

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Repentance
2 Corinthians 7:2-16

Last time...perfecting holiness in

- our relationships
- our flesh
- our spirit

Heb 12:14 Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

This time...that which is required for holiness – repentance

The backdrop, the context, of Chapter 7 is the 1st letter the Apostle Paul was inspired to write to the church at Corinth, a heavy letter of correction, reproof, and instruction in righteousness

One of the “letter carriers” to Corinth was Titus

v2 With the first letter on his mind, Paul wants to have a place in the lives and hearts of the saints at Corinth

He has

- wronged, unjustly hurt, no one
- corrupted, taught false doctrine to, no one
- defrauded, taken advantage of, no one

Instead, he has

- served them, been God’s minister to them
- led them, by following Jesus
- been faithful to his calling...2 Cor 4:2

As had Moses and Samuel during their ministries

Num 16:15 Moses...said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them (Korah and gang).

1 Sam 12:3 Behold, here I *am*: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received *any* bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

v3 Paul's sentiment for the church at Corinth, the saints in Corinth:
"I did not write what I did to condemn you, I love you!
You are in my heart and will be until my very last breath in this world,
You are in my heart forever in the next world!"

v4 With that love for them as the pure motive of Paul and the foundation of their
relationship, he wrote that heavy letter with great boldness...bluntness, frankness,
and plainness of words...for their good, not their harm

And at the same time, great was his boasting of them in the other places the Lord sent
him to minister

He and this church had a difficult even rocky relationship but, speaking for himself,
Paul is filled with comfort and joy because of them.

Is it possible to have a difficult even rocky relationship with someone you love
while at the same time be super delighted with having them in your life?
Absolutely!

That is how I feel about my 2 estranged sons.

v5 After Paul wrote 1 Corinthains and sent it with Titus and a few others, Paul carried on
with the ministry the Lord put before him (Acts 19:21 – 20:5)...
all the while wondering how the Corinthians received that letter

Today we have instant communication on a wide variety of technical platforms;
we take it all for granted

But Paul had to wait for Titus to go and then return, not knowing when that would be

Paul found the waiting to be unpleasant...just as we do

He was learning to wait...just as we are

As he waited, Paul was in emotional turmoil...as we often are

The anxious silence of not knowing how they received the letter was accompanied by

- spiritual battles...attacks of condemnation by the enemy
- internal fear and anxiety
 - doubts and 2nd thoughts
 - playing it over and over in his mind, plagued by questions
 - Did I say it the right way?
 - Should I have even said anything?
 - Was I too hard on them?
 - Do they know how much I love them?
 - Oh, if they could only see my countenance and hear the tone of my voice!

How often do we lay awake at night thinking about something we have said or done?
How often do worry and stress and fear rip us off the gift of sleep our Father has given us
(Ps 127:1)?

In hindsight,

what percentage of what we were thinking turned out to be wrong or misplaced?
what percentage of our anxious worries are about things over which we have no
control and then don't happen anyway?

Therefore, let's feast our eyes on and hear the Word of God:

Phil 4:6-8

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth
(interested in/concerned) for you.

1 John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and
knoweth all things.

Paul was in emotional turmoil while he waited for word about the Corinthians from Titus,
and we are often in emotional turmoil while we wait in times of relational discord
Which means...the Apostle Paul, the spiritual giant placed on a pedestal by so many
Christians, is a man of like passions as of us
Paul, Elijah, you, me...we are all the same

You might say: Paul gets us

The advertising campaign about Jesus: "He gets us" commercials
Started in March 2022 in Oklahoma
75 wealthy investors (Hobby Lobby CEO)
\$300M budget this year with a goal to reach \$1B
\$20M on Super Bowl ads later today

Yes, Jesus can relate to us...and much more – He knows us

Ps 103:14, Matt 10:30

But did He come to relate to us...or die for our sins?

Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father by being the Father's sacrifice for
our sins...of which the sinner must repent

Any mention of "sin" in those commercials?

Any mention of Jesus dying for our sins in those commercials?

Any mention of repentance in those ads (His 1st recorded word)?

Any mention of His Deity?

Any mention of His 2nd Coming to judge the world in righteousness?

The message of the ads falls SUPER SHORT of the Gospel and could be
very misleading i.e. "I'm OK with God just the way I am."

Therefore, the "handoff" is to the Body of Christ to complete the
message...which includes repentance of sin!!!

