**2 CORINTHIANS 2**

**RECOVERING THE FALLEN**

Because the first letter that Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church was a rebuke, he is a little hesitant to show up and have to correct them even more. In the first letter he had to tell them to stop abusing the gifts… Stop getting drunk at communion… Stop teaching heresy like soul sleep… And for heaven’s sake, SOMEBODY rebuke the leader who had married his stepmother!

He wanted to celebrate the grace of God with them, NOT chew them out for behaving badly… And so he HAD delayed his arrival so that when he DID visit, it would be a positive event… He wanted to spare them the embarrassment of being chastised… Listen, starting in CH 1:23…

**2 Corinthians 1:23** Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. 24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

**2 Corinthians 2:1** But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. (Like the first letter)

2 For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me?

* **NLT** - For if I cause you grief, who will make me glad? Certainly not someone I have grieved.
* **FOR EXAMPLE** - I always cringe at the videos of guys proposing on a hot air balloon ride… They should **wait** until the **END** of the ride to drop to one knee… **WHY?** - If she says “No”… That turns into the longest and most **awkward** ride ever!
* Paul didn’t want his visit to be awkward.
* He will develop this theme of forgiving one another in more detail later but he continues to “Esplain himself.” 😊

**ABOUT WHAT I WROTE…**

3 And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is *the joy* of you all.

* **Paul: I delayed my arrival so that we could share joy, not sorrow.**

**THAT FIRST LETTER WAS HARD**

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

* **Last week we determined together that we would NOT hold grudges against ministers or ministries that had hurt us, remember? YES… It WILL be easier in heaven – Start here though. JESUS said to!**

**FORGIVE THE FALLEN**

5 But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe. 6 This punishment which *was inflicted* by the majority *is* sufficient for such a man, **(1 COR 5:1)** 7 so that, on the contrary, you *ought* rather to forgive and comfort *him,* lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. 8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm *your* love to him.

* **THIS IS JUST AWESOME.**
* The Apostle had recommended that they ask the man to leave the church, UNTIL he had changed his lifestyle and repented and returned.
* They did that. It worked. But some were still unwilling to forgive the man.
* Paul tells them to forgive him and receive him back into fellowship.
  + “But what he did was so blatantly against the scripture…” Some would say…
  + Yes it was… And so was all of our sins that WE WOULD LIKE to have forgotten! RIGHT? ***(Jeepers!, IF only WE could forget them)***

**POP QUIZ!**

9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. 10 Now whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive.* For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

* **NLT - I wrote to you as I did to test you and see if you would fully comply with my instructions. 10 When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ's authority for your benefit, 11 so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.**

**Chuck Smith**: Use the three “R”s against Satan –

**Recognize**, (Ephesians 6:12) **Resist** (James 4:7)

& **Rejoice** (Matthew 5:12) because Jesus has won

***ABOUT FORGIVING***

* LOOK - Not to get too heavy here today… But do you remember what Jesus said at the end of the “Lord’s Prayer?” We like to skip it sometimes… The Lord’s prayer ended with:
  + **Matthew 6:13** And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. 14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 ***But if you do not*** forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**I have never seen V14 & 15 on a kitchen plaque**

SO… The answer to the difficult question:

**“Can you ever forgive them, him, her?”**

IS… Yes. Yes, with God’s help.

**TRIUMPH IN CHRIST**

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas **(West coast of Turkey)** to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, **(After the door in Ephesus was closed)** 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia. **(N. Greece)**

* Why was Paul so bummed out about NOT hearing from Titus?
* Because Titus was bringing the response to the first letter to the Corinthians… IE, Paul was anxious to hear HOW they had responded to his rebuke.
* Like the surveys we now receive asking for our opinion… Paul wanted to know! Paul found Titus in Macedonia.

**NOT FOR SALE**

14 Now thanks *be* to God who **always leads us in triumph in Christ**, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

16 To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

* Paul compares the Gospel to a favorite smell… Have you ever opened your front door to the aroma of homemade bread? Lovely!
* Have you been to a mall just when the Cinnabon takes the fresh rolls out?
* How about opening the door… Taking a deep breath… and realizing that you are having steamed broccoli for dinner… again. YUM!
* The Gospel smells like dessert to believers but somehow smells rotten to unbelievers… THAT, is just sad to me.

17 For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

* **CEV - A lot of people try to get rich from preaching God's message. But we are God's sincere messengers, and by the power of Christ we speak our message with God as our witness.**

SO… In CH 2 the Apostle encourages to be forgiving of one another… And if we will NOT be forgiving, we stink!

Don’t stink up the place beloved, forgive one another!