



IDENTITY



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06.07.2026

Difficult Relationships

II Corinthians 1:23-2:4

Sermon in a Sentence

**Healing difficult relationships is not easy,
but how we handle it says much about our identity in Christ.**

Question

How do we handle difficult relationships with Christlikeness?

I. Difficult relationships require sincerity.

- A. Paul called on God as a witness to the sincerity of his desire to spare the Corinthians.
- B. In order to succeed with difficult relationships, we have to be sincere in our approach.
- C. God demonstrated sincerity in His difficult relationship with us and we should do no less.

II. Difficult relationships require sensitivity.

- A. Paul was sensitive to the possibility that his actions could be interpreted by the Corinthians as an attempt to manipulate them.
- B. We have to exercise sensitivity when we are approaching those with whom we are experiencing trouble.
 - 1. *We should be sensitive in our perspective.*
 - 2. *We should be sensitive in our speech.*
 - 3. *We should be sensitive in our approach.*
- C. God was sensitive in His approach to our sin.

III. Difficult relationships require sympathy.

- A. Paul was sympathetic to the Corinthians' feelings about him.
- B. Acknowledging where the other person is coming from and their emotions can go a long way in helping a difficult relationship.
- C. God is compassionate toward those who are lost even as they show no concern for Him.

IV. Difficult relationships require sorrow.

- A. Paul was transparent about the emotions he experienced as he was writing to the Corinthians.
- B. If we are going to help heal a difficult relationship, we have to be ready to grieve over the relationship.
- C. Our lostness grieves God.

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