

Comfort Food for the Soul

Comfort from God's Promises 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 12:7-10

for Children:

Try a little experiment. Tape your thumbs against your palms and spend 30 minutes (or longer) doing your daily routine, then come back here.

Our thumbs make a big difference, don't they? They are always there, but we don't often think about how much they help us. It's like that with Jesus.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12. Paul noticed that Jesus' presence rescued and protected him over and over! Remind yourself of Matthew 28:19-20. While we can learn to live without our thumbs, we cannot live without the presence of Jesus!

Weekly Memory Verse:

"Therefore I delight in difficulties, in behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

2 Corinthians 12:10

for the Mature Christian:

Read 2 Corinthians 1:15-22. Paul is answering the accusation by the Corinthians that his delay in returning to them shows him to be unreliable, a "flip-flopper." (By the way, "vacillating"(NASB)/ "fickle"(NIV) does not mean that it's a problem to change your mind. In the Greek it means to not give thought to one's words in the first place).

Paul defends himself. The Corinthians should know that he lives and speaks by integrity. When he said he intended to visit he meant it. Paul does not make decisions "by the flesh," that is, from selfish motives or what is most convenient for him. He models his decision making after Christ - his "yes is yes, and no is no."

There is a play on words in the Greek. Essentially Paul is saying that the words he speak in everyday conversation (*logos*) are controlled by the Word of God (*Logos*) - Jesus.

Prayerfully check in on your own speech. Like Paul, do you realize it is spoken always in the presence of God?

for the Growing Christian:

Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-6. This comes at the ends of Paul's great "boasting" section (of course, Paul is boasting about his weaknesses to show off the power of Christ), and leads him into why he has been given a thorn in the flesh.

Paul was granted a vision of God's current dwelling place in Heaven (*third heaven*). This is an amazing and rare privilege. Paul saw and heard things there that he was forbidden to share with us, but the apostle John was, read Revelation 4.

How does this change your perspective on God and life on earth? (If you're not sure what to make of it, ask about it in Bible Study).

Finally, read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, then prayerfully consider these questions:

- What do you learn about answers to prayers?
- What do you learn about humility?
- What do you learn about how God works in the lives of individual humans like you?

Weekly Affirmation:

I can do all things through Him who gives me strength!

Recipe

September 2024 Growth Goals

- Read the Book of 2 Corinthians
- Memorize one of the weekly memory verses
- Watch the Bible Project video on the Book of 2 Corinthians (available on the website).
- Seek out a few individuals in your church family or sphere of influence and share with them a comforting promise of God.