



“The Fruit of Repentance”

2 Corinthians Chapter 7

One commentator writes, “One of the most difficult things to do is to rebuild a shattered relationship. This Paul tried to do in 2 Corinthians, and especially in chapters 6 and 7. Unfortunately, there are many shattered relationships today - in homes, churches, and ministries - and they can be repaired and strengthened only when people face problems honestly, deal with them biblically and lovingly, and seek to get right with God.”

> (v2-8) Let us observe the true fruit of a minister!

- (1) Begins with an OPEN HEART! (v2) (ref. 6:11)
- (2) Reveals a CLEAN HEART! (v2)
- (3) Produces a SACRIFICIAL HEART! (v3)
- (4) Displays an HONEST HEART! (v4-8)
 - *Boldness & Boasting*
 - *Comfort & Joy*
 - *Conflicts & Fears*
 - *No regrets, yet regrets* (observe the Minister’s ministry in 2 Timothy Ch. 3:10 – 4:5)

- Insight: Who is this inspirational disciple named TITUS?

Titus means *pleasant*. Titus is a "partner and fellow worker" (2 Cor 8:23) of the apostle Paul. Although Titus is not mentioned in the Book of Acts, Paul's letters reveal that he was the man of the hour at a number of key points in Paul's life.

Paul first mentions Titus in Gal 2:1-3. As an uncircumcised Gentile, Titus accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem as a living example of a great theological truth: Gentiles need not be circumcised in order to be saved.

Titus next appears in connection with Paul's mission to Corinth. While Paul was in Ephesus during his third missionary journey, he received disturbing news from the church at Corinth. After writing two letters and paying one visit to Corinth, Paul sent Titus to Corinth with a third letter (2 Cor 7:6-9). When Titus failed to return with news of the situation, Paul left Ephesus and, with a troubled spirit (2 Cor 7:5), traveled north to Troas (2 Cor 2:12-13).

Finally, in Macedonia, Titus met the anxious apostle with the good news that the church at Corinth had repented. In relief and joy, Paul wrote yet another letter to Corinth (2 Corinthians), perhaps from Philippi, sending it again through Titus (2 Cor 7:5-16). In addition, Titus was given responsibility for completing the collection for the poor of Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:6,16-24; 12:18).

Titus appears in another important role on the island of Crete (Titus 1:4). Beset by a rise in false teaching and declining morality, Titus was told by Paul to strengthen the churches by teaching sound doctrine and good works, and by appointing elders in every city (Titus 1:5). Paul then urged Titus to join him in Nicopolis (on the west coast of Greece) for winter (Titus 3:12). Not surprisingly, Titus was remembered in church tradition as the first bishop of Crete.

A final reference to Titus comes from 2 Tim 4:10, where Paul remarks in passing that Titus has departed for mission work in Dalmatia (modern Yugoslavia).

Titus was a man for the tough tasks. According to Paul, he was dependable (2 Cor 8:17), reliable (2 Cor 7:6), and diligent (2 Cor 8:17); and he had a great capacity for human affection (2 Cor 7:13-15). Possessing both strength and tact, Titus calmed a desperate situation on more than one occasion. He is a good model for Christians who are called to live out their witness in trying circumstances. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

> (v9-16) Let us observe the True Fruit of the Church!
(v9-12) Compare “godly sorrow” vs. “the sorrow of the world”:

> What is GODLY SORROW?

- Produces **REPENTANCE!** (Today we have “rehab” instead of repentance! Repentance is a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God (Matthew 9:13; Luke 5:32); a change of mind (Genesis 6:6-7) or a feeling of remorse or regret for past conduct (Matthew 27:3). True fruitful repentance is two sides of the same coin: by repentance, one turns away from sin; by faith, one turns toward God in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a twofold turning, or conversion, is necessary for entrance into the kingdom (Matthew 18:3). “*Unless you repent,*” said Jesus, “*you will all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:3,5). This is the negative, or judgmental, side of Jesus' message. The positive, or merciful, side is seen in these words: “*There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents*” (Luke 15:10.) Which leads to **SALVATION!**

- Produces **DILIGENCE!** (Diligence is true repentance that eagerly seeks righteousness.)

- **CLEARs** oneself! (To live the new life in Christ, whereas to erase one’s past. “He/she used to be a party animal, but now their life has changed, they’re a Christian.”)

