

# The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 12

## ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΙΟΥΣ Β' ΙΒ'

Each verse opens with the running Greek, an English translation, and a **discourse note** (its connective, relation, and role in the argument). Below follows the word-by-word breakdown in six tiers: gloss, case (color), parsing, *syntax*, **semantic force**, and a | lexical note.

CASE   ■ Nominative   ■ Genitive   ■ Dative   ■ Accusative   ■ Vocative   ■ Verb (no case)   ■ Indeclinable

Discourse notes head each verse: **relation** · connective · clause-flow. Indentation marks prominence — flush-left = main line of argument; indented = supporting / subordinate material.

### Discourse structure of the chapter

A · 12:1–4

#### The vision and the rapture to the third heaven

Boasting is unprofitable yet forced (1); Paul recounts, in deliberate third-person reticence, a man caught up fourteen years ago to the third heaven / Paradise (2–3), where he heard inexpressible words a human may not utter (4).

B · 12:5–6

#### Boasting only in weakness

Of such a one Paul will boast, but of himself only in his weaknesses (5); even truthful boasting he forgoes, lest anyone credit him beyond what is seen and heard (6).

C · 12:7–10

#### The thorn in the flesh and the sufficiency of grace

Lest he be exalted by the revelations, a thorn — a messenger of Satan — was given to buffet him (7); thrice he begged the Lord to remove it (8), but received the answer, 'My grace is sufficient, my power is perfected in weakness' (9), so that he now gladly boasts in weakness, for when weak, then strong (10).

D • 12:11–13

### The signs of an apostle; nothing inferior

Forced into folly by the Corinthians, Paul protests he is in nothing inferior to the 'super-apostles' (11); the signs of an apostle were worked among them in patience, signs, wonders, and powers (12); the only 'wrong' was that he did not burden them — ironic apology (13).

E • 12:14–18

### The third visit: a father who will not burden his children

Ready for a third visit, he will not be a burden, for he seeks them, not their goods, as a parent stores up for children (14–15); answering the charge of crafty exploitation, he and Titus took nothing and walked in the same Spirit (16–18).

F • 12:19–21

### Fear for the church: edification, not self-defense

All this is not self-defense but upbuilding before God (19); Paul fears that on arrival he will find quarrels, jealousy, and disorder (20), and that he will mourn many who sinned and did not repent of impurity and licentiousness (21).

## 1 Καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ· οὐ συμφέρον μὲν, ἐλεύσομαι δὲ εἰς ὄπτασίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις κυρίου.

It is necessary to boast; it is not profitable, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.

TRANSITION / CONCESSION **ASYNDETON** Resuming the forced 'fool's boasting,' Paul concedes its unprofitableness even as he presses on to a new and higher proof — visions and revelations.

### Καυχᾶσθαι

to boast

Pres Mid Inf · καυχᾶσθαι

*complementary infinitive (subject of δεῖ)*

→ customary present

καυχᾶσθαι: 'boast, glory'; the leitmotif of the fool's speech — here boasting is admitted to be unavoidable, not laudable.

### δεῖ

it is necessary

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · δεῖ

*impersonal main verb*

→ gnomic/situational present

δεῖ: impersonal 'it is necessary'; the constraint is imposed by the Corinthians' demand, not by Paul's appetite.

### οὐ

not

*negative particle*

### συμφέρον

profitable

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Neut · συμφέρω

*predicate participle (substantival/elliptical 'it is')*

→ stative present

συμφέρω: 'be advantageous, profit' (lit. 'bring together'); boasting yields no real benefit.

<p>μέν on the one hand <i>particle (μέν ... δέ correlation)</i></p>	<p>ἐλεύσομαι I will come/proceed Fut Mid Indic 1 Sg · ἔρχομαι <i>main verb</i> → predictive future ἐρχομαι: 'come, go'; here metaphorically 'I will proceed (to the topic of)' — moving the discourse to visions.</p>	<p>δὲ but <i>adversative/continuative particle</i></p>	<p>εἰς to <i>preposition + accusative (goal/topic)</i></p>
<p><b>ὄπτασίας</b> visions Accusative <i>object of εἰς</i> ὄπτασία: 'vision, appearance' (cf. ὁράω); a visual disclosure granted from above.</p>	<p>καὶ and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p><b>ἀποκαλύψεις</b> revelations Accusative <i>object of εἰς (coordinate)</i> ἀποκάλυψις: 'unveiling, revelation' (ἀπό + καλύπτω, 'uncover'); a disclosure of hidden divine reality.</p>	<p><b>κυρίου</b> of the Lord Genitive <i>genitive of source (revelations from the Lord)</i> κύριος: 'Lord'; either the source ('from the Lord') or content ('about the Lord') of the disclosures — likely source.</p>

2 οἶδα ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ πρὸ ἐτῶν δεκατεσσάρων — εἴτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἴτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν — ἀρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ.

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago — whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows — such a one was caught up to the third heaven.

ASYNDETON / REPORT BEGINS ASYNDETON Paul narrates in detached third person ('a man in Christ') to distance himself from the boast; the doubled 'I do not know ... God knows' underscores the experience's mystery.

## οἶδα

I know

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · οἶδα

*main verb*

→ perfect-with-present-force

οἶδα: 'know' (perfect of εἶδω with present sense); settled, certain knowledge.

## ἄνθρωπον

a man

Accusative

*direct object*

ἄνθρωπος: 'human being, man'; the studied indefiniteness veils Paul himself.

## ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (sphere)*

## Χριστῷ

Christ

Dative

*dat. of sphere (incorporative 'in Christ')*

Χριστός: the Pauline 'in Christ' — the man is identified by his union with Christ, not by status.

## πρὸ

before

*preposition + genitive (time)*

## ἐτῶν

years

Genitive

*genitive of time (object of πρὸ)*

ἔτος: 'year'; πρὸ ἐτῶν δεκατεσσάρων = 'fourteen years ago.'

## δεκατεσσάρων

fourteen

Genitive

*attributive numeral*

δεκατέσσαρες: 'fourteen'; the precise dating roots the experience in real history, not reverie.

## εἴτε

whether

*disjunctive conjunction (εἴτε ... εἴτε)*

## ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (sphere)*

## σώματι

body

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

σῶμα: 'body'; whether the rapture was bodily or in some disembodied state Paul leaves open.

## οὐκ

not

*negative particle*

## οἶδα

I know

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · οἶδα

*main verb (parenthetical)*

→ perfect-with-present-force

## εἴτε

or

*disjunctive conjunction*

## ἐκτός

out of

*improper preposition + genitive (separation)*

ἐκτός: 'outside, apart from'; the alternative to ἐν σώματι.

## τοῦ

the

Genitive

*article*

## σώματος

body

Genitive

*object of ἐκτός*

<p>οὐκ not <i>negative particle</i></p>	<p>οἶδα I know Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · οἶδα <i>main verb (parenthetical)</i> → perfect-with-present-force</p>	<p>ὁ the Nominative <i>article</i></p>	<p>θεός God Nominative <i>subject (parenthetical clause)</i></p>
<p>οἶδεν knows Perf Act Indic 3 Sg · οἶδα <i>main verb</i> → perfect-with-present-force  οἶδα: God's knowledge is set over against Paul's professed ignorance of the mode.</p>	<p>ἀρπαγέντα having been caught up Aor Pass Ptc · Acc Sg Masc · ἀρπάζω <i>adverbial/complementary ptc. (object-complement of οἶδα)</i> → constative aorist  ἀρπάζω: 'seize, snatch away'; the passive marks divine action — the man was caught up, he did not ascend (cf. Acts 8:39; 1 Thess 4:17).</p>	<p>τὸν the Accusative <i>article</i></p>	<p>τοιοῦτον such a one Accusative <i>resumptive demonstrative (object of ἀρπαγέντα clause)</i>  τοιοῦτος: 'such, of this kind'; resumes ἄνθρωπον after the parenthesis.</p>
<p>ἕως as far as <i>improper preposition + genitive (extent)</i>  ἕως: 'up to, as far as'; marks the limit reached — the highest heaven.</p>	<p>τρίτου third Genitive <i>attributive ordinal</i>  τρίτος: 'third'; the 'third heaven' = the highest, God's dwelling, in the layered cosmology of Second-Temple Judaism.</p>	<p>οὐρανῷ heaven Genitive <i>object of ἕως</i>  οὐρανός: 'heaven, sky'; the third heaven is identified with Paradise in v.4.</p>	

### 3 καὶ οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον — εἴτε ἐν σώματι εἴτε χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν

—  
| And I know that such a man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows —

| RESUMPTIVE RESTATEMENT καὶ A near-verbatim restatement that resumes the thread after the digression of v.2, building toward the climax in v.4; the same agnosticism about the mode is repeated.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

οἶδα

I know

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · οἶδα

*main verb*

→ perfect-with-present-force

τὸν

the

Accusative

*article*

τοιοῦτον

such

Accusative

*attributive demonstrative*

τοιοῦτος: 'such'; reidentifies the same anonymous figure of v.2.

