

# 2 Corinthians 7 Commentary

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2 CORINTHIANS - PAUL'S MINISTRY IN THE LIGHT OF THE INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

[A Third Chart](#)

## Overview of Second Corinthians

2Co 1:1-7:16 Character of Paul	2Co 8:1-9:15 Collection for the Saints	2Co 10:1-12:21 Credentials of Paul
Testimonial & Didactic	Practical	Apologetic
Past: Misunderstanding & Explanation	Present: Practical Project	Future: Anxieties
Apostle's Conciliation, Ministry & Exhortations	Apostle's Solicitation for Judean Saints	Apostle's Vindication of Himself
Forgiveness, Reconciliation Gratitude	Confidence	Vindication
Ephesus to Macedonia: Change of Itinerary Explained	Macedonia: Preparation for Visit to Corinth	To Corinth: Certainty and Imminence of the Visit
2Co 1:1-7:16	2Co 8:1-9:15	2Co 10:1-12:21

[2Corinthians written ~ 56-57AD - see Chronological Table of Paul's Life and Ministry](#)

Adapted & modified from [Jensen's Survey of the New Testament \(Highly Recommended Resource\)](#) & [Wilkinson's Talk Thru the Bible](#)

## INTRODUCTIONS TO SECOND CORINTHIANS:

- **IRVING JENSEN** - [Introduction and study tips](#) - excellent preliminary resource - scroll to page 1877 (Notes on both 1-2 Cor begin on p 1829)
- **JOHN MACARTHUR** [2 Corinthians Introduction - same as in the Study Bible](#)
- **JAMES VAN DINE** [2 Corinthians - Author, Purpose, Outline, Argument](#)
- **CHARLES SWINDOLL** - [2 Corinthians Overview](#)
- **MARK SEIFRID** - [The Message of Second Corinthians: 2 Corinthians as the Legitimation of the Apostle](#)
- **J VERNON MCGEE** - [2 Corinthians Introduction](#)
- **DAN WALLACE** - [2 Corinthians: Introduction, Argument, and Outline](#)
- **DAVID MALICK** - [An Introduction To Second Corinthians](#)

**2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that could defile the body and the spirit, and thus accomplish holiness out of reverence for God.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:1 τα τας ο ν χοντες τ σ παγγελ ας, γαπητο, καθαρ σωμεν αυτο σ π παντ σ μολυσμο σαρκ σ κα πνε ματος, πιτελο ντες γιωσ νην ν φ β θεο.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:1 Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:1 Having, then, these promises, beloved, may we cleanse ourselves from every pollution of flesh and spirit, perfecting sanctification in the fear of God;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, dear friends, since we have such promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, completing our sanctification in the fear of God.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:1 Because we have these promises, loved ones, let us cleanse ourselves from every contamination of flesh and spirit. In fear of God completely instantiate holiness.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since these promises have been made to us, my dear friends, we should wash ourselves clean of everything that pollutes either body or spirit, bringing our sanctification to completion in the fear of God.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, we need to cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit and live a holy life in the fear of God.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:1 Because God, then, will give us such rewards, dear brothers, let us make ourselves clean from all evil of flesh and spirit, and become completely holy in the fear of God.

- **Therefore** - 2Cor 1:20; 2Co 6:16, 17,18; Ro 5:20+, Ro 5:21+; Ro 6:1-2+, Ro 6:3-4+, Ro 6:5-10+, Ro 6:11+; Hebrews 4:1+; 2Pe 1:4+, 2Pe 1:5+, 2Pe 1:6+, 2Pe 1:7+, 2Pe 1:8+
- **let us cleanse ourselves:** Ps 51:10; 119:9; Prs 20:9; 30:12; Isa 1:16; Jer 13:27; Ezek 18:30, 31, 32; Ezek 36:25,26; Mt 5:8+; Mt 12:33; Mt 23:25,26; Lk 11:39,40; Titus 2:11+, Titus 2:12-+, Titus 2:13-+; Titus 2:14+; Titus 2:15+; Jas 4:8; 1Pe 1:22+; 1Pe 2:11+; 1Jn 1:7,9; 3:3)
- **from all defilement of flesh and spirit:** Isa 55:7 Jer 4:14 1Co 6:20 Eph 2:3 1Th 5:23
- **perfecting:** Mt 5:48+; Ep 4:12+, Eph 4:13+; Phil 3:12+, Phil 3:13+, Phil 3:14+, Phil 3:15+; 1Th 3:13+; 1Th 4:7+; Heb 12:23+; 1Pe 5:10+
- **in the fear of God:** 2Ch 19:9 Ps 19:9 Pr 8:13 16:6 Ac 9:31 Heb 12:28
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

[Click here for in depth commentary on 2 Corinthians 7:1](#)

#### Related Passages:

1 Peter 2:11+ Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to **abstain from** fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

2 Peter 1:4+ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

2 Timothy 2:19+ Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord **abstain** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) from wickedness."

Leviticus 11:44-45+, For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate (Hebrew verb qadash signifies an act or a state in which people or things are set aside for use in the worship of God) yourselves (Hebrew = nephesh = literally "your souls") therefore, and be holy; for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. 'For I am the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy.'" (cf Lev 19:2, 20:26)

Ps 128:1 How blessed is everyone who **fears** (Lxx **phobeo** is present tense - lifestyle) the LORD, who **walks** (In the Lxx **poreuo** in present tense - lifestyle) in His ways. (cf Ps 112:1)

## GOD'S PROMISES MOTIVATE SAINT'S PRACTICES

This verse most naturally goes with the preceding passages and therefore is an example of a less optimal chapter break (Verse numbers and chapters of course were added by men, not inspired by God!)

Note that cleansing from defilement and perfecting holiness (the two sides of sanctification) are motivated (1) by God's promises and (2) by a reverential, filial fear of God.

**Therefore** ([oun](#)) is a **term of conclusion** indicating that the statement it introduces is an inference drawn from the context, usually the preceding context. Always stop and ask the question "What is the **therefore** there for?" This conjunction clearly refers to the **seven promises** just mentioned at the end of 2Cor 6 (cf Nu 15:37-40ff). Promises are in effect privileges which brings responsibilities! S Lewis Johnson says "Conduct and calling are to agree."

Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, (**Promise #1**) "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND (**Promise #2**) WALK AMONG THEM; AND (**Promise #3**) I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND (**Promise #4**) THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And (**Promise #5**) I will welcome you. 18 "And (**Promise #6**) I will be a father to you, And (**Promise #7**) you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty. (2Cor 6:16-18+)

**C H Spurgeon comments on these promises:** The promises referred to are mentioned in the previous chapter.

1. Divine indwelling: "I will dwell in them" (2 Cor. 6:16).
2. Divine manifestation: "I will walk in them."
3. Divine covenanting: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

4. Divine acceptance: "I will receive you" (6:17).

5. Divine adoption: "I... will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (6:18).

These promises are already fulfilled in our experience. ([Sermon Notes](#))

**Elisabeth Elliot** - "God has never promised to solve our problems. He has not promised to answer our questions... He has promised to go with us."

**Hudson Taylor** - "There is a living God. He has spoken in the Bible. He means what he says and will do all He has promised."

**Having these promises, beloved - Having (echo)** in the present tense pictures the preceding promises as the continual possession of the saints. The promises are in the Bible, so one needs to read them and then needs to meditate on them for as a man believes, in such a way will he behave (Pr 23:7). **Calvin** put it well when he said that "Distrust (AND I WOULD ADD DISOBEDIENCE) is cured by meditating upon the promises of God." which Paul had said earlier "as many as are the promises of God, in Him (JESUS) they are yes." (2Co 1:20+)

**THOUGHT** - If one really believes these promises from God are true (AND THEY ARE!), this belief will serve to motivate and empower one's choices (enabled by the Holy Spirit - Php 2:13NLT+ Who supernaturally energizes this desire) and ultimately one's overall conduct and lifestyle. In short, possessing God's potential promises is a precious privilege but we must act upon them by faith and enabled by grace for them to become reality. As **Gurnall** wrote "Oh, it is sad for a poor Christian to stand at the door of the promise in the dark night of affliction **afraid to draw the latch!**"

His every word of grace is strong  
As that which built the skies;  
The voice that rolls the stars along  
Speaks all the promises.  
Isaac Watts

**F B Hole** writes that "WE HAVE THEN these striking promises from the lips of God. If we are separate from the world, and face whatever loss that may involve, we shall find God acting as Father toward us, and we shall enter consciously into the good and sweetness of the relationship in which we are set. ([2 Corinthians](#))

**Lenski** says "God's promise is better than any bond or note on any bank, financial institution, or most stable government, for all these may have to repudiate their bond; God never does so."

#### Related Resources:

- [What are the promises of God? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the greatest promises in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How do I know which of God's promises are for me? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are some of the exceedingly great and precious promises mentioned in 2 Peter 1:4? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Postiff** - 1. To cleanse. As Christians, we still have sinful tendencies. They need to be continuously cleaned on to eliminate further filth from our flesh and spirit. This is a comprehensive statement. Whatever kind of sinful thing, inside or outside, tangible or intangible—whatever—has to be cleaned out! 2. To perfect holiness. We do this in the fear of God. We reverence God. We realize that we are not perfectly holy and can improve in this area. Notice that the Bible gives the reason for us to do this cleaning and perfecting work: we should do so not in order to be saved, but because we have the promises!

**Let us cleanse (katharizo) ourselves from all defilement (molusmos) of flesh (sark) and spirit (pneuma)** - "Let us" is an exhortation. Notice the pattern - Paul's present exhortation is based on his preceding revelation. **Let us cleanse (katharizo)** is in the aorist tense which while not a command, nevertheless calls for a decisive, even immediate (urgent) action. **Let us cleanse** is also in the active voice which calls for the one to make a volitional choice, a choice of their will, a choice not be enabled by the fallen flesh but by continual reliance on the Holy Spirit Who supernaturally gives us the desire and the power to obey the exhortation (Php 2:13NLT+). Paul says "Don't delay to make a clean and complete break from defilement!" Note **ourselves** is a reflexive pronoun, indicating one needs to focus on their own faults not those of other saints! Also in using this pronoun Paul includes himself in the exhortation. **All** means **all** without exception. God is holy and is calling His sons and daughters to be holy as He is holy (1Pe 1:14-16). In a similar charge Jesus called his hearers "to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:48) Peter adds another reason believers can and should cleanse themselves for they have "escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Pe 1:4)

The **flesh and spirit** could be a figure symbolizing the whole person, the **flesh** representing the external (acts) and the **spirit** the internal (thoughts cf Pr 23:7) and together calling for entire man is to be cleansed! Holistic holiness so to speak!

Sow a thought, reap an act;  
Sow an act, reap a habit;  
Sow a habit, reap a character.

**McGee** - When I receive the Word in faith and I act upon that Word, I am cleansed from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit. This is what the Lord Jesus meant when He said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The best bar of soap in the world is the Word of God. It will really clean us up. The Holy Spirit enables us to deal with the sin in our lives.

**Warren Wiersbe** makes a good point writing that "Whenever we sin, we must pray, **Wash me**" (Ps 51:2, 7); but sometimes God says to us, "**Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean**" (Isa 1:16). When we seek forgiveness, God washes the record clean (1Jn 1:9); but God will not do for us what we must do for ourselves. Only we can put out of our lives those things that defile us, and we know what they are. It might mean cleaning out our library (Acts 19:18-20+), our cassette and CD collection, the magazine rack, or perhaps the TV viewing schedule (**ED: OR OUR "MOUSE CLICKS" ON THE INTERNET!**). We must separate ourselves from whatever defiles us and grieves the Father (2Cor. 6:14-7:1; James 4:7-8). ([Bible Exposition Commentary on OT](#))

**Rob Salvato** says **defilement** speaks of "mud on our wedding garment" and recalls to mind the **Bride of Christ** cleansing herself in the Revelation ""Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride **has made herself ready** (the verb *hetoimazo* here carries idea of willingness and eagerness as well as of readiness)" And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev 19:7-8+)

**Martin Luther** wrote "What greater rebellion, impiety, or insult to God can there be than not to believe His promises?" And if we truly believe His promises, we will strive in to obey through His power working in us.

**C H Spurgeon** - The sight of the promises themselves is good for the eye of faith: the more we study the words of grace, the more grace shall we derive from the words.

**John MacArthur** - Paul calls believers not only to cleanse themselves from sin and immorality but especially, in this context, from all associations with false religion. ([2 Corinthians](#))

**Adam Clarke** - Let us apply to him for the requisite grace of purification; and avoid every thing in spirit and practice which is opposite to the doctrine of God, and which has a tendency to pollute the soul.

**Warren Wiersbe** - Because of God's gracious promises, we have some spiritual responsibilities (2 Cor. 7:1). We must cleanse ourselves once and for all of anything that defiles us. It is not enough to ask God to cleanse us; we must clean up our own lives and get rid of those things that make it easy for us to sin. No believer can legislate for any other believer; each one knows the problems of his own heart and life. Too often Christians deal with symptoms and not causes. We keep confessing the same sins because we have not gotten to the root of the trouble and "cleansed ourselves." Perhaps there is "filthiness of the flesh," some pet sin that "feeds" the old nature (Ro 13:14-see note on make provision for the flesh).. Or it may be "filthiness of the spirit," an attitude that is sinful. The Prodigal Son was guilty of sins of the flesh, but his "moral" elder brother was guilty of sins of the spirit. He could not even get along with his own father (see Luke 15:11-21). But cleansing ourselves is only half of the responsibility; we must also be "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). This is a constant process as we grow in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). It is important to be balanced. The Pharisees were keen on putting away sin, but they neglected to perfect holiness. But it is foolish to try to perfect holiness if there is known sin in our lives. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**F B Hole** writes that "Now having such promises we are exhorted to purify ourselves, and thus perfect holiness in the fear of God. Notice that it says, "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." This is a very important word, and very sweeping. Our attention has just been directed to the necessity of a purification from all fellowship with the world in outward things. Yet if we merely practiced separation in outward things, confining ourselves to that, we should just become Pharisees; a most undesirable thing. The separation we are to practice goes much deeper. All filthiness or pollution of the flesh is to be avoided, and all filthiness of the spirit too. Both forms of separation are called for; the **inward** and the **outward** too. The **outward without the inward** is just hypocrisy. The **inward without the outward** is at best a very defective thing. At the worst it descends to the plight in which Lot was found in Sodom, though not himself descending to the shocking morals of that city. Abraham was in the happy path of God's will; clean outside the place as well as free from the evil. There are the pollutions of the world: the pollutions of the flesh: the pollutions of the spirit: the last of the three the most subtle of all, because the most refined form of sin. May God awaken us to great carefulness as to it. Holiness when carried to its perfection covers all three. But we are to be carrying it on towards its perfection even now. May God help us to do so. ([2 Corinthians](#))

**Brian Bell** - We should ask God to cleanse us (Ps.51:2,7 "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin...

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.") But we should also cleanse ourselves! We need to "put away" things that defile. Isa1:16 "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil," James 4:8 "Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." So who does the cleaning then? Both! You need to empty the alcohol out of your house; get the stash out of your secret hiding place; your porn sites out of your "favorites" file, & blocked off your computer! Maybe it's cleaning up the files of your mind. Maybe it is stopping the videotape in your mind from playing & replaying how to payback those who have hurt you. What do you need to take the scrub brush too in your life? Question - Do you take out your garbage weekly, or do you let it pile up for the month? ([Regret or Repent?](#))

**Richard Sibbes** (Puritan writer) says that "The promises, as they have a quickening, so they have a purging power; and that upon sound reasoning. Doth God promise that he will be my Father and I shall be his son? and doth he promise me life everlasting? and doth that estate require purity? and no unclean thing shall come there? Certainly, these promises being apprehended by faith, as they have a quickening power to comfort, so they purge with holiness. We may not think to carry our filthiness to heaven. Doth the swearer think to carry his blasphemies thither? Filthy persons and liars are banished thence; there is "no unclean thing." He that hath these promises purgeth himself and "perfecteth holiness in the fear of God." "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).

**A.B.Simpson** – "When an observatory is about to be built, the site selected is always on some high mountain. The aim is to find a place where there is a clear, unobstructed view of the heavens. Similarly, faith requires for its heavenly vision the highlands of holiness and separation, the pure sky of a consecrated life." ( A. B. Simpson in A Larger Christian Life. Christianity Today, Vol. 41, no. 8)

"Sleep with clean hands, either kept clean all day by integrity  
or washed clean at night by repentance."

-- John Donne, Christian Reader, Vol. 32, no. 5.

**Albert Barnes** - While it is true that all purifying influence and all holiness proceed from God, it is also true that the effect of all the influences of the Holy Spirit is to excite us to diligence, to purify our own hearts, and to urge us to make strenuous efforts to overcome our own sins. He who expects to be made pure without any effort of his own, will never become pure; and he who ever becomes holy, will become so in consequence of strenuous efforts to resist the evil of his own heart, and to become like God. The argument here is, that we have the promises of God to aid us. We do not go about the work in our own strength. It is not a work in which we are to have no aid. But it is a work which God desires, and where he will give us all the aid which we need. ([Barnes' Notes on the NT](#))

**C H Spurgeon** comments that let us **cleanse ourselves** speaks to...

1. Personality: "Let us cleanse ourselves."
2. Activity. We must continue vigorously to cleanse both body and mind.
3. Universality: "From all filthiness."
4. Thoroughness: "Of the flesh and spirit."

If God dwells in us, let us make the house clean for so pure a God.

Has the Lord entered into covenant with us that we should be his people? Does not this involve a call upon us to live as becometh godliness?

Are we his children? Let us not grieve our Father, but imitate him as dear children ([Sermon Notes](#))

**Perfecting (epiteleo) holiness (hagiosune) in the fear of God - Perfecting (epiteleo)** is in the present tense and active voice calling for the believer to make a continual personal choice of their will. **Perfecting** is a process, not an arrival in this lifetime. **Holiness** is our goal and should be the continual desire of our heart. Paul's point is that motivated by God's promises coupled with a holy **fear of God** and enabled by His Spirit (Php 2:13NLT+) this direction toward the goal of "perfection" is to be our daily practice (aka progressive sanctification) until the Lord returns (Rapture vs Second Coming) or we are called home to Him. There is no "graduation" from the school of holiness in this lifetime! Graduation day is our glorification day! This verse also obliterates the teaching of so-called "**entire sanctification**" because the battle for holiness is never complete in this life.

In other words, as saints ("holy ones", set apart ones), believers are in Christ and have His perfect positional holiness ([1Cor 1:30](#), NIV) but it is the duty of each saint to daily, continually choose to cleanse oneself and as we are doing this (controlled by the Holy Spirit, not legalistic constraints), we will be becoming in effect a more and more like Jesus (conformed to His image) and less and less like the world.

**Warren Wiersbe** gives an important caveat noting that "The Pharisees were keen on putting away sin (Mt 23:23), but they neglected

to perfect holiness. But it is foolish to try to perfect holiness if there is known sin in our lives. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Jesus rebuked the hypocritical, legalistic Pharisees who "clean (same verb used in 2Co 7:1 = [\(katharizo\)](#)) the outside of the cup, and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean ([\(katharizo\)](#)) the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean ([\(katharos\)](#) also." (Mt 23:25-26)

The **fear of God** is not a shaking fear, but a holy fear, a reverential fear and awe of His majesty and glory, a filial fear that shrinks from wanting to displease the One Who is our Father, our [Abba](#). Holy fear is a strong deterrent against unholiness. We are reminded of Job who "was blameless, upright, fearing God (WHICH MOTIVATED HIM) and turning away from evil." (Job 1:1) Solomon writes "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil." (Pr 8:13a) For much more in depth discussion of this vitally important and sadly seldom taught truth see [The Fear of the Lord](#) and 4 excellent [Mp3's by Jerry Bridges on the "Fear of God"](#)

**C H Spurgeon on fear of God** - (1) The **fear of God** casts out the fear of man and thus saves us from one prolific cause of sin. (2) The **fear of God** casts out the love of sin, and with the root, the fruit is sure to go. (3). The **fear of God** works in and through love to him, and this is a great factor of holiness. (4) The **fear of God** is the root of faith, worship, obedience, and so it produces all manner of holy service. ([Sermon Notes](#))

If God gives Himself to us in promises, we must give ourselves to Him in duties.

Divine revelation calls for a supernaturally enabled response.

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**Promises** (1860) (**epaggelia/epangelia** from **epí** = intensifies verbal meaning + **aggélio** = to tell, declare) originally referred to an announcement or declaration (especially of a favorable message) but in later Greek came to mean a declaration to do something with the implication of obligation to carry out what is stated (thus a promise or pledge). **Epaggelia** was used in secular Greek as a legal term denoting summons, and then came to mean a promise to do or give something. In the NT **epaggelia** is used primarily of the promises of God and represent His solemn pledge to perform or grant a specified thing. Promise thus speaks of the assurance that God will do something...

For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him (Christ) they are yes; wherefore also by Him (Christ) is our Amen to the glory of God through us. (2Cor 1:20) (In other words, the promises of God find their certain fulfillment, their "Yes", in Christ and we give our concurrence by saying "Amen". Or as John Boys has written "The resurrection of Christ is the Amen of all his promises." Meyer adds this exhortation "Learn to put your hand on all spiritual blessings in Christ and say 'Mine'." And all God's people said "Amen"!)

**Beloved** (27) (**agapetos** from **agapao** = love; **agape**) means beloved, dear, very much loved. **Agapetos** is love called out of one's heart by preciousness of the object loved. In Scripture **agapetos** is used only of Christians as united with God or with each other in love. God the Father uses this same word describing Jesus declaring that "This is My **beloved** Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Mt 3:17+) In fact the first 9 uses in the NT are of God the Father speaking of Christ, His beloved Son. This gives you some idea of the preciousness of the word **beloved**! This truth makes it even more incredible that Paul described the saints at troubled church at Corinth as **beloved**. In short, by addressing the saints at Corinth as **beloved**, Paul is conveying the deep feeling he has in his heart towards them. And recall that the Corinthian church was far from problem free! Grace is truly an amazing thing! All Paul's uses of **agapetos** - Ro 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5; 8,9, 12; 1Co 4:14, 17; 10:14; 15:58; 2Co 7:1; 12:19; Eph. 5:1; 6:21; Phil 2:12; 4:1; Col 1:7; 4:7, 9, 14; 1Th 2:8; 1Ti 6:2; 2Ti 1:2; Philemon 1:1, 1:16)

**Let us cleanse** (2511) (**katharizo** from **katharos** = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - **catharsis** = emotional or physical purging, **cathartic** = substance used to induce a purging, **Cathar** = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members) means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity. [Click here](#) (and here) for more background on the important Biblical concept of **clean** and **cleaning**. In secular Greek **katharizo** occurs in inscriptions for ceremonial cleansing in some of the false religious systems.

Figuratively **katharizo** is used in the NT to describe cleansing from ritual contamination or impurity (Acts 10:15) as well as the cleansing **lepers** from ceremonial uncleanness (Mt 8:2-3, et al). Another figurative use in 1John 1:9 (cf James 4:8, Hebrews 10:2-+) describes the purifying or cleansing from sin and a guilty conscience thus making one acceptable to God and reestablishing fellowship.

In short this word group (**katharizo**, **katharos** = pure, **kathairō** = prune) conveys the idea of physical, religious, and moral cleanliness or purity in such senses as clean, free from stains or shame, and free from

adulteration.

For a good sense of the meaning of **katharizo**, study the NT uses in context (or do the quick study by holding pointer over each reference) noting who does the cleansing and from what. Observe for God's sovereignty and man's responsibility (Mt 8:2,3; 10:8; 11:5; 23:25,26; Mk 1:40, 41, 42; 7:19; Lk 4:27; 5:12,13; 7:22; Lk 11:39; 17:14,17 Acts 10:15; 11:9; 15:9; 2Co 7:1 Eph 5:26; Titus 2:14; Heb 9:14, 22, 23; James 4:8; 1Jn 1:7, 9 )

**Defilement** (3436) (**molusmos** from [moluno](#) = stain or soil/smear as with mud ~ defile in a religious or cultic sense - see uses of moluno in 1Co 8:7, Rev 3:4, 14:4) describes that which stains, defiles or soils and thus produces foulness; dirtiness; uncleanness. Defilement is the corruption of morals, principles or character produced by the corrupting influence of fleshly desires (cf 2Pe 1:4+). The related verb [moluno](#) is used twice in Revelation 3:4; 14:4 and once in 1Co 8:7 describing defiling the conscience through the indiscriminate eating of meat sacrificed to idols (compare Jer 23:15). This brings us back full circle to Paul's opening injunction to stop entering into unequal partnerships with unbelievers (2Cor 6:14). The close association of molusmos with idolatry suggests that Paul is thinking especially of defilement that comes from dining in the local temples, membership in the pagan cults, ritual prostitution, active engagement in pagan worship and the like.

**Perfecting** (2005) (**epiteleo** from **epí** = intensifies meaning, in the sense of meaning "fully" + **teleo** = to complete, bring not just to the end but to the destined goal from **télos** = end, goal. Note: **télos** originally meant the turning point, hinge, the culminating point at which one stage ends and another begins; later the goal, the end. Marriage and death are in this sense both a **telos**) conveys the intensified meaning to **fully complete** or to fully reach the intended **goal** in the sense of successfully completing what has been begun (Gal 3:3, Ro 15:28+), to fully finish this "race of grace", to press on to a successful finish.

**Holiness** (42) (**hagiosune** from **hagios** = holy - from "a" = privative signifies the absence of a quality + "ge" = earth and thus hagios = literally that which is separated from the earth!) basically refers to separation from what is common or unclean, and consecration unto God (Lev 20:24-26 Acts 6:13; 21:28). **Hagiosune** refers to **holiness** not in the sense of describing the process of becoming "holy" but rather the quality, state or condition of exhibiting an ethical quality that reveals itself in purity or integrity of one's character and conduct. Holiness is a state of spiritual soundness and unimpaired virtue. **Hagiosune** refers to a quality of life expressed in careful obedience to God. In fact holiness is a chief attribute of God and a quality to be developed in His people.

Holy is from the Saxon word "halig" which means "whole" or "sound". Holiness then is a general term used to indicate moral wholeness. Tyndale Bible Dictionary adds that "The primary OT word for holiness means "to cut" or "to separate." Fundamentally, holiness is a cutting off or separation from what is unclean and a consecration to what is pure."

Separation from the world involves more than keeping our distance from sinners but also means staying close to God. More than avoiding entertainment that leads to sin, holiness extends into how we spend our time and money. There is no way to separate ourselves totally from all sinful influences. Nevertheless, we are to resist the sin around us, without either giving up or giving in. When you know what God wants you to do, make a clean break with sinful practices. But beware of the trap of falling prey to keeping a list of do's and don'ts or you will fall into the bondage of legalism.

**Fear** (5401) (**phobos** from verb **phébomai** = to flee from or to be startled) refers first to flight, to alarm, to fright or to terror (of the shaking type) (cf. Mt 14:26; Luke 21:26; 1Co 2:3). This type of fear is connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It speaks of the terror which seizes one when danger appears. On the other hand **phobos** as used in the present context refers to reverence, respect and honor or in short the attitude believers should have toward a holy God (cf. Acts 2:43; 9:31; 2Co 5:11).

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### **Jerry Bridges - HOLINESS IN SPIRIT 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1**

A number of years ago in campus evangelism, we used an illustration calculated to make our collegiate audiences vividly aware that they were personally sinners. We would say, "If I could flash on a screen before us tonight all of your thoughts of this past week, you would have to leave town." This remark not only made the point, but always drew a laugh. But for the Christian such a charge is no laughing matter. Our thoughts are just as important to God as our actions, and are known to God as clearly as our actions (Psalm 139:1-4, 1 Samuel 16:7).

Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount that God's commands are intended not only to regulate outward conduct, but inner disposition as well. It is not enough that we do not kill; we must also not hate. It is not enough that we do not commit adultery; we

must not even entertain lustful looks and thoughts.

Just as we must learn to bring the appetites of our bodies under control, so we must also learn to bring our thought lives under obedience to Jesus Christ. In fact, Paul warns us against misguided and wrongly motivated attempts to control the body that leave our thought lives unrestrained (Colossians 2:23). It is possible to curb the natural appetites of the body outwardly and yet be filled with all manner of inner defilement.

The Bible indicates that our thought lives ultimately determine our character. Solomon said, “For as he thinks within himself, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7, NASB). An old well-known verse puts it this way:

Sow a thought, reap an act;  
Sow an act, reap a habit;  
Sow a habit, reap a character.

It is because of the importance of our thought lives that Paul said, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things” (Philippians 4:8).

As Christians we are no longer to be conformed to the pattern of this world but we are to be renewed in our minds (Romans 12:1–2, Ephesians 4:23, 1 Peter 1:14). Holiness begins in our minds and works out to our actions. This being true, what we allow to enter our minds is critically important.

The television programs we watch, the movies we may attend, the books and magazines we read, the music we listen to, and the conversations we have all affect our minds. We need to evaluate the effects of these avenues honestly, using Philippians 4:8 as a standard. Are the thoughts stimulated by these various avenues true? Are they pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy?

The world around us constantly seeks to conform our minds to its sinful ways. It is earnest and pressing in its endeavors. It will entice and persuade us (Proverbs 1:10–14). When we resist, it will ridicule and abuse us as “old-fashioned” and “puritanical” (1 Peter 4:4).

Too many Christians, instead of resisting, are more and more giving ground to the world’s constant pressure. A few years ago sincere Christians were quite selective about the movies they attended, if they attended them at all. Today the same movies that were avoided are being shown on television in the living rooms of Christians across the nation. A friend of mine told me of a young couple in full-time Christian work who came to him wanting to know if it was wrong to attend X-rated movies! That the question should even be entertained illustrates the degree to which the world has infected our minds.

The music we listen to often carries the message of the world, and the world uses the medium of music to squeeze us into its mold. And a Christian cannot help being gradually influenced if he continually listens to the world’s music.

Perhaps it should go without saying that Christians are to abstain from indulging in or listening to suggestive stories and jokes. But Paul could not take this for granted among the early churches, and neither can we in this century. Listen to Paul’s clear warning on the subject: “But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving” (Ephesians 5:3–4). “Not even a hint of immorality” places any suggestive speech whatsoever outside the bounds of a holy walk.

Another stimulus to impure thoughts we must be alert for is what our eyes see. Jesus warned against the lustful look (Matthew 5:28). Job made a covenant with his eyes (Job 31:1). David’s wanton look was almost fatal to his spiritual life (2 Samuel 11:2). Not only must we guard our own eyes; we must be careful that we are not the source of temptation to others. For this reason, modesty of dress and actions is required among both men and women (1 Timothy 2:9; 5:2).

But Philippians 4:8 speaks to more than just immoral and unclean thoughts. Our thoughts must not only be pure—they must also be true, lovely, and praiseworthy. Just as we can commit adultery in our hearts (Matthew 5:28), so we can also commit murder in our hearts (Matthew 5:21–22).

In one of his letters Paul listed some acts of the sinful nature. These included defilements of the body—sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. Others in the list defile the spirit: hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, and so on. We must purify ourselves not only from the gross sins of the body, but also from the more “acceptable” sins of the spirit.

Alas, here again we Christians have so often failed miserably. Focusing on our particular group’s list of do’s and don’ts, we neglect the inner life where envy, pride, bitterness, and a critical, unforgiving spirit may reign unchecked.

The elder brother in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15) is a classic example of one who led an exemplary outward life but who was consumed by a spirit of envy and self-righteousness. He could claim never to have disobeyed his father's commandments, yet his jealousy and anger over his father's joy in the return of his prodigal brother marks him to this day as an example to be shunned rather than followed.

The spirit of envy was the root of King Saul's unrelenting warfare against David. Initially Saul was highly pleased with David and set him over his men of war. But one day Saul heard the women of Israel singing, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7). Saul was very angry that they had ascribed ten thousands to David and to him only thousands. And the Scripture says, "Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on" (1 Samuel 18:9, NASB). God has placed each one of us in the body of Christ as it has pleased Him (1 Corinthians 12:18), and has assigned to each of us a place in life (1 Corinthians 7:17). To some God has assigned a place of prominence, to others a place of obscurity; to some a place of wealth, to others a place of daily struggle to make ends meet. But regardless of our station in life or place in the Body, there is always the temptation to envy someone else. The elder brother would one day inherit all his father's possessions, yet he became jealous over a banquet to celebrate his brother's return. Saul was king over all Israel but could not stand someone else receiving more praise than he.

The cure for the sin of envy and jealousy is to find our contentment in God. Asaph in Psalm 73 was envious of the wicked as he saw their apparent prosperity (verse 3). He felt his pursuit of a holy life was in vain (verse 13). Only when he was enabled to say to God, "Earth has nothing I desire besides you" (verse 25), was he delivered from the sin of envy.

Another defilement of spirit that has shipwrecked many Christians is bitterness. Bitterness arises in our hearts when we do not trust in the sovereign rule of God in our lives. If ever anyone had a reason to be bitter it was Joseph. Sold by his jealous brothers into slavery, falsely accused by his master's immoral wife, and forgotten by one he had helped in prison, Joseph never lost sight of the fact that God was in control of all that happened to him. In the end he was able to say to his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20).

We can become bitter against God or against other people. Asaph was bitter against God because he felt God was not giving him a fair shake in life (Psalm 73:21). Job was bitter because he felt God was not recognizing his righteousness and even came to the place where his attitude was described as, "It profits a man nothing when he tries to please God" (Job 34:9).

Bitterness toward people is the result of an unforgiving spirit. Someone has wronged us, either apparently or actually, and we refuse to forgive that person. Instead we harbor thoughts of bitterness toward the person. We refuse to forgive because we will not recognize that God has forgiven us of far, far greater wrongs. We are like the servant who, having just been forgiven a debt of several million dollars, had a fellow servant thrown into prison over a debt of a few dollars (Matthew 18:21–35).

Closely akin to bitterness is the spirit of retaliation. When we are wronged, the tendency is to retaliate—often in our minds if not in actions. When David was fleeing the insurrection of his son Absalom in Jerusalem, Shimei of the family of Saul came out to curse David and throw stones at him. One of David's men wanted to retaliate by killing Shimei, but David restrained him with these words: "Leave him alone; let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. It may be that the Lord will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today" (2 Samuel 16:11–12).

Paul wrote, "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge, I will repay,' says the Lord" (Romans 12:19). Peter said of our Lord, "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23). This is the way to cleanse ourselves from the defiling spirit of retaliation: to entrust ourselves to Him who judges justly and who said, "It is Mine to avenge, I will repay."

One of the most difficult defilements of spirit to deal with is the critical spirit. A critical spirit has its root in pride. Because of the "plank" of pride in our own eye we are not capable of dealing with the "speck" of need in someone else. We are often like the Pharisee who, completely unconscious of his own need, prayed, "God, I thank you that I am not like other men" (Luke 18:11). We are quick to see—and to speak of—the faults of others, but slow to see our own needs. How sweetly we relish the opportunity to speak critically of someone else—even when we are unsure of our facts. We forget that "a man who stirs up dissension among brothers" by criticizing one to another is one of the "six things which the Lord hates" (Proverbs 6:16–19).

All of these attitudes—envy, jealousy, bitterness, an unforgiving and retaliatory spirit, and a critical and gossiping spirit—defile us and keep us from being holy before God. They are just as evil as immorality, drunkenness, and debauchery. Therefore, we must work diligently at rooting out these sinful attitudes from our minds. Often we are not even aware our attitudes are sinful. We cloak these defiling thoughts under the guise of justice and righteous indignation. But we need to pray daily for humility and honesty to see these sinful attitudes for what they really are, and then for grace and discipline to root them out of our minds and replace them with thoughts pleasing to God. ([\*\*The Pursuit of Holiness\*\*](#) - THIS BOOK IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED - TAKE TIME TO READ IT AND THEN PRACTICE THE PRINCIPLES IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT)

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**Holy Blue** (OR "HOW TO CATCH AN ERMINE) - In the forests of northern Europe and Asia lives little animal called the ermine, known for his snow-white fur in winter. He instinctively protects his white coat against anything that would soil it. Fur hunters take advantage of this unusual trait of the ermine. They don't set a snare to catch him, but instead they find his home, which is usually a cleft in a rock or a hollow in an old tree. They smear the entrance and interior with grime. Then the hunters set their dogs loose to find and chase the ermine. The frightened animal flees toward home but doesn't enter because of the filth. Rather than soil his white coat, he is trapped by the dogs and captured while preserving his purity. For the ermine, purity is more precious than life. The Lord wants His people to keep themselves separated from the filth of this world at all cost. In (Nu 15:38,40) the Lord told the Jews to put a blue thread on the borders of their clothes. When they saw the blue, they were to remember God's holy purpose for their lives and to keep a distance from sin. Do we remind ourselves often of our high and holy purpose for living? The best way to live in the world is to live above it.- Henry G Bosch ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**Jon Courson** - 2 Corinthians 7:1 - For the Old Testament picture of this New Testament principle, turn to 2 Kings 5...

In the Old Testament, leprosy is a very appropriate picture of sin, for it begins seemingly insignificantly, but spreads insidiously. When Naaman, a prominent Syrian ruler who had contracted this terrible disease was told by his servant girl that there was a prophet in Israel who could cure him, he sent a message to the king of Israel, who, in turn, sent for Elisha. Expecting Elisha to pronounce some sort of magical incantation over him, Naaman was 'wroth' when Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan River seven times. After all, Naaman thought the Jordan nothing more than a muddy creek compared to the rivers of his own country. Thus, Scripture says he 'turned and went away in a rage.'

But his servants didn't give up so easily. 'If Elisha had asked you to do something difficult, you would have done it,' they said to Naaman. 'Therefore, why not see what happens if you comply with this seemingly simple command?' So Naaman did indeed dip himself into the Jordan seven times—the number of completion—and he came out healed and whole.

Likewise, we who are eaten by the leprosy of sin must dip in the water over and over and over again. What water? Didn't David say in Psalm 119 that a young man shall cleanse his way by taking heed according to the Word? Didn't Jesus say in John 15 that we are clean through the Word which He has spoken unto us? Didn't Paul declare in Ephesians 5 that we are washed by the water which is the Word of God?

Let the Word of God cleanse you and an amazing thing will happen. You may never become a scholar of theology, but as you submerge yourself in Scripture, the leprosy which once gnawed on you will begin to be cleansed from you. To those who are struggling with their flesh and looking for a quick answer, we need to say, 'Plunge into Scripture. Plug into Bible study. And keep at it over and over and over again—for it's God's Word which will cleanse you and wash away the sin which hounds you.' ([A Day's Journey](#))

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A number of years ago in campus evangelism, we used an illustration calculated to make our collegiate audiences vividly aware that they were personally sinners. We would say, "If I could flash on a screen before us tonight all of your thoughts of this past week, you would have to leave town." This remark not only made the point, but always drew a laugh. But for the Christian such a charge is no laughing matter. Our thoughts are just as important to God as our actions, and are known to God as clearly as our actions (Psalm 139:1–4, 1 Samuel 16:7).

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**Oswald Chambers** - [Shall I rouse myself up to this?](#)

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Cor. 7:1.

"Having therefore these promises." I claim the fulfilment of God's promises, and rightly, but that is only the human side; the Divine side is that through the promises I recognize God's claim on me. For instance, am I realizing that my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, or have I a habit of body that plainly will not bear the light of God on it? By sanctification the Son of God is formed in me, then I have to transform my natural life into a spiritual life by obedience to Him. God educates us down to the scruple. When He begins to check, do not confer with flesh and blood, cleanse yourself at once. Keep yourself cleansed in your daily walk.

I have to cleanse myself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit until both are in accord with the nature of God. Is the mind of my spirit in perfect agreement with the life of the Son of God in me, or am I insubordinate in intellect? Am I forming the mind of Christ, Who never spoke from His right to Himself, but maintained an inner watchfulness whereby He continually submitted His spirit to His Father? I have the responsibility of keeping my spirit in agreement with His Spirit, and by degrees Jesus lifts me up to where He lived—in perfect consecration to His Father's will, paying no attention to any other thing. Am I perfecting this type of holiness in the fear of God? Is God getting His way with me, and are other people beginning to see God in my life more and more?

Be serious with God and leave the rest gaily alone. Put God first literally.

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### Oswald Chambers - Perfecting Holiness 2 Corinthians 7:1

"Having therefore these promises"—what promises? "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (2 Corinthians 6:16)—"let us cleanse ourselves"—no "excusing the sins we're most inclined to while condemning those we've no mind to"; there must be no moral partiality in the saint—"from all defilement of flesh and spirit" (rv)—nothing contrary to God's nature: "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"—"perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is perilously possible to cultivate a spurious, unhealthy holiness not "in the fear of God." There is a subtle form of carnal pride that is set on my holiness; it is unscriptural and morbid and ends in experience rather than in character, in taking myself more and more seriously and God less and less seriously. The cultivation of holiness is impossible without the spiritual concentration which the Holy Spirit enjoins.

"I beseech you . . . to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (rv). Practical holiness is the only holiness of any value in this world, and the only kind God will endorse. Romans 12:1-2 is a passionate entreaty to rouse ourselves out of that stagnation in which we are ensnared by thinking that because it is all of grace there is no need for "gumption"; whereas the tremendous initiative given us to sanctification ought to rouse us to determined activity until we are transformed by the renewing of our mind and able to make out the will of God. This mental renewing means the strenuous and courageous lifting of the problems of the world, individual, family, and social, into the spiritual domain, and habitually working out a life of practical holiness. It is not an easy task, but a heroically difficult one, requiring the mightiest effort of our human nature; a task which by the grace of God lifts us into thinking God's thoughts after Him until they become our unconscious inheritance. The secret of spiritual otherworldliness is not found in adhering to a set of rules, but lies deep down in a hidden spring of life and thought which the saint continually obeys. ([God's Workmanship](#))

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On Sunday morning, January 24, 1861, **Charles Haddon Spurgeon** closed his sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle with these words...

An unholy Church! It is of no use to the world, and of no esteem among men. Oh, it is an abomination, hell's laughter, heaven's abhorrence. And the larger the Church, the more influential, the worst nuisance does it become, when it becomes dead and unholy. The worst evils which have ever come upon the world, have been brought upon her by an unholy Church.

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**Alexander Maclaren** - The Tree of Life, according to some of the old rabbinical legends, lifted its branches, by an indwelling motion, high above impure hands that were stretched to touch them; and until our hands are cleansed through faith in Jesus Christ, its richest fruit hangs unreachable, golden above our heads. The fullness of the life of Heaven is only granted to those who, drawing near Jesus Christ by faith on earth, have thereby cleansed themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

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**J R Miller** - The forests in summer days are full of birds' nests. They are hidden among the leaves. The little birds know where they are; and when a storm arises, or when night draws on, they fly, each to his own nest. So the promises of God are hidden in the Bible, like nests in the great forests; and thither we should fly in any danger or alarm, hiding there in our soul's nest until the storm be overpast. There are no castles in this world so impregnable as the words of Christ.

