



ontrack devotions

1 & 2 CORINTHIANS

FEBRUARY 2024

# MONTHLY PRAYER SHEET

"...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16

Who I Will Reach

How I Will Do It

How It Went

Other Requests

Date Answered

How It Was Answered

# MONTHLY COMMITMENT SHEET

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

This sheet is designed to help you make personal commitments each month that will **help you grow in your walk with God**. Fill it out by determining

1. What will push you
2. What you think you can achieve

If you need help filling out your commitments, seek out someone you trust who can help you. Share your commitments with those who will help keep you accountable.

## **Personal Devotions:**

How did I do with my commitment last month? \_\_\_\_\_

I will commit to read the OnTrack Bible passage and devotional thought \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) each week this month.

## **Church Attendance:**

How did I do last month with my attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

I will attend church \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

I will attend small group \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

I will attend \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

(List any other activities you will participate in this month—Bible study, church events, etc.)

## **Bible Memory:**

How did I do with Bible memory last month? \_\_\_\_\_

I will memorize \_\_\_\_\_ verse(s) this month.

## **Outreach:**

How did I do last month with sharing Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

I will share Jesus with \_\_\_\_\_ this month.

I will serve my local church this month by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does it take to be someone God can use? How smart would you need to be? How popular do you need to be? What kind of talent would be necessary? Paul gives us the answer to those questions in today's reading. According to Paul, it only takes being foolish, weak, lowly, and despised. I think most of us will find ourselves in at least one of those categories. You see, according to verse 29, God chooses these kinds of people so that no one can boast about themselves. If God used only the great people, then the watching world would not see the power of God. They would think the results were because of the abilities of the people involved. God desires to show His great power to the world through you. It is not your ability that determines if God can use you. He is interested in your availability. Have you allowed Him to use you? Do not look at your own abilities, but look at God's capabilities to use you in the lives of others. You will be amazed at what He can do through you! Why not allow Him to start today!

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

1 CORINTHIANS 1

Reread the first five verses of this chapter and, at the end of each verse, ask yourself why. You would think that Paul would want to use eloquent speech and superior wisdom when he spoke to people about Jesus. You would think that he would want his message to contain wise and persuasive words so the listeners would respond to what he was saying. Why didn't he use them? He did not want people to respond to the message of Jesus because of his abilities or methods. He wanted them to respond because the Spirit of God was moving in their hearts. Paul wanted people to respond to the message of salvation because of a demonstration of the Spirit's power. Otherwise, they would be deceived into believing something supernatural had happened—because of him. Over time, they would fall away. In what way can the Holy Spirit's power be demonstrated by us? Our transformed lives is one way! If we needed great wisdom, eloquence, or persuasive words, some of us wouldn't be very effective. However, each of us ought to have a transformed life that others can observe. Is your life demonstrating the Spirit's power to those who are watching?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 2

There is an encouraging phrase in today's reading. This book was written to a church that had several problems. From this chapter we learn that there was jealousy and quarreling among them. One of the issues was a dispute over Paul and Apollos. Some felt superior because they had been saved through Paul's ministry, while those who had been saved through Apollos' felt they were superior. To counter the jealousy, Paul gave them principles to guide them. One of the principles is found in verse 8, in the phrase, "according to his own labor." This phrase teaches us that the results of someone's ministry, and his impact on others lives, are in God's hands. He alone determines the results in the people's lives. You may have planted the seed while someone else watered it. Later, someone else came along and harvested it. We must be willing to play the role God has designed and trust Him with the outcome. What role might God want you to be playing in people's lives right now? Are you ready to plant, water, or harvest? What is keeping you from doing that today? Use today's questions to help you get started.

### SAY WHAT?

In what ways can God use you to plant a seed?

### SO WHAT?

In what ways can God use you to water a seed?

### NOW WHAT?

What is an example from your life in which you did the planting or watering, but God used someone else to make it grow?

### THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

### EXTRA READING

1 CORINTHIANS 3

## PROVERBS 30

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

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If you want to know what made Paul such an effective witness, you need to look no further than today's reading. It is what also gave him the ability to confront the Corinthian church with the issues in this book. What is it? You'll find it if you look in verse 17. Paul says that he has a life that "agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church." What a statement! No wonder he had such influence. He was a person in whom there was no hypocrisy and could, therefore, make such a statement. What he preached and taught to others was what he lived. He did not address other's issues knowing his life had areas that had not been made right. Nor did he have to avoid saying what needed to be said because his own life did not measure up. His life was consistent with what he said and taught. When you put the truth of God together with a consistent life, you have incredible influence. Could you make this statement? Does your life agree with everything you say? Our world desperately needs to see people living a life consistent with what they claim to believe. What area do you need to work on so this can be true of you? Who can you ask to help you become more consistent?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

1 CORINTHIANS 4



Today's reading reveals another problem facing the church in Corinth. They had sin in their church and, not only were they not dealing with it, they were proud that they were tolerant of people and had not been judgmental. They patted themselves on the back as though it was to their credit that the guilty party felt no shame. They felt ignoring his sin was better than dealing with it out in the open. Paul explained why this response is wrong. First, the Corinthians response did not help the person come to see his actions as sin. By not confronting it, they led him to believe he was fine and his sin was not a problem. Secondly, their response was wrong because it would allow sin to spread throughout the church. Others would assume that they could engage in this kind of behavior also. Sin in our churches cannot be tolerated or ignored. We must lovingly confront it and, if there is no repentance, we must take a stand for the sake of the one sinning, as well as for the church. It may not be easy, but it must be done. There is too much at stake! Is there sin in your life you have not dealt with? Is there sin in your church?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 5

When we are confronted with a choice in an area of our lives that Scripture does not cover, how do we know what choice to make? How do we know what God would have us do? In today's reading, Paul gives us two principles to consider when confronted with that kind of situation. First, verse 12 says you need to ask yourself if this is something that is beneficial for you spiritually. That is, will it help you become more like Jesus? The question to ask is not "Will this hurt me?" but "How will this help me?" A second question to ask yourself is whether it will cause you to become controlled by it through addiction or habit. Will it become your master and control your behavior. There are many areas these principles govern that we need to examine. Ask yourself not only if the activity is permissible, but if it is beneficial and if it will enslave you. In what areas of your life do you need to be asking these questions? What area is the Spirit of God confronting you with as you read this? What will you do about it?

### SAY WHAT?

What kinds of things might be okay, but would not be beneficial for you?

### SO WHAT?

What kinds of things might be okay, but could control you?

### NOW WHAT?

What specific area of your life do you need to examine with these two questions in mind?

### THEN WHAT?

What personal commitment can you make in light of this passage?

### EXTRA READING

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Paul gives a common theme in verses 17, 20, 24, and 26. What is it? How does it apply to our lives right now? Often, when we make spiritual decisions, we think it means we need to make major, sweeping changes. That may be true sometimes, but there are some areas that should not change. In the Corinthian church, they thought getting saved meant finding a new wife, if you were married to an unbeliever. If a slave trusted Jesus, he might think that his decision meant his standing needed to change. Paul explained that you can be a Christian and live for God while remaining in your present circumstance. Often, we are exactly where God wants us to be, but are prone to jump ship or bail out. Paul discouraged that kind of attitude. Our spiritual decision might open doors to reach those in our world. In what present circumstance do you need renewed determination to hang on and allow God to work? God has you there for a reason.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 7

When addressing eating meat sacrificed to idols, why did Paul begin with verses 1-3? Why talk about how knowledge puffs people up? Why emphasize how important love is? Paul began here so this church would realize immediately that it is possible to pursue knowledge and only gain pride. Knowledge alone will not keep you from doing something that may hurt others, even though your action may not be wrong. Love, on the other hand, does not lead to pride, but humility. Its goal is to build others up, not hurt people. If someone were only interested in knowledge, they wouldn't care if eating meat hurt someone else. All they would care about is the question of right and wrong. They would work to simply gain more knowledge about the matter. Paul wanted the Corinthian church to have their knowledge affected by love. If it is, it will be motivated by what is best for others, not what is best for me. Because Paul was motivated by love, he could say what he did in verse 13. Can you? Are there things you will not give up, even though they may hurt another someone? If you are motivated by love, you will seek to benefit others.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

1 CORINTHIANS 8, 9

Why does Paul use the illustration of eating and drinking to challenge those in Corinth to glorify God? It would seem that eating and drinking are the most insignificant things we do in the course of a day. Surely he could come up with a more significant illustration. Illustrations like what career we choose or how we use our money might attract our attention better. But that may be his point. Paul clearly states that everything we do ought to glorify God. Even in the areas of our life that seem routine and insignificant, we ought to seek to bring Him glory. His point is that we should glorify God not just when we stand before people in a public way, but when we mow the lawn, wait in line, or hang out—in everything. He used an insignificant example to illustrate how important glorifying God is in every area of our lives. In what small area of your life do you need to seek to glorify God? Choose one area and begin today. Your life is on display. You may never realize what those around you have observed.