ἄνθρωπον

man

Accusative

*direct object*

εἴτε

whether

*disjunctive conjunction*

ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (sphere)*

σώματι

body

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

εἴτε

or

*disjunctive conjunction*

χωρὶς

apart from

*improper preposition + genitive (separation)*

χωρὶς: 'apart from, without'; a synonym here for ἐκτός in v.2.

τοῦ

the

Genitive

*article*

σώματος

body

Genitive

*object of χωρὶς*

οὐκ

not

*negative particle*

οἶδα

I know

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · οἶδα

*main verb (parenthetical)*

→ perfect-with-present-force

ὁ

the

Nominative

*article*

θεὸς

God

Nominative

*subject*

οἶδεν

knows

Perf Act Indic 3 Sg · οἶδα

*main verb*

→ perfect-with-present-force

#### 4 ὅτι ἤρπάγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἤκουσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι.

that he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.

**CONTENT OF THE KNOWING** ὅτι The ὅτι clause delivers the climax: the rapture into Paradise and the hearing of words too sacred to repeat — a revelation, paradoxically, that cannot be deployed as a boast.

ὅτι

that

*conjunction (content clause)*

ἤρπάγη

he was caught up

Aor Pass Indic 3 Sg · ἀρπάζω

*main verb (ὅτι clause)*

→ *constative aorist*

ἀρπάζω: 'snatch away'; again the divine passive — the man is the recipient, not the agent, of the ascent.

εἰς

into

*preposition + accusative (goal)*

τὸν

the

*Accusative*

*article*

παράδεισον

Paradise

*Accusative*

*object of εἰς (goal)*

παράδεισος: 'park, garden, paradise' (a Persian loanword); the LXX term for Eden, here the heavenly abode of God's presence (cf. Luke 23:43; Rev 2:7).

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

ἤκουσεν

he heard

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · ἀκούω

*main verb (coordinate)*

→ *constative aorist*

ἀκούω: 'hear'; the revelation was auditory — words, not merely sights.

ἄρρητα

inexpressible

*Accusative*

*attributive adjective*

ἄρρητος: 'unspeakable, not to be uttered' (ἀ- privative + ῥητός, 'spoken'); a NT hapax — words either impossible or impermissible to articulate.

## ῥήματα

words

Accusative

*direct object*

ῥῆμα: 'word, utterance, thing said'; the content heard in Paradise.

## ἃ

which

Accusative

*relative pronoun (object of λαλήσαι)*

## οὐκ

not

*negative particle*

## ἐξόν

permitted

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Neut · ἔξεστι

*predicate participle (impersonal 'it is [not] lawful')*

→ *stative present*

ἔξεστι(v): 'it is permitted/lawful'; the neuter participle ἐξόν with implied ἐστίν — the disclosure is sacred, off-limits to speech.

## ἀνθρώπῳ

for a man

Dative

*dat. of reference (the one permitted)*

ἄνθρωπος: 'human being'; what is heard in heaven a mere human may not relay on earth.

## λαλήσαι

to speak

Aor Act Inf · λαλέω

*complementary infinitive (with ἐξόν)*

→ *constative aorist*

λαλέω: 'speak, utter'; the very act forbidden — hence the revelation cannot serve as boasting material.

## 5 ὑπὲρ τοῦ τοιούτου καυχῆσομαι, ὑπὲρ δὲ ἑμαυτοῦ οὐ καυχῆσομαι εἰ μὴ ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις.

On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses.

APPLICATION OF THE VISION **ASYNDETON** Paul disengages the boast: the rapt 'man' may be boasted of, but as for himself he will glory only in weakness — the inversion that governs the whole speech.

ὑπὲρ

on behalf of

*preposition + genitive (reference/advantage)*

τοῦ

the

Genitive

*article*

τοιοῦτου

such a one

Genitive

*object of ὑπέρ (substantival demonstrative)*

τοιοῦτος: 'such a one'; still the third-person veil over Paul's own experience.

καυχῆσομαι

I will boast

Fut Mid Indic 1 Sg · καυχάομαι

*main verb*

→ predictive future

καυχάομαι: 'boast'; permissible of the 'other' self, the recipient of grace.

ὑπὲρ

on behalf of

*preposition + genitive (reference)*

δὲ

but

*adversative particle*

ἐμαυτοῦ

myself

Genitive

*object of ὑπέρ (reflexive pronoun)*

οὐ

not

*negative particle*

καυχῆσομαι

I will boast

Fut Mid Indic 1 Sg · καυχάομαι

*main verb (negated)*

→ predictive future

εἰ

if

*conjunction (εἰ μή = 'except')*

μὴ

not

*negative particle (εἰ μή = 'except')*

εἰ μή: 'except, unless'; carves out the single allowable ground of boasting — weakness.

ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (ground/sphere)*

ταῖς

the

Dative

*article*

ἀσθενείαις

weaknesses

Dative

*dat. of sphere (sole ground of boasting)*

ἀσθένεια: 'weakness, infirmity' (ἀ- + σθένος, 'strength'); the recurring banner of the fool's speech, where weakness is glory.

6 ἔὰν γὰρ θελήσω καυχῆσασθαι, οὐκ ἔσομαι ἄφρων, ἀλήθειαν γὰρ ἐρῶ· φείδομαι δέ, μή τις εἰς ἐμὲ λογίσηται ὑπὲρ ὃ βλέπει με ἢ ἀκούει ἐξ ἐμοῦ.

For if I should wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will speak the truth; but I refrain, lest anyone reckon of me beyond what he sees in me or hears from me.

GROUND / QUALIFICATION **γὰρ** A double clarification: such boasting would be true, not foolish — yet Paul abstains, refusing to be evaluated by anything but his observable life and message.

<p>ἔὰν if <i>conjunction (3rd-class condition)</i></p>	<p>γὰρ for <i>explanatory conjunction</i></p>	<p><b>θελήσω</b> I should wish Aor Act Subj 1 Sg · θέλω <i>verb of protasis (subjunctive)</i> → ingressive aorist θέλω: 'will, wish, want'; the hypothetical desire to boast.</p>	<p><b>καυχῆσασθαι</b> to boast Aor Mid Inf · καυχάομαι <i>complementary infinitive</i> → constative aorist</p>
<p>οὐκ not <i>negative particle</i></p>	<p><b>ἔσομαι</b> I will be Fut Mid Indic 1 Sg · εἶμι <i>main verb (apodosis)</i> → predictive future</p>	<p><b>ἄφρων</b> a fool Nominative <i>predicate nominative</i> ἄφρων: 'senseless, foolish' (ἀ- + φρήν, 'mind'); the 'fool' of the fool's speech — but real, not feigned, foolishness is denied here.</p>	<p><b>ἀλήθειαν</b> truth Accusative <i>direct object (fronted, emphatic)</i> ἀλήθεια: 'truth'; the boast, were he to make it, would be factual — distinguishing him from the lying rivals.</p>

γάρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

ἐρῶ

I will speak

Fut Act Indic 1 Sg · λέγω

*main verb*

→ predictive future

λέγω (fut. ἐρῶ): 'say, speak'; what he would speak is truth, not fabrication.

φείδομαι

I refrain

Pres Mid Indic 1 Sg · φείδομαι

*main verb*

→ customary present

φείδομαι: 'spare, refrain, forbear'; Paul holds back from the boast for the readers' sake.

