

**“Times Of Refreshing”**  
**2 Corinthians 1:1-2**

**Introduction:**

1. Please Turn With Me In Your Bibles This Morning:
  - To 2 Corinthians 1 - Where We Will Begin Looking:
    - At This Letter From The Very Beginning:
      - Verses 1-2 - Which At First Glance - Seem Like A Very Common & Ordinary Beginning:
        - To One Of Paul’s Letters!
    - 1:1-2 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: / Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ!”
      - Now - It Is True - That Paul Begins Most Of His New Testament Letters In A Similar Way!
        - But I Believe - That When The Corinthian Church Heard These Words:
          - It Meant More To Them Than We Could Ever Imagine!
2. Because - We Need To Remember:
  - That Before Paul Wrote This Letter:
    - There Was Some Contention Between:
      - The Corinthian Church & Paul!
        - So Much So - That Paul Had To Confront Them About Their Sin:
          - By A Personal, Painful Visit & By A Personal, Sorrowful Letter!
    - And When Paul Sent That “Sorrowful” Letter:
      - By The Hand Of Titus - He Waited To See How They Would Respond!
        - Paul Hoped That There Could Be **Reconciliation!**
          - And - When Paul Finally Met Up With Titus Somewhere In Macedonia:
            - He Got His Answer!
3. How Did The Corinthian Church Respond?
  - We Find Out In 2 Corinthians 7:9:
    - “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing!”
      - They Were Sorry With A Godly Sorrow!
        - And They Repented With A Godly Repentance!
          - And Paul Rejoiced & Praised The Lord!
4. But Now - It Was The Corinthians’ Turn To Wait!
  - How Would Paul Respond To Them?
    - Would He Forgive Them?
      - And Just As Paul Had Waited – They Waited:
        - Until, Finally, Another Letter Arrives From Paul!
          - **This Letter! 2 Corinthians!**
    - Imagine How They Must Have Felt Once Again:
      - When They Heard These Words:
        - 1:1-2 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: / Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ!”
          - Nothing Common & Ordinary In **These** Words!
            - To Them - **These** Words Of Introduction Were **Refreshing** Words!
    - Because Now The Corinthians Knew:
      - That They **Were** Reconciled!
        - And Their Relationships Were **Restored!**
          - With Paul - With Timothy - And With The Lord Himself!
  - 5. And Even Through These Two Somewhat Common Verses:
    - We Can See What:
      - True Reconciliation & Restoration:
        - Looks Like For All Christians – Including Us!
          - And For All Churches – Including Ours!
    - So - This Morning - I Want You To Think About:

**1. The Renewed Sense Of Fellowship:**

- That Comes Through Reconciliation!
  - The Renewed Sense Of Fellowship!
- **IE:** Have You Ever Been Hungry? Maybe You Had To Fast For An Entire Day For Surgery! Maybe You Were Sick And Unable To Eat For A Few Days! Many In This World Are Hungry Because There Is Just Not Enough Food For Them To Eat Where They Live! But When You Are Hungry, The Only Thing That Will Satisfy & Refresh You Is Food!
  - Well - Food May Refresh You From Hunger!
    - But There Is Only One Thing That Can Refresh Your Soul!
      - And That Is Reconciliation With God And With His People!
  - And There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
    - Than A Renewed Sense Of Fellowship!
- When Paul Wrote The Letter Of *1 Corinthians* - It Was Full Of Love & Hope!
  - Even As He Addressed Some Their Big Issues & Answered Some Of Their Big Questions!
- Listen To How He Began *1 Corinthians*:
  - 1:1-3 - "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, / Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: / Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ!"
- Paul's Greeting In *2 Corinthians*:
  - Are Almost Identical To His Greeting In *1 Corinthians*!
    - But How Did The Corinthians Receive His First Letter?
      - For The Most Part - They Rejected But The Message As Well As The Messenger Of Paul - Which Was Probably Timothy!
  - Their Sinful Response Is What Caused Paul's:
    - Painful Visit & Sorrowful Letter!
      - But Now - After Their "Godly Sorrow" And Repentance - Paul Picked Up Right Where He Left Off! And Once Again Writes:
- "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother!"
  - Their Fellowship Was Renewed!
    - And Their Friendship Was Restored!
      - And This Is What Christian Reconciliation Is All About! Because:
- Their Fellowship Was Renewed:
  - With Paul - Who Describes Himself As:
    - "An Apostle Of Jesus Christ By The Will Of God!"
      - Paul Relationship With The Corinthian Church Remained The Same!
        - He Did Not & Would Not Disown Them!
  - He Remained "An Apostle Of Jesus Christ!"
    - Which Means That:
      - He Was Appointed By Jesus!
      - He Had Authority From Jesus!
      - He Had Affection Like Jesus!
    - And So - The Corinthian Church Still Needed To Listen To Him & Learn From Him!
      - Even As He Said In 1 Corinthians 11:1 - "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ!"
  - And Now - They Were Willing To Fulfill Their Responsibilities As Christians!
    - And Their Fellowship Was Renewed! Also:
- Their Friendship Was Restored:
  - With Timothy - Who Paul Describes Simply As:
    - "Our Brother" - Or "The Brother!"
  - When Paul Sent Timothy:
    - To Deliver The Letter Of 1 Corinthians:
      - He Wrote This - 1 Corinthians 4:17 - "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church!"
  - And So - The Corinthians Were Supposed To Welcome Timothy With Open Arms!
    - But - They Didn't!
      - They Rejected Paul's Message & They Rejected Timothy As Paul's Messenger!

- And That Must Have Hurt Timothy Very Much!
  - But Now - After The Corinthians Finally Responded:
    - By Repentance & Seeking Reconciliation:
      - Both Paul **And** Timothy Join Together In Sending Their Greeting To The Church!
  - And Timothy Remained “A Brother” To Them!
    - They May Have Rejected Him, But He Does Not Reject Them!
      - Their Friendship Was Restored!
  - Remember - When Your Soul Is Hungry:
    - There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
      - Than A Renewed Sense Of Fellowship With The Lord And His People!
  - After All - It’s One Thing:
    - To Have Timothy As Your Brother In Christ!
      - But It’s Entirely Another Thing - To Have Jesus Christ Himself As Your Brother!
        - And - Hebrews 2:11 - “He is not ashamed to call them brethren!”
  - And When The Lord Jesus Christ:
    - Calls You “Brethren” - You Can Be Assured:
      - That Your Fellowship Has Been Renewed! And Your Friendship Has Been Restored!
- Second - We Also Need To Think About:
- 2. The Renewed Sense Of Forgiveness:**
- That Comes Through Reconciliation!
    - The Renewed Sense Of Forgiveness!
  - **IE:** Have You Ever Been Thirsty? Maybe You Just Walked Or Ran Or Exercised For Awhile! Maybe You Worked Long Hours With Hardly Any Breaks! Many In This World Are Thirsty Because There Is Just Not Enough Clean Water For Them To Drink! One Of The Services That The Samaritan’s Purse Organization Provides Is Well-Drilling For A Dependable Source Of Cool, Clean Water! But When You Are Thirsty, The Only Thing That Will Really Quench Your Thirst & Refresh You Is Water! Cool, Clear, Clean Water!
    - Well - Water May Refresh You From Thirst!
      - But There Is Only One Thing That Can Refresh Your Soul!
        - And That Is Reconciliation With God And His People!
    - And There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
      - Than A Renewed Sense Of Forgiveness!
  - And I’m Sure This Was The Case:
    - For The Corinthian Church - When They Finally Received The Letter Of 2 Corinthians:
      - Paul Described Them In Some Very Special Ways:
        - 1:1 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia!”
    - In Spite Of How They Treated Paul & Even Timothy:
      - In The Past - As Well As The Lord:
        - They Remained:
          - “The Church Of God” As Well As “Saints!”
      - What A Relief This Must Have Been For Them!
        - Paul - Under The Inspiration & Authority Of God Reassured Them That:
    - Their Calling From God Remained – Unchanged!
      - That Is - They Remained “The Church Of God” There In The City Of Corinth!
        - Their Repentance & Desire For Reconciliation Was Evidence That They Were An Authentic Church After All!
          - What Is A Church? A Body Of Believers - Forgiven From Their Sins - And Called Out By God To Worship Him & To Witness For Him In The Community Where God Placed Them!
      - As Paul Wrote These Words:
        - He Must Have Remembered What The Lord Said To Him In Acts 18:10 - “I Have Much People In This City!”
          - Because God Knew **Them** Before They Knew **Him!**
            - So - Their Calling Remained Unchanged, Because Their Sins Had Been Forgiven!
          - What A Relief!
    - Paul Also Reassured Them That:

- Their Condition Before God Remained – Unchanged!
  - That Is - They Remained “Saints” - Whether They Lived In The City Of Corinth Itself:
    - Or Anywhere Else In The Province Of Achaia!
      - This Also Shows Us That 2 Corinthians Was Not Just Meant For The Corinthian Church
      - But For Every Church & Every Christian! Noone Is Exempt From The Challenges Of This Letter! And Noone Is Excluded From The Comforts Of This Letter!
  - So - Paul Reminds All Christians That:
    - We Are “Saints!”
      - We Are The “Holy Ones” Of God - Sanctified By & Separated Unto The Lord And His Service!
  - In 1 Corinthians 16:9-10 - Paul Reminded Them Of The Sins That Once Separated Them From The Lord:
    - “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, / Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God!”
      - But Then - He Adds:
        - “And such *were* some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God!”
          - In Other Words - You Were Made “*Saints*” Of The Living God!
            - And The Lord Is Still In Process Of Sanctifying You & Changing You More & More Into The Image Of Your Savior!
  - What A Relief!
    - When You Call Upon The Name Of The Lord:
      - Your Sins Are Completely Forgiven & Your Condition Is Forever Changed!
      - You Are A Saint!
- Remember - When Your Soul Is Thirsty:
  - There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
    - Than A Renewed Sense Of Forgiveness From The Lord And From His People!
      - When There Is Genuine Repentance And Faith In Jesus Christ:
        - Your Calling & Your Condition As A Christian Will Remain – Unchanged!
  - “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance!” (Romans 11:29)

- Third - You Also Need To Think About:

### 3. **The Renewed Sense Of Favor:**

- That Comes Through Reconciliation!
  - The Renewed Sense Of Favor!
- **IE:** Are You Tired This Morning? Some Of You Are - I Can Tell From Here! But Have You Ever Been Thoroughly Exhausted? Not Just Your Body, But Your Mind, Even To The Depths Of Your Soul? In The Ongoing Battle Against ISIS, Forces Are Trying To Expel Them From Their Stronghold In Raqqa, Syria! I Read An Article About Some Civilians, Taking Advantage In A Lull Of The Fighting, Trying To Run To Safety! But Some Were So Thoroughly Exhausted, They Fell In The Rubble-Filled Streets, And Needed To Be Carried To Safety! They’ve Had So Little Food And Water And Sleep - That It Has Taken Its Toll On Them! They Are Exhausted! When You Are Exhausted - The Only Thing That Will Really Refresh You Is Rest!
  - Rest & Sleep May Refresh Your Body When You Are Tired & Even Exhausted!
    - But - Remember - There Is Only One Thing That Can Refresh Your Soul!
      - And That Is Reconciliation With God And His People!
  - And There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
    - Than A Renewed Sense Of God’s Favor Upon You!
      - Which Is What We Find Next:
- In 2 Corinthians 1:2 - Where Paul Offers A Prayer:
  - That Is Common To So Many Of His Letters:
    - But Is Anything **But** Ordinary!
      - “Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ!”
        - We See From This - That In Spite Of The Struggles Between The Corinthian Church And Paul:
- The Desire For God’s Favor Remains!
  - Even Though - As Christians - They Had Already **Received** The Grace & Peace Of God!
    - And Even Though - As A Church - God’s Grace & Peace **Remained** With Them!

