

## Godly Sorrow

II Corinthians 7:2-11

2/ 12/ 06

### Intro

Relationships are going to be an important part of our lives for a long time. For as long as we are on this earth, they will have a great impact on our happiness or our sorrow.

If we are going to have relationships, then we are also going to have conflicts, this is where many people get into trouble. Many people do not know what to do about conflicts in relationships, but God gives us great insights into this in His Word.

Paul is having trouble in his relationship with the church at Corinth and we can learn a lot from watching how Paul handles the situation and how he handles himself.

### **These are insights into how to restore and heal our relationships in a godly way.**

#### **I. Win the Person, Not the Argument**

##### A. Speak vision into the relationship

- Many people try to solve conflicts by using what in logic is called an “ad hominem” argument. This is Latin for “to the man” and it means that they attack the person.
- Verse 3-4 Paul is telling the Corinthians how important they are to him and telling them what he wants them to do, “make room for us in your hearts.”

- Paul is speaking vision into the relationship. This is a very valuable way to bring resolution to conflicts.

**Proverbs 29:18, “Where there is no vision, the people perish...”** KJV

- Winning the person means that you win their heart before you correct, then, their heart is teachable and ready to receive.

**Illus – If you’re branding cattle, being forceful is helpful. If you’re working with people, it’s a great hindrance.**

**Proverbs 15:1, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”**

**Illus – There was once a fellow at a retreat that stood up and walked out. He had to be won over before he could hear any words of correction.**

##### B. Take responsibility for your part

- In verse 2 Paul says that his conscience is clear, He wronged no one. Most people can’t say that. The key is that if there is something that you have added to the problem in the relationship, it helps a lot if you take responsibility.
- In other words, be teachable.

**Colossians 3:12-14, “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these**

**things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”**

C. Do not condemn

- Vs 3, “I do not speak to condemn you,” Paul wrote.
- Oftentimes, we try to get the other person to admit he was wrong and we end up just making the person angry.
- He finishes that verse by saying, “You are in our hearts to live or to die together.

**II Corinthians 2:4, “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.”**

**II. Let God Be Your Comfort**

A. God comforts the depressed

- One of the things that would really help us in difficult times is knowing that God knows about it and that He cares.
- There are many biblical examples of people who were strengthened in their heart by the Lord in times of trouble.

**Illus – Before David was king, his camp at Ziklag was attacked by Amalekites while he was away. They took everything, their wives and children included...**

**I Samuel 30:6, “Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.”**

B. God puts it in perspective

- It’s easy to lose perspective when there’s trouble in a relationship.

**Illus – When you hit your hand with a hammer, it seems that is the only thing that matters in your life at that moment.**

- Having God’s perspective is very healing.

**Illus – As the Titanic was listing and passengers were being loaded into the lifeboats, one of the wealthy passengers went back to her room. Leaving behind all her valuables, she took two oranges...**

**Psalm 19:7-11 He makes wise the simple.**

**III. Don’t Be Afraid of Godly Sorrow**

A. Speak the truth in love

- Paul knew that his letter caused sorrow. He won their hearts, but he also spoke the truth that they needed to hear.

**Ephesians 4:15, “but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,”**

- If we were to speak the truth, all by itself, it could be very harsh.

**Illus – What if God spoke the truth about us, but without love or grace? We would be in trouble.**

**John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”**

B. Sorrow of the world brings death

- This is the sorrow that comes from defensiveness.
- Sometimes we are hurt, we feel sorrow, but it’s because we are sensitive and touchy, rather than teachable and mature.
- Worldly sorrow does not help us, but hurts us instead. Not being teachable, nothing is learned, there is no growing from the sorrow; only hurt feelings and broken relationships.

**Psalm 73:21-22, “When my heart was embittered and I was pierced within, then I was senseless and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.”**

C. Godly sorrow brings repentance without regret

- Repentance without regret is a powerful phrase. It says that there is a repentance that leads to life.

- Paul says there is a sorrow that leads to repentance. This is sorrow that does something. It’s more than just feeling badly, it takes action...

**Illus – Jesus told the story of a man who had two sons that he had asked to go and work in the fields...**

**Matthew 21:28-32 True repentance brings change, it’s more than just feeling sorry.**

**Illus – Both Peter and Judas denied the Lord, and the scripture says that both repented. But Judas, “repented himself.” It means that he felt remorse, but it didn’t lead to life, it led to death. Peter also denied the Lord, but he truly repented and it led to life.**

**Matthew 26:75, And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, “Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.**

- After the resurrection, the disciples were told to wait in Galilee, but Peter decided to go fishing. The Lord appeared on the shore and Peter grabbed his cloak and jumped into the sea – he took action to get near to the Lord.

Conclusion

**There is a godly sorrow that leads to life, a repentance that comes without regret. Perhaps this is the day that some need to go beyond sorrow, and return to the Lord. There you will find life.**