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### Bob Gass - A Call to Holiness

Let us turn away from everything wrong ... giving ourselves to Him alone. (2 Corinthians 7:1TLB)

Before his conversion, St. Augustine was a "party animal." After becoming a Christian, he often walked home past a bar he'd frequented every night. One night, a prostitute, who assumed he'd finally "come back to his senses," approached him. But when they met, he walked right by her. In amazement, she called to him, "Augustine, don't you recognize who you just walked by? It's me!" For a moment he stopped, turned to her and said, "Yes, but it's no longer me!" Paul says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

When I was young, many of those claiming to be holy seemed harsh to me. They looked like they were enduring, rather than enjoying, their religion. They were comfortable in church, miserable everywhere else. Deep inside I knew something was wrong. Peter says, "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3NIV). God will help you in both areas! He also says that through His Word "you might become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). You have His very nature within you, and that nature will cause you to grow up spiritually. You'll know you've grown up—when you're able to feed yourself! As you do, holiness will be a natural outgrowth of your relationship with God. ([A Fresh Word for Today: 365 Insights for Daily Living](#))

REMEMBER, YOU CAN'T BE HOLY IN A HURRY,  
BUT YOU CAN START TAKING STEPS IN THAT DIRECTION RIGHT AWAY.

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## Perfecting Holiness

Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. —2 Corinthians 7:1

Today's Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26

I had not worked in my yard for several weeks, and I was amazed at how quickly weeds had sprung up and taken over. Weeds don't need tending; they seem to love to sprout up for anyone who just lets things go. A bed of beautiful flowers, however, takes watering, feeding, and of course, weeding. Flowers thrive under the care of one who is not afraid to get dirt under his fingernails.

The Christian life takes work too. It requires the commitment of one's whole being to Jesus—body, mind, emotions, and will—to have a life that is wholesome, attractive, uplifting to others, and fulfilling to oneself. Even then, weeds of selfishness and sinful attitudes can quickly spring up and overrun the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

That was the problem with many believers at Corinth. They had become overgrown with envy and divisiveness (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). So Paul told them to cleanse themselves from all "filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). By "holiness" he didn't mean they could be sinless, but blameless.

Lord, help us uproot any weeds of the flesh and the spirit before they become ugly habits. May the beauty of Jesus' character be what others see in us. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

(ED: SINCE SINS ARE RESISTANT TO ERADICATION LIKE CRABGRASS SEE - The Expulsive Power of a New Affection)

## The Weeding Process

1. Identify sins of the flesh or the spirit (Gal. 5:17-21).
2. Call them sin and confess them (1 John 1:9).
3. Stand firm in your position in Christ (Gal. 2:20).

If you yield to God, you won't give in to sin.

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## A Matter Of Taste

Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. —2 Corinthians 7:1

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:1-7:1

Two cockroaches decided to visit their favorite restaurant. While the larger of the two was enjoying his meal, the smaller one said, "You wouldn't believe the house I just left. It was spotless. The lady had to be a cleanaholic. Everything was immaculate—the sink, the counter, the floors. You couldn't find a crumb anywhere." The other cockroach stopped his munching, looked with some annoyance at his companion, and said, "Do you have to talk like that while I'm eating?"

This story about roaches can apply to human nature as well. The second letter to the Corinthians shows that Paul's readers had much to learn about clean living. They needed to develop a stronger hunger and thirst for righteousness. So the apostle pleaded with them to turn away from all filthiness (7:1). He reminded them that God wants His people to separate themselves from spiritual garbage.

If "cleanliness" of heart sounds unappealing, perhaps we've been satisfied with the crumbs of our earthly desires. We need to learn to savor the flavor of godliness.

Father, forgive us for feeding the cravings of our sinful flesh. Help us to cultivate instead the tastes that Your Holy Spirit wants to produce in us. By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If we desire to taste what's good  
And lose our taste for sin,  
We must with ruthless honesty  
Expose the dirt within.  
—D. De Haan

Sin cannot flourish where godliness is cultivated.

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### The Last Sins To Go

David said to God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing." —1 Chronicles 21:8

Today's Scripture: 1 Chronicles 21:1-13

The apostle Paul said that we are to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (2 Corinthians 7:1). Even though it may seem to people around us that we are living a clean, moral life, in our spirit we may be harboring an attitude that displeases the Lord. Because sins of the spirit are unseen, hidden in the heart, we tend to ignore them until they lead to some outward behavior that reveals their presence.

King David's life illustrates these two aspects of sin. His lust for Bathsheba led to adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11-12; Ps. 32:5), and brought great pain to his own life and reproach to the nation of Israel. Then, late in his life, he succumbed to Satan's prompting to take a census (1 Chronicles 21:1-6). This seemingly innocent act displeased God (vv.7-8) because David was taking pride in his military might. There seems to have been a subtle shift from completely relying on God, who had often miraculously delivered him, to trusting in his own power and strength.

On the outside, it may appear to others that we are winning the battle against sin. But we must stay alert to the sins of the spirit, especially pride. They can cause us to stumble and fall, even at the end of life's journey. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread](#), [Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We may confess our outward sins  
Because they're difficult to hide,  
But we must also guard against  
Our inner sins, like lust and pride.  
—Sper

Pride is the stone over which many people stumble.

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**F B Meyer** - The closing paragraph of the previous chapter tells us what this defilement stands for; and in the enumeration note the increasing bonds of approximation which each word indicates. An unequal yoke in ill-matched intercourse with unbelievers leads to fellowship, and this to communion, and this again to concord, and this to partnership; whilst the culmination of the entire series is agreement, and the yielding up of the body for the possession and indwelling of idols (cp 1Co 10:14, 1Jn 5:21). Let us beware of the beginning of this awful approximation. It is impossible to stand still; and they who think lightly of marrying an unbeliever may in the end hear words like those which watchers heard spoken in the doomed temple on the night before it fell into the hands of Titus (Ed: Roman General before whom Jerusalem and the Temple fell in 70AD).

There was, as it were, the rushing of wings, and voices were heard saying, Let us depart.

There is not only defilement of the flesh, but of the spirit. It is not enough to avoid the gross sins of the outward life. Those of the inner temple and disposition are equally abhorrent to the holiness of God (cp Mt 5:27-28, 29, 30+). We must come out and be separate from the latter as well as the former, or we shall never realize what God means when He promises to receive us, and to be a Father to us (cp Jesus' words in John 14:21)

The word **cleanse** ([katharizo](#)) is very decisive in the Greek. It calls for sudden, decisive action; and if you answer that sin is too closely interwoven with your nature to be thus summarily disposed of, remember that God demands our will only. Directly we are perfectly willing and eager, He steps in and does all the rest (cp Ro 8:13<sup>±</sup>, Col 3:5<sup>±</sup>). At unknown depths the Spirit of God is at work within us (cp Phil 2:12+; Phil 2:13<sup>±</sup>; Ezek 36:27+) to let us work out what He works in, that we may be welcomed to God's heart. (Cross references added)

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### Steve Gallagher - DECONTAMINATE YOURSELVES!"

"Do not touch what is unclean!... Cleanse (yourselves) from all the defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Is not Paul speaking of the contaminating influences of this fallen world?

Imagine, if you will, a healthy person living in a leper colony. Germs are everywhere: on the furniture, on the walls, on the floors.

There are the agents of a hideous, debilitating, and detestable disease. One feels the inside pressure, "Don't touch ANYTHING!"

In spiritual terms, the message to every believer is, "Don't have close contact with anything that is a part of the foul existence of Satan's kingdom! Shun all evil, uncleanness, pollution!"

[Kosmos](#) is constantly seeking to transfer its repulsive and diabolical mindset onto believers. It does this primarily through the varied forms of mass media and through the educational system. Any believer who lends his ear to the voice of kosmos is going to be affected by it. We have to remember that the spirit of the world appeals to the desires of our lower nature. The pull exerted by those lusts should never be underestimated. The enemy knows how to lure believers into his camp by catering to those ungodly passions.

Here's how it works when it comes to the mass media. The unsuspecting person simply wants to watch television when he gets home from work, for instance. [Kosmos](#) provides him with a wide variety of entertainment. At the same time his mind goes into a satisfied stupor, he is flooded with a barrage of unholy images and messages. Consequently, his worldly mentality is reinforced.

And here is how it often works in the field of academia. A young person desires to better himself through education. The spirit of the world provides him with a wealth of knowledge while underhandedly slipping in its own ungodly agenda.

To all this Paul cries out, "**Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**" We as believers should set up barricades to every avenue the devil seeks access into our minds. The Word of God will daily wash away all the contaminating thoughts as we bathe ourselves in it. Let us decry the tendency in ourselves and in others to merely affiliate with Christianity while at the same time retaining close ties with the spirit of the world. ([Intoxicated With Babylon: The Seduction of God's People in the Last Days](#)).

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#### Related Resource:

- [Theology of Sex](#) - Grant Richison's biblical study of a subject that we don't like to talk about but which is consuming Christian men because of the availability of (free) internet pornography! It may be free but the corrupting consequences are not "free" and always demand a high price regarding one's soul and one's soulmate!

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#### Spurgeon's Sermon Notes on 2 Corinthians 7:1

Kindling with strong emotion, constrained by the love of Christ, and animated by the fellowship of all spiritual blessings, the apostle here strikes out an exhortation, in which he appeals to the noblest passions of the children of God, to their possession of divine lineage, a present endowment, and their expectation of an exalted destiny. These he uses as incentives to holiness of life.

To stir up in us this godly ambition he sets before us the Christian in various lights—

I. AS POSSESSED OF MOST GLORIOUS PRIVILEGES. "Having these promises." Not promises in reversion merely, but in actual possession, received, embraced, enjoyed.

The promises referred to are mentioned in the previous chapter.

1. Divine indwelling: "I will dwell in them." (Chap. 6:16.)
2. Divine manifestation: "I will walk in them."
3. Divine covenanting: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."
4. Divine acceptance: "I will receive you." (Chap. 6:17.)
5. Divine adoption: "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (Chap. 6:18.)

These promises are already fulfilled in our experience.

II. AS LABOURING TO BE RID OF OBNOXIOUS EVILS. "Let us cleanse ourselves." The matter has in it—

1. Personality: "Let us cleanse ourselves."
2. Activity: we must continue vigorously to cleanse both body and mind.
3. Universality: "From all filthiness."
4. Thoroughness: "Of the flesh and spirit."

If God dwells in us, let us make the house clean for so pure a God.

Has the Lord entered into covenant with us that we should be his people? Does not this involve a call upon us to live as becometh godliness?

Are we his children? Let us not grieve our Father, but imitate him as dear children.

III. AS AIMING AT A MOST EXALTED POSITION. "Perfecting holiness."

1. We must set before us perfect holiness as a thing to be reached.
2. We must blame ourselves if we fall short of it.

3. We must continue in any degree of holiness which we have reached.
4. We must agonize after the perfecting of our character.

IV. AS PROMPTED BY THE MOST SACRED OF MOTIVES. "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

1. The fear of God casts out the fear of man, and thus saves us from one prolific cause of sin.
2. The fear of God casts out the love of sin, and with the root the fruit is sure to go.
3. The fear of God works in and through love to him, and this is a great factor of holiness.
4. The fear of God is the root of faith, worship, obedience, and so it produces all manner of holy service.

See how promises supply arguments for precepts.

See how precepts naturally grow out of promises.

#### OUTPOURINGS

"Cleanse ourselves." It is the Lord that is the sanctifier of his people, he purges away their dross and tin. He pours clean water, according to his promises, yet doth he call us to cleanse ourselves; having such promises, let us cleanse ourselves. He puts a new life into us, and causes us to act, and excites us to excite it, and call it up to act in the progress of sanctification. Men are strangely inclined to a perverse construction of things: tell them that we are to act and work, and give diligence, then they would fancy a doing in their own strength, and be their own saviours. Again, tell them that God works all our works in us, and for us, then they would take the ease of doing nothing: if they cannot have the praise of doing all, they will sit still with folded hands, and use no diligence at all. But this is the corrupt logic of the flesh; its base sophistry. The apostle reasons just contrary, Phil. 2:13: "It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do." Therefore, would a carnal heart say, we need not work, or at least, may work very carelessly. But he infers, "Therefore let us work out our salvation with fear and trembling," i. e., in the more humble obedience to God, and dependence on him, not obstructing the influences of his grace, and, by sloth and negligence, provoking him to withdraw or abate it. Certainly many in whom there is truth of grace, are kept low in the growth of it by their own slothfulness, sitting still, and not bestirring themselves, and exercising the proper actions of that spiritual life, by which it is entertained and advanced.—Archbishop Leighton.

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,  
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,  
 Nor touches on the world without a stain:  
 The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,  
 Immaculate, the manners of the morn—  
 Something we thought, is blotted; we resolved,  
 Is shaken; we renounc'd, returns again.

Edward Young.

"Let us go on to perfection" (Heb. 6:1) should rather be rendered, "Let us be carried on.".... If we are unable to go on, we are surely able to be carried on to perfection.—Charles Stanford.

The promises, as they have a quickening, so they have a purging power; and that upon sound reasoning. Doth God promise that he will be my Father, and I shall be his son? and doth he promise me life everlasting? and doth that estate require purity? and no unclean thing shall come there? Certainly, these promises being apprehended by faith, as they have a quickening power to comfort, so they purge with holiness. We may not think to carry our filthiness to heaven. Doth the swearer think to carry his blasphemies thither? Filthy persons and liars are banished thence, there is "no unclean thing." He that hath these promises purgeth himself, and "perfecteth holiness in the fear of God." "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, as he is pure": 1 John 3:3.—Richard Sibbes.

A spiritual mind has something of the nature of the sensitive plant: a holy shrinking from the touch of evil.—Richard Cecil.

**2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us in your hearts; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us in your hearts; we have wronged no one, we have ruined no one, we have exploited no one.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:2 Χωρ σατε μς ο δ να δικ σαμεν, ο δ να φθε ραμεν, ο δ να πλεονεκτ σαμεν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:2 Please open your hearts to us. We have not done wrong to anyone, nor led anyone

astray, nor taken advantage of anyone.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:2 receive us; no one did we wrong; no one did we waste; no one did we defraud;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:2 Open your hearts to us: we wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we took advantage of no man.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:2 Accept us. We have wronged no one, corrupted no one, defrauded no one.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us. We wronged no one. We corrupted no one. We took advantage of no one.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:2 Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room in your hearts for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us; we have not wronged anyone, or ruined anyone, or taken advantage of anyone.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:2 Keep a place for us in your hearts. We have not injured anyone, or ruined anyone, or taken advantage of anyone.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:2 Open your hearts to us. We haven't treated anyone unjustly, ruined anyone, or cheated anyone.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:2 Let your hearts be open to us: we have done no man wrong, no man has been damaged by us, we have made no profit out of any man,

- **Make room for us:** 2Co 11:16 Mt 10:14,40 Lu 10:8 Php 2:29 Col 4:10 Phm 1:12,17 2Jn 1:10 3Jn 1:8-10
- **we wronged:** 2Co 1:12 4:2 6:3-7 11:9 2Co 12:14-18 Nu 16:15 1Sa 12:3,4 Ac 20:33 Ro 16:18 1Th 2:3-6,10 2Th 3:7-9
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2Co 12:17-18 Certainly I have not **taken advantage** ([pleonekto](#)) of you through any of those whom I have sent to you, have I? 18 I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and walk in the same steps?

2 Cor 6:11-12 Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, our heart is opened wide. 12 You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.

## PAUL'S APPEAL FOR RECONCILIATION

**Hughes** - This is clearly a resumption of the appeal of 2Co 6:11–13. “O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged ... Be ye also enlarged”. As there is spacious accommodation for the Corinthians in his heart, so the Apostle desires them to respond by making room for him in their hearts.

**Warren Wiersbe** - In 2Co 2:12–13, Paul began to tell the Corinthians of his experience with Titus in Macedonia, and in this chapter he completes the account. Just as the word “**comfort**” appeared often in chapters 1–2, so it reappears here (2Co 7:4–7, 13). The appeal in this chapter is for the Corinthians to be reconciled to Paul. They had been critical and disobedient, but now it was time to receive him and fellowship with him again, particularly in light of his coming visit. In the early part of his letter, Paul told of the trials he went through when he left Ephesus, waited for Titus, and worried about the situation at Corinth. Now he explains how God comforted him and gave him joy. ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the NT](#))

**Brian Bell's summary** - Recap: Here Paul picks up again from a discussion in 2 Cor.2:12,13. Paul had no rest because he didn't know how the Corinthian situation had developed. – He departed to Macedonia to meet Titus to get the news. Remember, there

were some problems in the church at Corinth. Paul did a quick visit, which only made things worse. - After this he dispatched Titus w/a stern letter. - Paul couldn't rest until he heard back how they were doing. - He met up w/Titus in Macedonia, & was joyful to hear the trouble was over, relationships were healed, & all was well! ([Regret or Repent?](#))

**Paul Barnett** has an interesting analysis of 2Co 7:2-4 - These three verses are important to the structure of 2 Corinthians. They resume and bring to completion the appeal made in 2Co 6:11-13. More broadly, they serve as a conclusion to the lengthy excursus on apostolic ministry in 2Co 2:14-7:4, which is the longest and most important section within the entire letter. Yet 2Co 7:2-4—especially 2Co 7:4—are both the end of the excursus and—at the same time—the beginning of the passage that will follow (2Co 7:5-16). More broadly still, the positive note sounded in v. 4 is the basis for the major admonitions that form the latter part of the letter, that is, chapters 8-13. The optimism of vv. 2-4, especially v. 4, is foundational to Paul's appeals regarding the collection (chaps. 8-9), in regard to those who question his spiritual effectiveness (10:1-8), to those who receive the judaizing intruders (2Co 11:1-4) and to the intractably immoral (2Co 12:20-13:2). Although these final four chapters are ironical and reflect Paul's personal hurt, nonetheless, when taken with chapters 8 and 9, they end on a positive and optimistic note (see 2Co 12:19; 13:5-10). Thus vv. 2-4 are a hinge on which the two main parts of the letter turn. They bring to an end the apologetic first part of the letter, where Paul has been defending his actions (2Co 1:12-2:13) and his ministry (2Co 2:14-7:4). At the same time they lay an admonitory foundation for the second part, where Paul will prepare the Corinthians for his final visit to them. ([NICNT- 2Co](#))

**Michael Andrus** - Everyone lives with regrets; unfortunately some people never get beyond regret to true repentance. In one of the most powerful sections of the letter of 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul points out the deadly difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow, between regret and repentance. The paradigm biblical examples that reveal this difference are two well-known characters, David and Judas. Both sinned grievously; both experienced tremendous remorse for their sin; but David repented while Judas went out and hanged himself. This topic in 2 Corinthians 7 is found in a context of loving confrontation between a pastor and his people, and it's important that we understand it within that context. If you have been with us for our study of the first six chapters of 2 Corinthians, you are aware that this church of Corinth has been very hard on their founding pastor, the Apostle Paul. After he established the church and spent 18 months laying a strong foundation of truth and discipling leaders, he left to continue his church-planting mission elsewhere. Unfortunately, some of those who stepped into leadership after Paul began to move the congregation in new directions—philosophical, doctrinal, and moral. These leaders, who were really false teachers, knew they could never pull the wool over the eyes of these people so long as Paul was held in high esteem, so they undertook to discredit the Apostle—ridiculing him for his looks, his lack of eloquence, his suffering, and even such petty things as a change in his travel plans. It was an unscrupulous campaign of character assassination. Paul was clearly hurt by these charges, and he could have allowed himself to withdraw emotionally from these people or even attack them for their ingratitude. But instead he reaches out and begs them to open their hearts to him. He reminds them that during the whole time he was with them he wronged no one, corrupted no one, and exploited no one. In fact, he loves them so much he would live or die for them—which ever would promote their welfare. This man was an encourager, par excellence. (See his entire sermon - [The Deadly Difference Between Regret and Repentance](#))

**Make room for (choreo) us in your hearts** - BBE = "Let your hearts be open to us." In 2Co 6:11 Paul had said "our heart is opened wide." **Make room** is aorist imperative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey. So Paul issues a command (in love like from a father) for his spiritual children to leave a place in their hearts for him. He is calling for them to take some specific action. This follows his statement regarding their "tightness of heart" in 2Co 6:12, the **Amplified Bible** has "There is no lack of room for you in [our hearts], but you lack room in your own affections [for us]." The implication is that Paul believed they still had some hesitancy in opening their heart to him. In addition in 2Co 6:14 Paul had commanded them to stop being yoked with unbelievers. In a sense it is as if Paul was saying the believers in Corinth were to cease making room in their hearts for unbelievers. Don't join with them. Join with us (Paul et al)!

**Warren Wiersbe** - Open wide your hearts to us!" (2 Cor. 6:13) "Receive us!" (2 Cor. 7:2) "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3) If the Corinthians would only cleanse their lives and their church fellowship, God would receive them (2 Cor. 6:17) and they could again have close fellowship with Paul. The emphasis in this section is on the way God encouraged Paul after he had experienced such great trials in Asia and Troas (see 2 Cor. 1:8-10; 2:12-13). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Colin Kruse** - In the earlier appeal (2Co 6:11-13) he stressed that his own heart was opened wide towards them and that the remaining restriction in the relationship was on their side. ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

Now Paul asserts his integrity by giving a three fold denial of mistreatment of the Corinthians and which may be his way of addressing accusations that were made against him by his adversaries. Another way to look at these the statements is that they make Paul's appeal **make room for us in your hearts** a reasonable appeal. In other words since Paul was guilty of none of these "charges" the Corinthians should welcome him into their hearts. Paul and his associates were men of integrity and could be welcomed with "open arms" and "open hearts."

Note that each of the following 3 "denials" by Paul are prefaced by the Greek word oudeis which literally means "but absolutely not

one" and thus it is a strong denial that Paul was guilty of not even one of these actions! Paul is emphasizing the fact that in no single incident has he done any wrong whatsoever to the Corinthians.

[Paul Apple](#) entitles the following "Personal Testimony of Ministry Integrity– A Clear Conscience"

**We wronged (adikeo) no one - GWN** = "We haven't treated anyone unjustly." All three of Paul's "defensive disclaimers" are aorist tense, which could have two senses, one signifying past completed action, event or encounter, and the other sense pointing to the comprehensiveness of each "defensive disclaimer" (I think both senses are in play). Each disclaimer also specifies **no one** (oudeis) meaning absolutely no one, which adds to the all inclusive aspect of each disclaimer. Paul's declarations also recall Jesus' second great commandment to "love one another as yourselves!"

**THOUGHT** - Every minister of the Gospel of reconciliation (whether pastor or lay person, for all are ambassadors of Christ) should be able to confidently and with clear conscience make the same three disclaimers! Beloved, the only one who can truly make such declarations is the man or the woman who is continually filled with the Spirit, continually walking by the Spirit. Natural flesh by nature wrongs, corrupts and takes advantage of others to one degree or another.

**We corrupted (phtheiro) no one** - "Ruined no one" (NEB, NET). The idea is that Paul caused no deterioration of their inner life as would occur had it given them erroneous teaching. Corrupted is also often used metaphorically of moral corruption, the picture being that of inner dying and ruin gain, a continual rotting away. Paul's teaching and example (cf "in purity" in 2Co 6:11) would have given no foundation for the Corinthians to pursue an immoral lifestyle (which was a continual temptation in Corinth!)

**Kruse** - The verb, 'to corrupt' (phtheirō), is used three times in the Corinthian correspondence. In 1 Corinthians 3:17 Paul uses it after speaking of the building of the church on the foundation of Christ by various ministers, all of whose work is to be tested. He warns that anyone who 'destroys' (phtheirei) 'God's temple', that person God will 'destroy' (phtheirei). In 1 Corinthians 15:33 Paul speaks of bad company which 'ruins' (phtheirousin) good morals (a parallel use to this is found in Ephesians 4:22 where the 'old nature' is said to be 'corrupt' [phtheiromenon] through deceitful lusts). In all probability, therefore, Paul's meaning in our present context is that he has caused the church no harm, his teaching and example have not corrupted it or encouraged immoral behaviour. ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - Paul asked them to trust him, for he had never done anything to wrong them. This is certainly a reference to the false teachers who had accused Paul, especially the use of the word defrauded ("exploits"—see 2 Cor. 11:20NIV). "Paul is taking up this missionary offering so he can use the money himself!" they were saying. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**We took advantage (pleonekteo) of no one** - "Exploited no one" (MLB) "We have made no profit out of any man." (BBE) "Defrauded no man." (Mace NT) "Cheated or taken advantage of no one." (Amp). Paul had practiced no selfish and/or self-seeking fraud toward the Corinthians. He had used not "[bait and switch](#)" tactics like those who peddled the Word of God (2Co 2:17). He did not do wrong for the sake of gain. This denial could be related to the collection for the Jerusalem saints, implying the he and the other fundraisers had a desire to make some illegal profit or "[skim off the top](#)." He dogmatically denies that he had used his position for any personal gain. His integrity in financial matters was intact.

It is notable that this verb ([pleonekteo](#)) is used only 5 times in the NT and 4 are in 2 Corinthians - 2 Co. 2:11 = "no advantage would be taken of us by Satan"; 2 Co. 7:2; 2 Co. 12:17-18 = "Certainly I have not **taken advantage** (FINANCIALLY) of you through any of those whom I have sent to you, have I? 18 I urged Titus to go, and I sent the brother with him. **Titus did not take any advantage of you** (FINANCIALLY), did he? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and walk in the same steps?"

**Homer Kent** - Of course, these declarations are sufficiently general that they need not presuppose specific charges. Paul can be understood merely as ministering with such wholesomeness that the Corinthians' reception of him should be an easy and natural thing. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

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**Make room** ([5562](#)) (**choreo** from **choros** = place) means literally to have or make room or space for something or someone and thus conveys the idea to be friendly disposed toward someone or 'to open one's heart to. Move forward, progress, proceed, make room; contain, receive.

**Strong's** - 1) to leave space (which may be filled or occupied by another), to make room, give place, yield  
1a) to retire 1b) metaphorically. to betake one's self, turn one's self 2) to go forward, advance, proceed, succeed 3) to have space or room for receiving or holding something

**Gingrich** - 1. go, go out or away lit. Mt 15:17; 20:28 v.l. Fig. come 2 Pe 3:9 .—2. go forward, make progress J 8:37, though find place is also probable.—3. have room for, hold, contain—a. lit, John 2:6; Jn 21:25.there was no longer any room Mk 2:2 .—b. fig. cwrh,sate h`ma/j make room for us 2 Cor 7:2.—

Grasp, understand, comprehend, accept Mt 19:11f.\* [pg 218]

**Friberg** - from a basic meaning make room for, give way to; (1) as moving from one place to another; (a) as a motion forward make progress, go forward; figuratively make headway (probably JN 8.37); come to, reach (2P 3.9); (b) as a motion away from withdraw, go out, move on (MT 15.17; 20.28); (2) as having a large enough space for something have room for, contain, hold (MK 2.2); figuratively; (a) find acceptance (perhaps JN 8.37); (b) of persons open one's heart to, be friendly toward (2C 7.2); (c) intellectually grasp, understand, accept (MT 19.11)

**Complete Biblical Library - Incredibly Resource Classical Greek** The verb **chōreō** is well attested in all stages of the Greek language and has a rather broad semantic range. The meanings vary depending on whether the verb is used with (transitive) or without (intransitive) a direct object. Among classical authors, the meaning in intransitive uses was “to make room” for someone or something, usually by moving away from the space which it occupied. Thus, among post-Homeric authors, **chōreō** overlapped with **erchomai** (2048), “go, come,” and meant “to move forward, progress.” It could be applied to a number of different things, such as the “progress” of food through the digestive tract (cf. Matthew 15:17), the “spread” of information, or even the prosecution of a war (Schmidt, “Fullness,” Colin Brown, 1:741). In transitive constructions **chōreō** meant “to hold, contain,” frequently in reference to the capacity of vessels.

**Septuagint Usage Chōreō** is somewhat rare in the Septuagint as compared to other bodies of ancient Greek literature. In books that are translations from the Hebrew Bible it occurs a total of six times as a translation of several different Hebrew words. Both transitive and intransitive uses appear, and the range of meanings is consistent with what is found in classical Greek. However, an important new figurative use is found in Philo who used this verb in transitive constructions to describe the human inability to comprehend divine revelation (De Specialibus Legibus 1.44 and De Posteritate Caini 143). Later, Plutarch (De Catone Minore 64.3) also used **chōreō** in reference to human intellectual capacity.

**New Testament Usage** In the New Testament there are no purely figurative uses of **chōreō** when intransitive. John 8:37 is an example of the use of **chōreō** in the sense of “to progress”; that Jesus’ word has “no place in you” means that these believing Jews (cf. John 8:31) were not continuing to progress in Jesus’ teaching. The sense of “to progress” is probably also present in 2 Peter 3:9 where the delay in the return of the Lord is attributed to God’s desire that people “come to repentance” (for an alternative explanation, cf. Schmidt, “Fullness,” Colin Brown, 1:742). The transitive meaning of “to hold, contain” is used of vessels in John 2:6 and Mark 2:2. A figurative use of **chōreō** when transitive is found in 2 Corinthians 7:2. Paul admonished the Corinthians to extend their friendship to the apostles by using the spatial metaphor make room for us (KJV translates it simply “Receive us”; see Louw and Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, 1:448). In Matthew 19:11, 12 the figurative meaning “to understand” Jesus’ teaching is used, but the figure extends “beyond understanding and points to the capacity to receive and act upon the teaching” (Schmidt, “Fullness,” Colin Brown, 1:742). Given John’s tendency to dramatize the inability of people to understand Jesus’ teaching (e.g., Nicodemus in John 3 and the woman at the well in John 4), it would be tempting to include the use of **chōreō** in John 8:37 in this category if the construction were not so clearly intransitive.

**Colin Brown** - NT 1. Intransitive use. The expression **pantas eis metanoian chōrēsai** (2 Pet. 3:9, “that all should reach repentance” RSV) corresponds to the use of **chōreō** in the sense of tackling something and carrying it out. The thought is probably that of a single act that is possible, because God is delaying the last judgment. The phrase **eis tēn koilian chōrei** (Matt. 15:17 “passes into the stomach”) corresponds to the description of physiological processes in medicine (see above, CL 1 (b)). It expresses a certain independence of the natural processes of the mind and the will (→ Heart, art. σκληροκαρδία). **chōreō** in Jn. 8:37 means to spread or make progress. It is applied to the failure of Jesus’ word to make progress in the hearts and minds of his Jewish opponents. The assumption is less likely that **en** (in) is used in the sense of **eis** (into), giving the meaning that the word of Jesus finds no access. If the context of Jn. 8:30 is to be understood, Jesus is speaking to Jews who have heard his teaching with approval yet without letting it take effect. On the other hand, there is a tension between Jn. 8:31 and v. 37. The underlying thought is that of a process through which man is freed from the bondage to sin (8:32, 34).

2. Transitive use. (a) **chōreō** is used to denote the capacity to hold of water jugs (Jn. 2:6), of a place (Mk. 2:2, “so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door”), and the world (Jn. 21:25). (b) It means to receive or embrace the apocalyptic teaching of Jesus (Matt. 19:11f., contained in vv. 9 or 10). The meaning corresponds to understanding and grasping the teaching of the parables (cf. Matt. 13:11,

16f., 19, 23). In both instances Matt. stresses the understanding of the disciples. *chōreō* appears to go beyond understanding and points to the capacity to receive and act upon the teaching. Matt. 19:12 contains a form of apocalyptic warning found elsewhere in primitive Christianity. It exhorts a group of people who have been given an insight or a gift for something to make use of it, and thereby marks off this group from others. Paul's plea, "Make room for us [chōrēsate hēmas]" (2 Cor. 7:2), takes up his earlier plea to extend themselves (6:13), and corresponds to the assurance that, "You are not restricted [stenochōreisthe] by us, but you are restricted [stenochōreisthe] in your own affections" (6:12). The Corinthians are to recognize Paul in his apostolic ministry as he has given himself to be known by them (2 Cor. 1:6), so that they can be proud of each other on the day of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 1:14).

**Choreo** - 9v - accept(3), come(1), contain(1), containing(1), has...place(1), make room(1), passes(1), room(1) Matt. 15:17; Matt. 19:11; Matt. 19:12; Mk. 2:2; Jn. 2:6; Jn. 8:37; Jn. 21:25; 2 Co. 7:2; 2 Pet. 3:9. Uses in the Septuagint - Gen. 13:6; 1 Ki. 7:38; 1 Ki. 18:30; 2 Chr. 4:5

**Wronged** (harmed, treated unjustly) ([91](#)) **adikeo** from *adikos* = unjust) means 1a) to act unjustly or wickedly, to sin, 1b) to be a criminal, to have violated the laws in some way 1c) to do wrong 1d) to do hurt 2) transitively 2a) to do some wrong or sin in some respect 2b) to wrong some one, act wickedly towards him 2c) to hurt, damage, harm.

To do wrong Col 3:25; the evildoer Rev 22:11. Be in the wrong Acts 25:11. Do wrong to someone, cheat someone Mt 20:13; Ac 7:26; Gal 4:12; 2 Pt 2:13. Injure, harm, damage, spoil Rev 9:4, 10, 19; if he has caused you any loss Philemon 1:18. Note 3 uses of *adikeo* in Acts 7:24, 26, 27 and two more in Acts 25:10; Acts 25:11. Used 24v - Matt. 20:13; Lk. 10:19; Acts 7:24; Acts 7:26; Acts 7:27; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:11; 1 Co. 6:7; 1 Co. 6:8; 2 Co. 7:2; 2 Co. 7:12; Gal. 4:12; Col. 3:25; Phlm. 1:18; 2 Pet. 2:13; Rev. 2:11; Rev. 6:6; Rev. 7:2; Rev. 7:3; Rev. 9:4; Rev. 9:10; Rev. 9:19; Rev. 11:5; Rev. 22:11

**Corrupted** ([5351](#)) **phtheiro** from **phthíō** or **phthíno** = waste, decay, wither, pine away) means to cause harm to in a physical manner or in outward circumstances. To shrivel, to wither, to spoil. It means to ruin or destroy something with the implication of causing something to be corrupt and cease to exist. To destroy by corrupting. To pine or waste away. To corrupt in the sense of degeneration. Webster says that **corrupt** (from cor-'altogether' + rumpere 'to break') implies loss of soundness, purity, or integrity. **Phtheiro** is the root word from which we get our word **diphtheria**, an acute febrile contagious disease marked by the formation of a false membrane especially in the throat and caused by a bacterium (*Corynebacterium diphtheriae*) that produces a toxin causing inflammation of the heart and nervous system.

**Took advantage** (defraud) ([4122](#)) **pleonekteo** from **pleíon** = more + **écho** = have <> **pleonektes** degrees one who wants more, person covetous of something that others have, a defrauder for gain) literally means to have more than another and then to take advantage of any one. To claim more. To covet. To have more than one's due. To selfishly attempt to gain more at all costs and by all means disregarding others and their rights. Defraud means to selfishly and greedily take something at someone else's expense. Greeks defined **pleonektes** as "the spirit which is always reaching after more and grabbing that to which it has no right." It is aggressive getting.

Barclay writes that the Greeks defined **pleonexia** as "arrogant greediness," as "the accursed love of possessing," as "the unlawful desire for the things which belong to others." It has been defined as the spirit in which a man is always ready to sacrifice his neighbour to his own desires. **Pleonexia** is the irresistible desire to have what we have no right to possess. It might issue in the theft of material things; it might issue in the spirit which tramples on other people to get its own way; it might issue in sexual sin.... (**pleonexia**) is, therefore, a sin with a very wide range. If it is the desire for money, it leads to theft. If it is the desire for prestige, it leads to evil ambition. If it is the desire for power, it leads to sadistic tyranny. If it is the desire for a person, it leads to sexual sin "

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[Paul Apple](#) has an interesting introduction to this chapter:

**PERSPECTIVE:** We need some perspective on the overall process of Reconciliation before beginning this study. There was a serious problem between Paul and some of the believers in Corinth. Remember some of the specific charges that had been leveled against him by his opponents: -

- You are Ambiguous (2Co 1:13) – you are difficult to understand; Paul's opponents would twist his words and misrepresent his teachings

- You are Fickle (2Co 1:15-20)
- You can't be depended upon; you change your travel plans and back out of previous commitments; we can not depend on your commitment to us
- You Brag about Yourself (2Co 3:1-3)
- You are always commending yourself; exalting yourself; boasting in your accomplishments
- You are an Imposter (2Co 6:8)
- Your apostolic call is questionable; Christ does not really speak through you (2Co 13:3)
- You have no real Authority (2Co 10:1-2) – In fact you are timid in person and only bold when you are writing from a safe distance away
- You are Crafty and Deceitful (2Co 12:16) – You take advantage of others

These are all very serious charges that have the potential to undermine the effectiveness of Paul's ministry. Divine grace was needed not to lash back defensively and vindictively. What type of interaction would Paul choose:

- Loving Communication (with goal of restoration) or
- Angry Confrontation (with goal of revenge)

The Apostle Paul took the initiative by writing a severe letter and then waiting for Titus to report back with the response of the Corinthians.

- Loving Communication produces Godly Sorrow which leads to Genuine Repentance and Reconciliation
- Angry Confrontation produces Worldly Sorrow which leads to Superficial Regret and further Separation

**2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not speak to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:3 I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I told you before that you are in our hearts so that we die together and live together with you.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:3 πρὶς κατ κρισιν οὐ λύω· προεργάσας γέρω τινας τας καρδιας μέν στερεότατη συναποθάνει καὶ συζύγοι.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:3 I'm not saying this to condemn you. I said before that you are in our hearts, and we live or die together with you.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:3 not to condemn you do I say it, for I have said before that in our hearts ye are to die with and to live with;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:3 I say it not to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die together and live together.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:3 I don't say this to condemn you, for I have already said that you are in our hearts, to live together and to die together.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not speak for purposes of condemnation. For I stated earlier that you are in our hearts, making us as close as those who faced death together and live on together.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this in condemnation, for I have already said that you are in our hearts, that we may die together and live together.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:3 I am not saying this to condemn anybody; as I have already told you, you are in our hearts -- so that together we live and together we die.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:3 I'm not saying this to condemn you. I've already told you that you are in our hearts so that we will live and die together.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:3 It is not with the purpose of judging you that I say this: for I have said before that you are in our hearts for life and death together.

- **to condemn:** 2Co 7:12 2:4,5 13:10 1Co 4:14,15
- **for I have said before:** 2Co 6:11,12
- **you are in our hearts:** 2Co 3:2 11:11 12:15 Php 1:8,9
- **to die:** Ru 1:16-17 1Th 2:8
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Philippians 1:7+ For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, **because I have you in my heart**, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

Ruth 1:16-17+ But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. 17 **Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried.** Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me."

2 Corinthians 3:2-3+ You are our letter, **written in our hearts**, known and read by all men; being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

2 Corinthians 6:11-14+ **Our mouth has spoken freely** to you, O Corinthians, **our heart is opened wide.** 12 You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections. 13 Now in a like exchange—I speak as to children—open wide to us also. 14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

## **NO CONDEMNATION ONLY AFFIRMATION OF AFFECTION**

**Kruse** has a reasonable explanation of this passage - Paul may have felt that the strong defence of his own integrity in v. 2 might be taken to imply a questioning of the Corinthians' integrity. If so, these words would constitute an immediate denial of such an attitude on his part. On the contrary, his real attitude towards them is much more positive ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Paul Apple** entitles the following - Tone of Loving Acceptance – Not Judgmental Spirit 1. Not out to Condemn 2. Embracing Them in Loving Acceptance

**I do** (ou = absolutely) **not** (present tense - continually) **speak to condemn** (scold, reproach, blame - [katakrisis](#)) **you** - "I'm not saying this to condemn you." (NLT). Msg = "Don't think I'm finding fault with you." Paul is saying that if the Corinthians are making any of the charges in 2Co 7:2, he is not holding it against them.

**Pulpit Commentary** - My object is to maintain the old love between us; what I say, therefore, is merely to defend myself, not to complain of you (comp. 1 Cor. 4:14 = "I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.")

**For** - Paul explains why he does not hold these accusations against the Corinthians.

**I have said before -- Said before** (prolego) is in the perfect tense indicating stated in the past and what he said still stands true (see 2Co 6:11-14 [above](#)). He was not seeking to place blame on the Corinthians but to shore up their loyalty to him.

**That you are in our hearts** (aorist tense) **to die together** ([sunapothnesko](#)) **and** (present tense) **to live together** ([suzao](#)) - Die together...live together when one gives attention to the tenses more literally reads "I would die with you or continue to live with

you." **Amp** = "for I have said before that you are [nested] in our hearts, [and you will remain there] together [with us], whether we die or live." **Msg** = "I told you earlier that I'm with you all the way, no matter what." **TLB** = "as I have said before, you are in my heart forever, and I live and die with you." **You are in our hearts** shows Paul's great affection for the Corinthians regardless of negative things they were saying or thinking about Paul. **Die together...live together** indicates that Paul saw the Corinthians as in relationship to the end of their life. They were his brothers and sisters in Christ no matter what false things were being said about him. Paul is saying that nothing could deter or destroy his affection for the Corinthians. In a passage that conveys a similar truth about Paul's heart for the churches he served, he tells the saints at Thessalonica he is ready to give them his own life writing "Having so fond an affection for you, **we were well-pleased to impart to you** not only the gospel of God **but also our own lives**, because you had become very dear to us." (1 Th 2:8+)

**Warren Wiersbe** - Why is it so difficult to assure people of our love? What more could Paul do to convince them? He was willing to die for them if necessary, for they were in his heart (see 2 Cor. 3:1ff; 6:11–13). He was boasting of them to others ("glorying of you"), but they were criticizing him. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Wick Broomall** on **to die...and to live** - the priority of "dying" to "living." To place "dying" before "living" may teach us either that one must really "die" before he lives (cf. Jn 12:24; Ro 6:1-14) or, equally probable, that physical death must precede eternal life in glory (cf. Jn 11:25, 26; Heb 9:27, 28). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**P E Hughes** - His purpose, however, is to establish, or re-establish, the relationship of true Christian love and mutual confidence that should exist between the Apostle and the church he has founded. He is impelled by love, not bitterness. Hence his reminder to them of what he had already said earlier on, that they were in his heart, undoubtedly referring to 6:11 where he had affirmed that his heart was enlarged toward them. But his language now is even more intense; he speaks with the utmost devotion of the true lover: not only does he declare that they are in his heart, but that they are in his heart "to die together and live together"—so far as he is concerned, they will be one in true love, one in death as well as in life (**ED: SEE WORDS OF RUTH**). This is not the language of romanticism but of Christian reality. That genuine love which is the expression of communion and fellowship in Christ is the greatest of those things which abide (1 Cor. 13:13) and can neither be destroyed by death nor impaired by the changing circumstances of life. Could there be greater openness of speech and affection than is displayed here? And the authenticity of this protestation of his love is proved by the afflictions which Paul so willingly, and so constantly, endured for their comfort and salvation (1:6; 6:3ff.; 11:23ff.). ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Homer Kent** on **to die...and to live** - The meaning is that they were so much on his heart that if he should die, it would be with their concerns in mind, and if he should go on living, it would be to serve their interests. Another aspect of this thought might have been that he and the Corinthians were joined with each other through faith in Christ, so that he expected to be resurrected along with them and go on living in eternal bliss with Christ and other believers (4:14). The mention of dying before living suggests such an explanation. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**Gilbrant** on **live together** - Paul in this sense emphasized the commitment he felt toward the Corinthians and he believed they felt toward him. Paul used the phrase in order to place his criticism of the Corinthians and his exhortations to reform their lives in the context of his real and permanent commitment to them. Perhaps he also wished to emphasize their common destiny "in Christ" and the resurrection. ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**Colin Kruse** on **to die...and to live** - In the papyri the expression 'to live together and to die together' is found where mutual friendship and loyalty are extolled. The idea is that those involved have a friendship that will be sustained throughout life and will keep them together even if death is involved (cf. Mark 14:31). In his affirmation of friendship Paul reverses the order, i.e. not to live and die, but to die and live together, and this reflects a fundamental Christian outlook. It is by dying that we live; it is by suffering that we are prepared for glory. The idea originated with Jesus himself (cf. Mark 8:34–36; John 12:24–26) and is found frequently in the writings of Paul (cf. Rom. 6:8; 8:17, 36–39; 2 Cor. 4:8–12, 16–18; 2 Tim. 2:11). When Paul says the Corinthians are in his heart to die together and to live together it is in recognition of the fact that to be a Christian was to expose oneself to suffering and possible death, but to do so was also to put oneself in the way of experiencing the daily renewal and the manifestation of the life of Christ within. And by this process a person is prepared for eternal life and glory (cf. Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17). It is the recognition of this fact also which enables us to make sense of Paul's words at the end of the next verse ('With all our affliction, I am overjoyed'). ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** on **to die** - And one whose life was, for Christ's sake, a daily death, naturally mentions death first.

