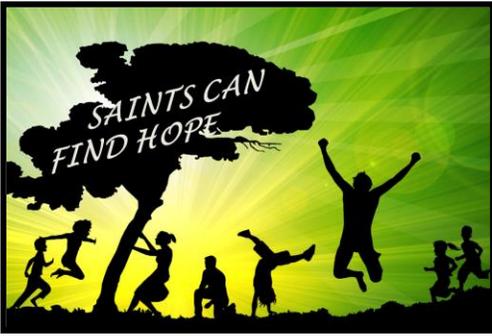


GULF SHORES
CHURCH OF CHRIST

Gulf Shores, AL

BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

Prepared by Ray Reynolds



Study Guide for II Corinthians

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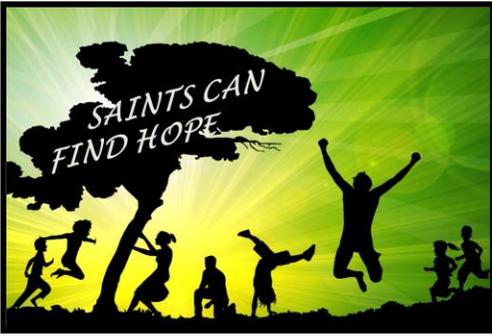
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This study guide was created by Ray Reynolds for use in Bible classes at the Gulf Shores Church of Christ (Gulf Shores, AL). The material presented in this series will be gleaned from personal notes, the New King James Study Bible, Dr. Coy Roper, Dr. Steven Guy, Dr. Edgar Elliot, Jerry Davidson, Gleason L. Archer, Irving L. Jensen, Mark Copeland, J. Vernon McGee and various other sources.



Study Guide for II Corinthians

INTRODUCTION

Author of II Corinthians:

Paul, the apostle (**II Corinthians 1:1, 10:1**), formerly Saul of Tarsus (**Acts 8-9**) identifies himself as the author of this letter. There is little doubt he penned this epistle. Timothy also aided in its writing.

Date of II Corinthians:

It is generally accepted that Paul wrote it shortly after the first letter, possibly within six months to a year from the first (**I Corinthians 16:1, II Corinthians 8:10, 9:2**). It is assumed to have been written in the fall of 57 AD in Ephesus (or the region of Macedonia) during his third missionary journey (**Acts 19:1-41**).

Theme of II Corinthians:

The entire book is about hope and encouragement to the church in Corinth, with the exception of chapters 10-13 that seem to be out of place (see below). When the problems at Corinth reached Paul because of the household of Chloe (**I Corinthians 1:11**), and a personal letter delivered by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (**I Corinthians 7:1, 16:17**). Paul makes necessary recommendations, including three men who could serve in the leadership, and had those three men personally carry his first letter. The church apparently needed continuous attention (four letters), so Paul sent Timothy to them (**I Corinthians 4:17, 16:10-11**), then himself made a "sorrowful" visit (**II Corinthians 1:23-2:1**), which didn't end well. Therefore, he sent a letter through Titus (**II Corinthians 2:3**), which some scholars believe can be found attached at the end (**II Corinthians 10-13**), called the "sorrowful letter."

Audience of II Corinthians:

The intended audience is the church in Corinth (See notes on I Corinthians and the Church in Corinth - Churches of Christ in the New Testament series). This was a congregation that was struggling with Paul's advice in previous letters and visits. Several complained about his authenticity (**II Corinthians 1:15-17**), his speech (**II Corinthians 10:10, 10:16**), his financial situation (**II Corinthians 11:7-9, 12:14**), his purpose for calling for their repentance (**II Corinthians 12:20-21**), and even his apostleship (**II Corinthians 10-13**).

The Geography of Corinth:

The city of Corinth is located on a narrow strip of land in Southern Greece (the "Bridge of Greece"). The city of Corinth was one of the main cities providing the ancient world with commerce. Ships from the east (Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt) would port in Cenchreae. Ships from the west (Italy, Sicily, and Spain) would port in Lechaem. To avoid Corinth, traders made a 200 journey around Peloponnesus (Cape Maelea). The flat terraces of land behind the city rose 1,500 feet above the skyline.

The History of Corinth:

The city of Corinth in New Testament times was an ancient city (at least 800 BC). Corinth was destroyed in 146 BC but rebuilt thanks in part to Julius Caesar in 44 BC. The city was repopulated with Italian freed slaves, displaced Greeks, and other diverse cultures. The Roman government was located in nearby Achaia (**Acts 18:12**). Corinth was a leading city of Greece for both political and commercial reasons. It had the temples of Apollo, Aesculapius, Dionysus, Isis, Aphrodite, etc.

