

The CHALLENGE of



2 Corinthians 1:23 - 2:13

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- NICE is a cookie



DEEP LOVE

- warts and all
- spiritual concern

TOUGH LOVE

- church discipline
- “care-frontation”

2 Corinthians 1:23-2:13

²³ I call God as my witness—and I stake my life on it—that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. ²⁴ Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

² ¹ So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. ² For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved? ³ I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. ⁴ For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

⁵ If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely.

⁶ The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. ⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ⁸ I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

⁹ Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. ¹⁰ Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, ¹¹ in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes. ¹² Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, ¹³ I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.



"I love you deeply" (2 Cor. 2:4)

The letter we call **2 Corinthians** is actually at least the Apostle Paul's 4th letter to the church in ancient Corinth, the capital city of the southern region of modern Greece called Achaia. Here is a viable reconstruction of Paul's 1st century connection with the church adapted from Scott J. Hafeman's lifelong work on 2 Corinthians.

1. Paul's 1st visit to Corinth for 1 and ½ years establishes the church (Acts 18:1-18).
2. Paul writes a letter (lost to history) prior to 1 Corinthians mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:9 ("I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people...").
3. Paul writes the New Testament's **1 Corinthians** addressing many serious problems in the church.
4. Paul's 2nd visit to Corinth is a "painful visit" because of conflict between himself and the church (2 Cor. 2:1; cf. 12:14; 13:1). 2 Cor. 2:5 suggests that the church had failed to deal with an offender in its midst (cf. 2 Cor. 7:12).
5. Paul writes a "tearful" or "severe" letter (lost to history), after his "painful visit." This letter is described in 2 Cor. 2:3-4 and 7:8-12.
6. Titus visits Corinth, and Paul later meets him in the northern region of modern Greece called Macedonia. Titus brings encouraging news about the Corinthians' response which included repentance (2 Cor. 7:5-16).
7. Paul writes the New Testament's **2 Corinthians** after receiving Titus' report. This paves the way for one more visit.
8. Paul's 3rd visit to Corinth is for 3 months (Acts 20:2-3; cf. 2 Cor. 12:14, 13:1).

Matthew 18:15-17

¹⁵ "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

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