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**Condem** ([2633](#)) (**katakrisis** from **katakrino**) - condemn from **kata** = against + **krino** = judge) describes an action of condemnation against someone, the act of condemnation but not the actual condemnation which is **katakrima**. Used only in 2Co 3:9 and 2Co 7:3.

**Hearts** ([2588](#)) **kardia** does not refer to the physical organ but is always used figuratively in Scripture to refer to

the seat and center of human life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God. The heart is the center of our personality, our "control center" (to make a play on the "air traffic control center" at the airport which carefully guards and guides what flies in and what flies out. How applicable to our "hearts" which are so prone to wander!). In short **kardia** refers to the the [affective](#) center of our being wherein lies the capacity of moral preference and volitional desire. The **kardia** generates thoughts that make the decisions which the mind works out. In other words, our logic flows out of our heart-decisions and not vice versa. Uses in Corinthians 1 Co. 2:9; 1 Co. 4:5; 1 Co. 7:37; 1 Co. 14:25; 2 Co. 1:22; 2 Co. 2:4; 2 Co. 3:2; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 3:15; 2 Co. 4:6; 2 Co. 5:12; 2 Co. 6:11; 2 Co. 7:3; 2 Co. 8:16; 2 Co. 9:7

**Die together** (4880)(**sunapothnesko** from [sun/syn](#) = intimately together + [apothnesko](#) = to die from **apo** = off + **thnesko** = to die) means "to die together with someone." Herodotus (5th Century BC) and Diodorus Siculus (1st Century BC) both used the word to speak of the burning of widows in India with their deceased husbands (Bauer). 3x in NT - Mk 14:31+ = Even if I **have to die with** You, I will not deny You!"; 2Co. 7:3; 2Ti. 2:11+ = " It is a trustworthy statement: For if (first class conditional = "SINCE WE...") **we died with** Him (DESCRIBES OUR "SPIRITUAL IDENTIFICATION" WITH JESUS), we will also live with Him." Not in Septuagint.

**Live together** (4800)(**suzao** from [sun/syn](#) = intimately together + [zao](#) = to live) means live together with. Friberg says suzao is figurative in 1Co 7:3 and conveys the sense of having a permanent place in one's affections (2Co 7:3). In Ro 6:8 **suzao** speaks of the identification with the resurrected and exalted Christ and means to be alive together with. We live because He lives! Only 3 NT uses = **Ro 6:8+** = "Now if (first class conditional = "SINCE WE...") we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also **live with** Him"; **2Co. 7:3; 2Ti 2:11+** = "we will also **live with** Him" = This refers to the believers' confidence of sustained fellowship with Jesus, not only in this present live by faith but one day in the future and forever by sight, face to face! Hallelujah! - Translated (NAS) = live(2), live together(1). Not in Septuagint.

**Gilbrant - Suzaō** (also spelled sunzaō) Paul never used the verb in the simple sense of "living with" another person; instead, he used it as a metaphor. In all three cases Paul connected "living with" someone to "dying with" the same person. In Ro 6:8 and 2 Ti 2:11 that person is Christ. In Romans 6 Paul drew a parallel between the meaning of baptism (not water but spiritual - 1Co 12:13) and the reality of the Christian life: as the believer "dies with" Christ in (spiritual) baptism (Ro 6:4), he now "lives with" Christ as a matter of his own will (Ro 6:11). Ultimately, Christians "live with" Jesus by living the life of faith through the Holy Spirit both now and, more perfectly, later at the end of the age. 2Ti 2:11 emphasizes the future aspects of "living with" Christ: believers shall fully experience salvation if they are faithful to what they have received. In 2Co 7:3 the same formula is applied to the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians: "For I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together" (RSV). ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**2 Corinthians 7:4 Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have great confidence in you; I take great pride on your behalf. I am filled with encouragement; I am overflowing with joy in the midst of all our suffering.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:4 πολλ ἡμι παρρησια α πρ σ μ σ, πολλ ἡμι κα χησις π ρ μ ν· πεπλ ρωμαι τ παρακλ σει, περπερισσε ομαι τ χαρ π π σ τ θλ ψει μ ν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have the highest confidence in you, and I take great pride in you. You have greatly encouraged me and made me happy despite all our troubles.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:4 I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:4 great is my freedom of speech unto you, great my glory on your behalf; I have been filled with the comfort, I overabound with the joy on all our tribulation,

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying on your behalf: I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have great confidence in you; I have great pride in you. I am filled with encouragement; I am overcome with joy in all our afflictions.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:4 On my part I have much confidence in you; I do much boasting about you. I am filled with encouragement. I am overflowing with joy in spite of all our trouble.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:4 I often boast about you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with consolation; I am overjoyed in all our affliction.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have great confidence in you, I have great pride in you; I am filled with encouragement, I am overflowing with joy all the more because of all our affliction.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:4 I can speak with the greatest frankness to you; and I can speak with the greatest pride about you: in all our hardship, I am filled with encouragement and overflowing with joy.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:4 I have great confidence in you, and I have a lot of reasons to be proud of you. Even as we suffer, I'm encouraged and feel very happy.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:4 My words to you are without fear, I am full of pride on account of you: I have great comfort and joy in all our troubles.

- **Great is my confidence in you:** 2Co 3:12 6:11 10:1,2 11:21 Eph 6:19,20 Php 1:20 1Th 2:2
- **great is my boasting on your behalf:** 2Co 1:14 9:2-4 1Co 1:4 1Th 2:19
- **I am filled with comfort:** 2Co 7:6,7 1:4 2:14 6:10 Ac 5:41 Ro 5:3 Php 2:17 Col 1:24 1Th 3:7-9 Jas 1:2
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Thessalonians 1:6 (**SECRET OF JOY IN AFFLICITION**) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in **much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit**(HE IS THE SECRET!),

Colossians 1:24 (**JOY AND AFFLICITION**) Now I **rejoice in my sufferings** for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Philippians 2:17 (**JOY AND AFFLICITION**) But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I **rejoice and share my joy with you all.**

1 Thessalonians 3:7-9 (**JOY AND AFFLICITION**) for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith; 8 for now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord. 9 For what thanks can we render to God for you in return **for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account,**

## ENCOURAGING WORDS TO THE CORINTHIANS

[Paul Apple](#) entitles the following - Outpouring of Deep Emotions 1. Confidence 2. Comfort 3. Joy

**Great is my confidence (parrhesia) in you - NLT** = "I have the highest confidence in you." Even though Paul felt the Corinthians had some hesitancy in fully accepting him in their heart, because of his great heart toward them (and enabled by the Spirit), he expresses great confidence in them. In other words, Paul firmly held to the belief that the Corinthians were still loyal to him. He repeats a similar affirmation in 2Cor 7:16 "I rejoice that in everything I have confidence ([parrhesia](#)) in you."

**Colin Kruse** suggests that while Paul believed they were still loyal to him "It only needed to be released from the restrictions brought about by painful past events and the criticisms they had entertained concerning his integrity." ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Great is my boasting (kauchesis) on your behalf - NLT** = "I take great pride in you." If you have confidence in someone, you are then able to boast or express your pride in them and that was Paul's feeling toward the Corinthians. Paul may have written of his great confidence and boasting in view of the good report from Titus (see 2Co 7:6-7) Paul spoke highly of the Corinthians, despite the difficulties he had experienced. Paul had a forbearing spirit (cf Php 4:5+) enabled by the Holy Spirit.

**P E Hughes** - The pride, however, which the Apostle takes in his converts is not that of self-congratulation, but that of joy and gratitude before God because of the manifestation of His saving and transforming grace, even through so unworthy an instrument as himself, in the lives of men and women who previously were in bondage to Satan. Such selfless glorying is characteristic of Paul, not least in this epistle (cf. 7:14; 8:24; 9:2-4; also 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Thess. 1:4). In contrast to the ministers of Satan (11:15) who had invaded his territory at Corinth, his glorying is always and entirely glorying in the Lord (10:17). ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**William MacDonald** may be correct in saying "Probably the particular aspect of their Christian life which evoked sincere commendation from Paul was their willing attitude in connection with the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem. The apostle will come to that subject directly, but here he only makes a passing allusion to it." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**I am filled (pleroo) with comfort (paraklesis) - NLT** = "You have greatly encouraged me. " **Filled** is perfect tense expressing his settled state. While this could be comfort provided by the Comforter, the Spirit, as noted above, in context it reflects the relief and joy he experienced when he heard the report from Titus (see 2Co 7:6-7)

**G Campbell Morgan** - "No circumstances of personal affliction can dim the gladness of seeing souls grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus."

**I am overflowing (huperperisseuo) with joy (chara) in all our affliction (thipsis) -** "I super-abound in joy; I have a joy beyond expression." **NLT** = "made me happy despite all our troubles." - Overflowing is in the present tense picturing an ever flowing river of joy (cf "rivers of living water" from his innermost being - Jn 7:38-39). The afflictions did not dampen Paul's joy related to the Corinthians. **Joy in affliction** is another clear evidence of Paul continually being a Spirit filled man. Affliction does not bring joy to a natural man, but only to a "supernatural man."

**David Guzik** - Some think that God wants us to endure tribulation with a blank, stoic face—the "stiff upper lip"—but God wants more from us than that. He wants us to super-abound in joy even in all our tribulation.

**Brian Bell** - Pain (tribulation, affliction) is actually our friend! It was designed by God to Warn us something's wrong(i.e. broken bone; my hand is burning on this stove; etc.). It was designed by God to Instruct us (i.e. spank). Remember the good times? Remember the bad times? Q: Which proved to be the better teacher? Q: Which stories do you use more to teach your children lessons? - "When I used to walk to school...20 miles in the snow..." It was designed by God to Mature us & Drive us back to God! It is only at the cross, where our vertical & horizontal relationships intersect! If you're having trouble having respect for others(your boss, your wife, your husband, your friend), know that you must 1st have reverence for God! God sends rain on all of our lives! - "He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."(Mt.5:45) On some it is a mist, on some it is sporadic, on others it is El Nino! When it rains you really have 2 choices: 1] Stand there & get soaked & complain. 2] Or, you could be "Singing in the Rain!" ([Regret or Repent?](#))

Paul's joyful heart didn't come from "lack of problems" but came "in the midst" of them!

-- Brian Bell

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### Joy in affliction:

2 Corinthians 1:4 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Matthew 5:12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance (see [Perseverance](#));

James 1:2; 3 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

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**Confidence** (boldness) ([3954](#)) **parrhesia/parresia** from **pás** = all + **rhesis** = speech, act of speaking) is literally all speech or speaking all things and thereby conveys the idea of freedom to say all. The basic idea in the word is freedom of speech, when the word flowed freely. It is that attitude of openness that stems from

freedom and lack of fear ("shaking" fear - godly, reverential fear is always appropriate) means in essence the freedom to say all. Greeks used **parrhesia** of those with the right to speak openly in the assembly. Speaking with plainness, openness and confidence ([Acts 2:29](#)). Speaking publicly or in the open ([Jn 7:13, 11:54, 18:20](#)) and then something done in public ([Jn 7:26, Col 2:15-note](#)) It is a deep confidence that shows itself in bold, candid speech, by one being "ready and willing" to make their convictions known in public without fear of repercussions (cp [Acts 4:13, 29, 31, 9:31, 28:31](#)

**Boasting** ([2746](#)) **kauchesis** from **kauchaomai** = to boast) refers to the act of boasting about something. It expresses the idea of self-congratulation with or without sufficient reason. To boast means to speak of or assert with excessive pride, to express pride in oneself or one's accomplishments and often suggests ostentation or even exaggeration. In the present context **kauchesis** denotes the assertion of a claim upon God on the ground of one's works. 11x in NT- Rom. 3:27; Rom. 15:17; 1 Co. 15:31; 2 Co. 1:12; 2 Co. 7:4; 2 Co. 7:14; 2 Co. 8:24; 2 Co. 11:10; 2 Co. 11:17; 1 Thess. 2:19; Jas. 4:16

**Filled** (complete) ([4137](#)) **pleroo** means to be filled ([passive voice](#) = saints acted on by outside force = "Divine Passive") to the brim (a net, [Mt 13:48](#), a building, [Jn 12:3](#), [Acts 2:2+](#), a city, [Acts 5:28+](#), needs [Phil 4:19+](#)), to make complete in every particular, to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally, to flood, to diffuse throughout, to pervade, to take possession of and so to ultimately to control.

**Comfort** ([3874](#)) **paraklesis** from **parakaleo** = beseech <> **pará** = side of + **kaléo** = call) refers to calling to one's side or one's aid which can be for the purpose of providing solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, encouragement.

**Overflowing** (abounding beyond measure or exceedingly) ([5248](#)) **huperperisseuo** from **hupér** [hyper] = over, super + **perisseuo** = be over and above, cause to overflow or superabound) means to superabound (even more than "superabound"!) or to abound much more in a comparative sense. The idea is to be in great excess or abundance (Ro 5:20). It is also used figuratively in 2 Corinthians 7:4 where the idea is to be full and running over, to be overflowing or to experience exceedingly.

**Joy** ([5479](#)) **chara** is a feeling of great pleasure, of inner gladness, or of delight. **Joy** is an emotion evoked by a sense of well-being. It is a deep feeling of happiness and contentment. **Joy** in the NT is virtually always used to signify a feeling of "happiness" that is based on spiritual realities (independent of what "happens"). **Joy** is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful behavior.

**Affliction** ([2347](#)) **thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Thipsis is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together as of grapes. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally **thlipsis**. The iron cage was **stenochoria** (see below). **Thlipsis** thus refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty.

**2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our body had no rest at all, but we were troubled in every way—struggles from the outside, fears from within.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:5 Καὶ γέραθη ντῶν μὲν εἰς Μακεδονίαν οὐδὲ μὲν σχηκεῖν νεσίν σρέξε μὲν ἀλλὰ παντὶ θλιβεῖ μενοι· ξωθεῖν μὲν χαίρει, σωθεῖν φέρει.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:5 When we arrived in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from every direction, with battles on the outside and fear on the inside.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted

at every turn-- fighting without and fear within.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:5 For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn--conflicts on the outside, fears within.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:5 for also we, having come to Macedonia, no relaxation hath our flesh had, but on every side we are in tribulation, without are fightings, within -- fears;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:5 In fact, when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest. Instead, we were troubled in every way: conflicts on the outside, fears inside.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came to Macedonia there was no letup on our flesh. Instead, there were those exerting pressure in every direction. There were battles outside, fears inside.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:5 For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way-- disputes without and fears within.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way-- external conflicts, internal fears.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:5 Even after we had come to Macedonia, there was no rest for this body of ours. Far from it; we were beset by hardship on all sides, there were quarrels all around us and misgivings within us.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:5 Ever since we arrived in the province of Macedonia, we've had no rest. Instead, we suffer in a number of ways. Outwardly we have conflicts, and inwardly we have fears.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:5 For even when we had come into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; there were fightings outside and fears inside.

- **For even when we came into Macedonia:** 2Co 1:16,17 2:13 Ac 20:1 1Co 16:5
- **our flesh had no rest,:** 2Co 4:8-12 11:23-30 Ge 8:9 Isa 33:12 Jer 8:18 45:3 Mt 11:28-30
- **but we were afflicted on every side:** 2Co 4:8 Job 18:11 Jer 6:25 20:10
- **conflicts without,:** De 32:25 1Co 15:31
- **fears within:** 2Co 2:3,9 2Co 11:29 2Co 12:20,21 Ga 4:11,19,20 1Th 3:5
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Corinthians 4:8-12 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 but in everything commanding ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, 5 in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger, 6 in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, 7 in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, 8 by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; regarded as deceivers and yet true; 9 as unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, 10 as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

2 Corinthians 11:28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 12:20-21 For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances; 21 I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced.

## PAUL PICKS UP AFTER THE "PARENTHESIS"

Recall that Paul had mentioned **Macedonia** in 2Cor 2:13 "I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to **Macedonia**." Recall Macedonia is region north of Achaia where Corinth was located. Therefore after the wonderful parenthesis in 2Co 2:14-7:4 Paul now resumes his narrative from 2Co 2:13, resuming the account of his search for Titus and their eventual "reunion."

[ESV Study Bible](#) - Paul picks up the narrative from 2Co 2:13. The intervening section has explained his new covenant ministry.

[Paul Apple](#) entitles 2Co 7:5-7 DIVINE COMFORT RELIEVES INTENSE MINISTRY PRESSURE --

- (:5) Inescapable Battleground Pressure – Squeezed on all fronts
- (:6) Divine Strategic Reinforcement – Divine Comfort in the person of Titus
- (:7) Encouraging Scouting Report – First Fruits of Genuine Repentance

**Michael Andrus** - Let me set the stage here. While Paul was away from Corinth on a long missionary journey he received reports about the church that concerned him deeply. In fact, he became so troubled that he couldn't even complete the ministry God had opened a door for him to do in Troas. But what could he do about the situation in Corinth? He had made one return trip himself to Corinth, but it had ended badly, with at least one of the leaders publicly rebuking him and very few supporting him. So he decided to send his friend and colleague, Titus, to go as an emissary to Corinth in his place to try to resolve the situation and bring back a report. Titus did just that, and apparently he was very effective in convincing the believers that Paul was their friend, not their enemy. He was able to report back to the Apostle that the situation was vastly improved. One lesson we can learn from this is that no pastor can do everything. No pastor can connect with everybody or reach everybody. All of us have to know when it's time to ask another gifted believer, like Titus, to take our place, minister in our behalf, or even be a go-between in a conflict situation.(See his entire sermon - [The Deadly Difference Between Regret and Repentance](#))

**McGee** - Paul gets very personal when he says, "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." This is so personal I almost feel that we shouldn't read it. ([2 Corinthians 7 Commentary](#))

**Kruse** - In this section Paul returns to the account of his travels which was broken off at 2Co 2:13 to include the long treatment of the nature, integrity and divine enabling of his ministry (2Co 2:14–7:4). He now picks up the threads dropped at 2:13, and in the rest of ch. 7, completes the account of his travels and concerns in relation to the Corinthian crisis. ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Guzik** - When Paul speaks of the coming of Titus, he actually picks up where he left off in 2 Corinthians 2:13. In a sense, 2 Corinthians 2:14 to 7:4 is one long digression—led by God of course and containing some of the richest treasure of the New Testament. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**For (gar) even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, (anesis)** - Paul was not on vacation but vocation, an ambassador for God. He was restless because he had not yet met Titus who he had dispatched to Corinth with a "severe letter" he had written to them "with many tears." (2Co 2:4). This description is similar to his statement that he "had no rest for (his) spirit" in 2Co 2:13. **Flesh (sarx)** refers to his physical flesh, to his whole person. **F F Bruce** says Paul used **Flesh (sarx)** here (instead of spirit - pneuma) to express "the weakness of human nature which is so much influenced by external circumstances and internal moods. Paul's failure to find **rest** in Macedonia surely reflects his initial failure to find Titus and then his thoughts of how the Corinthians would receive his "severe letter?" So at first in Macedonia Paul's hopes were deferred and...

Hope deferred makes the heart sick,  
But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

**But we were** (present tense - continually) **afflicted** ([thlibo](#)) **on every side** - Paul dealt with troubles in every direction - outside conflicts and inner phobias! This verse is like a summary of 2Co in 1:4–10, 2Co 4:7–12 and 2Co 6:3–10. **MIT** - "There were those exerting pressure in every direction." The nature of the pressing circumstances is not stated, but we recall that Paul had experienced significant affliction in his first tour through Philippi (in Macedonia) (Acts 16:16–40). In 2Co 8:2+ Paul says the churches in Macedonia were embroiled "**in a great ordeal of affliction** ([thlipsis](#))," and this undoubtedly explains to some degree how Paul "**was afflicted on every side.**" We are reminded from Luke's description in Acts 17:5–14+ that Paul's reception in the region of Macedonia had not exactly been cordial!

**Conflicts** ([mache](#)) **without, fears** ([phobos](#)) **within** - This statement is surely an accurate summary of Paul's entire ministry! Even though blessing and joy abounded, myriad, manifold difficulties continually assailed his heart and mind. **Conflicts** speaks of quarrels and disputes as described in 2Ti 2:23, Titus 3:9 and James 4:1. The Gospel was good news to those who received it, but those who were not of the elect it was "bad news" for it meant their failure to accept it destined them to eternal separation from God. It follows that the opponents of the Gospel would be aggressive and [intractable](#). Conflicts would be continual (**THOUGHT** - Are we still surprised when we encounter strong resistance to the Gospel in our families, friends and co-workers? We should expect **conflicts without!**) **Fears** speaks of inner emotional turmoil surely related to his concerns over the state of the church at Corinth. In context some of these fears were anxieties over the fact that he had still not made contact with Titus. These **fears** progressed to depression as he states in the next passage.

[Wick Broomall](#) - It (affliction) was incessant (no rest), encircling (on every side), external (without), and internal (within). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

[Bob Utley](#) - It is helpful for me in the midst of my worry and doubts to know the great apostle to the Gentiles was also plagued with his doubts about the abiding results of his ministry (cf. 2Co 6:1). "**conflicts without, fears within**" Since the time of Chrysostom, this phrase has been interpreted as referring to problems with unbelievers and believers (cf. 2Co 11:28). Paul worried about Satan's schemes (cf. 2Co 11:3; 1 Cor. 7:5).

[Homer Kent](#) - Mentioning again his trip into Macedonia, Paul explains the tremendous concern that had troubled his party at that time. They had not found Titus as expected in Troas (2Co 2:12–13), and had pressed on to Macedonia. The writer of Acts (Acts 20:1–2) gives no hint of these troubles (perhaps because he was not a participant at this time), but they were very real to the traveling missionaries. "Our flesh had no rest" is similar to "no rest for my spirit" (2Co 2:13), and describes the human realm in which sufferings occur. "Conflicts without" were the oppositions to the gospel and to the nurturing of converts which come from opponents both inside and outside the church. "Fears within" were the anxieties Paul experienced as he felt deep concern for his converts, and especially the Corinthians, not knowing how they had responded to his severe letter. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

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**Rest** (freedom, ease) ([425](#)) [anesis](#) from [aniemi](#) = loose, let up, hold back ~ relaxing or release) refers to relaxing as of confinement (Acts 25:23), refreshment or relief from tension due to something onerous or troublesome (2Co 7:5). It also describes release from burdensome expense (2Co 8:13).

**Afflicted** (crowded, distressed, troubled) ([2346](#)) [thlibo](#) from [tribos](#) = wear away, rub, break in pieces; **NIDNTT** says **thlibo** is from the root **thlao** = squash, crush) (See study of related word [thlipsis](#)) literally means to press, squeeze, crush, squash, hem in and then to be narrow. Thlibo presents the "picture of a loaded wagon crushed under its heavy load." **Thlibo** used literally pictures putting pressure upon or pressing in upon or pressing hard upon a person as when when Jesus was forced to get in the boat to keep from **crowding** Him (Mark 3:9). While some uses of **thlibo** refers to physical affliction, other uses are figurative and refer to emotional or spiritual affliction (e.g., "conflicts without, fears within" in 2Cor 7:5) And so in Paul's letters **thlibo** usually refers to the hardships he and his fellow workers experienced during their missionary journeys (2Cor 1:6; 4:8; 7:5; 1Th 3:4; 2Th 1:1-7). **Vincent - Tribulation** is perhaps as accurate a rendering as is possible, being derived from **tribulum**, the threshing-roller of the Romans. In both the idea of pressure is dominant, though **thlipsis** does not convey the idea of separation (as of corn from husk) which is implied in **tribulatio**."

**Conflicts** (fightings, struggles, battles) ([3163](#)) [mache](#) from [machomai](#) = to fight - this word is used for physical combat, especially military) when used literally refers to physical combat or a contest fought with weapons = battle, conflict, fight. The idea is a serious clash or conflict, and can be either physical or non-physical. It pictures violent personal relationships.

**Fear** ([5401](#)) [phobos](#) from [phebomai](#) = flee, withdraw) (see another discussion of [phobos](#)) is used in an

active sense to describe that which causes fear or terror. Fear is usually an emotion of severe distress aroused by intense concern of some impending pain, danger, etc, and is usually accompanied by a desire to flee because feeling inadequate or without sufficient resources.

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**Wick Broomall** suggests the following outline for the remainder of the chapter. He entitles it...

**Reasons for Paul's High Regard for the Corinthians.** 2Co 7:5-16.

1. 2Co 7:5-7 give Paul's first reason: Their regard for him.
2. 2Co 7:8-12 give Paul's second reason: Their response to his letter.
3. 2Co 7:13-16 Paul gives the third reason: Their reception of Titus. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

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**Honest Relationships**

We were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears. — 2 Corinthians 7:5

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:2-7

Meet Mr. and Mrs. Everything's Fine. They're dedicated to ministering to people and everyone respects them, but many feel uncomfortable around them.

They always speak in glowing terms about their marriage and the joys of parenthood. They have a Bible verse for every situation. One of their friends said, "When I'm around them, I don't feel free to say how I really feel. When I do, they just tell me to 'trust God.'"

Now consider the apostle Paul. Instead of pretending that everything was always okay, he was transparent about his own struggles. This made people feel safe to open up to him. Listen to his honesty: "Our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears" (2 Cor. 7:5).

Sharing those painful experiences and raw emotions enabled Paul to give this sincere testimony: "Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus" (v.6).

But how can greater honesty and transparency make us more effective in our ministry to others? If people see how Christ meets our needs when we're struggling, they will be more willing to trust Him themselves. And what greater ministry could we have than this? By: Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Wearing a mask that shows everything's fine  
Says that life's struggles are not God's design;  
But when we're open, transparent, and true,  
People will trust God to meet their needs too.  
—Sper

The more we work at what we should be, the less we'll need to hide what we are.

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**Streams in the Desert - "We are troubled on every side." (2 Cor. 7:5.)**

WHY should God have to lead us thus, and allow the pressure to be so hard and constant? Well, in the first place, it shows His all-sufficient strength and grace much better than if we were exempt from pressure and trial. "The treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

It makes us more conscious of our dependence upon Him. God is constantly trying to teach us our dependence, and to hold us absolutely in His hand and hanging upon His care.

This was the place where Jesus Himself stood and where He wants us to stand, not with self-constituted strength, but with a hand ever leaning upon His, and a trust that dare not take one step alone. It teaches us trust.

There is no way of learning faith except by trial. It is God's school of faith, and it is far better for us to learn to trust God than to enjoy life.

The lesson of faith once learned, is an everlasting acquisition and an eternal fortune made; and without trust even riches will leave us poor.—Days of Heaven upon Earth.

"Why must I weep when others sing?  
'To test the deeps of suffering'.  
Why must I work while others rest?  
'To spend my strength at God's request.'

Why must I lose while others gain?  
'To understand defeat's sharp pain.'  
Why must this lot of life be mine  
When that which fairer seems is thine?  
'Because God knows what plans for me  
Shall blossom in eternity.'

## 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

NET 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who encourages the downhearted, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:6 οὐαὶ παρακαλεῖται τοῖς ταπεινοῖς παρεῖ λεσσεῖ μηδὲ θεῖται παρουσίᾳ Τίτου,

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:6 but He who is comforting the cast-down -- God -- He did comfort us in the presence of Titus;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:6 Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who comforts the humble, comforted us by the arrival of Titus,

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, the companion of the humble, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:6 Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who consoles the downcast, consoled us by the arrival of Titus,

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who encourages the downcast, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus,

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God, who encourages all those who are distressed, encouraged us through the arrival of Titus;

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:6 Yet God, who comforts those who are dejected, comforted us when Titus arrived.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:6 But God who gives comfort to the poor in spirit gave us comfort by the coming of Titus;

- **But God, who comforts the depressed:** 2Co 1:3-4 2:14 Isa 12:1 51:12 57:15,18 61:1,2 Jer 31:13 Mt 5:4 Joh 14:16 Ro 15:5  
Php 2:1 2Th 2:16,17
- **comforted:** 2Co 2:13 1Co 16:17,18 1Th 3:2,6,7 3Jn 1:2-4
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Isaiah 49:13 (**GOD OF ALL COMFORT**) Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the **LORD has comforted His people** And will have compassion on His afflicted.

Isaiah 51:3 Indeed, **the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places.** And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

Isaiah 52:9 Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For**the LORD has comforted His people**, He has redeemed Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 1:3-11+ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and **God of all comfort**, 4 Who **comforts us in all our affliction** so that we will be able to **comfort** those who are in any affliction with the **comfort** with which we ourselves are **comforted by God**. 5 For just as the sufferings of

Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. 6 But if we are afflicted, it is for your **comfort** and salvation; or if we are **comforted**, it is for your **comfort**, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; 7 and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our **comfort**. 8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; 10 Who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us, 11 you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many.

Acts 28:15+ (**EFFECT OF BRETHREN IN ENCOURAGEMENT**) And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he **thanked God and took courage** (became confident).

1 Cor 16:17+ I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have supplied what was lacking ([husterema](#)) on your part.

Galatians 6:2+ **Bear** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

## GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL PROVISION

**But God** - A wonderful contrast describing what happens when God "steps in!" The key word in 2Co 7:6-7 is **comfort** ([parakaleo](#)). This was not the first time Paul had experienced the God of all comfort as he wrote in 2Co 1:3-11. First and foremost is God comfort, then people (Titus) comfort.

**THOUGHT** - We have all experienced similar "**but God**" moments in our life when God sets our feet on the mountain once again (cf Hab 3:19+) and it therefore behoves us to keep them in our memory when we are walking through the "valley times."

**But God** in the Corinthians letters (accounts for 8/20 NT occurrences) - 1Co. 1:27; 1Co. 3:6; 1Co. 3:7; 1Co. 6:13; 1Co. 7:15; 1Co. 12:24; 1Co. 15:38; 2Co. 7:6

**Who** (present tense - continually) **comforts** ([parakaleo](#)) **the depressed** ([tapeinos](#)) **comforted us by the coming** ([parousia](#)) of **Titus** - Note that first it is **God Who** continually comforted Paul (who was **depressed**). **Comfort** also has the sense of encourage, a effect Titus' arrival surely had on Paul's psyche! **Depressed** describes Paul's despondent, downcast state over concerns regarding Corinth. As we might say today Paul was "[down in the mouth](#)!" **Coming** is [parousia](#) meaning both an arrival and a being present at a place (as in Php 2:12), but also coming (1Co 16:17) and is used in 1Co 15:23 (cf 1Th 2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23) of "Christ at His coming."

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
Thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness  
--Psalm 30:11

**Homer Kent** - It was God who had stood beside these discouraged and apprehensive missionaries and provided the strength and comfort they needed to move forward with their ministry. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**McGee** - But God used a man to comfort Paul: "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus." You could help some dear saint of God and be a comfort to him. My friend, when was the last time you went to your preacher and put your arm on his shoulder and said, "Brother, I've been praying for you. I see that you are working hard and standing for the things of God, and I just want you to know I am standing with you." He would appreciate that....The Corinthians had said nice things about Paul. Friend, don't be so hesitant to say something nice about someone else. Really, your tongue won't fall out if you say some nice things. ([2 Corinthians 7 Commentary](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** in his commento on **coming of Titus** describes how believers can comfort one another - This is the way Christians ought to help one another. We ought to bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2); encourage one another (Heb. 10:25); minister to one another (1 Peter 4:10-11). Christ sent the disciples out two by two, knowing that "it is not good for a man to be alone" (cf. Gen 2:18) even in Christian service. Lonely Christians are often defeated Christians. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 states that "two are better than one." What a privilege and responsibility it is for Christians to encourage one another! When Elijah thought he was the only one faithful to

God, he began to backslide. Jonah ministered alone and developed a bitter spirit. (**ED: COROLLARY POINT - LONELY CHRISTIANS ARE OFTEN DEFEATED CHRISTIANS!**). ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the NT](#))

Paul was "sharpened" by the **coming of Titus** which recalls the truth in Proverbs 27:17 that "Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another." He was also refreshed as the proverb states...

Like cold water to a weary soul,  
So is good news from a distant land.  
--Proverbs 25:25

**Brian Bell** - Downcast Depression –All of us get depressed from time to time. (sometimes heavy, sometimes, light, sometimes it lingers, other times it quickly passes) How do you deal with it?

[1] As a Christian do you just deny depression exists? {remember, just as every day isn't sunny outside, so our lives will have days of clouds & rain showers}

[2] Did you think that in becoming a Christian all your problems would be solved? {Becoming a Christian complicates your life. You now have to deal w/a 2nd nature, rather than operating solely in the flesh.}

[3] Did you think that problems are a sign that you are unspiritual? {Though we do reap consequences, the problems might be signs of spiritual activity}

[4] Did you think being exposed to sound biblical teaching automatically solves your problems? {No more than immersing yourself in water makes you a fish! You must be a doer also} ([Regret or Repent?](#))

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**Comforts** ([3870](#)) **parakaleo** from **para** = side of, alongside, beside + **kaleo** = call) means literally to call one alongside, to call someone to oneself, to call for, to summon. **Parakaleo** can include the idea of giving help or aid but the primary sense in the NT is to urge someone to take some action, especially some ethical course of action. Sometimes the word means convey the idea of comfort, sometimes of exhortation but always at the root there is the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence and with gallantry. **Uses in the Corinthian letters** (note 3 uses in 2Co 7) - 1Co. 1:10; 1Co. 4:13; 1Co. 4:16; 1Co. 14:31; 1Co. 16:12; 1Co. 16:15; 2Co. 1:4; 2Co. 1:6; 2Co. 2:7; 2Co. 2:8; 2Co. 5:20; 2Co. 6:1; 2Co. 7:6; 2Co. 7:7; 2Co. 7:13; 2Co. 8:6; 2Co. 9:5; 2Co. 10:1; 2Co. 12:8; 2Co. 12:18; 2Co. 13:11

**Depressed** ([5011](#)) **tapeinos** means literally low, thus not high, not rising far from the ground. Metaphorically **tapeinos** speaks of one's condition as lowly or of low degree (Jas 1:9). One's emotional state is brought low as with grief - downhearted, cast down or depressed (2Co 7:6). Lowly in spirit or humble. Unimportant in world's eyes (Lk 1:52). **All 8 NT uses** - Mt. 11:29; Lk. 1:52; Ro 12:16; 2Co. 7:6; 2Co. 10:1; Jas. 1:9; Jas 4:6; 1Pe 5:5

**Coming** ([3952](#)) **parousia** is a combination of two Greek words **para** = with, alongside + **ousia** = being (**ousia** is the participial form of the verb **eimi** = to be) which together literally mean to be alongside. **Parousia** conveys the thought of an arrival (advent or coming) of a person to a place plus the idea of their presence at that place until a certain event transpires. **Uses in Corinthian letters** - 1Co. 15:23; 1Co. 16:17; 2Co. 7:6; 2Co. 7:7; 2Co. 10:10;

**Titus - All NT uses** - 2Co. 2:13; 2Co. 7:6; 2Co. 7:13; 2Co. 7:14; 2Co. 8:6; 2Co. 8:16; 2Co. 8:23; 2Co. 12:18; Gal. 2:1; Gal. 2:3; 2Ti 4:10; Tit. 1:4

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#### Related Resources:

- [What does the Bible say about depression? How can a Christian overcome depression? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is it wrong for a Christian to be depressed? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does the Bible say about Bipolar Disorder / Manic Depression? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [The Christian and Depression](#)
- [When Hope Is Lost: Dealing With Depression](#) - Radio Bible Class Booklet

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**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - "God, that comforteth those that are cast down." —2 Corinthians 7:6

And who comforteth like him? Go to some poor, melancholy, distressed child of God; tell him sweet promises, and whisper in his ear choice words of comfort; he is like the deaf adder, he listens not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. He is drinking

gall and wormwood, and comfort him as you may, it will be only a note or two of mournful resignation that you will get from him; you will bring forth no psalms of praise, no hallelujahs, no joyful sonnets. But let God come to his child, let him lift up his countenance, and the mourner's eyes glisten with hope. Do you not hear him sing—

“Tis paradise, if thou art here;  
If thou depart, 'tis hell?”

You could not have cheered him: but the Lord has done it; “He is the God of all comfort.” There is no balm in Gilead, but there is balm in God. There is no physician among the creatures, but the Creator is Jehovah-rophi. It is marvellous how one sweet word of God will make whole songs for Christians. One word of God is like a piece of gold, and the Christian is the gold beater, and can hammer that promise out for whole weeks. So, then, poor Christian, thou needest not sit down in despair. Go to the Comforter, and ask him to give thee consolation. Thou art a poor dry well. You have heard it said, that when a pump is dry, you must pour water down it first of all, and then you will get water, and so, Christian, when thou art dry, go to God, ask him to shed abroad his joy in thy heart, and then thy joy shall be full. Do not go to earthly acquaintances, for you will find them Job's comforters after all; but go first and foremost to thy “God, that comforteth those that are cast down,” and you will soon say, “In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.”

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**John Courson - Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus... II Corinthians 7:6**

When Paul was going through the wringer internally, externally, emotionally, and physically, how did God comfort him? Through Titus. This amazes me. You see, Titus was one of Paul's students, one of his disciples. After sending him to Corinth with his first letter, Paul says it was when Titus returned that he was built back up.

I'm afraid my reaction would have been, 'Oh, it's just Titus. Lord, why didn't You send me someone famous or deep? Billy Graham perhaps. But Titus? He's just one of my boys. How can he help me?'

I think of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. As He sweat great drops of blood while He prayed with intensity, an angel came and strengthened Him (Luke 22:43). Jesus could have said, 'I'm way above the angels.' Instead, He received the ministry of the angel.

So too, Paul received encouragement from Titus because he recognized an important principle: often the Lord comes to us in the unexpected person at an unexpected time in an unexpected way...

‘We know Him,’ they said. ‘He’s the carpenter’s son’ (Mark 6:3)—not realizing He was the Son of God.

Mary wept at the tomb, mistaking the Lord for a gardener (John 20:15).

On the road to Emmaus, they thought He was a stranger (Luke 24:18).

On the Sea of Galilee, they thought He was a ghost (Matthew 14:26).

Don't miss your Titus, gang. It might be your son or daughter. It might be a neighbor or co-worker. It might be someone you would never think had much to offer, but they'll come to you with words of encouragement—if you're wise enough to listen. Many people miss out, waiting for a pastor or a prophet, an author or a musician because they fail to recognize the Lord in the person sitting right next to them. ([A Day's Journey](#))

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**R Kent Hughes on depression in godly believers** - On a notable Sunday morning in 1866, the famous Victorian preacher **C. H. Spurgeon** shocked his five thousand listeners when from the pulpit of London's Metropolitan Tabernacle he announced,

“I am the subject of depressions of spirit so fearful that I hope none of you ever gets to such extremes of wretchedness as I go to.”

For some of his audience it was incomprehensible that the world's greatest preacher could know the valley of despair. Yet it was a regular part of his life because twenty-one years later in 1887 he said from the same pulpit,

“Personally I have often passed through this dark valley.”

**John Henry Jowett**, the renowned pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian in New York City, and later Westminster Chapel in London, wrote to a friend in 1920, “You seem to imagine I have no ups and downs but just a level and lofty stretch of spiritual attainment with unbroken joy and equanimity. By no means! I am often perfectly wretched and everything appears most murky.”

Writing of **Alexander Whyte**, perhaps Scotland's greatest preacher since John Knox, G. F. Barbour said, “Resolute as was Dr. Whyte's character, he had seasons of deep depression regarding the results of his work in the pulpit or among his people.”

Martin Luther was subject to such fits of darkness that he would hide himself away for days, and his family would remove all dangerous implements from the house for fear he would harm himself. In the midst of one of these times, his indomitable wife, Katharina, entered his room dressed in mourning clothes. Startled, Luther asked who had died. She replied that no one had, but from the way he was acting, she thought God had died!

The reality is that godly believers sometimes get depressed. ([2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness - Preaching the Word](#))

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#### QUESTION - Who was Titus in the Bible?

**ANSWER** - Titus was an early church leader, a trusted companion of the apostle Paul, and a faithful servant of the Lord.

Titus was a Gentile (Galatians 2:3) who was led to faith in Christ by Paul (Titus 1:4). He was drawn to the ministry and became a co-worker with Paul, accompanying him and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem (Titus is included in the “other believers” of Acts 15:2). At the [Jerusalem Council](#), Titus would have been a prime example of a born-again Gentile Christian. Titus was living proof that the rite of circumcision was unnecessary for salvation (Galatians 2:3).

Later, Titus went to Corinth to serve the church there (2 Corinthians 8:6, 16-17). On Paul’s third missionary journey, which took place from A.D. 53 to 57, Paul arrived in Troas and expected to meet Titus there (2 Corinthians 2:12-13). Not finding his friend, Paul left for Macedonia. Titus rejoined Paul in Philippi and gave him a good report of the ministry in Corinth (2 Corinthians 7:6-7, 13-14). When Titus returned to Corinth, he hand-delivered the Epistle of 2 Corinthians and organized a collection for needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:10, 17, 24).

Several years later, Titus and Paul traveled to the island of Crete, where Titus was left behind to continue and strengthen the work. Titus’s task was administrative, mostly: he was to maintain sound doctrine and “straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town” (Titus 1:5). When Artemas and Tychicus arrived in Crete to direct the ministry, Paul summoned Titus to join him in Nicopolis, a city in the province of Achaia in western Greece (Titus 3:12).

The last mention of Titus in the Bible indicates that he was with Paul during Paul’s final Roman imprisonment. From Rome, Titus was sent to evangelize Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10), an area which later became known as Yugoslavia and is now called Serbia and Montenegro.

As a Gentile Christian, Titus would have been particularly effective in combating the heresy of the Judaizers. The Judaizers insisted that all Christians were bound by the Mosaic Law. Usually, the Judaizers honed in on circumcision: Gentiles must be circumcised, they said, in order to truly be saved (see Paul’s refutation of this teaching in Galatians 5:1-6). Titus knew this teaching well, for the subject had come up in Syrian Antioch, leading to the Jerusalem Council, of which he had been a part.

