



SECOND CORINTHIANS

The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People



Part 28—“Godly Sorrow & Repentance”— 2 June 2024

Introduction: Hard Words, Soft People

“To fools and weaklings one writes soft things.” —C.S. Lewis (As quoted by Vanauken in *A Severe Mercy*)

“After this severe and splendid letter I loved Lewis like a brother. A brother and a father.”—Sheldon Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*

Prov. 13:1—A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Main Point: It is by His Word & Spirit that God _____ us of sin and leads us to _____ so that we may walk in newness of life.

Repentance Defined & Explained

“*repent*”—μετανοέω (metanoēō)— Lit. “to change one’s mind;” to feel sorrow or regret based on one’s prior view which may affect the will or thought; an internal change from within that will evidence itself externally (“to convert”).

- Repentance **is not** _____ sorrow or regret and a change in behavior.

“Unsaved people can truly repent but without being saved, as, for example, to change the mind about a bad habit and to break the habit as a result.”
—Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*

- Repentance **is not** to be understood as a separate condition for _____ in Christ.

“If repentance is cited as a condition of salvation in terms of feeling sorry for one’s sins, then it is a wrong usage of the term. It should not be understood as a separate step in salvation.” —Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*

- Repentance **is** essential to our salvation in Christ because of its relationship to _____.

“...it is as dogmatically stated as language can declare, that repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and could not be separated from it...repentance, which is a change of mind, is included in believing. No individual can turn to Christ from some other confidence without a change of mind, and that, it should be noted, is all that a spiritually dead individual can ever effect.”
—L.S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*

- Repentance **is** an ongoing aspect of the Christian life because of its relationship to _____ of sin.

“When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent’...he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.”
—Martin Luther, *95 Theses*

“A covenant that is unconditional...is not affected by any human elements...However, the *fact* of a covenant and the experience of its blessing are two different things. It is possible to be under the provisions of an unconditional covenant and to fail for the time being to enjoy its blessings because of sin...It therefore follows that, for covenant people, there is a divine dealing with the specific sin and a separate and unrelated repentance respecting it. This repentance is expressed by confession of sin to God. —L.S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*

2 Corinthians 7:8-13

Exposition

- I. Paul’s ‘severe’ letter had a profound effect on the Corinthians, causing them to _____ their sin.

“*grieve*”—λυπέω (lypeō)—(v.) to cause to experience mental or emotional distress; (n.) to be sad, sorrowful, or distressed.

⇒ This term is used in the OT in reference to how man at times responds to God’s Word: Cain was ‘grieved’ that God did not accept his sacrifice (Gen. 4:5) and Jonah was ‘greatly grieved’ that God spared the Ninevites. God Himself ‘grieves’ mankind because of sin (Isa. 57:17) but is Himself also ‘pained’ by the sin of His people (Ezek. 16:43).

⇒ Paul’s rebuke led the Corinthians to reconsider what they had done and to _____.

“*you were grieved into repenting*”

“...it distresses him to have distressed them which reveals his underlying fear that his boldness in this...confrontational letter might have driven them further away from him. Paul knows no one can minister effectively while running roughshod over the feelings of others, and he takes no pleasure in wounding anyone. His “weighty and strong” (10:10) words are not indented to wreck relationships. But he is glad that the [severe] letter hit the mark.”
—David Garland

Key Point: The _____ of God’s Word is necessary in order that we might be able to see the reality of our sin.

2. The Corinthians had been brought to repentance in accordance with God's _____.

“godly grief”— lit. “sorrow according to God;” ‘sorrow’ or ‘grief’ over sin that is genuine and reflects God’s own view of the seriousness of human rebellion and error.

(1) *‘Godly grief’ produces repentance because it necessarily involves _____ with God about our sin.*

(2) *True ‘repentance’ leads to ‘salvation’ because it necessarily involves believing the truth of the _____.*

Important Distinction: Repentance unto *eternal* salvation → _____ (Acts 2:38)

Repentance unto *temporal* salvation → _____ (Rev. 3:19-20)

“worldly grief”—lit. “sorrow according to the world;” ‘sorrow’ or ‘grief’ that is fundamentally self-centered and contrary to God’s will.

