

PRODIGAL

CHURCH II

A SERIES IN 2 CORINTHIANS



PRODIGAL CHURCH (SEASON 2) - RIDE OR DIE

Community Group Study Guide 2 Corinthians 7:2-16 - Week of October 31, 2021

Introduction

- Pastor Jan told a story of how his family upholds the “Ride or Die” slogan.
- In the text from this week, Paul shows his commitment to the Corinth Church. Even though this church has questioned his integrity, he cares for them and commits to love them like they are family.
- Speaking as a father, Paul calls the church to make room in their hearts for him in the same way that he has kept his heart open to them and Christ made room in his heart for us. See 2 Cor. 6:11-13.

You know someone is in your heart when:

1. You're willing to be grieved by them

- You're willing to get hurt; that's what it means to love. To start a relationship requires one to have an open heart and allow potential for another person to cause grief in their life.
- God opened his heart to us when he made us (and experienced grief for doing so).
- Jesus made himself vulnerable and was rejected.
- v. 4-5: Paul has troubles inside when he hears about troubles in a church that he planted. Not many people understand the level of grief for the church that he is talking about in his great excursus in 2 Cor. 2:13-7:4. This is because they don't view church like family. One can't understand this anxiety until they take ownership for the good of the church.
- v6-7: Paul was downcast because he wrapped his joy in the joy of those in the church.
- Paul opened his heart to the people in the Corinth Church, and, in doing so, grieved. When we love others in the church, we're opening our hearts for grief as The Father, Son and Holy Spirit did for us.

2. You're willing to grieve them

- v13: You show true love for people when you are willing to share with them hard truths that hurt.
- Jesus spoke to people directly. He knew that sometimes it took hard, provocative words in order to grieve people, and stir them toward repentance. See Matthew 16:23.
- We need to have a church culture where we can speak about anything together because we love each other. We need a culture where there's no self-censorship because we know that we're family. There's no other forum in the world where people can gather and share ideas in this way.

3. You're bold around them

- v4: “Great boldness” means “freedom to speak.”
- John 16:25: Jesus increases the level of clarity with which he speaks when the disciples show themselves mature and capable to handle it. Paul acknowledges such maturity in those in the Corinth Church in these verses.
- Growth in relationship and the sincerity of love toward another person are marked by a decrease in the amount of cushion time one feels is needed before one delivers hard words to the other person.

4. You're willing to eagerly repent

- v2: Before poking at the specks (or logs) in the Corinthian's eyes, Paul made sure that he did not have anything in his.
- Paul is challenging the view of sanctification that was promoted by the false teachers in Corinth who were questioning his integrity for not visiting them as he originally had hoped. He doesn't believe he sinned against them, though they claimed that he wronged the church. He is challenging the measure with which the false teachers were measuring him.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To understand that Christians should always die and live together.

Heart

To fight to maintain true love for other Christians, especially if they differ from us on matters of conscience.

Hands

To seek to preserve a culture of truthful, sincere and loving communication in the church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next **Baptism Seminar** will be at **1pm on November 14**. Sign up here:

brookline.mosaicboston.com/baptism

Sign up [here](#) to volunteer to help with the preparations, setup and teardown for our **December 4 (at 6pm) Members' Meeting**.

Sign up to join a **service team** here: <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve>.

- Paul is chipping away at a view that was being promoted by the false teachers that Christians (and teachers) are sinless. He is clarifying here that he doesn't believe the Christian life consists of sinlessness, but of sinning less. The Christian life is one that consists of constantly repenting of sin and believing that Christ bore the just penalty that was due for your sin.
- Repentance is the beginning of Christian life, but it's also a part of every step and the means for our growth.