Titus was a faithful servant of the Lord and a dedicated aide to Paul. He must have been trustworthy and dependable, since Paul appointed him to lead works in Corinth, Crete, and Dalmatia. Indeed, Paul calls him “my partner and fellow worker” (2 Corinthians 8:23). Knowing the difficult situations in both Corinth and Crete, we can infer that Titus was an insightful man who could handle problems with grace. Scripture says that Titus had a God-given love for the Corinthian believers; in fact, in returning to Corinth, Titus went “with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative” (2 Corinthians 8:16-17).

May we have the same zeal for the Lord that Titus showed. Every believer would do well to model Titus’s commitment to truth, fervor in spreading the gospel, and enthusiastic love for the church. ([GotQuestions.org](#))

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**2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more.**

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KJV 2 Corinthians 7:7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:7 We were encouraged not only by his arrival, but also by the encouragement you gave him, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your deep concern for me, so that I rejoiced more than ever.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:7 ο μνον δ ν τ παρουσ ατο λλ κα ν τ παρακλ σει παρεκλ θη φ μν, ναγγ λλων μντν μν πιπ θησιν, τν μν δυρμ ν, τν μνζ λον πρ μο στε με μλλον χρν ναι.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:7 His presence was a joy, but so was the news he brought of the encouragement he received from you. When he told us how much you long to see me, and how sorry you are for what happened,

and how loyal you are to me, I was filled with joy!

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only in his presence, but also in the comfort with which he was comforted over you, declaring to us your longing desire, your lamentation, your zeal for me, so that the more I did rejoice,

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced yet more.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his arrival, but also by the comfort he received from you. He told us about your deep longing, your sorrow, and your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:7 Not only was his coming an encouragement, but also what he shared with us about you, reporting to us your yearning, your grieving, and your solicitude concerning me. This made me rejoice all the more.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was consoled about you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not only by his arrival but also by the encouragement with which he was encouraged in regard to you, as he told us of your yearning, your lament, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:7 and not simply by his arrival only, but also by means of the encouragement that you had given him, as he told us of your desire to see us, how sorry you were and how concerned for us; so that I was all the more joyful.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:7 We were comforted not only by his arrival but also by learning about the comfort he had received while he was with you. He told us how you wanted to see me, how sorry you are for what you've done, and how concerned you are about me. This made me even happier.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:7 And not by his coming only, but by the comfort which he had in you, while he gave us word of your desire, your sorrow, your care for me; so that I was still more glad.

- **and not only by his coming:** Ac 11:23 Ro 1:12 Col 2:5 1Th 3:8 2Jn 1:4
- **but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you** 2Co 7:11 2:9 Ps 141:5 Pr 9:8,9
- **longing:** 2Co 5:2 8:16 Lu 22:44 Php 1:20 Heb 2:1 Jas 5:17 Jude 1:3
- **mourning:** 2Co 7:10 Jud 2:4,5 Ps 6:1-6 30:5 31:9-11 38:18 51:1 126:5,6 Jer 31:18-20 Mt 5:4 26:75 Jas 4:9,10
- **your zeal for me:** 2Co 1:14 2:3,4 1Th 3:6
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Matthew 2:18+ "A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, WEEPING AND GREAT MOURNING ([odumos](#), quoting Lxx of Jer 31:), RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN; AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE."

## COMFORT FROM HIS COMING

**And not only by his coming ([parousia](#)), but also by the comfort ([paraklesis](#)) with which he was comforted ([parakaleo](#)) in you -**  
NET - "We were encouraged not only by his arrival, but also by the encouragement you gave him." **Amplified** = "[Yes] and not only by his coming but also by [his account of] the comfort with which he was encouraged and refreshed and cheered as to you" Paul's joyful reunion with Titus was accompanied by joyful (joy-filled) news. Paul was consoled, comforted and encouraged by the coming alongside of Titus to give him assistance (and good news regarding the Corinthians). In addition Paul was comforted by Titus' report of the positive reception and response of the Corinthians had given him.

**Brian Bell** - It was great comfort to see Titus again, but it was also comforting to hear they had...an earnest desire(to see Paul again), they were mourning(over their sin), & they had zeal for Paul(rekindled love for Paul).It was also comforting to hear the good news that Paul's letter brought positive results. ([Regret or Repent?](#))

**As he reported to us** - The Greek word ([anaggello](#)) for **reported** has the notion of proclaiming again what has been received or discovered elsewhere. The present tense suggests Titus continually was giving Paul the good news from Corinth.

**Your** (deep) **longing** ([epipóthesis](#)), **your mourning** (deep sorrow, even [lamentation](#) = [odurmos](#)), **your zeal** (ardent concern, [solicitude](#), intense interest - [zelos](#)) **for me** - Here Paul summarizes the remarkable response of the Corinthians to his severe letter, and will give more detail in 2Co 7:11ff. This is like a "preview of coming attractions" for 2 of the 3 Greek words ([epipóthesis](#), [zelos](#)) are used again in his description of the seven-fold fruit of genuine repentance in 2Co 7:11. **Strong's** has this note on zelos "the fierceness of indignation, punitive zeal." Could this be the Corinthian's fierceness of indignation over their sins? (Just a thought to ponder). What are they **mourning** over? Surely it is their sin, yes, surely against their spiritual father Paul, but first and foremost against their holy Father, God. The fact that this same word [odurmos](#) is used only one other time Mt 2:18 (see [above](#)) gives us a sense of how deeply the Corinthians were grieving (over their sins).

**THOUGHT** - What would happen to those "little pet sins" we commit, confess and then commit again if our heart were broken like the Corinthians and we lamented audibly over our great sin against our holy Father? That's a rhetorical question for each reader to personally ponder.

Titus reported to Paul the supernatural change of attitude so that now the saints at Corinth had **deep longing** and intense yearning in their heart to see him (clearly they had "opened their hearts" to him as he had so desired). Clearly the adversaries and false teachers had not been successful in attempts to alienate the Corinthians from Paul.

Their **mourning** reflects their deep sense of sorrow and even regret over having causing Paul such grief and sadness and likely also their having tolerated such blatant sin in their assembly. And as Paul will go on to explain their grief was a godly grief that energized genuine change of heart (aka repentance).

Their **zeal** describes their eagerness, earnestness, enthusiastic devotion, single-minded allegiance, fervency and/or eager desire to see Paul and be reconciled. Their love for Paul was rekindled. One is reminded of the promise of Jesus that "upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Mt 16:18) The devil ([diabolos](#)) means to come between, as between Paul and the Corinthians) had attempted but was unable to overpower Christ's Church in Corinth!

**NLT** His presence was a joy, but so was the news he brought of the encouragement he received from you. When he told us how much you long to see me, and how sorry you are for what happened, and how loyal you are to me, I was filled with joy!

**So that I rejoiced** ([chairo](#)) **even more** (more than ever, greater than ever) - While we know joy is a supernatural fruit of the Spirit, clearly the circumstances in Corinthian also brought Paul true joy. Their **longing**, **mourning** and **zeal** was clear evidence that the Spirit was doing a supernatural work in the hearts of the Corinthians and this added to Paul's joy at the coming of Titus. In short Paul was experiencing joy upon joy!

**Bob Utley** - Paul's prayers and letters had proven effective. The majority in the church had responded appropriately to his apostolic authority and gospel presentation. They had rejected the immoral and heretical teachers (cf. vv. 8–13a).

As **Homer Kent** says Paul was relieved and rejoicing because "The severe letter which Titus had taken to Corinth could have been misunderstood and followed by shabby treatment of the man who delivered it (2Co 2:4, 9; 7:15). ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

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**Comfort** (encouragement) ([3874](#)) [paraklesis](#) from **parakaléō** = beseech <> **pará** = side of + **kaléō** = call) refers to calling to one's side or one's aid which can be for the purpose of providing solace, comfort, consolation, exhortation, encouragement. **Encouragement** is from **en** = in + **corage** from Latin **cor** = heart. It describes the act of inspiring one with confidence and/or hope, filling with strength, and suggests that the raising of one's confidence is accomplished especially through an external agency. **Comfort** is from Latin **com** = with + **fortis** = strong, and means to invigorate, to enliven, to cheer, to strengthen one's mind when depressed, to give new vigor to one's spirits, to give strength or hope to another, to ease their grief or trouble.

**Reported** ([312](#)) ([anaggello/anangello](#)) from **aná** = up to, again, back {like our English prefix "**re-**"= again thus "**re**-port" or "**re**-hearse" = to say again} + **aggélio** = tell, declare related to **ággelos** = messenger) means to bring back word and later to announce, to report. To rehearse, to show, to declare or tell of things

done. **Anaggello** means to carry back good tidings, to inform, to provide information, with some contexts conveying the implication of considerable detail (see Acts 14:27, 15:4). In the 14 NT uses of **anaggello**, notice that most report or announce something that has to do with God, including His works and/or purposes.

**Longing** (1972) (epipothesis from **epi** = upon, intensifies + **potheo** = to yearn) means a longing upon or toward, a great longing or yearning. It describes one's inner longing for something, a striving for some goal or object of desire. A prolonged unfilled desire or need. Only in 2Co 7:7, 11.

**Mourning** (3602) **odurmos** from **oduromai** = to lament) expresses a very intense and deep sense of sorrow, a loud and grievous expression of mourning or remorse. It can include the idea of wailing which means to utter a prolonged, inarticulate, mournful cry, usually high-pitched or clear-sounding, as in grief or suffering. Found only in Mt 2:18+, 2 Cor 7:7+ Once in the Septuagint of Jer 31:15+ "A voice is heard in Ramah, **Lamentation** and bitter weeping." Matthew's use indicates that this word describes audible mourning as an expression of sorrow.

**Thayer** has this note on synonyms - **dakruo** (cf [dakruon](#)), **klaio**, **oduromai** (cf [odurmos](#)), **threneo**, **alalazo** (ololuzo) **stenazo**: strictly, **dakruo** denotes to shed tears, weep silently; **klaio** to weep audibly, to cry as a child; **oduromai** to give verbal expression to grief, to lament; **Bp** to give formal expression to grief, to sing a dirge; **alalazo** to wail in oriental style, to howl in a consecrated, semi-liturgical fashion; **stenazo** to express grief by inarticulate or semi-articulate sounds, to groan.

**Oduromai** - **Liddell-Scott** - 1. c. acc. pers., Hom., Soph.; c. acc. mourned for it, i.e. for the want of it, 2. c. gen. pers. to mourn for, for the sake of, Hom. 3. c. dat. pers. to wail or lament to or before others, Id. 4. absol. to wail, mourn, Id., Eur.

**TDNT** - **oduromai** a. intr. "to wail," "to lament," "to grieve," "to be distressed," esp. for outward expressions of grief, often with tears, Hom. Od., 9, 13 (δυρόμενος στεναχίζω); 14, 129 (δυρομέν βλεφάρων πο δάκρυα πίπτει); 16, 144 f. (στοναχ τε γό τε); 18, 203 (κατά θυμόν); b. trans. "to bewail," "to bemoan," Hom. Il., 24, 714 (δάκρυ χέοντες); Soph. Ant., 693; Muson., p. 41, 4; 43, 2 (the exile). δυρμός, "wailing," "lamentation," "weeping," Eur. Tro., 609; Plat. Resp. 3, 398d (with θρ voi); Isoc. Panegyricus, 169 (δυστυχίας νδρ v); Plut. Demetr., 47, 3 (τς τύχης); Philo Migr. Abr., 156. In the LXX the verb occurs only in Jer 31:18+ for τιν hithp (lit. "to shake," shaking the head as a sign of grief), "to lament." For the noun δυρμός cf. ερ. 38:15 (31:15) (with θρ voi and κλαυθμός, Heb. בְּכָה, bitter weeping) for the loud (κούσθη) and violent lamentation of the mother at the loss of her children; also 2 Macc. 11:6 (μετ δυρμ v κα δακρύων κέτευον). The only NT examples of **odurmos** are in Mt. 2:18 (quoting ερ. 38:15 [31:15] → supra) for loud and grievous lamentation at a most bitter loss, and 2 C. 7:7 for violent expressions of bitter remorse.

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**Zeal** (jealousy) (2205) **zelos** from **zeo** = to be hot, to boil [from the sound of bubbling water], figuratively to be fervent or show great enthusiasm; eager striving, competition, enthusiasm, admiration. (cf [zeloo](#); [zelotes](#)). It was originally used in a good sense which described fervour in advancing a cause or in rendering service. **Zelos** gives us our English **zeal** (zealous - filled with intense enthusiasm).

**Strong's** -- excitement of mind, ardour, fervour of spirit 1a) zeal, ardour in embracing, pursuing, defending anything 1a1) zeal in behalf of, for a person or thing 1a2) the fierceness of indignation, punitive zeal 1b) an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy."

**Rejoiced** (5463) (**chairo**) means to be "cheer" full, calmly happy or well-off. **Chairo** implies and imparts joy. **Chairo** is used in a whole range of situations in which the emotion of joy is evoked. To be in a state of happiness and well being (often independent of what is happening when the Source is the Spirit!). **Chairo** means to enjoy a state of gladness, to be delighted. **Chairo in Corinthians** - 1 Co. 7:30; 1 Co. 13:6; 1 Co. 16:17; 2 Co. 2:3; 2 Co. 6:10; 2 Co. 7:7; 2 Co. 7:9; 2 Co. 7:13; 2 Co. 7:16; 2 Co. 13:9; 2 Co. 13:11

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**2 Corinthians 7:8 For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it--for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while-**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I made you sad by my letter, I do not regret having written it (even though I did regret it, for I see that my letter made you sad, though only for a short time).

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:8 τι ε κα λ πησα μς ν τ πιστολ, ο μεταμ λομαι ε κα μετεμελ μην, βλ πω [γρ] τι πιστολ κε νη ε κα πρς ραν λ πησεν μς,

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:8 I am not sorry that I sent that severe letter to you, though I was sorry at first, for I know it was painful to you for a little while.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it-- though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it--I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while--

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:8 because even if I made you sorry in the letter, I do not repent -- if even I did repent -- for I perceive that the letter, even if for an hour, did make you sorry.

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:8 For though I made you sorry with my epistle, I do not regret it: though I did regret it (for I see that that epistle made you sorry, though but for a season),

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I grieved you with my letter, I do not regret it-- even though I did regret it since I saw that the letter grieved you, yet only for a little while.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:8 Even if my letter pained you, I do not regret having sent it. Even if I did feel anguish at the time, for I understand that although that letter brought you grief when you received it,

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly).

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:8 For even if I saddened you by my letter, I do not regret it; and if I did regret it ((for) I see that that letter saddened you, if only for a while),

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:8 So now, though I did distress you with my letter, I do not regret it. Even if I did regret it -- and I realise that the letter distressed you, even though not for long-

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:8 If my letter made you uncomfortable, I'm not sorry. But since my letter did make you uncomfortable for a while, I was sorry.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:8 For though my letter gave you pain, I have no regret for it now, though I had before; for I see that the letter gave you pain, but only for a time.

■ **For though I caused you sorrow by my letter:** 2Co 7:6,11 2:2-11 La 3:32 Mt 26:21,22 Lu 22:61,62 Joh 16:6 21:17 Heb 12:9-11 Rev 3:19

■ **though I did regret it:** Ex 5:22,23 Jer 20:7-9

■ [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL'S SORROWFUL BUT EFFECTIVE LETTER

The key word in 2Co 7:7-11 is **sorrow** (noun and verb) occurring 8 times in these 4 verses. God's Spirit used Paul's sorrowful letter to cause the Corinthians to have a godly sorrow (2Co 7:10), a sorrow which the Spirit used to bring them to repentance.

Often rebuke causes pain for the moment, but its ultimate object is not the pain but the peaceable fruit of righteousness!

Hebrews 12:11+ All discipline (LIKE PAUL'S "SEVERE LETTER") for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness (AND IN THIS CONTEXT THE PEACEFUL FRUIT OF REPENTANCE - 2Co 7:11!).

**Brian Bell** - When you have to rebuke, check your heart to make sure it is not to "knock them down", but to "lift them up!" - Not to discourage, but to encourage them. – Not simply to eradicate the evil, but to make the good grow! Listen for God's reproofs through: your children, your parents, from teachers, coaches, counselors, from friends, from failures, from Scripture, from sickness, from losses, by disaster, by disappointment. {reproofs come in all shapes & sizes} (Chuck Swindoll(loose Paraphrase) pg.115) ([Regret or](#)

[Repent?\)](#)

**Paul Apple** Godly Sorrow is a Means to an End, not an End in Itself

**Michael Andrus** - Here Paul is looking back at the situation and reminiscing. He had sent a bold and blunt letter along with Titus, calling sin "sin" and rebuking the perpetrators. It stung the congregation. I want to make a very important point here—it's OK to hurt people (when necessary), but it's not OK to harm them. Parents, there are times when you need to hurt your children, but you should never harm them. Discipline hurts, but when it's done the right way it doesn't harm. God hurts us often, but He doesn't harm us. Paul's hurtful letter was not easy for the congregation to receive, but neither was it easy for Paul to write. At first he regretted having written it, but that was only momentary. Now he is glad he wrote it—not glad that they were hurt but glad that it produced the desired result—repentance, and therefore they "were not harmed in any way." (See his entire sermon - [The Deadly Difference Between Regret and Repentance](#))

**Colin Kruse** - Paul tells how in the light of the events reported by Titus he no longer regrets the writing of the 'severe' letter, (ED: SEE NOTES BELOW ON IDENTITY OF THE LETTER) though shortly after sending that letter he had regretted having done so. His change of attitude had been brought about by seeing the positive benefits now resulting from that letter (vv. 8–13). ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**For though I caused you sorrow** ([lupeo](#)) **by my letter**, **NKJV** = "For even if I made you sorry." The "IF" introduces a first class conditional statement so that what follows is assumed true (his letter did in fact cause sorrow among the Corinthians). This **letter** could be either First Corinthians or the so-called "severe letter" (2Co 2:3, cf 1Co 4:21), a letter of which we have no other record.

**William MacDonald** explains that "When the Corinthians first read his letter, it came as a rebuke to them, and they were pained. After sending the letter, the apostle anticipated their reaction to it, and this made him sorry. Not that he was conscious of having done any wrong; that is not the thought here at all. Rather he was sorry that in carrying out his work for the Lord, it was necessary that others should at times be cast into unhappiness temporarily in order that God's purposes might be worked out in their lives." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Wick Broomall** on the identity of the **letter** - Some scholars hold that the letter mentioned here is a lost "stern letter"; others hold that our 1 Corinthians is referred to. Available information does not sanction a dogmatic decision about this. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**David Guzik** - What **letter**? This probably is not the **letter** of 1 Corinthians but a letter that Paul wrote in between 1 and 2 Corinthians.. It helps if we remember the sequence of events. Things were going badly among the Christians in Corinth, and in an attempt to get them on track, Paul made a quick, unplanned visit that only seemed to make things worse (the "sorrowful visit" mentioned in 2 Corinthians 2:1). After the failure of this visit, Paul decided not to visit Corinth again in person at the time but instead sent Titus to them with a strong letter of rebuke. Paul was very worried about how the Corinthians would receive the letter and whether it would turn them to Jesus or just make them angry. When Titus came back with good news from the Corinthian Christians, Paul was greatly relieved. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**I do not regret** ([metamellomai](#)) **it though I did regret** ([metamellomai](#)) **it** - Paul **did regret** writing a confrontational letter which might not generate the response he hoped to achieve (cf our idiom "[second thoughts](#)"). But once he received the news of the effect of the letter on the Corinthians, he **did not regret it** Another way to interpret Paul's words **I did not regret it** is to understand that he could not have dealt effectively with the difficult issues at Corinth without discussing them and speaking openly about their offenses. In other words he did what he absolutely had to do in order to seek a cure so to speak.

As **William MacDonald** explains "The whole process which the apostle is describing here may be likened to the work of a surgeon. In order for him to remove a dangerously infected part from the human body, it is necessary for him to cut deep into the flesh. He does not rejoice in thus causing pain to the patient, though he knows it must be done if the patient is to regain his health. Especially if the patient is a close friend, the surgeon is keenly aware of the suffering that will be necessary. But he realizes that this suffering is only temporary, and he is willing that it should be so in order that the final outcome might be favorable." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**P E Hughes** - Both Chrysostom and Calvin liken the Apostle's feelings to those experienced by a father: the former to a father who finds regret, not pleasure, in seeing his son suffering pain under the surgeon's knife, but pleasure, not regret, in the cure that the operation is producing; the latter to a father who is grieved when he finds it necessary to punish his son severely, but none the less approves the action because it is directed towards his son's welfare. The aptness of this simile is attested by Paul's earlier statement that his object in writing this stern letter to the Corinthians was that he might have proof of them, whether (like sons) they were obedient in all things (2:9; cf. 6:13). And now that he has received the good news of the beneficial effects of the sorrow he had induced, his regret is replaced by joy and comfort. ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**For** - Paul explains why his regret turned into no regret.

**I see that that letter caused you sorrow (lupeo) though only for a while - For a while** is literally "for an hour (hora)" (a brief period of time). While the **letter** did have the effect of causing **sorrow** in the hearts of the Corinthians, the sorrow was short lived. So yes the letter did cause pain, but their painful reaction did not last.

**Swindoll** - From a spiritual perspective, the feelings of guilt, shame, and sadness that accompany a stern rebuke are not meant as a punishment, but as a call to repentance. By receiving the reproof, one opens the inner door of the soul to wisdom. By contrast, an angry reaction of resentment will bolt the door against an opportunity to learn from the experience. ([Insights on 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

**MacArthur** - The pleasure of sin is brief (Heb 11:25) while the sorrow it produces lasts; the sorrow of repentance is brief, while the joy it produces lasts. Sometimes confronting sin requires going beyond what love and compassion might be comfortable with. But it is necessary to do so, because sin is a deadly killer. Paul was not an abusive, harsh disciplinarian but a reluctant one, and he took no joy in causing even temporary sorrow to the Corinthians. He was like a father who has mixed feelings about disciplining a beloved child. But what motivated him to write the severe letter was his love for them and the truth, and his fear of the consequences of their sin. Despite his temporary regret, Paul knew that rebuking the Corinthians' sin had to be done. There are times in the ministry when strong, confrontational words are necessary. Sin crouches at the door; false teachers are everywhere, and Satan constantly seeks to destroy the work of God. The faithful pastor must not shrink from calling his people to obedience to Scripture. ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

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**Caused sorrow** (distressed) (3076) **lupeo** from **lupe** = sorrow) signifies pain, of body (physical), but more often figuratively of causing one to experience severe mental or emotional distress which may be accompanied by sadness, sorrow or grief. Uses in Corinthian letters (a keyword) - 2Co. 2:2; 2Co. 2:4; 2Co. 2:5; 2 Co. 6:10; 2 Co. 7:8; 2 Co. 7:9; 2 Co. 7:11

**Regret** (3338) **metamellomai** from **metá** = denoting change of place or condition + **mélomai**, = be concerned) means feel remorse or regret (Mt 27:3), become concerned about afterward, or to think differently afterward (the sense in Heb 7:21 = the Lord "will not **change His mind**."). Contrasted with **metanoeo**, to repent, **metamellomai** expresses the mere desire that what is done may be undone, accompanied with regrets or even remorse, but with no effective change of heart. 5x in NT - change his mind(1), feel remorse(1), felt remorse(1), regret(2), regretted(1). Matt. 21:29; Matt. 21:32; Matt. 27:3; 2 Co. 7:8; Heb. 7:21

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**Wick Broomall** suggests the following outline for the remainder of the chapter. He entitles it...

**Reasons for Paul's High Regard for the Corinthians.** 2Co 7:5-16.

1. 2Co 7:5-7 give Paul's first reason: Their regard for him.
2. 2Co 7:8-12 give Paul's second reason: Their response to his letter.
3. 2Co 7:13-16 Paul gives the third reason: Their reception of Titus. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

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**2 Corinthians 7:9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.**

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**KJV** 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.

**NET** 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I rejoice, not because you were made sad, but because you were made sad to the point of repentance. For you were made sad as God intended, so that you were not harmed in any way by us.

**BGT** 2 Corinthians 7:9 ν ν χαρω, ο χ τι λυπ θητε λλ τι λυπ θητε ε ζ μετ νοιαν· λυπ θητε γρ κατ θε ν, να ν μηδεν ζημιωθ τε ξ μ ν.

**NLT** 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way.

**ESV** 2 Corinthians 7:9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into

repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:9 I now do rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry to reformation, for ye were made sorry toward God, that in nothing ye might receive damage from us;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:9 I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance. For you were grieved as God willed, so that you didn't experience any loss from us.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:9 I now rejoice—not because you were made sorrowful, but that you were grieved enough to repent. For your sorrow was directed toward God, so that in no way would you sustain injury from us.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance; for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:9 I rejoice now, not because you were saddened, but because you were saddened into repentance; for you were saddened in a godly way, so that you did not suffer loss in anything because of us.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:9 I am glad now, not because you were made to feel distress, but because the distress that you were caused led to repentance; your distress was the kind that God approves and so you have come to no kind of harm through us.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:9 But I'm happy now, not because I made you uncomfortable, but because the distress I caused you has led you to change the way you think and act. You were distressed in a godly way, so we haven't done you any harm.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:9 Now I am glad, not that you had sorrow, but that your sorrow was the cause of a change of heart; for yours was a holy sorrow so that you might undergo no loss by us in anything.

- **I now rejoice:** 2Co 7:6,7,10 Ec 7:3 Jer 31:18-20 Zec 12:10 Lu 15:7,10,17-24,32 Ac 20:21
- **for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God:** 2Co 7:10,11 1:12
- **so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us:** 2Co 2:16 2Co 10:8-10 2Co 13:8-10 Isa 6:9-11
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, **he will suffer loss** ([zemioo](#)) ; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

## PAUL'S JOY OVER SORROW THAT LEADS TO REPENTANCE

I now (present tense - continually) **rejoice** ([chairo](#)), not that you were made sorrowful ([lupeo](#)) - AMP = "Yet I am glad now, not because you were pained." Paul adds that he was not joyful because they had grieved. He is not a spiritual masochist!

But (term of contrast) **that you were made** (aorist - at a point in time in past) **sorrowful** ([lupeo](#)) **to the point of repentance** ([metanoia](#)) - AMP - "but because you were pained into repentance [and so turned back to God]" Paul's joy is over the fact that the sorrow of the Corinthians was used by the Spirit of God to renew their minds and grant them **repentance**. In this context their **repentance** clearly is manifest by an "about face" change in their heart attitude toward Paul. Notice the clear distinction between sorrowful and repentance. Sorrowful is not the same as repentance. As [Guzik](#) says "One can be sorry for their sin without repenting from their sin. Sorrow describes a feeling, but repentance describes a change in both the mind and in the life."

**MacArthur** on **made sorrowful** - The Corinthians' remorse was not the sorrow of self-pity, of getting caught, of despair, bitterness, wounded pride, or manipulative remorse. ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**John Trapp** has a great remark - "In sin, the pleasure passes, the sorrow remains; but in repentance, the sorrow passes, the

pleasure abides forever. God soon pours the oil of gladness into broken hearts." (cf "oil of gladness instead of mourning" - Isa 61:3+) ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Charles Hodge** says **repentance** "is not merely a change of purpose, but includes a change of heart which leads to a turning from sin with grief and hatred thereof unto God." ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Morgan** - "**Repentance** is not sorrow only. It may be unaccompanied by sorrow ... at the time, but sorrow will always follow, sorrow for the past; but this change of mind is the great thing."

**Smith** - "Sorrow alone accomplishes nothing. Peter was sorry he denied Christ, and he repented. Judas was sorry he betrayed Christ but, instead of repenting, he killed himself."

**William Barclay** - The last thing that Paul wished was to rebuke. He did it only under compulsion and because there was nothing else to do. He took no pleasure whatever in inflicting pain. There are those who take a sadistic pleasure in seeing someone wince beneath the lash of their tongue. Who pride themselves on being candid when they are only being rude, and on being blunt when they are only being boorish. It is the simple fact that the rebuke which is given with a certain relish will never prove as effective as the rebuke which is obviously unwillingly dragged out of a man and which he only gives because he can do no other....Paul's sole object in giving rebuke was to enable people to be what they ought to be. By his rebuke he wished the Corinthians to see the real earnestness they possessed for him in the depths of their hearts in spite of their disobedience and their trouble-making. Such a course might for the moment cause pain, but its ultimate object was not the pain; it was not to knock them down, it was to lift them up; it was not to discourage them, it was to encourage them; it was not simply to eradicate the evil, it was to make the good grow ([2 Corinthians 7 Commentary](#))

**For** (gar - explanation) **you were made sorrowful** ([lupeo](#)) **according to the will of God** - **Will** is not in Greek but is added. **AMP** - "For you felt a grief such as God meant you to feel, so that in nothing you might suffer loss through us or harm for what we did." The idea is that God intended for the Corinthians to have a sorrowful response to his letter to fulfill the following purpose. Stated another way this sorrow is the kind that God likes to see! Clearly the Spirit had used Paul's letter in which he spoke the truth in love to convict them of sin, righteousness and judgment. (Jn 16:8)

**Homer Kent** - They had been grieved "according to God" (literal, kata theon), that is, in accordance with God's will. Theirs had been a distress produced by godly conviction, and it had proceeded along lines that God intended. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**So that** (hina - purpose clause) **you might not suffer loss** ([zemioo](#)) **in anything through us** - **AMP** - "so that in nothing you might suffer loss through us or harm for what we did." Some versions render [zemioo](#) as "harm" rather than loss. The idea of harm leads some writers to favor that Paul was saying that while he knew the "severe letter" hurt them (so to speak), it did not "harm" them. I favor the other rendering of "not suffer loss" because [zemioo](#) is used again by Paul in his first letter of those who would suffer loss at the Bema Seat (1Co 3:15+).

This purpose of the pain (so to speak) recalls Paul's warning in 2Co 6:1 for the Corinthians not to "receive the grace of God in vain." Grace wasted in time can never be re-used. **In vain** (and **suffer loss**) could refer to that future appointment at the Bema Seat when "each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2Co 5:10+). As Paul wrote in his first letter

"If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward ([mistrhos](#)). If any man's work is burned up, **he will suffer loss** ([zemioo](#) - same verb Paul uses here); but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1Co 3:14-15+)

**Not suffer loss in anything** recalls Paul's soul stirring, sobering words in 1Co 9:26-27

Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; I (present tense - continually) discipline ([hypopiazoo](#)) my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be **disqualified**. (cf "suffer loss in anything")

It also recalls the warning of Jesus in Revelation 2:4-5

But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5' Therefore **remember** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) from where you have fallen, and **repent** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) and **do** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place (cf "suffer loss in anything")—unless you repent.

Paul's purpose (not **suffer loss**) also reminds me of John's word of warning

"**Watch** (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves, that you do not lose ([apollumi](#)) what we have accomplished, but that you may receive ([apolambano](#)) a full reward ([misthos](#))."  
(2Jn 1:8)

I agree completely with **MacArthur's** comments on what if meant to **suffer loss** -

There were many blessings God could pour out on the Corinthians through his ministry. Had they remained alienated from him, they would have forfeited those blessings. The phrase **suffer loss** also appears in 1 Corinthians 3:15+, where it refers to the future judgment of believers' works. The loss of blessings from Paul's ministry would have resulted in the Corinthians accumulating valueless "wood, hay, [and] straw," fit only to be burned (1 Cor. 3:12). Paul's selfless love made him anxious not only that the Corinthians might experience God's chastening and lose their present blessings, but also that they might forfeit their future rewards (cf. 2 John 8). His concern was not for his loss, but theirs. ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Wick Broomall** - By suffer loss (ASV) Paul is thinking of the eternal damage that might result from his irresponsibility and leniency (cf. I Cor 3:15+; Phil 3:8). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**Kruse** - The grief they experienced was not a useless remorse without any corresponding action to rectify the situation. It was a godly grief leading to repentance, which brought positive results so that they suffered no loss by the receipt of Paul's 'severe' letter. What loss Paul thought they might have experienced is not specified. However, he uses the same verb (*zēmioō*) in 1 Corinthians 3:15 of the person who suffers loss of reward if his or her works do not pass God's test on the last day. Paul may have felt that the Corinthians' positive response to his 'severe' letter had saved them from such a loss. ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

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**Repentance** ([3341](#)) [metanoia](#) from **meta** = after + **noeo** = to understand) literally means "afterthought" or "to think after" and implies a change of mind. From the NT uses, it is clear that **metanoia** means however much more than merely a change of one's mind but also includes a complete change of heart, attitude, interest, and direction. Originally in Greek culture **metanoia** referred to a change of mind regarding anything, but when brought over into the New Testament, the usage is limited to a change of mind in the religious sphere. **Repentance** is a thorough change of man's natural heart, upon the subject of sin. Vincent adds "**Metanoia** (repentance) is therefore, primarily, an after-thought, different from the former thought; then, a change of mind which issues in regret and in change of conduct. These latter ideas, however, have been imported into the word by scriptural usage, and do not lie in it etymologically nor by primary usage. Repentance, then, has been rightly defined as "Such a virtuous alteration of the mind and purpose as begets a like virtuous change in the life and practice." Metanoia - 22v in NT - Mt. 3:8; Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3; Lk. 3:8; Lk. 5:32; Lk. 15:7; Lk. 24:47; Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; Acts 13:24; Acts 19:4; Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20; Ro 2:4; 2 Co. 7:9; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Ti 2:25; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 6:6; Heb. 12:17; 2 Pet. 3:9

**Suffer loss** (forfeit) ([2210](#)) [zemioo](#) from [zemia](#)) means to affect with damage or to do damage to, to suffer injury, to suffer loss, to sustain damage, to forfeit or to fine. It means to experience the loss of something, with implication of undergoing hardship or suffering. 6 uses in NT - Matt. 16:26; Mk. 8:36; Lk. 9:25; 1 Co. 3:15; 2 Co. 7:9; Phil. 3:8

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## Godly Sorrow

I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner. —2 Corinthians 7:9

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:5-10

Thieves stole nearly \$5,000 in sound and office equipment from a church in West Virginia, only to break in the following night to return the items they had taken. Apparently, the guilt of stealing from a church weighed so heavily on their conscience that they felt the need to correct their criminal behavior of breaking the commandment: "You shall not steal" (Ex. 20:15). Their actions make me think about the differences between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow.

Paul praised the Corinthians for understanding this difference. His first letter to them was biting, as he addressed issues of sin. His words caused sorrow among them, and because of this Paul rejoiced. Why? Their sorrow did not stop at just feeling sad about getting caught or suffering the unpleasant consequences of their sins. Their sorrow was godly sorrow, a genuine remorse for their

sins. This led them to repentance—a change in their thinking that led to a renouncing of their sin and turning to God. Their repentance ultimately led to deliverance from their sinful habits.

**Repentance is not something we can do unless we have the prompting of the Holy Spirit; it's a gift from God.** Pray for repentance today (2 Tim. 2:24-26). By: Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O Wind of God, come bend us, break us, Till humbly we confess our need; Then in Thy tenderness remake us, Revive, restore—for this we plead. —Head

Repentance means hating sin enough to turn from it.

**2 Corinthians 7:10 For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:10 For sadness as intended by God produces a repentance that leads to salvation, leaving no regret, but worldly sadness brings about death.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:10 γρ κατ θεν λ πη μετ νοιαν ες σωτηρ αν μεταμ λητον ρη ζεται. δ το κ σμου λ πη θ νοιον κατερυ ζεται.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:10 For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

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

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:10 for the sorrow toward God reformation to salvation not to be repented of doth work, and the sorrow of the world doth work death,

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly grief produces a repentance not to be regretted and leading to salvation, but worldly grief produces death.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:10 For the grief that is God-oriented produces repentance, leading to salvation—not to be regretted. But the world's grief exerts a lethal effect.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow produces a salutary repentance without regret, but worldly sorrow produces death.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:10 For to be distressed in a way that God approves leads to repentance and then to salvation with no regrets; it is the world's kind of distress that ends in death.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:10 In fact, to be distressed in a godly way causes people to change the way they think and act and leads them to be saved. No one can regret that. But the distress that the world causes brings only death.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:10 For the sorrow which God gives is the cause of salvation through a change of heart, in which there is no reason for grief: but the sorrow of the world is a cause of death.

- **produces a repentance without regret** 2Co 12:21 2Sa 12:13 1Ki 8:47-50 Job 33:27,28 Jer 31:9 Eze 7:16 Eze 18:27-30 Jon 3:8,10 Mt 21:28-32 26:75 Lu 15:10 18:13 Ac 3:19 11:18 2Ti 2:25,26
- **sorrow of the world produces death.** Ge 4:13-15 30:1 1Sa 30:6 2Sa 13:4 17:23 1Ki 21:4 Pr 15:13,15 Pr 17:22 18:14 Jon 4:9 Mt 27:4,5 Heb 12:17
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 14:9 (**HEROD - EXAMPLE OF WORLDLY SORROW**) Although he (KING HEROD - SEE CONTEXT - Mt 14:6-8) was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests.

Matthew 19:22 (**RICH YOUR MAN- EXAMPLE OF WORLDLY SORROW**) But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

Matthew 27:3-5 (**JUDAS- EXAMPLE OF WORLDLY SORROW**) Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" 5And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself.

## REPENTANCE THAT LEADS TO SALVATION

Paul contrasts godly sorrow with worldly sorrow and shows the "fruit" of each type of sorrow.

**For (gar) the sorrow (lupe) that is according to the will of God** (present tense - continually) **produces (ergazomai) a repentance (metanoia) without regret (ametameletoς), leading to salvation (soteria)** - The fact that the **sorrow** works in them a sincere repentance not just empty remorse is evidence that they are saved, that they are genuine believers. Note this **sorrow** is **without regret** because of the beautiful fruit it produces. Those who experience this quality of **repentance** will never **regret** it.

To what does **salvation** refer in this context? Since the Corinthians were already believers, Paul is not referring to their initial salvation (past tense salvation, justification), but to their **present tense salvation** (see [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)) or sanctification. Another way to view **salvation** is that in the context of a "rough" relationship between Paul and the Corinthians, **salvation** is effectively a restoration of their relationship or a reconciliation. Recall that the Greek word **soteria** conveyed other meanings such as deliverance from consequences of sin and subsequent restoration to a former state of safety, health, well being. Is that not part of the "fruit" of repentance? I think so.

**Alan Redpath** - "How sorry do you think you have to be? What is the purpose of your sorrow for sin? It is to bring you to trust in the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not your sorrow that cleanses you from sin, but His blood. It is the goodness of God that leads a man to repentance. Has your sorrow for sin led you at one time or another fling all the burden of it at the feet of a crucified, risen Saviour? If it hasn't, anything short of that is what Paul here calls sorrow that leads to death."

**John MacArthur** - True biblical **repentance** is not psychological, emotional human remorse, seeking merely to relieve stress and improve one's circumstances. Though it inevitably produces the fruit of a changed life (cf. Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20), it is not behavioral, but spiritual....This passage is incompatible with the teaching that repentance is not necessary for salvation. The progression it reveals is obvious: confrontation of sin leads to sorrow, which leads to repentance, which leads to salvation. Nor will this passage allow repentance to be defined as merely changing one's mind about who Jesus is. The text inextricably connects repentance with sorrow over sin. Repentance is not, of course, a meritorious human work that earns salvation. Like every aspect of salvation, repentance is a gracious work of God in the human heart (Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25). ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Colin Kruse** - The difference between godly grief and worldly grief is that the first issues in repentance while the second ends with remorse. Godly grief which issues in repentance (i.e. a change of mind and heart and a willingness to change behaviour) when coupled with faith in God leads to salvation. Involved, then, is the joy of the Lord and therefore no regrets....Biblical examples of godly grief can be seen in the cases of David (2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51), Peter (Mark 14:72) and Paul himself (Acts 9:1-22), while examples of worldly grief are to be found in the cases of Esau (Gen. 27:1-40; Heb. 12:15-17) and Judas (Matt. 27:3-5). ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**C H Spurgeon** - "In repentance there is a bitter sweetness, or a sweet bitterness—which shall I call it?—of which, the more you have, the better it is for you. I can truly say that I hardly know a diviner joy than to lay my head in my Heavenly Father's bosom and

to say, 'Father, I have sinned, but thou hast forgiven me; and, oh, I do love thee!' "

**J C Ryle** - True repentance is that one step that no man ever repented.... The way of life is a narrow path, but the footsteps in it are all in one direction,—not one has ever come back and said it was a delusion.

**Warren Wiersbe** - Pharisees were keen on putting away sin, but they neglected to perfect holiness. But it is foolish to try to perfect holiness if there is known sin in our lives. Do Christians need to repent? Jesus said that we do (Luke 17:3–4), and Paul agreed with Him (2 Cor. 12:21). Four of the seven churches of Asia Minor, listed in Revelation 2–3, were commanded to repent. To repent simply means "to change one's mind," and disobedient Christians need to repent, not in order to be saved, but in order to restore their close fellowship with God. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**David Guzik** - Godly sorrow produces repentance unto salvation: Does this mean we are saved by our repentance? Not exactly. Repentance "is not the ground of our salvation; but it is a part of it and necessary condition of it. Those who repent are saved; the impenitent perish. Repentance is therefore unto salvation." (Hodge) Repentance must never be thought of as something we must do before we can come back to God. Repentance describes the very act of coming to God. You can't turn towards God without turning from the things He is against (**ED: AND YOU CANNOT DO EITHER IN RELIANCE ON YOUR OWN STRENGTH** - See where repentance comes from in Ro 2:4+). "People seem to jump into faith very quickly nowadays. I do not disapprove of that happy leap; but still, I hope my old friend repentance is not dead. I am desperately in love with repentance; it seems to me to be the twin-sister to faith." (Spurgeon) ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Homer Kent** - This repentance is a true change of mind (metanoia) regarding the matters at issue, not just a response of emotion. Unbelievers who are brought to this kind of repentance experience the salvation of God. Sinning Christians, when convicted of their sin and genuinely repentant, will resume the sort of conduct that should characterize their salvation in its present aspect. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**But** (term of contrast) - This introduces a dramatic contrast, one that ultimately separates all of mankind into two camps.

**The sorrow (lupe) of the world (kosmos)** (present tense - continually) **produces (katergazomai) death** - The **sorrow of the world** is another way to describe worldly remorse. Same Greek word (**lupe**) for **sorrow**. Diametrically opposed results compared to the **sorrow that is according to God!** The **world** (note in context it contrasts with **God**) is **kosmos** which in this context describes the **world** not as a neutral influence but as an "evil force", the inveterate, incorrigible, intractable, intransigent, irrevocable enemy of God and of every believer. **Produces** is the compound verb (**katergazomai**) which is intensive and designed to emphasize the inevitability of the outworking of death in the sorrow of the world.

