

## 2 Corinthians 2:1–11

- <sup>1</sup> But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow.
- <sup>2</sup> For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me?
- <sup>3</sup> And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all.
- <sup>4</sup> For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.
- <sup>5</sup> But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe.
- <sup>6</sup> This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,  
<sup>7</sup>so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.
- <sup>8</sup> Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.
- <sup>9</sup> For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.
- <sup>10</sup> Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ,
- <sup>11</sup> lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

### *Restoring the Disciplined* *2 Corinthians 2:1-11*

#### INTRO:

Paul continues on in this paragraph to outline why he changed his plans. He changed his plans because he did not want to hurt them further. He also wanted them to respond to this disciplined brother in a Biblical way. This far from a fun topic, yet it is one the Lord things important enough for us to know that He put it in His Word.

*I. Why His Plan Changed, Part 2 (v. 1-4)*  
*II. Discipline is for Restoration (v.5-11)*

*I. Why His Plan Changed, Part 2 (v. 1-4)*

**2 Corinthians 2:1–4** *“But I determined this within myself that I would not come again to you in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.”*

A. We learned last time, Paul changed his mind because he did not want to visit and cause them sorrow. Paul reiterates this in our text today. Paul did not want to come to them again in sorrow. His letter which we call **1 Corinthians** had caused no little distress among the believers. Therefore, Paul did not desire to come and bring that kind of pain again.

B. Too often we look at Paul’s writing clinically and do not recognize that the Apostle Paul was a flesh and blood person. It hurt him to confront sin, just like it does us. He also was traveling in frequently difficult situations. In fact, we learn from the first letter how he was when he arrived to minister at Corinth. Paul described his coming in these words:

**1 Corinthians 2:3** *“I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.”*

Understandably alienating his own spiritual children in the infant church at Corinth was extremely painful to Paul. It hurt, but it had to be done.

C. Sometimes God calls upon us to also confront or challenge people we love. The important thing is to do this after some important self-inspection. Remember this admonition from the Sermon on the Mount.

**Matthew 7:3–5** *“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”*

*II. Discipline is for Restoration (v.5-11)*

**2 Corinthians 2:5–7** *“But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe. This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary, you*

***ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.”***

A. At **verse 5**, the Apostle Paul brings up one important point in the first epistle to Corinth which caused some potential problems. In **1 Corinthians 5**, Paul took the Corinthians to task because instead of mourning over the overt sin this man was committing, they chose to be arrogant and tolerant. Paul wrote **there**

**1 Corinthians 5:3-5** ***“For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh [in order that] his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”***

B. This one had committed a terrible public sin that the Corinthians tolerated and boasted about their toleration. Paul took them to task and demanded that they discipline this one so they might repent.

**v.5** ***“deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh [in order that] his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”***

Discipline is not for retribution (vengeance) but for restoration. We discipline to allow God to bring a brother or sister to repentance.

C. We learn a second reason for church discipline is for church purity.

**1 Corinthians 5:6–7** ***“Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”***

D. One of the hardest things a church must do from time to time is to discipline its members. Sometimes those who are discipline do return in repentance to the church and forsake their sin and seek restoration. When that happens there is a second difficult thing the church must do. We must forgive.

**2 Corinthians 2:8-11** ***“Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”***

E. If the purpose of discipline is restoration, then to refuse to forgive and restore is damaging to the family of the church. It is entirely possible that these folks loyal to Paul

insisted they could not forgive and restore this sinner unless the Apostle Paul who had already judged him and required he be removed from the church agreed to restore him. This was Paul's assurance that he did indeed forgive.

What Do We Learn From This?

1. The first thing we learn is that it is vitally important that we practice Biblical discipline in God's church. The discipline Paul wrote about here is the ultimate step of discipline. However, there are important middle steps. We must take the responsibility to exercise "mote and beam" discipline out of love to restore brothers and sisters in the Lord before the large scale discipline must happen, **Hebrews 10:24-25** speaks of this constant vigilance and accountability for one another.

***"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."***

2. Individually, do we forgive and restore when we are sinned against or hurt? You know this verse, the question is do we obey it?

**Ephesians 4:32** ***"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you"***

3. Are we committed to be an encourager of other believers? Do we care enough to confront in a right way, humbly and not judgmentally?

**Romans 12:9-10 (ESV)** ***"Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor"***

Hymn #201 *Grace Greater than Our Sin*