**SAY WHAT?**

In what small, insignificant areas of your life can you glorify God?

**SO WHAT?**

How will you go about accomplishing that task?

**NOW WHAT?**

How can you remind yourself what this passage teaches throughout the day?

**THEN WHAT?**

What personal commitment can you make in light of this passage?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 10

How serious is the communion service to God? Are our actions during communion important? Is God even aware that it takes place? When you read this chapter, you will realize communion is very important to God—probably more important than you thought. Paul included this chapter because the Corinthians were struggling with how they conducted communion. They came to the service with great division among themselves. Some did not wait, but began eating on their own, some excluded individuals, and others were even getting drunk during the service. Paul made it very clear how significant communion is to God and that it should not be taken lightly. Some of the members of their church were sick and had even died because they did not respond in a right way to this time of celebration. Communion is a solemn time to reflect on what Jesus did for us at Calvary. It is also a time for us to examine our lives for sin and where we are in our relationship with God. Do you take time to reflect on what Christ went through for you? Do you think about how your life has changed? Remember how significant this service really is the next time you attend.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

1 CORINTHIANS 11

What causes dissension in a local church? How can we prevent it? In today's reading, Paul condemns two responses that destroy unity. Could you be guilty of one of these responses? Paul begins this chapter by writing that everyone has at least one gift that God has given him to be beneficial to the entire body. One response to this truth is to look at yourself and determine that you are insignificant because your gift is not one of the important ones. A second response would be to examine others and determine that they are not valuable because they do not have what you consider to be important gifts. Both of these responses are wrong and hurt unity. We must realize that God has given to all followers of Jesus gifts to use in the church. If we take ourselves out or push others out, we hurt the body. We also miss out on what those gifts are designed to do. Have you struggled with either of these responses? Are you using the gifts God has given you? Do you see the role others must play in the body?

**SAY WHAT?**

What kind of gifts could make a person feel unimportant to the body?

**SO WHAT?**

In what ways do we make people feel like they are not important to the body?

**NOW WHAT?**

Look again at #1 and list some ways that God can use those gifts to impact the body.

**THEN WHAT?**

What personal commitment can you make in light of this passage?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 12

Why would Paul follow up a discussion about spiritual gifts with a section on love? Could it be that Paul follows his discussion on gifts with a discussion on love because love is the most important quality a church could have? We may assume that if a church had a great preacher it would be a great church. But Paul says that without love, it would sound awful. We may assume that if your church had great spiritual power, enough faith to move mountains, it would be a great church. But without love, it would be a church that amounts to nothing. We may assume that if your church made great sacrifices in order to meet the needs of the poor, or was willing to suffer personal harm, it would be a great church. But without love, all these sacrifices gain nothing. Without love, no matter what spiritual gifts your church might have, it will amount to nothing. Without it, nothing else matters.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

1 CORINTHIANS 13



What if the members of a church use their gifts but are not motivated by love? In this chapter, we see the consequences in a church that used their spiritual gifts, but were not motivated by love. You may see your own church fitting this description. As the believers in Corinth used their gifts, pride and jealousy developed among them. These divisive elements resulted from misuse and self-edification, rather than building the body. They concluded that someone's spiritual gift determined how spiritual they were. In their minds, the use of certain gifts demonstrated that they were more spiritual than someone who had a different gift. To make matters worse, people at church were using their gifts in a way that was causing confusion, and the worship of God was being hindered. Paul gives some very specific and direct guidelines to avoid these problems from continuing. The key was that they were using their gifts in a way that was not pleasing to God. Love was not the motivation of their lives, but pride. Do you see similar characteristics in your church? How are you using the gifts God has given to you? What can you do to avoid these abuses in your life and in your church?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 14

In today's reading, we find one of the greatest chapters in the Bible on the Resurrection of Jesus. There is so much in these verses that we could write many different insights or thoughts. However, rather than look at what we might pull out of this passage, think about how this chapter speaks to you. The following questions will help you walk through these verses and highlight what you find there. Take the time to read it and respond to the questions. It could change your life forever!