**Death** in context contrasts with **salvation**. What does **death** symbolize? Death always pictures separation. When a love one dies, we are separated from them (of course not forever if they are believers!) We often refer to the early stage of the death of a marriage as "separation," which sadly usually progresses to complete separation. And so in separation, at the very least there is brokenness in a relationship or in fellowship in time but worst of all eternal **separation** from the presence of God's glory (2Th 1:9+)

**THOUGHT** - For believers "**death**" is at the very least a temporary short-circuiting of fellowship with the Father (cf. 1Jn 1:6-7+), and at the very worst, actual physical death (1Co 11:28-30+, 1Jn. 5:16+)! Beloved brethren, whatever we sow, we will reap, for if we sow to flesh, we reap corruption and if we sow to the Spirit, we reap life! (Gal 6:7-8+) Do not be deceived by the deceitfulness of sin! (Heb 3:13+)

**John MacArthur** - The **sorrow of the world**—remorse, wounded pride, self-pity, unfulfilled hopes—has no healing power, no transforming, saving, or redeeming capability. It produces guilt, shame, resentment, anguish, despair, depression, hopelessness, even, as in the case of Judas (Matt. 27:3–5), death. ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** has a similar not in his study Bible - Human sorrow is unsanctified remorse and has no redemptive capability. It is nothing more than the wounded pride of getting caught in a sin and having one's lusts go unfulfilled. That kind of sorrow leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, self-pity, and hopelessness. People can die from such sorrow (cf. Mt 27:3). ([The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Repentance says, "I'm sorry,"  
but also shows, "I'm through."

Remorse is being sorry.  
Repentance is being sorry enough to stop.  
Repentance means hating sin enough to turn from it.

**Swindoll** has an interesting comment on sorrow of the world produces death - When a person starts down a path of rebellion and refuses correction, they begin to experience the effects of alienation from God's people, God's principles, and God's power. The

result? That person loses the safety of the church, the wisdom of God's Word, and the benefits of spiritual nourishment and inner strength. The final outcome of this can be actual physical death (1Jn. 5:16+). ([Insights on 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

**Homer Kent** - The sorrow of the world, however, ultimately produces death. Mere grief that is not brought about by godly conviction and therefore does not result in true repentance and spiritual transformation brings only remorse, bitterness, and despair. Being unconditioned by spiritual factors, it leaves the person unchanged in his relation to God and his situation only becomes worse. It is a harbinger of that final disillusionment of the sinner, death itself....A prime example in the New Testament is Judas, whose bitter grief led him not to faith but to suicide (Mt. 27:3-5).

**Colin Kruse** - worldly grief does not progress beyond remorse. There are deep regrets over what has happened, but there is no accompanying change of mind and heart, nor any willingness to change behaviour, nor any faith in God. The result is not salvation, but death (cf. Rom. 6:15-23). ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**Gromacki**: Genuine repentance is permanent as well as observable. A temporary reformation is a sign of human change rather than divine. Peter warned against those professed believers who "are again entangled therein, and overcome" with the pollutions of the world (II Peter 2:20). Paul was concerned whether their repentance was genuine or false. The report of Titus proved that it was genuine. ([Stand Firm in the Faith : An Exposition of II Corinthians](#))

**William MacDonald** - When Paul says that godly sorrow produces **repentance** leading to **salvation**, he is not necessarily thinking of the salvation of the soul (although that could be true also). After all, the Corinthians were already saved. But here salvation is used to describe deliverance from any type of sin, bondage, or affliction in a person's life....**sorrow of the world** produces bitterness, hardness, despair, and eventually death. It is illustrated in the life of Judas. He was not sorry for the results which his sin brought to the Lord Jesus, but only remorseful because of the terrible harvest which he himself reaped from it. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Lenski** writes that "The world's grief is already death's shadow closing down."

**Wick Broomall** says death is "the second death" (Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**Urley** on **death** - The use of this term is possibly purposeful ambiguity. It refers to spiritual death (cf. Gen. 3) and physical death (cf. Gen. 5).

**TSK** - The sorrow of carnal men about worldly objects, loss of fortune, fame, or friends; which, being separated from the fear and love of God, and faith in his providence and mercy, frequently drinks up their spirits, breaks their proud, rebellious hearts, or drives them to lay desperate hands on themselves.

**J Vernon McGee** on worldly **sorrow** - My dad used to tell about a boat on the Mississippi River that had a little bitty boiler and a great big whistle. When it would blow its whistle while going upstream, the boat would start to drift downstream because the boiler was so small it couldn't propel the boat and blow the whistle at the same time. There are a lot of folk who have a great big whistle and a little bitty boiler. They shed a lot of tears and make a big display, but there is no real repentance. They shed tears, but they keep on going in the same direction. ([2 Corinthians 7 Commentary](#))

**Michael Andrus** - Another biblical example is Esau. When he was deceived by his brother Jacob into selling his birthright, his sorrow was profound. The Scriptures tell us he wept bitterly. Nevertheless, there is no indication that he learned from the experience, and, for all his tears, there was no repentance. Listen to Hebrews 12:17: "Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears." In fact, Genesis 27:34 says "he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, 'Bless me—me too, my father!'" On the surface, it sounds from Hebrews 12:17 like Esau was trying to get his father Isaac to change his mind, but the original language implies otherwise. The New English Bible seems to have the translation right when it says, "He found no way open for second thoughts." He just couldn't bring himself to repent.

**John Piper** on distinguishing **godly grief** from **worldly regret** - I would suggest two ways to distinguish them.

- 1) Worldly regret is when you feel sorry for something you did because it starts to backfire on you and leads to humiliation or punishment. It's the reflex of a proud or fearful ego. Pride will always regret making a fool of itself. And fear will always regret acts that jeopardize comfort and safety. So feeling sorry for something we have done is in itself no sign of virtue. But godly regret is the reflex of a conscience that has wounded God's ego, not its own. Godly regret grieves that God's name has come into disrepute. The focus of godly regret is God.
- 2) A second way to distinguish worldly regret from godly regret is that godly regret is owing to God's word putting its finger on sin in our lives. Worldly regret is owing not to God's word but to the attitudes of men whose

praise we don't want to lose. We can feel extremely sorry for something we have done if we detect that the people around us think it is stupid or silly or reprehensible. The word of man not God becomes the criterion of guilt.

So in summary, godly grief, or godly regret, is the uncomfortable feeling of guilt when the word of God shows you that what you've done is sin and thus has brought reproach on God's name. (Of course, if other people have been hurt by your sin, godly regret will want to redress the wrong and so remove the reproach upon God's honor.) Godly regret is the regret of a God-saturated heart, not a world-saturated heart. ([The Good End of Godly Regret](#))

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**Brian Bell** - Can you relate? - In the "Dennis the Menace" comic strip, Dennis is kneeling beside his bed saying his prayers. "I'm sorry, but I've got a whole bunch of 'I'm sorrys' for you tonight!" There is a big difference between godly sorrow & the sorrow of the world...it is the difference between Repentance & Regret!

- Repentance is from God...Regret is from the world.
- Repentance is a sorrow that draws people closer to God...Regret drives people away from God.
- Repentance brings them to a place of confessing & forsaking sin...Regret only brings them into the hand of Satan.
- Repentance leads to salvation...Regret leads to spiritual death.

Peter showed Repentance - Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly. (Mt.26:75) He showed Repentance & was forgiven!

Judas showed Regret - Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. (Mt.27:3-5) He showed Regret & took his own life!

The sorrow of the world is only "resentment that is has been found out!"

We ask our kids "are you sorry for doing it, or for getting caught? {As if they are going to say the later?}

If it got the chance to do the same again & thought it could escape the consequences, it would do it!

"Let those who play at repentance remember that they who repent in mimicry shall go to hell in reality." (Spurgeon)

Some humble themselves for a time, & yet never repent before God!

"Regret involves the mind primarily & remorse involves the emotions. But repentance includes "a change of mind, a hatred for sin, & a willingness to make things right." If the will is not touched, conviction has not gone deep enough."

I summed it up this way à "Remember Remorse & Regret Restrict Resolve. Repentance & Restitution Reap Radical Returns!" ([Regret or Repent?](#))

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**Sorrow** (grief) ([3077](#)) **lupe** see verb form **lupeo**) means sadness, grief, pain, sorrow. **Lupe** is used in Septuagint of Ge 3:16 (twice) of literal pain in childbirth, but most NT uses are figurative of pain in one's heart ("heartache"). **Lupe** is a word that describes that which is grievous or produces an emotional "heaviness". **Lupe** was a word used of persons mourning. Lk. 22:45; Jn. 16:6; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 16:21; Jn. 16:22; Rom. 9:2; 2 Co. 2:1; 2 Co. 2:3; 2 Co. 2:7; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Co. 9:7; Phil. 2:27; Heb. 12:11; 1 Pet. 2:19

**Produces** (Accomplishes) ([2038](#)) **ergazomai** from **ergon** = work) means to engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort. To work effectively. The NT uses **ergazomai** in a literal (to do manual labor) and figurative (especially spiritual - see below) sense. To labor, do work. **Ergazomai** speaks of "an action as something that stands in contrast to inactivity or talk." (Richards) 1 Co. 4:12; 1 Co. 9:6; 1 Co. 9:13; 1 Co. 16:10; 2 Co. 7:10

**Without regret** ([278](#)) **ametameletos** rom **a** = without + **metamélo**mai = change one's mind; regret) means not feeling regret as result of what one has done. The idea is not feeling regret as result of what one has done = not regretful, not feeling sorry about, not repented of, unregretted. Only here and Ro 11:29

**Salvation** ([4991](#)) **soteria** from **soter** = Savior in turn from **sozo** = save, rescue, deliver) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction and peril. **soteria** include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health and well being as well as preservation from danger of destruction. L2 Co. 1:6; 2 Co. 6:2; 2 Co. 7:10

**World (2889) *kosmos*** related to the verb **kosmeo** = to order or adorn, to put in order [Mt 25:7 = "trimmed"], to adorn literally [1Ti 2:9], to adorn figuratively [Titus 2:9+] means essentially something that is well-arranged. 1 Co. 1:20; 1 Co. 1:21; 1 Co. 1:27; 1 Co. 1:28; 1 Co. 2:12; 1 Co. 3:19; 1 Co. 3:22; 1 Co. 4:9; 1 Co. 4:13; 1 Co. 5:10; 1 Co. 6:2; 1 Co. 7:31; 1 Co. 7:33; 1 Co. 7:34; 1 Co. 8:4; 1 Co. 11:32; 1 Co. 14:10; 2 Co. 1:12; 2 Co. 5:19; 2 Co. 7:10

**Produces (2716) *katergazomai*** from **katá** = intensifies meaning of verb + **ergazomai** = labor, work or engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort) means to work out fully and thoroughly, to accomplish or achieve an end (implying thoroughness), to finish or carry something to its conclusion. To work so as to bring something to fulfillment or successful completion and implies doing something with thoroughness. It means to do that from which something results. This verb always means to complete the effort and the work begun. 1 Co. 5:3; 2 Co. 4:17; 2 Co. 5:5; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Co. 7:11; 2 Co. 9:11; 2 Co. 12:12

**Death (2288) *thanatos*** is a permanent cessation of all vital functions and thus is the end of life on earth (as we know it). The separation of the soul from the body and the end of earthly life. Spiritual death is separation from the life of God forever by dying without being born again. The first use in the Septuagint is in a well known promise from God "you shall surely die (Lxx = thanatos apothnesko)." (Ge 2:17) followed by the second use in the deceptive lie by Satan "You surely shall not die (thanatos apothnesko)!" (Ge 3:4) Death is natural to humanity as part of the created world. Death is a result of Adam's sin (Ro 5:12). Death is universal - no one can escape it. 1 Co. 3:22; 1 Co. 11:26; 1 Co. 15:21; 1 Co. 15:26; 1 Co. 15:54; 1 Co. 15:55; 1 Co. 15:56; 2 Co. 1:9; 2 Co. 1:10; 2 Co. 2:16; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 4:11; 2 Co. 4:12; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Co. 11:23;

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## Related Resources

- [Repentance and Conversion](#) - Middletown Bible Church (see example below)
- [Is Repentance Necessary for Salvation?](#)
- Classic book by Dr H A Ironside - [Except Ye Repent](#) (88 page pdf)
- [Great Articles on repentance primarily from Puritan writers](#)
- [Quotes on Repentance - Puritans](#)
- [What is repentance and is it necessary for salvation?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about repentance? What does it mean to repent?](#)
- [Is repentance a change of mind or a turning from sin?](#)
- [What does it mean that God is not willing for any to perish, but that all should come to repentance \(2 Peter 3:9\)?\(See also commentary\)](#)
- [What is cheap grace?](#) (Excerpt - "The idea of carnal Christianity essentially teaches that as long as one makes a profession of faith in Christ, he or she is saved ([Romans 10:9](#)), even if there is no immediate obedience to the commands of Jesus and the apostles to live a life of holiness."
- [What is free grace? What is Free Grace Theology?](#) (Excerpt - Many Reformed theologians are appalled by the assertions of Free Grace theologians, accusing them of "[easy believism](#)" or even [antinomianism](#).)

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## When You Say, "I'm Sorry"

Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted. — 2 Corinthians 7:10

Today's Scripture: Hosea 6:1-6

With tears in his eyes a man said to me, "I told my wife I was sorry, but she says she won't continue to live with me. First John 1:9 says that God forgives us when we confess our sins. Please talk to her and tell her that if God forgives, she should too."

I knew this man had "repented" several times before, only to revert to his abusive behavior. So I said, "No, I'm not going to tell her that. In your case, saying 'I'm sorry' isn't enough." His wife insisted that he receive counseling and give evidence of a genuine change before returning home. She was right.

Just saying "I'm sorry" is not enough for God either. The leaders of Israel, in the face of trouble brought on by their sin, thought that merely returning to prescribed sacrificial offerings would solve their problems. But God rejected that kind of "repentance." It was as fleeting as "a morning cloud" and "the early dew" that fades away with the first rays of sunlight (Hosea 6:4).

Merely saying "I'm sorry" is no different than the empty rituals of the Israelites. God said, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (v.6). He meant that repentance must result in a change of heart and a change in

Repentance is to leave the sin  
That we had loved before,  
And showing we are grieved by it  
By doing it no more.  
—Anon.

Repentance means hating sin enough to turn from it.

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## Two Kinds of Repentance

Two kinds of repentance are possible in human experience. One is 'the sorrow of the world,' a feeling induced by the fear of getting caught. Many people recognize the unpleasant consequences of their sin and are persuaded that they are guilty. This results in a superficial sorrow that may lead to a temporary reformation but not to a genuine turning to Christ for forgiveness. Godly sorrow, on the other hand, is accompanied by conviction of sin, the work of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:37). This stems from the realization of offending a holy God. It leads to genuine repentance.

An unknown author wrote, "There is a radical distinction between natural regret and God-given repentance. The flesh can feel remorse, acknowledge its evil deeds, and be ashamed of itself. However, this sort of disgust with past actions can be quickly shrugged off, and the individual can soon go back to his old wicked ways. None of the marks of true repentance described in 2 Corinthians 7:11 are found in his behavior. Out of a list of 10 men in the Bible who said, 'I have sinned,' we believe only five actually repented. They were David (2 Sam. 12:13), Nehemiah (Neh. 1:6), Job (Job 42:5,6), Micah (Micah 7:9), and the prodigal son (Luke 15:18)." - H.G.Bosch ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**Stool of Repentance** ([See Picture](#); See [Wikipedia Description](#)) was an elevated seat in a Scottish Church, on which persons were formerly compelled to sit as a punishment for having committed certain of the deadly sins.

ED: This seems a bit harsh and also strikes me as man originated, not Spirit initiated. I suppose one might not agree to take the stool of repentance unless the Spirit had granted repentance, but that is not an absolute certainty for some may have been coerced by others aware of their sin. This seems a far cry from James 5:16+!

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**ILLUSTRATION OF NEED FOR REPENTANCE** - Those of us who grew up in the fifties are quite familiar with the name **Mickey Cohen** because he was the most flamboyant criminal of the day. Perhaps some have even heard of Cohen's becoming a "Christian." The story goes like this: At the height of his career, Cohen was persuaded to attend an evangelistic service at which he showed a surprising interest in Christianity. Hearing of this, and realizing what a great influence a converted Mickey Cohen could have for the Lord, some prominent Christian leaders began visiting him in an effort to convince him to accept Christ. Late one night, after repeatedly being encouraged to open the door of his life on the basis of [Revelation 3:20+](#) ("I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me"), **Cohen prayed**. Hopes ran high among his believing acquaintances. But with the passing of time **no one could detect any change in Cohen's life**. Finally they confronted him with the reality that being a Christian meant he would have to give up his friends and his profession. Cohen demurred. His logic? There are "Christian football players, Christian cowboys, Christian politicians; why not a Christian gangster?"

"The fact is," said evangelist J Edwin Orr (one of the leaders who had spoken with Cohen) **repentance** is the missing note in much modern evangelism." **The absurdity of what happened to Mickey Cohen dramatically underscores what is happening to untold numbers today. Though many ostensibly have "accepted Christ," they continue life as they always have. There is no repentance.** They remain self-sufficient, even puffed up. Indeed, they are nowhere near the kingdom because they have not experienced the poverty of spirit that the first Beatitude insists is the initial ground of the kingdom of heaven. (Hughes, R. K. Sermon on the Mount) (Bolding added)

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## All sins! By Spurgeon

The truly repentant person hates all of his sins, not just certain ones. He says, "Cover yourself with the finest gold, O sin, I will still hate you! Yes, cover yourself with pleasure, make yourself flashy, like the snake with its turquoise scales- I still hate you, for I know your venom, and I run from you, even when you come to me in the most illusive clothing." All sin must be given up, or else you will never have Christ; all evil must be renounced, or else the gates of heaven must be locked to keep you out forever. Let us, remember, then, that for repentance to be sincere, it must be total repentance. True repentance is a turning of the heart, as well as

of the life; it is the giving up of the whole soul to God, to be His forever and ever. It is a renunciation of the sins of the heart, as well as the corruptions of the life.

#### **Repentance & Faith** Arthur Pink, "Salvation From the Penalty of Sin"

Repentance is the hand releasing those filthy objects it had previously clung to so tenaciously.

Faith is extending an empty hand to God to receive His gift of grace.

Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin.

Faith is receiving a sinner's Savior.

Repentance is a revulsion of the filth and pollution of sin.

Faith is a seeking of cleansing therefrom.

Repentance is the sinner covering his mouth and crying, "Unclean, unclean!"

Faith is the leper coming to Christ and saying, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."

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#### **Bill Elliff - Repentance**

- The believer in Christ is a lifelong repenter. He begins with repentance, and ends with repentance.
- Repentance is a change of mind regarding sin and God--an inward turning from sin to God.
- Repentance is hating what you once loved, and loving what you once hated; exchanging irresistible sin for an irresistible Christ.
- The religious man often deceives himself in his repentance. The deceived repenter would be a worse sinner if he could, but society holds him back.
- He aspires to a 'Heaven' of light-hearted ease and recreation--and extended vacation; but a 'Heaven of holiness' would be Hell to such a man.
- Yet God is holy, and God is in Heaven. He cannot be blamed for sending the unholy man to Hell despite his most articulate profession.

#### **By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them**

The sure test of the quality of any supposed change of heart will be found in its permanent effects. 'By their fruits you shall know them' is as applicable to the right method of judging ourselves as of judging others. Whatever, therefore, may have been our inward experience, whatever joy or sorrow we may have felt, unless we bring forth fruits meet for repentance, our experience will profit us nothing. Repentance is incomplete unless it leads to confession and restitution in cases of injury; unless it causes us to forsake not merely outward sins, which others notice, but those which lie concealed in the heart; unless it makes us choose the service of God and live not for ourselves but for Him. There is no duty which is either more obvious in itself, or more frequently asserted in the Word of God, than that of repentance. - Charles Hodge

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**I Will Leave You Alone God... If...** People who want nothing to do with God make themselves candidates for His ultimate judgment. They spend their days alienated from Him, and will spend eternity banished from God's presence unless they repent.

Aaron Burr, the third Vice President of the United States, was reared in a godly home and admonished to accept Christ by his grandfather **Jonathan Edwards**. But he refused to listen. Instead, he declared that he wanted nothing to do with God and said he wished the Lord would leave him alone. He achieved a measure of political success in spite of repeated disappointments. But he was also involved in continuous strife. When he was forty-eight years old, he killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel. He lived for thirty-two more years, but was unhappy and unproductive. During this sad chapter in his life he declared to a group of friends, "Sixty years ago I told God that if He would let me alone, I would let Him alone, and God has not bothered about me since." Aaron Burr got what he wanted.

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#### **Mark 1:15 The First Word Of Salvation**

Repent, and believe in the gospel. —Mark 1:15

Evangelist J. Edwin Orr said that "the first word of the gospel" is repentance. It's a turning away from sin and toward the Lord. The prophet Zechariah cried out to the people of Israel to repent and return to the Lord: "Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds" (Zech. 1:4).

Salvation begins with repentance. It involves a change of mind about sin, which leads to belief in Jesus Christ and brings us the forgiveness of God. Yet repentance is more than a once-for-all act that initiates salvation. It is an ongoing choice—a change of mind

that sees sin as wrong, confesses it, and rejects it.

Martin Luther put it this way in the first of the 95 theses he nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said 'repent,' He willed that the entire life of a believer be one of repentance." It's an ongoing mindset toward sin.

Here's the point. The change of mind that is the heart of repentance should become a pattern of thinking—a lifestyle. Even though we are secure in Christ, we must continue to see sin through God's eyes and acknowledge it as evil. And when we sin, let's repent, confess our wrongdoing, and receive the forgiveness of God. By [David Egner \(Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved\)](#)

I reached for His tender compassion  
Because I was sinful and weak,  
And oh, the sweet words of forgiveness  
I heard Him so willingly speak!  
—Simon

Repentance means hating sin enough to turn from it.

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### True Repentance

Two kinds of "repentance" are possible in human experience. One is 'the sorrow of the world,' a feeling induced by the fear of getting caught. Many people recognize the unpleasant consequences of their sin and are persuaded that they are guilty. This results in a superficial sorrow that may lead to a temporary reformation but not to a genuine turning to Christ for forgiveness. Godly sorrow, on the other hand, is accompanied by conviction of sin, the work of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:37+). This stems from the realization of offending a holy God. It leads to genuine repentance.

An unknown author wrote, "There is a radical distinction between natural regret and God-given repentance. The flesh can feel remorse, acknowledge its evil deeds, and be ashamed of itself. However, this sort of disgust with past actions can be quickly shrugged off, and the individual can soon go back to his old wicked ways. None of the marks of true repentance described in 2 Corinthians 7:11 are found in his behavior. Out of a list of 10 men in the Bible who said, 'I have sinned,' we believe only five actually repented. They were David (2 Sa 12:13), Nehemiah (Neh. 1:6), Job (Job 42:5,6), Micah (Micah 7:9), and the prodigal son (Luke 15:18)." - H.G.Bosch. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION - The "R" Word** -Jimmy had trouble pronouncing the letter "R" so his teacher gave him a sentence to practice at home: "Robert gave Richard a rap in the rib for roasting the rabbit so rare." Some days later the teacher asked him to say the sentence for her. Jimmy rattled it off like this: "Bob gave Dick a poke in the side for not cooking the bunny enough." He had evaded the letter "R." There are a lot of people today—including Christians—who go to great lengths to avoid the "R" word of "Repentance."

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### Complete About Face

Wabush, a town in a remote portion of Labrador, Canada, was completely isolated for some time. But recently a road was cut through the wilderness to reach it. Wabush now has one road leading into it, and thus, only one road leading out. If someone would travel the unpaved road for six to eight hours to get into Wabush, there is only way he or she could leave—by turning around.

Each of us, by birth, arrives in a town called Sin. As in Wabush, there is only one way out—a road built by God himself. But in order to take that road, one must first turn around. That complete about face is what the Bible calls repentance, and without it, there's no way out of town. - Brian Weatherdon

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### An illustration from the Speaker's Quote Book

A Sunday school teacher asked a class what the word "repentance" means.

A little boy put up his hand and said, "It is being sorry for your sins."

A little girl also raised her hand and said, "It is being sorry enough to quit."

A schoolgirl was saved and someone asked her, "What were you before?" She said, "A sinner." Then she was asked, "What are you now?" She answered, "A sinner." They asked, "What's the difference?" She answered, "I was a sinner running after sin. But now I'm a sinner running from sin." (Zuck, R. B.. The Speaker's Quote Book. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications)

**It's never too soon to repent, but soon it may be too late.**

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### **Oswald Chambers - Repentance**

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. 2 Cor. 7:10.

Conviction of sin is best portrayed in the words—

'My sins, my sins, my Saviour.  
How sad on Thee they fall.'

Conviction of sin is one of the rarest things that ever strikes a man. It is the threshold of an understanding of God. Jesus Christ said that when the Holy Spirit came He would convict of sin, and when the Holy Spirit rouses a man's conscience and brings him into the presence of God, it is not his relationship with men that bothers him, but his relationship with God—"against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." Conviction of sin, the marvel of forgiveness, and holiness are so interwoven that it is only the forgiven man who is the holy man, he proves he is forgiven by being the opposite to what he was, by God's grace. Repentance always brings a man to this point: 'I have sinned.' The surest sign that God is at work is when a man says that and means it. Anything less than this is remorse for having made blunders, the reflex action of disgust at himself.

The entrance into the Kingdom is through the panging pains of repentance crashing into a man's respectable goodness; then the Holy Ghost, Who produces these agonies, begins the formation of the Son of God in the life. The new life will manifest itself in conscious repentance and unconscious holiness, never the other way about. The bedrock of Christianity is repentance. Strictly speaking, a man cannot repent when he chooses; repentance is a gift of God. The old Puritans used to pray for 'the gift of tears.' If ever you cease to know the virtue of repentance, you are in darkness. Examine yourself and see if you have forgotten how to be sorry.

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### **Spurgeon's Sermon Notes - 2 Corinthians 7:10**

Time was when inner experience was considered to be everything, and experimental preaching was the order of the day.

Now it is apt to be too much slighted.

Introspection was formerly pushed to the extreme of morbid self-searching; yet it ought not now to be utterly abandoned.

A correct diagnosis of disease is not everything, but yet it is valuable.

A sense of poverty cannot by itself enrich, but it may stimulate.

Sinners were unwisely influenced by certain ministries to look to their own feelings, many began to seek comfort from their own misery.

Now it is "only believe." And rightly so: but we must discriminate.

There must be sorrow for sin working repentance.

Upon this point we must—

#### **I. REMOVE CERTAIN ERRONEOUS IDEAS WITH REGARD TO REPENTANCE AND SORROW FOR SIN.**

Among popular delusions we must mention the suppositions—

1. That mere sorrow of mind in reference to sin is repentance.
2. That there can be repentance without sorrow for sin.
3. That we must reach a certain point of wretchedness and horror, of else we are not truly penitent.
4. That repentance happens to us once, and is then over.
5. That repentance is a most unhappy feeling.

6. That repentance must be mixed with unbelief, and embittered by the fear that mercy will be unable to meet our wretched case.

#### **II. DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE TWO SORROWS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT.**

1. The godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation is—

Sorrow for sin as committed against God.

Sorrow for sin arising out of an entire change of mind.

Sorrow for sin which joyfully accepts salvation by grace.

Sorrow for sin leading to future obedience.

Sorrow for sin which leads to perpetual perseverance in the ways of God. The ways of sin are forsaken because abhorred.

This kind of repentance is never repented of.

2. The sorrow of the world is

Caused by shame at being found out;

Is attended by hard thoughts of God;  
Leads to vexation and sullenness;  
Incites to hardening of heart;  
Lands the soul in despair.  
Works death of the worst kind.

This needs to be repented of, for it is in itself sinful and terribly prolific of more sin.

### III. INDULGE OURSELVES IN GODLY SORROW FOR SIN.

Come, let us be filled with a wholesome grief that we

1. Have broken a law, pure and perfect.
2. Have disobeyed a gospel, divine and gracious.
3. Have grieved a God, good and glorious.
4. Have slighted Jesus, whose love is tender and boundless.
5. Have been ungrateful, though loved, elected, redeemed, forgiven, justified, and soon to be glorified.
6. Have been so foolish as to lose the joyous fellowship of the Spirit the raptures of communion with Jesus.

Let us confess all this, lie low at Jesus' feet, wash his feet with tears, and love, yea, love ourselves away.

### FOR DISCRIMINATION

A cognate text in Rom. 2:2, 4, will help us here. These two allied but distinct intimations may be placed in parallel lines, and treated like an equation; thus—

"The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance."

We learn, as the result of the comparison, that the goodness of God leads to repentance by the way of godly sorrow. The series of cause and effect runs thus: goodness of God; godly sorrow; repentance.

Do not mistake; a fear of hell is not sorrow for sin: it may be nothing more than a regret that God is holy.

So hard is a heart long accustomed to evil, that nothing can melt it but goodness; and no goodness but God's; and no goodness of his but the greatest. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. "Looking unto Jesus" is the grand specific for producing godly sorrow in a human heart. It was a hard heart that quivered under the beams of his loving eye on the threshold of Pilate's judgment hall. When Jesus looked on Peter, Peter went out and wept. Emmanuel's love has lost none of its melting power; the hardest hearts laid fairly open to it must ere long flow down. God's goodness, embodied in Christ crucified, becomes, under the ministry of the Spirit, the cause of godly sorrow in believing men.—William Arnot.

The mind that broods o'er guilty woes,  
Is like the scorpion girt by fire;  
In circle narrowing as it glows,  
The flames around their captive close,  
Till inly searched by thousand throes,  
And maddening in her ire,  
One sad and sole relief she knows,  
The sting she nourished for her foes,  
Whose venom never yet was vain,  
Gives but one pang and cures all pain,  
And darts into her desperate brain;  
So do the dark in soul expire,  
Or live like scorpion girt by fire.  
So writhes the mind Remorse has riven,  
Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,  
Darkness above, despair beneath,  
Around it flame, within it Death.—Byron.

Once a mother told her pastor that she was troubled about her daughter, who was going to join the church. "She has not conviction enough," was the complaint; "and yet I have talked to her about her sins over and over again, setting them all in order before her till both of us were in tears; oh, what can I do more?" Then he gave her in her own hands a Bible, and he read aloud to her slowly Isaiah 6:1-5. She saw, without any word of his, that the prophet became intelligent as the sight of God flashed upon him, and grew penitent at the moment when the seraphim cried "Holy." Then he turned to Job 42:5, 6. She saw in silence that the patriarch repented, not when his exasperating friends pelted him with accusations, but when his eyes were opened to see God. She went away quietly to talk, with a wondering and awestruck heart, about the holiness of Jehovah; thus her child melted into contrition before the vision, and wept.—C. S. Robinson.

Sin, repentance, and pardon are like to the three vernal months of the year, March, April, and May. Sin comes in like March, blustering, stormy, and full of bold violence. Repentance succeeds like April, showering, weeping, and full of tears. Pardon follows like May, springing, singing, full of joys and flowers. Our eyes must be full of April, with the sorrow of repentance; and then our hearts shall be full of May, with the true joy of forgiveness.—Thomas Adams.

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### Genuine Repentance

Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, . . . but the sorrow of the world produces death. — 2 Corinthians 7:10

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:9-12

What is repentance? And how do we know when it is genuine?

A man who came to see me said he felt so much guilt before he was saved that he couldn't eat for days. Because he knew that I had not gone through such an intense period of grief, he said he didn't think I had truly repented.

Another man wept when he told me that his wife had left him because of his drinking and infidelity. He tearfully professed faith in Jesus and vowed to be done with his sinful lifestyle. But when his wife returned, he soon went back to his old ways.

In a similar situation, a man confessed with little emotion what a terrible sinner he was. He admitted his need for grace and received Christ. That was the end of his old lifestyle. Which of these two men genuinely repented?

Paul said godly sorrow for sin leads to salvation and a new life, whereas the sorrow of the world—merely feeling bad about sin's consequences—leaves a person unchanged and leads to death. True repentance doesn't mean we never sin again. But if we admit that we are helpless sinners, if we believe that Jesus died for our sins, if we are trusting Him for salvation, and if we have a deep desire to live for Him, our repentance is genuine. We have been forgiven. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

True repentance leaves the sin  
That we had loved before,  
With firm resolve to turn from it  
And yield to it no more.  
—Anon.

Repentance says, "I'm sorry," but also shows, "I'm through."

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### Finding Forgiveness

Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation. —2 Corinthians 7:10

Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:1-16

Today's Bible reading is from Paul's second letter to the Christians in Corinth. He begins the chapter by calling them "beloved" and finishes by rejoicing over his confidence in them.

How could he honestly say those things, considering that the rest of the chapter is about their sins he had sternly confronted in his first letter? (1 Cor. 5). He could commend them because they had responded with godly sorrow. They had sincerely repented, and now their slate was completely clean!

Many of us as Christians find it difficult to accept God's forgiveness for our sin and to feel forgiven. We tell others about the love and forgiveness that Jesus offers, yet the hardest thing for us to do, it seems, is to receive that same love and forgiveness. After we've done something wrong, it's not unusual to feel sorry about it. But if we merely regret the consequences and don't genuinely repent and accept God's forgiveness, we have done nothing more than sorrow as the world does (2 Cor. 7:10).

Don't say, "If only I could undo the past." You can't undo sin, but you can sincerely repent of it. Our merciful God is waiting right now to flood your troubled heart with the joy of His forgiveness. By: Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dear Lord, be merciful to us;  
Our sin has grieved Your heart;  
And strengthen our resolve, O Lord,

To make a fresh, new start.

—DJD

God makes us miserable through conviction to make us joyful through confession.

**2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:11 For see what this very thing, this sadness as God intended, has produced in you: what eagerness, what defense of yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what deep concern, what punishment! In everything you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:11 δο γρ ατ το το τ κατ θε ν λυπηθ ναι π σην κατειρ σατο μ ν σπουδ ν, λλ πιλον αν, λλ γαν κτησιν, λλ φ βον, λλ πιπ θησιν, λλ ζ λον, λλ κδ κησιν. ν παντ συνεστ σατε αυτο ζ γνο ζ ε ναι τ πρ γμωτι.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:11 Just see what this godly sorrow produced in you! Such earnestness, such concern to clear yourselves, such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me, such zeal, and such a readiness to punish wrong. You showed that you have done everything necessary to make things right.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:11 for, lo, this same thing -- your being made sorry toward God -- how much diligence it doth work in you! but defence, but displeasure, but fear, but longing desire, but zeal, but revenge; in every thing ye did approve yourselves to be pure in the matter.

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:11 For consider how much diligence this very thing-- this grieving as God wills-- has produced in you: what a desire to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what deep longing, what zeal, what justice! In every way you showed yourselves to be pure in this matter.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:11 See this same principle applied in connection with godly sorrow as to how much earnestness it produced in you. The stark antithesis to this kind of sorrow is: excuse-making, resentment, fear, obsession, agitation, revenge. You demonstrated yourselves to be pure of the practice of all of these.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold what earnestness this godly sorrow has produced for you, as well as readiness for a defense, and indignation, and fear, and yearning, and zeal, and punishment. In every way you have shown yourselves to be innocent in the matter.

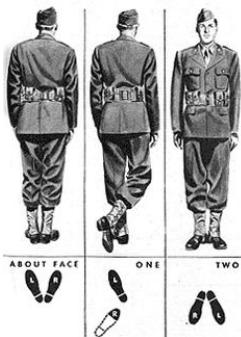
NJB 2 Corinthians 7:11 Just look at this present case: at what the result has been of your being made to feel distress in the way that God approves -- what concern, what defence, what indignation and what alarm; what

yearning, and what enthusiasm, and what justice done. In every way you have cleared yourselves of blame in this matter.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:11 When you became distressed in a godly way, look at how much devotion it caused you to have. You were ready to clear yourselves of the charges against you. You were disgusted with the wrong that had been done. You were afraid. You wanted to see us. You wanted to show your concern for us. You were ready to punish the wrong that had been done. In every way you have demonstrated that you are people who are innocent in this matter.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:11 For you see what care was produced in you by this very sorrow of yours before God, what clearing of yourselves, what wrath against sin, what fear, what desire, what serious purpose, what punishment. In everything you have made it clear that you are free from sin in this business.

- **this godly sorrow:** 2Co 7:9 Isa 66:2 Zec 12:10-14 1Co 5:2
- **what earnestness:** 2Co 7:7 1Co 12:25 Tit 3:8
- **what vindication of yourselves:** Ge 44:6,7 1Co 5:13 Eph 5:11 1Ti 5:21,22
- **what indignation:** 2Sa 12:5-7 Ne 5:6-13 13:25 Job 42:6 Jer 31:18-20 Da 6:14 Mk 3:5 Eph 4:26
- **what fear:** 2Co 7:1 Ps 2:11 Pr 14:16 28:14 Ro 11:20 Php 2:12 Heb 4:1 12:15,16 1Pe 1:17 Jude 1:23
- **what longing:** Ps 38:9 42:1 130:6 145:19 Song 8:6 Isa 26:8 1Pe 2:2
- **what zeal:** 2Co 9:2 Ps 69:9 119:139 Joh 2:17 Ac 17:16
- **what avenging of wrong:** Ps 35:13 Mt 5:29,30 Mk 9:43-48 Rev 3:19
- **In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent** 2Co 6:4 13:7 Ro 14:18 2Ti 2:15
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## SEVEN FOLD FRUIT OF GODLY SORROW > REPENTANCE

Seven "whats" of godly sorrow leading to repentance will give you "seven watts of power" (so to speak) to energize a holy walk empowered by the Spirit Who is now not grieved and/or quenched by unconfessed, unrepentant sin!

Given that it is **godly sorrow** that leads to repentance, it is actually better to see these seven "fruits" are the product of **godly sorrow**, but either way they are intimately a part of genuine repentance.

As [Jim Bomkamp](#) says now "Paul describes for the Corinthians what the 'godly sorrow' they experienced as a result of his 'severe letter' produced in them."

The command "[About Face](#)" is describes the act of pivoting 180 degrees, especially in a military formation (see diagram above). Another English definition says it is "a reversal of direction, of attitude, behavior, or point of view." This is a good picture of repentance

This passage gives us an excellent Biblical list to assess whether a person who claims to have repented is being honest or whether they have mistaken ungodly sorrow, remorse and regret for repentance. One important point to remember is that true repentance can be easily recognized by others because it produces a complete reorientation of thoughts, attitudes, and actions, resulting in a turning from sin and a turning towards God (see this pattern in 1Th 1:9-10+).

[Paul Apple](#) - Repentance and Faith always go hand in hand – like the two sides of the same coin. Just as Repentance is essential for initial conversion, it is also essential for continued spiritual growth (this is not emphasized enough). Cf. Colossians 2:6+ says "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so **walk** (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in Him."

**Broomall** has an interesting comment that "The energy of this verse is almost untranslatable." Paul arranges seven nouns in ascensive order to describe the explosive nature of their repentance. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

## NUMBER ONE

Paul now begins the most complete list of the characteristics of repentance in Scripture, recording seven traits (if you count "earnestness") that characterized the repentance of the saints at Corinth.

**For** (gar) is a term of explanation. **Plummer** says "He wants them to see how they themselves afford an example of the right kind of **lupe** (sorrow) and its fruits...He looks back to what was said in 2Co 7:7<sup>±</sup>, and in his desire to give them full credit for the excellent change in them he adds a great deal to what was said before; in 2Co 7:7<sup>±</sup> we have three particulars ('**your longing, your mourning, your zeal**'), here we have seven. He is brimming over with affectionate delight"

**Behold** (**idou**) **what earnestness** (**spoude**) **this very thing, this godly sorrow** (**lupeo**) , **has produced** (**katergazomai**) **in you** - **Behold** is used to focus their attention to what follows. Paul lists the seven-fold fruit**produced by godly sorrow**. (if you include earnestness). In effect this seven-fold list of fruits of repentance is the most complete summary statement of repentance in Scripture which may account for Paul's use of the attention arresting command **Behold**. Obviously each of these righteous "fruits" of godly sorrow/repentance were gleaned by Paul from what Titus reported ([anaggello](#)) to him.

**Earnestness** refers to the quality of genuine commitment, with elements of enthusiasm and zeal. **Earnestness** characterizes true repentance for it deals with the sin immediately, without procrastination or delay. "**NOW**" (not later) is the watchword of genuine repentance!

**P E Hughes** - The exclamation "**Behold!**" with which the Apostle introduces this sentence carries the ring of his exultation and suggests that the Corinthian scene as described by Titus is vividly pictured in his mind. There is no need for him to theorize as it were in the abstract, for in themselves as a Christian community they have practical first-hand knowledge and a compelling illustration of this very thing about which he is speaking, namely, sorrow which is according to God and the worthy fruits which it produces. This is apparent from the notable degree of eager application they have evinced, in contrast to their former carelessness and indifference. And Paul goes on to mention half-a-dozen forms in which this eager application of theirs has manifested itself—exoneration, indignation, fear, longing, zeal, and requital. The repeated "yea what ..." before each noun<sup>14</sup> powerfully conveys the impression that Paul is at this moment writing in a mood of exalted delight; the news brought by Titus has raised him from the trough of his former apprehensiveness to the crest of a great wave of consolation..([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

A **godly sorrow** is a sorrow or grief (ESV - "godly grief") like God has over sin.

**Paul Apple** on **earnestness** (**spoude**) - Speedy Resolution (diligence, earnestness, eagerness) "For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you" (our English word "speed") – same word used in Ro 12:11 – "not slothful in business" – I am afraid we are more diligent in doing a good job solving problems at work than we are in addressing reconciliation problems. A genuinely repentant person will quickly seek out reconciliation on his own initiative. He will not treat the situation with careless indifference or ignore the problem (hoping it will go away). There is a need to get busy and be in earnest.

**Wiersbe** - Repentance is from God and is a sorrow that draws people closer to God and brings them to a place of confessing and forsaking sin. Regret is from the world; its drives people away from God and into the hand of Satan. For example, Peter showed repentance and was forgiven; Judas showed regret and took his own life. Godly sorrow is good; it leads to life. But the sorrow of the world leads to death. ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the NT](#))

**John MacArthur** - The repeated use of the comparative **what** before each element underscores the intense emotion Paul felt....**earnestness** or eagerness for righteousness on their part. It ended their indifference toward Paul and their complacency about their sin. They were eager to make things right, to make restitution, to restore their broken relationship with the apostle. ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Michael Andrus** - . Earnestness. Godly sorrow produced a new desire for righteousness on their part. It ended their indifference toward Paul and their complacency about their sin.

**Guzik** has an interesting comment on the significance of **earnestness** in the repentant individual - Repentance means to turn around, and it takes diligence to stay turned around. If one gives up easily, they can never walk in repentance, though they may perform acts of repentance. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Homer Kent** - **Earnestness**" (spoudēn) refers to the diligence and eagerness with which they now had devoted themselves to dealing with the issues Paul had addressed. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **earnestness**. It is the initial reaction of true repentance to eagerly and aggressively pursue righteousness. This is an attitude that ends indifference to sin and complacency about evil and deception.

**Puritan Thomas Brooks - Earnestness** (spoudēn) - the word notes the serious intention of the mind, and the diligence and dexterity of the soul in shunning and avoiding sin, and arming of the soul against all occasions and temptations thereunto. The great care and concern of the repenting soul is to leave all sin, to shake off all sin, to avoid all sin, and to weaken and subdue, and bring under all sin. Oh! the care, the caution, the circumspection, the vigilance, the strivings and the strugglings of the repenting soul against temptations and corruptions. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

## NUMBER TWO

**What vindication (apologia) of yourselves** - NLT = "such concern to clear yourselves." **NET** has "what defense of yourselves," which is a little misleading for a repentant person does not seek to defend or excuse their sin. The Greek word **apologia** means defense or a speech in defense (cf Acts 22:1, 1Co 9:3, Php 1:7, 16, 2Ti 4:16). **Guzik** says the thought is **vindication** "is a clearing of guilt and shame, from knowing that we brought our sin to God and we now walk in the right way."