δέ

but

*adversative particle*

μή

lest

*conjunction (negative purpose)*

τις

anyone

Nominative

*subject (indefinite pronoun)*

εἰς

of/to

*preposition + accusative (reference)*

ἐμέ

me

Accusative

*object of εἰς (reference)*

λογίσηται

should reckon

Aor Mid Subj 3 Sg · λογίζομαι

*verb of purpose clause (subjunctive)*

→ ingressive aorist

λογίζομαι: 'reckon, credit, estimate'; Paul will not be over-valued beyond verifiable reality.

ὑπὲρ

beyond

*preposition + accusative (comparison/excess)*

ὑπέρ + acc.: 'beyond, more than'; the limit is what is empirically observed.

ὄ

what

Accusative

*relative pronoun (object of βλέπει)*

βλέπει

he sees

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · βλέπω

*main verb (rel. clause)*

→ customary present

βλέπω: 'see, observe'; the public, visible conduct of Paul.

με

me

Accusative

*direct object*

ἢ

or

*disjunctive conjunction*

ἀκούει

hears

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · ἀκούω

*main verb (rel. clause)*

→ customary present

ἀκούω: 'hear'; Paul's audible teaching — the second measure of true estimation.

ἐξ

from

*preposition + genitive (source)*

ἐμοῦ

me

Genitive

*object of ἐκ (source)*

7 καὶ τῇ ὑπερβολῇ τῶν ἀποκαλύψεων. διὸ ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι, ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, ἄγγελος Σατανᾶ, ἵνα με κολαφίζῃ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι.

And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations — therefore, so that I might not be exalted, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted.

**INFERENCE / COUNTERWEIGHT** διὸ The exaltation that the revelations might breed is checked by a divinely given thorn; the doubled 'lest I be exalted' frames the affliction as preventive grace. The opening clause is read with v.6 or as anacoluthon resumed by διὸ.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

τῇ

the

Dative

*article*

ὑπερβολῇ

surpassing greatness

Dative

*dat. of cause*

ὑπερβολή: 'excess, extraordinary degree' (cf. 'hyperbole'); the sheer magnitude of the revelations posed the danger of pride.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

*article*

ἀποκαλύψεων

revelations

Genitive

*attributive/objective genitive*

ἀποκάλυψις: 'revelation'; the very gifts of vv.1–4, now the occasion of the thorn.

διὸ

therefore

*inferential conjunction*

διὸ: 'wherefore, therefore'; draws the consequence — a counterweight was supplied.

ἵνα

so that

*conjunction (negative purpose)*

μὴ

not

*negative particle*

## ὑπεραίρωμαι

I be exalted

Pres Pass Subj 1 Sg · ὑπεραίρω

*verb of purpose clause*

→ present (durative)

ὑπεραίρω: 'lift up over, exalt oneself (ὑπέρ + αἴρω); passive 'be over-exalted, become conceited.'

## ἐδόθη

was given

Aor Pass Indic 3 Sg · δίδωμι

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

δίδωμι: 'give'; the passive leaves the giver ambiguous — God ordains it, though Satan is the immediate agent (cf. Job 1–2).

## μοι

to me

Dative

*dat. of recipient (disadvantage)*

## σκόλοψ

a thorn/stake

Nominative

*subject of ἐδόθη*

σκόλοψ: 'thorn, splinter, sharpened stake'; a piercing, embedded torment — its precise referent (ailment, opponents, temptation) Paul leaves undefined.

## τῇ

the

Dative

*article*

## σαρκί

in the flesh

Dative

*dat. of place/sphere (or disadvantage)*

σάρξ: 'flesh'; here the physical/bodily realm — the thorn afflicts his bodily existence.

## ἄγγελος

a messenger

Nominative

*apposition to σκόλοψ*

ἄγγελος: 'messenger, angel'; the thorn personified as a hostile emissary.

## Σατανᾶ

of Satan

Genitive

*genitive of source/subordination*

Σατανᾶς: 'Satan, the adversary' (from Hebrew śāṭān); the thorn serves Satan's malice yet God's purpose.

## ἵνα

to

*conjunction (purpose)*

## με

me

Accusative

*direct object*

## κολαφίζη

it might buffet

Pres Act Subj 3 Sg · κολαφίζω

*verb of purpose clause*

→ present (iterative)

κολαφίζω: 'strike with the fist, beat, buffet'; the present pictures repeated, ongoing blows.

## ἵνα

so that

*conjunction (negative purpose, resumptive)*

μὴ

not

*negative particle*

ὑπεραίρωμαι

I be exalted

Pres Pass Subj 1 Sg · ὑπεραίρω

*verb of purpose clause (emphatic repetition)*

→ present (durative)

ὑπεραίρω: the repeated clause brackets the verse, hammering the divine intent — humility.

## 8 ὑπὲρ τούτου τρίς τὸν κύριον παρεκάλεσα ἵνα ἀποστῇ ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.

Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

**NARRATIVE RESPONSE** **ASYNDETON** Paul's threefold petition (echoing Gethsemane's threefold prayer) seeks the thorn's removal — the natural human plea against affliction.

ὑπὲρ

concerning

*preposition + genitive (reference)*

τούτου

this

Genitive

*object of ὑπὲρ (demonstrative)*

οὗτος: 'this'; refers to the thorn/messenger — masculine or neuter referent, 'this thing.'

τρὶς

three times

*adverb (numerical)*

τρὶς: 'thrice'; not casual repetition but earnest, completed entreaty.

τὸν

the

Accusative

*article*

κύριον

Lord

Accusative

*direct object (the one entreated)*

κύριος: 'Lord'; here Christ, who answers in v.9 — prayer addressed directly to the risen Lord.

παρεκάλεσα

I implored

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · παρακαλέω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

παρακαλέω: 'call alongside, urge, beseech' (παρά + καλέω); here earnest petition.

ἵνα

that

*conjunction (content/purpose of request)*

ἀποστῇ

it might depart

Aor Act Subj 3 Sg · ἀφίστημι

*verb of ἵνα clause*

→ ingressive aorist

ἀφίστημι: 'stand off, depart, withdraw' (ἀπό + ἵστημι); the prayer is for the thorn's complete removal.

ἀπ'

from

*preposition + genitive (separation)*

ἐμοῦ

me

Genitive

*object of ἀπό (separation)*

9 καὶ εἶρηκέν μοι· Ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου· ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελεῖται. ἤδιστα οὖν μᾶλλον καυχῆσομαι ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις μου, ἵνα ἐπισκηνώσῃ ἐπ' ἐμὲ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

And he has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

**DIVINE ANSWER / PIVOT** **καὶ** The theological heart of the chapter: the Lord's standing word reframes weakness as the very arena of grace and power, and Paul reorders his desire — he will boast in weakness so that Christ's power may tabernacle on him.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

εἶρηκέν

he has said

Perf Act Indic 3 Sg · λέγω (εἶρηκα)

*main verb*

→ intensive perfect (abiding word)

λέγω (pf. εἶρηκα): 'say'; the perfect marks the answer as a settled, still-valid oracle, not a passing remark.

μοι

to me

Dative

*indirect object*

Ἀρκεῖ

is sufficient

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · ἀρκέω

*main verb (oracle)*

→ gnomic present

ἀρκέω: 'be enough, suffice'; the grace given is fully adequate — no more is needed than what is already supplied.

σοι

for you

Dative

*dat. of advantage*

ἡ

the

Nominative

*article*

χάρις

grace

Nominative

*subject of Ἀρκεῖ*

χάρις: 'grace, favor'; Christ's enabling favor, sufficient in itself for the afflicted apostle.

μου

my

Genitive

*genitive of source/possession*

ἡ

the

Nominative

article

γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

δύναμις

power

Nominative

subject of τελεῖται

δύναμις: 'power, might'; divine power, which finds its full scope precisely where human strength fails.

ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (sphere)*

ἀσθενεία

weakness

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

ἀσθενεία: 'weakness'; the surprising medium in which power reaches completion.

