

World-Working Sorrow/God-Working Sorrow

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[0:00] if you take your Bibles please and turn to 2 Corinthians 2 Corinthians chapter 7 if you're visiting with us you can pull that black Bible out in the chair in front of you I believe it's on page go towards the back sorry and then I believe you'll find on page 143 2 Corinthians chapter 7 2 Corinthians 7 starting in verse 2 we're going to read verses 2 through 16 we're going to do all of chapter 7 relatively speaking except for verse 1 we're going to study all of chapter 7 this morning again 2 Corinthians 7 2 through 16 page 143 in that black Bible let's read make room for us we wronged no one we corrupted no one we took advantage of no one

I do not speak to condemn you for I've said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together great is my confidence in you great is my boasting on your behalf I'm filled with comfort I am overflowing with joy at all our affliction for even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest but afflicted on every side conflicts without fears within but God who comforts the lowly comforted us by the coming of Titus and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you as he declared to us your longing your mourning your zeal for me so that I rejoiced even more for though I cause you sorrow by my letter I do not regret it though I did regret it I see that that letter caused you sorrow though only for a while verse 9 I now rejoice not that you were made sorrowful but that you were made sorrowful unto repentance for you were made sorrowful according to God in order that you might not suffer loss in anything by us verse 10 for the sorrow that is according to God works repentance unto salvation without regret but the sorrow of the world produces death for look what earns this very thing this sorrow unto God according to God has produced in you what vindication of yourselves indignation fear longing zeal vengeance and everything you demonstrate yourselves to be pure in the matter so although I wrote to you not for the sake of the offender nor for the sake of the one offended but that your earnestness on our behalf might be made known to you in the sight of God for this reason we have been comforted and besides our comfort we rejoice even much much more at the joy of Titus because his spirit has been refreshed by you all for if in anything

I boasted to him about you I was not put to shame but as we spoke all things to you in truth so also our boasting before Titus it proved to be true and his affection abounds all the more toward you remembering the obedience of you all you received him with fear and trembling I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you there's one scene in a movie that's set in the 1700s a pirate ship was being chased by a Spaniard ship the pirate ship was about to go into an area that would surely destroy their ship and the Spaniards were like oh this is great we have them the captain of the pirate ship told his crew to throw their ropes across and to grab hold of this rock that was going to be on their left and they were like you got to be crazy they're arguing and of course within the movie it's seconds right that this is all happening so he's trying to convince his crew finally they said okay we'll do it they threw their ropes they cast it over there on the rock and the captain turned the wheel and the ship as it grabbed the whole of the rock again this is the movies as it grabbed the whole of the rock it turned the ship all the way around made a 180 degree turn the Spaniards wide the eyes were wide this big you know wide eyed everything oh no cannons everything blah blah what's my point why am I bringing this up because that's the very thing you see here in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 2 Corinthians chapter 7 the actual turning actually we'll go this way turning of the ship they're turning in the right direction now finally the Corinthian church was turning in the right direction and the only reason why was because

God's effective work that was being done in their hearts now we have a somewhat of a contrast paradox so to speak boast in their weakness boast in the Lord and they go together that's kind of the theme of 2 Corinthians right and we followed that theme today we'll definitely see a contrast world working sorrow God working sorrow God working sorrow world working sorrow truly a

contrast to the Corinthians world they thought they thought world working sorrow was this and yet they were gravely mistaken they thought God working sorrow was something like that they were gravely mistaken here Paul teaches them this is true godly sorrow this is world working sorrow here's a statement for you

God working sorrow works in the hearts of God's people by bringing true repentance so that they embrace God's word and the messenger of that word resulting in great joy and comfort for God's messenger and for God's people that's what this chapter is about a turn in the right direction or if anything instead of keeping going this way it actually went neutral you can put it that way the Corinthian church God working grief sorrow has begun to work in them so in essence in this chapter Paul is saying you're going in the right direction keep going that way don't stop keep in that direction you're making room for us in your hearts keep moving in that direction stop listening to these super apostles the loyal opposition

