

### 2 CORINTHIANS 7:2-7 | PAUL'S HEART FOR THE CORINTHIANS

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- Verses 2-3 -
  - Paul had a ministry to which he was bound, and he would **be all things to all men** (1 Cor. 9:22) Nor would he charge for his services (1 Cor. 9:12).
  - He always took the utmost care to make sure that nothing he said or did would hinder his assignment, so here he reminds the Corinthians that he had **wronged no man...corrupted no man...defrauded no man** (v. 2).
  - Because Paul says, **I speak not *this* to condemn you**, we can speculate that some of his enemies in Corinth had made accusations which he here denies.
- Verse 4 -
  - In 2 Corinthians 3:12 Paul spoke of using **great plainness of speech**, where he used this same Greek word, *παρρησία* [parresia].
  - In addition to this bold speech, Paul had a **bold glory** in the Corinthian church, and even though he had experienced much **tribulation** (even in connection with this church), he was **filled with comfort**.
- Verses 5-6 -
  - Recall that Paul had intended to go from Troas to Corinth, but was not able to fulfill his plans. When he arrived in Troas, he was troubled because Titus was not there, so he left for Macedonia to search for him (2 Cor. 2:12-13).
  - Only in this verse do we learn affirmatively that Paul met Titus in Macedonia. Paul viewed this meeting as the comfort of God.
- Verse 7 -
  - The comfort extended beyond the coming of Titus to the **consolation** Titus received **when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me**.
  - Titus, it seems, was relieved to express to Paul that the Corinthian church loved him and was devoted to him.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 7:8-16 | GODLY SORROW

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- Verse 8 -
  - Paul had regretted that **I made you sorry with a letter**, possibly the letter that is now 1 Corinthians.
  - Though Paul said **I did repent** he now says **I do not repent** for the sorrow caused by this letter.
  - He changed his mind about the sorrow caused when he realized **that the same epistle hath made you sorry**, but that sorrow was **but for a season** and now the relationship was restored *and* the purpose of the letter was fulfilled.
- Verse 9 -
  - Paul now rejoices, not over the sorrow, **but that ye sorrowed to repentance**, otherwise the **damage by us** in causing the sorrow would have been **in nothing** (with no result other than the sorrow itself).
  - No Christian should rejoice because they have made someone *sorry for their sins*, but rather that the person came to repentance for those sins. Sorrow alone has no merit.
- Verse 10 -
  - Paul had a premature repentance of the sorrow that he had caused, then "withdrew repentance" when he discovered the good the sorrow produced (v. 8).
  - Here, he says that there is a **salvation not to be repented of** (i.e.: not to regret in any fashion) that comes through a **repentance that godly sorrow worketh**.
    - Peter told his audience to **repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins** (Acts 2:38).

- Both passages use the Greek word εἰς [eis], translated **for** in Acts 2:38 and **to** in this verse. (It is from this Greek word we get *eisegesis*, the "reading into" Scripture).
    - The dilemma for the one who holds a grace-based gospel is, "what role does sorrow and repentance play in salvation?"
  - To answer the question, we must consider:
    - Is the salvation referred to an experience of entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?
    - If so, where do we find the Gospel in the context of this verse?
    - Does any of the context give evidence that this **salvation** is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, or is their evidence to the contrary?
  - To consider these matters, ponder these thoughts:
    - Paul used the same word for **salvation** in 2 Corinthians 1:6, where he says that his afflictions are for **your consolation and salvation** and that this salvation "is wrought in the enduring of the same sufferings" (YLT).
      - Is there anyone who in any way would teach that "salvation is achieved by the enduring of sufferings?"
      - If Paul uses the word **salvation** in 1:6 to refer to something other than an individual relationship with God through Jesus Christ, could he be doing the same here?
    - Because there has been no mention of nor information about personal salvation in Christ since chapter 5, should we automatically read such salvation in here?
    - Does the context of verse 11 prohibit this being a salvation of the soul?
- Verse 11 -
  - Paul continues to talk about **this selfsame thing** (i.e.: **godly sorrow**, as mentioned in v. 10), and the things that such sorrow produces, including **carefulness, clearing of yourselves, indignation, fear, vehement desire, zeal** and even **revenge!**
  - While all these things are good and honorable in their right context, none would be connected to personal salvation, and are much more pointed in the direction of self-effort toward holy living.
  - In fact, in 2 Corinthians 7:1, Paul began the chapter saying, **let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.**
  - I conclude that the **repentance to salvation** is a salvation from unholy living, not an entrance into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
  - I make this conclusion based on context
    - Positive: the entire context of 1 & 2 Corinthians is unholy behavior among believers.
    - Negative: there is no mention of the work of Christ and the place of faith for personal salvation.
- Verse 12 - Paul returns to the subject of his letter (v. 8) and says he wrote it not **for his cause that had done wrong** neither for **his cause that suffered wrong** but in order to **express our care for you.**
- Verses 13-16 -
  - Paul expresses his pleasure that "**we**" found comfort by caring for the Corinthians, but were even more pleased that Titus **refreshed by you all.**
  - Not only has Titus been refreshed (about something of which Paul appears to have been more confident than Titus (see v. 14)), but Paul now says **I have confidence in you in all things.**
  - We can move forward in the letter knowing that the Corinthian problem has been addressed to Paul's satisfaction.