

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Spiritual Warfare

REVIEW/CONTEXT

- 1:3-11** *Perfect comfort* is only found through faith in Christ.
- 1:12-14** God's grace empowers genuine Christianity ministry.
- 1:15-22** God's grace empowers a ministry of Christian honesty.
- 1:23-2:4** God's grace empowers a ministry of Christian love.

BIG IDEA:

Display biblical forgiveness for the glory of God and for the spiritual health of the Church.

EXPOSITION: *Three reasons why Christians display biblical forgiveness.*

I. Paul urges the church to pursue biblical forgiveness for the sake of loving reconciliation. (2:5-8)

- “painful, pain” – 2:1-5, 7; 6:10; **7:8-12**; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; 1 Peter 1:6
- “forgive” – Galatians 6:1 (Matthew 4:21); Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 2:13; 3:13; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 John 4:19-21¹
- **“comfort” – 1:3-7**; 13:11; “reaffirm your love”

II. Paul urges the church to pursue biblical forgiveness for the sake of complete obedience. (2:9)

- “test” – 8:2; 9:13; 13:3; Philippians 2:22
- “obedient” – Philippians 2:8

III. Paul urges the church to pursue biblical forgiveness for the sake of spiritual protection. (2:10-11)

- “outwitted” – 7:2; 12:17; 1 Thessalonians 4:6;
- “designs” – 3:14; 4:4; 10:5; 11:3; Philippians 4:7
- Ephesians 4:26-27; 6:10-13ff; 1 Peter 5:6-8; James 4:6-8

¹ Jesus Christ made some powerful statements about the importance of forgiveness in the lives of His disciples – Luke 6:37; 7:36-50; 11:4; 17:3-5; Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-35; Romans 5:6-11.

QUESTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

- Why is biblical forgiveness such a difficult thing for us to properly display?
- Who will always be the perfect example of biblical forgiveness and why?
- While unilateral forgiveness is a good thing, biblical forgiveness is not just a one-way street: it must be desired by the sinning party and extended by the party that was wronged.
- If our forgiveness is lacking a genuine desire for biblical reconciliation, then we are leaving the door open for bitterness, gossip, and other devilish ploys to make us spiritually weak.
- God is going to give you opportunities this week to display biblical forgiveness. Are you spiritually ready for those opportunities with a right mindset and heart posture?
- What passage(s) of Scripture will you turn to when either you struggle to forgive others or when you need to receive forgiveness from others?

APPLICATION

- When biblical forgiveness seems impossible for you show towards someone who has sinned against you, look to the cross—and remember Jesus Christ's forgiveness of all your sin.
- When those who have sinned against you are obstinate and unrepentant, ask God for His grace and strength to maintain a heart posture that desires forgiveness and reconciliation.
- When you sin, depend on God's grace to help you (1) repent with a godly sorrow over your sin and (2) pursue reconciliation with those against whom you have sinned.
- Pray for God (1) to help you forgive those who have sinned against you and (2) to convict you over any unconfessed or unreconciled sin that you may have in your heart.
- Ask God to convict any brothers or sisters in Christ who have sinned against you or others.