

# Letters to the church in...



# Corinth

**Focus:** 2 Corinthians 2:1-17

## Lesson 19-Forgiveness and the Savor of Life

- **Determining to have joy and not to be sorrowful (v.1-5)**
  - Paul determined in His mind to not come to Corinth with a heavy or sorrowful heart.
  - (v.3,4) Paul confides about the sorrow and affliction that met his heart as he had written that first letter to the Corinthians.
- **The work of redemptive punishment and forgiveness (v.5-11)**
  - (v.6,7)—Here Paul brings up the issue of the man who had been ensnared in sin before, and had been cast out of the church (**1 Cor. 5:4,5**). The Temporal punishment by the church, corporately, had apparently worked in this man's heart a realization of his terrible sin, and a spirit of repentance. Because of the administrative and corporate punishment, he had apparently come to his senses and now was desiring to walk in the way of life. (**See the counsel in Galatians 6:1**)—The Lord hopes that we would repent of our sin and come to Him. (**see also Ezekiel 33:11; 18:21-26; Isaiah 1:16-19**). **"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent"**-Jesus (Revelation 3:19). Apparently, the punishment the man received "was sufficient" for him to repent of his sins and to seek salvation—longing to come back to the Lord and to be saved! The task of the Corinthian believers now, was not to shun him in his repentance, but to "comfort" him and to "forgive" him in the Lord's forgiveness. To help him be fully reconciled back into the flock of the Lord; and that he may live a righteous life in Christ.
  - **"...Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"** "of whom" we are chief (**1 Timothy 1:15**). Paul felt keenly that fact that the Lord had forgiven him for his great many sins against the saints in his early days—he knew personally the extreme forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ! **GOD IS WILLING TO FORGIVE EVEN THE GREATEST OF SINNERS IF THEY TRULY REPENT OF THEIR SIN AND SEEK HIS CLEANSING AND FORGIVENESS!** (even if they had known the right way, but had sinned against him). King David had experienced the saving forgiveness of God after his deep repentance from sin—yet it's true, he did still suffer painful consequences from his sin—such as losing his son, among other things. **"God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!"** (Romans 5:8). **"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (1 John 1:9). "Whoever confesses and forsakes his sins will have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13). If we persist and continue in the path of sin, however, continually abusing God's graces, and not having genuine repentance, then our sinful course will not be covered (Hebrews 10:26).

- (v.8,10)-“**re-affirming**” their love for this repentant one, and forgiving was quite **important as part of the healing process** (as this man was coming to his right senses and recovering from this horrible sin).
- **The saving grace and fragrance of Jesus Christ (v.12-17)**
  - (v.13) Paul didn’t have peace in his heart to continue staying in Troas. A door was opened up for him to do the work there, but he did not have the peace to continue staying there. These other matters in Corinth were weighing heavily upon his mind and he felt like there was some unresolved, unfinished business that needed to be taken care of first—so, he sought to find Titus and to hear from him the report about these matters in Corinth—therefore, he moved on to Macedonia, where he finally met with Titus.
  - (v.14) diffusing “**...the fragrance of His knowledge...**” in every place!
  - (v.15) **Stirring up this fragrance among two groups...**(1) those who are “being saved”, and (2) among those who are perishing! **We all need the saving grace of Jesus Christ to continually be touching our hearts and turning our minds to spiritual things.** (we, in hopes that the second group may yet come to repentance in Jesus Christ)
  - (v.16) For **those who refuse the fragrant saving grace of Jesus Christ it becomes a SAVOR OF DEATH leading to death.** “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (Hebrews 2:3). If we are turning away from the very help that God would give, then it is like sealing our death sentence. The light was there for us! What can we possibly say to God in the judgment as an answer to this? **To those receive the saving aroma of Christ’s grace it becomes a savor of life leading unto life.**
  - (v.17) Working not as the insincere, or just as some cold hearted, indifferent business man....but laboring in love and sincerity—**speaking as one who stands in the sight of God—for God sees ALL that we say and do—whatever that may be!**

*Question (s) for the Heart:*

**Would you like to have the forgiveness of Christ in your heart for others?\_\_\_\_\_** (and having your own sins washed and cleansed away by God through Jesus Christ?) **Would like to have the gospel fragrance (savor) of life unto life in your own heart? \_\_\_\_\_**