(1) *‘Worldly grief’ is caused by the _____ or _____ of something that we want for ourselves.* (Rev; 18:9-11)

(2) *‘Worldly grief’ leads to ‘death’ because of its association with _____ in which we remain separated from God.*

Key Point: The _____ of the Holy Spirit is necessary if we are to rightly acknowledge both our sin and God’s grace to us in Christ.

3. The Corinthians had born _____ in keeping with repentance.

“earnestness”— σπουδή (spoudē)—earnest commitment in discharge of an obligation or experience of a relationship, *eagerness, diligence* etc.

⇒ Because their sorrow was godly and their repentance genuine, their _____ was affected:

They were *eager* to do what was right!

They were *indignant* towards the offender!

They had the *fear* of the Lord!

They *longed for* and were *zealous* to see their relationship with Paul restored!

“It seems that while the congregation as a whole may not have sprung to the apostle’s defense when he was maligned in their presence by the ‘offender’, and while they had been lax in responding to earlier calls to discipline him, nevertheless they were not involved in maligning him. In that matter at least they proved to be guiltless when they finally acted to discipline the offender.” —Colin Kruse

“it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong”

⇒ Paul’s ultimate concerns were for God’s _____ and the _____ of the Corinthians.

Key Point: The _____ of the Holy Spirit is necessary if we are to rightly turn from sin and walk in newness of life.

Concluding Thought

- Mature believers are willing to _____ the truth to others and _____ the truth from others.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must _____ our affections.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must _____ sin.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must _____ obedience.

Rev. 3:19-20—¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.



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“repent”—μετανοέω (metanoēō)— Lit. “to change one’s mind;” to feel sorrow or regret based on one’s prior view which may affect the will or thought; an internal change from within that evidences itself externally (“to convert”).

- **Repentance is not merely sorrow or regret and a change in behavior.**

“Unsaved people can truly repent but without being saved, as, for example, to change the mind about a bad habit and to break the habit as a result.”
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- **Repentance is not to be understood as a separate condition for belief in Christ.**

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- **Repentance is essential to our salvation in Christ because of its relationship to faith.**

“...it is as dogmatically stated as language can declare, that repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and could not be separated from it...repentance, which is a change of mind, is included in believing. No individual can turn to Christ from some other confidence without a change of mind, and that, it should be noted, is all that a spiritually dead individual can ever effect.”
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- **Repentance is an ongoing aspect of the Christian life because of its relationship to confession of sin.**

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“A covenant that is unconditional...is not affected by any human elements...However, the *fact* of a covenant and the experience of its blessing are two different things. It is possible to be under the provisions of an unconditional covenant and to fail for the time being to enjoy its blessings because of sin...It therefore follows that, for covenant people, there is a divine dealing with the specific sin and a separate and unrelated repentance respecting it. This repentance is expressed by confession of sin to God. —L.S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*

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⇒ Paul’s rebuke led the Corinthians to reconsider what they had done and to repent.

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Key Point: The truth of God’s Word is necessary in order that we might be able to see the reality of our sin.

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(2) True 'repentance' leads to 'salvation' because it necessarily involves believing the truth of the Gospel.

Important Distinction: Repentance unto *eternal* salvation → Conversion (Acts 2:38)

Repentance unto *temporal* salvation → Fellowship (Rev. 3:19-20)

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Key Point: The conviction of the Holy Spirit is necessary if we are to rightly acknowledge both our sin and God's grace to us in Christ.

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"it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong"

⇒ Paul's ultimate concerns were for God's glory and the good of the Corinthians.

Key Point: The power of the Holy Spirit is necessary if we are to rightly turn from sin and walk in newness of life.

Concluding Thought

• Mature believers are willing to speak the truth to others and receive the truth from others.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must affirm our affections.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must rebuke sin.

⇒ To speak the truth in love, we must exhort obedience.

Rev. 3:19-20—¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.