[7:23] I'm here for your benefits I'm not here to destroy you says Paul so God working sorrow it works in the hearts of God's people by bringing true repentance so they embrace God's word and the messenger of that word resulting in great joy and comfort for God's messenger and God's people another statement God working sorrow places oneself under the authority of God and his messenger knowing that we're all under the authority of the gospel world working grief bucks God and his authority which eventually produces nothing but death this is what Paul wants them to understand there's no profit to them there's no gain for them so he's encouraging them in the right direction he appealed to the Corinthians because really overall the troubles with Corinth had not been overcome yet in the midst of the strained relationship one battle was won a ride they received

Titus and really they received Paul so this chapter is overall very positive with Paul having great joy I mean count the number of times you see Paul using the word joy rejoicing so there's movement in the right direction or at the very least the ship stopped moving in the wrong direction this rift between Paul and the Corinthian church it was no private matter it was the elephant in the room right but in reality it wasn't about Paul it was about fidelity to the gospel that's what it was about when the love relationship between a church and her pastor is threatened hurt feelings and accusations will continue to ensue and unless action is taken the action of the pastor to extend grace and mercy and the action of the members to repent any kind of resolution between the two will not come to fruition it just won't not to mention the fact that pastor probably needs to repent too we all need to repent that's how we come as we just sang songs that we just sang beforehand so this part of

Paul's letter it centers on that threatened love relationship and one of the best ways to handle that tension no he was strong at times with them and rightly so here he sought to win them I was reading in my study this one writer is it Peter no no no no no now I can't remember his first name Seyfried is his last name it was funny he put this as a quote Paul sought to win them with honey rather than vinegar that resonated with me instead of trying to win them with vinegar he thought about sugar for 21st century or to put it better where's Susanna they're not here today chocolate use chocolate to win them don't win anybody over except for Michael Matthews cheesecake how bad use sugar that's what

Paul does he sought to win them using honey sugar instead of vinegar to help foster this repentance in them that's what he's doing that's what this chapter is about now I have a series of questions we're going to answer those questions first what does God working sorrow look like now I normally start in verse 2 but I'm going to kind of go outside the box here go to verse 10 verse 10 where am I at verse 10 notice how he begins here in verse 10 for the sorrow that is according to God works a repentance unto salvation without regret what does God working sorrow look like it shows itself in true repentance when God does his grief work it affects repentance unto salvation without regret this is the first of the two responses to the gospel when you respond to the gospel what are the two words that we use repent trust or believe right repent and believe so when true God works sorrow comes there's repentance and notice this is what it looks like and notice how it produces something there in verse 11 for behold look what earnestness is very thing this sorrow according to God has produced in you look at what true repentance has brought to you has worked in you has produced in you what is it eagerness defense igniination fear desire passion vindication you look at all those things you're like wait what how is vindication or I used I translated the word vengeance right you might be saying how in the world is vengeance a good thing are you crazy what version is that guy reading anyways right this was a God work response in the relationship

with

[13:15] Paul what do I mean they were eager to accept or support Paul and defend Paul they had igniination toward the one who instigated a standoff with Paul they had a fear of Paul's authority in a good way a desire and a passion for Paul they wanted to vindicate Paul in favor of Paul this is what he's talking about instead of listening to the loyal opposition the super apostles overall they embraced Paul they started to move in this direction and notice what he says here the end of verse 11 and everything you demonstrated or showed yourselves to be and it's translated for you in the American standard innocent in the matter another way to translate the noun is pure and I take it in connection to the similar word that means sincere so I believe Paul said they were sincere or pure in their response or in other words they meant it

Paul is saying in everything in this whole situation you showed yourselves to be pure in the matter you really meant this this is your reaction your response to me you really meant it that's what he's saying verse 12 so although I wrote to you not for the sake of the offended or the offender not for the sake of the one offended but for your earnestness on your behalf on our behalf might be made known to you in the sight of God he's talking about the content and the concern of you know that letter chapter 2 verse 4 the one that he wrote with tears the one that brought major turmoil with the church because he had to say some pretty hard things to them he did not write that letter for his own sake he didn't say I'm going to write this you know when you write that email to that person oh yeah don't send it delete accidentally send it oh no right no he he said

