

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 2ND, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

HURT (2 CORINTHIANS 7:1-4) PROMISES

In the last verses of chapter 6, God made some promises to Believers: to dwell among them, to be their God, and to be their Father.

- Paul had seen the salvation of the Believers at Corinth, but they ignored sin and allowed false doctrine into their lives. They forgot to follow God.

CLEANSE OURSELVES?

In response to God's promises, Paul called them to repent again of their sin. But could they cleanse themselves?

- **How effective are we at stopping when we find ourselves in sin? Just how strong does our will have to be to overcome personal sin?**

HOLINESS AND FEAR

Paul knew something that we sometimes forget: holiness is the work of the Holy Spirit in each Believer.

- **When we surrender to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in another step toward holiness. What direction are we going? Why do we take so long to repent? Who do we fear?**

MAKE ROOM

Paul said in chapter 6 that they were withholding their affection from him. They had followed sin, and Paul corrected them in love. It hurt Paul when they rejected his words and him.

- **Speaking the truth in love isn't always easy. Teaching isn't always easy. We do it because we love people more than we love appreciation.**

MOTIVE

Paul realized that they loved false teachers who took advantage of them more than the authentic leaders who loved and led them to Christ. Those false teachers were ready to feed the fire of disunity.

- **We must beware of people in our lives who listen to our mess and never challenge us to change. Are we nurturing foolishness or wisdom?**

IN OUR HEARTS

They rejected repentance and accused Paul, but he still says they are "in our hearts."

- **Paul shows the deep love of a fellow Believer. An entire congregation slandered him and he still loved them despite the hurt he felt in his own heart!**

DIE TOGETHER, LIVE TOGETHER

Paul went a step beyond keeping them in his heart. He declared that they would continue to work together for Christ, even if it cost him his life.

- **When we are hurt (by Believers), we try to purge them from our hearts when God would have us pursue reconciliation for His glory and our good.**

HURT, BUT NOT MAD

Paul has been sincere in his corrections, and now he reminds them (and himself) of his feelings for them. He is proud of them. He is encouraged by them. He has joy, even in the middle of his personal hurt.

- **Yes, we need to deal with our issues. But we cannot forget what has brought us together and will keep us together through our afflictions.**

COMFORT (2 CORINTHIANS 7:5-13A) TROUBLED

While Paul was away from Corinth, he had endured many trials. Some were from the community, and some were in his mind.

- **Life continues to happen all around us as we face struggles at work, school, and home. Depression is real, and sometimes "church friends" don't help.**

BUT GOD...

Paul reveals the strength that empowered him to endure: God's presence through His people.

- **We all need the comfort that comes from standing together, nurturing, and preaching the gospel to one another. We all need the presence of a godly group of Believers. Life Groups!**

LONGING, SORROW, AND ZEAL

Paul knew he had written a strong rebuke that had hurt their feelings. When Titus shared that the people openly shared their love for Paul, it encouraged him even more.

- **Sometimes, saying that we appreciate someone can be more important than knowing we do.**

GRIEF VS. REPENTANCE

Paul rejoiced because they had repented. He hadn't written that letter to hurt them, even though he knew it would. He wanted them to repent and follow Christ. They were mad and grieved because their sin was exposed, and that grief (conviction) lasted until they turned from their sin.

GOOD GRIEF!

Paul explains two different types of grief. Worldly grief leads to hopeless sorrow and isolation. Godly grief is a hopeful sadness that leads to repentance.

- **Godly grief means we take the time to examine things from God's perspective and surrender to His will. This is how God changes us!**

DILIGENCE

Paul rejoiced because he could see God working in their repentance. They received Paul's words and followed God by committing themselves to holiness (letting the Holy Spirit lead and change them).

- **Do we have a true passion for God, or do we just want to be right?**

COMFORT

Paul lets them know that it wasn't just about one or two people, it was about the church's unity. Paul wanted them to experience the repentance and restoration Believers can have when they surrender to God's solution to spiritual and emotional pain.

JOY (2 CORINTHIANS 7:13B-16)

A WITNESS

All of Paul's pain was worth it. People were following Christ and focused on the gospel in their lives. Even more encouraging was that Titus had witnessed it. He experienced their faithfulness and desire to surrender to God's will entirely.

CONTAGIOUS

Paul had bragged about the Believers in Corinth, and after Titus spent time with them, he quickly developed an affection for the family he found.

- **Our willingness to surrender to the conviction of sin and repent will encourage others to follow Christ in obedience. Are we willing?**

PAINFUL

- Everyone experiences pain.
- **Spiritual and emotional pain are real.**
- **Sometimes, the only way to grow is to experience some hurt. We may need to hear things we don't want to hear, and we may need to say things we don't want to say.**

LISTEN

- Who is qualified to correct?
- **Whoever God uses to speak the truth.**
- **We need to stop being so offended by individuals and groups and ask if we have been faithful to God. Obedience will change the way we hear and the way we speak.**

HEALTH

- Pain is a part of life, but it shouldn't be our life.
- **God has a plan for spiritual and emotional health that progressively changes us.**
- **This healing doesn't happen without the Holy Spirit. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we speak the truth in love. By the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we respond with repentance. We want healing, but are we willing? Are we ready to live with a "God, deal with me" attitude?**