

December Questions

- 1) [December 1] Paul's _____ letter to the church at Corinth (called 2 Corinthians). Paul began by praising God for His _____ in all his afflictions, and he told the Corinthians that they shared with him in both the _____ and the comfort of Christ. This teaches us to patiently _____ the sufferings that come our way, for God's comfort will enable us to be a blessing to _____ in their afflictions. Paul told the church what happened to him in Ephesus, and he encouraged them to pray for him. He did this to strengthen the ties between the Corinthians and himself, for he knew that we grow to _____ those for whom we pray. He then explained the _____ he had made to his original travel plans (cf. 1 Cor 16:5–9). The effort he put into his explanation teaches us how important it is to maintain a reputation for _____ and dependability. Fickleness on our part can bring _____ on the name of Christ. He went on to urge the church to _____ the one who had "caused pain" (the individual who had rejected Paul's authority) and _____ him lest he be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. This teaches us the importance of _____ those who have sinned, for Satan will always try to take advantage of such situations.
- 2) [December 2] Paul continued by denouncing those who peddled God's word for _____ (2 Cor 2:17). They relied on "letters of recommendation" to win over their followers, but Paul let the transformed _____ of the Corinthians speak for him. They were a _____ testament to the glory of the _____ covenant through the ministry of the Spirit. This teaches us that we share in the ministry of _____ which the old covenant foreshadowed, for the gospel we preach has the power to _____ those held captive by the ministry of death. Paul went on to say that his physical _____ showed that "the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Cor 4:4, 7). This teaches us not to lose heart when we suffer for the gospel, for our "light _____ affliction" is preparing for us "an _____ weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Cor 4:17). Paul continued by reminding the Corinthians that the things which are seen are _____, while the things that are unseen are eternal. This teaches us to be of good courage, for to be absent from the body is to be _____ with God. Paul concluded this part of the letter by reminding the Corinthians that their bodies were the _____ of the living God and this meant they should never yoke themselves unequally with unbelievers. Rather, they were to _____ themselves "from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God" (2 Cor 7:1). This teaches us the importance of purity and _____ in our daily lives.
- 3) [December 3] Paul now addressed the issue of raising _____ for the impoverished churches in Judea. Paul's comments here contain many principles on giving and good works. *First, the way Paul spoke to the Corinthians about completing their collection teaches us:* (1) Good works are acts of _____, and the desire to do them comes from the working of the _____ in our lives. (2) God's will is for us to _____ the good works which the Spirit has put in our hearts to do. Initial enthusiasm is not a substitute for _____ and determination. (3) An unfinished good work can call our love and sincerity into question, and it can also be an _____ to the cause of Christ. We must never allow _____ or _____ to keep us from completing these acts of grace. *Second, the reasons Paul gave for having a generous spirit teach us:* (1) The basis for giving is the _____ of Jesus Christ. (2) Being able to contribute to the needs of the saints is a _____, for when we give to them, we're really giving to Jesus. (3) Our willingness to give _____ and enthusiastically is more important than the _____ we're able to give. (4) We're free to give whatever we decide in our heart, but we should remember that "whoever sows bountifully will also _____ bountifully" (2 Cor 9:6). *Finally, the comments Paul made on material blessings teach us:* (1) God gives financial resources to us, not so we can

focus on pleasing ourselves, but so that we're able to give to _____. (2) There will be times when we have an abundance and times when we're in _____. When we have an abundance, we should rejoice in the opportunity to _____ to those in need, and when we're in need, we should _____ the gifts of others who are blessed by giving to us. (3) The more we're generous toward others, the more God's _____ will abound in our lives!