I didn't write this letter for my sake or for the sake of the one who had wronged him he's talking about the guy who had done him injustice he addressed the issue yes but in that letter the Corinthians came to see themselves notice what he says in God's sight that they were eager to accept embrace and defend Paul as their apostle as their pastor and it wasn't about Paul per se but about his calling and his mission here I'll put it a different way when a church truly embraces their pastor to be their pastor they're truly embracing God's calling upon that man and God's mission for that man to that church to give them the truth that's what he's saying you guys embrace that yes the Corinthians were guilty and he's going to deal with that a little bit later on in the letter more so but Paul overlooked it by seeing things through the glasses of the gospel sometimes we just have to look at each other through gospel lenses through lenses of grace through lenses of compassion through lenses of mercy that's what

Paul does because the gospel that is the issue right at least it should be so that's what God working sorrow looks like okay what does world working sorrow look like world working working working tongue twister say that 10 times real fast that's the last part of verse 10 but sorrow sorrow of the world works or produces death death in one instance there's true repentance in another instance there's only regret because notice what he says before just for that part he says without regret see that he says for the sorrow that is according to God works how it's in the Greek repentance unto salvation without regret but the sorrow of the world produces death so without regret meaning that the sorrow of the world it works death it works regret it's one thing to regret like Judas it's another thing to repent like Peter

Judas did not repent he regretted and then he committed suicide Peter truly repented grief or world working grief versus God working grief repentance false grief drains life and joy bringing hopelessness true grief brings life joy and hope in the God who destroys and yet restores we'll talk more about that in a moment true repentance leads to salvation false repentance leads to bitterness resentment so God worked grief leads to repentance leads to salvation world worked grief leads to regret leads to death bitterness no resolution that's why the gospel must be the focus so that means also so tears cannot be a mark of true repentance true God worked repentance shows itself in a changed life you didn't have the privilege but Caitlin and I had the privilege and Carolyn too of hearing about

[19:56] Debbie's life how it just it just changed didn't it Debbie just changed her life just went like a 180 degree turn just like that ship went right it totally did we had the privilege of hearing about that in the membership interview with Debbie it's a life change this is the very heart of the gospel and our response to the gospel if you're here you're not a Christian you're not a follower of Jesus you need to repent and trust Christ and when you repent and trust Christ it's a life change it's not just to check a box off it changes your whole outlook on life so that's what world working sorrow looks like another question what's the response to God working sorrow when you see God working in a person's heart and there's repentance what's the response that comes a prerfora of responses love

confidence boasting comfort joy this is what you see from Paul verse 2-4 verse 13 verse 16 look at verse 2 make room for us we wronged no one we corrupted no one we took advantage of no one as a matter of fact an injustice was done to Paul by one who openly resisted him now why does he put this down here why does he say we wronged no one we corrupted no one we took advantage why does he put this here because he was accused and so he responded to the accusation that he lacked care by not visiting them he lacked care by the strong things he said in his letter chapter 2 verse 4 that letter that third letter the tearful letter plus he or they did not take advantage of the church in what way they didn't get paid they said don't pay us don't do that the Corinthians took offense to that so he's responding to the accusations that he did not care but he did he loved them look at verse 3

I don't speak to condemn you I've said before you are in our hearts he didn't seek to condemn them on the contrary the things he had said and done it proved they were in his heart he loved them he loved that church you kind of you scratch your head you're like Paul the church just treated you just horribly and yet he loved them he really did so Paul wasn't about winners or losers there wasn't no sides he sought their love Paul had their best constantly in mind contrary to their thinking you're trying to take advantage of us Paul you're trying to corrupt us Paul no I'm on your side he sought fellowship reconciliation and restoration with them all which is found in Christ displayed in those statements to die and live together because in Christ alone we have fellowship that's why he puts that there to die together to live together we're connected together so stop bucking my authority he's saying because I love you guys notice the sugar more sugar verse 4 great is my confidence in you great is my boasting on your behalf here's the sugar here's the chocolate

