

## 2 Corinthians 7.2-16

“There goes Dad, Bragging Again!!”

2 Corinthians 7.<sup>2</sup>Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. <sup>3</sup>I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. <sup>4</sup>I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy. <sup>5</sup>For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. <sup>6</sup>But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, <sup>7</sup>and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. <sup>8</sup>For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. <sup>9</sup>As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. <sup>10</sup>For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. <sup>11</sup>For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. <sup>12</sup>So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. <sup>13</sup>Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. <sup>14</sup>For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true. <sup>15</sup>And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling. <sup>16</sup>I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

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. Charles Spurgeon, 1866

Personally, I have often passed through this dark valley. Charles Spurgeon, 1887

vs. 5,6 ...our bodies had no rest...we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within...God, who comforts the downcast

## 1. Restless Heart made Quiet

## a. Separation from Messenger

When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia. 2 Corinthians 2.12,13

For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. 2 Corinthians 2.4

vs. 11,12 At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God.



So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia... 2 Corinthians 2.13

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For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest...

2 Corinthians 7.5

v. 5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within.

To be a true minister to men is always to accept new happiness and new distress... The man who gives himself to others can never be a wholly sad man; but no more can he be a man of unclouded gladness. To him shall come with every deeper consecration a before untasted joy, but in the same cup shall be mixed a sorrow that it was beyond his power to feel before.

Phillips Brooks

## b. Separation from Master

We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

2 Corinthians 6.11-13

v. 2 Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.

v. 3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

v. 8 For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while.

## 2. Rejoicing in Triple Joy

### a. Titus

v. 6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted his people and will have compassion on his afflicted. Isaiah 49.13

The more we are afflicted, so much the greater is the consolation prepared for us by God. John Calvin

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort  
2 Corinthians 1.3

Paul practices a fundamental principle of good relationships. Show love to people by seeing the best in them, whatever may be to the contrary. We are then able to put the record straight if that needs to be done. Difficulties are much more readily overcome if we do not aggravate them. Derek Prime

### b. Corinthians

“Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?” Amos 3.3

v. 13 Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” 3 John 4

v. 14 For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true.

v. 7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

### c. Paul

v. 4 I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy.

For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?  
1 Thessalonians 2.19

The living God is quite capable of changing apparently intractable attitudes (including ours!) by his Word and Spirit. Ministers of God’s Word can find encouragement and renewal in their ministries by this example of the changed attitudes of the Corinthians. Paul Barnett

## 3. Repentance leads to Life

vs. 9,10 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

The Apostle is not commending repentance if it were the ground of salvation – that would be a most un-Pauline doctrine of justification by works. Paul’s concern here is not with the ground of salvation, which is the pure grace of God in Christ, but with the commendation of repentance...a sign of the grace of God in operation, because of the fruit which it produces. Philip Hughes

“I am the centre of the world I see; where the horizon is depends on where I stand” William Temple

Worldly sorrow comes from an unwelcome consequence of sin...seeking to avoid future consequences...in no instance is the person driven to God...feels no deep-seated remorse over actions against God...Recognition of sin by itself is not repentance, if may be defiance. Nor is sorrow for sin repentance, if it be alone in the mind, it may be remorse or despair. Abandonment of sin, by itself, may be no more than prudence. Owen Strachan

v. 11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

To mistreat God’s representative placed the Corinthians in a precarious position because it involved a wrong attitude to the Gospel... an affront to God. Ralph P. Martin

No minister has the same authority that Paul carried. Ministers today carry apostolic authority only to the degree they represent the apostolic gospel...Parishioners must not confuse the person of the minister with the message...Let ministers and pastors be careful that it is the word that is being rejected and not, in reality, some fault in them. Paul Barnett

v. 15 And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling.

This passage teaches what is the right way of receiving the ministers of Christ. It is assuredly not with sumptuous banquets, nor luxurious clothing, nor effusive and honorific salutations, nor theatrical applause...But when the doctrine of salvation is received with reverence from his mouth, when the authority which belongs to him for the edification of the Church is secure, when the people submit themselves to his discipline so that by his ministry they may be governed under the banner of Christ, then his cup of joy is full. John Calvin

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13.7

v. 16 I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

If we know people are perhaps suspicious of us, or that they misunderstand our motives, it is often difficult to know what to do. One obviously good response is to persist in doing what is right, trusting that in the end the people concerned will recognize the truth of our motives. However, the situation may become so serious and unhelpful that it is better to make them aware that we know what they are saying and thinking. The devil delights in innuendoes and lies. The most effective answer to his activity sometimes is to bring things out into the open, no matter how uncomfortable the process may be. Derek Prime

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1.4-9