to rescue them and God made him alive again.
16 Because of all that, we do not think about anyone in
merely human ways any longer. Indeed, although at one time
we thought about the Messiah in merely human ways, we
do not think about him in those ways any longer. 17 So then,
whenever God unites people to the Messiah, he makes them
new people. What they used to be has disappeared. Look, what
they are now is something new! 18 God is the one who gives
us every one of these things. By working through the Messiah,
he has enabled us to be with him. Further, God empowers us
to act so that others can also be with him. 19 Here is how that
works: God works through Christ to enable every person to be
with him. In doing so, he forgives people for what they have
done wrong. Further, he commissions us to tell others about
how they can be with God.
20 Because *God has commissioned us*, we represent the
Messiah. So, God encourages others through us. We speak
for the Messiah when we ask you *to believe the good news so
that* you can be with God. 21 Jesus did not sin. *Despite that,* for
our sake God treated him as if he had sinned. As a result, God
makes us righteous by uniting us to Jesus.

6 As those who serve with God, we encourage you to accept
fully what God has graciously done *for you*, so that it
changes *how you live*. 2 *You should do that* because God says *in
the scripture*:

> "When I considered it to be the right time,
> I heard you *and acted*.
> Indeed, when I was rescuing *people*, I assisted you."

Right now is when God considers it to be the best time! Indeed,
right now is when God is rescuing *people*!
3 We avoid doing anything that might offend others. That
way, no one can criticize how we serve *God*. 4 Rather, we
prove that we are trustworthy in every way while we serve
God. We always persevere when people hurt and persecute us.
5 *We persevere* when people strike us, put us in jail, and stir
up crowds against us. *We persevere* when we work hard, do
not sleep much, and go hungry. 6 We are free from evil things,
we know *what is true*, and we do not easily become angry. We
care *for others*, we have the Holy Spirit, and we love *people*
sincerely. 7 We proclaim what is true, and God enables us to
act powerfully. We are righteous, which is like having a sword
in one hand and a shield in the other. 8 Some people honor us,
and others shame us. Some people say bad things about us, and
others say good things about us. Some people think that we
tell lies, but really we speak what is true. 9 Some people think
that nobody acknowledges us, but really, God acknowledges
us. Some people think that we are dying, but really, we are
alive! Some people think that God is punishing us, but really,
he has not decided that we should die. 10 Some people think
that we mourn, but really, we continually rejoice. Some people
think that we are needy, but really, we help many people gain

what is truly valuable. Some people think that we do not have anything, but really, we have everything.

11 Fellow believers in the city of Corinth, we have told you what is true, and we care for you greatly. 12 We are not the ones who have stopped *caring for you*. Rather, it is you who have stopped caring *for us*. 13 Now I will speak to you *as if you thought in simple ways* like children *do*: since we care for you, it would only be right if you cared for us in return.

14 Do not join in with people who do not trust *the Messiah*. *I say that* because what is right and what is wrong have nothing in common. Further, what is good shares nothing with what is evil. 15 The Messiah does not agree *about anything* with the devil Beliar. Further, people who trust *the Messiah* do not belong with people who do not trust *the Messiah*. 16 God's temple does not go together with other gods. In fact, it is as if we *who believe* were the only real God's temple. *You can tell that we are God's temple* because God spoke *these words in the Scriptures*:

> "I will be with my people.
> Indeed, I will not leave them.
> They will consider me to be their God
> and I will consider them to be my people."

17 So then, *we should do what* the Lord *God* says *in the Scriptures*:

> "Get away from people *who do not serve me*.
> Make sure that you are different *than them*.
> Stay away from anything that defiles you."
> *He says,* "Then, I will gladly receive you."

18 Further, the Lord *God*, who rules all things, says,

> "I will be your father.
> You will be my sons and daughters."

7 So then, *fellow believers* whom I love, because God has promised these things to us, we should get rid of everything that defiles us on the outside and on the inside. We should become completely holy as we fear God.

