

2 CORINTHIANS 7 The Corinthians Repentance; The Joy of Titus!

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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Now Paul finishes the thought begun in verses 14-18 of the previous chapter 6, ***Therefore "COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU."***

2Co 6:18 "I WILL BE A FATHER TO YOU, AND YOU SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY." God's call to the church to live a life of separation from the world. The “them” would be the world. Come out from the world. Be separate, says the Lord and touch not the unclean thing. Understanding that living apart from the world will result in losing acquaintances and associates, the Lord gives us these three promises! And ***I will receive you.*** That is the first promise. ***And I will be a Father unto you.*** That is the second promise. And ***you shall be My sons and daughters,*** the third promise.

AN EXAMPLE OF WORLDLY SORROW (SORROW WITHOUT REPENTANCE):

2Co 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Judas Hangs Himself

Mat 27:3 Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, [4] saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" [5] Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

EXAMPLES OF GODLY SORROW (SORROW WITH REPENTANCE – Peter & King David):
2Co 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Peter Denies Jesus - Mat 26:69-75 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." [70] But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." [71] And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth." [72] But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" [73] And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." [74] Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. [75] And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ***So he went out and wept bitterly.***



A PRAYER OF REPENTANCE!

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

Psa 51:1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David When Nathan the Prophet Went to Him, After He Had Gone in to Bathsheba.

Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. [2] Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. [3] For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. [4] You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. [5] I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. [6] Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. [7] Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [8] Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. [9] Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. [10] Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. [11] Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. [12] Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. [13] Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. [14] Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. [15] O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. [16] For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. [17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise. [18] Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. [19] Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 7:1 *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse* (*katharizō* - ; to *cleanse* (literally or figuratively): - (make) clean (-se), purge, purify) *ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh (external pollution – drunkenness, fornication, adultery, and all such sins as are done immediately against the body.) and spirit* (internal pollution - Impure desires, unholy thoughts, and polluting imaginations; Our pride, legalism, self-focus, self-righteousness, bitterness, and our hatred can all be far worse to deal with than the more obvious sins of the flesh), *perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (to persevere as in faith, so in holiness; to continue believing in Christ, living soberly, righteously, and godly, to the end of our days).

The Corinthians Repentance!

2Co 7:2 *Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one.* (Cf. 2 Cor. 6:11-13)

2Co 7:3 *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.*

2Co 7:4 *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.*

v. 1 *having these promises*: The natural conclusion to **2Co 6:14-18**, where we were told about the need to separate from worldly influences, so we can live a close life with God. We are then to do two things: *cleanse ourselves from all filthiness*. A cleansing that isn't just something God does for us. This is a self-cleansing for intimacy with God that goes beyond a general cleansing for sin. Two things to do in light of God's promises - *cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. As Christians we're not to be only getting rid of evil, but continually doing and becoming good.

v. 2 Paul's appeal -. *open your hearts to us*, He has been completely honest with the Corinthians. They must be honest with Paul, and open to seeing the truth about Paul and his ministry. Now it is time to open their hearts to him! ...*wronged no one...corrupted no one,...cheated no one*. Paul reminds them that they had no good reason for criticizing him.

v. 3 *I do not say this to condemn*: Paul's desire isn't to condemn the Corinthian Christians, but to restore the bonds of fellowship between them again. Paul really loves the Corinthian Christians: I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. It is possible to confront without condemning, though those who are being confronted rarely think so!

v. 4 Paul is encouraged by good news from the Corinth. *Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf*: Paul has been bold in his criticism of the Corinthians, but he is also bold in his **boasting** about them. *I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation* . . I super abound in joy! I have a joy beyond expression. Some think we're to endure tribulation with a grim, stiff determination, but God wants more from us than that. He wants us to super abound in joy even *in all our tribulation*. God brought comfort to Paul by hearing of the work, God was doing among the Corinthians. No circumstances or personal affliction should dim the gladness of seeing souls grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus.

v. 1 There is a main aspect of cleansing which comes to us as we trust in Jesus and His work on our behalf; is really God's work in us, and not ours But there is another aspect of cleansing which God looks for us to do with the participation of our own will and effort. The cleansing is to be from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Often we think of purity only in terms of cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh. There is also a need to cleanse ourselves from filthiness of the spirit. Our pride, legalism, self-focus, self-righteousness, bitterness, and our hatred can all be far worse to deal with than the more obvious sins of the flesh.

