

November 3  
Lesson 10 (NIV)

## FAITH THAT IS TESTED

DEVOTIONAL READING: James 1:12–18

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 13:1–

11

### 2 CORINTHIANS 13:1–11

<sup>1</sup>This will be my third visit to you. “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” <sup>2</sup>I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others, <sup>3</sup>since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. <sup>4</sup>For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him in our dealing with you.

<sup>5</sup>Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? <sup>6</sup>And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test. <sup>7</sup>Now we pray to God that you will not

do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed. <sup>8</sup>For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. <sup>9</sup>We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is that you may be fully restored. <sup>10</sup>This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.

<sup>11</sup>Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.



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#### KEY VERSE

*Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? —2 Corinthians 13:5*

#### RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE

## Unit 3: Faith Leads to Holy Living

### LESSONS 10–13

#### LESSON AIMS

After participating in this lesson, each learner will be able to:

1. Summarize the history between Paul and the Corinthian church.
2. Explain the seeming paradox of “strength in weakness.”
3. Ask self-examining questions to gauge his or her level of being “in the faith.”

#### LESSON OUTLINE

##### Introduction

- A. Restoration Risks
  - B. Lesson Context
- I. Examination (2 CORINTHIANS 13:1–6)
    - A. Paul’s Warning (vv. 1, 2)  
*No Potemkin Church*
    - B. God’s Power (vv. 3, 4)
    - C. Know Yourself (v. 5)
    - D. Know Us (v. 6)
  - II. Exhortations (2 CORINTHIANS 13:7–11)
    - A. Be True (vv. 7–9)  
*Where Is Our Strength?*
    - B. Be Perfectly Restored (v. 10)
    - C. Be with God (v. 11)

##### Conclusion

- A. Strength in Weakness
- B. Prayer

## C. Thought to Remember

#### HOW TO SAY IT

Athens	<i>Ath-unz.</i>
Berea	<i>Buh-ree-uh.</i>
Corinth	<i>Kor-inth.</i>
Corinthians	<i>Ko-rin-thee-unz</i> ( <i>th</i> as in <i>thin</i> ).
Ecclesiastes	<i>Ik-leez-ee-as-teez.</i>
Ephesus	<i>Ef-uh-sus.</i>
Hellenism	<i>Heh-leh-nih-zim.</i>
Mediterranean	<i>Med-uh-tuh-ray-nee-un.</i>
Philippi	<i>Fih-lip-pie</i> or <i>Fil-ih-pie.</i>
Thessalonica	<i>Thess-uh-lo-nye-kuh</i> ( <i>th</i> as in <i>thin</i> ).

#### Introduction

##### A. Restoration Risks

Close personal relationships bring us great joy, but they bring pain also. The stronger the emotional connection, the more we care. The closer and more long-standing the relationship, the greater its capacity for causing sorrow or creating happiness.

Because of the high stakes, it takes great courage to confront a close friend who is causing pain. We want to think that time will erase any relationship rift, but this is often not the case. As with an infection, sometimes the wound must be reopened before it will heal. When

restoration is achieved, the relationship may emerge even stronger than before, but we know this does not always happen. When we find ourselves at odds with a friend, confrontation presents a risk because it could end the relationship altogether.

## B. Lesson Context

Paul's first visit to Corinth occurred on his second missionary journey ([Acts 18](#)). He arrived between AD 52 and 54 after visiting Philippi ([16:11-40](#)), Thessalonica ([17:1](#)), and Berea ([17:10](#)), as well as Athens ([17:16-34](#)).

Corinth was the second-largest city in Greece, about 50 miles west of Athens, but the two cities were very different. Athens represented learning, culture, and the grand traditions of the Greeks. Corinth, on the other hand, thrived as a Roman commercial and transportation hub. Scholars were made in Athens; fortunes were made in Corinth.

Paul spent about 18 months ministering in the city of Corinth ([Acts 18:11](#)). His initial stay resulted in a church that included Jewish and Gentile believers ([18:1-8](#)). Mixing those two groups was not easy, for each had a sense of cultural superiority over the other (compare [1 Corinthians 1:20-22](#)). The Greeks remembered the glory of their philosophers and the military exploits of Alexander the

Great and his successors, dating back to 334 BC. It was they who brought Greek culture (Hellenism) to much of the Mediterranean world.