- **INDIGNATION** against sin! (A holy anger/displeasure with sin and the shame it has caused the name of Christ.)

- Breeds the **FEAR** of God! (A feeling of reverence, awe, and respect toward God. The Scriptures declare, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Proverbs 1:7) as well as “the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 16:16.)

- A vehement **DESIRE!** (To live for God and to restore the relationship with the one they sinned against.)

- **ZEAL!** (To love Jesus, proclaim the gospel and to love others.)

- **VINDICATION!** (The repentant sinner seeks to bring restitution no matter the cost (i.e. Zacchaeus – Luke 19:1-10 - *Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked*

up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

> What is **WORLDLY SORROW**?

- No repentance. (No change toward God or humanity.)

- Which produces death. (Dead relationship to God and others. One author writes, "Human sorrow is unsanctified remorse and has no redemptive capability. It is nothing more than the wounded pride of getting caught in a sin and having one's lusts go unfulfilled. That kind of sorrow leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, self-pity, and hopelessness. People can die from such sorrow (cf. Ps. 32:3, 4)."

> Let us look at examples of "Worldly sorrow" vs. "Godly Sorrow":

- Cain & Abel - The New Testament refers to Cain in three places. Abel's offering to God was "a more excellent sacrifice" than Cain's because Abel was "righteous." His heart was right with God, and Cain's was not (Heb 11:4). John calls Cain "the wicked one" and asks why he murdered his brother; the answer was, "Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12). Jude warns his readers to beware of those who have "gone in the way of Cain" (Jude 11).

- Judas & Peter – Judas was filled with remorse and went out and hung himself, why? Judas did not love Jesus, God, nor his fellow man. Judas loved himself, he was greedy and empty of soul, he lived for the moment not eternity; he on emotion not devotion; he lived a lie not willing to face the truth regarding his sins, thus unwilling to repent.

Peter on the other hand was a man of confession and repentance, whereas each time he was defiant or sinful he humbly turned God and his Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness and hope!

> (v13-16) Let us practice the true fruit of a Christian fellowship!

- Seven key traits:

#1 – COMFORT!

#2 – JOY AND REJOICING!

- Benefits of feeling more joy, promotes a healthier lifestyle, boosts immune system, fights stress and pain, supports longevity.

C.H. Spurgeon writes about joy, "Why should Christians be such a happy people? Why, it is good in all ways. It is good for our God; it gives Him honor among the sons of men when we are glad. It is good for us; it makes us strong. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." It is good for the ungodly; for when they see Christians glad, they long to be believers themselves. It is good for our fellow Christians; it comforts them and tends to cheer them. Whereas, if we look gloomy we shall spread the

disease, and others will be wretched and gloomy too. For all these reasons, and for many more that can be given, it is a good and pleasant thing that a believer should delight himself in God.”

#3 – REFRESHING!

#4 – TRUTH!

- Understanding TRUTH - Conformity to fact or actuality; faithfulness to an original or to a standard. In the Old and New Testaments, truth is a fundamental moral and personal quality of God. God proclaimed that He is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth" (Ex 34:6). He is a "God of truth...without injustice" (Deut 32:4). Furthermore, all of His paths are "mercy and truth" (Ps 25:10). Frequently in the psalms, God's mercy and His truth are joined together (Ps 57:3; 89:14; 115:1). All of God's works, precepts, and judgments are done in righteousness and truth (Ps 96:13; 111:8).

Truth is a moral and personal characteristic of God: He is "the God of truth" (Isa 65:16). The psalmist declared, "Your law is truth" (119:142), "all Your commandments are truth" (119:151), and "the entirety of Your word is truth" (119:160). Because of His perfect nature and will, God has to speak and act in truth; He cannot lie (1 Sam 15:29; Heb 6:18; James 1:17-18).

Jesus is the Word of God who became flesh, "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). All Jesus said was true, because He told the truth which He heard from God (John 8:40). He promised His disciples that He would send "the Spirit of truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) - a Helper who would abide in Christians forever (John 14:16), testify

about Jesus (John 15:26), guide Christians into all truth (John 16:13), and glorify Jesus (John 16:14).

God is truth; the Spirit is truth; and Jesus is truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Jesus and the revelation which the Spirit of truth gave through His apostles are the final, ultimate revelation and definition of truth about God, man, redemption, history, and the world. "The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

#5 – AFFECTIONS!

#6 – OBEDIENCE!

#7 – CONFIDENCE!