

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Week #25 – Adult Bible Study**

**II Corinthians 7:5-16**

**April 1 & 2, 2025**

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**7:5-7**

1. With this passage, we return to the story/situation with which II Corinthians begins, about the visit of Titus to Corinth and about an “offender” who has caused some sort of pain involving Paul and the Corinthian church
2. 2:12-13 says, *“When I [Paul] came to Troas to proclaim the good news of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord; but my mind could not rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said farewell to them and went on to Macedonia.”* 7:5 continues, *“For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way....”*
3. Paul was so worried about Corinth and also about the delay of Titus in returning to him that Paul leaves his work in Troas (Troy) and goes to Macedonia (Greece) to find him
4. Remember that Paul had changed his plans to visit Corinth, sent a letter instead, and sent Titus as a substitute
5. Apparently, this change on Paul’s part had made the situation worse and had led to further deterioration in Paul’s relationship with the church
6. Titus has good news: the situation has been resolved, and Paul’s mind is greatly eased
7. Three aspects of this good news are mentioned:
  - a. “Longing” – the Corinthians want to restore the relationship with Paul
  - b. “Mourning” – because Paul had stayed away and they realized it was their fault
  - c. “Zeal” – they now see Paul in the original sense that they had seen him: as God’s agent and someone to be trusted and heard
8. Notice that Paul does not say, “I told you so!” -- He is simply overjoyed that the situation has been healed

**7:8-13a**

9. One person had acted badly against another person, most likely Paul himself, though we never learn what the actual offense was
10. The destroyed relationship between the other person and Paul had also damaged the rest of the church’s relationship with Paul, and so Paul had stayed away
11. We also do not have the severe/painful letter that Paul had written
12. Paul reflects on the impact this letter had
  - a. He seems to be a bit sorry that he had written it – perhaps because it was too angry or self-serving in tone?
  - b. But he also is glad he wrote it, because it helped the Corinthians see the error of having supported “the Offender”
  - c. In seeing their error, they have repented and then grown from the experience
13. Here, Paul speaks of “godly” grief and “worldly” grief
  - a. Godly grief – the realization and the sorrow that leads to repentance and changed behavior and attitude
  - b. Worldly grief – “produces death” – this kind of grief generates embarrassment but not repentance, therefore it does not lead to spiritual growth
14. The Corinthians were mature enough in Christ that they could receive a rebuke in the right spirit and use it in the right way: to recognize their error, repent of it, and then grow as a result
  - a. This growth Paul characterizes as “earnestness, eagerness, indignation, alarm, longing, zeal, punishment”
15. Note that Paul links this repentance process to the Corinthian’s “salvation” – they are already saved, which must mean that he understand the grief/repentance cycle to be a continual one in the living out of Christian life
16. Further, Paul notes that his strongly worded letter has not been about wanting to hurt “the Offender” nor to justify “the Offended One” but rather to help resolve the situation and restore the relationship
17. The result, again, is “comfort” and “consolation”

**7:13b – 16**

18. Paul also is happy for Titus, who had been given the difficult and often thankless job of being the go-between (the diplomat and peacemaker” between the two warring parties

19. There is usually collateral damage when relationships go bad, and this had been the risk, both with the Corinthians and with Titus – but now this damage has been avoided
20. Importantly, this hard situation has actually served to strengthen the faith and the relationships of all involved, but this is only because the way it was handled was in the Way of Christ (“obedience”)
21. Now, Paul again has “complete confidence” in the Corinthians

### **Questions for Your Life Today**

- A. Name some specific kinds of conflicts that you have observed (or even been part of) with other people, or in the church itself
- B. Describe the emotional pain involved when a relationship is hurting
- C. Name some unhelpful and then some helpful ways there are to respond to conflict in relationships, or to rebuke someone, or to receive a rebuke from someone
- D. What lessons does this letter teach about how Christians address conflict?
- E. Describe a time when you apologized and truly repented in a relationship with another person, or they did with you, and what you learned from the experience

Notes by The Rev. Dr. Jack Baca, Senior Pastor, The Village Church, Rancho Santa Fe, California

#### Resources:

- Interpretation Commentary on First Corinthians, Richard B. Hays, John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1997
- Interpretation Commentary on Second Corinthians, Ernest Best, John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 1987
- The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of 1 Corinthians – Life in the Local Church, David Prior, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1985
- The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of 2 Corinthians – Power in Weakness, Paul Barnett, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1988
- The Communicator’s Commentary, 1, 2 Corinthians, Kenneth L. Chafin, Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1985