Back to Paul

v6-7 “But God”

- the God of all comfort (Ch 1:3)
 - comforts those who are cast down...depressed, oppressed, humiliated
- comforted Paul by the
- return of Titus – the agonizing silence was broken!
 - report of Titus

And as is so true for us also, Paul’s fretting was for naught

Titus returned to Paul with a Good Report, not an evil report as Paul feared!

The Corinthians received and embraced Paul’s correction, reproof, and instruction in righteousness!

The Corinthians were prudent and not foolish!

Prov 15:5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

Titus reported to “the father” (1 Cor 4:15) of “the children’s”

- earnest desire...great longing to obey the Lord and to correct their errors
 - mourning...lamenting their errors vs rebelling against the chastisement
- Matt 5:4 *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*
- Heb 12:5-11
- fervent mind toward Paul...they loved him as he loved them

And Paul rejoiced!

v8 Paul knew his letter would sting...chastisement always does
But he does not regret sending it...now
Even though he did regret sending it...then

But with Titus’ report Paul does not now have any regrets because of the good work by the Holy Spirit in their hearts and lives – the essential work of repentance

Evidence of faith that saves: repentance

v9 Prov 27:6 Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

Paul rejoices

- NOT that they were merely saddened or grieved by the letter
- BUT that they were moved to repentance by the letter
 - turn from Self and the world and turn to the Lord
 - make changes
 - in thinking
 - in action

When caught or exposed in doing something wrong (against our consciences)

Note: right and wrong must have an absolute basis upon an absolute truth;
relative truth and relative right and wrong is confusion
almost everybody says, “Oh I’m sorry, I’m sorry!”

Most people, however will not change their way of thinking or their behavior,
but instead just keep doing the same thing over and over again because
that is what they want to do to satisfy the lusts of their flesh

e.g. CPR class this week: LV gambler that coded

e.g. man arrested in Dallas for stealing 2 monkeys from the Dallas Zoo:
“I’ll do it again.”

e.g. jails and prisons are filled with people who are sorry, but unchanged
in their minds and hearts

Most wrong-doers will not change but a few will repent, be grieved by what they
have done against God and turn to Him for mercy and forgiveness

With the Word of God as the absolute basis for right and wrong,

Heb 4:12 the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any
twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and
spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the
thoughts and intents of the heart.

God shows us

- the truth about our heart – Jer 17:9
- the truth about us relative to Him – Rom 3:23, Is 59:1-2, Rom 6:23, Eph 2:8-9

It is the goodness of God (grace, mercy) that leads us to repentance, to the place He
wants us to be and the gift He wants to give us

The grace of God changes

- our hearts
- our minds
- our motives
- our relationship with God (Rom 5:1)
- our actions

The saints in Corinth were children of God, they were sealed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit

Faithful to His ministry, the Holy Spirit did not condemn them (Rom 8:1) but convicted them of their sin

And they were moved to repent, turn, change...made sorry/saddened/grieved after a godly manner...after God's own heart rather than after their own lustful flesh

The Church at Corinth was not damaged by Paul's 1st letter, they benefitted from it! They took it to heart, turning to the Lord rather than turning from the Lord

v10 Godly sorrow vs worldly sorrow

Godly sorrow accomplishes

- repentance...turning, changing
 - a gift of God Who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift
 - 2 Tim 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;
- unto salvation...Life, eternal Life in Christ
- not to be repented of
 - "irrevocable"...God does not repent, does not change His mind; salvation is irrevocably secured
 - Rom 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance ("irrevocable").
 - The gift of salvation (Eph 2:8-9) is secure...irrevocable
 - "No regrets!!!"...by God or by us!

Consider King David

Ps 51:1-17 exposed, believed, confessed, repented, and forgiven

Ps 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Worldly sorrow accomplishes

- death
- no change...continuance of the foolish and unfortunate *status quo*
- an eternity of regrets ("If only I had but believed...")

Hell is filled with "sorry" sinners

Heaven is filled with repentant sinners, reconciled and made new creatures in Christ

This requirement for holiness, apart from which no one can see the Lord...
Who spoke of repentance?

The Lord!

1. Through His prophets..."rising early", calling His people to repent quickly and frequently, no delaying

2 Chron 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Is 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

John the Baptist

- broke 400 years of silence
- no greater man born of woman, per Jesus
- the Lord's messenger, whose 1st word was...
Matt 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

2. Personally

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

Mark 1:14-15 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

3. Through the Apostles

Acts 2:37-38 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 17:30-31 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he

will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead. (otherwise Christ died in vain!)

