

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

II CORINTHIANS 1

II Corinthians 1

The Book of II Corinthians is an incredibly personal letter from the Apostle Paul to his beloved Corinthian people. The context of the book is that Paul had written I Corinthians, and in places, it was harsh. He spoke of the contentious and fleshly/carnal behavior of those within the body and often used sarcasm to get his point across. A man who was involved in an incestuous relationship was not being disciplined, and on the other hand, their lack of dealing with open, public sin was bringing shame and reproach to the name of Christ and His church. The Corinthians had been led to believe that this kind of condoning of sin was good, and they were proud of their "open-mindedness to ungodly behavior." Paul instructed the church that their very pride showed that they did not understand the gospel and the grace of God.

The grace of God never condones or compliments sin; rather, it condemns it. The church should condemn sin within its membership as well. By the tone and content of II Corinthians, the church had repented and exercised the discipline Paul had called for in I Corinthians 5, but the people had gone to the extreme in their discipline and made it punitive/punishment-centered instead of redemptive and restoration-centered. It is in the very

nature of mankind to go from one extreme to the other. It is zeal without proper knowledge and wisdom. These extremes are still with us today. The offender/sinner living in a public display of sin so great that even the heathen did not do, repented when confronted by the church. However, after repentance, the church would accept his repentance and restore such a one to the fellowship. Paul said the Corinthians must restore such a one, lest he is being destroyed through the sorrow of being an outcast of such proportion that restoration is impossible.

Paul spends much of the remaining book defending his apostleship and helping the Corinthians to get ready for the offering that would need to be ready to take to Jerusalem. He wants the Corinthians to get the overarching message of the Christian life, that is, it is not about what we want, but what Jesus wants. Our life must be lived in conformity to the will of God, and that life is about loving God, loving others, and to the Corinthians, living a life of generosity. ***"To whom much is given, much shall be required."***

Prayer and Action Steps

Dear Lord, thank You that You can forgive and restore the lowest sinner and that You can change any life that is filled with repentance, trusting in Your redemption and grace. Amen