

FOLLOW UP FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

- ◆ How could being part of a church like the one at Corinth hurt the spiritual life of a believer?
- ◆ How should a believer respond to a church filled with problems and division?
- ◆ Why do you think Paul put so much effort into trying to help and restore the church at Corinth?
- ◆ What do you think the Church at Corinth needed to do to become a successful growing church?
- ◆ How is the life of a believer a fragrance to the world and to God?

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2ND LETTER TO THE CHURCH AT CORINTH **RESTORING TRUTH—CHAPTER 2.1-17**

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Paul was deeply concerned for the Church at Corinth. He had visited there twice and was the founding pastor of this church. Yet, he finds it necessary to write a letter instead of coming to see them a third time. Paul's concern for them is shown in his desire for the church to restore a sinful member. Paul wants them to see that either a person is all right or all wrong and how it effects the smell or fragrance of their life. This second chapter is an overview of his goals and concerns as well as his personal struggles with the church at Corinth.

THE DELAY IN COMING

[2 Cor. 2:1] But I determined this for my own sake, that I would not come to you in sorrow again. [2] For if I cause you sorrow, who then makes me glad but the one whom I made sorrowful? [3] This is the very thing I wrote you, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow from those who ought to make me rejoice; having confidence in you all that my joy would be the joy of you all. [4] For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.

- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.1-2 Why is Paul delaying his coming to the church at Corinth?
- ◆ How would this make a visit difficult or unfruitful?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.3 Why did he write his previous letter(s)?
- ◆ What was the goal of his previous letters?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.4 How would you describe Paul's attitude toward the church at Corinth?
- ◆ What results was Paul hoping to accomplish with a letter that was written in "anguish of heart?"
- ◆ How could a letter be seen as the best way of handling the problems at the church?
- ◆ How could a letter be seen as a poor way of handling the problems at the church?

- ◆ How does experience and learning come into our understanding of God's will?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.15 How are the lives of believers described?
- ◆ READ Revelation 5.8; 8.3-5 How does this help us understand how our lives and prayers are brought to God?
- ◆ What happens to the prayers of the saints and how are they answered?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.15-16 How can the aroma or fragrance be both life to some and death to others?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.17 What is the difference in how people approach the sharing of the Word of God?
- ◆ Does this mean you should not pay someone for preaching and teaching the Word of God? See 1 Timothy 5.17-18 and 1 Cor. 9.4-14 Key vs. 14)
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.17 What is the key to Paul's sharing of the Gospel (good news) of Christ?

- ♦ Titus is a link between the church at Corinth and Paul. See 2 Cor. 7.6; 7.13-14; 8.6, 13, 23; 12.18.
- ♦ READ Acts 16.6-10 Paul is writing to describe how he was drawn to the regions that included the church at Corinth. If not for this vision there might not be a church at Corinth. What are some possible reasons Paul reminded the church at Corinth of this fact?



THE FRAGRANCE OF A BELIEVER'S LIFE

[2 Cor. 2.14] But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. [15] For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; [16] to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? [17] For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

- ♦ 2 Cor. 2.14 What is Paul's attitude toward seeking Christ directions and guidance?

- ♦ How could this be seen in light of the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 18.15-17?

RESTORING THRU FORGIVENESS AND COMFORT

[2 Cor. 2.5] But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree—in order not to say too much—to all of you. [6] Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, [7] so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. [8] Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. [9] For to this end also I wrote, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. [10] But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, [11] so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

- ♦ 2 Cor. 2.5 What appears to be wrong in the church that Paul wants to deal with?
- ♦ 2 Cor. 2.6 How did the church respond to the situation?
- ♦ READ 1 Cor. 5.9-13 Describe how Paul wants them to deal with sinful people inside of the church?

- ◆ How is the way believers respond to sinful people inside the church different than the way they respond to sinful people outside of the church?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.7 How does Paul temper his previous instructions?
- ◆ What would it require of the person who is being disciplined if the church was going to restore him?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.8 Could a church exercise love and skip the discipline and expect the same results? Why or Why not?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.9 How could discipline and love be seen as test of a church?
- ◆ READ Revelation 2.20 What Problem did Jesus have with the church at Thyatira? (for further study see also Rev. 2.4; 2.14)
- ◆ How could the directions of Paul to the church at Corinth helped them deal with such problem?

- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.10 How does Paul approach church discipline and church forgiveness?
- ◆ What do you consider the hardest part of forgiving someone who has sinned or hurt the church?
- ◆ 2 Cor. 2.11 What is the key reason a church should work to restore a person into full fellowship?
- ◆ How can restoring both help the person and the church in defeating Satan's schemes?



GUIDANCE FROM GOD

[2 Cor. 2.12] Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord, [13] I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia.

- ◆ Who was Paul hoping to meet up with at Troas?
- ◆ How did this event help him to continue his trip?