2 *We ask you to* care for us! We have not hurt, cheated, or destroyed anyone. 3 I am not saying these things to blame you. In fact, as I have already written *in this letter*, we care for you greatly, no matter what happens. 4 I am very confident *that* you *will do what is right*. *In fact,* I often say great things about you. You encourage me greatly, and I rejoice very much *about you* even while we are suffering.

5 Now to return *to how I traveled*, when we arrived in Macedonia, things did not get easier for us. Instead, we suffered in many ways. Other people quarreled with us, and we ourselves were often afraid. 6 However, God encourages people who feel discouraged. He encouraged us by having Titus join *us*. 7 *God encouraged us* partly by having Titus join *us*, but even more by how what you did encourages Titus. He has told us that you want *to see me*, that you are sorry *for what you did*, and that you strive to honor me. Because of those things, I rejoiced more *than I did before*.

8 I am not sorry *that I wrote the previous letter*, even though I hurt you with what I wrote. In fact, the only reason I would be sorry *that I wrote it* is that I know that the letter hurt you, although only for a little while. 9 However, now *that Titus has told us about you,* I am very happy. *I am happy* not because I hurt you. Rather, *I am happy* because when I hurt you, you became sorry *for what you did* and stopped *doing it*. In fact, you felt hurt in a way that honors God. So, we have not deprived you of anything good. 10 *That is* because, when people feel hurt in a way that honors God, it causes them to be sorry *for what they did* and stop *doing it*. They are not sorry *that they felt hurt*, because *God uses how they feel* to rescue them. However, when people feel hurt in the way that most people do, *how they feel* eventually causes them to die. 11 As for you, when you felt hurt in this way that honors God, it certainly caused you to be very eager *to do what is right*. You argued that you were not guilty. You were upset *about what had happened*. You feared *what might happen*. You wanted *to see us*. You strove to honor *us*. You punished *the person who had done what was wrong*. By doing all *those things*, you have shown that you have done what is right in response to what happened. 12 So then, when I sent *the previous letter* to you, I was not primarily dealing with the person who did what was wrong. Also, I was not primarily dealing with the person whom he hurt. Rather, I intended to show you how eager you are *to act rightly* toward us and that God approves *of this*. 13 Since you responded in these ways, you have encouraged us.

In fact, although you did encourage us, we are even more happy about how you made Titus happy. *You did that* when you all comforted and strengthened him. 14 *We were this happy* because you did not disgrace me after I had said great things about you to Titus. Instead, Titus found out that the great things we said about you were actually true. *This is* just like how everything we told you was also true. 15 Titus recalls how you all obeyed us, particularly how you feared him when he arrived. *Because of that,* he cares about you even more now. 16 I am happy that I am completely sure that you *are doing what is right*.

8 My fellow believers, we want to tell you about what God has graciously enabled the groups of believers *here* in Macedonia province to do. 2 Even though they suffered very much, which tested *how they would respond*, they were extremely generous. They were very joyful *as they did this*, even though they had very little. 3 In fact, I can tell you that *they offered* as much as they could afford, and even more than they could afford. They were the ones who chose to do this. 4 They were very insistent when they urged us to accept *what they were giving*. They wanted to share in serving God's people. 5 Further, they did even more than what we had expected. They dedicated themselves primarily to *serving* the Lord *Jesus* and then also to *serving* us. *That is* just what God wants. 6 Because of that, we encouraged Titus to finish accepting what you are giving, especially since he had already started *doing so*. 7 As for you, you are already doing well in so many ways. *This includes* how you trust *God*, what you say, how much you know, how you are always eager *to do what is right*, and how much we love you. So, you should also do well in giving *money for fellow believers*.

