

2 Corinthians 2:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

Analysis

For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you—The term *dokimēn* (δοκιμήν, "proof, testing, character") suggests tested authenticity, like metal refined by fire. Paul's severe letter had a secondary purpose beyond addressing specific sin: testing whether the Corinthians would obey apostolic authority. Church discipline reveals congregational character—will they submit to Scripture's demands even when costly?

Whether ye be obedient in all things—The phrase *eis panta* (εἰς πάντα, "in all things") indicates comprehensive obedience, not selective compliance. The test encompassed both implementing discipline when required and offering restoration when appropriate. Many churches will discipline but refuse to restore; others will tolerate sin to avoid conflict. Full obedience requires both courage to confront and grace to forgive. Paul's test assessed their willingness to obey even when emotionally difficult.

Historical Context

Apostolic authority in the first-century church required demonstrated obedience to apostolic teaching. Paul's letters often include similar tests of compliance (1 Cor 14:37-38, 2 Thess 3:14). This was not arbitrary authoritarianism but recognition that apostolic teaching carried Christ's authority.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do churches today demonstrate selective obedience to Scripture?
2. Why is the willingness to both discipline and restore a test of true obedience?
3. What does Paul's testing of the Corinthians teach about apostolic authority?

Interlinear Text

εἰς	τοῦτο	γὰρ	καὶ	ἔγραψα	ἵνα	γνῶ	τὴν	δοκιμὴν
in	this end	For	also	did I write	that	I might know	G3588	the proof
G1519	G5124	G1063	G2532	G1125	G2443	G1097		G1382
ὑμῶν	εἰ	εἰς	πάντα	ὑπήκοοί	ἐστε			
of you	whether	in	all things	obedient	ye be			
G5216	G1487	G1519	G3956	G5255	G2075			

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 10:6 (Parallel theme): And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Philippians 2:22 (Parallel theme): But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.