

2 Corinthians 7:2-16 Body Life!

One of the hardest things for most of us about being a part of the family of God is when you have to confront or rebuke someone.

A) Most of us try to avoid those situations at all cost and we try to run from them when faced with them.

B) I know for me – My stomach gets tight – can't eat that is SERIOUS –rob can't eat.

1) I don't sleep well.

C) Even the apostle Paul didn't enjoy confrontation

We have seen here in our study of 2 Corinthians that Paul had written the letter of 1 Corinthians to answer some questions deal with problems

A) The Church in Corinth had some issues.

B) Abusing gifts / Communion / Suing / Divorce and remarriage / Sexual immorality / Idolatry

1) Huge issue – **Tolerance**: Man who was sleeping with his step mom – Father's wife.

C) Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to answer the questions and to deal with some problems

And we noted that for some in the Church that letter wasn't well received. –

A) So Paul went to visit them – Confront them – and it didn't go so well. First time –

B) So much so that back in Ch. 2 Paul said – I couldn't make another Painful visit to you.

1) He just didn't have it in him to visit them again under those circumstances

C) So Paul wrote another letter – { We don't have it – not in the Canon of Scripture.

1) But Paul makes reference to it several times

D) He sent Titus to deliver that letter to them. – Then He waited. – Anxiously waited.

Paul was supposed to hook up with Titus in Troas but Titus never showed – More anxious

A) Paul was wondering – what happened – how was the letter received.

B) That is where Paul left us in Ch. 2:13 – Anxiously waiting to hook up with Titus

C) **Ch. 2:14 – Ch.7:1** – Paul goes on a **Divine Detour** as he expounds to us the glorious aspects of the NC

1) Paul was called to be a Minister of the NC

D)And we are thankful for that **Divine Detour** – some of the most powerful Ch's in the NT

1)Blessing that are ours for being in the NC not the OC - Gets CD's – Website listen

Ch.7:2 takes us back to Ch. 2:13 – Paul anxiously waiting for Titus – **Attitude of heart ... content of letter**

2 Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one. 3 I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

A)Paul's heart toward the Corinthians is in the right place as he tells them **“I'm not down on you. “I don't want to bring condemnation to you.**

B)You're in our hearts; we live and die with you.”

4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is **my boasting on your behalf**. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

5 For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, {Here is where he goes back Ch.2:13} our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears. 6 Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast.....

It does my heart a lot of good to hear Paul the great apostle say that – he was troubled on every side. – A)Ever feel that way? Lord trouble is all around me!

B)Last week Potters Field Ranch – Missions training school. – Great place

1)Mike R & I were talking with students about – the Battle – so intense – Enemy is closing in

C)The word v.6 Down cast = depressed!

1)Christians can get depressed.

2)Part of Battle especially for those in ministry!

One Sunday morning in 1866, the famous Victorian preacher C. H. Spurgeon shocked his five thousand listeners when from the pulpit of London's Metropolitan Tabernacle he announced, “I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever gets to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to.”

ONE OF THE GREATEST PASTORS OF ALL TIME

John Henry Jowett, the renowned pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian in New York City, and later Westminster Chapel in London, wrote to a friend in 1920, “You seem to imagine I have

no ups and downs but just a level and lofty stretch of spiritual attainment with unbroken joy and equanimity. By no means! I am often perfectly wretched and everything appears most murky.”

Martin Luther was subject to such fits of darkness that he would hide himself away for days, and his family would remove all dangerous implements from the house for fear he would harm himself.

During one of those episodes in his life his wife Katharina, entered his room dressed in mourning clothes.

Startled, Luther asked who had died.

She replied that no one had, but from the way he was acting, she thought God had died!

Good Move Katharina – I’ve had times ...God died!

So Paul is getting real with us here – this great apostle and man of God was depressed!

A)Notice how he describes it in v. 5 Outside were conflicts { opposition – persecution

B)INSIDE WERE FEARS – Not fear of getting hurt physically – we have to much evidence – he was speaking about something else here.