8 I am not ordering you *to give money*. Rather, I want to show that you really care *for fellow believers* by comparing *what you do* with how other people are always eager *to give money*. 9 *You should be eager to give money* because you realize

that our Lord, Jesus the Messiah, kindly gave up everything
he had to help you. *He did that even though* he had very many
things. He wanted to give you many things by himself giving
up what he had.
10 I am telling you what I think about giving money, because
hearing what I think helps you. Last year, you both wanted
to and did start *giving money*. 11 Right now, you should finish
what you started. That way, what you finish doing matches
what you eagerly wanted *to do*, *which is to give some* of what
you have. 12 Now God approves of *what people give* based on
what they have, not based on what they do not have. *This is*
true as long as they are eager *to give*.
13 So, it is not that I want you to suffer while other believers
do well. Rather, I want *believers to share what they have* equally.
14 Right now, how much you have can help people who do
not have much. Then, when those people have much and you
have little, they can help you. That way, believers share *what*
they have equally. 15 *We want it to be* like what someone wrote
when God powerfully gave food to the Israelites:

> "The people who had much did not have more
> than they needed.
> The people who had little did not have less
> than they needed."

16 We thank God for causing Titus to be eager *to care* for
you, just like we are. 17 Indeed, he is visiting you partly because
he listened to us urging him *to do so*. Mostly, however, *he is*
visiting you because he is so eager *to care for you* that he himself
chose *to visit you*. 18 We have chosen a fellow believer to go
with Titus. Many groups of believers commend him *because*
of what he does for the sake of the good news. 19 More than
that, the groups of believers selected him to travel with me.
He is helping us as we work to accept *money for the believers*
in Jerusalem. *Accepting this money* honors the Lord *God* and
demonstrates how eager we are *to care for fellow believers*.
20 So, we are doing what we can to keep others from
criticizing us for what we do *with this money* that people have
generously given. 21 As you can see, before *we started to collect*
this money, we planned how to do it well. *We considered* what
the Lord *God* thinks, but we also *considered* what other people
think.
22 We have chosen another fellow believer to go with Titus
and the other man *I have been speaking about*. We have tested
him and know for sure that he is eager *to serve God*. In fact,
because he is very confident that you *will do what is right*, right
now he is particularly eager *to serve with you*. 23 *I recommend*
these men. Titus joins me *in what I do* and works with me to
help you. The groups of believers send the other two fellow
believers, and they honor the Messiah. 24 So then, show these
three men and also the groups of believers that you really do
care *for fellow believers* and that the great things we say about
you really are true.

9 Really, though, I do not need to say anything to you about
how we are serving God's people *in Jerusalem*. 2 *That is*
because I recognize how eager you are *to give*. In fact, I say
great things about you to the believers in Macedonia province.
I tell them that you believers in Achaia province were already
preparing *to give* last year. How eager you were *to give* has
encouraged most of them *to give also*. 3 However, *although we*
know that you are eager, we have chosen these *three* fellow
believers to visit you to make sure that the great things we say
about how you are eager *to give* prove true. *They are visiting*
you so that you can finish preparing *to give* and in this way
match what I have told *the Macedonians about you*. 4 On the
other hand, *think about what would happen* were some believers
from Macedonia province to visit you with me and discover
that you had not finished preparing *to give*. How you had acted
would shame even us, and *it would* most definitely *shame* you.
5 Because of that, I decided that I needed to ask these *three*
fellow believers to visit you before *I do* and help you with what
you said you would give. That way, you will have already
prepared what you are giving, and *you will offer it* because you
want to and not because we are making you do it.
6 Here is an example *that illustrates how you should give*.
When farmers plant only a few seeds, they harvest only a little
food. When farmers plant many seeds, they harvest much food.
Much like that, when you help other people, someone will help
you in return. 7 Each of you should choose for yourself *how*
much to give. Do not *choose how much to give* because you feel
hurt or because you have to. *I say that* because God cares for
people who give gladly. 8 God can graciously give you more
than you need. That way, because you always have everything
you need in every situation, you can always do everything
that is right. 9 *You can tell that is true* because someone wrote
about this kind of person in the Scriptures,

> "They give to many people.
> Yes, they help those who have very little.
> They will do what is right forever."

