

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 21ST, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

VISIT (2 CORINTHIANS 1:23–2:4) GOD AS MY WITNESS

Here, Paul is pledging to tell the truth, and sharing the heart that should be in every pastor and the people they minister to. **They are not to lord their position over people, but to be coworkers towards Christ.**

- **We are meant to be equipped and empowered by the church, to go and share the gospel and to bring joy to people, because Christ did it first.**

PAINFUL VISIT

This section calls back to the previous chapter, which is why context is so important. Paul didn't lie about him visiting; the condition he found himself in showed that **God was sparing the congregation and himself of a painful visit filled with hot emotions.**

- Sometimes the best thing we can do before a conversation **is cool off.**

WROTE

Many scholars debate on how many letters were written to Corinth, but **the minimum was 3.** One that we don't have was most likely the most stern, which is probably what he was talking about in vs. 3 and 4.

- The reason we don't have that letter is likely because there is something God saw in it that **wouldn't improve or it may have hindered God's Word**, so we lost it.

WHO WILL CHEER ME?

2 Corinthians is the best glimpse into Paul's heart towards people. He sets an example for how Christians should live and react to calling people out on their sin. To him, **it caused him pain to the point of needing to be cheered up.**

- **If we are calling people out on their sin, and we don't feel bad, there needs to be a heart change.**

MY JOY WILL BE YOURS

Corinth was known as one of the most self seeking churches Paul wrote to. They would get drunk off of Communion, were idolizing pastors, sued each other constantly, and they even had one congregant sleeping with his dad's wife. **Yet Paul wanted them to have godly joy.**

- **We need to see the person that Christ died for behind the sin.**

FORGIVE (2 CORINTHIANS 2:5–11)

NOT TO EXAGGERATE

Paul is telling Corinth the communal consequence of sin. If someone sins, it doesn't just hurt the leader. **It hurts the whole church!**

- How many of us have hurt others by our sin? How many of us have been hurt by sin that wasn't even done to us? **If we pursue self-gratification, we can only expect destruction.**

SUFFICIENT

Here Paul is giving instructions on how to bring someone who is repentant back into the congregation.

The point of the church punishing a sinner is to always restore them back to Christ.

- **Punishment without restoration is condemnation**, and we are not meant to condemn one another. We are supposed to point people to Christ, Who restores.

EXCESS GRIEF

Paul mentions how churches **can go too far in their punishment of a repentant sinner**, which can be hard when the person who sinned hurt the people giving the punishment.

- **This is toward a repentant sinner.** There are processes for unrepentant sinners **that end in excommunication.**

REAFFIRM YOUR LOVE

Paul has the assumption that the repentant person was loved by the congregation before the sin was committed. **Once punishment has been dealt, then it is time to comfort.**

- **This does not mean there won't be consequences for our sin**, but it does mean we won't be hopelessly bound to our sin.

SATAN

Behind all of these problems and sins, **Paul sees Satan trying to divide the church** and destroy everything Jesus prayed for in John 17. Satan would love nothing more than for a repentant Believer to be outside the church.

- There is an enemy who wants to harm us, our families, this church, and our community. **Are we vigilant?**

AROMA (2 CORINTHIANS 2:12–17)

TROAS

Titus went as an ambassador of Paul, and was supposed to report to him how Corinth was. **He also saw Titus as a son in Christ** and was sharing his heart about a fellow Christian when he wasn't found.

- Who are the people we are pouring into? Who are we inviting into our lives, our homes— **people who will replace the ministry we are currently doing?**

TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION

When Rome would win a battle, they'd have incense during the procession, creating a smell that would be recognizable during these parades and throughout the whole town. **It is through Christ's victory that Paul gets to celebrate.**

- Now that Christ has conquered death, **we are able to have a restored relationship with God.**

FRAGRANCE

Paul's suffering would both empower and inspire people to live holy lives, **showing that they can have life in Christ.** For some it would show their condemnation, revealing where their hearts are.

- We do not determine where people are—no one is too far gone. **We need to be willing to point people back to Christ so they can be restored.**

MARKET THE WORD

Paul is calling out the false prophets, saying they were only in Corinth for money. Because Paul didn't get money from Corinth he mentions later that he had to "rob" other churches (2 Cor. 11) **so Christ could be known in that city.**

- **What we do to bring people in is what will make them stay.** That is why we must always be Christ centered.

TRUSTWORTHY

- It doesn't matter what happened to us, what we did to others, or what we're going through— this is a safe place.
- We don't reject others because Christ didn't reject us. **He wanted to know us and for us to know Him.**
- We don't condone sin or hardship, and **we aren't afraid of them either.**

ENCOURAGE

- The best way to help the church work through hurt is not to add to the sin.
- Luke 7:47 says when we recognize how much we have been forgiven, **it lets us love Jesus and others more.**
- **We won't be forgiven of much if we don't see sin for what it really is.**

HEALING

- When we see people as projects it's joyful to fix them. When they're seen as people it grieves us to correct.
- **There is a joy that comes after the hardship of repentance.**
- We can be the means by which God saves people. Do we want that? **Do we want all that comes with that?**