The Beginning of the Church in Corinth:

The Jews in Corinth were planted there because of the Dispersion. In Asia Minor there were many Jewish settlements, but this one seems to be unique. Luke records the early background of the church in **Acts 18**. Paul makes a very important contact with a man named Aquila and his wife Pricilla. Every Sabbath day he preached in the synagogue to both Jews and Greeks. Paul is rejected by the Jews and he decides to shift his focus to the Gentiles (**Acts 18:6-8**). Paul receives a vision that he should stay awhile in Corinth (1 1/2 years). He was instrumental in their growth and success.

The Work of the Church in Corinth:

The Bible and historical evidence prove the existence of a large congregation in Corinth. The work seems to be successful because of the message of God's grace to all people. The conversion of Titius/Titus (aka Justus) is a very important step. Paul did extensive work among the Gentiles after his rejection by the Jews (**Romans 16:23**). Paul would move to Ephesus from Corinth (**Acts 19**). The correspondence between Paul and the Corinthians.

The Dilemmas of the Church in Corinth:

The church suffered a setback with Paul's trial before Gallio. Gallio was governor of all of Southern Greece and brother of Seneca, a Roman philosopher. Historians have documented evidence that Gallio became proconsul in the Summer of 51 AD. The Jewish leaders hoped to separate themselves from the Christians. Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, is beaten for his association with Paul (**I Corinthians 1:1**). The church faced many heresies and conflicts. There were also several acute cases of "preacheritis" in the New Testament, and Corinth bears no exception to this dilemma. There is a Apollos party, a Cephas party, a Paul party, and a Christ party. The influence of Gnosticism is also seen in this congregation.

The Maturity of the Church in Corinth:

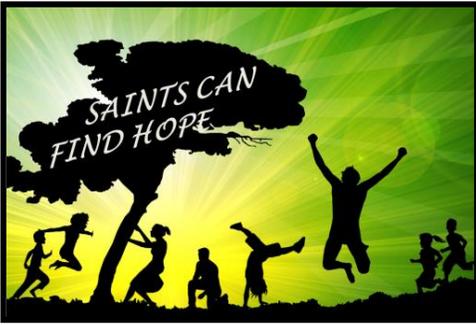
The church benefited when it was led by stable mature leaders. The congregation succeeded when Pricilla and Aquila were there leading them. Paul, Apollos, Peter, Titus and Timothy were also effective, but they needed stability. The church would have matured faster with good shepherds. It seems from **I Corinthians 1-4** that they had no elders. The three men in **I Corinthians 16:17** were sent to supply what was lacking (**Titus 1:7**). The church would have matured faster with solid preaching and effective shepherding. It seems that Apollos was discouraged with the brethren there, maybe for this reason (**I Corinthians 16:12**). Paul tells them in **I Corinthians 16** Timothy will bring the next letter, but it was Titus who ended up going. Were the Christian missionaries avoiding this city and these brethren? If so, why? The church became a mature church when they heeded Paul's advice. This book was his "best shot" for the saints of God.

Key Verses of II Corinthians:

II Corinthians 1:3-4, 4:1, 4:7, 4:16-18, 5:20-21, 6:2, 6:14, 8-9, 12:7-13, 13:1-4

Outline:

- 1) *Saints Can Find Hope in Consolation (Chapter 1)*
- 2) *Saints Can Find Hope in Instruction (Chapter 2)*
- 3) *Saints Can Find Hope in Commendation (Chapter 3)*
- 4) *Saints Can Find Hope in Manifestation (Chapter 4)*
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- 12) *Saints Can Find Hope in Affection (Chapter 12)*
- 13) *Saints Can Find Hope in Examination (Chapter 13)*



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Consolation (I Corinthians 1)

Introduction: We are beginning a new series on the book of II Corinthians. The church in Corinth had many problems. Paul wrote at least four letters to this congregation. I & II Corinthians are only part of that correspondence. However, the second letter in our New Testament reveals that the first letter was received with love and acceptance. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. Today we will see how we can receive hope in consolation. Let’s open to chapter one and study together...

Discussion:

I. The Source of Consolation (vs.1-11)

- God is the source of benevolence (**II Corinthians 9:8-15**).
- God is the source of patience and comfort (**Romans 15:5**).
- God is the source of goodness and mercy (**James 1:17**).
- God is the source of love (**I John 4:7-21**).

