

2Corinthians – Week 27

I. Review: 2Cor. 7:5-9

A. God does not comfort us by some kind of magical means.

i. He comforts us through people.

1. The next time you feel down (perhaps loss of health, mourning, etc.), recognize that when God's child reaches out to you, that is the hand of God extending comfort to you!

2. God comforted Paul...

a. By the arrival of Titus after some delay

b. By Titus' positive report regarding the Corinthians

B. Titus' encouraging report regarding the Corinthians:

i. They yearned to see Paul!

ii. They had godly sorrow for the way they behaved during Paul's painful visit.

iii. They had zeal for Paul, that is, they were ready to comply with his wishes!

C. Paul' purpose for writing the painful letter was not to grieve them but to help them repent for their ungodly behavior.

II. Continuation

A. Worldly Grief (or Sorrow) vs. Godly Grief

i. Its cause:

1. Worldly grief is caused by the loss or denial of something we want for ourselves.

a. It grieves over worldly things like:

i. Not receiving the recognition that one thinks he or she deserves.

ii. Not getting something one covets.

iii. Not having as much money as one wants.

b. An example of worldly grief can be found in Revelation 18, where the merchant weep at the destruction of figurative "Babylon" (i.e., Rome) because they have nowhere to sell their cargo and make their profits...

i. Rev. 18:12 (ESV), "*And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore*"

2. Godly grief comes from the awareness that God is offended and hurt by a certain action.

a. Consider the example of King David when confronted with his sin in 2Samuel 12.

ii. Its results:

1. Worldly grief causes one to drown in self-pity or turns the grief into bitterness.

a. Esau's life was filled with regret when he sold his birthright (cf. Hebrews 12:17).

b. Judas was overcome with grief by his betrayal of Christ, but it led to despair and the desperate act of taking his own life, not to repentance. (cf. Matthew 27:1-5).

2. Godly grief, on the other hand, leads to repentance.

a. The prodigal son came to his senses and went home to confess to his unworthiness to his father. (cf. Luke 15:11-24).

b. Godly grief leaves no regret!

c. It motivates us to get right with God and with those whom we hurt!

iii. Grief is good for nothing except for sin!

1. Grieving over loss of money does not restore the money!

2. Grieving over a loss of a loved one does not bring back the loved one!

3. Grieving over sickness does not cure the sickness!

4. But grieving over sin can be positive when it produces true repentance!

- B. 2Cor. 7:10 (ESV), “*For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.*”**
- i. Paul’s bold letter woke the Corinthians up to the seriousness of the matter.**
 - 1. He wrote the letter to test their character and see if they would be obedient (cf. 2Cor. 2:9)**
 - 2. And as a result, Paul assesses them as having passed the test.**
 - ii. We would think that those who were Christians, namely, the Corinthians, would already have the assurance of salvation.**
 - 1. However, if a Christian reverts to sinful practices, that can harm his salvation.**
 - a. Keep in mind, Paul had deep concerns for the Corinthians...**
 - i. In 2Cor. 5:20, he urged them to be reconciled to God.**
 - ii. In 2Cor. 6:1, he urged them not to receive the grace of God in vain.**
 - iii. In 2Cor. 6:14ff, he urged them not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers.**
 - iv. Later on, in chapter 12, verse 21, Paul will express his concern over those who may have not repented of immoral behavior.**
 - iii. However, Paul was overjoyed that the many have repented after receiving Paul’s letter.**
 - iv. The next verse gives us insight in what true repentance looks like...**
- C. 2Cor. 7:11 (ESV), “*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.*”**
- i. Seven manifestations of true repentance:**
 - 1. Earnestness:**
 - a. The Corinthians didn’t merely feel remorseful for what they have done, but they eagerly sought to correct their behavior after reading Paul’s severe letter.**
 - 2. Eagerness to clear yourselves**
 - a. The Corinthians wanted to take steps necessary to clear up the matter with God and with His servants, namely, Paul.**
 - 3. Indignation**
 - a. Indignation involves feeling anger or hatred towards someone or something.**
 - b. The Corinthians did not make excuses for their behavior, but rather they saw their behavior for what it really was: a detestable thing before God!**
 - c. When one has indignation towards one’s own personal sins, he will renounce it!**
 - d. Those who have no indignation to sin, find themselves repeating their folly...**
 - i. Proverbs 26:11 (ESV), “*Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.*”**
 - 4. Fear**
 - a. Paul mentioned the fear of the Lord several times in this epistle, and in verse 1 of this chapter, he tells the Corinthians to bring holiness to completion in the fear of the Lord.**
 - b. Those who fear the Lord...**
 - i. Hate what is evil in the Lord’s sight (Prov. 8:13).**
 - ii. Avoid what is evil in the Lord’s sight (Prov. 16:6).**
 - iii. Simply put, those who fear God obey God (cf. Eccl. 12:13).**

5. Longing
 - a. The Corinthians displayed a desire to have a right relationship with God and with His servants, namely, Paul.
 - i. Earlier, Paul mentioned their longing to see him (v. 7)
 - b. True repentance shows itself when a person does whatever it takes to bring about peace with those whom he sinned against.
 6. Zeal
 - a. The Corinthians displayed zeal for God, zeal to do what is right and zeal for a right relationship with their gospel father, Paul! (cf. v. 7).
 7. Punishment
 - a. Their godly sorrow motivated them to see justice done by administering church discipline to the offending brother mentioned in 2:5-11 and 7:12.
- ii. *“At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter”*
1. Paul is not saying that the Corinthians didn't do any wrong.
 - a. The fact that they repented shows that they were guilty of wrongdoing.
 2. In context, Paul is saying that by their true repentance has cleared them of the hurt they caused Paul and his companions.