Michael Matthews here's the cheesecake he expressed such great confidence in boasting the Corinthians anticipating how they welcomed Titus we'll look at it in a moment not that they were great in themselves it's because of the work God had done in them in Christ so he boasted look he says I am filled with comfort remember they were the source of his affliction they were the source of pain to Paul but because of the report given to him by Titus they had given him comfort it's usually the opposite usually the pastor gives comfort to the members right interesting Paul is saying God used you guys church as a tool to be a comfort to me you see that in this way Paul gave like a I called it a God compliment to the Corinthians this wasn't a relationship of dominance or dependence though they accused him of that no members can give great comfort to their pastor when they do this when they respond this way he's like yeah this is great love confidence comfort joy joy that's right

I'm overflowing with joy at our affliction the our I believe it's Paul and his associates was the affliction the Corinthian church and other things too yes but he's talking about the Corinthian church you guys have been amazing for me I'm just overflowing with joy because oh you guys are moving in the right direction he's just enamored oh wait wait oh what did I ask oh here here Corinth was a difficult church yet in spite of all his struggles and frustrations with them he overflowed with joy because they made a step in the right direction Paul's just ecstatic look at verse 13 for this reason we'll look at that in a moment and reference their response to him and to Titus but for this reason we have been comforted the reason they were truly embraced him and who he really was Paul's associates they're comforted by that I mean Paul was he was modeling to the Corinthians reconciling forgiving love his joy and comfort was this they repented of defection and were zealous for him when members of a church truly embrace Hebrews 13:17 they realize this for their benefit because a pastor gets joy when the people have joy in Christ and the people get joy when their pastor's joy is in Christ Hebrews 13:17 obey your leaders and submit to them let them do this with joy not with grief for there's no benefit to you that's what that means I get benefit when you are enjoying Christ you get benefit when I'm enjoying Christ it's all directed to Christ we're serving one another for the joy of Christ our joy in Christ our joy in each other this is what

[27:24] Paul's talking about friends and then look at verse 16 I rejoice in everything I've confidence in the notes again Paul's joy it didn't come from some long past obedience he gained joyful obedience from the assurance of God's work in their heart right now he had confidence in them because his confidence was in God God does a work in the heart by Christ and his work always produces his desire effect a battle has been won with this church yet the war was not over I understand that he's still fighting for the love and affection I know now we'll look this quickly through this God working sorrow as seen in their response to Paul how did they respond to Paul what happened what took place we'll take a few moments to look at how they did that with Paul and then

how they did with Titus okay go to verse 5 for even when we came to

Macedonia our flesh had no rest he's picking up where he left off from chapter 2 verse 12 he was in Troas he helped him with Titus didn't find Titus he was anxious he was freaking out he left the open door he went to Macedonia and yet when we came there our flesh had no rest afflicted on every side conflicts without fears within what happened we don't know he doesn't tell us he doesn't go into detail with the Corinthians nor did he need to but notice what he says in verse 6 but God who comforts the lowly comforted us by the coming of Titus who is the one who comforts the lowly the depressed those in despair God himself God in his grace comforts us when we are brought low and Paul understood what it meant to be low God comforts us he's not with the high mighty as the Corinthians thought he's with the lowly the depressed this is a comfort for you if you're facing depression and lowliness and despair this is a comfort for you

God is your comfort those who suffer humiliation brought upon them by God's providence action by enemies circumstances beyond control they'll find comfort in God and his grace this is what Paul's saying by the coming of Titus the means that God used to bring comfort to Paul was Titus coming to him God used his means to comfort us notice verse seven no it wasn't just by his coming but also not his coming but the comfort which he was comforted by you and he reported us your longing mourning and your zeal for me so I rejoiced even more so there's three aspects one they found Titus two Titus was just excited and three he's excited so then we're excited so there's even more rejoice because they said Titus said they accepted you as Paul puts it longing mourning zeal for me do you see that longing for Paul mourning over Paul zealous for Paul this is the response to Paul given the tension with this relationship with this church this is a big deal they long for Paul and express sorrow over the broken relationship that ensued between them they're broken over their tears