II. The Significance of Consolation (vs.12-22)

- God wants us to seek direction from Him (**Romans 15:4**).
- God wants us to talk to Him (**Philippians 4:6-7**).
- God wants us to draw closer to Him (**James 4:8**).
- God wants us to share our experiences (**II Corinthians 7:4-7, 13**).

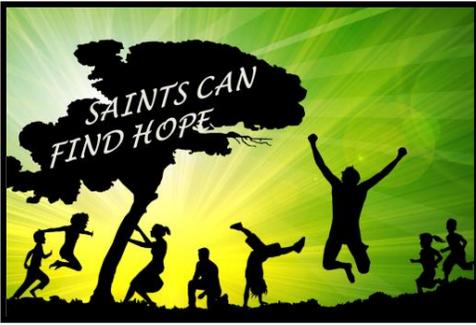
III. The Safety of Consolation (vs.23-24)

- God has given us His judgment (**Romans 1:28-2:11**).
- God has given us His grace (**Ephesians 2:1-10**).
- God has given us His Word (**II Timothy 3:16-17**).
- God has given us His promises (**Hebrews 13:5**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- Why should we have hope? What is the proper use of this comfort from God?
- What appears to be the reason Paul's integrity was in question? Did that hinder him?
- How can we console one another in Christ? Explain.

Conclusion: Paul began our text with these words: "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort*" (v.3). The comfort Paul had received was moving him to praise God and pass that comfort along to others! Do you have hope? Are you in Christ? If you have this hope, have you been sharing it with others? Are you ready to be filled with hope?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Instruction (II Corinthians 2)

Introduction: Last week we began a new series on the book of II Corinthians. The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of the correspondence Paul felt they needed to correct those problems. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. Today we will see how we can receive hope in instruction. Let’s open to chapter two and study together...

Discussion:

I. The Instruction for Joy (vs.1-4)

- Joy can come in persecution (**Matthew 5:11-12**).
- Joy can come in sorrow (**John 16:22**).
- Joy can come in tribulation (**Romans 12:12**).
- Joy can come in trials (**James 1:2-4**).

II. The Instruction for Forgiveness (vs.5-11)

- Forgiveness comes from God (**Psalms 65:3**).
- Forgiveness causes us to forgive others (**Matthew 6:14-15**).
- Forgiveness causes us to forget wrongs (**I Corinthians 13:5**).
- Forgiveness causes us to confess our sin (**I John 1:8-9**).

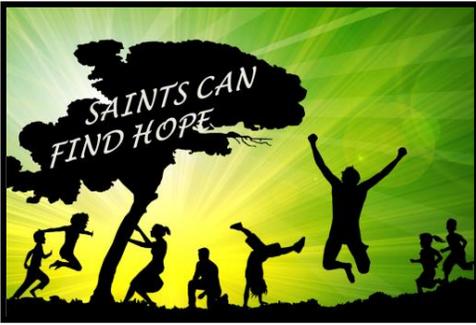
III. The Instruction for Victory (vs.12-17)

- Victory is revealed by peace (**John 16:33**).
- Victory is revealed by meekness (**II Corinthians 10:1-4**).
- Victory is revealed by teaching (**Ephesians 4:15**).
- Victory is revealed by patience (**II Timothy 2:24-26**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What was Paul determined not to do? Why?
- What did Paul want them to do with the man who had sinned in I Corinthians?
- Why was Paul so willing to forgive the man once the Corinthians had forgiven him?

Conclusion: Paul began our text with what he had determined to do, and not to do, for the sake of the gospel. To the Romans, Paul said: “*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*” (**Romans 15:13**). Do you have hope? Hope only comes from “the God of all comfort.” Are you sharing that hope? People are dying to know it. Are you ready to be filled with hope? Come to Jesus.



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Commendation (II Corinthians 3)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of his correspondence to them. This second letter in our New Testament reveals that the first letter was well received. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. The third chapter is about giving praise where it is due. Paul reveals that any heart can change when it has been touched by God. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. Commend Those Who Change (vs.1-6)

- They have been spared of God’s wrath (**Psalm 89:32-33**).
- They have been given life (**John 16:13-15**).
- They have been impacted by the gospel (**I Thessalonians 1:4-5**).
- They have confessed their sin (**II Timothy 2:19**).