5. You're willing to joyfully forgive

- v9-10: "True" repentance produces a godly grief for sin.
- Godly grief and worldly grief look very similar on the surface. You don't have to be a Christian to feel bad about messing up when you sin.
- To identify the kind of grief that you're experiencing ask: (1) Is it grief over sin? Or is it grief over being exposed? (2) Is it grief over sin? Or grief over consequences of sin?
- Any sorrow for sin that is not rooted in grief for having sinned against a holy God is not godly grief. Our grief over sin should be like that when David when Nathan revealed his sin, and Peter after betraying Christ. Such godly grief always leads to repentance of sin.
- In verse 8, Paul uses a word for repentance that means something more like remorse, regret, and insincere sorrow. In verse 9, though, he intentionally uses a word for "repentance" (metanoia) that appeals to a true turning of one's mind and change of heart.
- Luke 22:54-62: Peter, at first, didn't realize who he sinned against, but he later did (perhaps, while seeing Christ wearing a crown of thorns on the cross). It was his understanding that he betrayed the Son of God and sinned against God, that led him to repent and place his faith in Christ to have restored relationship with God.
- True repentance doesn't look for excuses, cause one to lawyer up or look between a person and himself/herself, but looks to God and sees how it grieves God and crucified Christ.
- We should repent before committing sin; we should mortify it on a daily basis.
- Too many people continue to sin and limp through life. Only grieving that you have sinned against God will allow you to have true victory and freedom over sin. Once you experience this freedom, all you want to do is tell people about it.
- v11: The Corinth Church heard Paul's words, acknowledged their sin and did repent. They grieved over their sin, acknowledged it before God, received Christ's grace for it, and it led to action/change in their life.
- All Christian lives should be marked by change that stems from repentance from sin.

6. You're comforted by them

- v12-16: The "one who did wrong" is the man of 1 Cor. 5. The one "who suffered the wrong" is his father.
- Paul is saying that they repented and it's, therefore, clear to him that the Corinthians are true believers. This is the source of Paul's comfort (as compared, to the grief that he experienced that was discussed earlier).

7. You'd die or live for them

- v3: "To die together and live together" is family language. Paul is saying, "I'm not condemning you. We're family. Brothers and sisters. No matter how disobedient the Corinthians had been in certain ways and no matter how unfaithful they've been to their Christian calling, he never lost confidence in their being real Christians."
- Paul starts with "die together" before "live together" to show the seriousness of his love for the Corinthians.
- v12: In appealing to the Corinthians to "make room for us," Paul is asking the Corinthians to keep their hearts open to him, and not legalistically stigmatize him for not upholding the unbiblical standards set by the false teachers. Paul wants them to make room for him in their hearts as a repentant sinner who is led by the Spirit, just as they are, and not group him or any other Christians into an unrighteous box for any reason.
- In our day, we can't create a class system, as warranted by the false teachers of our day, in the church. We can't make claims that all Christians should get vaccinated or should not get vaccinated. We can't close our hearts off to other true Christians when we differ with them on matters of conscience. We should view Christians as "our people," those with whom we ride and die together because they're made Christian/righteous, just like us, by the blood of Christ.

Conclusion

- Jesus lived with family. Jesus died for His family. Jesus makes room for us. Have you made room for Him? Have you made room in your hearts for those whom He has accepted? Make room in your hearts for us. Just like Jesus made room in His heart for you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read 2 Corinthians 7:2-16

1. Can someone take a moment to review the main sections of the sermon?
2. Which of the sermon sections revealed something in the text to you in a fresh way?
3. **Read verses 8-11.** What are the similarities and differences between godly grief and worldly grief?
4. Can someone take a moment to describe a situation in which they experienced godly grief?
5. How does the experience of godly grief connect with repentance in the Christian life?
6. The main sermon sections teach us a lot about having a loving heart toward those with whom we have relationships. How did this sermon help you gain a deeper understanding about relationships with other people? With other Christians?
7. **Read verse 3.** What does it mean to “make room in your heart” for another person?
8. What gives Christians the ability to make and keep room in their hearts for relationships with other people (and Christians), even when others sin against them or disagree with them about something?
9. **See verses 4, 6, 7, and 13.** Why is the repentance of the Corinthians such a source of comfort for Paul? Why is the repentance of other Christians a source of comfort for us today, especially when tension in the community are running high about something?
10. When we see the observe the of other Christians, how should it inform the way with which we walk forward together with them in all seasons of life?