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Structural Analysis of 2 Corinthians via Outline

- I. INTRODUCTION: 1:1-4
 - A. Addressed to the Corinthian church and to all those in Achaia who are believers.
 - B. Paul speaks of God's comfort and mercy in trials

- II. SUFFERINGS 1:5-2:16
 - A. We and you both have suffered
 1. We suffered I Asia, you suffered in Corinth 1:5-10
 2. Thank you for prayer 1:11
 3. We abide on God's Grace 1:12-14
 - B. Delay in visiting not desired 1:15-24
 - C. Paul grieved due to the Corinthian believer's state 2:1-4
 1. Discipline he has provided caused him grief 2:1-4

Paul speaks in general but also specifically that the Corinthians may have taken church discipline too far with a member who they cast out but then repented.

 2. After discipline and repentance should come grace 2:5
 - i. Forgive the one who repents 2:6-13

Paul again says to forgive and accept back in the brother who repents of sin, this is the correct response of the church after disciplining a brother caught in sin, to welcome him back into the fold once they repent.
 - D. The Gospel brings life to believers but death to non-believers 2:14-16

Paul speaks of the aroma, it would be a sweet-smelling aroma to those who believe, but a stench to those who are not believers. In this way, the message he preached will have fallen on receptive ears of believers but be rejected by false teachers who are not truly saved, this is why they reject the message – they are not of God and remain dead in sin.

- III. APPROVED OF GOD: PROOFS & HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE 2:17-7:15

Paul not only provides proofs of the validity of his calling and message (along with those who teach with him) but also contrasts these proofs against those who are false teachers. When he states we teach Christ – he is also saying – the false teachers teach their own message. When he says we preach and persist through trials, he says the false teachers teach to their own benefit or shy away at the first sign of difficulty. If carrying on in this pattern and Paul is an ambassador of Christ, it can be assumed false teachers are ambassadors of the devil, and so on.

 - A. We are not peddling the gospel, as some (false teachers) are doing 2:17
 - B. God is evidenced in our ministry 3:1-4:2
 - C. Those who reject our message are not of God (because we bring God's message) 4:3-4
 - D. We preach Christ, not ourselves 4:5-7
 - E. We preach and persist through trials (not to our benefit) 4:8-5:19
 - F. We are ambassadors of Christ 5:20-7:15
 1. Be reconciled to God, following our example 5:20-6:10
 2. Separate from evil, be cleansed 6:11-7:1
 3. Head our correction which came in love – sorrow leads to repentance 7:2-15
 - i. Comfort will follow repentance

This mirrors Paul's teaching in other epistles where he states no discipline seems pleasant at the time but is useful in correction. He speaks to this point here, it's natural not to feel great about being rebuked, sorrow is evidence of the repentance that is coming or follows, and once repentance comes, there is forgiveness and then comfort.

- IV. PREPARATION OF THE GIFT TO THE BELIEVERS AT JERUSALEM 7:16-9:15

This entire section speaks concerning the gift the Corinthians had previously determined to give but have delayed in doing, perhaps swaying from their initial commitment. Paul encourages them to do what they originally set out to do and not to delay. He shares that word of their desire to give is what spurred on the Macedonian church to give – even beyond their means. Now, to their shame, he nudges them to continue on in their original plan. He shares he sends others ahead to help in the preparation of the gift, so that when he arrives the Corinthians will not be ashamed for performing to deliver what they have already committed to. He speaks again to false teachers who have started rumors that this is a subterfuge to simply take their money. He also speaks against the rumor that they are to be robbed so that those in Jerusalem can take it easy and not work. He shares that there is a need and suffering in Jerusalem, causing a great need for assistance, persecution, not laziness is what is driving the need for the brethren there.

A. The Macedonians have given beyond their means 7:16-8:6

B. Continue in what you set out to do (give) 8:7-9:15

1. The brothers are arriving ahead of me to help organize your gift

2. Your desire to give spurred on the Macedonians to give in excess

3. Your gift will meet the real needs of others

Each of parts 1, 2, and 3 are repeated within the section so are not broken out in sequence. For example: 1: Brothers arriving to help organize gift: 8:6, 16-24, 9:5; 2: Desire to give spurred on the Macedonians: 8:1-5, 24, 9:2,-4; 3: Gift will meet the needs of others: 8:4, 10-15, 21, 9:1, 6-11, 12-15.

V. APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY & TRUE SERVANTS OF GOD 10:1-12:21

A. Reminder that Paul speaks with God's authority, not man's 10:1-8

B. Reminder that punishment will accompany his next visit if repentance is not present 10:9-18

i. To those who claim Paul is all talk, he reminds that he will come in person and with God's power, this is a warning to the false teachers about the coming actions of correction.

C. Paul anguishes over the false teachers who have taken root 11:1-20

i. False teachers have taken advantage of the Corinthians

D. We are your servants and endure suffering for the Gospel 11:21-33

VI. PAUL'S THIRD COMING, REMAINING SIN WILL NOT BE TOLERATED 13:1-10

A. This is my third attempt to correct

B. To those that think that correction is just talk, correction will come in action upon my coming

i. No one who is unrepentant will be spared from rebuke and discipline

ii. Be warned it is not with the power of man but the power of Go that will correct

VII. CONCLUSION 13:11-14

A. Farewell, become complete.

Paul calls them to completeness – to follow through with repentance leading to growth

B. Be unified and live in peace and comfort

C. Greetings from the other saints and grace