**MacArthur** explains **vindication** this way "The Corinthians had a strong desire to clear their name, remove the stigma of their sin, rid themselves of their guilt, and prove themselves trustworthy. Therefore, they made sure that all who had known of their sin now knew of their repentance."

**P E Hughes** - .We cannot be certain of the precise significance in the given circumstances of each of the different aspects of the Corinthians' response to Paul's letter listed here, but a consideration of the available data leads us to suggest that they may best be interpreted in the following manner: **Clearing of themselves**—the Greek noun (**apologia**) means a defence of oneself in the face of a charge. The Corinthians had been roused to give an account of themselves, whereas previously in their apathy and inactivity it had mattered little to them whether or not they seemed to be guilty of complicity in the wrong that had been committed. ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Paul Apple** has an interesting explanation of **vindication (apologia)** - Reasonable Dialogue (controlled by reason, not by emotion) "what vindication of yourselves" (controlled by reason, not emotion – cf. English word "apology") – Not compounding the sin or seeking to justify your participation in that sin, but explaining your repentance so that now you stand in a state of innocence – not participating in any of these false charges; not giving them any more of a hearing.

**Rich Cathers** on **vindication** - It's clearing your name. Doing what's necessary to clear the wrong you've done. True repentance says "I'm sorry" (AND MEANS IT!)

**Michael Andrus** - Eagerness to clear oneself. They desperately want to free themselves of any blame in the matter, to remove the stigma of their sin and prove themselves once again trustworthy. Sometimes, friends, all that takes is confession and a plea for forgiveness. At other times, however, it may require restitution. If you have stolen someone's possessions, what good does it do to tell them you're sorry if you aren't willing to return what you stole? The important thing is that the Corinthians wanted to make sure that all those who knew of their sin also know of their repentance.

**Pastor Jim Bomkamp** - **vindication** - Paul writes that the Corinthians' 'godly sorrow,' that had led them to repentance, had produced in them several good results. This is what godly sorrow produces in our lives: It caused them to try to make a 'vindication' of themselves. That is, they determined that they were going to make things right. In other words, they saw the error of their way, where they had fallen short and rebelled in their hearts against the Lord, and they determined that they would not let the sun set before they would make proper amends for their actions.

**Alan Redpath** - "Godly sorrow that leads to repentance, therefore, is a sorrow that leads to a change of purpose, of intention, and of action. It is not the sorrow of idle tears; it is not crying by your bedside because once again you have failed; nor is it vain regret, wishing things had never happened, wishing you could live the moments again. No, it is not that. It is a change of purpose and intentions, a change of direction and action."

**William MacDonald** says "by taking resolute action, they tried to clear themselves of any further guilt or blame in the matter. Their change in attitude led to this change in action." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

## NUMBER THREE

**What indignation (aganaktēsis)** - Compare same idea of "your mourning" in 2Co 7:7<sup>±</sup>. This refers to mental agitation, a state of extreme emotional disturbance as one might see in righteous indignation. In this context it indicates the **indignation** at the shame brought upon God, upon the church and upon Paul by their sins (e.g, see 1Co 5:2+) As such this could refer to the sinner in 1Co

5:1-8+ (cf 2Co 2:5-11+) because of the reproach he brought to the Name of Christ. In any event, this word conveys the thought that divinely dispensed and enabled repentance had given them a genuine hatred of their sin which they previously had practiced. One is reminded of Paul's question to the saints at Rome "Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death." (Ro 6:21+)

**Thomas Watson** - Gospel-mourning must be joined with hatred of sin. **What indignation!** (2 Corinthians 7:11). We must not only **abstain** from sin—but **abhor** sin. **The dove hates the least feather of the hawk.** A true mourner hates the least motion to sin. A true mourner is a sin-hater. Amnon hated Tamar more than ever he loved her (2 Samuel 13:15). To be a sin-hater implies two things: first, to look upon sin as the most deadly evil—as the essence of all evil. It looks more ghastly than death or hell. Second, to be implacably incensed against it. A sin-hater will never admit of any terms of peace. The war between him and sin is like the war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. 'There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days' (1 Kings 14:30). Anger may be reconciled—hatred cannot. True mourning begins in the love of God—and ends in the hatred of sin. (Excerpt from section entitled "What is the right Gospel mourning?" in [The Beatitudes - Gospel Mourning - Matthew 5:4](#))

**Paul Apple Indignation** (shame and distress) – **"what indignation"** Not calm and unruffled evidencing no sorrow for sin; not arrogant and stubborn; but recognizing the shame associated with such failure and being distressed by the whole situation and yet not despairing because of the forgiveness for sins provided by the blood of Christ.

**Michael Andrus** - Indignation. They were actually disgusted at themselves for offending Paul and for sinning against God. They now hate the sin they once cherished.

**P E Hughes** - **Indignation (aganaktesis)**—with themselves, rather than against the one who had sinned (as Chrysostom, Afford, etc., take it), because of the scandal they had permitted to continue unchecked in the church and the consequent affront to the holy Name of God. This **indignation** may be equated with the mourning mentioned in 2Co 7:7± ("your mourning" - [odurmos](#)). ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Puritan Thomas Brooks** - **Indignation (aganaktesis)**— It notes the very rising of the stomach with rage, and a being angry unto fretting, fuming, and sickness. Again, it notes the very height of anger and rage. The true **penitent** is not so exceeding angry with himself for anything—as he is angry with himself for his sins. **Indignation here imports the turning of all the passions of the soul wholly against sin.** There are no men in the world so hot and angry against themselves for their sins, as **penitents** are. "Then you will defile your idols overlaid with silver and your images covered with gold; you will throw them away like a menstrual cloth and say to them—Away with you!" Isaiah 30:22KJV. Witness David, Psalm 73:22; witness Ephraim, Hosea 14:8; and witness Paul, Romans 7:22-23. There are none who fret, and fume, and chafe at themselves for sin, as **penitent** souls do. There are none who loathe themselves, who abhor themselves, and who are weary of themselves, upon the account of their sins—like **penitent** souls. It is not this thing nor that, nor this enemy nor that, nor this party nor that, nor this design nor that—but sin, which is the main—the grand object of a penitent's hatred, scorn, wrath, rage, reproach, disgrace, and contempt, etc. **He who would be angry and sin not, must be angry at nothing but sin.** If some men would but spend more of their anger and indignation against their sins, they would not be so angry as they are with their brethren, that in disputable things differ from them. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **indignation.** Often associated with righteous indignation and holy anger. Repentance leads to anger over one's sin and displeasure at the shame it has brought on the Lord's name and His people.

While godly sorrow includes **indignation** or a "holy hatred" of our sin, it is important to realize that we are not to stay mired in the memory of our sin against God. When we confess our sins God "is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1Jn 1:9+). Psalm 103:12 says "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." Micah asks "Who is a God like You, Who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea." (Micah 7:18-19+) In Philippians Paul gives us "marching orders" when we have confessed and repented of past sins writing "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Php 3:13-14+)

Their sorrow for their sin was not a ball and chain that they were dragging along constantly.

Rather, they were forgiven, cleansed by God of **all** unrighteousness,  
and now they were **filled with the joy of the Lord.**

--Jim Bomkamp

**Puritan writer Thomas Watson** ([see full article](#)) including index to his 4 part series below - see especially [his list of 20 characteristics of sin](#)! Also see his "[Choice Excerpts](#)" from the 4 sections) expands on mindset that follows **indignation** in his section entitled "**Comfort for the Repenting Sinner.** Let me in the next place speak by way of comfort. Christian, has God given you a

repenting heart? Know these three things for your everlasting comfort:

**1. Your sins are pardoned.** Pardon of sin brings blessedness within it. (Psalm 32:1). Whom God pardons—he crowns. "Who forgives all your iniquities, who crowns you with loving-kindness" (Psalm 103:34). A repenting condition is a pardoned condition. Christ said to that weeping woman, "Your sins, which are many—are forgiven" (Luke 7:47+). Pardons are sealed upon soft hearts. O you whose head has been a fountain to **weep for sin**—Christ's side will be a fountain to **wash away sin!** (Zech. 13:1). Have you repented? God looks upon you as if you had not offended. He becomes a Friend, a Father. He will now bring forth the best robe and put it on you (Lk 15:22+). God is pacified towards you and will, with the father of the prodigal, fall upon your neck and kiss you (Lk 15:20+). Sin in scripture is compared to a cloud (Is. 44:22). No sooner is this cloud scattered by repentance, than pardoning love shines forth. Paul, after his repentance, obtained mercy, (1Ti 1:16).

**When a spring of repentance is open in the heart—  
a spring of mercy is open in heaven!**

**2. God will pass an act of oblivion.** He so forgives sin as he forgets. "I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34+). Have you been penitentially humbled? The Lord will never **upbraid** you with your former sins. After Peter wept we never read that Christ **upbraided** him, with his denial of Him. God has cast your sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19+). How? Not as cork—but as lead. The Lord will never in a judicial way account for them. When He pardons, God is as a creditor that blots the debt out of his book (Isaiah 43:25). Some ask the question, whether the sins of the godly shall be mentioned at the last day. The Lord said he will not remember them, and he is blotting them out, so if their sins are mentioned, it shall not be to their harm, for the debt-book is crossed out. (**ED: IF THIS DOES NOT CAUSE YOU TO SHOUT "HALLELUJAH! THANK YOU JESUS" I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL!**)

**3. Conscience will now speak peace.** O the music of a clean conscience! Conscience is turned into a paradise, and there a Christian sweetly solaces himself and plucks the flowers of joy (2Co 1:12+). The repenting sinner can go to God with boldness in prayer, and look upon Him not as a judge—but as a Father. He is "born of God" and is heir to a kingdom (Luke 6:20+). He is encircled with promises. He no sooner shakes the tree of the promise, but some fruit falls (cf 2Co 1:20+, 2Pe 1:4+).

To conclude, the true penitent may look on death with comfort. His life has been a life of tears—and now at death all tears shall be wiped away! **Death** shall not be a **destruction**—but a **deliverance** from jail. Thus you see what great comfort remains for repenting sinners. Luther said that before his conversion he could not endure that bitter word "**repentance**"—but afterwards he found much **sweetness** in it.

**Wayne Barber** - they were **indignant** towards their sin which means they saw their sin as what it was, and they moved quickly to deal with it. Let me ask you a question this morning. When you have sinned, and the Holy Spirit convicts you of that which is a step in repentance, He's got to convict you, and you realize what's wrong, what's that like in your life? I would love for us to have small group discussion sometime on this. You know what it's like in my life? A horse has kicked me in the chest and I have absolutely no relief until I do what God's told me to do. I'm very cautious about people who can live in sin and never be convicted and never change. Something's wrong in the church of Jesus Christ in the 21st century: we have people sitting on pews that don't even know the Lord Jesus Christ. There's got to be that indignant attitude toward sin. God brings that about. You hate it; it's filthy. I want to get away from it.....they were **indignant** toward their sin, which means they were **repulsed** by it. And they immediately wanted it out of their life. They moved quickly to deal with it.

**Guzik** has an interesting comment on the significance of **earnestness** in the repentant individual - Repentance means to turn around, and it takes diligence to stay turned around. If one gives up easily, they can never walk in repentance, though they may perform acts of repentance. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Homer Kent - Earnestness**" (spoudēn) refers to the diligence and eagerness with which they now had devoted themselves to dealing with the issues Paul had addressed. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**Pastor Jim Bomkamp - Indignation (aganaktesis)** - It caused them to have 'indignation' towards themselves for having sinned. They were incensed towards themselves for having fallen short of the Lord's holiness, and thus they determined that they had to honor the Lord and do in their life what brought glory to God. They also developed great 'indignation' for the man who had openly defied Paul when he had tried to discipline those who had sinned. Now, the Corinthians had come to the place where they hated every evil way, and felt 'indignation' towards any and all who would rebel against the Lord.

**Rich Cathers** - True repentance is truly grieved and upset over its own sin. Sometimes the victory in our lives over certain areas

just doesn't occur until we get to the point where our sin just totally makes us sick.

**THOUGHT** - This "fruit" of repentance, a [repugnant](#) attitude toward sin, is eminently [pragmatic](#) and begs the honest question -- When you sin, whether hidden (Ps 19:12+) or committed willfully/presumptively (and we all do beloved!)(Ps 19:13+) , the question is this -- Does this cause you to experience godly sorrow to the point that you literally hate and detest and are disgusted by your sin? I did not say "hate yourself," but the sin which you committed. Our sin is not just against our body but supremely is against our heavenly Father and it should cause us deep agonizing pain which births a holy hatred of that which offends the One we have the inestimably precious privilege to call [Abba!](#) One is reminded of Joseph in Genesis 39:9 (when tempted by Potiphar's wife enticing him with "[when the cat's away, the mice will play!](#)") declaring "How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" (cf David in Ps 51:4+).

**Alan Redpath** has an interesting thought which needs a "[disclaimer](#)" - "I am glad that the Bible allows me to get mad, mad with the devil! To think that he had the audacity to pull me down and make me do that! What indignation, what fury at sin and all the agencies of Satan!" (ED: The "[disclaimer](#)" I would add is that we cannot always say "[The devil made me do it!](#)" We have a "devilish" depraved flesh in these holy temples (1Co 6:19-20) which has plenty of power to convince us to seek pleasure and disregard the pain/punishment!)

**C H Spurgeon** - "Happy is that man who has had enough of the smart of sin to make it sour and bitter to him all the rest of his days; so that now, with changed heart, and renewed spirit, he perseveres in the ways of God, never thinking of going back, but resolved 'through floods or flames' to force his way to heaven, to be, by divine grace, master over every sin that assails him (cf Paul in 1Co 9:27+)."

**Plummer** says "[Indignation](#) at the shame brought upon the Church."

**William MacDonald** says **indignation** "probably it refers to their attitude toward themselves for ever having allowed such a thing (incest in their midst) to go on for so long without taking action on it." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**James Smith** - But we have often found that we have been betrayed by some foe, or led away by some temptation, and have lost this blessedness for a time; we have seen that our departures from the Lord have been grievous in his sight, and exceedingly injurious to us. The Holy Spirit has made use of this to produce self-loathing, penitence, and caution; and a greater measure of fear has been experienced and exercised. The young Christian knows but little of commended carefulness, 2 Corinthians 7:11; or of that hesitation which is often felt and manifested by more advanced believers. ([The Christian's Perspective - James Smith](#))

## NUMBER FOUR

**What fear (phobos)** - In context this **fear** refers to that reverential **fear** of the Lord, fear of displeasing Him, fear that shrinks back from anything that would not be pleasing to our Father in Heaven. (See Job 1:1c, Pr 8:13 = "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil", et al). Some think the idea of fear in context of their prior sins is a fear that God might deal with them.

**THOUGHT** - I can identify with godly fear of the disciplining rod of God when I sin. God does not "wink" at our sins and if we fail to confess, repent and return, He may be forced to subject us to divine discipline. We should have a holy fear of being taken out to the "woodshed" by God! It is (or should be) a motivating factor to impede a loose, apathetic approach to willful sinning.

In every penitent, God implants such a holy fear, such a filial fear, such a reverential fear,  
such a fear leading to diligence and vigilance,  
that the penitent Christian's heart rises, detests and abhors, not only gross sins—  
but the least motions, inclinations, and temptations to sin.  
--Thomas Brooks

**Paul Apple** **fear** – "**what fear**" The Corinthians recognized they had sinned against a holy God and against His apostolic representative. They realized how serious such an offense was and what judgment could have been theirs; no complacency or false security.

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **fear**. This is reverence toward God, Who is the One most offended by sin. Repentance leads to a healthy fear of the One who chastens and judges sin.

**Michael Andrus** - I think this indicates that they had arrived at a renewed reverential fear and awe of God as the One who disciplines and judges.

**P E Hughes** - **Fear**—not so much of God here (though that was undoubtedly present) as of Paul, lest with the authority divinely

delegated to him he should come to them “with a rod” (1 Cor. 4:21) as the messenger of God’s judgment. ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Guzik** has an interesting comment on the significance of **earnestness** in the repentant individual - Repentance means to turn around, and it takes diligence to stay turned around. If one gives up easily, they can never walk in repentance, though they may perform acts of repentance. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Homer Kent - Earnestness**” (spoudēn) refers to the diligence and eagerness with which they now had devoted themselves to dealing with the issues Paul had addressed. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**Puritan Thomas Brooks** - "Yes, what fear" of God's displeasure, and of doing anything wickedly before the Lord. Penitent souls are of all souls the most trembling souls, the most timorous souls: Proverbs 28:14, "Blessed is the man who fears always." The penitent Christian has still a jealous eye upon his own heart, words, and ways. He is very apt to suspect a snake under every flower, and to fear a snare in every creature-comfort. The burnt child dreads the fire. He who has been once stung hates a snake; he who has been in danger of drowning, trembles at the thoughts of going by water; and he who has once broken his leg, rides and walks with a fear of diligence and vigilance all his life after. I have read of the dove, that she is afraid of every feather that has grown upon a hawk; the very sight of any of the hawk's feathers brings as much terror upon her as if she had seen the hawk herself. Such a native dread is, it seems, implanted in her, that it detests and abhors the very sight of any such feather. In every penitent, God implants such a holy fear, such a filial fear, such a reverential fear, such a fear leading to diligence and vigilance, that the penitent Christian's heart rises, detests and abhors, not only gross sins—but the least motions, inclinations, and temptations to sin. Those who have paid dear for past guilt—have known what an aching heart, a wounded conscience, and a bleeding soul means. Those who have experienced what the frowns of God, the threatenings of God, and the wrath of God means—will certainly beware of sin, watch and war against it, and fear to fall into it. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

**David Guzik** has an interesting comment on **fear** - Godly sorrow produces, and repentance shows a **fear** that we would ever fall into the same sin again. Paul isn't writing about a **fear of God** here as much as a **fear of sin**, and **fear** of our own weakness toward sin (**ED: I THINK THE FEAR OF GOD AND FEAR OF SIN ARE INTERRELATED**). ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

## NUMBER FIVE

**What longing (epipothesis)** - Note this is the same Greek word used in 2Co 7:7<sup>±</sup>. ([epipothesis](#)) is only found in the Bible in 2Co 7:7,11), so clearly is related. This yearning could refer to reconciliation of their relationship with Paul as their spiritual father. It could also refer to a strong desire to have their fellowship with their Heavenly Father restored as John describes in 1 John 1:6-7+ writing "If we say that we have fellowship with Him (GOD) and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; ut if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." And finally it would include a holy desire to pursue holiness (Heb 12:14+) and discipline of one's self for godliness (1Ti 4:8+, cf 1Co 9:27+).

**Rich Cathers** - Repentance involves a deep, deep desire to do what's right. It's a "lust", but not for something forbidden, it's a "lust" for something that's right.

**Michael Andrus - Longing.** This speaks of their deep, heart-felt desire for the former relationship with Paul to be restored

**MacArthur Study Bible - longing.** This could be translated "yearning," and refers to the desire of the repentant sinner to restore the relationship with the one who was sinned against.

**P E Hughes - Longing**—(as in 2Co 7:7<sup>±</sup>) to be reunited with him who had brought the gospel to them, to welcome him as their own genuine apostle, and to see the restoration of their former relationship of trust and affection.. ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Paul Apple** Longing (to see the offended party) – “what longing” They wanted to meet personally to set things right and to make sure that the problem is behind them; not avoiding or despising the offended party.

**William MacDonald on longing** - Most commentators agree that this refers to a genuine longing which had been awakened in their souls for a visit from Paul. However, it could also mean a strong desire to see the wrong righted and the evil corrected. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Puritan Thomas Brooks - longing (epipothesis)** - It signifies such a desire of fervency that can admit of no delay; it notes such a desire as produces diligence, activity, and industry. The true penitent is full of fervent and vehement desires to be rid of his sins. Rachel was never more vehement and fervent in her desires after children, nor David after the water of the well Bethlehem, nor the hunted deer after the water-brooks, nor the betrothed virgin for her marriage-day, nor the slave for his freedom, nor the captive for his ransom, nor the soldier for the conquest, nor the sick man for his cure, nor the condemned man for his pardon—than **the true**

**penitent is vehement and fervent in his desires to have his lusts subdued, mortified, and destroyed, Romans 7:22-24.** Many a day have I sought death with tears, said blessed Cowper, not out of distrust, impatience, or perturbation—but because I am weary of sin, and fearful of falling into it. If you ask the penitent, Why do you hear, pray, read, and apply yourself so seriously, so frequently, so unweariedly, and so constantly to all sin-subduing ministrations? he will tell you that it is out of a vehement and fervent desire that he has to be rid of his sins. If you ask him again, why he is so much in complaining against sin, in mourning over sin, and in warring against sin? etc., he will tell you that it is out of a vehement and earnest desire that he has to be fully and finally delivered from sin. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

## NUMBER SIX

**What zeal (zelos)** - Note this is the same Greek word used in 2Co 7:7. The idea is eagerness, earnestness, diligence. But **zeal** for what? In 2Co 7:7 Paul described the **zeal** of the Corinthians for him. But in the context of repentance it speaks of a fervor of spirit to make things right. In other words genuine repentance energizes (by the Spirit) a deep desire and power to do what is right.

**Homer Kent - Zeal**” described the Corinthians’ enthusiasm for getting the matter settled soon before Paul came. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**P E Hughes - Zeal**—(again as in 2Co 7:7) for Paul, for the honouring of his apostolic authority and the repudiation of those intruders who had sought to usurp his authority, and for the imitation of his example in assiduously applying themselves to the cause of Christ. ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Michael Andrus** - They had become zealous for holiness and righteousness.

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **zeal**. This refers to loving someone or something so much that one hates anyone or anything that harms the object of this love

**William MacDonald** says **zeal** "has been variously explained as meaning zeal for the glory of God, for the restoration of the sinner, for their own cleansing from defilement in the matter, or for taking sides with the apostle." ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** **Zeal** (upholding the honor and reputation of the offended party) “what zeal” Encouraging others to express their loyalty towards this person; upholding his honor; not undermining loyalty to such a person and attacking him at every turn

**Puritan Thomas Brooks - what zeal** - Zeal is an extreme heat of all the affections set against sin, and working strongly towards God. David's zeal did eat up his sin as well as himself. And Paul was as zealous in propagating the gospel, as he had been furious in persecuting of it. Many men's zeal is hot and burning, when scorns and reproaches are cast upon them; but the penitent man's zeal is most hot and burning, when religion is scorned, saints persecuted, truth endangered, and the great and dreadful name of God blasphemed, etc. The zeal of a true penitent will carry him on in a course of godliness, and in a course of mortification, in spite of all the diversions and oppositions that the world, the flesh, and the devil can make. Holy zeal is a fire that will make its way through all things that stand between God and the soul. The true penitent is unchangeably resolved to be rid of his sins, whatever it cost him. Whatever escapes, whatever lives—he is fully determined his lusts shall die for it. Only remember this, though zeal should eat up our sins—yet it must not eat up our wisdom, no more than public policy should eat up our zeal. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

## NUMBER SEVEN

**What avenging of wrong (ekdikesis)** - It means the meting out of justice, which they in fact had carried out against the immoral, incestuous man in their assembly (1Co 5:1-8+, 2Co 2:6-11+) When a repentant person sees injustice, they have a strong desire to see justice meted out and wrongs righted by restitution if necessary. When applied personally, this trait depicts genuine repentance as seeking repayment of any damages or losses incurred when in the unrepentant state.

**Paul Apple** - **Avenging of wrong** – “what avenging of wrong” The church is the proper forum for judging one another and exercising any necessary discipline. We should hold to a high standard of justice. We should not take matters into our own hands or seek revenge.

**P E Hughes - Avenging**—or, better, requital, that is, seeing that justice is done by bringing the guilty person to book and subjecting him to ecclesiastical discipline, and thus putting their house in order (cf. 1 Cor. 5:5, 13+). ([The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#))

**Michael Andrus** - Truly repentant people have a strong desire to see justice done and to make restitution for the wrongs they have done. Instead of being defensive of their behavior, they openly accept the consequences of their sins. I can't help but think of Chuck Colson here. Compare his actions and attitudes after the Watergate scandal blew wide open to those of his boss, Richard Nixon. And compare the effectiveness of both of their lives following the revelation of their crimes.

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **avenging of wrong.** This refers to the desire to see justice done. The repentant sinner no longer tries to protect himself; he wants to see the sin avenged no matter what it might cost him.

**Bob Utley** - There has been some divergence of opinion among scholars as to exactly what this verse is referring. Some assert that (1) it refers to 1 Cor. 5:5+, while others believe (2) it refers to the factions or false teachers (cf. v. 12).

**Puritan Thomas Brooks** - **"what revenge."** The true penitent revenges himself upon himself for his sins, not by whips and scourges, as the papists do—but by buffeting the flesh, and bringing it into subjection by fasting and prayer, and by crossing of his lusts, and loading of them with chains, and by drawing the sword of mortification against them, and by withholding from them that fuel that might feed them, and by the use of all other holy exercises, whereby the old man, the body of sin and death, may be subdued to the obedience and discipline of the Spirit of God. [1 Cor. 9:27. A penitent sinner loathes the very scars of his sins after they are healed.—Gregory Nazianzen.] Holy revenge will show itself by contradicting of corrupt self, and by a severe chastising and punishing of all these instruments that have been servants to the flesh; as you may see by the daughters of Israel in dedicating their looking-glasses, by which they had sinned, to the service of the sanctuary, Exod. 38:8; and as you may see by the Ephesians' burning of their costly and blasphemous books before all men, Acts 19:19; and by Mary Magdalene's wiping of Christ's feet with her hair, wherewith formerly her fond and foolish lovers were enticed and entangled, Luke 7. And the same spirit you may see working in Zaccheus, Luke 19:8-9; and in the jailor, Acts 16:23-34. And so blessed Cranmer thrust his right hand first into the fire, that being the hand by which he subscribed the popish articles, revengefully crying out, "This unworthy right hand, this unworthy right hand," as long as he could speak. The common language of holy revenge is this: "Lord, pour out all your wrath, and all your fierce anger, and all your fiery indignation, upon this lust and that lust. Lord, bend your bow, and shoot all the arrows of your displeasure, into the very heart of my strong corruptions; Lord, when will you rain hell out of heaven upon this proud heart, this unbelieving heart, this unclean heart, this worldly heart, this foward heart, this treacherous heart of mine, etc." I have read of Hannibal, that when he saw a pit full of the blood of his enemies, he cried out with much contentment and delight, "Oh beautiful sight!" Just so, when a penitent Christian sees his spiritual enemies, his strong corruptions, all in a gore-blood, oh how delightfully and rejoicingly does he cry out, "Oh beautiful sight! Oh blessed sight, that ever I have seen!" When the children of Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore, then they sang a song of praise, Exod. 15. The application is easy. O sirs! let no man deceive his own immortal soul; for it is most certain, that repentance to life has all these lively companions attending of it. Sound repentance, and the companions of it, are born together, and will live and continue together until the penitent soul changes earth for heaven, grace for glory. And let this much suffice for the first part of true repentance, etc. ([A Cabinet of Choice Jewels](#))

**In everything you demonstrated (sunistemi) yourselves to be innocent (hagnos) in the matter (pragma)** - Paul has added up (so to speak) all the aspects of their repentance and now gives his summary statement of affirmation and encouragement. **In everything** would include all seven items must mentioned. So Paul has added up the 7 characteristics and the "sum" was innocence (purity)! **Demonstrated** means the Corinthians gave evidence for the authenticity of their repentance (and their salvation). Their words and actions were proof that they were **innocent**. The seven items Paul had just listed stood as proof of genuine repentance. This recalls John the Baptist's charge to his hearers to **"bear fruit (the seven items) in keeping (áxios) with repentance."** (Mt 3:8+)

**Jim Bomkamp** says "By responding appropriately and genuinely repenting of their sins, the Corinthians proved that though they had sinned that their hearts were not given over to sin. Their hearts were truly pure. They had only momentarily stumbled, but being true children of God they had gotten up off of the ground with the Lord's help and now they were determined not to let themselves get in the same position again. Notice here that the Corinthians were only sorrowful for awhile. They had confessed and repented of their sins revealed to their hearts through Paul's letter, and the Lord had cleansed them of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9+), and now they had no more sorrow for their wrong. Their sorrow for their sin was not a ball and chain that they were dragging along constantly. Rather, they were forgiven, cleansed by God of all unrighteousness (as 1 John 1:9+ promises), and now they were filled with the joy of the Lord. Genuine repentance always produces a good result in our lives as Christians. We Christians must realize that we need to constantly be repenting of sin as often as the Lord makes us aware of it in our life. As a pastor, my job in teaching always involves the attempt to bring us as Christians to the point where we confess and repent of any sins which we may have allowed into our lives. This is because we always need to be repenting of sin, just as often as we may sin. In the Calvarys, for many years we had a Baptist preacher from England named Stanley Voke who every year would come to the states and bless our churches as he would tour several of the Calvary chapels and preach. He was a fiery preacher in the style of a modern day Spurgeon, and he always preached about repentance, telling us that we needed to repent, and challenging us with area after area of our lives concerning where we might need to repent. I will never forget one message where he was preaching about repentance and he said, "People often come up to me after a message I've preached and they say something like, 'That was a wonderful message!' However, my question to them is, 'Well, if it was wonderful then what in your life is going to change as a result of the message? What result is the message going to produce in you?' I'm not interested in preaching wonderful messages, my concern is to preach messages that change peoples' lives for eternity!'"

**MacArthur Study Bible** - **to be innocent in the matter.** The essence of repentance is an aggressive pursuit of holiness, which was

characteristic of the Corinthians. The Greek word for "innocent" means "pure" or "holy." They demonstrated the integrity of their repentance by their purity.

**Michael Andrus** - Recovered innocence. The last phrase of verse 11 is remarkable: "At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter." They were not innocent, so the point Paul must be making is that they have recovered innocence through repentance.

**Rich Cathers** makes an interesting comment on in everything - When a person is truly overcome with repentance, it affects their whole life. It's not like they only try to change the one area that you pointed out. Their whole life turns over.

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**Thomas Brooks** - It is one of the greatest and clearest evidences of grace, for a man to make it his greatest business, work, and concern—to keep his heart always in a gracious frame, to keep his heart always in a wakeful frame, in a watchful frame, in a tender frame, in a believing frame, in a repenting frame, in a humble frame, in a patient frame, in a serious frame, in a heavenly frame, and in a jealous frame; for the more gracious the heart is, the more suspicious it will be. [Song 5:2; 2 Ki 22:19; 2 Chr 32:26; James 5:11; Eccl. 5:1,2; Col. 3:1,2; 2Co 7:11.]

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**John Calvin - Institutes of the Christian Religion** - The Apostle, in his description of repentance, (2 Cor. 7:11) enumerates seven causes, effects, or parts belonging to it, and that on the best grounds. These are carefulness, excuse, indignation, fear, desire, zeal, revenge. It should not excite surprise that I venture not to determine whether they ought to be regarded as causes or effects: both views may be maintained. They may also be called affections conjoined with repentance; but as Paul's meaning may be ascertained without entering into any of these questions, we shall be contented with a simple exposition. He says then that godly sorrow produces carefulness. He who is really dissatisfied with himself for sinning against his God, is, at the same time, stimulated to care and attention, that he may completely disentangle himself from the chains of the devil, and keep a better guard against his snares, so as not afterwards to lose the guidance of the Holy Spirit, or be overcome by security. Next comes excuse, which in this place means not defence, in which the sinner to escape the judgment of God either denies his fault or extenuates it, but apologising, which trusts more to intercession than to the goodness of the cause; just as children not altogether abandoned, while they acknowledge and confess their errors, yet employ depreciation; and to make room for it, testify, by every means in their power, that they have by no means cast off the reverence which they owe to their parents; in short, endeavour by excuse not to prove themselves righteous and innocent, but only to obtain pardon. Next follows indignation, under which the sinner inwardly murmurs, expostulates, and is offended with himself on recognising his perverseness and ingratitude to God. By the term fear is meant that trepidation which takes possession of our minds whenever we consider both what we have deserved, and the fearful severity of the divine anger against sinners. Accordingly, the exceeding disquietude which we must necessarily feel, both trains us to humility and makes us more cautious for the future. But if the carefulness or anxiety which he first mentioned is the result of fear, the connection between the two becomes obvious. Desire seems to me to be used as equivalent to diligence in duty, and alacrity in doing service, to which the sense of our misdeeds ought to be a powerful stimulus. To this also pertains zeal, which immediately follows; for it signifies the ardour with which we are inflamed when such goads as these are applied to us. "What have I done? Into what abyss had I fallen had not the mercy of God prevented?" The last of all is revenge, for the stricter we are with ourselves, and the severer the censure we pass upon our sins, the more ground we have to hope for the divine favour and mercy. And certainly when the soul is overwhelmed with a dread of divine judgment, it cannot but act the part of an avenger in inflicting punishment upon itself. Pious men, doubtless, feel that there is punishment in the shame, confusion, groans, self-displeasure, and other feelings produced by a serious review of their sins. Let us remember, however, that moderation must be used, so that we may not be overwhelmed with sadness, there being nothing to which trembling consciences are more prone than to rush into despair. This, too, is one of Satan's artifices. Those whom he sees thus overwhelmed with fear he plunges deeper and deeper into the abyss of sorrow, that they may never again rise. It is true that the fear which ends in humility without relinquishing the hope of pardon cannot be in excess. And yet we must always beware, according to the apostolic injunction, of giving way to extreme dread, as this tends to make us shun God while he is calling us to himself by repentance. Wherefore, the advice of Bernard is good, "Grief for sins is necessary, but must not be perpetual. My advice is to turn back at times from sorrow and the anxious remembrance of your ways, and escape to the plain, to a calm review of the divine mercies. Let us mingle honey with wormwood, that the salubrious bitter may give health when we drink it tempered with a mixture of sweetness: while you think humbly of yourselves, think also of the goodness of the Lord," (Bernard in Cant. Serm. xi.)

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**Behold** (2400) **idou** is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT **idou** is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. **Idou** in the **middle voice** means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The **aorist imperative** is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" In 2Cor 5:17 Paul uses **idou**, to get his reader's attention as he introduces the truth that the one who is now **in Christ** is a qualitatively new person. (see also notes above on "behold") **C H Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration.

Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Earnestness** (4710) **spoude** from **speudo** = move quickly, hasten, make haste) refers to eagerness, earnestness, willingness or zeal. It denotes quick movement or haste accompanying the eagerness, etc, in the interest of a person or cause. Thus **spoude** can refer to swiftness of movement or action and means haste or speed (like our expression "in a hurry"). It can refer to an earnest commitment in discharge of an obligation or experience of a relationship. **Spoude** implies more than mere earnest desire, but includes action as well as desire. Spoude "never takes 20 minutes to do a 10 minute job." (William Hill) **Louw-Nida - Spoudē** means "eagerness to do something, with the implication of readiness to expend energy and effort" **Spoude** was often used in Greek and Roman literature and found on inscriptions in reference to extraordinary commitment to civic and religious responsibilities, which were frequently intertwined, and also of concern for personal moral excellence or optimum devotion to the interests of others. For believers, **spoudē** ("speedy diligence") means quickly obeying what the Lord reveals is His priority. This elevates the better over the good and the more important over the important – with divinely-inspired swiftness.

**Vindication** (627) **apologia** from **apo** = from + **logos** = speech) literally means, "to talk one's self off from". **Apologia** was a technical word used in the Greek law courts and was used of an attorney who talked his client off from a charge preferred against him. In short it refers to a speech given in defense. Although **apologia** may have the idea of a judicial interrogation in which one is called to answer for the manner in which he has exercised his responsibility, the word can also mean an informal explanation or defense of one's position (1Cor 9:3; 2Cor 7:11) and the word would aptly describe giving an answer to the skeptical, abusive or derisive inquiries of ill-disposed neighbors.

**Indignation** (74) **(aganaktesis** from **aganakteo** = to grieve much, be indignant - Mt 20:24, 21:15, 26:8; Mk 10:14, 41, 14:4; Lk 13:14) describes a state of strong opposition and displeasure against someone or something judged to be wrong. The idea is that they expressed a feeling of strong opposition aroused by something which was considered wrong. Only here in the NT. **Liddell-Scott** - properly in physical sense, feel a violent irritation, of the effects of cold on the body, metaphorically, to be displeased, vexed, especially show outward signs of grief. In Medicine - physical pain and irritation, of the irritation caused by teething,

**Indignation** (English definition) = Anger or strong displeasure aroused by something perceived as unjust, wrong, offensive, base, unfair or unworthy. Like a "righteous anger." (Origin - Latin - *indignari*, to regard as unworthy, from *indignus*, unworthy)

**Fear** (5401) **phobos** from the verb **phébomai** = to flee from or to be startled) refers first to flight, to alarm, to fright or to terror (of the shaking type) (cf. Mt 14:26; Lk 21:26; 1Co 2:3). This type of fear is connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It speaks of the terror which seizes one when danger appears.

**Avenging of the wrong** (1557) **ekdikesis** from **ek** = out, from + **dike** = justice; see also **ekdikos**) is literally that which proceeds "out of justice". **Ekdikesis** means to give justice to someone who has been wronged. It means to repay harm with harm on assumption that initial harm was unjustified and that retribution is therefore called for. The word indicates full, complete punishment. **Ekdikesis** was a technical term for administrative justice. **W E Vine** says ekdikesis describes pay back that is based on justice and "not (as often with **human vengeance**) from a sense of injury, or merely out of indignation. The judgments of God are holy and right, and free from any element of self-gratification... There is thus no element of vindictiveness, of "taking revenge,"... in the judgments of God; they are both holy and right

**Demonstrated** (commended) (4921) **(sunistemi/sunistao** from **sún** = together with + **hístemi** = set, place, stand) means literally to set, place or put together. To set in the same place, this literal meaning being found in [Luke 9:32](#) (below). To bring together. When one brings together a person with another person, it is a way of presenting or introducing them. This gives **sunistemi** the meaning of **commend**, which means to recommend as worthy of confidence (the implication being that others adopt a similar attitude) or to present to one's acquaintance for favorable notice. (9/16 NT uses)

**Innocent** (pure) (53) **hagnos** means freedom from defilements or impurities. **Hagnos** means free from admixture of evil, **Hagnos** describes what is morally undefiled and when used ceremonially describes that

which has been so cleansed that it is fit to be brought into the presence of God and used in His service. Although **hagnos** refers primarily to that which is inwardly pure, this purity also affects a person's conduct. Here it indicates the irreproachable conduct of the wife.2 Co. 7:11; 2 Co. 11:2; Phil. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:22; Tit. 2:5; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:2; 1 Jn. 3:3

**Matter (4229) *pragma*** from **prásso** = to do, perform where suffix **-ma** = the result of) describes that which has been done or that which happens (a happening), and thus a deed, a thing, an event, an occurrence or an accomplished fact. In this meaning **pragma** speaks of something in the past.

**2 Corinthians 7:12 So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the offender nor for the sake of the one offended, but that your earnestness on our behalf might be made known to you in the sight of God.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 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** in the sight of God might appear unto you.

**COMMENT** - The KJV has "our care for you" is different from the NAS (and all modern translations) which has "your earnestness for us." Compare NET = "your eagerness on our behalf before God." While it is not unreasonable to see Paul's "severe letter" as a demonstration of his love as a shepherd over the flock at Corinth, most favor the newer translations.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:12 So then, even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did wrong, or on account of the one who was wronged, but to reveal to you your eagerness on our behalf before God.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:12 ρα ε κα γραψα μ ν, ο χ νεκεν το δικ σαντος ο δ νεκεν το δικηθ ντος λλ νεκεν το φανερωθ ναι τ ν σπουδ ν μ ν τ ν π ρ μ ν πρ σ μ σ ν πιον το θεο .

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:12 My purpose, then, was not to write about who did the wrong or who was wronged. I wrote to you so that in the sight of God you could see for yourselves how loyal you are to us.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:12 So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:12 So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong or of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:12 If, then, I also wrote to you -- not for his cause who did wrong, nor for his cause who did suffer wrong, but for our diligence in your behalf being manifested unto you before God --

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:12 So although I wrote unto you, I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:12 So even though I wrote to you, it was not because of the one who did wrong, or because of the one who was wronged, but in order that your diligence for us might be made plain to you in the sight of God.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:12 Therefore, although I wrote to you in reference to the one who did wrong, it was not merely about him, or for the sake of the one who was wronged. But it was that your earnestness on our behalf, as it reflects on you, might be manifested in the presence of God.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:12 Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not do it for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:12 So although I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the one who was wronged, but in order that your zeal for us might be made known to you before God.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:12 So then even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, or on account of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your concern for us might be made plain to you in the sight of God.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:12 So although I wrote a letter to you, it was not for the sake of the offender, nor for the

one offended, but only so that you yourselves should fully realise in the sight of God what concern you have for us.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:12 So, when I wrote to you, I didn't write because of the man who did the wrong or the man who was hurt by it. Rather, I wrote because I wanted you to show your devotion to us in God's sight.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:12 So though I sent you a letter, it was not only because of the man who did the wrong, or because of him to whom the wrong was done, but so that your true care for us might be made clear in the eyes of God.

- **it was not for the sake of the offender** 2Co 2:9 1Co 5:1
- **but that your earnestness on our behalf might be made known to you** 2Co 2:4,17 11:11,28 1Ti 3:5
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This is a difficult verse to interpret.

**So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the offender**([adiko](#)) **nor for the sake of the one offended**([adiko](#)) - Regarding this translation [see the note above](#). NLT = "My purpose, then, was not to write about who did the wrong or who was wronged" AMP "So although I did write to you [as I did], it was not for the sake and because of the one who did [the] wrong, nor on account of the one who suffered [the] wrong."

**William MacDonald** points out the difficulties with being too dogmatic on this passage - There are four major problems in this verse. First, which letter does Paul refer to in this expression, I wrote to you? Second, who is the man who had done the wrong? Third, who is the man who suffered wrong? Finally, should the last part of the verse be translated our care for you, or "your care for us"? The letter could be the one we know as 1 Corinthians, or it could be a subsequent letter which was not preserved for us. The wrongdoer could be the incestuous man of 1 Corinthians 5, or it could be some rebel in the church. If Paul is speaking of the incestuous man, then the injured person was the man's own father. On the other hand, if the wrongdoer was a rebel, then the injured person was Paul himself or some unidentified victim. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Wick Broomall** - Whatever the wrong or whoever the wronged may have been, the apostle's chief concern in writing his letter to them was that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God (ASV; cf. 2Co 5:11; 11:6). Their obedience was Paul's primary concern ( Cf. 2Co 2:9; 7:15; 10:6). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**Ray Stedman** says "they begin to recover a sense of their own identity."