τελεῖται

is perfected

Pres Pass Indic 3 Sg · τελέω

*main verb (oracle)*

→ *gnomic present*

τελέω: 'complete, bring to its goal, perfect'; power attains its purpose, paradoxically, through weakness.

ἥδιστα

most gladly

*adverb (superlative of manner)*

ἥδιστα: 'most gladly, most sweetly' (superlative of ἠδέως); affliction is now embraced with joy.

οὖν

therefore

*inferential conjunction*

μᾶλλον

rather

*adverb (comparison/preference)*

μᾶλλον: 'more, rather'; Paul prefers to glory in weakness rather than seek its end.

καυχῆσομαι

I will boast

Fut Mid Indic 1 Sg · καυχάομαι

*main verb*

→ *predictive future*

καυχάομαι: 'boast'; the redirected boast — now gladly in weakness.

ἐν

in

*preposition + dative (ground/sphere)*

ταῖς

the

Dative

article

## ἀσθενείαις

weaknesses

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

ἀσθενείαι: 'weakness'; the plural gathers up all his infirmities as occasions of grace.

## μου

my

Genitive

*genitive of possession*

## ἵνα

so that

*conjunction (purpose)*

## ἐπισκηνώση

may rest upon/tabernacle

Aor Act Subj 3 Sg · ἐπισκηνώω

*verb of purpose clause*

→ *ingressive aorist*

ἐπισκηνώω: 'pitch a tent upon, take up residence over' (ἐπί + σκηνή, 'tent'); evokes the Shekinah glory tabernacling — Christ's power tents over Paul.

## ἐπ'

upon

*preposition + accusative (place upon)*

## ἐμέ

me

Accusative

*object of ἐπί*

## ἡ

the

Nominative

*article*

## δύναμις

power

Nominative

*subject of ἐπισκηνώση*

δύναμις: 'power'; the goal of embracing weakness — that Christ's power may dwell on him.

## τοῦ

of the

Genitive

*article*

## Χριστοῦ

Christ

Genitive

*genitive of source/possession*

Χριστός: the power is Christ's own — the same risen Lord who answered the prayer.

10 διὸ εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ὕβρεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν διωγμοῖς καὶ στενοχωρίαις, ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ· ὅταν γὰρ ἀσθενῶ, τότε δυνατὸς εἰμι.

Therefore I am content with weaknesses, with insults, with hardships, with persecutions and distresses, for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

INFERENCE / PARADOX **διὸ** The conclusion drawn from the oracle: a catalogue of sufferings 'for Christ' is embraced, capped by the governing paradox of the whole speech — weakness is the locus of strength.

<p><b>διὸ</b> therefore <i>inferential conjunction</i></p> <p>διὸ: 'wherefore'; draws out the practical consequence of v.9.</p>	<p><b>εὐδοκῶ</b> I am content / well pleased Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · εὐδοκέω <i>main verb</i> → customary present</p> <p>εὐδοκέω: 'be well pleased, take pleasure in, consent gladly'; Paul positively delights in what would naturally repel.</p>	<p><b>ἐν</b> in <i>preposition + dative (sphere/reference)</i></p>	<p><b>ἀσθενείαις</b> weaknesses Dative <i>dat. of sphere</i></p> <p>ἀσθένεια: 'weakness'; heads the suffering-list as its summary term.</p>
<p><b>ἐν</b> in <i>preposition + dative</i></p>	<p><b>ὕβρεσιν</b> insults Dative <i>dat. of sphere</i></p> <p>ὕβρις: 'insolence, outrage, mistreatment'; both the abuse suffered and the insolence of the abuser.</p>	<p><b>ἐν</b> in <i>preposition + dative</i></p>	<p><b>ἀνάγκαις</b> hardships Dative <i>dat. of sphere</i></p> <p>ἀνάγκη: 'necessity, distress, calamity'; the pressing constraints of apostolic life.</p>

ἐν

in

*preposition + dative*

διωγμοῖς

persecutions

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

διωγμός: 'persecution, pursuit' (cf. διώκω, 'chase'); hostility endured for the gospel.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

στενοχωρίαίς

distresses

Dative

*dat. of sphere*

στενοχωρία: 'narrowness, dire straits' (στενός + χώρα, 'narrow place'); the cramped, hemmed-in feeling of severe affliction.

ὑπὲρ

for the sake of

*preposition + genitive (advantage/cause)*

Χριστοῦ

Christ

Genitive

*object of ὑπὲρ (the reason that transvalues suffering)*

Χριστός: 'for Christ's sake' is the key qualifier — these are not random woes but borne for him.

ὅταν

whenever

*conjunction (indefinite temporal)*

ὅταν: 'whenever' (ὅτε + ἄν); the recurring, general condition.

γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

ἀσθενῶ

I am weak

Pres Act Subj 1 Sg · ἀσθενέω

*verb of ὅταν clause*

→ gnomic present

ἀσθενέω: 'be weak, sick, powerless'; the verbal counterpart to ἀσθένεια.

τότε

then

*adverb (temporal correlative)*

δυνατός

strong

Nominative

*predicate nominative*

δυνατός: 'powerful, strong, able' (cf. δύναμις); the strength is Christ's power resting upon him, not native ability.

εἰμι

I am

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · εἰμί

*main verb (copula)*

→ gnomic present

11 Γέγονα ἄφρων· ὑμεῖς με ἠναγκάσατε. ἐγὼ γὰρ ὄφειλον ὑφ' ὑμῶν συνίστασθαι· οὐδὲν γὰρ ὑστέρησα τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων, εἰ καὶ οὐδὲν εἰμι.

I have become a fool; you compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you, for I was in no way inferior to the super-apostles, even though I am nothing.

RECAPITULATION / REPROACH ASYNDETON Dropping the third-person veil, Paul names the folly and pins responsibility on the Corinthians, who should have commended him; he equals the 'super-apostles' yet disclaims worth in himself.

### Γέγονα

I have become

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · γίνομαι

*main verb*

→ intensive perfect (resultant state)

γίνομαι: 'become'; the perfect marks the standing result — 'I now stand as a fool' (by their forcing).

### ἄφρων

a fool

Nominative

*predicate nominative*

ἄφρων: 'senseless one'; the self-designation of the fool's speech, owned ironically.

### ὑμεῖς

you

Nominative

*subject (emphatic pronoun)*

### με

me

Accusative

*direct object*

### ἠναγκάσατε

you compelled

Aor Act Indic 2 Pl · ἀναγκάζω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

ἀναγκάζω: 'compel, force' (cf. ἀνάγκη); the foolish boasting was extorted by their failure to defend him.

### ἐγὼ

I

Nominative

*subject (emphatic pronoun)*

### γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

### ὄφειλον

I ought

Impf Act Indic 1 Sg · ὀφείλω

*main verb (unfulfilled obligation)*

→ imperfect (obligation, contrary to fact)

ὀφείλω: 'owe, be obligated'; the imperfect signals a duty they failed to discharge — 'I ought to have been [but was not] commended.'

ὑφ'

by

*preposition + genitive (agency)*

ὑμῶν

you

Genitive

*genitive of agency*

συνίστασθαι

to be commended

Pres Pass Inf · συνίστημι

*complementary infinitive (with ὠφειλον)*

→ present (durative)

συνίστημι: 'commend, present, prove';  
they, not he, should have established  
his credentials.

οὐδέν

in nothing

Accusative

*accusative of respect / adverbial*

οὐδεῖς: 'no one, nothing'; 'in no respect'  
inferior.

γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

ὑστέρησα

I was inferior / fell short

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · ὑστερέω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

ὑστερέω: 'lack, fall short, be inferior';  
Paul yields nothing in apostolic  
standing.

τῶν

the

Genitive

*article*

ὑπερλίαν

super-/eminent

*adverb used attributively (with ἀποστόλων)*

ὑπερλίαν: 'exceedingly, super-' (ὑπέρ +  
λίαν); the ironic title 'super-apostles' for  
the intruding rivals (cf. 11:5).

ἀποστόλων

apostles

Genitive

*genitive of comparison (after ὑστέρησα)*

ἀπόστολος: 'apostle, envoy'; here the  
self-styled super-apostles whom Paul  
matches.

