



# **POWER IN WEAKNESS!**

**The Epistle of 2 Corinthians**

**When it is Good to Hurt!**

**2 Corinthians 7:1-16**

**Message #9 of 17 – S883**

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**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# When it is Good to Hurt!

## 2 Corinthians 7:1-16

### Opening Comments

- Turn to **2 Corinthians 7**
- For you watching online, welcome – we are glad to have you with us
- Today we continue our journey through **2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness!**
- If you have been alive for more than a minute you realize that pain is a part of life – physical, emotional, relational
- Books have been written about handling pain, recovering from pain, avoiding pain
- Here are a few quotes on pain
- It is highly unlikely that anyone ever goes through life without feeling pain
- And as weird as it might sound to say, sometimes pain is good for us
- There is pain that just hurts, but there can be pain that helps
- That latter type is what Paul is going to talk about today
- Paul wrote this letter as a response to hearing from Titus who Paul had sent to Corinth to see how they had responded to a previous letter from Paul
- In that previous letter Paul wrote some things that might have been hard for them to hear
- We will see that Paul was encouraged by what Titus experienced from the Corinthian church
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **When it is Good to Hurt!**
- Let's jump into our text
- **2 Corinthians 7:1**
- Let's jump back into chapter six and look at those promises
- **2 Corinthians 6:16b-18**

- Based on God's promises of intimacy and acceptance, we ought to respond by getting rid of the filthiness from our lives
- Paul had addressed that in his first letter – rebuking them for tolerating a man in the church who was in an immoral relationship with his stepmother
- God's goal in our lives is perfect holiness! Relational holiness is imputed to us through faith in Christ.
- Sanctification is the process we use to bring our practical lives into alignment with God's view of us. **1 Thessalonians 4:3**

**For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality...**

- And our motivation for doing it is 'the fear of God' – reverence for God.
- **2 Corinthians 7:2-3**
- Paul is standing on his integrity and upon the experience the Corinthians had with Paul
- Paul's ministry to them was based on his love for them
- He is calling them to return his love – as was right
- **2 Corinthians 7:4-5**
- Paul sometimes endured difficult trials for the opportunity to share Christ with the lost
- He is saying he could endure the suffering as long as he knew they were okay
- **2 Corinthians 7:6-7**
- Titus came and told Paul how the Corinthians had responded to his letter of correction – it comforted Paul
- They didn't take what Paul said and treat it as unimportant
- They responded by encouraging Titus and by expressing earnest desire, mourning, and zeal regarding the things Paul wrote about
- When Paul wrote the letter, he wasn't sure how they were going to respond
- **2 Corinthians 7:8**
- Paul is expressing the heart of a spiritual parent to the Corinthians
- Most of them were saved because Paul shared the gospel with them
- As a loving parent, we don't enjoy disciplining our children
- But we know it is necessary

- We know that sometimes a little discomfort, inconvenience, or pain will teach them lessons that nothing else can
- Seeing their response Paul says he doesn't regret making them sorry, to sadden them
- It was a temporary sorrow or pain that led to something better
- I have had pain in my back in the past
- Often, I have to go to the chiropractor and let her cause me more pain so that I can get better
- Surgeons do that when they operate – they cause pain to provide healing
- Paul wasn't trying to make them sad – he was hoping for something more
- **2 Corinthians 7:9-10**
- Everyone needs people in their life like Paul
- Someone who will tell you the things you don't want to hear

**Proverbs 27:6**

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

- In fact, if you don't have someone or two or three that will tell you that you are being a jerk, knucklehead, or brat – then you don't have the right kind of friends
- Or if you don't have someone who will challenge you to examine your life based on the Word of God – it might be because you don't want anyone to
- Notice what Paul is rejoicing in – 'your sorrow led to repentance'
- He is saying, you were headed down a path that led away from God and toward destruction
- My letter was a big yellow warning sign of danger
- You realized that I was right, and it made you sad, but your sadness was a godly sadness – it led to repentance
- Sorrow can come into our lives for many reasons – Paul is talking about sorrow over our own sin
- As Christians, sin ought to make us sad – ought to produce sorrow
- Every time we sin, we are moving away from God, from His grace, from His mercy, from the sense of His presence, from the experience of His love

- The more sensitive we are to God and His love, the more we will be like little children
  - If a small child wanders away from their parent at the store – They are scared and sad when they realize it
  - And the first chance they get, they run back to their parent and cling to them
  - Repentance is realizing that we have wandered away from God (sinned) and we are saddened by that realization, and we run to God and experience His forgiveness
  - Paul is saying, that was the result of the difficult letter he wrote
  - I am thankful that I have people in my life who love me enough to tap me on the shoulder when I am wandering from God
  - We all need those people in our lives – we call that Christian community
  - Paul goes on to say there was evidence of their repentance
  - **2 Corinthians 7:11**
  - Real repentance is evidenced by real change
  - Many people are sorry for the wrong things they do but they don't change – haven't repented
  - **2 Corinthians 7:12**
  - Paul wasn't trying to make them feel bad but to prove that he cared for them
  - Everyone needs people in their life who will let them know when they are wandering off the narrow path **Matthew 7:13-14**
- Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**
- If you don't have people like that in your life, you start being that person for others
  - **2 Corinthians 7:13-16**
  - Titus had gone to Corinth to represent Paul and see how they were doing
  - Paul was concerned – were they upset by the letter
  - Paul was comforted by Titus because of the comfort they showed Titus
  - What Paul is describing here is real Christian community at work

- In our social media culture community happens online
- And while that is a form of community, it is not Christian community
- That happens offline – face-to-face – or in a small group
- Christian community tends to be messy
- And in a case like what Paul is describing here – sometimes uncomfortable
- No one likes to experience the pain of being called out for our sin
- But it is a pain that is good for us **Hebrews 12:11**  
**Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**
- Real Christian community is not all about fun, though it typically is
- It is not about the people, it is about Jesus
- It is not about the activities, it is about the relationships those activities nurture
- It is not about being safe and comfortable, it is about making yourself vulnerable enough for other people to really see you
- Christian community is not about keeping your life private, but learning how to share your life with others, and sharing in their lives
- Christian community is not mandatory – you don't have to do it
- But if you are not a part of a gospel-oriented, Christian community, then you are denying yourself the resources God has provided to help you live the best life possible
- God created you to glorify him, bless others, and to grow faith
- The best way to do that is in Christian community
- How do you start? Get to know people better
- I have said a few times I love getting together with people over coffee
- You make the time and I'll buy the coffee
- “Aren't you too busy?” If I ever get too busy to meet with people, something is wrong
- Get into a Life Group – CCFV.life
- Attend events that we put on
- Get involved in service – there is a place literally for every single person in this building – come be a part of sharing Jesus with others through our service

- Don't wait to be invited – if you are invited, respond, but if you are not invited, then you invite someone – it is for your own good
- If you do those things – you will start to experience Christian community
- And yeah, sometimes it is going to make you uncomfortable, might sting, may even hurt – but it is a good kind of hurt
- We'll end with a Bob Dylan quote

**Behind every beautiful thing, there's been some kind of pain.**

- If as Ernest Hemingway said, 'Life is pain', let's make sure the pain we experience is for our good
- Get connected – it is so worth it
- Come see us if you have any questions
- **Pray!**