**Homer Kent** - Our knowledge of the details prompting this letter is admittedly meager, and thus we can only suggest possibilities. The view espoused in this commentary sees the offender as the ringleader of opposition against Paul (and perhaps Titus). The one offended was probably Paul, or perhaps Titus, but this is less likely. (The other view identifies the offender as the incestuous man of 1 Corinthians 5, and regards the one offended as the man's aggrieved father.) With this understanding, Paul is regarded as saying that his primary concern was not to secure punishment for the offender or vindication for himself. What he really wanted was for the Corinthians to prove to themselves that their response to spiritual truth and to God's messengers was right. To accede to the directives of the apostle would rectify the situation. True repentance and an altered course of action would bring God's approval, and this in turn would remind the Corinthians of the importance of heeding the instruction of Christ's duly chosen apostles. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

Here is **John MacArthur's** interpretation of this difficult verse - one of the apostle's goals was to strip away their sinful, fleshly attitudes and reveal to the Corinthians their real attitude toward him. Paul led up to his point by first eliminating other potential reasons for writing. That roundabout approach served to heighten the dramatic impact of his words. When he wrote the severe letter, it was not for the sake of the offender. He did not write primarily to condemn the man who had caused him so much grief during his painful visit to Corinth (2 Cor. 2:1). Nor was his main concern for himself as the one offended; he was not seeking personal vengeance. The most important reason Paul wrote the severe letter was that the Corinthians' earnestness on his behalf might be made known to them in the sight of God. **Sin's deceitfulness had caused them to lose sight of their earnestness (eagerness), loyalty, and love for Paul and the truth he preached. They had been so deceived that their outward attitude toward the apostle was inconsistent with how they really felt about him. His letter peeled back the layers of deceit that had encrusted their hearts and made known to them their true feelings for him. It restored their spiritual sight and enabled them to see Paul as the trusted servant of God they had always known him to be.** ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Colin Kruse** - Because of such a positive response on the part of the Corinthians to the 'severe' letter Paul is now able to say to them that his real motive in writing was not simply to get action taken against the 'offender' (not on account of the one who did the wrong), nor was it just to have his own position vis-à-vis the Corinthians clarified and vindicated (nor on account of the one who

suffered the wrong), but rather that the Corinthians themselves, by experiencing such godly grief, might realize just how much Paul really meant to them (in order that your zeal for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God). ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**But that your earnestness (spoude) on our behalf might be made known to you in the sight of God-** NLT = "I wrote to you so that in the sight of God you could see for yourselves how loyal you are to us." AMP "but in order that you might realize before God [that your readiness to accept our authority revealed] how zealously you do care for us."

**THOUGHT** - If you care, you'll confront. People will know that you care for them when you risk being "the bad guy" and saying something that's a little hard, but saying it in love. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. " (Pr 27:6) ([Rich Cathers](#))

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**Offender (91) adikeo** from **adikos** = unjust) means do wrong Col 3:25; the evildoer Rev 22:11. Be in the wrong Acts 25:11. Do wrong to someone, cheat someone Mt 20:13; Ac 7:26; Gal 4:12; 2 Pt 2:13. Injure, harm, damage, spoil Rev 9:4, 10, 19; if he has caused you any loss Philemon 1:18. Note 3 uses of adikeo in Acts 7:24, 26, 27 and two more in Acts 25:10; Acts 25:11.

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### Steve Zeisler - Characteristics of a Corrector

Paul makes two important points. First, his motives are right. When he had to say hard things to them, it was not for his own sake. He didn't have an axe to grind, and he didn't come to get riches, prominence, or ego satisfaction from them. I used to play football, and I recall good and bad coaches. One demanded a lot of the team, insisting we go beyond what we thought we could physically do. We ran until we dropped, practiced till it hurt, and call on reserves we didn't know we had. Sometimes the coach's demands on us succeeded in producing efforts that went beyond our expectations. But he wasn't centered on his own ego. He was demanding, but he wanted to serve his team, to see those in his charge succeed. But other coaches I've known are exactly the opposite. They treat their players like cattle, and if an individual is injured or needs extra help, he is "thrown away" and someone else put in his place because the program exists to promote the coach.

Paul is making that distinction here. He has had to demand hard things of the Corinthians. He has pointed out areas of their lives that they needed to hear about even though they didn't want to, but he didn't do it for his own sake. His motives were pure. That's a very important place to start if we are ever to be Micaiah's ourselves. Remember what Jesus said about logs and splinters in one's eye. Jesus said, first the log needs to be removed from your own eye before you can remove the splinter from another's eye. If we don't deal with our own motives and shortcomings, we shouldn't be in the ministry of shaping up someone else.

Paul alludes to another qualification in saying that the Corinthians are in his heart; he would live or die with them. Whatever happens in this correction process, he is not going to hold himself at a distance. Whatever pain or hardship they have to go through, his shoulder will be under the burden with them. Christian ministry of this sort cannot possibly take place at great distance. When the apostle must come to his church, or when a brother must come to his brother or sister, then he needs to be willing to say, "I know it's going to cost me something if you suffer because you matter so much to me."

To conclude, last week we talked about being yoked to non-Christians and why that's such a bad idea-having an unbreakable, inflexible oneness that dilutes our influence, that makes us live in a way that is less and less of the Lord. The exact opposite point is being made here, isn't it? We're not yoked enough to each other! We're not involved enough with those who are our family-we don't get close enough, speak forcefully enough; we're unwilling to do the courageous thing or we're too hardened to receive godly sorrow. We've taken communion today, and the Bible forbids us to take communion in an unworthy manner. It may very well be that we need someone to help us see our unworthiness. I need someone to come to me and tell me when I'm being arrogant, or when greed has infiltrated me, or I've stopped caring for other people. You need people like that to come to you. So it's good to avoid being unequally yoked with unbelievers. But let's be more yoked to each other! Let's be more willing to say the hard thing when it's required, and expect godly sorrow to have its result, that life should abound.

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**2 Corinthians 7:13 For this reason we have been comforted. And besides our comfort, we rejoiced even much more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.**

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KJV 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.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:13 Therefore we have been encouraged. And in addition to our own encouragement, we rejoiced even more at the joy of Titus, because all of you have refreshed his spirit.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:13 δι το το παρακελ μεθα. π δ τ παρακλ σει μ ν περισσοτ ρως μ λλον χ ρημεν π τ χρ του, τι ναπ παυται τ πνε μα α το π π ντων μ ν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:13 We have been greatly encouraged by this. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was about the way all of you welcomed him and set his mind at ease.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:13 Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:13 By all this we are encouraged. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:13 because of this we have been comforted in your comfort, and more abundantly the more did we rejoice in the joy of Titus, that his spirit hath been refreshed from you all;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:13 Therefore we have been comforted: And in our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit hath been refreshed by you all.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:13 For this reason we have been comforted. In addition to our comfort, we rejoiced even more over the joy Titus had, because his spirit was refreshed by all of you.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:13 Because that was achieved, we have been consoled. Beyond our being encouraged in this manner, we rejoiced enthusiastically to an even greater degree over Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed from contact with all of you.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:13 Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:13 In this we find comfort. In addition to our own consolation, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:13 For this reason we are encouraged. And besides our encouragement, we rejoice even more because of the joy of Titus, since his spirit has been refreshed by all of you.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:13 That is what I have found encouraging. In addition to all this to encourage us, we were made all the more joyful by Titus' joy, now that his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:13 This is what has comforted us. In addition to being comforted, we were especially pleased to see how happy Titus was. All of you had put his mind at ease.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:13 So we have been comforted: and we had the greater joy in our comfort because of the joy of Titus, for his spirit had been made glad by you all.

- **For this reason we have been comforted:** 2Co 2:3 Ro 12:15 1Co 12:26 13:5-7 Php 2:28 1Pe 3:8
- **because his spirit has been refreshed by you all:** 2Co 7:15 Ro 15:32 1Co 16:13 2Ti 1:16 Phm 1:20

## THE JOY OF TITUS

**For this reason we have been comforted (parakaleo)** - What reason? The general reason would be the favorable report from Titus of their favorable response. Specifically Paul's letter had had the desired effect of bringing forth abundant fruit in keeping with repentance. This truth **comforted** Paul. **Comforted** is in the perfect tense indicating Paul began to experience comfort when he was reunited with Titus and the good report he gave regarding the Corinthians and that this comfort was his present state.

**NLT** = We have been greatly encouraged by this. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was about the way all of you welcomed him and set his mind at ease.

**David Guzik** - The experience of Titus in Corinth and his report from there were sure evidence that the Corinthian Christians had a change of mind. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**John MacArthur** adds "The Corinthians' repentance, purity, and renewed loyalty to Paul were reason enough for him to have been comforted." ([2 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Swindoll** writes "Recall the emotional roller coaster we've ridden with Paul over the last two chapters. The ups and downs of

ministry can feel nauseating at times, can't they? Yet at the end of it all, Paul lands in a place of comfort, rejoicing, and refreshment (7:13). What a change from the tension that existed before! Sin, anger, and distrust clouded everything. Without the strong reproof and the wise response to correction, none of this would have been possible. ([Insights on 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

Paul now explains the reason for his joy at the reunion with Titus.

**Paul Apple** summarizes this final section v13-16 - (v13) **Genuine Repentance** Brings Great Comfort and Refreshing Joy Personal Comfort – experienced by the Apostle Paul “For this reason we have been comforted” Vicarious Comfort Evoking Even Greater Joy – based on encouragement to Titus “(v14) **Genuine Repentance** Brings Vindication of Boasting (Renewed Confidence) “For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting before Titus proved to be the truth.” (v15) **Genuine Repentance** Brings An Outpouring of Affection “And his affection abounds all the more toward you, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling.” (v16) **Genuine Repentance** Brings Joy in the Confident Expectation of Future Obedience “I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you.” Quite the blanket statement!

And besides our comfort ([paraklesis](#)), we rejoiced ([chairo](#)) even much more for the joy ([chara](#)) of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed ([anapauo](#)) by you all - The second reason for Paul's comfort and cause of rejoicing was seeing Titus is such **high spirits**." Titus received great hospitality which was a highly esteemed practice in the ancient world (no motels, hotels, etc). It is notable that the Corinthians had not been so gracious to Timothy, otherwise Titus would never have been sent. (cf 1Co 4:17+, 1Co 16:10-11+). **Refreshed** is perfect tense describing Titus' abiding condition (rested). **NET Note** adds "all of you have put his mind at ease." **Joy of Titus** shows the power of positive, encouraging interactions with other believers, in this case the saints at Corinth who were manifesting the beautiful fruits of repentance. Few things can bring more joy to a minister's heart than his sheep living Spirit filled lives of repentance. John writes "I have **no greater joy** than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth." (3 John 1:4) Paul also knew that they favorable reception of Paul's representative Titus was a good barometer of how he himself would be received.

**Rich Cathers** is probably correct suggesting that "Titus was probably expecting to get a fight from the Corinthians over Paul's admonitions. But instead, he was surprised to find them willing to repent. He was encouraged and refreshed by them."

**Brian Bell** on **rejoiced even much more** - You've experienced the joy of seeing someone you love welcomed or well-treated! (your kids welcomed in a new school, auto accident someone helping them, meals brought over for my wife, money for Mical for shopping) And so the Father is blessed when His kids are taken care of... "inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." ([Regret or Repent?](#))

**Homer Kent** on Titus' spirit **refreshed** - It had been a confirmation of the good things Paul had told him about the church in spite of its recent problems. In all likelihood Titus had undertaken this trip to Corinth with considerable trepidation. His feelings may have been similar to those of Timothy on an earlier occasion when Paul had to urge the Corinthians not to intimidate him if he came (1 Cor. 16:10-11). In the case of Titus, the wholesome reaction of the Corinthians to him greatly eased his mind, and brought him a spiritual refreshment which was not just momentary but was still present at the time the epistle was written. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**Bob Utley** -The church treated Titus well. Apparently Paul was worried about this because of the treatment that Timothy had received earlier.

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**Has been refreshed** (373)([anapauo](#)) from **ana** = again, back, or even as intensifying the meaning of the verb + **pauo** = to cease or give rest) means to rest or take a rest in a physical sense or also means to cause to rest, to calm, to give "inner" rest, to comfort or to refresh. (1) to cause someone to gain relief (by resting), refreshment, intermission from toil ( [LXX](#) use = 1Chr 22:18, Mt 11:28, 1Co 16:18, 2Co 7:13, Philemon 1:7, 20) (2) in the middle voice meaning to take bodily rest, as in sleep (Mt 26:45, Mk 14:41, 6:31 [Septuagint - LXX](#) use = Ex 23:12) and (3) to rest upon an object (1Pe 4:14). 12v in NT - Matt. 11:28; Matt. 26:45; Mk. 6:31; Mk. 14:41; Lk. 12:19; 1 Co. 16:18; 2 Co. 7:13; Phlm. 1:7; Phlm. 1:20; 1 Pet. 4:14; Rev. 6:11; Rev. 14:13

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**Wick Broomall** suggests the following outline for the remainder of the chapter. He entitles it...

**Reasons for Paul's High Regard for the Corinthians.** 2Co 7:5-16.

1. 2Co 7:5-7 give Paul's first reason: Their regard for him.
2. 2Co 7:8-12 give Paul's second reason: Their response to his letter.
3. 2Co 7:13-16 Paul gives the third reason: Their reception of Titus. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**2 Corinthians 7:14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting before Titus proved to be the truth.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 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.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if I have boasted to him about anything concerning you, I have not been embarrassed by you, but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus about you has proved true as well.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:14 τι ε τι ατ πρ μν κεκα χημαι, ο κατ σχ νθην, λλ ζ π ντα ν ληθε λαλ σαμεν μν, ο τως κα κα χησις μν π Τ του λ θεια γεν θη.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:14 I had told him how proud I was of you-- and you didn't disappoint me. I have always told you the truth, and now my boasting to Titus has also proved true!

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:14 For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:14 I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:14 because if anything to him in your behalf I have boasted, I was not put to shame; but as all things in truth we did speak to you, so also our boasting before Titus became truth,

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if in anything I have gloried to him on your behalf, I was not put to shame; but as we spake all things to you in truth, so our glorying also which I made before Titus was found to be truth.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if I have made any boast to him about you, I have not been embarrassed; but as I have spoken everything to you in truth, so our boasting to Titus has also turned out to be the truth.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:14 I was not embarrassed about anything I had boasted to him concerning you. But everything we had said in reference to you was true, just as we had boasted accurately in Titus' presence.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:14 For if I have boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame. No, just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting before Titus proved to be the truth.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:14 And if I boasted about you to him in any way, then I have not been made to look foolish; indeed, our boast to Titus has been proved to be as true as anything we said to you.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:14 I didn't have to be ashamed of anything I had said to him when I bragged about you. Since everything we told you was true, our bragging to Titus has also proved to be true.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:14 For I was not put to shame in anything in which I may have made clear to him my pride in you; but as we said nothing to you but what was true, so the good things which I said to Titus about you were seen by him to be true.

- **For if in anything I have boasted to him about you** 2Co 7:4 8:24 9:2-4
- **but as we spoke all things to you in truth:** 2Co 1:18-20
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **BOASTING ABOUT CORINTHIANS WAS NO EMPTY BOAST!**

Paul's boast was not empty, false, or vain, but was validated by the repentant behavior of the Corinthians.

**Kruse** - Paul tells how he is relieved by the good reports also because the confidence he had expressed to Titus about the Corinthians has proved to be justified. ([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

For if in anything I have boasted ([kauchaomai](#)) to him about you, I was not put to shame ([Kataischung](#)) - NLT = " I had told him how proud I was of you-- and you didn't disappoint me." IF introduces a first class conditional statement that is assumed to be true. It was a fact that Paul had **boasted** to Titus about the Corinthians before he sent him to visit them.

**Broomall** - Three thoughts are here: (1) Paul's vulnerability - if I have boasted; (2) his veracity - as we spake all things . . . in truth; (3) his vindication - so our glorying . . . was found to be truth (ASV). On as . . . so, see 1:7. This is the only place in the NT where truth is a predicate noun after ginomai ("to become"). "Our glorying . . . became (cf. Jn 1:14) truth" - as if truth became incarnate before them! ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary - online](#))

**Homer Kent** - "If in anything I have boasted to him about you" implies that Paul had recounted to Titus some of the good points of the Corinthians. Paul was a missionary statesman of sufficient stature to see beyond momentary lapses to the inherent value of these believers. He saw their potential and remembered their successes. Unpleasant incidents, even when they had been directed against him personally, could not blind him to the genuine greatness of this church in which outstanding spiritual victories had occurred. Paul was gratified that the Corinthians had not disappointed him in their treatment of Titus. By the way they had received Titus, they had proved to him that Paul had not exaggerated their virtues. Once again Paul's veracity had been demonstrated, for he had always spoken truly to the Corinthians on his visits to them, and he had also spoken truth about them to others, even when some people might have found it hard to do so. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**but as we spoke all things to you in truth ([aletheia](#)), so also our boasting ([kauchesis](#)) before Titus proved to be the truth -**  
NLT = " I have always told you the truth, and now my boasting to Titus has also proved true!" Everything Paul had boasted about the Corinthians to Titus proved to be true.

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**Boasted** (exult, glory) ([2744](#)) [kauchaomai](#) akin to **aucheo** = boast + **euchomai** = pray to God <> **auchen** = neck which vain persons are apt to carry in proud manner) means to boast over a privilege or possession. The idea is to take pride in something. Uses in Corinthians (a keyword) - 1 Co. 1:29; 1 Co. 1:31; 1 Co. 3:21; 1 Co. 4:7; 2 Co. 5:12; 2 Co. 7:14; 2 Co. 9:2; 2 Co. 10:8; 2 Co. 10:13; 2 Co. 10:15; 2 Co. 10:16; 2 Co. 10:17; 2 Co. 11:12; 2 Co. 11:16; 2 Co. 11:18; 2 Co. 11:30; 2 Co. 12:1; 2 Co. 12:5; 2 Co. 12:6; 2 Co. 12:9

**Put to shame ([2617](#)) [Kataischuno](#)** from **kata** = down but here intensifies meaning of verb **aischuno** = to shame) means primarily to put to shame, to humiliate, to disgrace

**Truth ([225](#)) [aletheia](#)** from **a** = indicates following word has the opposite meaning ~ without + **ianthano** = to be hidden or concealed, to escape notice, cp our English "*latent*" from Latin = to lie hidden) has the literal sense of that which contains nothing hidden. **Aletheia** is that which is not concealed. **Aletheia** is that which that is seen or expressed as it really is.

**Boasting ([2746](#)) [kauchesis](#)** from [kauchaomai](#) = to boast) refers to the act of boasting about something. It expresses the idea of self-congratulation with or without sufficient reason. To boast means to speak of or assert with excessive pride, to express pride in oneself or one's accomplishments and often suggests ostentation or even exaggeration. In the present context **kauchesis** denotes the assertion of a claim upon God on the ground of one's works.

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**2 Corinthians 7:15 His affection abounds all the more toward you, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling.**

KJV 2 Corinthians 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.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affection for you is much greater when he remembers the obedience of you all, how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:15 καὶ τὸ σπλαγχνα αὐτοῦ περισσότερος εἰς τὸν μὲν στίν νομίμην σκοπὸν νοοῦ τὸν πνεύματον, τὸν μὲν φόβον καὶ τὸν μου δέξασθε αὐτὸν.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:15 Now he cares for you more than ever when he remembers the way all of you obeyed him and welcomed him with such fear and deep respect.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:15 and his tender affection is more abundantly toward you, remembering the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye did receive him;

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affection is more abundantly toward you, while he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affection toward you is even greater as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you received him with fear and trembling.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:15 His deepest feelings toward you were all the more evident as he recalled your collective submission, as with quavering trepidation you welcomed him.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his heart goes out to you all the more, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, when you received him with fear and trembling.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:15 His personal affection for you is all the stronger when he remembers how obedient you have all been, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:15 His deepest feelings go out to you even more as he remembers how obedient all of you were, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:15 And his love to you is the more increased by his memory of you all, how you gave way to his authority, and how you took him to your hearts with fear and honour.

- **His affection abounds all the more toward you**, 2Co 6:12 Ge 43:30 1Ki 3:26 Song 5:4 Php 1:8 Col 3:12 1Jn 3:17
- **as he remembers the obedience of you all**: 2Co 2:9 10:5,6 Php 2:12 2Th 3:14
- **how you received him with fear and trembling**: 2Co 7:10,11 Ezr 9:4 10:9 Job 21:6 Ps 2:11 Ps 119:120 Isa 66:2 Ho 13:1 Ac 16:29 Eph 6:5 Php 2:12
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Psalm 2:11 Worship the LORD with **reverence** And rejoice with **trembling**.

Psalm 119:120 **My flesh trembles for fear of You**, And I am afraid of Your judgments.

Isaiah 66:2 "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and **who trembles at My word**.

Philippians 2:12+ So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** (present imperative) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) your salvation with **fear and trembling**;

## CORINTHIAN CHURCH'S RECEPTION OF TITUS

**His affection** ([splagchnon](#)) **abounds** ([perissos](#)) **all the more toward you** - NET = "And his affection for you is much greater when he remembers the obedience of you all." NLT = "Now he cares for you more than ever." Paul assures the Corinthians that Titus' affection for them is now more than before.

As he ([present tense](#)) continually **remembers** ([anamimnesko](#)) the **obedience** ([hypakoe](#)) **of you all**, **how you received** ([dechomai](#)) put the welcome mat out for) **him with fear** ([phobos](#)) **and trembling** ([tromos](#)) - NLT = "when he remembers the way all of you obeyed him and welcomed him with such fear and deep respect." BBE paraphrases **the obedience of you all** = "how you gave way to his authority." The Corinthians' **obedience** is another marker of the genuineness of their repentance and their sincere desire to pursue holiness. **Fear and trembling** is not a cringing position but speaks of the Corinthians manifesting a humble and respectful attitude and reception toward Titus. They received Titus with respect, seeing him as Paul's representative. In the ancient world one

was always to receive a representative with the same honor one would grant the person being represented and this is what the Corinthians did!

**Wiersbe** - It is interesting to read through the Bible and note that God's servants rejoice when God's people are obedient and are burdened when God's people disobey. Moses often felt like giving up because the people were rebellious. Jeremiah wept bitterly over the hardness of Israel. Jesus Himself wept because the Jews were ignorant of the day of their visitation. Paul's ministry was one of tears (Acts 20:19, 31). God's servants are human; they have the treasure "in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7) and know the disappointments and discouragements that life can bring. How important it is for us to "remember them which have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:7), "obey them that have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:17), and "salute [i.e., greet in love] all them that have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:24). ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the NT](#))

**William MacDonald** - Obviously Titus did not know what kind of a reception he would get when he reached southern Greece. Perhaps he had anticipated the worst. But when he did arrive, the Corinthians gave him a cordial welcome, and not only so, they endeared themselves to him all the more by being obedient to the instructions which he carried from the Apostle Paul. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Homer Kent** - Not only had Titus discovered that Paul had not misjudged the good qualities of the Corinthian believers, but he also continued to be emotionally stirred as he remembered their ready response to his ministry. Instead of receiving him with suspicion or hostility, they had been prepared to obey. In fact, they had received him "with fear and trembling." ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

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Two preachers, who for some reason never got along very well, met on the street one day. The one said, "I heard you speak the other night, and recognized that sermon as one you preached fourteen years ago." The other, somewhat chagrined by this in-tended dig, retaliated, "I heard you speak just three weeks ago, and I can't remember a word you said!" There's a lesson which can be drawn from this incident: our lives should be like good sermons, conveying a "message" worth remembering, that we in turn may motivate others to godly living. When your life's course has been run, what will folks recall about you? Will your influence have been good or bad?

I read recently about a woman who, when she was dying, complained, "I'm just afraid that when I'm gone nobody will re-member me." Her devoted husband took steps at once to have a horticulturist develop a flower to be named for her. As lovely as that bloom might be, the "fragrance of remembrance" produced by the beautiful flower of a godly life is much more to be de-sired! It not only blesses others, but its sweet perfume ascends to the very throne of Heaven itself. It's all right to have a flower named for you, but how much better a tribute it is if you are remembered as a devoted Christian — a person who loved the Lord and His Word, and who exemplified the Savior in every action.

For what will you be remembered? How tragic to be a Diotrephes, of whom John wrote: "I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious word" (3 John 10). How much more blessed the memories Paul had concerning Timothy, for in writing to him he said, "I am ... mindful of thy tears" and "call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee ... " (2Ti 1:5).

Is your life "preaching" the kind of a "sermon" which will long be remembered? Or will folks say, "I can't recall a word he 'said'!"

So live that when you come to die even the undertaker will be sorry!—S. C.

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**Fear and trembling** - 5x in 5v - Ps. 55:5; 2 Co. 7:15; Eph. 6:5; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 12:21

**Affection** ([4698](#)) **splagchnon** originally referred to the upper abdominal viscera especially the intestines, which the ancients regarded as the seat of affections and emotions, such as anger and love. This word is always in the plural in the NT. The phrase "I feel it in the pit of my stomach" is a modern parallel. And we all know how that feels! So **splagchnon** refers to that deep, internal caring comparable to the modern expressions of deep feeling such as "broken-hearted" or "gut-wrenching". Figuratively, the inward parts indicating the breast or heart as the seat of emotions and passions. In the NT, of the gentler emotions as compassion, tender affection indicating the mind, soul, the inner man

**Abounds** (greater) ([4053](#)) **perissos** from **peri** - around, all-around, over and above) properly means "all around, more than (abundantly). primarily, "what is above and over, super-added," hence came to denote "what is superior and advantageous," Beyond what is anticipated. Exceeding expectation. Going past the expected limit. Exceeding some number or measure, more than enough, more than is necessary, superadded. Superabundance, extraordinary, profuse, abundant.

**Remember** ([363](#)) (**anamimnesko** from **ana** = again + **mimnesko** = remember so literally recall again is more

forceful than **mimnesko** alone) carries idea of carefully thinking back and reconstructing something in one's mind, not merely remembering. Call to remembrance. Cause to remember. To remind someone of something. In passive voice means to be reminded or to remember. 6v - Mk. 11:21; Mk. 14:72; 1 Co. 4:17; 2 Co. 7:15; 2 Tim. 1:6; Heb. 10:32

**Obedience** (5218) **hupakoe** from **hupó** = under + **akouo** = hear) ([Click](#) study of related verb [hupakouo](#)) literally means "hearing under", that is, listening from a subordinate position in which compliance with what is said is expected and intended.

**Received** (1209) **dechomai** = [middle voice](#) of a primary verb) means to accept with a deliberate and ready reception of what is offered, to receive kindly and so to take to oneself what is presented or brought by another. It means to welcome as a teacher, a friend, or a guest into one's house. The word describes accepting persons with open arms, minds, and hearts, even going beyond normally expected gracious hospitality. The term was often used of welcoming honored guests and meeting their needs with special attention and kindness.

**Trembling** (5156) **tromos** from **trémo** = tremble, gives us our English word "tremor") quaking with fear or quivering often with the implication of fear and/or consternation (Mk 16:8). **Tremor** in the present context expresses profound reverence and respect (1Co 2:3, 2Co 7:15). **Tromos** and **phobos** are also found in the [Septuagint \(LXX\)](#) translation of Psalm 2 which calls for us to "Worship [LXX](#) translates it with douleuo = serve, Hebrew is more literally "serve") **Jehovah** with **reverence** (phobos), and rejoice with **trembling** (tromos). ([Psalm 2:11-note](#)) The Lord seeks such an attitude from those who would worship Him in spirit and in truth, the psalmist writing "Worship the LORD with **reverence** (phobos) and rejoice with **trembling** (tromos). ([Psalm 2:11-note](#))

## 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you.

KJV 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

NET 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice because in everything I am fully confident in you.

BGT 2 Corinthians 7:16 χαρω τινα πιστωθασσαν μην.

NLT 2 Corinthians 7:16 I am very happy now because I have complete confidence in you.

ESV 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

NIV 2 Corinthians 7:16 I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.

YLT 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice, therefore, that in everything I have courage in you.

ASV 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you.

CSB 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice that I have complete confidence in you.

MIT 2 Corinthians 7:16 I am glad to have confidence in you about everything.

NKJ 2 Corinthians 7:16 Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything.

NRS 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

NAB 2 Corinthians 7:16 I rejoice, because I have confidence in you in every respect.

NJB 2 Corinthians 7:16 I am glad that I have every confidence in you.

GWN 2 Corinthians 7:16 I'm pleased that I can be confident about you in every way.

BBE 2 Corinthians 7:16 It gives me great joy to see you answering to my good opinion of you in every way.

- **I rejoice that in everything:** 2Th 3:4 Phm 1:8,21
- [2 Corinthians 7 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Colin Kruse** - Paul concludes this major section of the letter with a great expression of confidence in the congregation. Such an expression of confidence stands in stark contrast to the way Paul addresses the same people in chs. 10–13 (cf. esp. 11:3–4, 19–20), and this is one of the main factors which leads many scholars to see in chs. 10–13 the remains of a subsequent letter of Paul

([Full text of the Tyndale NT Commentary on 2 Corinthians](#))

**I rejoice (chairo) that in everything I (present tense continually) have confidence (tharrheo) in you - NLT** = "I am very happy now because I have complete confidence in you." Titus' report had clearly brought joy to his heart and a renewed convinced that the church at Corinth was "on the right track!" Did they have problems? Of course they did, but what Paul now saw was their willingness to address them from a Scriptural perspective. **Confidence** means Paul felt he was able to depend on them to move forward as a church.

**Homer Kent** - Paul would not need to hesitate in visiting them again. Nor did he have to give up hope of finding at Corinth a hearty response to the collection. He could discuss the matter of the collection in the next major section of the epistle. ([A Heart Opened Wide: Studies in 2 Corinthians](#))

**William MacDonald** - When Paul says he had confidence in the saints in everything, we must not make his words say more than he intended. They certainly do not mean that he considered the Corinthians to be beyond the possibility of sin or failure. But rather they mean that the confidence which he had placed in them, and of which he had boasted to Titus, had not been in vain. They had proved themselves worthy of his trust. It doubtless includes the idea also that since they had taken a proper attitude in reference to the matter discussed in the First Epistle, he feels justified in having full confidence in them. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**David Guzik** asks "Is Paul being sarcastic here? Probably not. He is probably simply trying to encourage the Corinthians, showing them that he is convinced their repentance was genuine. At the end of this chapter, Paul praises the Corinthian Christians and they seem to be in a place of victory. But in the "sorrowful letter" (mentioned in 2 Corinthians 2:1) there was no praise. What was the difference? Their real repentance, reported by Titus and commented on by Paul in this chapter.i. All through this chapter we see how concerned Paul was about his relationship with the Corinthian Christians. This shows that people were just as important to Paul as ministry. He didn't want to do "ministry" at the expense of his relationships with people. ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**John Trapp** - Thus by praising them, he further winneth upon them, whom before he had more sharply handled. Sour and sweet make the best sauce." ([2 Corinthians 7](#))

**Brian Bell** - "I rejoice" – God's servants throughout the bible & still today Rejoice when God's people are obedient & are burdened when God's people disobey. Moses often felt like giving up because the people were rebellious. Jeremiah wept bitterly over the hardness of Israel. Jesus Himself wept because the Jews didn't know the day of their visitation. The writer of Hebrews says: Remember those who rule (spiritually) over you! (Heb 13:7) "Obey those who rule over you!" (Heb 13:17) "Greet all those who rule over you!" (Heb 13:24) Question - How do you best express Joy? {Through music, singing, laughing, prayer, meditation?} - Whatever your method express it to the Father...today! ([Regret or Repent?](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** has some wise words for us all - One of the most difficult things to do is to rebuild a shattered relationship. This Paul tried to do in 2 Corinthians, and especially in chapters 6 and 7. Unfortunately, there are many shattered relationships today—in homes, churches, and ministries—and they can be repaired and strengthened only when people face problems honestly, deal with them biblically and lovingly, and seek to get right with God. As you and I examine our own lives, we must determine to be a part of the answer and not a part of the problem. We must show appreciation, practice separation, and encourage reconciliation if God is to use us to restore broken relationships. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** in another commentary has an important warning - Having now replied to his critics and defended his ministry, and having been assured of the love of the church, Paul moves to a plea for the missionary offering for the poor saints of Judea. It is dangerous to take offerings from Christians who are not right spiritually. We do them harm, and we do the cause of Christ harm. Paul dealt first with the Corinthians' spiritual needs, and then he reminded them of their promise to help in the missionary relief collection. ([Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the NT](#))

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**Have confidence** ([2292](#)) **tharrheo** from **thársos** = boldness) means to display or have courage, an attitude of confidence or firmness of purpose in face of danger or testing. be courageous, have courage, be bold, be of good cheer. "To have certainty in a matter." (BDAG). 6v in the NT - 2 Co. 5:6; 2 Co. 5:8; 2 Co. 7:16; 2 Co. 10:1; 2 Co. 10:2; Heb. 13:6

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#### **Paul Apple - DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:**

- 1) Do we take the initiative to seek reconciliation – whether we judge ourselves to be the offending party or the offender?
- 2) Do we have a condemning, judgmental spirit that seeks to place blame or to exact revenge or do we deeply long for the spiritual growth of the other party and for restored relationships?

- 3) Do we teach our children the difference between just mouthing the words "I'm sorry" (= worldly sorrow) and actually following through with attitudes and actions that demonstrate a changed heart of repentance (= godly sorrow)?
- 4) Do we make our boast in the spiritual maturity and proper responses of those whom we are training in discipleship?

## The Doctrine of Repentance

### Section 4

**Thomas Watson, 1668**

Note that the article below is part 4 of a 4 part series by Watson. Only part 4 is included because in Watson has a discussion related to 2 Corinthians 7. Below is the index for all 4 parts with links to each section and the topics in each section. See also the "[Choice Excerpts](#)" (taken from all 4 Sections) that follow Section 4.

#### Section 1

- Introduction
- Counterfeit Repentance

#### Section 2

- Nature of True Repentance

#### Section 3

- Reasons Enforcing Repentance
- Serious Exhortation to Repentance
- Powerful Motives to Repentance
- Exhortations to Speedy Repentance

#### Section 4

- Trial of our Repentance
- Comfort for the Penitent
- Impediments to Repentance
- Means to Repentance

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### **The TRIAL of Our Repentance, and COMFORT for the Penitent**

#### A. A TRIAL.

If any shall say they have repented, let me desire them to try themselves seriously by those seven fruits or effects of repentance which the apostle lays down in 2 Corinthians 7:11, "See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done."

**1. Earnestness.** The Greek word signifies a solicitous diligence or careful shunning all temptations to sin. The true penitent flies from sin, as Moses did from the serpent.

**2. Eagerness to clear yourselves.** The Greek word is "apology". The sense is this: though we have much care—yet through strength of temptation we may slip into sin. Now in this case, the repenting soul will not let sin lie festering in his conscience but judges himself for his sin. He pours out tears before the Lord. He begs mercy in the name of Christ and never leaves until he has gotten his pardon. Here he is cleared of guilt in his conscience, and is able to make an apology for himself against Satan.

**3. Indignation.** He who repents of sin, his spirit rises against it, as one's blood rises at the sight of him whom he mortally hates. Indignation is a being fretted at the heart with sin. The penitent is vexed with himself. David calls himself a fool and a beast (Ps 73:22). God is never better pleased with us, than when we fall out with ourselves, for sin.

**4. Alarm.** A tender heart is ever a trembling heart. The penitent has felt sin's bitterness. This hornet has stung him and now, having hopes that God is reconciled, he is afraid to come near sin any more. The repenting soul is full of fear. He is afraid to lose God's favor which is better than life. He is afraid he should, for lack of diligence, come short of salvation. He is afraid lest, after his heart has been soft, the waters of repentance should freeze and he should harden in sin again. "Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord" (Proverbs 28:14). A sinner is like the Leviathan who is made without fear (Job 41:33). A repenting person fears and sins not; a graceless person sins and fears not.

**5. Longing.** As sauce sharpens the appetite, so the bitter herbs of repentance sharpen desire. But what does the penitent desire? He desires more power against sin and to be released from it. It is true, he has got loose from Satan—but he goes as a prisoner that has broken out of prison—with a fetter on his leg. He cannot walk with that freedom and swiftness in the ways of God. He desires therefore to have the fetters of sin taken off. He would be freed from corruption. He cries out with Paul: "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24). In short, he desires to be with Christ—as everything desires to be in its center.

**6. Zeal.** Desire and zeal are fitly put together to show that true desire puts forth itself in zealous endeavor. How does the penitent bestir himself in the business of salvation! How does he take the kingdom of heaven by force! (Matt. 11:12) Zeal quickens the pursuit after glory. Zeal, encountering difficulty—is emboldened by opposition and tramples upon danger. Zeal makes a repenting soul persist in godly sorrow against all discouragements and oppositions whatever. Zeal carries a man above himself for God's glory. Paul before conversion, violently opposed the saints (Acts 26:11), and after conversion, he was judged mad for Christ's sake: "Paul, you are beside yourself" (Acts 26:24). But it was zeal, not frenzy. Zeal animates spirit and duty. It causes fervency in religion, which is as fire to the sacrifice (Romans 12:11). As fear is a bridle to sin—so zeal is a spur to duty.

**7. Readiness to see justice done.** A true penitent pursues his sins with a holy malice. He seeks the death of them as Samson was avenged on the Philistines for his two eyes. He uses his sins as the Jews used Christ—he gives them gall and vinegar to drink. He crucifies his lusts (Gal. 5:24). A true child of God seeks to be revenged most of those sins which have dishonored God most. Cranmer, who had with his right hand subscribed the popish articles, was revenged on himself; he put his right hand first into the fire. David defiled his bed by sin; afterwards by repentance he watered his bed with tears. Israel had sinned by idolatry, and afterwards they defiled their idols: "You will defile your silver-plated idols and your gold-plated images. You will throw them away like menstrual cloths, and call them filth!" (Isaiah 30:22).

Mary Magdalene had sinned in her eye by adulterous glances, and now she will be revenged on her eyes. She washes Christ's feet with her tears. She had sinned in her hair. It had entangled her lovers. Now she will be revenged on her hair; she wipes the Lord's feet with it. The Israelite women who had been dressing themselves by the hour and had abused their looking-glasses unto pride, afterwards by way of revenge as well as zeal, offered their looking-glasses to the use and service of God's tabernacle (Exod. 38:8). So those conjurers who used magic arts, when once they repented, brought their books and, by way of revenge, burned them (Acts 19:19).

These are the blessed fruits and effects of repentance, and if we can find these in our souls we have arrived at that repentance which is never to be repented of (2 Cor. 7:10).

#### **A Necessary Caution**

Such as have solemnly repented of their sins, let me speak to them by way of caution. Though repentance is so necessary and excellent, as you have heard—yet take heed that you do not ascribe too much to repentance. The papists are guilty of a double error:

(1) They make repentance a sacrament. Christ never made it so. And who may institute sacraments, but he who can give virtue to them?

(2) The papists make repentance meritorious. They say it merits pardon. This is a gross error. Indeed repentance fits us for mercy. As the plough, when it breaks up the ground, fits it for the seed, so when the heart is broken up by repentance, it is fitted for forgiveness of sin—but it does not merit it. God will not save us without repentance, nor yet for it. I grant, that repenting tears are precious. They are, as Gregory said, "the fat of the sacrifice;" as Basil said, "the medicine of the soul;" and as Bernard said, "the wine of angels." But yet, tears do not merit pardon for sin. Christ's blood alone can merit pardon. We please God by repentance—but we do not merit pardon by it. To trust to our repentance is to make it a savior. Though repentance helps to purge out the filth of sin—yet it is Christ's blood which washes away the guilt of sin. Therefore do not idolize repentance. Do not rest upon this—that your heart has been wounded for sin—but rather that your Savior has been wounded for sin. When you have wept, say, "Lord Jesus, wash my tears in your blood."

#### **B. Comfort for the Repenting Sinner.**

Let me in the next place speak by way of comfort. Christian, has God given you a repenting heart? Know these three things for your everlasting comfort:

### **1. Your sins are pardoned.**

Pardon of sin brings blessedness within it. (Psalm 32:1). Whom God pardons—he crowns. "Who forgives all your iniquities, who crowns you with loving-kindness" (Psalm 103:34). A repenting condition is a pardoned condition. Christ said to that weeping woman, "Your sins, which are many—are forgiven" (Luke 7:47). Pardons are sealed upon soft hearts. O you whose head has been a fountain to weep for sin—Christ's side will be a fountain to wash away sin! (Zech. 13:1). Have you repented? God looks upon you as if you had not offended. He becomes a friend, a father. He will now bring forth the best robe and put it on you. God is pacified towards you and will, with the father of the prodigal, fall upon your neck and kiss you. Sin in scripture is compared to a cloud (Is. 44:22). No sooner is this cloud scattered by repentance, than pardoning love shines forth. Paul, after his repentance, obtained mercy, (1 Tim. 1:16). When a spring of repentance is open in the heart—a spring of mercy is open in heaven!

### **2. God will pass an act of oblivion.**

He so forgives sin as he forgets. "I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34). Have you been penitentially humbled? The Lord will never upbraid you with your former sins. After Peter wept we never read that Christ upbraided him, with his denial of him. God has cast your sins into the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:19). How? Not as cork—but as lead. The Lord will never in a judicial way account for them. When he pardons, God is as a creditor that blots the debt out of his book (Isaiah 43:25). Some ask the question, whether the sins of the godly shall be mentioned at the last day. The Lord said he will not remember them, and he is blotting them out, so if their sins are mentioned, it shall not be to their harm, for the debt-book is crossed out.

### **3. Conscience will now speak peace.**

O the music of a clean conscience! Conscience is turned into a paradise, and there a Christian sweetly solaces himself and plucks the flowers of joy (2 Cor. 1:12). The repenting sinner can go to God with boldness in prayer, and look upon him not as a judge—but as a father. He is "born of God" and is heir to a kingdom (Luke 6:20). He is encircled with promises. He no sooner shakes the tree of the promise, but some fruit falls.

To conclude, the true penitent may look on death with comfort. His life has been a life of tears—and now at death all tears shall be wiped away! Death shall not be a destruction—but a deliverance from jail. Thus you see what great comfort remains for repenting sinners. Luther said that before his conversion he could not endure that bitter word "repentance"—but afterwards he found much sweetness in it.

## **VIII. The Removing of 10 IMPEDIMENTS to Repentance**

Before I lay down the expedients and means conducive to repentance, I shall first remove the impediments. In this great city, when you lack water, you search the cause, whether the pipes are broken or stopped, that the current of water is hindered. Likewise when no water of repentance comes (though we have the conduit pipes of ordinances), see what the cause is. What is the obstruction which hinders these penitential waters from running? There are ten impediments to repentance:

### **1. Men do not understand that they need repentance.**

They thank God that all is well with them, and they know nothing they should repent of: "you say, I am rich, and have need of nothing" (Rev. 3:17). He who does not think that there is any illness in his body, will not take the physic prescribed. This is the mischief sin has done; it has not only made us sick—but senseless. When the Lord bade the people return to him, they answered stubbornly, "Why shall we return?" (Mal. 3:7). So when God bids men repent, they say, "Why should we repent?" They know nothing they have done amiss. There is surely no disease worse, than that which is not felt.