The Jews, for their part, identified themselves as God's chosen people, with an ancient law given to them by God himself (compare [Romans 2:17-29](#)). Yet Paul argued persuasively that they had a new, common identity as the body of Christ ([1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 27](#)), united under a common Lord and Savior ([1:2](#)).

After Paul's departure in AD 54, outsiders arrived whom Paul sarcastically calls "super-apostles" for their claim of authority greater than his own or that of any other apostle ([2 Corinthians 11:5; 12:11](#)). These "apostles" tried to discredit Paul ([11:5-15; 12:11, 12](#)). Paul was deeply hurt by the Corinthians' acceptance of false teaching, which signaled to be a betrayal of friendship. Before writing [2 Corinthians](#), he traveled to Corinth to correct this false teaching, to clear his name, and to restore his relationships. The book of Acts does not tell us of this visit, but Paul refers to it as a "painful visit" ([2 Corinthians 2:1](#)).

The setting for the writing of [2 Corinthians](#) is quite different from the setting for his writing of [1 Corinthians](#). In the first letter, likely written about AD 56, Paul draws on his relationship with the Corinthians to give authoritative direc-

tions concerning many problematic issues in the congregation (see [1 Corinthians 1:10-17](#); [5:1-6:20](#); [7:1-14:40](#)). He does this with confidence, believing their love and respect for him will allow his voice to be heard even when he is not there (see [5:3-5](#)).

By the time Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in AD 57, the impact of the false apostles had poisoned Paul's relationship with his friends. Because of this, Paul had some bold, harsh words for the Corinthians, words designed to put their relationship to rights. His response came in the form of a harsh, sorrowful letter ([2 Corinthians 2:4](#)). Paul saw more than a friendship at risk. He feared that a church he loved would turn to false teaching in ways that endangered their faith ([11:1-15](#)).

#### *What Do You Think?*

What steps can we take to ensure that a painful confrontation with friends or relatives is productive rather than destructive?

#### *Digging Deeper*

What biblical texts offer wisdom or cautionary tales for handling confrontation?

## I. Examination

### ([2 CORINTHIANS 13:1-6](#))

#### A. Paul's Warning (vv. 1, 2)

**1. This will be my third visit to you. "Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."**

Paul uses this letter to prepare the way for his *third* visit (see [2 Corinthians 12:14](#)). He emphasizes the decisive nature of this visit by citing an ancient Jewish tradition: *two or three witnesses* are required to uphold an accusation of wrongdoing ([Deuteronomy 19:15](#)). One theory is that Paul includes this quotation because he expects to be vindicated during this visit. He believes that not even two or three people will be willing to testify against him. The Corinthians know him and respect him too much to give false witness about his ministry.

Another theory is that the witnesses do not refer to people at all. For Paul, it is a matter of his refuting three times the accusations against him. These witnesses can be taken as his three visits during which the Corinthians have seen what they need to know in order to establish Paul's integrity in his ministry. This underlines the seriousness of this situation for Paul. He is devoting much time and effort to come to a good resolution of the frayed situation.

#### *What Do You Think?*

What forms might the principle of "multiple witnesses" take when someone must be confronted?

*Digging Deeper*

Considering [Matthew 18:15, 16](#), in what kinds of circumstances might it be best not to bring others into a disagreement?

### **NO POTEMKIN CHURCH**

As the story goes, Grigory Potemkin was just a Russian nobleman trying to win the favor of Catherine the Great. In 1783, Potemkin wanted to impress Catherine with the quality of her new Crimean possessions. Before her tour of the region, he ordered pleasant village façades to be built to impress her during her tour of the area. Peasants were dressed to look much wealthier than they were to give a false impression of prosperity. Today the phrase “Potemkin village” refers to a façade that is intended to deceive.

Paul warned the Corinthians that he was planning a visit. Previous visits had not solved the problem of the false teachers’ influence. It would not suffice for the Corinthians to “make things pretty” for this visit. They had to face the underlying issues that were threatening the church’s well-being. On a personal level, what do you need to do to be prepared for the Lord’s next visit?