εἰ

if

*conjunction (εἰ καὶ = 'even though')*

καὶ

even

*adverbial (εἰ καὶ, concessive)*

εἰ καὶ: 'even if, although'; concedes  
Paul's own nothingness while affirming  
his parity.

οὐδέν

nothing

Nominative

*predicate nominative*

οὐδεῖς: 'nothing'; Paul's self-estimate  
apart from Christ — humility  
undergirding the parity.

εἰμι

I am

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · εἰμί

*main verb (copula)*

→ stative present

12 τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατεργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ, σημείοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν.

The signs of an apostle were indeed worked among you with all endurance, by signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

EVIDENTIAL GROUND **μὲν** Proof of his parity: the authenticating apostolic signs were performed among them, framed first of all by patient endurance — the apostle's truest credential.

<p><b>τὰ</b> the Nominative article</p>	<p><b>μὲν</b> indeed <i>particle (μέν, here nearly affirmative)</i></p>	<p><b>σημεῖα</b> signs Nominative <i>subject of κατεργάσθη</i> σημεῖον: 'sign'; the authenticating marks of genuine apostleship.</p>	<p><b>τοῦ</b> of the Genitive article</p>
<p><b>ἀποστόλου</b> apostle Genitive <i>genitive of source/possession (signs that mark an apostle)</i> ἀπόστολος: 'apostle'; 'the signs of the apostle' = the credentials proper to apostolic office.</p>	<p><b>κατεργάσθη</b> were worked Aor Pass Indic 3 Sg · κατεργάζομαι <i>main verb (neut. pl. subj. w/ sg. verb)</i> → constative aorist κατεργάζομαι: 'work out, accomplish, bring about' (intensive of ἐργάζομαι); the passive again leaves God as the true worker.</p>	<p><b>ἐν</b> among <i>preposition + dative (place/sphere)</i></p>	<p><b>ὑμῖν</b> you Dative <i>dat. of place (among you)</i></p>

ἐν

with

*preposition + dative (manner/attendant circumstance)*

πάση

all

Dative  
*attributive adjective*

ὑπομονῇ

endurance

Dative  
*dat. of manner*

ὑπομονή: 'steadfast endurance, perseverance' (ὑπό + μένω, 'remain under'); placed first — the chief apostolic credential is patient suffering.

σημείοις

signs

Dative  
*dat. of means/instrument*

σημεῖον: 'sign'; here the means by which apostleship was attested.

τε

both/and

*connective particle (τε ... και)*

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

τέρασιν

wonders

Dative  
*dat. of means*

τέρας: 'wonder, portent'; the awe-evoking aspect of a miracle — never used alone of Christian miracles, always paired with σημεῖα.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

δυνάμεσιν

mighty deeds

Dative  
*dat. of means*

δύναμις: 'mighty work, miracle'; the power-aspect of the miraculous — the standard triad signs/wonders/powers (cf. Acts 2:22; Heb 2:4).

13 τί γάρ ἐστιν ὃ ἡσώθητε ὑπὲρ τὰς λοιπὰς ἐκκλησίας, εἰ μὴ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ οὐ κατενάρκησα ὑμῶν; χαρίσασθέ μοι τὴν ἀδικίαν ταύτην.

For in what were you made inferior to the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you?  
Forgive me this wrong!

RHETORICAL QUESTION / IRONY **γάρ** Biting irony: the only respect in which Corinth was 'shortchanged' relative to other churches was that Paul refused their support — for which he mock-pleads forgiveness.

<p><b>τί</b> what Nominative <i>predicate nominative (interrogative)</i> τίς: 'who, what'; opens the rhetorical question.</p>	<p><b>γάρ</b> for <i>explanatory conjunction</i></p>	<p><b>ἐστιν</b> is Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἰμί <i>main verb (copula)</i> → stative present</p>	<p><b>ὃ</b> in which Accusative <i>relative pronoun (accusative of respect)</i></p>
<p><b>ἡσώθητε</b> you were made inferior Aor Pass Indic 2 Pl · ἡσώομαι <i>main verb (rel. clause)</i> → constative aorist ἡσώομαι: 'be made less, be inferior, be worsted' (cf. ἥσων, 'less'); were the Corinthians shortchanged relative to other churches?</p>	<p><b>ὑπὲρ</b> compared to <i>preposition + accusative (comparison)</i> ὑπέρ + acc.: 'beyond, more than'; here 'in comparison with.'</p>	<p><b>τὰς</b> the Accusative <i>article</i></p>	<p><b>λοιπὰς</b> rest of the Accusative <i>attributive adjective</i> λοιπός: 'remaining, rest'; the other congregations Paul served.</p>
<p><b>ἐκκλησίας</b> churches Accusative <i>object of ὑπέρ</i> ἐκκλησία: 'assembly, church'; the gathered people of God in each locale.</p>	<p><b>εἰ</b> if <i>conjunction (εἰ μὴ = 'except')</i></p>	<p><b>μὴ</b> not <i>negative particle (εἰ μὴ = 'except')</i></p>	<p><b>ὅτι</b> that <i>conjunction (content)</i></p>

## αὐτός

myself

Nominative

*intensive pronoun (w/ ἐγώ)*

αὐτός: 'self; emphatic — 'I myself,'  
personally.

## ἐγώ

I

Nominative

*subject (emphatic)*

## οὐ

not

*negative particle*

## κατενάρκησα

I burdened

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · καταναρκάω

*main verb*

→ *constative aorist*

καταναρκάω: 'be a burden, weigh down'  
(lit. 'benumb,' from νάρκη, 'numbness');  
a rare word (only here and 11:9; 12:14)  
for sponging on others' support.

## ὑμῶν

you

Genitive

*genitive object of καταναρκάω*

## χαρίσασθέ

forgive

Aor Mid Impv 2 Pl · χαρίζομαι

*main verb (imperative, ironic)*

→ *constative aorist (imperative)*

χαρίζομαι: 'show favor, forgive, freely  
grant' (from χάρις); the mock-apology  
— 'pardon me this injustice!'

## μοι

me

Dative

*dat. of advantage*

## τήν

the

Accusative

*article*

## ἀδικίαν

wrong

Accusative

*direct object*

ἀδικία: 'unrighteousness, wrong,  
injustice'; used ironically for the  
supposed offense of refusing pay.

## ταύτην

this

Accusative

*demonstrative (attributive)*

14 Ἴδου τρίτον τοῦτο ἐτοίμως ἔχω ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ οὐ καταναρκήσω· οὐ γὰρ ζητῶ τὰ ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς, οὐ γὰρ ὀφείλει τὰ τέκνα τοῖς γονεῦσιν θησαυρίζειν, ἀλλὰ οἱ γονεῖς τοῖς τέκνοις.

Behold, this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden; for I do not seek what is yours but you, for the children ought not to store up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE THIRD VISIT **ASYNDETON** The speech turns to the imminent third visit; Paul's policy of non-burdening is grounded in paternal love — he seeks them, not their possessions, as parents provide for children, not the reverse.

**Ἴδου**

behold

Aor Mid Impv 2 Sg · ὀράω (interjection)  
*attention-marker (frozen imperative)*

→ imperativ

ἰδοῦ: 'look! behold!'; a fossilized imperative used to arrest attention.

**τρίτον**

a third time

Accusative  
*adverbial accusative (of time)*

τρίτος: 'third'; 'this third time' — the imminent visit, with two prior (or one prior, one intended).

**τοῦτο**

this

Accusative  
*demonstrative (w/ τρίτον)*

**ἐτοίμως**

readily

*adverb (manner; ἐτοίμως ἔχω = 'I am ready')*

ἐτοίμως: 'readily'; ἐτοίμως ἔχω is an idiom, 'I am in readiness.'

**ἔχω**

I have/am

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · ἔχω  
*main verb (idiom w/ ἐτοίμως)*

→ stative present

ἔχω: 'have, hold'; with the adverb = 'be ready, be disposed.'

**ἐλθεῖν**

to come

Aor Act Inf · ἔρχομαι  
*complementary infinitive*

→ constative aorist

ἔρχομαι: 'come'; the object of his readiness.