### SAY WHAT?

What facts about the Resurrection did you learn from reading this chapter?

### SO WHAT?

Why is the Resurrection important to followers of Jesus?

### NOW WHAT?

What would the implications be if Jesus did not rise from the dead?

### THEN WHAT?

According to verse 58, what ought your response be and how will you make sure you respond like that?

### EXTRA READING

1 CORINTHIANS 15

What standard does God have for giving? When does He expect me to give? How can I know if God is pleased with what I am giving? These questions are not only important today, but they were also important in the church in Corinth. Paul closes his letter by addressing them. In verse 2, he gives instructions that the people were to give regularly—they were to make it a consistent habit. How often do you give? What was the standard for how much they were to give? According to Paul, it was dependent upon their income. Everyone is expected to give, and the amount they give is determined by their income. God knows how much you make, and expects you to give accordingly. How do you do with these instructions? We are often not taught that God has expectations for giving. When was the last time you took a portion of what you made and gave it away? This week would be a good time to get started.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 CORINTHIANS 16

Why do bad things happen to God's people? If you have ever asked that question, you will find some of the answers in today's reading. In this section of Scripture, Paul gives us two reasons why bad things happen to God's people. The first reason is found in verse 4. Bad things happen to God's people so that they will be able to more effectively reach out and comfort those who are going through a difficulty. We are able to give them hope by sharing with them how God comforted us in the midst of our trouble. We would have empty words if we never experienced trouble. A second reason that bad things happen to God's people is so they will learn to rely on God, not themselves. The greater the trial, the greater the need to depend on God. When things are going well, we often forget about God and try to handle everything on our own. Sometimes good things cause us more trouble than bad things. In difficult times, remember that God has a purpose. Seek to allow His purpose to be accomplished in your life. What purpose could there be for your present difficulty? How should you respond to what God has allowed?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

2 CORINTHIANS 1

To understand this chapter, you need to remember the instructions Paul gave to the Corinthians concerning the man who was living in sin in 1 Corinthians 5. You may want to go back and read it again. Understanding the context will enable you to more fully understand its message. When the church received the instructions from Paul in chapter 5 of 1 Corinthians, they followed them. Because they did, the man who was in sin repented. The problem here was that they would not forgive him. Paul gave them instructions on how they needed to respond to this man. First, they needed to forgive him (2:7). Secondly, after forgiving him, they needed to comfort him (2:7). Repentance is followed by sorrow for sin and sometimes it is overwhelming. Finally, they were to reaffirm their love for him (2:8). Could there be someone in your life who has sinned against you and repented, but you have not forgiven them, comforted them or even reaffirmed your love for them? How can you take care of that today?

**SAY WHAT?**

What can you do to communicate to someone that you forgive them?

**SO WHAT?**

How can you comfort someone whom you have forgiven?

**NOW WHAT?**

How can you reaffirm your love for someone you have forgiven?

**THEN WHAT?**

What personal commitment can you make in light of what this passage teaches?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 2

What does the verb "being" communicate to you? Does it communicate to you a process or a moment in time? Why even ask the question? Paul uses this verb to illustrate something very important to us. Followers of Jesus often think that after salvation, they will be completely different immediately. We can become discouraged when change isn't taking place quickly and doubt the sincerity of our faith. In verse 18, Paul states that we are being transformed into the likeness of Jesus. He uses this word to illustrate that our growth is a process. Becoming like Jesus does not happen in a moment. The key is to look for growth. Am I more like Jesus this year than last year? The actual decision is needed to begin the process and make change possible. However, change takes place over a period of time. What steps do you need to take in order to keep growing? Remember, it's a process.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

2 CORINTHIANS 3

What two adjectives did Paul use to describe his troubles in verse 17? Are they the same two words you would use to describe the troubles you are facing right now or have faced in the past? Paul used them because of how he viewed troubles. He knew that though outwardly he was wasting away, inwardly God was doing a great work in his heart. God was renewing him and comforting him in the midst of his trials. Paul knew that the troubles he faced were accomplishing something very important in his life. In light of his perspective, he did not lose heart when trials came his way. When he looked at eternity and what God was accomplishing in his life, his troubles seemed light and momentary. Maybe you need to begin today by fixing your eyes not on what you can see (your problems) but on what you can't see (God's work in your heart). Maybe you need to focus on what God is accomplishing in your life as Paul does in this passage. To help, make a list of positive results that have come from the troubles you have experienced in the past. Use the questions to help you focus on what God is doing in your life.

