

- 5) Paul assured them that he had also forgiven the offenders (v.10).

b. We must forgive lest Satan should get an advantage of us.

- 1) Verse 11 is a very important verse.
- 2) During Bible college, one year I was on the wrestling team. I soon learned that if I let the opponent get the advantage over me by getting on top of me, I was in big trouble. When I was on top, I had the advantage, but when he was on top of me, I was in danger of being pinned and losing the match.
- 3) If you do not forgive someone who has offended you, you are allowing Satan to get an advantage in your life. He gets on top, and you are then in trouble.
- 4) Satan uses many devices or carefully thought plans to trap us.
- 5) God is warning you that if you do not forgive others, you are walking into a trap of Satan. You are allowing him to get advantage over you. When you refuse to forgive, you hurt yourself. Jesus warned of this in (Matthew 6:14-15) **"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."**
- 6) Love empathetically forgives the repentant.

Conclusion: This passage teaches us three important lessons about biblical love. 1) Love tenderly confronts sin. 2) Love prudently administers punishment. 3) Love empathetically forgives the repentant. Have you been showing this kind of biblical love to those around you? If not, you need to ask God to forgive you and help you, and then do what needs to be done.

If you have done wrong, you must humble yourself, repent, and ask those you hurt to forgive you.

If you have not yet trusted Christ to save you, you have offended him by your sin and rejection of him. You need to seek his forgiveness.

Song: His Way with Thee - 367

Biblical Love

28 April 2024 AM – Text: 2 Corinthians 2:1-11 – Topic: Love

Introduction: The Apostle Paul, after starting the church in Corinth, learned of some serious problems in the church. He wrote 1 Corinthians to address those problems. This helped to resolve some of the problems, but not everyone in the church understood his motives. Here in 2 Corinthians 2:1-11, Paul seeks to correct the misunderstanding by explaining that his motives were based on biblical love.

Biblical love or agape love is the sacrificial giving of oneself to meet the needs of another, expecting nothing in return. This love is an action, not a feeling. It is a choice, not a response.

Transition: This passage teaches us three important lessons about biblical love, which can help us in our relationships with others.

1. Love tenderly confronts sin, 2Co 2:1-4.

a. With tears, Paul had urged church discipline.

- 1) He knew that his first letter had caused sorrow in the congregation.
- 2) He had confronted various issues including divisions and jealousy, lawsuits, abuse of the Lord's Supper, food offered to idols, striving for the best spiritual gifts, marriage during persecution, and the resurrection of believers, but one major issue was that a church member was living in immorality. He told the congregation that they must discipline that member and not fellowship with him that he might see his error and repent.
- 3) Paul now assures them that confronting those issues gave him much affliction and anguish of heart (v.4). He had written the letter with many tears (v.4).
- 4) Any time that you or I must confront sin in another person's life, it ought to grieve our hearts. We must do so with many prayers and tears.

b. Paul did this, not to grieve, but in love.

- 1) Addressing these problems saddened him, and he knew that it grieved them. He was now desired that the next time he visited them, they could all rejoice together.
- 2) He assured them that his motive in writing the first time

was not just to cause them to grieve (though he knew that happened). Rather, his motive was that they might know the abundant love he had for them.

- 3) Paul was able to say this because biblical love does not overlook sin, it tenderly confronts it. (Proverbs 27:6)
"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." (Hebrews 12:6-8) **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."**
- 4) Parents who claim that they love their children too much to physically punish them, have been deceived. Letting a child think that sin has no consequences allows him to develop a sinful lifestyle and blinds him to the wickedness of his sin. This will make it more difficult for him to see his sinfulness and need of Christ's forgiveness, and will ultimately lead him to hell. That is not love! God's counsel is truly loving. (Proverbs 13:24) **"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes. Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."**
- 5) Biblical love tenderly confronts sin.

2. Love prudently administers punishment, 2Co 2:5-6.

a. Paul was not seeking to punish the innocent.

- 1) He assured the congregation that he was not seeking to make all of them grieve, but that only those guilty might grieve.
- 2) He did not want to lay a burden on those who were not guilty.
- 3) When I was in high school, I remember my gym teacher often punished our entire class for the disobedience of one boy. That was unfair. I guess he hoped that the rest of us would shame the offender into doing right. Paul was not trying to do that, and we ought to avoid it as well.

b. Punishment accomplished need not continue.

- 1) Paul concluded that when the congregation disciplined the offending man, that was sufficient.
- 2) It appears that the offender had repented and sought forgiveness. When you or I sin, the right and the wise thing for us to do is to admit our guilt, repent, and seek the forgiveness of those we hurt. This is not just saying, **"I am sorry."** It is saying, **"I was wrong, would you please forgive me."** This calls for the offended person's response.
- 3) Sadly, many offences never get biblically resolved by forgiveness. Any offence that is just pushed aside, swept under the rug, or dropped has not been properly resolved.
- 4) A person who has been punished for his sin and now wants to rebuild ought not to be shunned by others. Some sins may have consequences that limit the person for life, but he needs to be able to move on and rebuild.
- 5) Paul was saying that love prudently or wisely administers punishment. Doing this will help us as well.

3. Love empathetically forgives the repentant, 2Co 2:7-11.

a. Paul urged them to forgive and comfort the repentant.

- 1) Presenting the opposite of continual punishment, Paul urged the congregation to forgive the offending man and comfort him. To do this, they must empathise with him. Ask yourself, **"How would I feel if I were the offender and others refused to forgive me?"**
- 2) He did not want the offender to be swallowed up with undo sorrow or grief.
- 3) We have all done wrong. We know what it is like to be guilty. Whether the sin is a lie, anger, an unkind word, or a crime, guilt is painful. Many people carry a load of guilt because their parent won't forgive them or their child refuses to forgive them. Some people have not talked to each other for years because neither will forgive. They are disobeying God.
- 4) What did Paul say in verse 8? He begged them to confirm their love toward the repentant sinner.