**πρὸς**

to

*preposition + accusative (direction)*

**ὑμᾶς**

you

Accusative  
*object of πρὸς*

καὶ  
and

*coordinating conjunction*

οὐ  
not

*negative particle*

**καταναρκήσω**

I will burden

Fut Act Indic 1 Sg · καταναρκάω

*main verb*

→ predictive future

καταναρκάω: 'be a burden'; Paul reaffirms his settled policy for the coming visit.

οὐ  
not

*negative particle*

γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

**ζητῶ**

I seek

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · ζητέω

*main verb*

→ customary present

ζητέω: 'seek, desire'; what Paul truly pursues is the people themselves.

**τὰ**

the things

Accusative

*article (substantizing, w/ ὑμῶν)*

**ὑμῶν**

of you

Genitive

*possessive genitive (τὰ ὑμῶν = 'your goods')*

**ἀλλὰ**

but

*strong adversative conjunction*

**ὑμᾶς**

you

Accusative

*direct object (of implied ζητῶ)*

οὐ

not

*negative particle*

γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

**ὀφείλει**

ought

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · ὀφείλω

*main verb (gnomic principle)*

→ gnomic present

ὀφείλω: 'owe, be obligated'; states a general norm of family economy.

**τὰ**

the

Nominative

*article*

**τέκνα**

children

Nominative

*subject of ὀφείλει*

τέκνον: 'child' (from τίκτω, 'beget'); the Corinthians as Paul's spiritual offspring.

**τοῖς**

for the

Dative

*article*

## γονεῦσιν

parents

Dative

*dat. of advantage*

γονεύς: 'parent, begetter' (cf. γίνομαι); the natural providers in the family analogy.

## θησαυρίζειν

to store up

Pres Act Inf · θησαυρίζω

*complementary infinitive (with ὀφείλει)*

→ customary present

θησαυρίζω: 'lay up treasure, save up' (cf. θησαυρός, 'treasure'); the obligation runs from parent to child, not child to parent.

## ἀλλὰ

but

*strong adversative*

## οἱ

the

Nominative

*article*

## γονεῖς

parents

Nominative

*subject (of implied θησαυρίζειν ὀφείλουσιν)*

γονεύς: 'parent'; Paul, as spiritual father, accepts the parent's role of providing.

## τοῖς

for the

Dative

*article*

## τέκνοις

children

Dative

*dat. of advantage*

τέκνον: 'child'; the beneficiaries of parental provision.

15 ἐγὼ δὲ ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν. εἰ περισσοτέρως ὑμᾶς ἀγαπῶν, ἦσσον ἀγαπῶμαι;

And I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I to be loved less?

INTENSIFICATION OF LOVE δὲ Paul presses the paternal logic to its limit — total self-expenditure for their souls — and laments the painful asymmetry: greater love met by lesser return.

ἐγὼ

I

Nominative

subject (*emphatic pronoun*)

δὲ

and

*continuative particle*

ἥδιστα

most gladly

*adverb (superlative of manner)*

ἥδιστα: 'most gladly'; the same eager joy  
as in v.9, now in self-giving.

δαπανήσω

I will spend

Fut Act Indic 1 Sg · δαπανᾶω

*main verb*

→ predictive future

δαπανᾶω: 'spend, expend (resources)';  
Paul will lay out all he has for them.

καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι

I will be utterly spent

Fut Pass Indic 1 Sg · ἐκδαπανᾶω

*main verb*

→ predictive future

ἐκδαπανᾶω: 'spend out completely,  
exhaust' (ἐκ-intensive); a NT hapax —  
Paul will pour out his very self to the  
last.

ὑπὲρ

for

*preposition + genitive (advantage)*

τῶν

the

Genitive

*article*

ψυχῶν

souls

Genitive

*object of ὑπέρ*

ψυχή: 'soul, life, person'; the whole  
persons of the Corinthians, their  
eternal good, is the object of his  
expenditure.

ὑμῶν

your

Genitive

*possessive genitive*

εἰ

if

*conjunction (1st-class condition, here  
interrogative)*

περισσοτέρως

more abundantly

*adverb (comparative degree)*

περισσοτέρως: 'more abundantly, all the  
more' (comparative of περισσῶς); the  
surplus of Paul's love.

ὕμᾱς

you

Accusative

*direct object of ἀγαπῶν*

ἀγαπῶν

loving

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · ἀγαπάω

*conditional/causal participle*

→ present (durative)

ἀγαπάω: 'love'; the self-giving covenant love that defines Paul's ministry.

ἧσσον

less

*adverb (comparative degree)*

ἧσσον: 'less' (comparative neut. of ἧσσω); the painful disproportion of their response.

ἀγαπῶμαι

am I loved

Pres Pass Indic 1 Sg · ἀγαπάω

*main verb (question)*

→ present (durative)

ἀγαπάω: here passive — Paul's love is requited with diminishing affection, a grief he voices openly.

16 ἔστω δέ, ἐγὼ οὐ κατεβάρησα ὑμᾶς· ἀλλὰ ὑπάρχων πανούργος δόλω ὑμᾶς ἔλαβον.

But be that as it may, I did not burden you; yet, being crafty, I took you by deceit — so it is alleged.

CONCESSION / REBUTTAL OF SLANDER **δέ** Paul cites the opponents' insinuation: granting he took nothing directly, they charge he 'caught' the Corinthians by cunning (e.g. via the collection or his agents). The next verses dismantle the slur.

ἔστω

let it be / be that as it may

Pres Act Impv 3 Sg · εἰμί

*main verb (concessive imperative)*

→ imperatival

εἰμί (impv. ἔστω): 'let it be so'; a conceding formula, 'granted.'

δέ

but

*adversative particle*

ἐγὼ

I

Nominative

*subject (emphatic pronoun)*

οὐ

not

*negative particle*

## κατεβάρησα

I burdened

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · καταβαρέω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

καταβαρέω: 'weigh down, burden' (κατά + βάρος, 'weight'); a NT hapax, synonymous with καταναρκάω — he was no financial dead-weight.

## ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

*direct object*

## ἀλλὰ

yet

*adversative conjunction (introducing the charge)*

## ὑπάρχων

being

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · υπάρχω

*causal/concessive participle*

→ present (durative)

ὑπάρχω: 'be, exist, be inherently'; introduces the alleged character — 'being (supposedly) crafty.'

## πανούργος

crafty

Nominative

*predicate adjective (w/ υπάρχων)*

πανούργος: 'unscrupulous, cunning' (lit. 'ready for anything,' πᾶν + ἔργον); the slander voiced by his detractors.

## δόλω

by deceit

Dative

*dat. of means/manner*

δόλος: 'guile, trickery, bait' (originally a fisherman's lure); the charge of underhanded entrapment.

## ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

*direct object*

## ἔλαβον

I took / caught

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · λαμβάνω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

λαμβάνω: 'take, catch'; here 'caught' as with a snare — the verb of the imagined cunning, repeated ironically from his opponents' lips.

## 17 μή τινα ὧν ἀπέσταλκα πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δι' αὐτοῦ ἐπλεονέκτησα ὑμᾶς;

Did I take advantage of you through any of those I sent to you?

**RHETORICAL REBUTTAL** **ASYNDETON** The first question dismantling the charge: through none of his envoys did Paul exploit them — the expected answer is an emphatic 'No.'

μή

[not / surely not]

*interrogative particle (expecting 'no')*

μή: introduces a question anticipating a negative answer — 'surely I did not ...?'

τινα

anyone

Accusative

*object (indefinite pronoun; resumed by δι' αὐτοῦ)*

ῶν

of those whom

Genitive

*relative pronoun (partitive genitive)*

ἀπέσταλκα

I have sent

Perf Act Indic 1 Sg · ἀποστέλλω

*main verb (rel. clause)*

→ intensive perfect

ἀποστέλλω: 'send with a commission' (cf. ἀπόστολος); the perfect views his commissioned envoys as a standing fact.

πρός

to

*preposition + accusative (direction)*

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

*object of πρὸς*

δι'

through

*preposition + genitive (agency/means)*

αὐτοῦ

him

Genitive

*object of διὰ (resumes τινα)*

ἐπλεονέκτησα

I took advantage of

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · πλεονεκτέω

*main verb (question)*

→ constative aorist

πλεονεκτέω: 'take advantage of, defraud, exploit' (from πλεονέκτης, 'greedy one'); the very vice imputed to him, here flatly denied.