**SAY WHAT?**

What troubles have you have faced in your life?

**SO WHAT?**

What positive results do you see in your life because of those troubles?

**NOW WHAT?**

How can God use your current troubles to change you?

**THEN WHAT?**

What personal commitment can you make in light of what this passage teaches?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 4

If the Holy Spirit was given to guarantee our salvation, does that mean I can live however I want and still go to heaven? Not according to what Paul says in this chapter. Paul tells us what our response ought to be to the truth that the Holy Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing our salvation. First, this truth ought to result in confidence in our salvation, knowing we have eternal life. We should never doubt our salvation or wonder if a sin we commit would make us lose our salvation. Our salvation is guaranteed. Second, notice what that confidence produces. It produces motivation to please God no matter where we are (5:9). The fact that our salvation is guaranteed does not mean we can do whatever we want. It means we desire to do whatever God wants us to do. Why? Because one day we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. You see, eternal security is not a license to do whatever you want and still go to heaven. It is the motivation to serve and please God at all times. If eternal security has not motivated you in this way, as it should, maybe you don't understand what it really means. How should this affect your life and how you live it?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

2 CORINTHIANS 5



Can a saved person marry an unsaved person and it not be considered sin? From today's reading, you realize that the answer is no. But does this passage speak to the issue of dating unsaved people? It does, if you understand the principles involved here. Paul gives us the reasons why God forbids a believer from being yoked together with an unbeliever in marriage. He says it is because we have nothing in common (vs14). We can't have real fellowship (vs14), we find no harmony (vs15), and we find no agreement with the unsaved (vs16). In other words, all that is involved in a good dating relationship could not be possible between a saved person and an unsaved person. How can we enjoy dating someone with whom we have nothing in common, no real fellowship, no harmony, and no possibility of agreement? While this passage does not say that dating the unsaved is wrong, it gives solid reasons to discourage it. We need to love, reach out to, and seek to win the unsaved. However, using a dating relationship to win the lost can be confusing and dangerous.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 6

How can you tell if someone is demonstrating true godly sorrow over their sin? How do you know if they are truly repentant or just acting as if they are sorry. Paul lists some defining characteristics of godly sorrow in this chapter. We can use these to examine our life and others' lives. Paul heard how this church responded to the correction he wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians. He knew they had genuine, godly sorrow because they had demonstrated the characteristics that he listed in verses 10-11. First he saw that they had an earnestness and an eagerness to clear themselves and to make it right. Second, he saw indignation and alarm about what they had done. They felt terrible about their sin. Third, he saw that they had a longing, a concern, and a readiness to see justice done. They were prepared to accept the consequences their sin required. Does your life reflect these characteristics when you sin? Have you seen it in the lives of others? If not, ask God to show you or them the true nature of sin, so that godly sorrow might lead to true repentance.

**SAY WHAT?**

How might someone act who has an earnestness and eagerness to clear themselves?

**SO WHAT?**

How might someone act who has indignation and alarm about what they have done?

**NOW WHAT?**

How might someone act who has a longing, a concern, and a readiness to see justice done in response to their sin?