### **2 . People think that it is an easy thing to repent.**

They think that it is but saying a few prayers: a sigh, or a "Lord have mercy", and the work is done. This mistake of the easiness of repentance is a great hindrance to it. That which makes a person bold and adventurous in sin, must needs obstruct repentance. This opinion makes a person bold in sin. The angler can let out his line as far as he will—and then pull it in again. Likewise when a man thinks he can lash out in sin as far as he will—and then pull in by repentance when he pleases—this must needs embolden him in wickedness. But to take away this false conceit of the easiness of repentance, consider:

- (1) A wicked man has a mountain of guilt upon him, and is it easy to rise up under such a weight? Is salvation obtained with a leap? Can a man jump out of sin—into heaven? Can he leap out of the devil's arms—into Abraham's bosom?

(2) If all the power in a sinner is employed against repentance, then repentance is not easy. All the faculties of a natural man join forces with sin: "I have loved strangers, and after them will I go" (Jer. 2:25). A sinner will rather lose Christ and heaven—than his lusts! Death, which parts man and wife, will not part a wicked man and his sins; and is it so easy to repent? The angel rolled away the stone from the sepulcher—but no angel, only God himself, can roll away the stone from the heart!

### **3. Another impediment of repentance, is presuming thoughts of God's mercy.**

Many suck poison from this sweet flower. Christ who came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15) is coincidentally the occasion of many a man's perishing. Though to the elect he is the "bread of life"—yet to the wicked he is "a stone of stumbling" (1 Pet. 2:8). To some his blood is sweet wine—to others the water of Marah. Some are softened by this Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), others are hardened. "Oh," says one, "Christ has died; he has done all for me; therefore I may sit still and do nothing." Thus they suck death from the tree of life; and perish by the Savior.

So I may say of God's mercy. It is coincidentally the cause of many a one's ruin. Because of God's mercy, men presume and think they may go on in sin. Should a king's clemency, make his subjects rebel? The psalmist says, "there is mercy with God, that he may be feared" (Psalm 130:4)—but not that we may live in sin. Can men expect God's mercy—by provoking his justice? God will hardly show those mercy who sin, because mercy abounds. "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means!" (Romans 6:1-2)

### **4. The next impediment of repentance, is a slothful sluggish disposition.**

Repentance is looked upon as a toilsome thing, and such as requires much industry; and men are settled upon their lees and care not to stir. They had rather go sleeping to hell—than weeping to heaven! "A slothful man hides his hand in his bosom" (Proverbs 19:24); he will not be at the labor of smiting on his breast. Many will rather lose heaven, than ply the oar and row there upon the waters of repentance. We cannot have the world without labor and diligence—and would we have that which is more excellent? Sloth is the cancer of the soul: "slothfulness casts into a deep sleep" (Proverbs 19:15).

It was a witty fiction of the poets, that when Mercury had cast Argus into a sleep and with an enchanted wand closed his eyes, he then killed him. When Satan has by his witcheries lulled men asleep in sloth, then he destroys them. Some report that while the crocodile sleeps with its mouth open, the Indian rat gets into its belly and eats up its entrails. So while men sleep in security they are devoured.

### **5. The next impediment of repentance, is the bewitching pleasure of sin.**

"Who had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:12) Sin is a sugared draught, mixed with poison. The sinner thinks there is danger in sin—but there is also delight, and the danger does not terrify him as much as the delight bewitches him. Plato calls love of sin, a great devil. Delighting in sin hardens the heart. In true repentance there must be a grieving for sin—but how can one grieve for that which he loves? He who delights in sin, can hardly pray against it. His heart is so bewitched with sin that he is afraid of leaving it too soon. Samson doted on Delilah's beauty—and her lap proved his grave. When a man rolls iniquity as a sugared lump under his tongue, it infatuates him and is his death at last. Delight in sin is a silken halter. Will it not be bitterness in the latter end (2 Sam:2:26)?

### **6. An opinion that repentance will take away our joy.**

But that is a mistake. It does not kill our joy—but refines our joy, and removes the foul lees of sin. What is all earthly joy? It is but a pleasant insanity. Worldly mirth is but like a pretended laugh. It has sorrow following at the heels. Like the magician's rod, it is instantly turned into a serpent; but divine repentance, like Samson's lion, has a honeycomb in it.

God's kingdom consists as well in joy—as in righteousness (Romans 14:17). None are so truly cheerful as penitent ones. The oil of joy is poured chiefly into a broken heart! "He will give beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning" (Isaiah 61:3). In the fields near Palermo grow a great many reeds in which there is a sweet juice from which sugar is made. Likewise in a penitent heart, which is the bruised reed, grow the sugared joys of God's Spirit. God turns the water of tears into the juice of the grape—which exhilarates and makes glad the heart. Who should rejoice if not the repenting soul? He is heir to all the promises—and is not that matter for joy? God dwells in a contrite heart—and must there not needs be joy there? "I live with those whose spirits are contrite and humble" (Isaiah 57:15). Repentance does not take away a Christian's music—but raises it a note higher and makes it sweeter.

### **7. Another obstacle to repentance, is despondency of mind.**

"It is a vain thing for me," says the sinner, "to set upon repentance; my sins are of that magnitude that there is no hope for me." "Return now everyone from his evil way . . . And they said, There is no hope" (Jer. 18:11,12). Our sins are mountains—and how shall these ever be cast into the sea? Where unbelief represents sin in its bloody colors, and God in his judge's robes—the soul would

sooner fly from him than to him. This is dangerous. Our sins need mercy—but despair rejects mercy. It throws the cordial of Christ's blood on the ground. Judas was not damned only for his treason and murder—but it was his distrust of God's mercy that destroyed him. Why should we entertain such hard thoughts of God? He has affections of love to repenting sinners (Joel 2:13). Mercy rejoices over justice. God's anger is not so hot—but mercy can cool it; nor so sharp—but mercy can sweeten it. God counts his mercy—his glory (Exod. 33:18,19).

We have some drops of mercy ourselves—but God is "the Father of mercies" (2 Cor. 1:3), who begets all the mercies that are in us. He is the God of tenderness and compassion. No sooner do we mourn—than God's heart melts. No sooner do our tears fall—than God's relentings kindle (Hos. 11:8). Do not say then, that there is no hope. Disband the army of your sins, and God will sound a retreat to his judgments. Remember, great sins have been swallowed up in the sea of God's infinite compassions. Manasseh made the streets run with blood—yet when his head was a fountain of tears, God grew merciful.

#### **8. The next impediment of repentance, is hope of sinning with impunity.**

Men flatter themselves in sin, and think that God, having spared them all this while, never intends to punish them. Because the judgment is put off, they think therefore, "surely there will be no judgment". "The wicked say to themselves, God has forgotten; He hides His face and will never see." (Psalm 10:11). The Lord indeed is longsuffering towards sinners and would by his patience allure them to repentance—but here is their wretchedness; because he forbears to punish—they forbear to repent. Know, that the lease of patience will soon run out. There is a time when God will say, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). A creditor may forbear his debtor—but forbearance does not excuse the payment. God takes notice how long the hour-glass of his patience has been running: I gave her time to repent, but she would not turn away from her immorality" (Rev. 2:21). Jezebel added impenitence to her immorality, and what followed? "So I will cast her on a bed of suffering" (Rev. 2:22), not a bed of pleasure—but a bed of languishing where she will consume away in her iniquity. The longer God's arrow is drawing, the deeper it will wound! Sins against God's patience will make a man's hell so much the hotter.

#### **9. The next impediment of repentance, is fear of reproach.**

"If I repent—I will expose myself to men's scorns." The heathen could say, "when you apply yourself to the study of wisdom, prepare for sarcasms and reproaches." But consider well—who they are, who reproach you. They are such as are ignorant of God and spiritually insane. And are you troubled to have them reproach you, who are insane? Who minds a madman laughing at him? What do the wicked reproach you for? Is it because you repent? You are doing your duty. Bind their reproaches as a crown about your head. It is better that men should reproach you for repenting—than that God should damn you for not repenting! If you cannot bear a reproach for true religion, never call yourself a Christian. Luther said, "a Christian is a crucified one." Suffering is a saint's badge. And alas, what are reproaches? They are but chips off the cross, which are rather to be despised than laid to heart!

#### **10. The last impediment of repentance, is immoderate love of the world.**

No wonder Ezekiel's hearer's were hardened into rebellion—when their hearts went after covetousness (Ezek. 33:31). The world so engrosses men's time and bewitches their affections that they cannot repent. They had rather put gold in their bag—than tears in God's bottle! Many scarcely ever give heed to repentance; they are more for the plough and breaking of clods—than breaking up the fallow ground of their hearts. The thorns choke the Word. We read of those who were invited to Christ's supper who put him off with worldly excuses. "But they all began making excuses. One said he had just bought a field and wanted to inspect it, so he asked to be excused. Another said he had just bought five pair of oxen and wanted to try them out. Another had just been married, so he said he couldn't come." (Luke 14:18-20).

The farm and the shop so take up people's time, that they have no leisure for their souls. Their golden weights hinder their silver tears. There is an herb in the country of Sardinia, like balm, which if they eat much of, will make them die laughing. Such an herb (or rather, weed) is the world, if men eat too immoderately of it—instead of dying repenting, they will die laughing.

These are the obstructions to repentance which must be removed so that the current may be clearer. In the last place I shall prescribe some rules or means conducive to repentance.

### **IX. MEANS for Repentance**

#### **I. The first means to repentance, is SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.**

The first means conducive to repentance, is serious consideration: "I thought on my ways—and turned my feet unto your testimonies" (Psalm 119:59). The prodigal, when he came to himself, seriously considered his riotous luxuries, and then he repented. Peter, when he thought of Christ's words, wept. There are certain things which, if they were well considered, would be a means to make us break off a course of sinning.

**A. Firstly, consider seriously what SIN is, and sure enough there is enough evil in it to make us repent.** There are in sin these twenty evils:

**(1) Sin is a parting from God.** (Jer. 2:5). God is the supreme good, and our blessedness lies in union with him. But sin, like a strong bias, draws away the heart from God. The sinner parts from God. He bids farewell to Christ and mercy. Every step forward in sin, is a step backward from God: "they have forsaken the Lord, they have gone away backward" (Isaiah 1:4). The further one goes from the sun, the nearer he approaches to darkness. The further the soul goes from God, the nearer it approaches to misery.

**(2) Sin is a walking contrary to God.** (Lev. 26:27). The same word in the Hebrew signifies both to commit sin and to rebel. Sin is God's opposite. If God is of one mind, sin will be of another. Sin strikes at God's very being. If sin could help it, God would no longer be God, "Rid us of the Holy One of Israel!" (Isaiah 30:11). What a horrible thing is this, for a piece of proud dust to rise up in defiance against its Maker!

**(3) Sin is an injury to God.** It violates his laws. Here is grievous high treason! What greater injury can be offered to a prince—than to trample upon his royal edicts? A sinner offers contempt to the statute laws of heaven: "they cast your law behind their backs" (Neh. 9:26), as if they scorned to look upon it. Sin robs God of his due. You injure a man when you do not give him his due. The soul belongs to God. He lays a double claim to it: it is his by creation and by purchase. Now sin steals the soul from God and gives the devil that which rightly belongs to God.

**(4) Sin is profound ignorance.** Some say that all sin is founded in ignorance. If men knew God in his purity and justice—they would not dare go on in a course of sinning: "they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, says the Lord" (Jer. 9:3). Therefore ignorance and lust are joined together "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance" (1 Pet. 1:14). Ignorance is the womb of lust. Vapors arise most in the night. The black vapors of sin arise most in a dark ignorant soul. Satan casts a mist before a sinner—so that he does not see the flaming sword of God's wrath. The eagle first rolls himself in the sand and then flies at the stag, and by fluttering its wings, so bedusts the stag's eyes that it cannot see—and then it strikes it with its talons! So Satan, that eagle or prince of the air, first blinds men with ignorance and then wounds them with his darts of temptation. Is sin ignorance? There is great cause to repent of ignorance.

**(5) Sin is hazardous.** In every transgression a man runs an apparent hazard of his soul. He treads upon the brink of the bottomless pit! Foolish sinner, you never commit a sin, but you do that which may undo your soul forever. He who drinks poison, it is a wonder if it does not cost him his life. One taste of the forbidden tree lost Adam paradise. One sin of the angels lost them heaven. One sin of Saul lost him his kingdom. The next sin you commit—God may clap you up prisoner among the damned! You who gallop on in sin—it is a question whether God will spare your life a day longer or give you a heart to repent.

**(6) Sin besmears with filth.** In James 1:21 it is called "filthiness". The Greek word signifies the putrid exudate of ulcers. Sin is called an abomination (Deut. 7:25), indeed, in the plural, abominations (Dent. 20:18). This filthiness in sin is inward. A spot on the face may easily be wiped off—but to have the liver and lungs cancered, is far worse. Such a pollution is sin, it has gotten into mind and conscience (Titus 1:15). It is compared to a menstrual cloth (Isaiah 30:22), the most unclean thing under the law. A sinner's heart is like a field spread with dung. Some think sin is an ornament; it is rather an excrement. Sin so besmears a person with filth—that God cannot abide the sight of him: "My soul loathed them!" (Zech. 11:8).

**(7) In sin there is odious ingratitude.** God has fed you, O sinner, with angels' food. He has crowned you with a variety of mercies—yet do you go on in sin? As David said of Nabal: "in vain have I kept this man's sheep" (1 Sam. 25:21). Likewise in vain has God done so much for the sinner. All God's mercies may upbraid, yes, accuse, the ungrateful person. God may say, I gave you wit, health, riches, and you have employed all these against me: "I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, and lavished on her the silver and gold—which they used for Baal" (Hos. 2:8). I sent in provisions and they served their idols with them. The snake in the fable which was frozen, stung him who brought it to the fire and gave it warmth. Likewise, a sinner goes about to sting God with his own mercies. "Is this your kindness to your friend?" (2 Sam. 16:17). Did God give you life—to sin? Did he give you wages—to serve the devil?

**(8) Sin is a debasing thing.** It degrades a person of his honor: "I will make your grave; for you are vile" (Nah. 1:14). This was spoken of a king. He was not vile by birth—but by sin. Sin blots our name, and taints our blood. Nothing so changes a man's glory into shame—as sin. It is said of Naaman, "He was a great man and honorable—but he was a leper" (2 Kings 5:1). Let a man be ever so great with worldly pomp—yet if he is wicked, he is a leper in God's eye. To boast of sin is to boast of that which is our infamy; as if a prisoner

should boast of his fitters—or be proud of his halter.

**(9) Sin is infinite loss.** Never did any thrive by grazing in sin's pasture. What does one lose? He loses God; he loses his peace; he loses his soul. The soul is a divine spark lighted from heaven; it is the glory of creation. And what can countervail this loss (Matt. 16:26)? If the soul is gone, the treasure is gone; therefore in sin there is infinite loss. Sin is such a trade, that whoever follows it—is sure to be ruined.

**(10) Sin is a burden.** "My iniquities have gone over my head—as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Psalm 38:4). The sinner goes with his weights and fitters on him. The burden of sin is always worst—when it is least felt. Sin is a burden wherever it comes. Sin burdens God: "I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves" (Amos 2:13). Sin burdens the soul. What a weight did the apostate Spira feel! How was the conscience of Judas burdened, so much so that he hanged himself to quiet his conscience! Those who know what sin is, will repent that they carry such a burden.

**(11) Sin is a debt.** It is compared to a debt of millions (Matt. 18:24). Of all the debts we owe, our sins are the worst. With other debts a sinner may flee to foreign countries—but with sin he cannot. "Where shall I flee from your presence?" (Psalm 139:7). God knows where to find out all his debtors. Death frees a man from other debts—but it will not free him from his debt of sin. It is not the death of the debtor, but of the creditor—which discharges this debt.

**(12) There is deceitfulness in sin.** "The deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). "The wicked works a deceitful work" (Proverbs 11:18). Sin is a mere cheat. While it pretends to please us, it beguiles us! Sin does as Jael did. First she brought the milk and butter to Sisera, then she pounded the tent peg through his head, so that he died (Judg. 5:26). Sin first courts, and then kills. It is first a fox, and then a lion. Whoever sin betrays—it kills. Those locusts in Revelation are perfect emblems of sin: "They had gold crowns on their heads . . . They had tails that stung like scorpions, with power to torture people" (Rev. 9:7-10). Sin is like the usurer who feeds a man with money and then makes him mortgage his land. Sin feeds the sinner with delightful objects and then makes him mortgage his soul. Judas pleased himself with the thirty pieces of silver—but they proved deceitful riches. Ask him now, how he likes his bargain.

**(13) Sin is a spiritual sickness.** One man is sick with pride, another with lust, another with malice. It is with a sinner as it is with a sick patient: his palate is distempered, and the sweetest things taste bitter to him. So the Word of God, which is sweeter than the honeycomb, tastes bitter to a sinner: "They put sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5:20). And if sin be a disease it is not to be nourished—but rather cured by repentance.

**(14) Sin is a bondage.** It binds a man to the devil as his slave. Of all conditions, servitude is the worst. Every man is held with the cords of his own sin. "I was held before conversion," said Augustine, "not with an iron chain—but with the obstinacy of my will." Sin is imperious and tyrannical. It is called a law (Romans 8:2) because it has such a binding power over a man. The sinner must do as sin will have him. He does not so much enjoy his lusts—as serve them, and he will have work enough to do to gratify them all. "I have seen princes going on foot" (Eccles. 10:7); the soul, that princely thing, which once was crowned with knowledge and holiness—is now made a lackey to sin and runs the devil's errand!

**(15) Sin has a spreading malignity in it.** It does hurt not only to a man's self—but to others. One man's sin may occasion many to sin. One man may help to defile many. A person who has the plague, going into company, does not know how many will be infected with the plague by him. You who are guilty of open sins, know not how many have been infected by you. There may be many, for anything you know, now in hell, crying out that they would never have come there—if it had not been for your bad example!

**(16) Sin is a vexatious thing.** It brings trouble with it. The curse which God laid upon the woman is most truly laid upon every sinner: "in sorrow you shall bring forth" (Gen. 3:16). A man vexes his thoughts with plotting sin, and when sin has conceived, in sorrow he brings forth. Like one who takes a great deal of pain to open a floodgate, when he has opened it, the flood comes in upon him and drowns him! So a man beats his brains to contrive sin, and then it vexes his conscience, brings trouble to his estate, rots the wall and timber of his house (Zech. 5:4).

**(17) Sin is a foolish thing.** What greater foolishness is there, than to gratify an enemy! Sin gratifies Satan. When lust or anger burn in the soul—Satan warms himself at the fire! Men's sins feast the devil. Samson was called out to amuse the Philistines (Judg. 16:25). Likewise the sinner amuses the devil! Nothing more satisfies him—than to see men sin. How he laughs to see them hazarding their souls for the world, as if one would trade diamonds for straws; or would fish for gudgeons with golden hooks! Every wicked man shall be indicted as a fool, at the day of judgment. "But God said to him—You fool! This very night your soul will be demanded from

you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" Luke 12:20

**(18) There is cruelty in every sin.** With every sin you commit—you give a stab to your soul. While you are kind to sin—you are cruel to yourself, like the lunatic man in the Gospel who would cry out and cut himself with stones (Mark 5:5). The sinner is like the jailer—who drew a sword to kill himself (Acts 16:27). The soul may cry out, "I am being murdered!" Naturalists say the hawk chooses to drink blood, rather than water. So sin drinks the blood of souls.

**(19) Sin is a spiritual death.** "Dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). The life of sin—is the death of the soul. A dead man has no sense. So an unregenerate person has no sense of God. "Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more." (Eph. 4:19). Try to persuade him to mind his salvation. To what purpose do you make orations to a dead man? Go to reprove him for vice? To what purpose do you strike a dead man?

He who is dead has no taste. Set a banquet before him, and he does not relish it. Likewise a sinner tastes no sweetness in Christ, or in precious Scripture promises. They are but as cordials in a dead man's mouth!

The dead putrefy; and if Martha said of Lazarus, "by now the smell will be terrible because he has been dead for four days" (John 11:39). How much more may we say of a wicked man, who has been dead in sin for thirty or forty years, "by now the smell will be terrible!"

**(20) Sin without repentance, will bring to final damnation.** As the rose perishes by the canker which breed in itself—so do men perish by the corruptions which breed in their souls. What was once said to the Grecians of the Trojan horse, "This engine is made to be the destruction of your city!" the same may be said to every impenitent person, "This engine of sin will be the destruction of your soul!" Sin's last scene is always tragic. Diagoras Florentinus would drink poison in a frolic—but it cost him his life. Men drink the poison of sin in a merriment—but it costs them their souls! "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). What Solomon said of wine may also be said of sin: at first "it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly. In the end it bites like a poisonous serpent; it stings like a viper!" (Proverbs 23:31-32). Christ tell us of the worm and the fire (Mark 9:48).

Sin is like oil, and God's wrath is like fire. As long as the damned continue sinning, so the fire will continue scorching! "Who of us can dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14). "They cursed the God of heaven for their pains and sores. But they refused to repent of all their evil deeds!" (Revelation 16:11)

But men question the truth of this and are like impious Devonax who, being threatened with hell for his villainies, mocked at it and said, "I will believe there is a hell when I come there, and not before!" We cannot make hell enter into men—until they enter into hell.

Thus we have seen the deadly evil in sin which, seriously considered, may make us repent and turn to God. If, for all this, men will persist in sin and are resolved upon a voyage to hell—who can hinder their damnation? They have been told what a soul-damning rock sin is—but if they will voluntarily run upon it and damn themselves—their blood is upon their own head!

**B. The second serious consideration to work repentance, is to consider the MERCIES of God** A stone is soonest broken upon a soft pillow, and a heart of stone is soonest broken upon the soft pillow of God's mercies. "The goodness of God leads you to repentance" (Romans 2:4). The clemency of a prince sooner causes relenting in a malefactor. While God has been storming others by his judgments—he has been wooing you by his mercies.

(1) What preventative mercies have we had? What troubles have been prevented, what fears blown over? When our foot has been slipping, God's mercy has held us up! (Psalm 94:18). His mercy has always been a screen between us and danger. When enemies like lions have risen up against us to devour us—free grace has snatched us out of the mouth of these lions! In the deepest waves the arm of mercy has upheld us—and has kept our head above water. And will not all of God's preventative mercies lead us to repentance?

(2) What positive mercies have we had!

Firstly, in supplying mercy. God has been a bountiful benefactor, "the God who fed me all my life long unto this day" (Gen. 48:15). What man will spread a table for his enemy? We have been enemies—yet God has fed us! He has given us the horn of oil. He has made the honeycomb of mercy drop on us. God has been as kind to us—as if we had been his best servants. And will not this supplying mercy lead us to repentance?

Secondly, in delivering mercy. When we have been at the gates of the grave, God has miraculously preserved our lives. He has turned the shadow of death into morning, and has put a song of deliverance into our mouth.

And will not delivering mercy lead us to repentance?

The Lord has labored to break our hearts with his mercies. In Judges, chapter 2, we read that when the angel had preached a sermon of mercy, "the people wept loudly." If anything will move tears, it should be the mercy of God. He is an obstinate sinner indeed—whom these great cable-ropes of God's mercy will not draw to repentance!

**C. The third serious consideration to work repentance, is to consider God's AFFLICTIVE providences.** God has sent us in recent years to the school of affliction. He has twisted his judgments together. He has made good upon us, those two threatenings, "I will be to Ephraim as a moth" (Hos. 5:12). Has not God been so to England in the decay of trading? And "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion" (Hos. 5:14) has he not been so to England in the devouring plague? All this while God waited for our repentance. But we went on in sin: "I hearkened and heard—but no man repented of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" (Jer. 8:6).

And of late, God has been whipping us with a fiery rod in those tremendous flames of the great fire of London—which is emblematic of the great conflagration at the last day when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Pet. 3:10). When Joab's grain was on fire—then he went running to Absalom (2 Sam. 14:31). God has set our houses on fire—that we may run to him in repentance. "The Lord's voice cries unto the city: "Hear the rod—and him who has appointed it!" (Mic. 6:9). This is the language of the rod—that we should humble ourselves under God's mighty hand and "break off our sins by righteousness" (Dan. 4:27). Manasseh's affliction ushered in repentance (2 Chron. 33:12).

God uses affliction, as the proper medicine for carnal security. "Their mother has played the harlot" (Hos. 2:5), by idolatry. What course now will God take with her? "Therefore I will hedge up your way with thorns" (Hos. 2:6). This is God's method, to set a thorn-hedge of affliction in the way. Thus to a proud man—contempt is a thorn. To a lustful man—sickness is a thorn, both to stop him in his sin and to goad him forward in repentance. The Lord teaches his people as Gideon did the men of Succoth: "Gideon taught them a lesson, punishing them with thorns and briers from the wilderness" (Judg. 8:16). Here was a sharp lesson. Likewise God has of late been teaching us humiliation, by thorny providences. He has torn our golden fleece from us; he has brought our houses low—that he might bring our hearts low. When shall we dissolve into tears—if not now?

God's judgments are so proper a means to work repentance that the Lord wonders at it, and makes it his complaint that his severity did not break men off from their sins: "I kept the rain from falling when you needed it the most, ruining all your crops." (Amos 4:7). "I struck your farms and vineyards with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured all your fig and olive trees." (Amos 4:9). "I sent plagues against you like the plagues I sent against Egypt long ago. I killed your young men in war and slaughtered all your horses. The stench of death filled the air!" (Amos 4:10). But still this is the theme of God's complaint, "Yet you have not returned to me!"

The Lord proceeds gradually in his judgments. First he sends a lesser trial—and if that will not do, then a greater one. He sends upon one a gentle illness to begin with—and afterwards a burning fever. He sends upon another a loss at sea—then the loss of a child—then a loss of a husband. Thus by degrees he tries to bring men to repentance.

Sometimes God makes his judgments go in circuit—from family to family. The cup of affliction has gone round the nation; all have tasted it. And if we repent not now, we stand in contempt of God, and by implication we bid God do his worst! Such an epitome of wickedness, will hardly be pardoned. "The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you to weep and mourn. He told you to shave your heads in sorrow for your sins and to wear clothes of sackcloth to show your remorse. But instead, you dance and play; you feast on meat, and drink wine. 'Let's eat, drink, and be merry,' you say. The Lord Almighty has revealed to me that this sin will never be forgiven you until the day you die! That is the judgment of the Lord, the Lord Almighty!" (Isaiah 22:12-14). That is, this sin shall not be expiated by sacrifice.

If the Romans severely punished a young man who in a time of public calamity was seen sporting—of how much sorcer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who strengthen themselves in wickedness and laugh in the very face of God's judgments! The heathen mariners in a storm repented (Jon 1:14). Not to repent now and throw our sins overboard is to be worse than heathens.

**D. The fourth serious consideration to work repentance, is to consider how much we shall have to answer for at last—if we do not repent.** How many prayers, counsels, and admonitions will be put upon the account book. Every sermon will come in as an indictment. As for such as have truly repented, Christ will answer for them. His blood will wash away their sins. The mantle of free grace will cover them. "In those days, search will be made for Israel's guilt—but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah—but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare" (Jer. 50:20). Those who have judged themselves in the lower court of conscience shall be acquitted in the High Court of heaven. But if we do not repent—our sins must be all accounted for at the last day, and we must answer for them in our own persons, with no counsel allowed to plead for us.

O impenitent sinner, think with yourself now, how you will be able to look your infallible Judge in the face! You have a damned cause to plead and will be sure to be damned on the day of judgment! "What could I do when God stands up to judge? How should I answer Him when He calls me to account?" (Job 31:14). Therefore, either repent now, or else provide your answers and see what

defense you can make for yourselves when you come before God's dread tribunal. When he calls you to account—how will you answer him!

## **II. The second means to repentance, is a PRUDENT COMPARISON.**

Compare penitent and impenitent conditions together—and see the difference. Spread them before your eyes and by the light of the Word—see the impenitent condition as most deplorable—and the penitent as most comfortable. How sad was it with the prodigal before he returned to his father! He had spent all; he had sinned himself into beggary, and had nothing left but a few husks! He was fellow inhabitant with the swine! But when he came home to his father, nothing was thought too good for him. The robe was brought forth to cover him, the ring to adorn him, and the fatted calf to feast him. If the sinner continues in his impenitency, then farewell Christ and mercy and heaven! But if he repents, then presently he has a heaven within him. Then Christ is his, then all is peace. He may sing a song to his soul and say, "soul, you have enough stored away for years to come. Eat, drink, and be merry!" (Luke 12:19).

Upon our turning to God, we have more restored to us in Christ—than ever was lost in Adam. God says to the repenting soul, "I will clothe you with the robe of righteousness; I will enrich you with the jewels and graces of my Spirit. I will bestow my love upon you! I will give you a kingdom! Son, all I have is yours!"

O my friends, do but compare your estate before repentance and after repentance together. Before your repenting, there were nothing but clouds and storms to be seen—clouds in God's face and storms in conscience. But after repenting how is the weather altered! What sunshine above! What serene calmness within! A Christian's soul is like the hill Olympus—all light and clear, and no winds blowing!

**III. The third means conducive to repentance, is a SETTLED DETERMINATION to leave sin** Not a faint wish—but a resolved vow. "I have sworn that I will keep your righteous judgments" (Psalm 119:106). "All the delights and artifices of sin, shall not make me break my vow!" There must be no hesitation, no consulting with flesh and blood, "Had I best leave my sin—or not?" But as Ephraim, "What have I to do any more with idols!" (Hos:14:8). I will be deceived no more by my sins! I will no longer be fooled by Satan! This day I will put a bill of divorce into the hands of my lusts! Until we come to this settled resolution, sin will gain ground of us—and we shall never be able to shake off this viper! It is no wonder that he who is not resolved to be an enemy of sin—is conquered by it.

This resolution must be built upon the strength of Christ more than our own. It must be a humble resolution. As David, when he went against Goliath put off his presumptuous self-confidence, as well as his armor, "I come to you in the name of the Lord" (1 Sam. 17:45) so we must go out against our Goliath lusts—in the strength of Christ! Being conscious of our own inability to leave sin, let us get Christ to be bound with us, and engage his strength for the mortifying of corruption!

**IV. The fourth means conducive to repentance, is earnest PRAYER.** The heathens laid one of their hands on the plough—and the other they lifted up to Ceres, the goddess of corn. So when we have used the means, let us look up to God for a blessing. Pray to him for a repenting heart: "You, Lord, who bid me repent—give me grace to repent". Pray that our hearts may be holy stills, dropping tears. Beg of Christ to give to us such a look of love as he did to Peter, which made him go out and weep bitterly. Implore the help of God's Spirit. It is the Spirit's smiting on the rock of our hearts—which makes the waters gush out! "He causes his wind to blow—and the waters to flow" (Psalm 147:18). When the wind of God's Spirit blows—then the water of tears will flow.

There is good reason we should go to God for repentance:

(1) Because repentance is God's gift: "God has granted even the Gentiles, repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18). The Arminians hold that it is in our power to repent. True—we can harden our hearts—but we cannot soften them. This crown of freewill has fallen from our head! Nay, there is in us not only impotency—but obstinacy! (Acts 7:51). Therefore beg of God a repentant spirit. He alone can make the stony to heart bleed! His is a word of creative power.

(2) We must have recourse to God for blessing because he has promised to bestow it. "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:25-26). I will soften your adamant hearts—in my Son's blood! Show God his hand and seal.

Here is another gracious promise: "They shall return unto me with their whole heart" (Jer. 24:7). Turn this promise into a prayer: "Lord, give me grace to return unto you with my whole heart!"

**V. The fifth means conducive to repentance, is endeavor after clearer discoveries of GOD.** "I had heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes! Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes!" (Job 42:5 6). Job, having surveyed God's glory and purity—as a humble penitent, he abhorred himself. By looking into the clear looking-glass of God's holiness—we see our own blemishes and so learn to bewail them.

**VI. Lastly, we should labor for FAITH.** But what is faith to repentance? Faith breeds union with Christ, and there can be no separation from sin, until there is union with Christ. The eye of faith looks on God's mercy—and that thaws the frozen heart! Faith carries us to Christ's blood, and that blood mollifies the hard heart! Faith persuades of the love of God, and that love sets us a-weeping!

Thus I have laid down the means or helps to repentance. What remains now—but that we set upon the work. And let us be in earnest—not as actors, but as warriors. I will conclude all, with the words of the psalmist: "He who goes out weeping—will return with songs of joy!" (Psalm 126:6).

## The Doctrine of Repentance By Thomas Watson, 1668

### CHOICE EXCERPTS

If any ingredient is left out

"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luke 13:5

Repentance is a grace of God's Spirit, whereby a sinner is inwardly humbled and outwardly reformed.

Repentance is a spiritual medicine made up of six special ingredients:

1. Sight of sin
2. Sorrow for sin
3. Confession of sin
4. Shame for sin
5. Hatred for sin
6. Turning from sin

If any ingredient is left out, it loses its virtue.

"I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds." Acts 26:20

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When we are lepers in our own eyes!

"Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices!"  
Ezekiel 36:31

A true penitent is a sin-loather. If a man loathes that which makes his stomach sick, much more will he loathe that which makes his soul sick! It is greater to loathe sin—than to leave it. The nauseating and loathing of sin, argues a detestation of it.

Christ is never loved—until sin is loathed.

Heaven is never longed for—until sin is loathed.

When the soul sees its filthiness, he cries out, "Lord, when shall I be freed from this body of death! When shall I put off these filthy garments of sin—and be arrayed in the robe of Your perfect righteousness! Let all my self-love be turned into self-loathing!"

We are never more precious in God's eyes—than when we are lepers in our own eyes!

The more bitterness we taste in sin—the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ!

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The damned in hell would be most penitent

"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luke 13:5

There are several counterfeits of repentance.

A man has gone on long in sin. At last God arrests him, shows him what desperate hazard he has run —and he is filled with anguish! But after a while, the tempest of conscience is blown over, and he is quiet. Then he concludes that he is a true penitent because he has felt some bitterness in sin.

Do not be deceived! This is not true repentance! Both Ahab and Judas had great trouble of mind. It is one thing to be a terrified sinner—and another to be a repenting sinner. Sense of guilt is enough to breed terror in the conscience. Only infusion of divine grace, breeds true repentance. If pain and trouble were sufficient to repentance—then the damned in hell would be most penitent, for they are most in anguish.

"Men gnawed their tongues in agony, and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done!" Revelation 16:10-11

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A voyage to hell

"Who of us can dwell with everlasting burnings!"

Isaiah 33:14

Sin is like oil, and God's wrath is like fire. As long as the damned continue sinning—so long will the fire continue scorching! "They cursed the God of heaven for their pains and sores. But they refused to repent of all their evil deeds!" Revelation 16:11

But men question the truth of this, and are like impious Devonax who, being threatened with hell for his villainies, mocked at it and said, "I will believe there is a hell when I come there—and not before!" We cannot make hell enter into men—until they enter into hell.

If, for all this, men will persist in sin and are resolved upon a voyage to hell—who can hinder their damnation?

They have been told what a soul-damning rock sin is—but if they will voluntarily run upon it and damn themselves—their blood is upon their own head!

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Satan warms himself at the fire!

Sin is a foolish thing. What greater foolishness is there, than to gratify an enemy! Sin gratifies Satan.

When lust or anger burn in the soul—Satan warms himself at the fire! Men's sins feast the devil.

Samson was called out to amuse the Philistines. Likewise the sinner amuses the devil! Nothing more satisfies him—than to see men sin. How he laughs to see them hazarding their souls for the world, as if one would trade diamonds for straws; or would fish for gudgeons with golden hooks!

Every wicked man shall be indicted as a fool, at the day of judgment. "But God said to him—You fool! This very night your life will be demanded

from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" Luke 12:20

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Ask him now how he likes his bargain!

"The deceitfulness of sin" Hebrews 3:13

Sin is a mere cheat. While it pretends to please us, it beguiles us! Sin does as Jael did. First she brought the milk and butter to Sisera, then she pounded the tent peg through his head! (Judges 5:26). Sin first courts, and then kills! It is first a fox—and then a lion. Whoever sin betrays—it kills!

Those locusts in Revelation are fit emblems of sin: "They had gold crowns on their heads . . . They had tails that stung like scorpions, with power to torture people" (Revelation 9:7-10).

Judas pleased himself with the thirty pieces of silver—but they proved deceitful riches. Ask him now how he likes his bargain!

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Worse than the torments of hell

Sin is worse than hell. Torment has its epitome in hell—yet nothing in hell is as bad as sin.

Hell is of God's making—but sin is not of God's making. Sin is the devil's creature.

The torments of hell are a burden only to the sinner—but sin is a burden to God.

In the torments of hell, there is something which is good, namely, the execution of divine justice. There is justice to be found in hell—but sin is a piece of the highest injustice. Sin would rob God of his glory, Christ of his purchase, the soul of its happiness.

Sin is the most hateful thing—for it is worse than the torments of hell.

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A holy antipathy against sin

There is no better sign of true repentance—than a holy antipathy against sin. Sound repentance begins in love to God—and ends in the hatred of sin.

How may true hatred of sin be known?

When a man's HEART is set against sin. Not only does the tongue protest against sin—but the heart abhors it. However lovely sin is painted—we find it odious—just as we abhor the picture of one whom we mortally hate, even though it may be well drawn.

Suppose a dish be finely cooked and the sauce good —yet if a man has an antipathy against the meat, he will not eat it. So let the devil cook and dress sin with pleasure and profit—yet a true penitent has a secret abhorrence of it, is disgusted by it, and will not meddle with it.

True hatred of sin is UNIVERSAL. There is a dislike of sin not only in the judgment—but in the will and affections. Many a one is convinced that sin is a vile thing, and in his judgment has an aversion to it—yet he tastes sweetness in it—and has a secret delight in it. Here is a disliking of sin in the judgment—and an embracing of it in the affections! Whereas in true repentance, the hatred of sin is in all the faculties, not only in the mind—but chiefly in the will: "I do the very thing I hate!" (Romans 7:15). Paul was not free from sin—yet his will was against it.

He who truly hates one sin—hates all sins. He who hates a serpent—hates all serpents. "I hate every false way!" (Psalm 119:104). Hypocrites will hate some sins which mar their credit. But a true convert hates all sins—gainful sins, complexion sins, the very stirrings of corruption.

A holy heart detests sin for its intrinsic pollution.

Sin leaves a stain upon the soul. A regenerate person abhors sin not only for the curse—but for the contagion. He hates this serpent not only for its sting but for its poison. He hates sin not only for hell—but as hell.

Those who have no antipathy against sin, are strangers to repentance. Sin is in them—as poison in a serpent, which, being natural to it, affords delight. How far are they from repentance who, instead of hating sin—love sin! To the godly—sin is as a thorn in the eye; to the wicked—sin is as a crown on the head! "They actually rejoice in doing evil!" (Jeremiah 11:15).

Loving of sin is worse than committing it. What is it, which makes a swine love to tumble in the mire?

Its love of filth. O how many there are—who love the forbidden fruit! They love their sin—and hate holiness.

There should be a deadly antipathy between the heart and sin. What is there in sin, which may make a penitent hate it?

Sin is the accursed thing, the most deformed monster!

Look upon the origin of sin, from whence it comes. It fetches its pedigree from hell: "He who commits sin is of the devil!" (1 John 3:8). Sin is the devil's special work. How hateful is it to be doing that which is the special work of the devil—indeed, that which makes men into devils!

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## Powerful orators for mercy

"Mary knelt behind Him at His feet, weeping. Her tears fell on His feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing His feet and putting perfume on them." Luke 7:38

Mary brought two things to Christ—perfume and tears. Her tears were better than her perfume. Tears are powerful orators for mercy. They are silent—yet they have a voice. "The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping." Psalm 6:8

They say that tears have four qualities: tears are hot, moist, salty, and bitter. It is true of repenting tears. They are . . .

hot—to warm a frozen conscience;  
moist—to soften a hard heart;  
salty—to season a soul putrefying in sin;  
bitter—to wean us from the love of the world.

And I will add a fifth. They are sweet, in that they make the heart inwardly rejoice "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy!" John 16:20

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The devil has two places he dwells in

"I love foreign gods, and I must go after them!" Jeremiah 2:25

A hard heart is a dwelling for Satan. As God has two places He dwells in—heaven and a humble heart; so the devil has two places he dwells in—hell and a hard heart.

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Worse than affliction

Sin is worse than affliction. There is more malignity in a drop of sin—than in a sea of affliction—for sin is the cause of affliction, and the cause is more than the effect. The sword of God's justice lies quiet in the scabbard—until sin draws it out!

Affliction is good for us: "It is good for me, that I have been afflicted" (Psalm 119:71).

Affliction causes repentance (2 Chron. 33:12).

The viper, being stricken, casts up its poison. Just so, when God's rod strikes us with affliction, we spit away the poison of sin!

Affliction betters our grace. Gold is purest, and juniper sweetest—when in the fire.

Affliction prevents damnation. "We are being disciplined—so that we will not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. 11:32).

Thus, affliction is in many ways for our good—but there is no good in sin. Manasseh's affliction brought him to humiliation and repentance—but Judas' sin

brought him to desperation and damnation. Affliction only reaches the body—but sin goes further—it poisons the mind, disorders the affections. Affliction

is corrective; sin is destructive. Affliction can but take away the life; sin takes away the soul (Luke 12:20).

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You cannot make a beast blush

"The wicked know no shame." Zephaniah 3:5

Many have sinned away shame. It is a great shame, not to be ashamed. "Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush!" (Jer. 6:15).

The devil has stolen shame from men. When men have hearts of stone and foreheads of brass—it is a sign that the devil has taken full possession of them!

There is no creature capable of shame but man. The brute beasts are capable of fear and pain—but not of shame. You cannot make a beast blush. Those who cannot blush for sin, do too much resemble the beasts. There are some so far from this holy blushing, that they are proud of their sins. They are so far from being ashamed of sin, that they glory in their sins!

They look on sin as a piece of gallantry. The swearer thinks his speech most graceful when it is interlarded with oaths. The drunkard counts it a glory that he is mighty to drink. But when men shall be cast into the fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter by the breath of the Almighty—then let them boast of sin!

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A swine with a man's head

Sinners are compared . . .  
to foxes (Luke 13:32),  
to wolves (Matt. 7:15),  
to donkeys (Job 28 11:12),  
to swine (2 Pet. 2:22).

A sinner is a swine with a man's head. He who was once little less than the angels in dignity—has now become like the beasts! The ungodly are, in a manner—wholly brutified! They do not act rationally, but are carried away by the violence of their lusts and passions. Our sins have taken away that noble, holy spirit which once we had. The crown has fallen from our head. God's image is defaced, reason is eclipsed, conscience stupified!

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Sin must drown

"Unless you repent, you will also perish." Luke 13:5

The two great graces essential to a saint in this life, are faith and repentance. These are the two wings by which he flies to heaven.

Moist tears of repentance dry up sin—and quench the wrath of God. Repentance is the nourisher of piety—and the procurer of mercy.

Worldly tears fall to the earth; but godly tears of repentance are kept in a bottle. "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book." Psalm 56:8.

Either sin must drown in the tears of repentance —or the soul must burn in hell.

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Lose Christ and heaven

"How long will you love what is worthless?" Psalm 4:2

An unbeliever would rather lose Christ and heaven—than his lusts!

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The cancer of the soul

"Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep" Proverbs 19:15

Sloth is the cancer of the soul. Men had rather go sleeping to hell—than weeping to heaven! When Satan has by his witcheries lulled men asleep in sloth—then he destroys them!