

2 Corinthians
Verses 7:2-16
Sorrow and Confidence
August 21, 2011

I. When is It Acceptable to Point Out Problems in Others?

Any confrontation of others should be for their good, not ours (this is a big item). Additional principles that Paul alludes are:

<u>METHOD</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
Be firm and bold	7:9, 10:2
Affirm all you see that is good	7:4
Be accurate and honest	7:14, 8:21
Know the facts	11:22-27
Follow up after the confrontation	7:13, 12:14
Be gentle after being firm	7:15, 13:11-13
Speak words that reflect Christ's message, not your own ideas	10:3, 10:12-13, 12:19
Use discipline only when all else fails	13:2

What are some examples of us seeking our good rather than that of the person whom we are confronting?

II. Paul's Heart for the Corinthians

2 Cor. 7:2-7

2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one. 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. 4 I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. 5 For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within. 6 But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, 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.

NIV

In this passage, Paul returns to the thoughts of 6:11 ff.

Verse 2 Apparently, part of the reason that has kept the Corinthians from opening their hearts is their attachment to the world. By detaching themselves from the world, they can then walk with Paul.

Verse 3 Paul's reproach of the Corinthians for holding him in suspicion is softened by saying that he has no intention of condemning them and by repeating that they occupy an important place in Paul's heart

- Verse 4 As a bit of roadmap for the rest of the chapter is indicated by the words that Paul cites in this verse:
- | | |
|------------|---------------------|
| Confidence | 7:16 |
| Pride | 7:14 |
| Comfort | 7:6 |
| Joy | 7:7, 7:9, 7:13 7:16 |
- Verse 6 Paul wrote some of the greatest anti-depressant sections of the Bible in which we all find hope, as in:

Romans 8:31

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God {is} for us, who {is} against us?

NAU

It is somehow reassuring that he also needed comforting.

- Verse 6 Apparently, he was either worrying about Titus, or perhaps more significantly about Titus' mission to the Corinthians.

- Verse 7 Five events evoke Paul's joy:

- Titus' safe arrival
- Titus' being comforted by the Corinthians
- Corinthians longing for Paul
- Their mourning
- Their zeal for Paul

III. Corinthian Repentance: A Reaction to Sorrow

2 Cor. 7:8-12

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— 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. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 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. 12 So even though I wrote to you, it was neither on account of the one who did the wrong nor on account of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are.

NIV

Verse 8: We see Paul following his own advice from Col 3:21

Col 3:21

21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

NAU

Verse 8: Paul knows that his letter caused them sorrow. Knowing that they were hurt, he did regret it. Yet, he also knows that longer-term his message was necessary for them to grow. When he hears Titus's

report and that they have recovered from their hurt, he does not regret his actions any longer.

Prov 27:6

6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

NAU

Verse 9: His rejoicing is over their repentance. If they had rejected him, they may well have rejected God, either temporarily or forever. The verse explains the mixed emotions stated in verse 8.

Verse 9: Paul affirmed the Corinthians for their right responses to the correction he had given them. It is difficult to accept criticism, correction, or rebuke with poise and grace. It is much more natural to be defensive and then counterattack. We can accept criticism with self-pity, thinking we do not really deserve it. We can be angry and resentful. But a mature Christian should graciously accept constructive criticism, sincerely evaluate it, and grow from it.

Verse 10: Difference in worldly and Godly grief:

	<u>Worldly</u>	<u>Godly</u>
Caused by:	Loss of denial of something we want Self-centered	Failure to do will of God God-center
Results in:	Despair, bitterness, paralysis	Repentance

Examples of how sorrow works differently in people:

- Judas betrayed Jesus. His sorrow caused him to commit suicide.
- Peter betrayed Jesus three times. His sorrow was a mainstay in his future actions as a leader of the young church. Note his rededication in John 21:15-19.

Verse 10: These verses would appear to be written to Christians, indicating that repentance is necessary. Especially in the OT, repentance indicates going in another direction from where we had been heading.

Verse 10: What makes suffering remedial is not the experience itself, but the matter in which an individual responds to it.

Verse 11: In 2:9, Paul writes that that he wrote the critical letter to see their character, and now he asserts that they have demonstrated innocence.

2 Cor. 2:9

9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

NIV

Verse 12: The offender is not known. The purpose was to bring about restitution for the offender, not to bring vengeance for the offended.

Verse 12: Apparently, they faced off the offender in a way that was beneficial to him and in accordance with Paul's directions.

IV. Encouraged Boasting

2 Cor. 7:13-16

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. 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. 15 And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling. 16 I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.

NIV

Verse 13: While all was not well with the Corinthians as the later parts of this letter will demonstrate, here we see Paul seeking to find what positive things that he can in this statement.

Verse 15: "Fear and trembling" would indicate that they were nervous to please. Many people attempt to rehabilitate this phrase, but if it says fear and trembling. The same Greek is used in the OT Septuagint when translating a Hebrew words meaning of "dread." If the Bible says "fear and trembling," we should assume that it means "fear and trembling."

Verse 15: Paul is the only Bible writer to use this phrase, four times in 1 Cor. 2:3, 2 Cor. 7:15, Eph. 6:5, and Phil 2:12.

Paul has been rejoicing throughout this chapter; he has also indicated that he has been greatly encouraged. Why?

V. Questions

How does sorrow bring us to God?

How does it push us away from Him?

Why is there a difference in response?