- 4) [December 4] Paul now addressed the issue of the “_____ -apostles” that had infiltrated the congregation. Paul’s reaction has much to teach us about spiritual maturity. First, Paul recognized that although he walked in the flesh, he waged war by the _____ (2 Cor 10:3–4). Second, Paul did not evaluate himself or his ministry by _____ himself with others. Instead, he based his sense of self-worth and success on whether or not he had _____ God. Third, Paul was more concerned about the spiritual welfare of the Corinthians than he was about his own _____. He had deliberately shared the gospel with them free of charge so he could avoid being a _____ to the church. Fourth, Paul did not hesitate to _____ the so-called apostles as a threat to the Corinthians. Paul was _____ in his confrontation of such men, and we must be quick to do the same. Fifth, Paul played the “_____” by telling the Corinthians of his religious heritage, his toils and hardships, and his many visions and revelations. He did this, not to exalt himself, but to show the Corinthians that he was indeed a true _____ of Jesus Christ. Sixth, Paul recognized his own tendency to become _____, and he accepted God’s “thorn in the flesh” as necessary for his soul (2 Cor 12:9). This teaches us to see our weaknesses as opportunities for God to display His power, “for when I am weak, then I am _____” (2 Cor 12:10).
- 5) [December 5] Paul’s letter to Rome expressed his desire to visit the church and share in their ministry, and it sought their _____ for his future missionary work in _____. Paul also wanted the Romans to understand the _____ which he preached, and he carefully explained God’s plan to save both Jews and Gentiles alike through _____ in Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16). He began by affirming that the Gentiles were justly condemned as sinners, for “although they knew God, they did not _____ him as God or give _____ to him” (Rom 1:21). This teaches us that there are no “innocent” people in the world, for _____ becomes aware of God’s existence. This means that man-made religions (which are forms of _____) are not the result of man’s search for truth, but rather the result of man’s _____ of God! Paul continued by saying that the Jews were also accountable for their sin, for there is no _____ with God. There were advantages and privileges to being a Jew, yes, but with those privileges came the _____ to uphold and obey God’s commands. This teaches us that we cannot rely on our church _____ or religious upbringing to make us right with God. Paul concluded this section with the statement: “Both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: ‘_____ is righteous, no, not one’” (Rom 3:9–10). If “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” how can we be justified and righteous before God? “Through _____ in Jesus Christ...for...all...are justified by his _____ as a _____, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith” (Rom 3:22–25). Paul supported his claim by appealing to _____, that timeless example of salvation by grace through faith. Abraham was justified by _____, not works; by _____, not Law; by _____ power, not human effort.
- 6) [December 6] Paul now explained the results of justification: _____ and reconciliation with God. Our responsibility is to _____ the love God has given us by obeying His commands and _____ to the desires of the Spirit. Paul continued by addressing the question of whether _____ man could bring life to so many. Indeed, Jesus could, for just as Adam’s _____ brought condemnation and death to all men, so Jesus’ _____ brought justification and life to all men (Rom 5:18). Paul next addressed the accusation that by emphasizing grace, he was encouraging

a lifestyle of _____. “By no means! How can we who _____ to sin still live in it?” (Rom 6:1–2). This means we have both the _____ and the _____ to live above sin. Paul went on to say, “My brothers, you also have died to the _____ through the body of Christ” (Rom 7:4). Paul explained that the law, which was “holy and righteous and good,” could not, in itself, _____ the sinner; it could only expose their sinful heart and _____ them to more sin. In Christ there is no _____, for what the law could not do, the _____ could. This means that we are free to walk, not after the _____, but after the Holy Spirit. We know that God is working all things together for our good, that we might be _____ to the image of Jesus Christ.