vs. 2-3 Paul's desire isn't to condemn the Corinthian Christians, but to restore the bonds of fellowship between them again. In confronting the Corinthians, he did not want to condemn them. The importance of condemning without condemnation.

v. 4 *Does abounding in joy over your tribulation sound strange to you?* How can Paul, and we, say, *"I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation"* Circumstances of **personal affliction cannot dim the gladness of seeing souls grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus.** Why was Paul in tribulation? It was because Paul was human. God had him write like that to let you and me know how human he really was. Also **it shows us how tender and sweet and loving he was and that you and I ought to be the same way. What a lesson in this for us!** Once Paul had received the news he could write, "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation."

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 7:5 *For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.*

2Co 7:6 *Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, (2Co 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.)*

2Co 7:7 *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.*

2Co 7:8 *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.*

v. 5 Paul was having a hard time in Macedonia (*our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears*). But Titus had come to Paul when he was in Macedonia, bringing a good report of how the Corinthians were turning back to Jesus and to Paul. In spite of all his frustrations with the Corinthians, and in the midst of all his afflictions in ministry, Paul had real confidence and hope, especially in light of Titus bringing a good report. In **2Co 1:3**, Paul declared that God is the **God of all comfort**. Here, Paul experienced that comfort through the coming of Titus and the news he brought. Paul experienced the comfort of God through human instruments. Often, by turning away from people, we turn away from the comfort God wants to give us. . **Outside were conflicts, inside were fears**: This was Paul’s life in ministry. It was a life of great blessing, but also a life of many **conflicts and fears**. On the **outside**, Paul was constantly in conflict with enemies of the gospel and worldly-minded Christians. On the **inside**, Paul daily battled with the stress and anxiety of ministry.

v. 6 When Paul speaks of **the coming of Titus**, he actually was picking up from **2Co 2:13**. In a sense, **2Co 2:14** to **2Co 7:4** is one long digression - led by God of course, and containing some of the richest treasure of the New Testament!

v. 7, **when he told us of your earnest desire, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more**. Despite the many trials Paul was facing (from within and without), he could find joy, and part of that joy was good news from the Corinthian Christians. **Your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me**: Titus told Paul that the Corinthian Christians had not forsaken him completely. In fact, these things (**desire . . . mourning . . . zeal**) proved God really was doing a work in the Corinthians, and Paul was comforted by knowing that.

v. 8 The severe letter and its effect. **For even if I made you sorry with my letter**: A previous letter, possibly that of First Corinthians. Things were going badly among the Christians in Corinth. Attempting to get them back on track, Paul made a quick, unplanned visit which only seemed to make things worse (the “sorrowful visit” mentioned in **2Co 2:1?**). Paul decided to not to personally visit Corinth again at the time, so he sent Titus to them to see how they had received his strong letter of rebuke. Paul was most concerned how the Corinthians would receive the letter, and whether it would turn them to Jesus or make them angry. When Titus came back with good news from the Corinthians, Paul was greatly relieved. **I do not regret it; though I did regret it**: When Paul first wrote his previous letter, he didn’t enjoy the idea of being so confrontational to the deserving Corinthians.

Vs. 5-6 Paul as a friend wrote to them. The things that he had to deal with were hard. He wasn’t sure how they took it. So after he said it he was worried. He may have sent Titus with the letter. At any rate Paul was feverishly waiting for Titus to return from Corinth with a report on how the Corinthians has received and responded to the severe letter. Paul was so troubled in his spirit he had not rest but was troubled on every side. It is assuring to us today to see that Paul knew the meaning of distress and disappointment (**2Co 7:5**). Where was Titus? What was the situation like in Corinth? Would the church last at Ephesus? All these questions and many more crowded into Paul’s mind as he traveled to Macedonia. But the arrival of Titus was a source of great comfort to Paul. He admits he was “cast down” (**downcast — 2Co 7:6**), but that the arrival of his friend brought him great relief. This is the way Christians ought to help one another. What a privilege and responsibility it is for Christians to encourage one another!

v. 7 Titus gave a good report. The Corinthians has received the letter wonderfully and had responded most positively to the exhortations from Paul. Not only did Titus give this report but also that he treated well. The result was that Titus was comforted and blessed! **Are our reports usually encouraging or do we temper them with any personal negative and critical input?**

v. 8 It’s been said that **in sin, the pleasure passes, the sorrow remains; but in repentance, the sorrow passes, the pleasure abides forever**. God soon pours the oil of gladness into broken hearts.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 7:9 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.