—C. R. B.

### **2.I already gave you a warning**

**when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others,**

Paul plans to put an end to the influence of the “super-apostles” and their followers once and for all and *will not spare* them ([2 Corinthians 11:5; 12:11](#)). Sufficient warnings have been issued; if Paul sees that the Corinthians need discipline on his next visit, he will not hesitate to use the authority he has to administer it.

His warning specifically targets *those who sinned earlier*. He is already worried that he will find this group involved in unholy activities ([2 Corinthians 12:20, 21](#)). This may suggest that the false teachers have either turned a blind eye to these outrageous behaviors or even encouraged them, perhaps through their own participation.

*What Do You Think?*

How can we determine whether a confrontation calls for the approach in [Matthew 10:34–36](#) or for the one in [Romans 12:18](#) and [14:19](#)?

*Digging Deeper*

How do passages such as [Psalm 120:7](#); [Ecclesiastes 3:8](#); and/or [Micah 3:5](#) help frame your answer, if at all?

### **B. God’s Power (vv. 3, 4)**

**3. since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.**

This verse seems to challenge the false apostles directly. Their presentation and demeanor are brash and confident. This contrasts starkly with Paul's usual gentleness and patience (see [2 Corinthians 10:1](#)). The opponents apparently claim that they speak with the very voice and authority of Christ. In so doing, they dismiss Paul's claim to speak for the Lord because he is unassuming in his presentation. The strategy of the other "apostles" is not so much to justify their own teachings through logical presentation as it is to undermine Paul's authority and thereby discredit him altogether.

Paul uses irony to make his counterpoint, seemingly agreeing that Christ speaks through him in a lesser way in comparison to how Christ speaks through the opponents. The real irony is that while they think highly of the power and authority of the false apostles, those fall short of Paul's power and authority. This points to his paradoxical argument that what appears to be weakness is sometimes a display of great strength (see [2 Corinthians 4:7-12](#); [13:4](#)). Thus Paul is able to insist that his message to the Corinthians is *not weak*.

**4a. For to be sure, he was crucified**

**in weakness, yet he lives by God's power.**

Paul's immediate example of strength despite seeming *weakness* is Christ himself. Jesus' crucifixion showed him *in weakness*, not resisting his accusers or executors. Although he could have called angels to deliver him ([Psalm 91:11, 12](#); [Matthew 26:53](#)), Jesus submitted to an unjust death sentence. This self-imposed weakness ([Philippians 2:6-8](#)) was shown to be temporary and even illusory by his resurrection, a display of God's power unlike anything ever witnessed ([2:9-11](#)). The shame of the cross was replaced by Jesus' triumph over death to life *by God's power*.

**4b. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him in our dealing with you.**

Paul's litany of the physical trials and perils he has suffered in his missionary endeavors demonstrates his own experience (see [2 Corinthians 11:23-28](#)). His many troubles help him identify with Christ's own weakness in the cross. Rather than identifying with Christ's glorification, Paul points to persecutions as the mark of a true apostle.

Paul is confident, though, that his personal weaknesses will not determine the outcome of his dealings with his opponents. Instead, just as Christ lives by the resurrection power of God, so Paul

will live in fellowship with Christ and in Jesus' power in confronting the issues at Corinth.

### C. Know Yourself (v. 5)

**5a. Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.**

Paul now shifts the focus from himself and the false accusations that have been made against him. He exhorts the Corinthians to *examine* and *test* themselves, to look at their own lives.

**5b. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?**

The Corinthian believers have questioned the Spirit-inspired nature of Paul's authority (2 Corinthians 13:3); now he questions them. Do they actually *realize that Christ Jesus* lives in them? If not, Paul contends, they *fail the test* of spiritual self-examination, thus disqualifying themselves from judging true spirituality and relationship to Christ.

