

## *The Burden of My Brethren (2 Cor 7)*

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**Introduction:** Those who have the richest lives also carry many burdens.

- A. Christ will give us a burden that can be borne. **(Mt 11:28-30)**
  - 1. However He will also push us to our limits, to do greater things.
  - 2. In this process of growth we become able to bear things that others cannot. This will result in a greater responsibility and greater blessings. **(Mt 25:28-30)**
- B. There is no greater joy than to be used by the Lord to help build up others.
  - 1. Those who are parents know this joy. **(1 Cor 4:14-16; 2 Jn 1:3-4)**
  - 2. Parents also know the burden of waiting for that child to do what is right. **(2 Cor 11:28)**

### ***I. Paul's Plea to the Corinthians (7:1-3)***

- A. There can be no other goal than holiness. **(7:1)**
  - 1. What is holiness?
  - 2. Where does holiness come from? The promises of God! **(2 Pt 1:3-4; 1 Jn 3:1-3)**
  - 3. We must "cleanse ourselves" in our separation from evil. **(2 Tim 2:19-21)**
- B. Paul again pleaded for the Corinthians to have an open heart. **(7:2-3)**
  - 1. Because of the work of certain brethren among them, false charges were privately circulated with the goal of closing hearts and minds to him.
  - 2. Sadly Paul had to make a blanket defense of himself due to the nature of the cowardly "blanket charges" made in the background. **(7:2)**
  - 3. If Satan can get you to close your mind through a report given to you in private, then you would likely have opposed Paul too if you lived then. What would a fair-minded Christian do? **(Acts 25:16)**
  - 4. The Corinthians needed to move away from their swaying emotions to the solid reasoning of God's word. **(2 Cor 6:11-13; 4:4)**

### ***II. Paul's Burden for the Corinthians (7:4-6)***

- A. Paul returns now to a point where he left off in chapter two, his anxiety when searching for Titus **(2:12-13)**.
  - 1. Have you ever loved one so much that you were burdened when they were in danger? **(Gal 4:16-19)**
  - 2. The church would be better off if we carried such burdens for each other than to selfishly build a wall around ourselves and "do our own thing." **(1 Cor 12:26)**
  - 3. The burdens for the Corinthians were so great that Paul passed up an open door to preach the gospel, and was filled with conflicts and fears! Could you imagine that someone could have seen his letter and scoffed at it as "preacher talk?"
- B. Paul found the comfort of God lest he be taken to the sidelines.
  - 1. Paul did what God wanted, he wrote the first letter to correct the problems! The solutions to our problem should begin with teaching.

2. Paul then was comforted by the effect the word of God had on good hearts. **(7:4, 6-7)**
3. Some of the most difficult things we will do in this life is to teach and then wait on God. We do much damage when we try to do more.

### ***III. Paul's Goal for the Corinthians, Repentance (7:7-12)***

- A. We must have no other goal in our work with brethren than for each of us to find needed repentance!
  1. It could have been possible for Paul to sweep these problems under the carpet so that he might "keep their relationship." They all would have been lost!
  2. When repentance is found there will be rejoicing for all, both the taught and the teacher.
  3. In my opinion repentance is the hardest command of the Bible. **(Jn 12:42-43)**
- B. Where does repentance come from?
  1. It first comes from hearing the bad news. **(Rom 1:18)**
    - a. Here is where the teacher might get hurt by the anger of the guilty.
    - b. What kind of risk did Nathan take with David? **(2 Sam 12:5-10)**
  2. When the word is received properly there will be godly sorrow. **(7:9)**
    - a. What is godly sorrow?
    - b. How long must godly sorrow work? We need to be patient and let the word do its work.
  3. Repentance is a turn of our will.
- C. What are the fruits of repentance?
  1. **Earnest desire (7:7)** - they wanted to do right!
  2. **Clearing of yourselves (7:11)** - They would openly make corrections.
  3. **Mourning (7:7), indignation (7:11)** - Their sin greatly hurt them and now they hate it!
  4. **Zeal (7:7), vehement desire (7:11)** - They are fully committed to do the will of God.
  5. **Fear (7:11)** - They are aware of the power and wrath of God.
- D. The letter of Paul was for the Corinthians good. It showed Paul's love. **(7:12)**
  1. Here Paul is specifically referring to the man that the Corinthians withdrew from!
  2. When a church is urged to withdraw from one walking in sin, this is an act of love.

### ***IV. Paul's Shared Joy With Titus (7:13-16)***

- A. Is it not good to have another brother to rejoice with? **(1 Cor 12:26)**
  1. We need to be careful for sometimes the zeal and rejoicing may appear to be pride.
  2. Still it is good to have the kind of relationship with others where the sharing of spiritual things are the focus.
  3. Remember, the world will not understand nor be happy. **(Jn 16:20)**
- B. Brethren let our rejoicing be in the truth and those who submit to it.

***Conclusion:*** What kind of burdens are you bearing?