2Co 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

v. 8 *con’td* That’s why he says “**though I did regret it.**” At the same time, when Titus came back giving a good report, (**the earnest desire . . . mourning and zeal** mentioned in **2Co 7:7**), Paul was delighted for the effect the letter had had. That’s why he can write “**I do not regret it.**” **The same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while:** “

v. 9 **Not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance.** Notice the clear separation between **sorrow** and **repentance**. They are not the same things! One can be **sorry** for their sin without **repenting** from their sin. **Sorrow** describes a feeling, but **repentance** describes a change in both the mind and in the life. Repentance is not sorrow only. It may be unaccompanied by sorrow at the time, but sorrow will always follow, sorrow for the past; but this change of mind is the great thing.” **You were made sorry in a godly manner:** Paul did make the Corinthians feel bad for their sin, but in a godly way. He used the truth, not lies or exaggeration. He told the truth in love. It isn’t right to try to make someone **sorry** in an **ungodly manner**. **That you might suffer loss from us in nothing** shows *why* it is important to only make others **sorrow in an godly manner**. You may succeed in making them feel bad (**sorrow**). But the relationship you have with that person will **suffer loss**. You can win the “battle” yet lose the “war.”

v. 10. Since **godly sorrow** does such a great work, it is **not to be regretted**. It doesn’t feel good, but it does a good work. **The sorrow of the world** is different, because it **produces death**. When sorrow is received or borne in a worldly way, it has the deadly effect of producing resentment or bitterness. We can regret that kind of sorrow. But godly sorrow produces a repentance, unto salvation, that is **not to be regretted**.

Godly sorrow produces repentance unto salvation: Does this mean we are saved by our repentance? No, repentance “is not the ground of our salvation; but it is a part of it and a necessary condition of it. Those who repent are saved; the impenitent perish. Repentance is therefore *unto salvation*.” Sorrow in itself doesn’t produce anything except bad feelings. But **godly sorrow produces repentance**. Since repentance is a change (in both thinking and action), we can tell if sorrow is really **godly** by seeing if it **produces repentance**. So **godly sorrow** cannot be measured by feelings or tears, but by what it **produces**. What is the purpose of your sorrow for sin? It is to bring you to trust in the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not your sorrow that cleanses you from sin, but His blood. It is the goodness of God that leads a man to repentance. iv. Real repentance acts. It means actually turning from our sins and turning to God!

v. 9 Sorrow without repentance accomplishes nothing. Peter was sorry he denied Christ, and he repented. Judas was sorry he betrayed Christ but, instead of repenting, he killed himself.

v. 10 Repentance sounds like a harsh word to many. But it is an essential aspect of the gospel, and has been called “the first word of the gospel.” When John the Baptist preached, he said Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! (Mat_3:2); when Jesus began to preach, He said Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Mat_4:17). When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he told his listeners to repent (Act_2:38). In repentance there is a bitter sweetness, of which, the more you have, the better it is for you. How sweet it is to lay my head in my Heavenly Father’s bosom and to say, ‘Father, I have sinned, but You have forgiven me; and, oh, how I love You!

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2Co 7:11 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.

2Co 7:12 Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not do it for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

11. *What diligence it produced in you, ...* Eight “whats” (effects) are listed here, of these things showed that the sorrow of the Corinthians was working true and real repentance.

1 What diligence: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *diligence*. Repentance means to turn around, and it takes *diligence* to stay turned around.

2 What clearing of yourselves: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *a clearing*. It’s a clearing of guilt and shame, from knowing that we have brought our sin to God, and we are now walking in the right way.

3 What indignation: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *indignation*. We are indignant at ourselves for our foolishness in sin.

4 What fear: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, a *fear* that we would ever fall into the same sin again. Paul isn’t writing about a fear of God here as much as a fear of sin - a fear of our own weakness toward it.

5 What vehement desire: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *vehement desire*. This is a heart that really desires purity and godliness, and doesn’t want to sin any more. This *vehement desire* is expressed through prayer and total dependence on God.

6 What zeal: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *zeal*, which speaks of heat. We are to be hot towards God and His righteousness, and hot against sin and impurity. We have *zeal*, not laziness, in our walk with the Lord.