- Paul's Desire & Prayer Was That God's Grace & Peace Would Be *Multiplied* Unto Them!
- They Needed The Reassurance:
  - That Only God's Grace & Peace Could Provide!
    - Matthew Henry Describes These As "Two Great And Comprehensive Blessings! Fitly Joined Together, Because There Is No Good And Lasting Peace Without True Grace!"
- And This Is What Paul Desired / Wanted Them To Continue To Experience!
  - And What The Lord Continues To Offer To All Who Come To Him For Reconciliation!
    - But - We Also See That:
- The Depth Of God's Favor Remains!
  - *All* The Grace And Peace We Need:
    - Comes From One Source - "God Our Father, And From The Lord Jesus Christ!"
      - And Since The Source Of These Blessings Is Infinite, The Supply Of These Blessings Is Infinite As Well!
    - James 1:17 - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning!"
- Remember - When Your Soul Is Thirsty:
  - There Is Nothing More Refreshing:
    - Than A Renewed Sense The Favor Of God!
    - And The Renewed Enjoyment Of His Infinite Supply Of Grace And Peace!

### Conclusion:

1. When Paul Sent Titus:
  - With His "Sorrowful Letter" To The Corinthian Church:
    - He Didn't Know How They Would Respond!
      - But - When They Finally Did Respond With A "Godly Sorrow" That Led Them To Repentance & Reconciliation:
        - Listen To What It Did For Titus!
    - 2 Corinthians 7:13 - "Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was *refreshed* by you all!"
      - This Is What Repentance Can Do!
      - This Is What Reconciliation Can Bring!
2. Do You Know This Feeling:
  - In Your Own Heart & Life Today?
    - Is There Some Conflict / Some Sin In Your Life:
      - With Other People?
        - Perhaps With Other Christians?
    - Is There Some Conflict / Some Sin In Your Heart:
      - With God?
  - Don't You Sense & Feel The Stress & Misery?
    - Don't You Sense & Feel The Guilt?
      - Proverbs 13:15 Tells Us That - "The way of transgressors is hard!"
        - It Is A Hard Way! It Is Rough & Rugged!
          - Hard On Your Body!
          - Hard On Your Mind!
          - Hard On Your Spirit & On Your Soul!
3. But - What Do We Often Do:
  - When We Feel This Way?
    - We Follow The Example Of Our Earliest Parents:
      - Adam & Eve - When The "Hid Themselves From The Presence Of The Lord God Amongst The Trees Of The Garden!"
        - Even Though God Was Already There - "Walking In The Garden In The Cool Of The Day" - Seeking Them!
    - Instead - What Should You Do?
      - Joel 2:13 - "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness!"
        - Why?
3. Because There Is Nothing More Refreshing:

- Than Being Reconciled With God & His People!
  - So What Are You Waiting For?
    - Food May Refresh You:
      - When You Are Hungry!
    - Water May Refresh You:
      - When You Are Thirsty!
    - Sleep May Refresh You:
      - When You Are Tired!
  - But Only Reconciliation:
    - Can Refresh Your Soul!
- 4. And When You Experience For Yourself:
  - The Grace Of God:
    - And His Peace - "Which Passeth All Understanding!"
    - There Is Nothing More Refreshing Than:
      - A Renewed Sense Of:
        - Fellowship With God!
        - The Forgiveness Of God!
        - And The Favor Of God!
  - ***There's Nothing More Refreshing Than This!***
    - Let's Close In Prayer!

\* "Softly & Tenderly"

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