C)His inner fears were concerning what might happen to the work.

D)He told the Galatians, “I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain” (Galatians 4:11);

E)and he wrote to the Thessalonians, “For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain” 1 Thessalonians 3:5

F)In 1 Corinthians 11:29 Paul spoke of his daily anxiety he felt concerning all the Churches

These ministerial fears weighed heavily on Paul. He was always fearful for some troubled soul in one of the churches who was falling away.

A)Always afraid that his life’s work was going to be destroyed by someone or by the enemy.

B)Common fear of those in Ministry. –

1)You Have to trust God

C)I find this encouraging because it reminds us that in his own faith and walk with the Lord - Paul was constantly being stretched

D)The Lord continued to put him in places that were uncomfortable – faith was stretched and taxed

1)But thru that Paul was moving into new territory – And deeper water than he had been in before.

E)In Montana – **My Daughter jumped off a 40 foot cliff into a lake – Scary – Hip**

1)Afterwards “ That was awesome!

F)You want to do it again? No- Christian life in the midst of it – scary – hard –

1)Afterwards –Awesome** – Lord I love what you did in my heart! – Deeper Stronger –**

2) you want to do that again? NO!

So Paul was outside there was trouble – but even worse inside were fears { Hard time

6 Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast comforted us by the coming of Titus, 7 and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

Think about this: Titus was Paul’s student – and yet he is used by God to bring Comfort to Paul.

A)Jesus in Gethsemne was strengthened by an Angel he created –

B)I wonder if sometimes we miss out on receiving the comfort of God because we don’t receive it – coming through what we perceive to be a lesser vessel?

A) Right now – Finances are tough –the cupboard is bare – Christmas is going to be here before we know it.

B)The 401K has turned into a 201K - Lord I need some comfort – about 40K worth

C)Your little son or daughter sensing the stress – the worry – the depression – says – Don’t worry Daddy God has it under control.

1)That is your Titus – instead of receiving Comfort you say – Son you just don’t understand

D)Your son / daughter who has Child like faith sees a big God – you see only big problems – { A word for ..

E)Or Your wife says: Remember the sparrows....

1)You say: I know that verse but this is different

F)Instead of saying thanks Honey – There goes my Titus!

So Paul was encouraged by the coming of Titus but also by his report – that the Church had repented – they were doing well – they loved Paul

A) And Titus was blessed by them – encouraged by their hearts and response

8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it.

A) Paul is saying I really 2nd guessed myself in sending that letter – was it the right thing to do?

B) Ever send an email that had a touchy subject – Afterwards thinking I shouldn't have sent that

1) 2nd guessing yourself. Checking for a response every 30 minutes –

C) Paul is in that Place – Should I have sent the letter – Lord I prayed – I thought it was you.

D) **Rebuke is Like being a Surgeon** – Bittersweet – Not fun to take a scalpel to anyone – but need to take out the cancer –

E) PP who like rebuke scare me – this is my gift

Rules of confrontation:

1. **Pray:** Sometimes God just deals with the situation
Prayer prepares your heart and theirs.

2. **Go in humility.**

3. **Do it in love.**

4. **Purpose is to build up not tear down.**

8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while.

9 Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Huge Principle: Godly sorrow vs Worldly sorrow

A) Worldly sorrow says: **“I am sorry that I got caught.”**
“I am sorry for the pain I have caused.”

B) **“I am sorry for the mess that I have made.”**

1) **“I am sorry that I disappointed you.”**

C) **But this the Problem: It is not sorry enough to change or to make things right.**

1) **Not sorry enough to humble yourself and take ownership for your actions.**

D) **Worldly sorrow – makes promises it doesn’t really intend to keep – “I will never.....”**

Magee

“My dad used to tell about a boat on the Mississippi River that had a little bitty boiler and a great big whistle. When it would blow its whistle while going upstream, the boat would start to drift downstream because the boiler was so small it couldn’t propel the boat and blow the whistle at the same time.