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

*direct object*

18 παρεκάλεσα Τίτον καὶ συναπέστειλα τὸν ἀδελφόν· μήτι ἐπλεονέκτησεν ὑμᾶς Τίτος; οὐ τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι περιεπατήσαμεν; οὐ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἴχνεσιν;

I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not in the same footsteps?

**SPECIFIC EXHIBIT** **ASYNDETON** Titus is the test case: his conduct, and Paul's, displayed the same Spirit and identical 'footsteps' of integrity — answering the slander with a concrete, verifiable instance.

### παρεκάλεσα

I urged

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · παρακαλέω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

παρεκαλέω: 'urge, exhort, appeal to'; Paul dispatched Titus at his own initiative.

### Τίτον

Titus

Accusative

*direct object*

Τίτος: Titus, Paul's trusted Gentile coworker and emissary to Corinth (cf. 2:13; 7:6; 8:6).

### καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

### συναπέστειλα

I sent with him

Aor Act Indic 1 Sg · συναποστέλλω

*main verb*

→ constative aorist

συναποστέλλω: 'send along with' (σύν + ἀποστέλλω); the companion accompanied Titus as witness/safeguard.

### τὸν

the

Accusative

*article*

### ἀδελφόν

brother

Accusative

*direct object*

ἀδελφός: 'brother'; an unnamed fellow-believer sent with Titus (cf. 8:18–22).

### μήτι

[surely not]

*interrogative particle (expecting 'no')*

μήτι: a strengthened μή — 'he didn't, did he?'

### ἐπλεονέκτησεν

took advantage of

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · πλεονεκτέω

*main verb (question)*

→ constative aorist

πλεονεκτέω: 'exploit, defraud'; the same verb as v.17, now of Titus — likewise denied.

**ὕμᾱς**

you

Accusative  
*direct object*

**Τίτος**

Titus

Nominative  
*subject*

**οὐ**

[not]

*interrogative particle (expecting 'yes')*

οὐ: introduces a question expecting an affirmative answer — 'did we not ...?' (we did)'

**τῷ**

the

Dative  
*article*

**αὐτῷ**

same

Dative  
*identifying adjective*

αὐτός: 'same'; the identity of Paul's and Titus's conduct.

**πνεύματι**

spirit

Dative  
*dat. of manner/sphere*

πνεῦμα: 'spirit'; either disposition ('the same spirit') or the Holy Spirit who governed both — the same animating principle.

**περιεπατήσαμεν**

we walked

Aor Act Indic 1 Pl • περιπατέω  
*main verb (question)*

→ constative aorist

περιπατέω: 'walk about,' metaphor for conduct of life (a Semitic idiom, Hebrew *hālak*); the same manner of life for both.

**οὐ**

[not]

*interrogative particle (expecting 'yes')*

**τοῖς**

the

Dative  
*article*

**αὐτοῖς**

same

Dative  
*identifying adjective*

αὐτός: 'same'; identical steps — no divergence in integrity.

**ἵχνεσιν**

footsteps

Dative  
*dat. of manner (elliptical 'walk')*

ἵχνος: 'footprint, track'; 'in the same footsteps' = following the identical path of honest dealing.

19 Πάλαι δοκεῖτε ὅτι ὑμῖν ἀπολογούμεθα; κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν· τὰ δὲ πάντα, ἀγαπητοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς.

Have you been thinking all along that we are defending ourselves to you? It is before God, in Christ, that we are speaking; and all of it, beloved, is for your upbuilding.

CLARIFICATION OF PURPOSE **ASYNDETON** Paul corrects a possible misreading: the whole defense is not self-justification before a human tribunal but speech 'before God, in Christ,' aimed wholly at the church's edification.

**Πάλαι**

all along / long since

*adverb (time)*

πάλαι: 'long ago, all this while'; 'have you been supposing all along ...?'

**δοκεῖτε**

you think

Pres Act Indic 2 Pl · δοκέω

*main verb (question)*

→ present (durative)

δοκέω: 'think, suppose, seem'; their mistaken impression.

**ὅτι**

that

*conjunction (content)*

**ὑμῖν**

to you

Dative

*dat. of reference/indirect object*

**ἀπολογούμεθα**

we are defending ourselves

Pres Mid Indic 1 Pl · ἀπολογέομαι

*main verb (ὅτι clause)*

→ present (durative)

ἀπολογέομαι: 'make a defense, give account' (cf. 'apology, apologetics'); Paul denies that the Corinthians are his judges.

**κατέναντι**

before / in the sight of

*improper preposition + genitive (in the presence of)*

κατέναντι: 'opposite, before, in the presence of'; the true audience is God, not the church.

**θεοῦ**

God

Genitive

*object of κατέναντι*

**ἐν**

in

*preposition + dative (sphere)*

## Χριστῷ

Christ

Dative

*dat. of sphere (incorporative 'in Christ')*

Χριστός: the sphere of union with Christ in which all Paul's speech is uttered — coram Deo and in Christ.

## λαλοῦμεν

we speak

Pres Act Indic 1 Pl · λαλέω

*main verb*

→ present (durative)

λαλέω: 'speak'; all his utterance is under God's gaze.

## τὰ

the

Nominative

*article (substantizing, w/ πάντα)*

## δὲ

and

*continuative particle*

## πάντα

all things

Nominative

*subject (of implied 'is/are')*

πᾶς: 'all'; the entire defense and the whole letter.

## ἀγαπητοί

beloved

Vocative

*vocative of address*

ἀγαπητός: 'beloved'; the tender direct address that softens the rebuke — they remain dearly loved.

## ὑπὲρ

for

*preposition + genitive (advantage/purpose)*

## τῆς

the

Genitive

*article*

## ὑμῶν

your

Genitive

*possessive genitive (fronted for emphasis)*

## οἰκοδομῆς

upbuilding

Genitive

*object of ὑπέρ (the goal)*

οἰκοδομή: 'building up, edification' (οἶκος + δέμω, 'build a house'); the constructive aim of all Paul's severity (cf. 10:8; 13:10).

20 φοβοῦμαι γὰρ μή πως ἐλθὼν οὐχ οἴους θέλω εὔρω ὑμᾶς, καὶ γὰρ εὐρεθῶ ὑμῖν οἶον οὐ θέλετε, μή πως ἔρις, ζῆλος, θυμοί, ἐριθειᾶι, καταλαλιαί, ψιθυρισμοί, φυσιώσεις, ἀκαταστασίαι·

For I fear that perhaps when I come I may not find you such as I wish, and that I may be found by you such as you do not wish — that perhaps there may be strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, slanders, whisperings, conceits, disorders;

GROUND OF CONCERN / APPREHENSION **γὰρ** The reason for the edifying intent: Paul dreads finding unrepented communal sins on arrival — a vice-list of eight relational disorders that fracture the church's life.

### φοβοῦμαι

I fear

Pres Mid Indic 1 Sg · φοβέομαι

*main verb*

→ present (durative)

φοβέομαι: 'fear, be afraid'; the pastoral apprehension governing vv.20–21.

### γὰρ

for

*explanatory conjunction*

### μή

lest

*conjunction (after verb of fearing)*

### πως

perhaps

*particle (indefinite)*

πως: 'somehow, perhaps'; μή πως = 'lest somehow.'

### ἐλθὼν

having come

Aor Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · ἔρχομαι

*temporal participle*

→ antecedent aorist

ἔρχομαι: 'come'; 'on arriving.'

### οὐχ

not

*negative particle*

### οἴους

such as

Accusative

*correlative relative (qualitative)*

οἴος: 'of what sort'; 'not the kind I wish.'

### θέλω

I wish

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · θέλω

*main verb (rel. clause)*

→ present (durative)

θέλω: 'wish, want'; Paul's hope for their spiritual state.

## εὔρω

I may find

Aor Act Subj 1 Sg · εὕρισκω

*verb of fear-clause (subjunctive)*

→ ingressive aorist

εὕρισκω: 'find, discover'; what he will encounter on arrival.

