

***“Peaceable Fruit”***  
***2 Corinthians 7:12-16***

**Introduction:**

1. This Morning - We Are Going To Finish Looking:
  - At The 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter Of Paul’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter To The Corinthians!
  - So - Please Turn There With Me:
    - Where We Will Look At The Last 5 Verses Of This Chapter:
      - These Verses Also Mark The Close The First Major Section Of This Letter!
      - 2 Corinthians 7!
  - Now - From Chapter 1 Through Chapter 7:
    - The Apostle Paul Has Been Dealing With:
      - His Personal Relationship With The Church!
      - And Especially About Their Response To Him & His Confrontation About A Major Sin In Their Midst!
2. And At First:
  - They Did Not Respond Properly!
    - When Paul First Attempted To Confront Them:
      - About Their Sin - He Did So In The Letter Of 1 Corinthians:
        - Which He Sent By The Hand Of Timothy!
        - Well - They Pretty Much Ignored What He Had To Say!
  - Then - Paul Made An Unscheduled Visit:
    - To The Church - In Order To Confront Them:
      - Personally!
        - But They Still Did Not Listen!
        - And Paul Left - Quite Discouraged & In Distress About The Corinthian Church!
  - Paul Then Made One Final Attempt:
    - To Urge Them To Repent From Their Sin!
      - And This Time - He Wrote Them:
        - A “Sorrowful Letter” And Sent It By The Hand Of Titus!
3. And For Days & Weeks & Perhaps Even Months:
  - He Waited To Hear From Titus:
    - About Their Response!
      - And As We’ve Been Reading From Chapter 7:
        - When They Finally Met Up Together:
          - Titus Had Some Good News!
  - The Corinthians:
    - Received The Letter:
      - Responded With A “Godly Sorrow” And:
        - Finally Repented From Their Sins:
          - Against Paul & Against The Lord!
  - And For This - Paul Was Filled With Joy And Thanksgiving!
    - Because What Could Have Ended In:
      - A Spiritual Tragedy:
        - Became A Spiritual Triumph!
5. I Think That A Lot Of The Time:
  - We Believe That If We Try To Confront People:
    - About Sin Biblically:
      - And Exercise Church Discipline:
        - That It Will Lead To Further Discord & Division!
  - But - Instead - Paul Reveals To Us:
    - What Can Happen:
      - When We Seek To Deal With Sin:
        - Properly - In Our Own Lives & In Our Church!
  - As We Are Told In Hebrews 12:11:
    - “It Yieldeth The Peaceable Fruit Of Righteousness!”
6. And We Can See More Of This “Peaceable Fruit” In:

- In 7:12-16:
  - “Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. / 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. / For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth. / And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. / I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things!”
- As We Look At These Verses More Closely This Morning:
  - I Believe That We Can Experience This Same Kind Of:
    - Peace & Unity As A Church:
      - When *We* Seek To Deal With Sin:
        - Properly As Well!
    - This Is The “Peaceable Fruit” That Comes From:
      - True Repentance And Reconciliation!
        - First:

### ***1. It Yields A Greater Care For Each Other!***

- As It Did For The Apostle Paul & The Corinthian Church!
  - In 7:12 - “Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you (Or - Rather - Your Care For Us) in the sight of God might appear unto you!”
    - After Their Sin & Offense Was Cleared Up:
      - Through Godly Sorrow, Repentance, Confession, And Forgiveness:
        - Paul Explains That This Was The Point Of His Letter All Along!
        - It Was:
  - The Primary Purpose - Of His Letter! But:
    - To Get To That - He Explains That His Primary Purpose:
      - Was *Not* Just To Bring Judgment:
        - To The Offending Party!
          - The One Who “Had Done The Wrong!”
      - Even Though:
        - He Did Care For This Person!
          - And He Did Want To See Him Repent & Be Restored!
    - His Primary Purpose:
      - Was *Not* Just To Bring Justice:
        - To The Offended Party:
          - The One Who “Suffered Wrong!”
      - Even Though:
        - He Did Care For This Person As Well!
          - And He Did Want To See Reconciliation Take Place!
    - His Primary Purpose:
      - *Was* For The Justification Of The Church:
        - Who At First - Instead Of Dealing With The Sin In Their Midst:
          - Let It Go On! And So - Paul Wrote His Letter So That:
  - The Primary Proof - Of Their True Relationship:
    - To Him & To The Lord - Might Be Revealed!
      - In 7:12 - The Vast Majority Of Greek Texts:
        - Have The Phrase - “Our Care For You” - In Reverse Order!
          - They Have - “Your Care For Us” Instead!
      - So - The Main Reason Paul Wrote His Letter:
        - Was Not Just To Reassure Them:
          - Of His Care - Even Though He Did Care For Them Greatly!
        - He Wanted To Reassure Them:
          - Of God’s Care For Them:
            - And His Ongoing Work In Their Lives!
      - And So His Letter Was A Test!
    - And When They Responded To Paul:

- By Repenting From Their Sin - They Passed The Test!
  - And It Yielded A Greater Care In Their Own Hearts:
    - For Paul!
      - And This Was Evidence / Proof That They Were, In Fact, The Children & The Church Of God!
- God Was Still In Their Midst!
  - And Because Of Their Reconciliation With Paul:
    - They Were Now Even Able To See Themselves In God's Light!
- And This Is What Will Happen:
  - When We Deal With Sin Properly As Well!
    - It Will Yield A Greater Care For Each Other!
      - Which Proves That God Is Still With Us & Working In Us!
      - What Else Will Happen?