II. Commend Those Who Grow (vs.7-11)

- Our church family helps us grow spiritually (**Acts 14:21-22**).
- Our faith helps us grow spiritually (**I Corinthians 3:5-9**).
- Our prayer life helps us grow spiritually (**I Thessalonians 5:17**).
- Our Bible study helps us grow spiritually (**I Peter 2:2**).

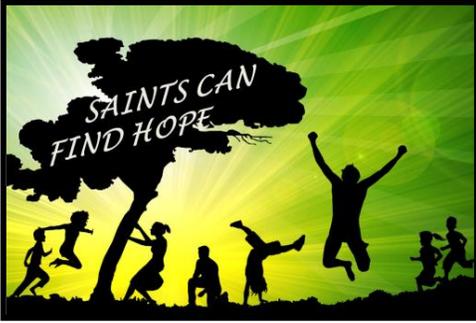
III. Commend Those Who Transformed (vs.12-18)

- Transformation begins when we are born again (**John 3:3, 5**).
- Transformation takes root when we renew our thinking (**Romans 12:1-2**).
- Transformation continues when we see our potential (**Philippians 1:6**).
- Transformation ends when we are taken to Heaven (**Revelation 2:10**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- Who was Paul's "epistle of commendation"? Why? Explain.
- Who made Paul sufficient as a minister of the new covenant?
- What is said of the glory of the old covenant when compared with the new?

Conclusion: Change, growth, and transformation modify our focus into the right direction. Christ "*died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for the One who died for them and was raised*" (**II Corinthians 5:15**). Do you have hope? Hope only comes from "the God of all comfort." Are you ready to be filled with hope? The Lord wants to inspire and empower you to become a minister of reconciliation, a bringer of hope, and a peacemaker. Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Manifestation (II Corinthians 4)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. The letters we call "I & II Corinthians" are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about accepting Paul's advice and putting it into action. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. Do NOT Lose Heart (vs.1-6)

- We can reap with the right persistence (**Luke 18:1-8**).
- We can reap in the right season (**Galatians 6:9**).
- We can reap in the right situations (**Ephesians 3:13**).
- We can reap with the right people (**Hebrews 10:24-25**).

II. Do NOT Lose Perspective (vs.7-12)

- We must renew our minds (**Romans 12:2**).
- We must give up things daily (**I Corinthians 15:31**).
- We must take every thought captive (**II Corinthians 10:5**).
- We must die with Christ (**Galatians 2:20**).

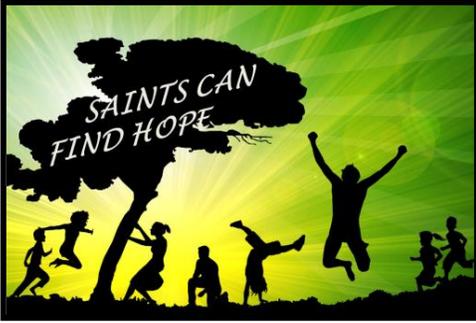
III. Do NOT Lose Faith (vs.13-18)

- We need true conviction (**I Corinthians 4:13**).
- We need true comfort (**I Corinthians 4:14**).
- We need true compassion (**I Corinthians 4:15**).
- We need true courage (**I Corinthians 4:16**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- Why does Paul not "lose heart"?
- How does Paul view himself? Why?
- How is the "light" that God has commanded to be shone in his heart described?
- Why was Paul and others allowed to suffer for Christ?

Conclusion: Hopefully, we will not grow weary or lose heart. We need to have hope. Paul said, "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart*" (**Galatians 6:9**). Do you have hope? It should be manifested in your heart, mind and soul. Are you filled with hope? Are you ready to reap blessings? Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Reconciliation (II Corinthians 5)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. The letters we call “I & II Corinthians” are only part of Paul’s correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about seeking reconciliation. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. Temporary Things Are Destructive (vs.1-5)

- We live in a temporary world (**Matthew 24:25**).
- We dwell in a temporary house (**Acts 17:24-25**).
- We have temporary knowledge (**I Corinthians 13:12**).
- We see temporary things (**II Corinthians 4:18**).

II. Eternal Things Are Distinctive (vs.6-11)

- We can live in an eternal world (**Matthew 7:13-14**).
- We can dwell in an eternal house (**John 14:1-3, Philippians 3:20-21**).
- We can have eternal knowledge (**I Corinthians 13:12**).
- We can see eternal things (**II Corinthians 5:7**).