## ὕμᾱς

you

Accusative

*direct object*

## κἀγῶ

and I

Nominative

*subject (crasis καὶ + ἐγώ, emphatic)*

κἀγῶ: crasis of καὶ ἐγώ, 'and I.'

## εὔρεθῶ

I may be found

Aor Pass Subj 1 Sg · εὕρισκω

*verb of fear-clause (subjunctive, passive)*

→ ingressive aorist

εὕρισκω: passive 'be found, prove to be'; he too might appear in an unwished-for guise (stern, disciplinary).

## ὕμῖν

by you

Dative

*dat. of agent/reference*

## οἷον

such as

Accusative

*correlative relative (qualitative)*

οἷος: 'of what sort'; 'the kind you do not wish.'

## οὐ

not

*negative particle*

## θέλετε

you wish

Pres Act Indic 2 Pl · θέλω

*main verb (rel. clause)*

→ present (durative)

## μή

lest

*conjunction (resumptive, w/ implied 'there be')*

## πιως

perhaps

*particle (indefinite)*

## ἔρις

strife

Nominative

*subject (of implied verb)*

ἔρις: 'strife, contention, quarreling'; heads the vice-list — the disease already diagnosed at Corinth (1 Cor 1:11).

## ζῆλος

jealousy

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

ζῆλος: 'zeal, jealousy, envy'; here the negative party-spirit and rivalry.

## θυμοί

outbursts of anger

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

θυμός: 'passion, rage, outburst'; the plural denotes flares of temper.

## ἐριθειαι

selfish ambitions

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

ἐριθεία: 'selfish ambition, factiousness' (orig. 'work for hire, intrigue'); self-seeking partisanship.

## καταλαλιαί

slanders

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

καταλαλιά: 'evil speaking, slander' (κατά + λαλέω, 'speak against'); open defamation.

## ψιθυρισμοί

whisperings

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

ψιθυρισμός: 'whispering, secret gossip' (onomatopoeic); covert backbiting, the twin of open slander.

## φυσιώσεις

conceits

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

φυσιώσις: 'puffing up, conceit, arrogance' (cf. φυσιώω, 'inflate'); the swollen self-importance Paul condemned at Corinth (1 Cor 4–5; 8:1).

## ἀκαταστασίαι

disorders

Nominative

*subject (coordinate)*

ἀκαταστασία: 'disorder, tumult, instability' (ἀ- + καθίστημι, 'set in order'); the social chaos these vices breed.

21 μὴ πάλιν ἐλθόντος μου ταπεινώσει με ὁ θεός μου πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ πενθήσω πολλοὺς τῶν προημαρτηκότων καὶ μὴ μετανοησάντων ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ ἀσελγείᾳ ἣν ἔπραξαν.

lest, when I come again, my God may humble me before you, and I may mourn over many who have sinned before and have not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and licentiousness which they practiced.

DEEPEST FEAR / MOURNING ASYNDETON The climactic dread: not the relational vices only but unrepented moral filth — impurity, fornication, licentiousness — which would humble Paul and turn his visit to mourning. The chapter ends on this somber note, propelling the warnings of ch. 13.

μὴ

lest

*conjunction (continues the fear of v.20)*

πάλιν

again

*adverb (repetition)*

πάλιν: 'again'; the recurrence points to the painful 'second visit' behind 2 Corinthians (cf. 2:1; 13:2).

ἐλθόντος

having come

Aor Act Ptc • Gen Sg Masc • ἔρχομαι

*genitive absolute (temporal)*

→ antecedent aorist

ἔρχομαι: 'come'; the genitive absolute 'when I have come (again).'

μου

I / my

Genitive

*subject of genitive absolute*

## ταπεινώση

may humble

Aor Act Subj 3 Sg · ταπεινώω

*verb of fear-clause (subjunctive)*

→ *ingressive aorist*

ταπεινώω: 'make low, humble, humiliate'; Paul fears God will humble him through grief over the church's sin.

## με

me

Accusative

*direct object*

## ὁ

the

Nominative

*article*

## θεός

God

Nominative

*subject*

## μου

my

Genitive

*genitive of relationship*

## πρὸς

before

*preposition + accusative (in relation to)*

## ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

*object of πρὸς*

## καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

## πενθήσω

I may mourn

Aor Act Subj 1 Sg · πενθέω

*verb of fear-clause (coordinate subjunctive)*

→ *ingressive aorist*

πενθέω: 'mourn, grieve, lament' (as for the dead); deep sorrow over impenitent members.

## πολλούς

many

Accusative

*direct object (substantival adj.)*

πολύς: 'many'; the troubling scope — not a few isolated cases.

## τῶν

of those

Genitive

*article (substantizes the participles; partitive)*

## προσημαρτηκότων

who have sinned before

Perf Act Ptc · Gen Pl Masc · προσημαρτάνω

*substantival participle (partitive genitive)*

→ *intensive perfect (abiding guilt)*

προσημαρτάνω: 'sin beforehand / formerly' (προ- + ἀμαρτάνω); the perfect marks sin whose effect persists — they remain in their former sin.

## καὶ

and

*coordinating conjunction*

## μὴ

not

*negative particle (w/ participle)*

## μετανοησάντων

having repented

Aor Act Ptc · Gen Pl Masc · μετανοέω

*substantival participle (negated)*

→ *constative aorist*

μετανοέω: 'change one's mind, repent' (μετά + νοέω); the absence of repentance is what makes their case grievous.

## ἐπὶ

of / over

*preposition + dative (occasion/reference)*

<p><b>τῇ</b> the Dative article</p>	<p><b>ἀκαθαρσία</b> impurity Dative <i>object of ἐπί</i> ἀκαθαρσία: 'uncleanness, impurity' (ἀ- + καθρός, 'clean'); moral defilement, esp. sexual.</p>	<p><b>καὶ</b> and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p><b>πορνεία</b> sexual immorality Dative <i>object of ἐπί (coordinate)</i> πορνεία: 'fornication, sexual immorality' (cf. πόρνη); illicit sexual conduct broadly — a besetting Corinthian sin (1 Cor 5–6).</p>
<p><b>καὶ</b> and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p><b>ἀσελγεία</b> licentiousness Dative <i>object of ἐπί (coordinate)</i> ἀσελγεία: 'sensuality, debauchery, shameless excess'; unbridled indulgence flaunting all restraint.</p>	<p><b>ἣ</b> which Dative <i>relative pronoun (dat. by attraction; object of ἔπραξαν)</i></p>	<p><b>ἔπραξαν</b> they practiced Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · πράσω <i>main verb (rel. clause)</i> → <i>constative aorist</i> πράσω: 'do, practice, perform'; the habitual commission of these sins, now unrepented.</p>

**On the text.** The Greek follows the standard critical text of 2 Corinthians 12, uniform in its main wording across the modern editions (NA28, SBLGNT, THGNT) and itself an ancient, public-domain text; NA28's distinctively copyrighted critical apparatus is not reproduced. Verse punctuation and paragraphing are editorial and conventional. The chapter has twenty-one verses; it continues the 'fool's speech' (11:1–12:13) and its caustic, ironic register, then turns to the announcement of the third visit (12:14–21). Well-known variants (e.g. the reading of v.1 καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ vs. καυχᾶσθαι δὴ, and οἶδα ἄνθρωπον / οἶδα γὰρ ἄνθρωπον in vv.2–3) are not annotated.

**On the labels.** Parsing gives Tense·Voice·Mood·Person·Number (+ Case·Number·Gender for participles) and lemma. The *syntactic-function* and **semantic-force** tiers follow standard intermediate-grammar categories (e.g. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*); both involve interpretive judgment, and the majority reading has been chosen where opinions differ. Lexical notes condense commonly cited data (etymology, sense range, synonym contrasts, NT frequency, OT/LXX echoes) and are no substitute for a lexicon.

**On the discourse tier.** Discourse structure operates above the word, so it is shown at the clause/verse level (the connective, the relation it signals, and the role of the clause) and summarized in the chapter outline. Relation labels, any proposed chiasm, and the paragraph divisions reflect a common reading of the argument; other discourse analyses segment and label some relations differently.