**THEN WHAT?**

What personal commitment can you make in light of what this passage teaches?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 7



What is your church known for? If we talked to people in your town and asked them what they knew of your church, what would they tell us? Would they describe it the way the church in Macedonia is described in this passage? Wouldn't it be exciting to be part of a church that has such a heart for giving? To be described in this way is a great honor. So many people see Christians as selfish and uncaring. How important is it to be a giving church? In verse 7 of chapter 8, Paul gives 5 areas in which the church at Corinth excelled. They excelled in faith, speech, love, knowledge, and complete earnestness. Paul also wanted them to excel in their giving. It is wonderful to be a church that is known for the five things Paul listed. But a church also needs to be a giving church in order to be all that God wants it to be. What words would you use to describe your church? What words would you use to describe yourself? Do you give out of your poverty with extreme generosity and then give even beyond your ability? In what ways can you improve in this area and also help your church to improve in its giving? How will you begin?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 8, 9

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

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## 2 CORINTHIANS 10:7-18

## NOT WISE

When you read verses 12-18, did they encourage you or concern you? For some, it is very encouraging to know that our standard is not based on other people. We can become discouraged by comparing ourselves to others and realize that we can't be what they are or what they think we should be. How comforting to know that God is the only one we need to please. Others, however, compare themselves to those around them and feel fine with where they are in their relationship with God. We may not be where we should be spiritually, but compared to some, we are fine. This passage should concern you if you are comparing yourself to those around you and concluding you are fine. To compare ourselves to any standard but God's is, as Paul says, not wise. Comparisons either discourage you from service and joy, or fill you with misplaced confidence in where you stand. Using this as your guide, where do you stand in your relationship with God? Determine today to stop comparing yourself to others and use God's standard. He alone is who we must please.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 10

How did the serpent deceive Eve in the garden? Why not go back to Genesis 3 and read the account again to refresh your memory? If you look closely at Genesis 3, you will see Satan used a method that is still successfully being used today. It is also a method Paul was afraid Satan would use on those in the church at Corinth. First, in Genesis 3, you see that Satan tried to get Eve to see God as being restrictive. Instead of Eve looking at all the other trees in the garden she could eat from, her attention was drawn to the one tree from which God told her not to eat. Then, Satan got her to question God's motives for His instructions and expectations. Satan implied God had given instructions, not for her good or because He loved her, but because He was unkind and selfish. Has Satan tried to convince you that God's ways are restrictive and unfair? Do you focus on what you do not have rather than on all He has given you? Has he tried to convince you that God does not have your best interest at heart and is unkind and selfish? If so, memorize Scripture so that you can quote it when Satan tries to deceive you. Resist him, and he will flee.

### SAY WHAT?

In what ways does Satan deceive people into viewing God as restrictive?

### SO WHAT?

In what ways does Satan deceive people into believing that God's motives are anything but love?

### NOW WHAT?

What Scripture verses can you memorize to quote when Satan uses these methods against you?

### THEN WHAT?

What personal commitment can you make in light of what this passage teaches?

### EXTRA READING

2 CORINTHIANS 11

When trouble comes your way, how do you respond? When you are not getting the playing time you want on your athletic team, how do you respond? When someone at work or school is really frustrating you, how do you respond? Do you try to get out of the situation or complain about it? When someone gets an award or promotion you deserved, how do you respond? Maybe you should rejoice. If you come to view troubles the way Paul did in this chapter, you will. Paul had something in his life that was a great struggle for him. Some think it was a physical illness and others think it was a person or group of people who opposed him. Whatever it was, he did not like it and wanted God to take it away. However, God showed him that He would not remove it because He wanted to take what Satan meant for harm and use it for Paul's good. God did, however, tell Paul He would give him the grace to respond in a way that would allow God's power to rest on him. When Paul saw that, he rejoiced. From the list of examples Paul gives in verse 10, which one do you need to see as a gift from God to make you strong? Ask God to help you see trouble as Paul did.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

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**EXTRA READING**  
2 CORINTHIANS 12

Why did Paul close this book by admonishing those in Corinth to aim for perfection? That seems like an impossible goal and one that would discourage the church. Why not just tell them to do the best they could and remember they are human and God understands when they fail? Most likely, Paul closed with that admonition so they did not become satisfied with the progress they were making in their relationship with God and with what was happening in the church. Paul didn't want the changes they were making to stop until they had reached perfection. He did not want them to be satisfied with where they were personally or where the church was until they became, personally and as a church, perfect. So, he gave them this goal to shoot for. What is it that you shoot for? Though you may have experienced great growth in your personal life, don't become satisfied. Aim for perfection. Even though your church is growing and God is at work, don't become satisfied. Make it your goal, and seek every day to become everything God wants you to be.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING  
2 CORINTHIANS 13





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IMAGE OF GOD.

2 COR. 4:4

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