



2 Corinthians: Triumph in Trials

Week 10: Godly Repentance

2 Corinthians 7:2-16

Feedback from last week: Persevere and be Holy?

Has last week's passage and session changed you in any way this week? Share your stories.

Read 2 Corinthians 7:2-16

Questions (choose some from):

This passage centres around opposition that Paul has faced which may well have been from the 'Super apostles' mentioned in Chapters 10 & 11 (See <https://www.gotquestions.org/super-apostles.html> although some think that the 'the one who did the wrong' (v12) was the incestuous man from 1 Corinthians 5 which is also a possibility). These 'super apostles' had come into the church at Corinth and undermined Paul and his ministry (see 2 Corinthians 10-11) and caused some of the church to turn against Paul. Paul had written them a letter which is now lost (the 'severe letter' or 'letter of tears' 2 Cor v8) which had caused the church to repent and open their hearts to Paul again.

- 1) Is there anything that specifically spoke to you from the sermon on Sunday?
- 2) How do you react when people oppose you and attack or undermine you?
- 3) What do we learn from this passage (and previous passages) about how Paul dealt with the opposition that he faced in this situation?
- 4) v2 Paul urges the Corinthian church to 'Make room for us in your hearts' which follows on from 2 Cor 6:11-13 where Paul urges them to 'open wide [their] hearts also.' It reminds us that whenever we are hurt by people it can be so easy to close our hearts off to them. Do you relate to this? What might it look like for situations that you find yourselves in? What might it look like to 'open your hearts' to those who have hurt you. Share your stories.
- 5) Why do you think Paul has managed to get to a point where he can 'open his heart' again to those who have hurt him? What do you think helped him do that?
- 6) Read v 8-10. What is the difference do you think between 'worldly sorrow' and 'Godly sorrow'?
- 7) What does Godly sorrow bring (v10-11) to the Corinthians and us?
- 8) At the heart of this is 'repentance.' Dave explained on Sunday that this is much more than just 'confession' of our sins, but the Greek word 'metanoia' means a complete change of mind, or a complete 180 degree change of direction. What might this look like in different situations of conflict that you have encountered?
- 9) Godly repentance then leads to 'salvation' (Greek word Sozo which means much more than just 'having our sins' forgiven, but it is the idea of complete healing and 'being made whole'). How can forgiving others bring a new healing and wholeness?
- 10) Lewis B Smedes said once 'To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.' Discuss!

Respond and Encounter:

Some suggestions:

- 1) Dave talked about Godly repentance being about our hurts and pain to God and leaving them at the foot of the cross and allowing God to 'search our hearts.'
 - a. In the quiet, bring before God a situation of conflict in your life and bring it to God.
 - b. Then dwell in the words of Psalm 139 23-24

'Search me O God and know my heart,
Test me and know my anxious thoughts,
See if there is any offensive way in me
And lead me in the way everlasting.'

What is God saying to you in your conflict? How might he be calling you to repent and act?

- 2) Reflect on these two quotes as you listen to 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkGCFs1VrZQ>) and allow the deep truths of the cross to transform you afresh.

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." (C.S.Lewis)

"If Jesus forgave those who nailed Him to the cross, and if God forgives you and me, how can you withhold your forgiveness from someone else?" (Anne Graham Lotz)

Key verses to meditate on this week:

'Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow leads to death.' (2 Corinthians 7:10)