



Real Life Ministry ~ 2 Corinthians 12:11-21
August 16, 2026

Next Week: 2 Corinthians 13

Questions for the Community

What does the Bible say? (goal: go slow, notice the text, let God speak for Himself in the words of His book)

1. Review all the ways that Paul is distinguishing himself from the “super-apostles”. Why do you think he emphasized “patience” alongside the mighty signs, wonders and works (vs. 12)?
2. What metaphor does Paul use to compare his relationship to the Corinthian church? How does this shape his communication and actions toward them?
3. What is the purpose of all he has been saying to the Corinthians in vs. 19?

What does it mean? (goal: get to the heart of the text by understanding what Paul is teaching then and how it relates to now)

4. Paul says, “I seek not what is yours but you.” What does that teach us about the difference between genuinely loving people and merely wanting something from them?
5. Paul says, “I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.” What does this say about the cost of discipling another person? Why will genuine love always cost the person doing the loving?
6. Paul says everything he does is “for your upbuilding.” How does that help us distinguish loving bluntness from being harsh, argumentative, controlling, or simply “telling it like it is”?
7. Paul fears he may have to mourn over people who have refused to repent. Compare this with 1 Corinthians 13:6, which says love “does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.” Why is grieving over someone’s sin actually an expression of love?

What do I do? (goal: move from understanding to faithful, obedient lived response; this is sometimes plain and sometimes requires listening in prayer)

8. Love pursues. Who in your life might God be calling you to move toward rather than quietly give up on?
9. Love gives. Where are you currently being tempted to protect your money, time, energy, comfort, or resources rather than “spend and be spent” for someone else’s good?
10. Love builds. Think about the people closest to you. Are your words generally helping them move toward Jesus? What is one conversation, encouragement, question, or truth you could *build* into someone?
11. Love mourns. Is there someone you love whose choices are pulling them away from Jesus? Have you confused keeping the relationship comfortable with actually loving them? What might loving truthfulness require from you?
12. Paul models a love willing to **risk** the relationship rather than preserve the relationship at all **costs**. Is there a difficult conversation you have been avoiding because of fear? How can you approach that conversation with humility, patience, truth, and a genuine desire for their good?