

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 04 March 2018.....1Cor 1-3.....United in Christ
- 2) 11 March.....1Cor 4-6.....Glorifying God
- 3) 18 March.....1Cor 7.....Keeping Commitments
- 4) 25 March.....1Cor 8-10.....Influencing for Christ
- 5) 01 April.....1Cor 15-16.....Assurance of the Resurrection
- 6) 08 April.....1Cor 11.....Remembering the Sacrifice
- 7) 15 April.....1Cor 12 & 14.....Serving God's People
- 8) 22 April.....1Cor 13.....Understanding Love
- 9) 29 April.....2Cor 1-2.....**Enjoying God's Comfort**
- 10) 06 May.....2Cor 3-5.....Displaying the Gospel
- 11) 13 May.....2Cor 5-7.....Becoming New
- 12) 20 May.....2Cor 7-9.....Giving Faithfully
- 13) 27 May.....2Cor 10-13.....Finding Strength

INTRODUCTION

What Happened Between 1Corinthians & 2Corinthians?

- The Corinthians succumbed to certain false apostles who had cleverly turned the church against Paul.....2Cor 11:13-15
- Paul left Ephesus (Macedonia) to try to correct the wrong perceptions of the Corinthians, but it was painful2Cor 2:1
- After returning to Ephesus he wrote a now-lost letter of rebuke to the Corinthians, sending it by Titus2Cor 2:3-4
- When Paul and Titus finally made it back to Corinth they found that a majority of the church had repented and been reconciled to Paul2Cor 7:5-7
- Paul wrote this 3rd letter that we know as 2nd Corinthians to express his relief of the good news Titus brought back to him

How do churches handle major problems today?

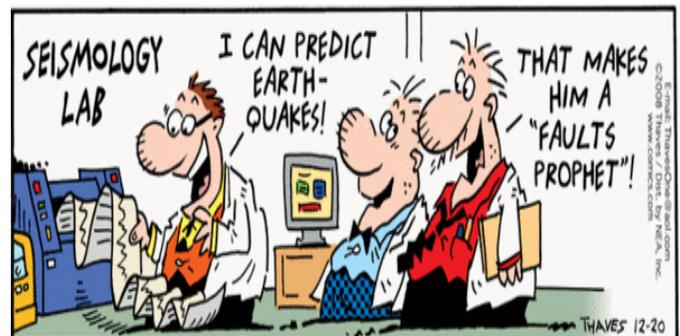
- Some wait till the roof caves in before they tackle tough issues
- Some look for another pastor, while some look for another church
- Others turn minor problems into mountains
- ...and others turn major problems into molehills
- Consider how Paul handled a major problem of dealing with false teachers, false practices, and false accusations here in 2Cor
 - ♦ The Apostle Paul wasted no time to fight and win the battle against false teachers, false practices and false accusations – and his communication means at that time period was how fast could he & Titus hoof it from Ephesus to Corinth

Essence of 2 Corinthians

- Paul provides more autobiographical information about himself in this letter than in any of his other writings
- Both of his letters seemed to have been written within 4-6 months (~A.D. 55), so Paul moved fast on all the issues such as accusations that his word could not be trusted, that he was in the ministry just for the money, and he wasn't a genuine Apostle
- Chapters 1-7 – Paul explains the reason for changing his plans
- Chapters 8-9 – Paul encourages the Corinthians to complete their fund raising for the saints in Judea
- Chapters 10-13 – Paul stresses the certainty of his coming, his authority as an apostle, and his readiness to invoke discipline

Passage	Comments
2Cor 1:1-10	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul starts off with affirming his Apostleship by the will of God – not by man or by himself • vv4-7. God comforts us so we can comfort others. This begs 3 questions, "How does God comfort us?" "Why doesn't God comfort others as He comforted us?" and "Why does God need us as a middleman?" ♦ Consider this. An unsaved person, coworker, or relative doesn't have God in their life, so who better can be used to be God's hands, feet, & heart during their times of trouble or heartache?