There are a lot of folk who have a great big whistle and a little bitty boiler.

A) **They shed a lot of tears and make a big display, but there is no real repentance.**

B) **They shed tears, but they keep on going in the same direction.”**

C) **That is death! – Sow to the flesh reap destruction.**

1) **Carnal mind = death**

Godly sorrow is different: By the way: Sorry is good

A) **Godly sorrow is to sin what pain is to disease.**

B) **A sensitive conscience is a gift of God, just like nerve endings that recoil from scalding water.**

C) **Godly sorrow results in repentance:**

1) **Repentance = to change!**

D) **Change of mind: See sin for what it is! – No excuses.**

1) **Change of attitude:**

2) **Change of direction: Doing the right things and let my heart follow.**

Notice what Paul says in v.10 Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation.

A) **“But weren’t the Corinthian believers already saved?” Absolutely. Then what does this mean?**

B)The word translated salvation here in the greek is *Soteria*,

1) **It speaks of more than simply being born again.**

C)When the Scriptures talk about salvation, they speak of the full orb of God’s blessing—
1)not only of being born again eternally, but of being saved from bondage and pain presently.

D)Pastor Chuck: “Being under the spout where the blessings flow out.”

What brings about this kind of salvation?

Paul says the answer is repentance.

A)“to change direction.” In other words, if you were going to the left, you go right; if you were going down, you go up.

B)Contrary to popular belief, repentance is not about emotion. It’s an action.

Paul proceeds to explain the actions that manifested their true godly sorrow that produced repentance.

11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter

Actions over time! – Not long – but time

What Diligence: There is a seriousness about dealing with sin. – Now!

What eagerness to clear yourselves. Deal with it Now! A)True repentance doesn’t say, “Maybe I’ll get to it next year.” No, true repentance says,

B)“This is wrong, and I’m going to deal with it now—with finality and certainty, no matter the cost.”

What indignation: Angry at sin – even at ourselves for giving into it.

What fear: Fear of the consequences – fear of what could be lost.

A)Fear: Healthy respect

What vehement Desire: A strong desire: A longing – to be right with God to do things right. -

A)True repentance produces a strong longing to know God be right with God.

What zeal: The Greek word speaks of *heat*;

A)That person is on fire: Zealous – running around telling their friends how great God is!

What Vindication: A desire to right the wrong.

Now I am so glad that Paul lays this out – because really clears up any confusion: Did they or didn't they repent? – Tears – but Change:

True repentance looks like this:

A) There is a seriousness about dealing with sin - not procrastinating – deal with it now!

B) There is an anger and brokenness not over being caught but over the sin and the damage it produced

1) As well as a healthy fear of what it would continue to produce had it not been dealt with.

C) There is a strong desire coupled with a Zeal to be right with God – get close to God

D) And a strong desire to RIGHT THE WRONG!

So Paul was excited because the letter he wrote to them – caused godly sorrow leading to repentance.

Paul's ending paragraph – we learn 4 important lessons about confrontation:

#1 Motivation: The spiritual well being of the people.

12 Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not do it for the sake of him who had done the wrong, {not for the guy sleeping with his dad's wife} nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, {not even for the dad} but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

#2 Don't give up!

A) Paul 1 visit – two letters. Finally a break thru!

13 Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

B) Titus comes back from his meeting with the Church in Corinth He is refreshed.

1) He is excited by their response:

#3 In public focus on the positives.

A) What Paul says in v.14 makes me wonder if Titus knew much about the contents of the letter.

14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true.

Paul says – when we talked to Titus about you guys I boasted in you guys.

A) I talked you guys up – I told him how great you guys are – your love for the Lord.

B)Paul says we weren't lying – I just chose to focus on the good stuff.

C)You have to deal with someone – don't make it anyone else's business. - Pray

D)2 Corinthians 5:16 Know no man after the flesh

#4 Give the benefit of the doubt that they will receive it.

15 And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. 16 Therefore I rejoice that **I have confidence** in you in everything.