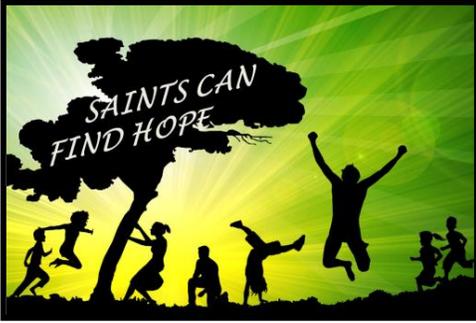
III. Wisdom Is Knowing the Difference (vs.12-21)

- Wise people love reconciliation (**Matthew 18:15-17**).
- Wise people preach reconciliation (**Romans 10:14-15**).
- Wise people teach reconciliation (**II Timothy 2:2**).
- Wise people proclaim reconciliation (**I Peter 2:9-10**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What is the nature of Paul’s ministry according to this chapter?
- What does our present condition require of us in our daily walk? Why?
- How has God reconciled us to Himself? What then does he make us?

Conclusion: We need to put off the old self and become a new creation in Christ. We need to ignore our trespasses and except the forgiveness of God. **Romans 5:8** says, “*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” We need to have an eternal hope. We need to be reconciled to God. Are you ready to be filled with hope? We need to be reconciled to others. Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Separation (II Corinthians 6)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. The letters we call “I & II Corinthians” are only part of Paul’s correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in separation. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. A Life of Ministry (vs.1-10)

- Rejoicing in the day of salvation for us (**Isaiah 49:8, 55:6-7**).
- Ignoring the deluge against us (**Acts 9:16**).
- Preparing for the danger ahead of us (**Romans 8:31-39**).
- Visualizing the death that awaits us (**II Timothy 4:6-8**).

II. A Love for Mission (vs.11-13)

- Love our family and friends (**Matthew 7:12, 22:37-39**).
- Love our church family (**II Corinthians 11:28**).
- Love our fellow workers (**II Timothy 1:2**).
- Love our future brethren (**John 17:20**).

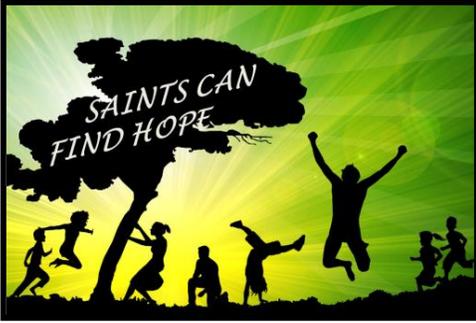
III. A Lack of Mischief (vs.14-18)

- The Holy Spirit gave temporary gifts (**I Corinthians 12:8-10, 13:10**).
- The Holy Spirit gives natural gifts (**Romans 12:6-9**).
- The Holy Spirit bears fruit (**Galatians 5:22-23**).
- The Holy Spirit strengthens believers (**Ephesians 3:16**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What are some of the physical sufferings that commended Paul as a minister?
- How did Paul demonstrate his integrity as a minister of God?
- What does he say about the Corinthians' affections toward him?
- What is necessary to receive the promises of God? Explain.
- Why is it a blessing to have a Father who dwells among us?
- Why is it so important to be separated from the world we live in?

Conclusion: We are never truly separated from God if we are in Christ. Listen carefully to the words of **Romans 8:35-39**. We need to have an eternal hope. Are you ready to be filled with hope? Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Satisfaction (II Corinthians 7)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. The letters we call “I & II Corinthians” are only part of Paul’s correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding satisfaction in the things that matter. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. A Change of Heart (vs.1-4)

- A clean heart will produce godliness (**Psalm 51:10**).
- A clean heart will perfect holiness (**Matthew 5:48**).
- A clean heart will prosecute no one (**Romans 2:1**).
- A clean heart will program our speech (**Ephesians 4:29**)

II. A Change of Plans (vs.5-12)

- Do not become weary in doing good (**Galatians 6:9**).
- Do not neglect your salvation (**Philippians 2:12**).
- Do not neglect true repentance (**Philippians 3:19-21**).
- Do not ignore true religion (**James 1:27**).