- 7) [December 7] Paul lamented the fact that the majority of his own people, the _____, were not saved. However, Israel’s lack of faith did not mean that God’s Word had failed, because the promise was to the Israel of _____, not _____ Israel (Rom 9:6–7). This meant that _____ descent did not equal participation in the promised blessing of salvation. Was this unjust? By no means! God is free to grant mercy as He chooses, and by granting mercy to _____ (Rom 11:32), God showed that participation in the promised blessing has nothing to do with _____ effort (Rom 9:16). That being said, we are accountable for our sin, for God created us as _____ agents, and we’re responsible for our decisions (Rom 9:19–23). God provided access to the promised blessing by _____ in Jesus Christ, not by _____ of the law (Rom 9:32). This is precisely where the Jews went wrong, for they sought to establish their own righteousness through _____ rather than seeking God’s righteousness by faith. The law had a righteousness that led to life in the sense that those who kept the law avoided the _____ that was threatened to law-breakers, but it never offered _____ life. Did Israel’s unbelief mean that God had rejected His people? By no means! There is even now a _____ of believing Jews who participate in the promised blessing by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The Jews’ rejection of Christ meant the _____ of the world to God (Rom 11:15). This implied that the Gentiles should not be _____ of their inclusion in the olive tree of believing Israel, for even though unbelieving branches were _____ off that they might be grafted in, they too would be cut off if they did not _____ by faith in God’s kindness.
- 8) [December 8] Paul called the Romans to live out in _____ what was true of them in spirit, and his commands are the _____ of our lives. First, and perhaps most important, we are called to _____ ourselves to God (Rom 12:1). Before we were saved, we had nothing to offer God except our sin, but now that we have been washed in the cleansing blood of Christ, we can offer _____ to God as _____, _____ sacrifices (cf. Lev 1:1–4; Num 3:9–13). This is an act of submission and _____, and it means that we give up the right to have our own way and _____ unconditionally to God’s will for our lives. Second, we are called to be _____ by “the renewal of our mind” (Rom 12:2). This means we must _____ our minds in God’s Word and allow the Spirit to conform our thinking to God’s. We are called to use our spiritual gifts in humble _____ to the church, not thinking more highly of ourselves than we should, but working to _____ up our fellow believers. We are called to _____ to the governing authorities, for all power and authority finds its source in _____, and those that exist have been put there by Him. As long as man’s authority does not contradict God’s will (Acts 5:28–29), we must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of _____. We are called to fulfill the law by _____ others, for “love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom 13:10). We are called to _____ off the works of darkness and _____ on the armor of light, not making _____ for the flesh to gratify its desires, but putting on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 9) [December 9] The last part of Romans reveals Paul’s perspective on evangelism and discipleship, and it has significant insights for a biblical theology of _____. First, this passage teaches us that

all missionary efforts are dependent on _____, and the results must be recognized as the work of His _____ (Rom 15:17–18). This means that while planning, preparation and resources are needed to accomplish the work of missions, the most important factor is the powerful, supernatural _____ of the Spirit. Second, the task of missions is the _____ privilege of ministering Christ to the nations (Rom 15:16). Third, missions must maintain a balance between the ultimate goal of establishing mature _____ and the urgent need to _____ those who have never heard the gospel (Rom 15:19–20). Paul’s approach to missions was to proclaim the gospel, establish a congregation of new converts, and then _____ those believers until they were _____ enough to continue the cycle themselves. The ultimate goal of missions is to see maturing fellowships of believers who are themselves _____ out to make disciples. Finally, our churches must engage in _____ of mutual benefit in order to advance the cause of Christ around the world. Paul stressed the need for partnership in missions, and as he looked to _____, he knew he needed help from the church in Rome to accomplish his goal.

10) [December 10] Paul’s farewell speech to the Ephesian elders has much to teach us about spiritual _____. When the elders came, Paul could have said, ‘Now be sure to remember all the things I taught you.’ Instead, he reminded them of how he had _____ among them (Acts 20:18). This teaches us that the essence of leadership is setting the right _____ for others.

- Paul served God with _____.
- Paul faithfully _____ persecution.
- Paul boldly _____ “anything that was profitable” (Acts 20:20).
- Paul shared the gospel with both _____ and _____.
- Paul followed the leadership of the _____.
- Paul refused to be _____ by the prevailing doctrinal winds of his day.
- Paul warned his congregation of the danger of _____ teachers.
- Paul did not _____ material possessions.
- Paul _____ hard to supply his own needs.