10 God provides the seeds for the one who plants them, and
he provides food for people to eat. So, he will also provide what
you need and give you more of it. Further, when you do what
is right, he will use that to accomplish good things. 11 God
consistently gives you more than you need so that you can
always generously *give to others*. When you give generously
and we send your gifts *to fellow believers*, they thank God.
12 In fact, when you serve God's people *in Jerusalem* by
giving *to them*, it provides what they need. Even more, though,
it causes them to thank God very much. 13 You prove yourselves
by serving God's people *in Jerusalem*. So then, they will honor
God because you actually do what the good news about the
Messiah requires, *which is the same good news* that you say you
believe. *They will honor God* also because you generously share
what you have with them and with all *believers*. 14 Further, they
will want *to see* you as they pray for you, since you give very
graciously as God enables you to. 15 We thank God for giving
us these things that are more wonderful than we can say!

10 Now I *will speak about* myself, Paul. I am humbly and
reasonably urging you *to do what is right*, just like the
Messiah *was humble and reasonable*. *Some people say that* when
I was with you in person, I was gentle with you, but now,
when I am away, I am forceful with you. 2 I do intend to be
forceful when I boldly act against these people who think that
I and those *who serve* with me act in merely human ways. So, I
ask you *to do what is right* so that I will not need to be forceful
with you too when I visit you. 3 In fact, although we act as

humans, we do not defend ourselves in merely human ways.
4 In fact, what we use to defend ourselves is not what humans
normally use. Rather, God empowers *what we use to defend*
ourselves so that we can defeat what other people powerfully
argue. 5 *We* also *defeat* anything that people claim is greater
than knowing God. Further, we work to influence everything
that people think so that they obey the Messiah. 6 At the time
when you fully obey *the Messiah*, we will be ready to punish
anyone who disobeys *him*.

7 Think about what is obvious. Suppose that people are
sure that they represent the Messiah. Those people need to
remember that we too represent the Messiah, just like they do.
8 Indeed, I do not disgrace myself when I say many great things
about how the Lord *Jesus* has empowered us to represent him.
He did that so that we could encourage and help you *to trust*
God more, not so that we could discourage you *from trusting*
God. 9 So, *you can tell that* I am not trying to scare you when I
send *forceful* letters to you. 10 *I write that* because some people
say *about me*, "He sends severe and powerful letters to us,
but he is feeble and speaks very poorly when he is with us."
11 People who say those things need to realize that what we
write in our letters *to you* when we are not with you is also
how we act when we are with you.

12 We are too humble to say that we are as good as people
you know who say that they are trustworthy. Those people are
foolish. *When they say that they are great,* they are looking only
at themselves. 13 In contrast, we do not say great things about
ourselves beyond what we actually do. Rather, *we say great*
things about ourselves that match with what God has given us
to do. That includes what we do whenever we are with you.
14 In fact, only if we had not actually visited you would *what*
God has given us to do not include you. Of course, we really
have already visited you *and told you* the good news about the
Messiah.

15 We do not say great things about ourselves because of
what others do but because of what we actually do. In fact, we
confidently expect that God will give us even more to do with
you. *That will happen* when you trust *God* more. 16 That way,
we can tell the good news to people who live even further
away from us than you do. *That is what we plan to do* instead
of saying great things about ourselves because of how other
people have done what God has given them to do. 17 *Everyone*
should do what the prophet Jeremiah wrote,

> "Anyone who says great things should say them
> about the Lord *God*."

18 *Everyone should do that* because the Lord *Jesus* recommends
those whom he says are trustworthy, not those who say that
about themselves.