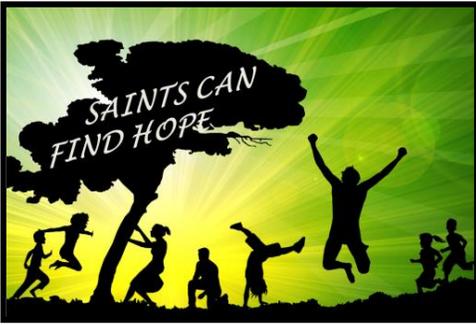
III. A Change of Behavior (vs.13-16)

- Repentance strengthens God’s message (**Luke 3:7-8**).
- Repentance unlocks God’s plan (**Luke 13:3-5**).
- Repentance emphasizes God’s work (**Acts 2:38-39**).
- Repentance supports God’s will (**II Peter 3:9**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What was Paul's condition when he first came to Macedonia? Why?
- What gave Paul comfort and joy? Explain.

Conclusion: Paul says, “*I rejoice that I have confidence in you and everything*” (**II Corinthians 7:16**). What a statement of satisfaction. He was confident in the brethren in Corinth. He knew they were willing to change. They wanted to find contentment. Are you ready to be filled with hope? Have you accepted the will of God? Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Devotion (II Corinthians 8)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in our Christian devotion. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. A Kingdom Principle (vs.1-7)

- Giving is a sign of God's grace (**Philippians 1:29-30**).
- Giving is a sample of God's deliverance (**I Thessalonians 1:6**).
- Giving is a symbol of God's fellowship (**Acts 11:29**).
- Giving is a statement of God's abundance (**Romans 12:1-2**).

II. A Personal Example (vs.8-15)

- Giving with a willing heart (**I Corinthians 13:1-3**).
- Giving with a willing soul (**Matthew 16:26**).
- Giving with a willing mind (**Mark 12:38-44**).
- Giving with a willing strength (**Ecclesiastes 9:10**).

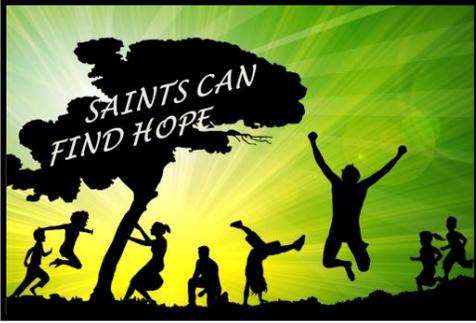
III. A Humble Apostle (vs.16-24)

- The collection is taken wisely (**I Corinthians 16:1-2**).
- The collection is guarded wisely (**John 12:6**).
- The collection is dispersed wisely (**Philippians 4:19**).
- The collection is remembered wisely (**Psalms 24:1**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What was the condition of the churches in Macedonia?
- What three guidelines does Paul give to govern their giving?
- What three men were sent to administer this collection? Why?

Conclusion: Godly people have given themselves to the Lord (**II Corinthians 8:5**). We must promise our best to God (**Matthew 6:25-34**). If we give ourselves to the Lord, it is only natural to give to others. This is a sign of true discipleship. God didn't call us to be takers. He called us to be givers. Are you ready to be filled with hope? Have you accepted the will of God? Will you share hope with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Demonstration (II Corinthians 9)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was received with love and acceptance. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in demonstrating our genuine faith. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. The Ministry of Saints (vs.1-5)

- Giving follows the teaching of Jesus (**Luke 6:30-36, 14:12-14**).
- Giving follows the pattern of the early church (**Acts 2:40-47, 4:32-37**).
- Giving follows the example of Paul (**Acts 20:33-35, Galatians 2:9-10**).
- Giving follows the teaching of Paul (**Galatians 6:9-10, I Timothy 6:17-19**).

II. The Sowing of Seed (vs.6-11)

- God will reward us for serving more (**Matthew 20:28**).
- God will reward us for giving more (**Mark 9:41**).
- God will reward us for helping more (**Acts 28:10**).
- God will reward us for doing more (**I Corinthians 3:8**)

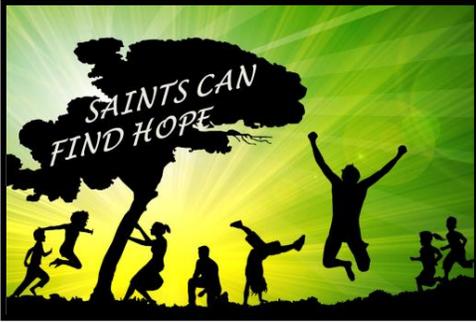
III. The Sharing of Gifts (vs.12-15)

- God is honored by our gifts (**Exodus 35:22**).
- God is honored by our generosity (**Ezra 2:68-69**).
- God is honored by our great sacrifices (**Hebrews 13:16**).
- God is honored by our godly love (**I John 3:16-17**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- Why was Paul's writing to the Corinthians about this collection superfluous?
- What is the relation between sowing and reaping? Which is better? Explain.
- Why did Paul pray that God supply and multiply the seed sown by the Corinthians?