Paul had shed for the moment the Corinthians in general zealously defended and affirmed Paul as their apostle as their pastor and that's why Paul says because of this I rejoice even more he was jealous in his love for them that's because Paul wanted to wed them to Christ he'll talk about that in chapter 11 verse 2 which is every true pastor's goal because it's not about me no it's about Christ in you look at verse 8 and 9 he says for though I cause you sorrow by my letter you know that letter I don't regret it he don't want to grieve them which is why he wrote the tearful letter and yet that letter grieved them but he didn't regret it yet he says I did regret it I see that that letter caused you sorrow only for a while I now rejoice verse 9 not that you were made sorrowful that you were made sorrowful unto repentance for you made sorrowful according to God he did regret it because the pain it brought them

Paul and pastors don't do things to get their way all that we do is for the benefit of the body and yet they grieved only for a little while but when Titus arrived he told Paul their reaction their grief had worked for their good because it produced in them repentance so God wounded the church in order to heal it and he did it by using Paul they were grieved he says according to God the Corinthians were used as instruments in Paul's life and a church must realize that her pastor or pastors are used as instruments of God in their lives it goes both ways his wounds are whole and completely according to God's ways God works his will to restore us not to destroy us and yet he must at times destroy us in order to restore us

[33:09] God works his will to restore us not to destroy us yet he must at times destroy us in order to restore us he has our best in mind that's the essence of the gospel God strips us of our idols doesn't he not he strips us of our idols which can really hurt it can cause grief and pain it doesn't feel good when you're stripped away from something that means a lot to you but he restores and he saves and then last look at this God working sorrow seen in their response to Titus go verse 13 he says and besides our comfort we rejoice even much more at the joy of Titus now he shares with them the joy Titus had over them because the spirit was refreshed why was the spirit refreshed because they had accepted embraced Titus look verse 14 for anything I boasted to him about you I was not put to shame but as we spoke all things to you in truth so also are boasting before

Titus proved to be true what's he talking about Paul Paul Paul to Corinth to Titus oh no no no no Titus they're going to accept me I know it Titus was like I'm not so sure no no no no really Titus I don't know when Paul heard the news about their response he was not put to shame instead his boasting proved to be true since he spoke truth to the church that is he spoke in the true gospel truth to the church it was proof God had done a work in them and why does he say this to Titus why does he say this to the because he's trying to use the sugar rather than the vinegar he wants to

foster that repentance he's not lying he's not trying to butter them up either he was pointing out a positive element their relationship was not secure yet by building upon this God work response Paul hoped it would secure their allegiance to him really not to him their allegiance to the gospel so look at what he says there in verse 15 and his affection that's Titus affection abounds all the more toward you why he remembers he has such passion for remembering their obedience to the gospel with Titus as an apostolic delegate you received him with fear and trembling they had received Titus with fear and trembling they obeyed him as if he was Paul which meant they were really obeying God in the gospel so you have all this taking place a God working sorrow world working sorrow this is the response to the working that God was doing in their hearts this is how it was seen in their relationship with Paul seen in their relationship with Titus one last point that's why Paul says therefore make room for us you see that verse two go back verse two make room for us make room for and by the way it says make room for us in your hearts which in your hearts is not in the original but that's the intent of what he's saying receive me open your hearts to me the tone changed we want this to be resolved open your heart receive us receive me the direction of the ship was moving in the right direction

Paul was trying to foster that there's more to come battles won wars not over hate to put it in that way but that's how it was for the Corinthians they fought tooth and nail with Paul you'll see that but for now praise God for this work God working sorrow works in the hearts of God's people by bringing true repentance so that they embrace God's word and the messenger of that word resulting in great joy and comfort for God's messenger and God's people and Father we pray that you would work in us by the power of the spirit you work in our hearts by bringing to repentance so that we embrace your word you have spoken to us from your word this morning bring great joy in us bring great comfort in us as your people we take comfort in the cross of

Jesus Christ his death and resurrection we thank you for that truth and there's true repentance that needs to come from us not just for the unsaved is this gospel message it's for us the saved work your work of repentance in us work your work of sorrow in us we pray that we be broken and may there be repentance take this time if you would and ponder what we've seen from God's word and after a few moments we'll worship in our giving we'll worship with song what if you would I would encourage you to just take this time a time of silence between you and the Lord maybe reflect on your notes or take some time in prayer just a few moments for you to ponder what we've seen from God's word this morning you and