

“Perfecting Holiness In The Fear Of God” – The Results

2 Corinthians 7:1-11

1

“Having therefore these promises.”

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

- ▶ **Negative:** “Let us cleanse ourselves” (we who are defiled by sin), “from all defilement of flesh and mind” (2 Corinthians 7:1).
- ▶ **Positive side:** “Perfecting holiness.” “Perfecting” (*epiteléō*) means to complete or to finish. cf. Philippians 3:13

2

Context of 2 Corinthians 7:1 ff

Verses 2-4 Transitional: The optimism of verses 2-4, especially verse 4, is foundational.

Consider what follows:

- ▶ Regarding the collection. (chapters 8-9)
- ▶ To his response to those who question his spiritual effectiveness. (10:1-18)
- ▶ To his warning to those who receive the Judaizing intruders. (11:1-4)
- ▶ To his stern rebuke of those immoral persons who have not yet repented. (12:20-13:2)

3

Context of 2 Corinthians 7:1 ff

Verse 3, “for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die together and live together”

- ▶ He had already expressed a sincere affection for them in 3:2-3 and 6:11-12.

4

Joyous News (7:4-16)

Verse 4, “Great is my glorying on your behalf: I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction.”

- ▶ There were still problems, but they have been resolved enough to lift Paul’s spirit. (see 2:5-11; 7:5-16)
- ▶ In view of the (tribulation, see 1:4; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4) that he continues to experience.
 - Paul’s bottled-up emotions burst into joy!
 - Proverbs 25:25, “(As) cold waters to a thirsty soul, So is good news from a far country.”

5

Joyous News (7:4-16)

The report of Titus. 2 Corinthians 7:6-16

- ▶ Paul’s zeal for them had been reciprocated. Verse 7
- ▶ They had repented! Verses 8-10; cf. Luke 15
- ▶ Fruit of their repentance. Verse 11
- ▶ Titus rejoiced. Verses 12-15
- ▶ Paul’s confidence confirmed. Verse 16

6

Fruits Of Repentance

- ▶ “For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging!”

In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter.” 2 Corinthians 7:11

7

Fruits Of Repentance

“What Earnest care.”

spoudee, “with haste, earnestness, diligence” (Thayer)

“conveys the thought of anxiety, of watchful interest and earnestness.” (W.E. Vine)

- ▶ Truly, penitent Christians will immediately take whatever action that the situation demands in the light of God’s word. (cf. Acts 8:20)

8

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what clearing of yourselves.”

Apología, “to give an answer or speech in defense of oneself” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary).

The church in Corinth had been tolerant of sin among them. (1 Corinthians 5; cf. 2 Corinthians 7:14)

- ▶ Truly penitent Christians who are ready and anxious to clear themselves and to cause men to glorify their father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:16).

9

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what indignation.”

aganakteesis, “To be oppressed in mind, grieved, resentful.” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

This is more than intense sorrow. It carries to the next level of hatred for sin. cf. Genesis 39:9 Psalms 119:128, “Therefore I esteem all (thy) precepts concerning all (things) to be right; (and) I hate every false way.”

- ▶ Penitent Christians are indignant at that which had enslaved them in the past and now is trying to recapture them or others and drag them away from the Lord.

10

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what fear.”

phóbos, “fear, dread, terror; reverence, respect.” (Thayer)

- ▶ Perhaps fear of further contamination. cf. 1 Corinthians 5:6
- ▶ Perhaps the fear of further displeasing God or even the apostle Paul. cf. 1 Corinthians 4:18–21
- ▶ Penitent Christians have a holy fear, or reverence, for God and rebuke of God’s people are legitimate deterrents to sin. We must learn that sin has consequences.

11

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what longing.”

epipothesis, to desire earnestly, strong affection (2 Corinthians 7:7,11) (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

- ▶ Titus comforted Paul with his good report concerning the Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 7:7
- ▶ There is a better way to live. cf. Luke 15:1,2,17,18
- ▶ Penitent Christians long to maintain fellowship with God and other Christians.

12

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what zeal.”

zelos, as the capacity or state of passionate commitment. (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament)

- ▶ Zeal without knowledge can do harm. (Romans 10:1–3)
- ▶ Penitent Christians are passionate about correction.

13

13

Fruits Of Repentance

“Yea what avenging.”

ekdikēsis, “to execute justice. Execution of right, justice.” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

- ▶ That which was once tolerated is no longer permitted.
- ▶ Translations: “justice” (KJV – “revenge,” NASB – “avenging of wrong”). The NIV puts it, “what readiness to see justice done.”
- ▶ Penitent Christians will not tolerate sin.

14

14

Fruits Of Repentance

“For behold ... In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter.”

*hagnós; “Freedom from defilements or impurities. Akin to *hāgios*, Holy.” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)*

Note 2 Corinthians 7:1. *“Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”*

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