Conclusion: We need to promise our best to God (**Matthew 6:25-34**). God didn't call us to be ignorers, or haters, or takers. He called us to be givers. Do people deserve it? No! But God demonstrated His own love toward us when we were sinners (**Romans 5:8**) he allowed Jesus to die. And Jesus forgave His accusers. He gave them hope NOT hate! Are you ready to be filled with hope? Have you accepted the will of God? Will you share hope with others who need it?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Transformation (II Corinthians 10)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in our spiritual transformation. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. Enduring Through Spiritual Warfare (vs.1-6)

- Change your thinking (**Romans 12:1-2**).
- Conquer your enemy (**Ephesians 6:10-20**).
- Confirm your reward (**Hebrews 10:36**).
- Cast away your burden (**Hebrews 12:1-2**).

II. Edifying Through Spiritual Words (vs.7-11)

- Don't overreact (**Proverbs 15:1**).
- Deal with the criticism (**Proverbs 15:32, 27:6**).
- Do the right thing (**Matthew 7:12**).
- Direct people to God (**Luke 6:28**).

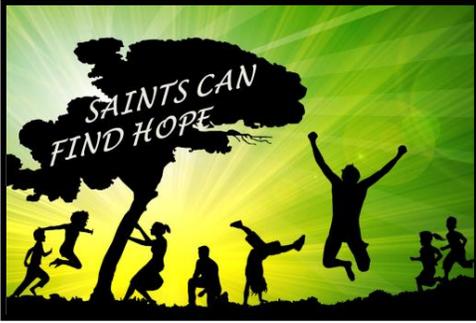
III. Escaping The Spiritual Wickedness (vs.12-18)

- Wicked people prefer evil desires (**Psalms 36:1-4**).
- Wicked people live in darkness (**Proverbs 4:19**).
- Wicked people choose division over peace (**Isaiah 48:22**).
- Wicked people deserve punishment (**Romans 1:18-20**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What two qualities of Christ-like character does Paul plead with the Corinthians?
- Why was Paul so concerned about meeting with the brethren in person?
- What accusations were being made against Paul? Why?
- Why is transformation needed for approval from God?

Conclusion: The Bible says, "God is in his holy Temple. He is a father to orphans, and he defends the widows. God gives the lonely a home. He leads prisoners out with joy, but those who turn against God will live in a dry land" (**Psalms 68:5-6**). God is everything you need and more! He wants to lead you, guide you, and transform you! Are you ready to be filled with hope? Have you accepted the will of God? Are you being transformed into the image of Jesus? Will you share hope with others?



GULF SHORES

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Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Declaration (II Corinthians 11)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was well received. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in declaration. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. Preaching Through Knowledge (vs.1-6)

- Fear & Knowledge (**Proverbs 1:7**)
- Blessings & Knowledge (**Proverbs 2:6-12**)
- Advice & Knowledge (**Proverbs 13:10**)
- Guidance & Knowledge (**Hosea 14:9**)

II. Teaching Through Humbleness (vs.7-15)

- God hears the prayers of the humble (**II Chronicles 7:14**).
- God saves the people who are humble (**Psalms 18:27**).
- God preserves the lives of the humble (**Psalms 147:6**).
- God exalts the people who are humble (**Luke 18:14**).

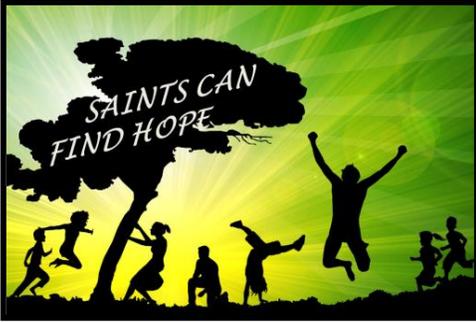
III. Boasting Through Weakness (vs.16-33)

- God knows we are weak (**Deuteronomy 8:16**).
- God watches over the weak (**Psalms 12:5**).
- God strengthens us when we are weak (**II Corinthians 12:9**).
- God wants us to encourage the weak (**I Thessalonians 5:14**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What was Paul fearful of concerning the Corinthians?
- What practice of Paul evidently was used as a charge against him?
- Why would Paul continue the practice of not accepting support from them?
- How does Satan often transform himself and his ministers?