11) [December 11] When God sent Ananias to restore Paul’s sight, he told him that Paul was “a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and _____ and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). The time had come for this to be fulfilled, and in the space of about two years, Paul shared the gospel with _____, _____, and _____ Agrippa II. Paul took full advantage of his situation, and he reasoned with Felix and Drusilla “about righteousness and self-control and the coming _____” (Acts 24:25). This teaches us several lessons. First, it reminds us that God desires “_____ people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). Second, it challenges us to be _____ in our interaction with others. Paul was not hostile or offensive, but neither was he timid in preaching the gospel. Third, it teaches us the importance of _____, for Paul refused to give Felix a _____.

12) [December 12] There are several lessons we can learn from Paul’s long and dangerous voyage to _____. First, Luke and Aristarchus showed their love and support for Paul by _____ with him on his journey. This teaches us that true friendship demonstrates itself by a willingness to _____ with those we love. Second, Paul took the initiative and _____ the centurion, the captain and the owner of the ship not to leave Fair Havens. This teaches us that we have an obligation to look out for the _____ of others and the _____ of their possessions. Third, God didn’t send an angel to Paul until all _____ of being saved was abandoned (Acts 27:20). This teaches us that God often _____ until all human effort has failed and nothing remains except complete dependence on Him. Fourth, Paul boldly _____ the entire ship about

God's promise, and he staked his life and reputation on the truth of God's word. This shows us that true faith _____ what God says and _____ His word no matter how difficult the situation. Fifth, Paul's _____ behavior in the face of imminent death testified to God's faithfulness and gave his words a measure of authority. This teaches us that the best witness we have is how we _____ in desperate situations. Sixth, Paul patiently _____ the hardship caused by others' poor decisions, and he refused to feel _____ for himself, even when he was bitten by a viper! This teaches us to "share in suffering as a good _____ of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 2:3). Finally, Paul continued to seek _____ opportunities in spite of all he had been through. This teaches us that opportunities to share the gospel abound for those who have the _____ to see them.

- 13) [December 13] Philippians is the first of what are known as the "_____ Epistles" (Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon), so named because they were written during Paul's imprisonment in _____. This letter has many insights on how to be a disciple of Jesus. First, Paul emphasized the need to _____. This teaches us that joy is both a _____ and an _____. As we _____ our minds on what God is doing and choose to _____ God in every situation, the Spirit produces within us a feeling of joy. Second, Paul highlighted the fact that his imprisonment had served to _____ the gospel. This teaches us to _____ and _____ in how God is using the circumstances in our lives to spread the good news and make us more like Jesus. Third, Paul encouraged the church to let their _____ be worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil 1:27). Rather than acting from selfish ambition and conceit, they were to _____ themselves, considering _____ as more important. This teaches us to imitate the mindset and attitude of _____. Fourth, Paul warned against false _____. The Jews who demanded circumcision and works of the law were quick to tout their _____ credentials. Paul dismissed such claims and reminded the Philippians that he could boast of the same things, yet he counted them as _____ "in order that I may know Christ" (Phil 3:8). This teaches us that the righteousness which really matters is the righteousness that depends on _____, for the ultimate credential is to _____ Christ and the power of His resurrection. Finally, Paul admonished the Philippians to be _____ in every situation. He revealed that the secret to obeying this command is found in the glorious truth: "I can do _____ things through him who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13). This teaches us to regard what God has given us to be _____ and rest in the knowledge that He will supply our needs as He sees fit.