11 *Next,* I hope that you will be patient with me as I say
a few things *that I consider* foolish. I know that you
are patient with me! 2 *I will say foolish things* because I am
protective of you as God is protective of you. In fact, when I
told you the good news, I was like a father who promised to
give you to a man as his wife. Just like this father wants his
daughter to be with only this one man, so I want you to trust
only in the Messiah. 3 However, I fear that someone *will trick*
you, just as Satan cleverly tricked Eve*, the first woman*. *I fear*
that such a person will ruin how you think in ways that are
completely loyal to the Messiah. 4 *I fear for you* because *I know*
that people visit you and tell you about Jesus, but it is not the
same Jesus we told you about. Others offer you a spirit, but it
is not the Holy Spirit that we offered to you. Others proclaim
good news to you, but it is not the same good news that you
first believed. Despite that, you are very patient *when people*
tell you about these things.

5 *I want you to believe what we first told you* because I think
that the Messiah acts through me as much as through those
who say that they represent him the best. 6 Although I have
not learned how to speak very well, despite that, *I have learned*
to know *what is true*. I show you that this is true whenever I
say or do anything.

7 You know that I did not sin against you when I did not
ask you to pay me for proclaiming to you the good news from
God. *By doing that,* I made myself less important to make you
more important. 8 *In fact,* I received money from other groups
of believers. I accepted their money so that I could serve you.
9 Further, when I was with you, I did not have everything
that I needed. However, I did not bother any of you *by asking*
for money. *I could do that* because our fellow believers who
traveled *with me* from Macedonia province gave me everything
that I needed. Indeed, in every situation, I did not and never
will bother you *by asking for money for myself*. 10 No one who
lives in any part of Achaia province will be able to keep me
from saying great things *about how I did not bother you*. What
I am saying is as true as if the Messiah were saying it. 11 My
reason for *not bothering you* is not that I do not care for you.
God can testify *that I do care for you*.

12 Rather, *here is my reason for why* I will continue not to
bother you. That way, I can prevent anyone from being able
to say such great things about themselves as we *say about*
ourselves. *I know that* some people want to do this. 13 Those
people are not really those whom the Messiah sent to represent
him. They deceive people with what they do, and they can only
pretend to represent the Messiah. 14 That should not surprise
us. The devil also pretends to be a glorious spiritual being. 15 So
then, we should expect those who serve him also to pretend to
help people become righteous. God will eventually give them
what they deserve in proportion to what they have done.

16 I repeat what I said earlier: I do not want anyone to think
that I am foolish. However, if you do *think that I am foolish*,
you should at least allow me to act in foolish ways. That way,
I too can say a few great things about myself. 17 What I am
about to say is not how I speak when I am representing the
Lord *Jesus*. Rather, I am about to speak foolishly as I prove
that I can say great things about myself. 18 Many other people
say great things about themselves in merely human ways. So,
I too will say great things about myself. 19 *I know that you*
will listen to me, because you consider yourselves to be wise
people, so you are happy to be patient with other people who
act foolishly. 20 In fact, you are patient *when people treat you*
badly. They may force you to obey them. They may use up
what you have. They may cheat you. They may say they are
better than you. They may insult you. *However, you are still*
patient with them. 21 *If that is the right way for powerful people to*
treat you, then I admit *that how we acted when we were with you*
shames us and proves that we are weak. On the other hand,
whatever other people dare to do, I too can dare to do. Of