Though the question is framed as being primarily about the spiritual condition of the Corinthians, it also serves as a test of Paul's apostleship. If they find that they are truly in the faith, then must not Paul also be in the faith? After all, Paul "planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Contrary to his detractors' accusations, Paul indicates that the root cause of their problematic relationship is not the apostle sitting in Ephesus writing the letter. Instead he suggests that the false apostles rampaging in Corinth are the problems as they besmirch his reputation and gain a following. It is not so much that Paul is saying the Corinthians must be on his side, but that they should be sure they are on the Lord's side.

### D. Know Us (v. 6)

**6. And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.**

Paul's underlying confidence in his Corinthian brothers and sisters shines through here. Paul knows that he and his associates *have not failed the test*. He is also confident that, upon reflection, the Corinthians will agree.

## II. Exhortations (2 CORINTHIANS 13:7-11)

### A. Be True (vv. 7-9)

**7. Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong—not so that people will see that we have stood the test but so that you will do what is right even though we may seem to have failed.**

This is the focal point of the great decision the Corinthians must make.

They must *not do anything wrong* but make the *right* choice by rejecting the false claims of Paul's critics who have painted him and his associates as lacking true spiritual qualifications. Given Paul's assertion that Christ does truly live in them, this momentous decision in Paul's favor should be obvious.

Furthermore, the Corinthians should do what is right even if it seems that Paul and his companions are in the wrong. He wants them to choose correctly not for his sake but because it is right. The fact that what is right will vindicate Paul is a side benefit to the apostle.

**8. For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.**

Paul now expands his *we* to include the Corinthians. *Truth* must be the guide. The Corinthians must not be driven by self-interest or the charisma of a false teacher, but by a higher standard: truth detached from personal considerations. Rejecting truth will be met with the consequences of God's wrath ([Romans 2:8](#)). Paul would rather be shown false than to impede the journey of the gospel.

#### *What Do You Think?*

In conflict situations, what techniques can we use to ensure that our motive is to seek the truth above all else?

#### *Digging Deeper*

Does the outcome of Rahab's untruthfulness establish that truth is secondary in some situations ([Joshua 2:4-7](#); [James 2:25](#))? Why, or why not?

**9. We are glad whenever we are weak but you are strong; and our prayer is that you may be fully restored.**

Despite the frustrations he has expressed, Paul's great love for the Corinthians comes out at the end of this section. Paul is *weak* in many ways, not the least of which is his position of weakness due to his absence from Corinth. In this verse, he refers to his humble and unassuming demeanor he exhibits when he's with the Corinthians.

Paul's admission of weakness is not his primary interest. He wants the Corinthians to be *strong*. If they are strong in the faith in the ways they believe they are, then Paul has no reason to be strong in his own authority to reprimand them. He can be "weak" as he desires. Paul wishes for them to *be fully restored*, a goal that cannot be achieved following Paul. They must be guided and controlled by Christ, the Savior whom Paul has preached to them faithfully ([1 Corinthians 15:1-8](#)).

#### **WHERE IS OUR STRENGTH?**



*Kraft durch Freude* (KdF) was a movement in Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Translated into English, it means “strength through joy.” KdF’s stated intent was to provide leisure activities to the German working class in the belief that happy people create a strong nation.

However, the real purpose of KdF was to control every moment of the German worker’s time and thus prevent anti-government sentiments and movements from developing. Nazi spies took part in KdF-sponsored cruises, day trips, athletic competitions, library visits, and theater events to make sure no dissent from Nazi ideology was expressed by participants.

Paul wanted the Corinthians’ spiritual strength to be based on their bond with Christ, nothing else. Strength through Christ is available to everyone, regardless of status in this world. How does Jesus’ strength shine through your weakness?

—C. R. B.

## B. Be Perfectly Restored (v. 10)

**10. This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.**

The picture we have of the apostle Paul from the New Testament is of a man who cherishes his relationships. Because

of this, Paul recognizes the personal advantages of not being in Corinth at this time. His frustration and desire for corrective action could result in being *harsh*—the unpleasant exercise of the valid *authority the Lord* has given to him.

### *What Do You Think?*

Under what circumstances, if any, would it be a good idea to give advance warning of a pending confrontation?

### *Digging Deeper*

In what ways do texts such as [2 Samuel 12:1–7](#) (no advance warning) and [Revelation 2:4, 5](#) (advance warning) inform your response?