Conclusion: Sometimes you need to humble yourself to allow God to exalt you. God wants you to share your story... the entire story! God wants you to share your wisdom and knowledge. He wants you to share your story. Are you ready to be filled with hope? Have you accepted the will of God? Are you declaring the good news? Will you share hope with others who need it?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Affection (II Corinthians 12)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. I & II Corinthians are only part of Paul's correspondence to this church family. The second letter reveals that the first letter was received with love and acceptance. The "saints" of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. In this second letter, we can see several things that gave the church hope. This chapter is about finding hope in grace and affection. Let's study together...

Discussion:

I. Paul's Vision (vs.1-6)

- Paul received visions at his conversion (**Acts 9:3-6, 12**).
- Paul received visions throughout his ministry (**Acts 16, 18, 22, 23, 27**).
- Paul received visions of Paradise (**II Corinthians 12:1-6**).
- Paul received visions for writing (**II Timothy 3:16-17**).

II. Paul's Thorn (vs.7-13)

- Thorns are the enemies of God's people (**Numbers 33:55, Joshua 23:13, Judges 2:3**).
- Thorns are the suffering of God's people (**Ezekiel 2:6, 28:24, Luke 10:18-19**).
- Thorns are the foolishness of God's people (**Luke 6:44, 8:5-15, 12:16-18**).
- Thorns are the curses of God's people (**Galatians 6:7, Hebrews 6:8-9**).

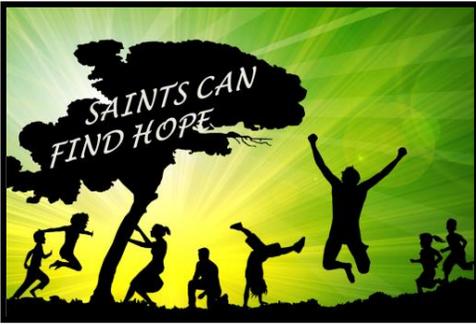
III. Paul's Concern (vs.14-21)

- This is a reminder to consider your priorities (**Matthew 6:33**).
- This is a reminder to consider your potential (**Matthew 7:7**).
- This is a reminder to consider your persistence (**Luke 18:1-8**).
- This is a reminder to consider your patience (**James 1:2**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- Why was Paul given a thorn in the flesh?
- How many times did Paul plead with the Lord to remove the thorn?
- What were the signs of an apostle that Paul had done among the Corinthians?
- What was the motive behind all that Paul did for the Corinthians?

Conclusion: Consider the words of Paul in **Titus 3:3-7**. Have you accepted the grace of God? Will you confess Jesus as your Lord and submit to Him in baptism? Are you ready to be filled with hope? Will you share it with others?



Study Guide for II Corinthians

Saints Can Find Hope In Examination (II Corinthians 13)

Introduction: The church in Corinth had many problems. In this second letter, we have seen several things that gave the church hope. The “saints” of God in Corinth realized that not all hope was lost. This final chapter is about finding hope in examination. Let’s study together...

Discussion:

I. Examine Your Foresight (vs.1-4)

- We need to be ready for salvation (**Mark 16:16**).
- We need to be ready for Christ’s return (**Luke 12:35-40**).
- We need to be ready for judgment (**Hebrews 9:27-28**).
- We need to be ready to defend our faith (**I Peter 3:15**).

II. Examine Your Faith (vs.5-10)

- Substantial faith comes in small amounts (**Luke 17:6**).
- Saving faith comes in Jesus Christ (**Romans 3:28, 5:1**).
- Sound faith comes from the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**).
- Strong faith comes from unity (**Ephesians 4:5**).

III. Examine Your Fellowship (vs.7-14)

- Christians should be complete (**I Corinthians 1:10**).
- Christians should be comforted (**II Corinthians 1:3-4**).
- Christians should be considerate (**I Corinthians 10:24**).
- Christians should be in communion (**I Corinthians 11:26**).

IV. How Can We Find Hope?

- What will be the significance of Paul's third visit to them?
- What was Paul's prayer for the Corinthians?
- What three blessings does Paul pray for them as he closes this epistle?
- How do these final exhortations prove Paul’s sincerity?

Conclusion: We need to examine ourselves and treat people as we want to be treated (**Matthew 7:12**). **II Corinthians 13:11** says, “*Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.*” What a great passage! If you want hope, look to these verses. Have you accepted Christ and confessed Him as your Lord? Have you submitted to Him in baptism? Are you ready to be filled with hope? Are you telling others the good news? Will you share hope with others who need it?