7 What vindication: Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows, *vindication*. You are vindicated as a Christian, even though you have sinned. No one can doubt it. The measure of a Christian is not whether or not they sin, but whether they *repent*.

8 Proved yourself to be clear: When repentance is marked by the preceding characteristics, we are *clear* of guilt and sin. The stain of sin is gone! We can feel it, and others can see it!

In all things you proved yourselves to be clear: Their actions of repentance *proved* them *to be clear*. It wasn’t words or feelings that *proved them to be clear*, but actions. Godly sorrow that leads to repentance is a sorrow that leads to a change of purpose, of intention, and of action. *In this matter:* Paul is using godly discretion by not bringing up the whole affair again from the beginning.

v. 12 I did not do it for the sake: Paul’s purpose in writing the “sorrowful letter” was not to take sides in a dispute among the Corinthians. His purpose was to demonstrate his concern (*that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you*).

v. 11 The apostle proceeds to **describe godly sorrow by its effects**, which are so many evidences of the sincerity and genuineness of true and real repentance; some of the things mentioned are peculiar to the case of the Corinthians, and others common to evangelical repentance in any situation.

v. 12 Paul’s concern for the Corinthians was evident, but amazing. It would appear there was never a Church less worthy of an apostle’s affections than this Church was at this time; and yet no one ever more beloved the church at Corinth.

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2Co 7:13 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.

2Co 7:14 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.

2Co 7:15 And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him.

2Co 7:16 Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything.

TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY – William Longstaff –
Dallas Christian Adult Choral Group

1. Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord; Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word. Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak, Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

2. Take time to be holy, the world rushes on; Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone Abiding in Jesus, like Him thou shalt be; Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.

3. Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul, Each thought and each motive beneath His control. Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love, Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

v. 13 How Titus regards the Corinthian Christians after his visit. **His spirit has been refreshed by you all:** The experience of Titus in Corinth, and his report from there, are sure evidence that the Corinthians have had a change of mind.

v. 14 **If in anything I have boasted to him about you:** Paul had been “hopefully” boasting to Titus that the Corinthians would respond well to the severe letter. Probably Titus was not so sure! But Paul's **boasting to Titus was found true!**

v. 15 **His affections are great for you:** Paul is assuring the Corinthians that Titus loves them more than ever now. Probably, Titus had seen a lot of ugliness among the Corinthians. Titus may have had a “chip on his shoulder” against them. So Paul wants them to know that after he saw and reported their repentance, Titus loves them more than ever now!

v. 16 **I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything:** Is Paul being sarcastic here? Probably not. He is probably simply trying to encourage the Corinthians, showing them that he is convinced their repentance was genuine. At the end of this chapter, Paul is praising the Corinthians. They seem to be in a place of victory. But in the “sorrowful letter” (mentioned in 2Co 2:1) there was no praise. What was the difference? The real repentance, reported by Titus and commented on by Paul in this chapter.

v. 13 **Therefore we were comforted in your comfort - In the repentance which they had manifested, they were a happy people, and would be happy by obeying the commands of God.** This gave Paul additional joy. He could not but rejoice that they had removed the cause of the offence, which was displeasing to God. **Had they not repented and put away the evil, the consequences to them must have been deep distress. As it was, they would be blessed and happy. And exceedingly the more ...** - Titus had been kindly received. This was to Paul an additional occasion of joy;

v. 14 **...not ashamed** - It has all turned out to be true. Titus has found it as I thought. All my expectations are realized; and you have been as kind, and hospitable, and benevolent as I assured him you would be.....**all things to you in truth** - Everything which I said to you was said in truth. All my promises to you, and all my commands, and all my reasonable expectations expressed to you, were sincere. I practiced no disguise, and all that I have said thus far turned out to be true. **Even so our boasting ...** - My boasting of your character, and of your disposition to do right, which I made before Titus has turned out to be true.

v. 15 Titus has become deeply and tenderly attached to you. His affectionate regard for you has been greatly increased by his visit. **How with fear and trembling you received him** - With fear of offending, and with deep apprehension of the consequences of remaining in sin. He saw what a fear there was of doing wrong, and what evidence there was, therefore, that you were eagerly concerned to do right.

v. 16 All through this chapter, we see how concerned Paul was about his relationship with the Corinthian Christians. This shows that *people* were just as important to Paul as *ministry*. He didn't want to do “ministry” at the expense of his relationships with people.

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