Paul does not take his God-given authority lightly. He wants to use it *for building [them] up, not for tearing [them] down* (see [2 Corinthians 13:9](#)). His great hope is that this letter will prepare the way for his next visit. He wants to engage in church building, not church discipline. He does not want to take them back to the most basic elements of following Christ. Instead, Paul wants the Corinthians to ready their hearts to move forward in their quest for spiritual maturity (compare [1 Corinthians 3:2](#)).

## C. Be with God (v. 11)

**11a. Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration,**

**encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.**

Paul ends the letter with five commands that summarize his desired outcomes for this corrective letter. First, is *rejoice*. Despite strained relationship, the Corinthians have much in common about which to be joyful (compare [2 Corinthians 1:24](#)).

Second, the Corinthians should *strive for full restoration*. They should be guided by truth, living and making choices that reflect this “guide star.” In this way they can attain “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” ([Ephesians 4:13](#)).

Third, they should *encourage one another*. Paul is confident that this current rough spot in their relationship is nearing its conclusion and that good days are ahead.

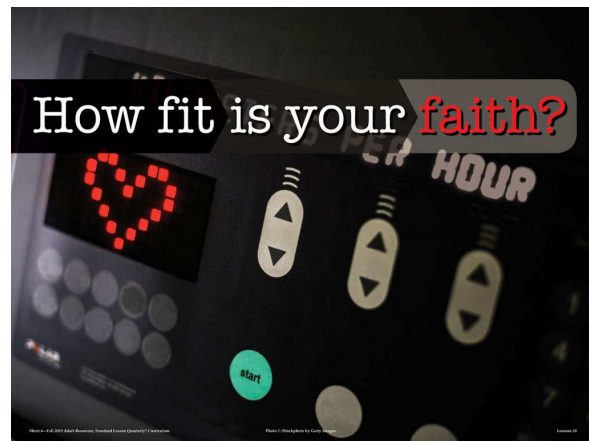
Fourth, the Corinthians should be unified. This is very important for a congregation with a history of factionalism (see [1 Corinthians 1:12](#)). Paul’s goal in writing this letter will not have been accomplished if some people side with the false apostles and some side with him.

Finally, they should *live in peace*. never letting disagreements fester to the point of divisiveness and church-splitting passions. This is not a matter of sacrificing the truth (see [2 Corinthians 13:8](#) above). Rather, it is about laying down bombastic and disrespectful treatment of those with

whom one disagrees. Paul will not be satisfied with winning back the confidence and affections of a majority of the Corinthians. He wants them all to respect him and each other.

**11b. And the God of love and peace will be with you.**

Two understandings of this phrase are possible. One possibility is that the presence of *God* with his *love and peace* is how the Corinthians will accomplish the tasks commanded above. The other is that God’s love and peace will be a felt result of obedience in those tasks. It’s not clear which Paul means. The ambiguity may suggest that Paul wants the Corinthians to assume both: God will help them in their quest for maturity, and they will experience his presence all the more as they strive toward that goal.



Visual for Lesson 10. Ask the class what kinds of tests they can put to their faith to evaluate their strength in Christ.

## Conclusion

### A. Strength in Weakness

The Old Testament offers many accounts in which followers of God found victory despite being in positions of weakness (see [Exodus 14:26–28](#); [Judges 7](#); [1 Samuel 17](#); [2 Chronicles 32:9, 16–21](#); [Isaiah 37:36, 37](#)). All have one thing in common: the God who wins the victory. Even in weakness, God’s people are strong because of him.

We have this dynamic working for us too. We often think that success in the Christian life is a matter of trying harder. Our efforts are important, but we will never be fully mature in our Christian walk through our own efforts. In fact, self-focused striving may block the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Think of your own life. Are you satisfied with your progress as a Christian believer? Are you weak like Christ or strong in your own wisdom? Maybe it is time to “let go and let God,” giving him the glory along with your obedience.

### B. Prayer

Father, we are weak in many ways and need your power in our lives. Strengthen us in obedience and love for you and for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

### C. Thought to Remember

We gain strength by trusting in God.

## INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

Enhance your lesson with [NIV Bible Student](#) (from your curriculum supplier) and the reproducible activity page (at [www.standardlesson.com](http://www.standardlesson.com) or in the back of the [NIV Standard Lesson Commentary Deluxe Edition](#)).

### Into the Lesson

Ask class members with smartphones to look up “false religions” on the internet. Other possibilities: “false prophets,” “counterfeit Christianity,” “false teachers,” or “false churches.” Allow several to share findings. Ask, “How big is the problem of truth in religion today?”

*Alternative.* Ask class members to share examples of contemporary false teachers from their experience and memory.

Tell class members that the ancient Corinthian church was plagued with false teachers, a problem the apostle Paul was forced to address. Tell them that today’s Scripture text was written in the midst of that problem.

### Into the Word

During the week before class, arrange

for one or two participants each to deliver a two- or three-minute mini-lecture explaining the background and context for the lesson. As they do so, have them write the following headings on the board. (*Option.* You can put these on handouts.)

- Paul's visits with the Corinthians
- Paul's challenges to the Corinthians
- Paul's relationship with the Corinthians
- Paul's letters to the Corinthians

After the reading of the text, divide the class in groups to read the text again in their groups to discover *the why* and *the how* that each column heading suggests. Students should come to the board and record under the heading their discoveries as they occur. (If you use handouts, learners can record their discoveries there instead of coming to the board.)

After an appropriate amount of time, fill in gaps during the ensuing whole-class discussion.

As time permits, use this discussion to offer information or insights from the lesson commentary to complete learners' understanding or correct misunderstanding.

*Alternative.* Distribute copies of the exercise "A Difficult Letter" on the activity page, which you can download. Divide the class into at least four groups, one to consider each of the headings listed.

After several minutes of group work, have groups share their decisions during whole-class discussion.

## Into Life

Ask class members to brainstorm answers to this question: "How do I know a person is 'in the faith'?" After 60 seconds in which they call out answers you write on the board, ask class members if everyone agrees with each item suggested. If you have time, decide as a class which of the items is most important. Number them in order, or circle three or four. (Do not hesitate to add items to the list if you think it is incomplete.)

Read aloud the first two paragraphs under "Strength in Weakness" in the Conclusion to the lesson commentary. Ask class members to think of other biblical examples. Discuss the following questions with the class or hand them to four groups that are each assigned a different question from the list below. (In that case, reconvene after a few minutes to discuss as a class.)

1—What makes the notion of "strength in weakness" difficult for us to understand or put into practice? 2—Who or what are examples of people or incidents in history or your own life when this principle played out? (Or perhaps you can name times when the opposite was true: a person or nation promoted

strength only to be undone or put down.)  
3—How might the principle of strength in weakness improve interpersonal relationships? 4—Why is this principle vital if we are to have a rich relationship with God?

*Alternative.* Distribute to pairs copies of the “Strength Through Weakness” exercise on the activity page to be completed as indicated. Ask volunteers to share what they’ve written.

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To print the reproducible activity page, simply click the highlighted text below to create a pdf file on your hard drive. Then open the pdf file in Acrobat Reader and print.

[Activity Page \(November 3—Faith that Is Tested\)](#)

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### A DIFFICULT LETTER

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians is difficult, sometimes bordering on harsh. He ends it with challenges that are pointed but ultimately full of positive possibilities.

Use the following outline to help you summarize what Paul is telling the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 13:1-13. First fill in the blanks to state which verses are represented by each heading. Then jot down a sentence or two to summarize what Paul is saying in that section.

A. His warning repeated; verses \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. His wish presented; verses \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. His hopes explained; verses \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D. His blessing given; verses \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS

Today's passage is not the only place where Paul writes to the Corinthians about strength through weakness. Read these passages to see what else he says: 1 Corinthians 1:27; 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10. (You may also want to look at other passages, such as Psalm 8:2 and Hebrews 11:32-34.)

Write one or two sentences that summarize the Bible's teaching about achieving ultimate strength by embracing weakness.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now jot down one area of your life where you feel especially weak. How could God use that weakness for his glory?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_