

## September 11–17. 2 Corinthians 1–7: “Be Ye Reconciled to God”

### Introduction

In his first epistle to the Corinthians Paul centers his remarks toward Saints who were carnally minded and struggling to understand and obey the basic principles of the gospel

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

[1] And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

[2] I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

[3] For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

It seems that with his second epistle Paul perceives that the Saints are turning away from their carnal ways and have become more spiritual. So this epistle is more focused on their spiritual needs.

### Godly Sorrow

Paul rejoices because they are experiencing “Godly sorrow” because of their sins. And this kind of sorrow leads to repentance

2Cor 7:9-10

[9] Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

[10] For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

What do you think Paul means when he says “ye were made sorry after a godly manner”?

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"There is an important difference between the sorrow for sin that leads to repentance and the sorrow that leads to despair.

"The Apostle Paul taught that 'godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation'. Godly sorrow inspires change and hope through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Worldly sorrow pulls us down, extinguishes hope, and persuades us to give in to further temptation.

"Godly sorrow leads to conversion and a change of heart. It causes us to hate sin and love goodness. It encourages us to stand up and walk in the light of Christ's love. True repentance is about transformation, not torture or

torment." (CR, Oct. 2013)

## Reconciliation

Note Elder Uchtdorf said, "Godly sorrow leads to... a change of heart. It causes us to hate sin"

With that in mind let's read what Paul said about be reconciled by God

2Cor 5:16-21

[16] Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

[17] Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

[18] And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

[19] To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

[20] Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

[21] For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

JST 2Cor 5:16-17

16) Wherefore, henceforth *live* we no *more* after the flesh; *yea, though we once lived after the flesh, yet since we have known Christ, now henceforth live we no more after the flesh.*

17) Therefore if any man *live* in Christ, he is a new creature...

What does it mean to be reconciled by God?

(if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away)

Kevin S. Hamilton

"Through His grace He can make weak things become strong. If we humble ourselves and have faith in Jesus Christ, then His grace will enable us to change. In other words, He will empower us to change. This is possible because, as He says, 'my grace is sufficient for all men' (Ether 12:27). His strengthening, enabling grace gives us power to overcome all obstacles, all challenges, and all weaknesses as we seek to change....

"The Savior worked out His infinite and eternal Atonement so that we could in fact change, repent, and become better. We can actually be born again. We can overcome habits, addictions, and even the 'disposition to do evil' (Mosiah 5:2). As sons and daughters of a loving Father in Heaven, we have the power within us to change." (CR, April 2022)

How can we be reconciled by God?

(since we have known Christ... live we no more after the flesh)  
(he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him)

Delbert L. Stapley

“Man can only become spotless and sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost in his personal life. The Holy Ghost is a cleansing and purifying agent to all who receive it and are righteous. This means that sin and iniquity are spiritually burned out of the repentant person. He then receives a remission of sins, and his soul is sanctified and made clean for the Holy Ghost to abide in him. The cleansed person enjoys a newness of life and becomes a new creature in the spirit.” (CR, Oct. 1966)

### Comfort From Afflictions

Now that they’ve entered in thru the gate and are pursuing the straight and narrow path Paul reminds them that afflictions are an inevitable part of their progression. He tells them that the Lord has promised to comfort them in all of their afflictions.

2Cor 1:3-4,7

[3] Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

[4] Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

[7] And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

Through what means do we receive comfort in our afflictions?

(Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort)

Jeffrey R. Holland

“Concentrate with me for a moment on the first promise—that God is the God of all comfort... Inasmuch as all of us need comfort at so many different moments every day of our lives, it is wonderfully reassuring that our God, our Father, is 'the God of all comfort.' That phrase 'of all comfort' means to me not only that there is no greater source available for solace and strength, but that technically speaking there is no other source.... God comes to us as 'the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.' What a reassurance and reward just to know that such all-encompassing help is available to us in our anxious times." (On Earth As It Is in Heaven, pg. 35-37)

We should comfort each other

(that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble,  
as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation)

John C. Pingree Jr.

“Our trials help us discover and prepare for the work Heavenly Father has for us. Paul instructed, ‘[God] comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God’. Like the Savior, whose atoning sacrifice enables Him to succor us we can use knowledge gained from difficult experiences to lift, strengthen, and bless others.” (CR, Oct. 2017)

2Cor 4:5-9

[5] For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

[6] For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[7] But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

[8] We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

[9] Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

Why was Paul able to suffer afflictions with such patience and tolerance?

(the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ)

Neal A. Maxwell

"The disciple-one who has committed himself to Christ-is not insulated from the realities of such an unsettled world, yet he will see it differently: 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.'  
(2Cor 4:8-9)

"Part of the reason for the different view is the vantage point of a disciple. He walks the strait and narrow path-even if only by struggling effort-and the perspective from that path is profoundly different." (A Time to Choose, pg. 2)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

“When our souls are anchored in the safe harbor of the Savior, we can proclaim as did Paul: ‘We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.’ (2Cor 4:8-9)” (CR, April 2000)

## Come Out From Among Them

Now that they've turned away from their carnal lifestyle Paul admonishes them stay separated from those who still embrace it

2Cor 6:14-18

[14] Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

[15] And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

[16] And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

[17] Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

[18] And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

What do you think it means to “come out from among them, and be ye separate”?

(I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God)

Charles W. Penrose

“Though we mingle with the world, yet we must not pattern after their evil ways nor ‘touch the unclean thing.’ We need not partake of the sins of the world. We can be wrapped around by the influence of our religion as by the garments that we wear, and be separate even though in the midst of the wicked. We need not follow their ways nor be guided by their enticements, or be governed by their nations, but should live according to the light of God; and when evil spirits tempt us and seek to turn us aside from the strait path that leads to the celestial city, stand firm in the spirit of the Gospel and overcome them. And if we overcome all things we shall inherit all things.”  
(JD, 26:18)

## Spirit of the Law

Paul states that one of the blessings of being born of the Spirit is that you have the ability to live the spirit of the law instead of being dictated by the letter of the law

2Cor 3:6,17

[6] Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

[17] Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

What do you think Paul means by, “for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth

life”?

You go thru the motions of living the commandments but not be guided by the Spirit

Spencer W. Kimball

“There are many people in this Church today who think they live, but they are dead to the spiritual things. And I believe even many who are making pretenses of being active are also spiritually dead. Their service is much of the letter and less of the spirit.” (CR, April 1951)

How can we focus living the spirit of the law which gives life and liberty?

Be guided by the Spirit to focus on what’s important

James E. Faust

“Over the centuries dogmatism, coercion, and intolerance have too often polluted the living water of the gospel, which quenches our spiritual thirst eternally.... Paul said, ‘The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.’

“We are not only to avoid evil, not only to do good but, most importantly, to do the things of greatest worth. We are to focus on the inward things of the heart, which we know and value intuitively but often neglect for that which is trivial, superficial, or prideful.” (CR, Oct. 1997)

## Ministry

Now that they are committed to Christ, Paul tells them the attributes, gifts, and traits that they must strive for in order to be ministers of His gospel

2Cor 6:3-10

[3] Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

[4] But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

[5] In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

[6] By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

[7] By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

[8] By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

[9] As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

[10] As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

What traits do we need to be effective ministers of God?

(verses 4 – 7)

Much like an often quoted Section in the D&C on missionary work:

D&C 4:2-7

2) Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.

5) And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.

6) Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence.

7) Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Amen.