course, I say these things only because I am acting foolishly.
22 Those people say they are Jews who speak Hebrew, but I
also *am a Jew and speak Hebrew*. They say they are Israelites,
but I also *am an Israelite*. They say they are descendants of
Abraham, but I also *am a descendant of Abraham*. 23 They say
they serve the Messiah, but I *serve the Messiah* even more.
Of course, I am talking like a crazy person. *However,* I have
worked harder *than they have*. People have put me in jail
more *than them*. People have struck me very many times. I
have almost died many times. 24 Five different times Jewish
leaders had someone strike me *the maximum number of times:*
39. 25 Three different times leaders had someone repeatedly
hit me with a stick. One time people threw stones at me *to kill
me*. Three different times the ship *I was sailing in* sank. I have
survived for 24 hours in the middle of the ocean. 26 I travel
frequently. I go through dangerous places, including rivers,
towns, deserts, and oceans. There are always people who could
hurt me, including thieves, Jewish people, non-Jewish people,
and people who pretend to be fellow believers. 27 I work very
hard. I frequently do not sleep much. I do not have enough to
eat or drink. I frequently go hungry. I sometimes freeze and
do not have enough clothing. 28 Besides everything else *that
I could mention*, I anxiously think daily about all the groups
of believers. 29 When a fellow believer is feeble, I am feeble.
When someone causes a fellow believer to sin, I become very
angry.

30 Since I need to say great things about myself, I intend to
say great things about how feeble I am. 31 We all will forever
honor the God and Father of the Lord Jesus. He can testify
that what I am saying is true.

32 When I was in Damascus city, the local ruler who served
King Aretas had soldiers looking for me in the city to capture
me. 33 However, fellow believers helped me get away from the
local ruler. *They put me* in a large basket, *attached it to a rope,
and* let it down through an opening in the city wall.

12 I need to say great things about myself. *So,* although it
is not helpful, I am moving on to *speak about* how the
Lord *Jesus* specially shows things *to specific people*. 2 Fourteen
years ago, God took a certain Christian to the third *level of*
heaven. I am not sure whether *God took him there* physically or
in a dream or spiritually. Only God can be sure *how it happened*.
3 Now *I will tell you more about* that specific Christian. *Again,* I
am not sure whether *God took him to the third level of heaven*
physically or in a dream or spiritually. Only God can be sure
how it happened. 4 God took that person into Paradise*, the place
in heaven where dead believers are*. There, he heard amazing
things that he cannot repeat to anyone. 5 I could say great
things about that*, since the person I have been talking about is
me*. However, I will only say great things about how feeble I
am. 6 In fact, suppose that I did want to say great things about
myself. Since I am speaking truthfully, I would still not be
acting foolishly. However, I decide not to *say great things about
myself*. *That way,* people can only characterize me by what
they observe me saying and doing. 7 So then, in order that
I might not become proud because God revealed such great
things to me, he allowed me to suffer. Specifically, a spiritual
being whom Satan sent made me suffer. That way, I might not
become proud. 8 I asked the Lord *Jesus* three different times to
make me stop suffering in that way. 9 He responded by saying
to me, “When I act kindly to you, that is all you need. In fact, I
make people fully powerful when they are feeble.” Therefore,
I will most happily say more great things about how feeble
I am. That way, the Messiah will always enable me to act
powerfully. 10 So then, I am happy *when bad things happen to
me* because *I serve* the Messiah. This includes when I am feeble,
when people say bad things about me, when people hurt me,
when people persecute me, and when I struggle. *I am happy*
because *God* empowers me when I am feeble.

11 I have been speaking foolishly, which is what you forced
me to do. *You forced me* because you should be saying that I
am trustworthy, *but you are not saying that*. *You should be saying
that* because I am just as great as any people who say that
they represent the Messiah the best. *That is true* even though
I am not great at all. 12 I persevered in acting in the ways that
prove to you that I really am one whom the Messiah sent to
represent him. I did powerful and amazing things. 13 Further,
I did not treat you like you were less important than any other
group of believers. The only way *I acted differently with you*
was that I did not bother you *by asking you for money*. If that
was actually wrong, please forgive me for doing it!

14 Pay attention! I am about to visit you for the third time.
Yet again, I will not bother you *by asking for money*. *That is*
because I want you *to trust me and the Messiah*. *I do not want*
the things that you have. In fact, since I am like your parent,
I should be saving money for you. Further, since you are like
my children, you should not be saving money for me. 15 I will
most happily do and experience anything to help you. When
I love you more *than I did before*, you should not love me less
than you did before.