Passage	Comments
1:11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ And consider this. For those who intimately know God and His word it is indeed a comfort to realize God will see us through every catastrophe and mature us to be more like His Son every day. <p>Effectively praying for missionaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul eagerly encouraged prayers be made on his behalf as he took the Gospel to the Gentiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Strive with me in prayersRom 15:30 ♦ Pray for my deliverancePhp 1:19 ♦ Pray that I may come to youPhm 1:22 • In like fashion, Missionaries covet our prayers for safety, deliverance and success in reaching others • We shortchange them and ourselves when we fail to strive in prayer with them and for them • God will accomplish His will in the work of each missionary, but the load would be easier to bear if we pray for them because God wants to work through our prayers to receive glory John 15:7-8
1:12-20	<p>Paul's Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v17 – Paul was accused of being wishy washy or hypocritical (his word was both yes & no) • Paul retorted that all of God's promises, which he thoroughly taught, were positive. In other words, they would be fulfilled as intended
1:21-24	<p>Established, Anointed, and Sealed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has the bulk of the responsibility to grow us, but we have the responsibility to OBEY • v24 – By Faith We Stand. Our faith should include virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness and love, which makes us fruitful for Christ & able to stand 2Peter 1:5-10
2:1-4	<p>Purpose of Godly Rebuke is to Restore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Godly rebuke is emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually draining for all parties • But to ignore major problems within the church is to invite worse anguish • If Paul opted to ignore the problems within the Corinthian church, what would have been the result: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The problem would have naturally healed itself <input type="checkbox"/> The church would have imploded and dissolved <input type="checkbox"/> The church would have lost its testimony and become ineffective (losing its candlestick) • Why did the Corinthians even need Paul? Why not rely on the Apostolic-appointed elders to fix things? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The elders may not have been spiritually mature <input type="checkbox"/> The elders might have been part of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> The congregation refused to listen to their elders as they refused to listen to even the Apostle Paul <input type="checkbox"/> Other reasons?



Passage	Comments
2:5-11	<p>Reconciliation with an Offender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vv5-7. This repentant individual could be the scoundrel in 1Cor 5:1-5 who was sleeping with his step-mom, or possibly he was a false apostle. Either way, Paul says to truly forgive & “comfort” them Paul also teaches we should forgive as Christ forgives us (Eph 4:32), which is complete & total. Our sins are no longer remembered, and He treats us as if we never sinned in the first place
When Not to Restore Fully	<p>When Is It Appropriate to Forgive but Not Fully Restore?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider this. If someone doesn't ask or want our forgiveness, then we are not obligated to forgive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which thief on the cross did Jesus NOT forgive? The one who didn't want His forgiveness. Do you forgive a child molester who serves his time in prison and asks for forgiveness & then let them work again in the nursery? Only if you are a fool! Remember, we live in a fallen world, so one must be faithful in small things before being given greater responsibility. IOW, be judicial in the restoration process. Just as a thief should not be a Treasurer, a child molester should be a safe distance from children Also Note. We may be asked to forgive a transgressor 70x7, but forgiveness does not change one's behavior. What about our Age of Grace? Yes, child molesters, murderers, adulterers, rebellious sons, etc., can now receive forgiveness like the 2nd thief on the cross thanks to Christ being the perfect sacrifice and High Priest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whereas in the Old Covenant molesters, murderers, adulterers were taken to the local rock quarry, the Law (being imperfect) provided no means for an atoning sacrifice or grace or mercy for such atrocious sins In the NT, we virtually see all sins being forgivable (e.g., murder, molestation, immorality); EXCEPT for “blaspheme of the Holy Spirit” which we take to mean rejection of Christ's atonement on the Cross. Mark 3:29 Atrocious sins in the NT (e.g., sleeping with one's step-mother – 1Cor 5) resulted in expulsion from the church but not loss of salvation or loss of one's life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> However. God seemed to treat lying and false judging by His own children as more atrocious. Recall that Ananias & Sapphira died for lying, and others incurred illness or death for judging others wrongly Acts 5:1-11; 1Cor 11:30 <p>Scripture Precedence → Recall David & Bathsheba. David's adulterous tryst with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Uriah, warranted the death penalty for David. Yet God forgave David for breaking His rules and once again extended His love to him. BUT life would NOT be the same since it would have big scars. David lost 4 of his sons & almost his kingdom 2Sam 12:24</p>
2:12-17	<p>We always Triumph in Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v13 – “Titus my brother” – Titus is mentioned 12x in the NT, 8x here in 2Corinthians – He is Paul's trusted “partner & co-worker” 2Cor 8:23 Can we be considered a trusted partner or co-worker in the ministry? How can we? vv15-17 – We are a special fragrance to both saved & unsaved. In essence, people will remember us for our pleasant testimony just as they recall a pleasing smell or a cheerful disposition

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Patience is a good thing for most things, except when it comes to atrocious sins, false teachings, and false accusations. Expediency is often warranted to minimize damage and restore fellowship.
- ...and though we are commanded to forgive others as Christ forgave us – totally, yet we restore judiciously and with “comfort”

NEXT WEEK: 2Cor 3-5. We are given the ministry of reconciliation to fix broken relationships → this is a priority for God's people

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