

2 Corinthians 1:15-2:11: Sincerity and Forgiveness:

I. Sincerity (1:15-23).

The Corinthian Christians accused Paul of being unreliable and untrustworthy because he said he would come at a certain time and did not. He changed his plan, instead he sent a letter, but would visit them later.

Some Corinthian Christians accused Paul of being dishonest simply bse he altered his plans; It was all right for the Corinthian Christians to be disappointed that Paul didn't come and visit them. But they were wrong in trying to *blame* Paul for the disappointment.

“As God is faithful, Paul wanted to be and was; he did not say **Yes** and mean **No** or say **No** and mean **Yes**, as the Corinthian Christians accused him.

We have to be flexible and gracious when changes are made, rather than being accusatory. **The Gospel message remains the same even when our schedules.**

Paul and his associates were commissioned by God, filled with the Holy Spirit; a seal of ownership and protection.

Matthew 5:33-37 - *“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ “But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; “nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. “Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.*

James 5:12 - *But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But **let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,”** lest you fall into judgment.*

II. Forgiveness (2:1-11).

Forgive, comfort and reaffirm your love.

Paul’s most recent visit to Corinth was full of conflict and unpleasantness. So he **determined** that he would not have another “sorrowful” visit with the Corinthians. Instead of a second visit, Paul wrote a letter.

Paul then recommends that the Corinthian Christians forgive the brother who had sinned (and repented) among them.

Paul displays real pastoral wisdom and compassion. He refers to a specific offender among the Corinthians who needed forgiveness, probably one mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 - *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

The Corinthian Christians applied the **punishment**, and apparently the man repented. Now, Paul must tell the Corinthian Christians to restore the repentant man.

“Their harsh stance towards this man had a real danger: By withholding restoration and forgiveness from the man they risked ruining him, causing him to be **swallowed up with too much sorrow** and Satan buffets them the more.

Satan’s strategies; steal, kill, destroy/devour, hate, accuse, tempt, deceive, cause conflict/confusion, isolate...

Dangers of un-forgiveness include; loss of health, loss of joy, loss of freedom and bitterness.

Matthew 6:14-15 - *“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. “But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Matthew 18:21-35 – *unforgiving servant*

Colossians 2:13 - *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,*

Ephesians 1:7 - *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*