16 You can agree, then, that I personally did not bother
you *by asking for money*. However, perhaps I am a clever
person. *Maybe* I somehow tricked you into giving me *money*.
17 *However,* I have not had anyone visit you who has acted for
me by cheating you. 18 *For example,* I asked Titus *to visit you*,
and I had a fellow believer go with him. *You know that* Titus
did not cheat you. He and I live the same way and do the same
things.

19 You should know that the reason why we have said these
things is not to explain to you that I and those who serve with
me are trustworthy. Rather, as those whom God has united
to the Messiah, we have been saying what pleases God. Of
course, *fellow believers* whom we love, we intend everything
we say and do to help you grow. 20 *I have said these things*
because I am concerned about *what will happen* when I visit. *I
am concerned that* I will discover that you are not acting as I
want *you to act* and that you will discover that I am not acting
as you want *me to act*. *I am concerned* that you may be fighting
with each other, being jealous *of each other*, being angry *with
each other*, trying to control *each other*, saying bad things *about
each other*, telling false stories *about others*, saying great things
about yourselves, or stirring up crowds *against each other*. 21 *I
am concerned* about *what will happen* when I visit you this third
time. God may make me ashamed about you. Further, I may
feel very sad about many people who have previously done
what is wrong and have not stopped having improper sex.

13 *The scripture says:* “At least two or three witnesses
must say the same thing *about someone* before we can
believe that it is true.” *Be aware that* the next time that I visit

you will be the third time *that I will be a witness to what you are doing*. 2 When I visited you the second time, I warned all of you that I was going to punish everyone among you who had been sinning. And now I am warning you again while I am still away from you. When I visit you this third time, I will punish everyone who has been sinning. 3 I tell you this because you have demanded that I prove to you that the Messiah is speaking to you when I speak to you. *You will know this when he disciplines you.* He will not be weak with you; instead, he will work powerfully among you. 4 You see, *as a man,* the Messiah allowed himself to be weak when people nailed him to a cross. But God is powerful, and he has made him alive again. We, too, are weak human beings, as he was. But God also works powerfully in us to make us live as the Messiah does, so we will work powerfully among you.

5 Each of you should ask yourself: "Do I trust the Messiah and live as he directs me?" Each of you should test yourself *in this way*. Then you will know that you truly live as one with Jesus the Messiah. That is true unless, of course, you fail this test. 6 As for us, I am certain that you will understand that we have passed the test. 7 We pray to God that you may not be doing any bad things. We pray for this, not because we want people to consider that we have been successful *in disciplining you*, but so that you would be doing good things. We want this for you even if it means that people consider that we have failed *because you did not need us*. 8 We want you to do good things *even if then we cannot discipline you and appear to be powerful* because we must obey God's true message. We cannot do anything that contradicts God's true message. 9 We are happy when *people think that* we are weak, because you are strong *in obeying God without needing discipline from us*. This is the very thing that we pray for, that you may decide to trust and obey God completely. 10 It is because I want you to trust and obey God completely that I am writing to you about these things while I am apart from you. Then when I come to you, I will not have to discipline you severely. The Lord has empowered me to represent him, but he did that so that I could encourage and help you *to trust God more*, not so that I could discourage you *from trusting God*.

11 Here are the last things that I want to say to you, my fellow believers. Be joyful! Live in the way that God wants you to live. Let the things that I have said to you encourage you *to trust God more*. Agree with each other *about the important things*. Live peacefully with each other. *If you do these things,* God will be with you. He is the one who enables you to love and to be peaceful with others. 12 Greet each other affectionately in a way that is appropriate for those who are members of God's family. All of God's people *here* send greetings to you. 13 May the Lord Jesus the Messiah act kindly toward you, may God love you, and may the Holy Spirit be with you and join you all together.