

LOVE  
&  
AUTHORITY  
2 CORINTHIANS



## Sermon Series Notes

### "Strained Relationships" (II Corinthians 6:3-13)

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#### I. SACRIFICE & SUFFERING FOR THE SAKE OF MINISTRY (vv.3-10)

Nine trials, in three sets of three each. Then nine inner qualities, followed by nine pairs of paradoxes.

vv.3-10 See I Cor.4:11-16; II Cor.11:23b-29a

\* See II Tim.2:8-10

\* Paul had endured more than most of us can even imagine, yet the thing that hurt him the most was not the sacrifices and sufferings he had made for the sake of ministry read vv.11-13.

\* What hurt Paul most in life and ministry was the "strained relationships" with the very people who were the product of his ministry.

#### II. STRAINED RELATIONSHIPS (vv.11-13)

##### A. Paul's Heart Toward The Church

\* He was "open-hearted," despite their hearts being closed to him.

\* II Cor.12: 15 So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less?

##### B. The Cause Of The Chasm

1. His tough talk to correct them
  - Rebuke for carnality (I Cor.3)
  - Rebuke for failure to discipline a sinning church member (I Cor.5).
  - Rebuke for lawsuits against one another (I Cor.6)

2. His seeming fickleness in decision making (II Cor.1)

3. Other "apostles" Who had slandered him (II Cor.2:17-3:3)

#### 4. The immaturity of the Corinthian Christians

#### C. Some Practical Thoughts

\* Pastoring & parenting are very similar, and each has the challenge of strained relationships

\* There are no perfect pastors/parents

- A perfect parent is a person with excellent child-rearing theories and no actual children.

- A perfect pastor is a person with excellent pastoring theories and no actual congregation.

\* The Bible is full of strained relationships: Adam & Eve (see Gen.3:12); Cain & Abel; Abraham & Sarah (see Gen.16:1-5); Abraham & Lot (Gen.13); Jacob & Rachael (see Gen.30:1-2); Moses & his congregation (see Numbers 11:10-15); Moses & his leaders (Numbers 16); The Twelve, Paul & Barnabas, Euodia & Syntyche (Phil.4)

\* Strained relationships are going to happen, because all of us are imperfect

\* One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair in contrast to her brunette head. She then asked her mother inquisitively, "Mommy, why are some of your hairs white?" Her mother replied, "Well, every time you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white." The little girl was silent for a moment, and then said, "Poor Grandma. You must have been a very, very bad girl."

\* Sometimes there is nothing you can do to heal a strained relationship. What I mean is that you cannot change someone else's heart.

\* Romans 12: 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

#### D. What Is My Responsibility In Attempting To Heal Strained Relationships?

1. Make sure there is evidence of my love toward the person(s) I'm having a problem with.

\* What sacrifices have I made to express my love for them?

\* Am I willing to rebuke/correct when it's needed?

- Rev.3: 19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.

- Prov.13: 24 He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

2. Make sure my heart is open to reconciliation

\* Have I allowed my heart to become hard?

\* Have I rejected needed rebuke/correction?

\* Paul had shown his openness to rebuke/correction (see Acts 23:3-5).

\* Proverbs 9: 8 Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. 9 Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.

### 3. Reach out in love in an effort to restore the relationship

\* Don't wait for them to reach out first.

\* Romans 12: 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

\*Paul could have come up with some pretty good reasons not to reach out to the Corinthians

\* David and Absalom

- See II Samuel 13-18

- This is an example of both parties refusing to reconcile, and look at the pain and heartache it brought not only to them, but to their family.

### CONCLUSION

\* If I asked how many are in a strained relationship right now, I'm certain lots of hands would go up the question in closing is, what have you done/are you doing to attempt to heal that strained relationship?

\* Sacrifices that prove my love? Open heart? Reaching out?