**2. *It Yields A Greater Comfort From Each Other!***

- 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!"
  - In A Sense - Paul Is Here Thanking Them:
    - For The "Comfort" & The Encouragement That They Gave Him:
      - Through Their Response To Him & Their Repentance!
      - Because - Look At What Their "Comfort" Brought About!
  - It Brought Relief!
    - Paul And His Companions Were:
      - "Comforted In / By Their Comfort / Encouragement!"
        - Remember How Paul Felt Before He Heard Back From Titus?
    - 7:6 - He Was Feeling "Cast Down!"
      - But Now - The Pendulum Had Swung:
        - From Despair To Delight!
          - No More Anxiety About Them!
          - No More Apprehension About Them!
    - Paul Was Relieved:
      - And Encouraged! Also:
  - It Brought Rejoicing!
    - "Yea, And Exceedingly The More Joyed We For The Joy Of Titus!"
      - When Titus Finally Met Up With Paul:
        - He Was Full Of Great Joy!
          - Probably With A Spring In His Step & A Smile On His Face!
    - And The Joy Of Titus:
      - Was Contagious!
        - And Because Titus Was Happy:
          - So Was Paul!
    - And Isn't This What It Should Be Like:
      - In Our Church!
        - A Little Joy Can Go A Long Way!
      - Try It Sometime!
        - Smile As You Think About & Tell Others About What God Has Done For You!
          - But Why Were They So Happy?
            - Because:
    - It Brought Refreshment!
      - "Because His Spirit Was Refreshed By You!"
        - It Seems That When Titus Arrived In Corinth:
          - With Paul's Sorrowful Letter:
            - He Too Was Burdened!
              - He Too Had A Pastor's Heart For Them!
    - So It Seems That He Was:
      - Weary From His Travels:
        - And A Bit Worried About His Mission!
          - Titus Knew The Stakes! He Knew His Own Responsibility!

- What Would Happen?
  - It Is Clear That Upon His Arrival:
    - They Read Paul's Letter!
      - They Received Titus As Paul's Own Representative!
      - They Responded Properly!
      - And Through All This, They Refreshed The Spirit Of Titus!
  - All Of The Needs Titus Had When He Arrived:
    - They Met! Probably A Place To Stay:
      - Food To Eat & Fellowship To Enjoy!
      - It Rejuvenated Titus!
      - It Revived Him In A Sense!
      - Because His Mission Was Accomplished!
  - May This Be The Goal & Desire:
    - For Our Church!
      - To Encourage Each Other:
        - And Bring Relief, Joy & Refreshment To Each Others' Souls!
        - And One Of the Best Ways To Do This Is Dealing With Our Sins & Problems Properly & Biblically & By Bearing The "Peaceable Fruit Of Righteousness!"
        - But It Continues!
3. ***It Yields A Greater Confirmation About Each Other!***
- As We See In 7:14 - "For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth!"
    - Before Paul Sent Titus:
      - He Shared Some Things About Them!
        - He Writes - "If I Have Boasted Any Thing To Him Of You!"
        - In Other Words - There ***were*** Some Things That He Was Pleased With & Proud Of In The Corinthian Church!
        - And We See Again:
    - The Focus Of Paul's Assurance:
      - He Focused - Not Just On The Negative Things:
        - That Needed To Be Resolved:
        - But The Positive Things:
          - About The Corinthian Church!
      - There Were ***Some*** Things That Paul:
        - Knew About Them - That Were Positive:
          - Because Of His Own Experience With Them!
      - He Knew Of:
        - Their Initial Faith In The Lord!
        - Their Initial Love For Him!
        - Their Initial Generosity For The Church!
      - And So - Even Though Paul Was Discouraged:
        - He Still Had Hope!
          - And - Because Of God's Continuing Work In Them - Paul Wrote:
            - 7:14 - "I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth!"
            - This Reveals:
    - The Fulfillment Of Paul's Assurance!
      - Paul's Hope About The Corinthian Church:
        - Was Realized!
          - What Paul Said To Titus About Them:
            - Was Proven True!
      - In Fact - He Explains That:
        - Just As Everything He Said ***To***:
          - The Corinthians Was True:
        - So - Everything He Said ***About***:
          - The Corinthians Was True!
    - But What Was Paul So Pleased In & Proud Of:

- About Them?
  - It Could Only Be The Success Of The Gospel To Them:
    - And The Continual Work Of God In Them & Through Them!
- To Be Proud Of The Fruit:
  - Is To Bestow Praise On The Farmer!
    - After All - The Fruit Itself Contributes Nothing To Its Growth & Success!
    - It Takes Good Seed, Good Soil, The Right Amount Of Sun & Rain!
- Remember What Jesus Said In:
  - John 15:1-5 - "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. / Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. / Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. / Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. / I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing!"
- And So - To Express Pride & Glory In The Fruit:
  - Is To Express Pride & Praise In The Vine!
    - "For Without Me – Jesus Says – Ye Can Do Nothing!"
- Paul Was Confident:
  - Not So Much In Their Work For God:
    - But In God's Work In Them!
- And This Is Why We Can Experience Assurance:
  - When We Deal With Sins & Issues That Come Up:
    - In The Right & Biblical Way!
      - Because God Himself Is Always At Work In His People!
      - Further - We See:

**4. *It Yields A Greater Commitment Toward Each Other!***

- 7:15 - "And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him!"
  - Paul Is Speaking About Titus Again:
    - And How His Love Toward Them:
      - Grew!
        - It Grew Into A Deep & Strong & Devoted Love - Coming From His Heart!
    - Because It Was Based On:
  - A Grace-Filled Remembrance:
    - Of His Time With Them!
      - "Whilst He Remembereth!"
        - Their Reception Of Titus Made A Continuing Impression On Him!
    - And His Love Grew!
      - He Just Couldn't Get Them Out Of His Mind!
        - **IE:** Isn't This What Real Love Is Like?
        - His Love Was Also Based On:
  - A Grace-filled Response!
    - Which Was Their "Obedience!"
      - Obedience To The Lord:
        - And To The Apostle Paul & His Letter!
    - They Heard God's Word!
      - They Heeded God's Word!
        - And They Did So Cheerfully & Completely!
    - And Titus' Love Grew!
      - It Was Also Based On:
  - A Grace-Filled Reception!
    - "How With Fear And Trembling Ye Received Him!"
      - When Paul Wrote The Letter Of 1 Corinthians & Sent It With Timothy:
        - He Told Them - 16:11 - "Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace!
        - Apparently, They Did Not Do This! They Did Not Receive Timothy In The Right Way!

- But This Time - They Received Titus:
  - With "Fear And Trembling!"
    - This Time - They Wanted To Respond In The Right Way & Had An Intense Desire To Make Things Right & To Do What Was Right!
    - They Responded In The Fear Of The Lord!
- And Titus' Love For Them Grew!
- And This Is How Our Love For Each Other Will Grow:
  - As Well!
    - As We Receive Each Other:
      - And Respond Properly To Each Other:
        - And Remember Each Other!
- This Is Part Of The Fruit:
  - Of Christian Fellowship!

**Conclusion:**

1. And So - Paul Ends This Chapter & This First Major Section:
  - Of His Letter - With These Words:
    - 7:16 - "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things!"
      - This Is The Final Expression:
        - Of Paul's Own Feelings About:
          - Their Response & The Resolution Of The Matter That Was Causing Such Strife!
    - Paul Was Able To Rejoice:
      - Because Now He Knew:
        - That God Remained At Work:
          - Among Them!
2. He Now Knew:
  - That No Matter What Came Before Them:
    - Their Fruit Revealed Their True Nature:
      - And Their True Condition As A Church:
        - Of Jesus Christ!
    - Paul Could Rest In The Fact:
      - That The Lord Was Truly Among Them!
        - And God Was Able To Use Paul's Letter:
          - To Bring "Them Joy And Happiness To Strengthen Their Unity In Christ!"
3. And This Is the Kind:
  - Of "Peaceable Fruit" That Will Grow:
    - In The Soil Of Our Hearts:
      - When There Is True Repentance & Reconciliation:
        - In Our Lives As Christians & As A Church!
    - We Can Be Confident:
      - As We Are Told In Philippians 1:6:
        - "Confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ!"
    - Paul Understood That:
      - The Corinthian Church:
        - Would Not Always Have Him!
          - But The Lord Would Always Have:
            - The Corinthian Church!
    - And He Could Rest In:
      - The Presence Of The Lord:
      - The Promises Of The Lord:
      - And The Power Of The Lord:
        - In And Among Them:
          - To Continue To Perform His "Good Work" In Them!
4. And This Can Be Our Confidence As Well!
  - This Is Why - When It Comes To Matters Of:
    - Sin & Error - We Need To:

- Trust And Obey God's Way:
  - For Confronting & Dealing With Them!
- Because God's Way Is Always The Best Way!
  - And In The End - When We Deal With Sin:
    - Properly & Biblically:
      - It Will Yield This Kind Of "Peaceable Fruit!"
- A Greater Care For Each Other!
  - A Greater Comfort From Each Other!
  - A Greater Confirmation About Each Other!
  - And A Greater Commitment To Each Other!
- May The Lord Help Us To Deal Properly:
  - With Our Sins!

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