- 14) [December 14] In the first half of Ephesians, Paul shared what God is doing through the _____ in the _____ by the _____. Before the creation of the world, God sovereignly and graciously _____ (elected) Jesus to be the one through whom the world would be saved (Eph 1:4). This teaches us that election is _____, that is, election is realized and centered "_____ Christ." God also _____ (predestined) that all who repent of their sins and believe in Christ would be spiritually _____ with Him and _____ as sons (Eph 1:5). This teaches us that our election is both _____ and _____. It is corporate in the sense that our status as elect comes only from being united by faith _____ Christ. We are elect because we are "in _____," the elect One. It is conditional in the sense that our election is based on our _____ to God's requirements of faith and repentance. This means that no one is predestined to be saved or lost. Rather, _____ men are called to believe in Christ (Matt 22:14) and those who "_____ in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel" shall be saved (Col 1:22–23). Paul went on to say that everyone, whether _____ or _____, must place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. When they do, they are _____ from death to spiritual life and are made "_____ together with Christ" (Eph 2:5). This teaches us that Christ's body, the _____, is made up of all those who are "in Christ." This wonderful truth is the _____ of Christ, that "the Gentiles are fellow heirs, _____ of the same

body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Eph 3:6).

- 15) [December 15] Having reminded the Ephesians of their new identity in Christ, Paul now exhorted them to _____ worthy of their high and holy calling. Once again, this reminds us that theology matters, for right _____ must come before right living. Paul began with a plea for love and _____. This teaches us that we must treat our brothers and sisters with _____ and gentleness, _____ with them in love and humility. Paul went on to say that within the unity of the church, there is a diversity of _____, and when they are exercised properly, the Spirit will lead the church to _____. Notice that Paul said that the apostles and shepherds and teachers were given “to _____ the saints for the _____ of the ministry” (Eph 4:12). This means that the work of the ministry is _____ responsibility. Paul then pointed out the impact that individual _____ has on the health and growth of the church. The church _____ on our consistent obedience to God’s Word in order to succeed. Above all, we must _____ each day to the desires of the Holy Spirit. Rather than being “drunk with wine,” we are to be under the Spirit’s _____, allowing Him to guide and control all we do and say (Eph 5:18). As we walk in the light, the Spirit will lead us to _____ “to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph 5:21). Paul concluded by saying, “Finally, be _____ in the Lord and in the strength of his might” (Eph 6:10). This teaches us that the battles we face are ultimately _____ battles.
- 16) [December 16] In his letter to the Colossians, Paul declared the truth which would guard them from heresy and motivate them to persevere in the faith: the _____ and _____ of Jesus Christ (Col 1:15–20). First, Paul emphasized Christ’s supremacy over creation, saying that Jesus is “the _____ of all creation” (Col 1:15). We usually associate the term firstborn with birth, as in the first child born (cf. Luke 2:7), but it can also denote priority in _____ or supremacy in _____. Jesus was _____ “all creation” in time, and He is _____ “all creation” in authority. Paul was _____ saying that Jesus is the first created being, but rather that Jesus is supreme over all things as Creator, for “all things were created _____ him and for him” (Col 1:16). Second, Paul declared Christ’s sufficiency in _____, saying that “through him,” God was pleased to _____ “all things” to Himself, “making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20). *The truth of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ _____ false teaching.* In Christ, the “whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9). This refutes any system of thought which denies either the _____ or the _____ of Christ. In Christ, we received a spiritual circumcision by participating in His death and resurrection (Col 2:11–12). This refutes those who insist on _____ law-keeping to faith in Jesus. In Christ, we died to the world and its fallen ideas and values (Col 2:20–22). This refutes those who demand _____ (false humility, severe self-discipline) and the _____ of angels. *The truth of the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ also motivates us to live a _____ life.* In Christ, we have been raised to heavenly places. This motivates us to _____ our minds on things above, not on things on earth. In Christ, we died and our life is hidden with Christ in God. This motivates us to put to _____ the deeds of the flesh. In Christ, we have been raised to newness of life. This motivates us to put on a “compassionate heart, _____, humility, meekness and patience” (Col 3:12). Our _____ with Christ is the basis of everything we are spiritually, and if we _____ in Him, He will empower us to live a holy and righteous life.