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins (sorrowed after a godly sort), he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What room is there for this NECESSARY-for-holiness repentance in

- The Love Gospel
God is love and He loves you just the way you are, for He made you the way you are
Everybody goes to heaven, hell is not real
- The Social Gospel
Centered on “sins against man” and not on sins against God
(of which all are!)
- Salvation by works
No amount of which can remove the work of even just one sin
(James 2:10)
Without grace, sin remains

that are infecting the church in our days?

So why is so little said of repentance in the Laodicean church of today?

What does the church at Laodicea (and 4 others) need to do, according to Jesus?

Rev 3:19b **be zealous** (action) **therefore, and repent.**

v11 The evidence of godly sorrow in the church at Corinth that accomplishes repentance:

1. the diligence and eagerness of their repentance
2. the clearing of their thinking and consciences of their errors/sin...
seeing their thoughts and actions as God sees them, clear-mindedness
3. the indignation they felt about their errors/sin...
How could I/we have tolerated that?!
4. the cleansing fear of the Living God...
What have I/we done?! Oh, Lord help me/us!
5. the vehement desire to please the Lord Who has purchased them with His blood
6. the zeal of their repentance...the actions they took
7. the revenge/vindication of receiving the Holy Spirit’s correction and instruction thru Paul

The evidence of their repentance exhibited the Church at Corinth to be cleansed of those matters

Their sins were exposed, confessed, repented, and forgiven

Ps 32:1-2 Blessed *is he whose* transgression *is* forgiven, *whose sin is* covered. Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

v12 With the one “glaring” sin concerning a man and his father’s wife (1 Cor 5)
“front and center” perhaps, Paul says he did not write what he did to single out the man or his father, but for the good of the entire fellowship

Lev 13:45-46 And the leper in whom the plague *is*, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague *shall be* in him he shall be defiled; he *is* unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp *shall* his habitation *be*.

Lev 15:31 Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that *is* among them.

1 Cor 5:6-7a Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.

v13-15 The Holy Spirit comforted the church at Corinth with God’s gift of repentance
Titus, Paul’s letter carrier” was overjoyed with how the church received this heavy letter and, accordingly, his spirit was refreshed and encouraged
The “trickle down effect” was that Paul was also greatly comforted and he rejoiced exceedingly by what the Lord had done in the church he loved so

Paul had boasted of, had spoken very highly of the Corinthian saints to Titus before dispatching him with that letter; his boast was proven to be well-placed
And Titus grew in his affection for these brethren, being an eyewitness of their obedience in and fear and trembling of the Living God

After all, the Church at Corinth could do what the world does and what carnal churches do – shoot the messenger

Churches today fire the pastor if they do not like what he says...
like talking of sin and repentance and the judgment of a holy God
Pastors today don’t talk of sin and repentance and the judgment of a holy God so they don’t get fired...making themselves to be hirelings and ministers of men vs shepherds and ministers of God (become ear-ticklers)

v16 Paul's confidence in this fellowship has grown as a result of how they received his heavy letter

He is confident they will stand with the Lord in all things

There is respect and joy in their relationship ("father" and "children")

2 John 4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth,
as we have received a commandment from the Father.

3 John 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Take-away

How good is our God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift...such as

- salvation...irrevocable
- repentance...godly sorrow leading to a change in thinking and acting,
turning from the world and returning to Him, as evidenced by
 - the diligence and eagerness to turn to the Lord
 - the clearing of our thinking and conscience of our errors
 - the indignation we felt about our errors
 - the cleansing fear of the Living God
 - the vehement desire to please the Lord Who has purchased us with His blood
 - the zeal of our repentance...the actions we take
 - the revenge/vindication of receiving the Holy Spirit's correction and instruction

Repentance is in plentiful supply from God, but in very short demand by

- the "Woke" world
- the Jezebel Church
- the dead Reformation Church
- the lukewarm Church

in these Days of Noah and Days of Lot

It is as if "repentance" has become a dirty word

Who would turn a beautiful gift of God...required for holiness...
and make it a dirty word?

Who has the ear of the "Woke" world and much of the Church (5 of 7 need to repent)?

Repentance is not a "swear word", a dirty word to be avoided...

it is a wonderful gift of a wonderful God to be embraced!

Rejoice in repentance...don't lament the course correction!!!