

Intro: *“Genuine love cannot remain silent when it see the one it loves in danger.” “Philip Hughes”*

That is the essence of what the Apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthian church in the passage we look at this morning. Let me remind you of the background for the book of 2 Cor. It is:

- A later book in a series of 3 or 4 letters to the Cor Church
- A “follow-up” to what Paul calls a “difficult” letter which came earlier
- Paul’s earlier difficult letter was “*calling the church out*” because of unrepentant sin in the body
- The earlier difficult letter MAY have been 1 Cor. Most believe it was lost and even more direct than 1 Cor 4:14-5:5

Paul had earlier called the Cor church out...because he saw them not only caught up in sin...be celebrating it! And he knew that if they continued down that path it would destroy them. Now in 2 Cor 7:2-16 he explains to them and to us, where find Strength To Do Hard Things
2 Cor 7:2-16 Page 819 (Read)

Where do you find the strength to do things you just simply DON'T want to do? We all face situations like that. Having a difficult conversation with a spouse, or a child. Confronting behavior that is harmful to the individual, the family, the church...That is what Paul did...and here he is putting it all in perspective. Look with me at where we find Strength To Do Hard Things!

1. The Motive That Drives You Is Love.

7:2-4; 12-16

Back to that quote we started with: “Genuine love cannot remain silent when it sees the one it loves in danger!”

Paul is saying here, Church...I love you...and BECAUSE I love you, when I see you going down a path of danger...I’ll say so!

- Notice how he explains himself:
 - >Did not wrong anyone: Lit = *I didn’t treat you unfairly or unjustly*
 - >Did not corrupt anyone: Lit = *I didn’t cause you damage of any kind by corrupting what was pure*
 - >Did not take advantage: Lit = *I didn’t use you for myself and my own ends*
 - >Did not condemn you: Lit = *I didn’t pass judgement and say, “you will NEVER be forgiven!”*
- Look at his motive:
 - >I have you in my heart: Lit = *We are joined together heart to heart!*
 - >I am completely committed: Lit = *Live or die...we are together in this...I’m not walking away*
 - >Have confidence in you Lit = *I am willing to speak boldly about you and your faith*
 - >I am proud of you Lit = *I boast about who you are “Look at the picture of my kids!”*
 - >I am encouraged by you Lit = *You build me up when I remember you...make me strong*
 - >You bring me joy in trials!: Lit = *Whatever trials I am going through... you bring me joy (Extra/Overflowing)*

You can’t read that and be confused...Paul LOVES the Corinthian church. But...that doesn’t preclude his warning them In fact...Listen: BECAUSE HE LOVES THEM...HE WARNS THEM!

- Look at his impartiality vs 12 ; 13-16
 - >Didn’t write because of the one that was in sin
 - >Didn’t write because of the one that was sinned against
 - >I didn’t write to take sides...I wrote because I love you...and the church...and the LORD!
 - >I wrote...because I had such confidence in you that you would get it right! Vs 13-16

Paul’s MOTIVE for calling the church out...MOTIVE for doing a Hard Thing...was LOVE

2. I Did The Hard Thing Because I Believed The Best Of You!

7:5-7

I believed that when you saw the reality of what you were doing...how you were behaving...and understood the outcome That you would respond correctly! I believed the very BEST of you. And so believing that...I knew I could show danger And you came through: Vs 14 You didn’t embarrass me...You lived up to every expectation!

- Vs 14: I had boasted to Titus about your love for God and your love for me...and you came through!
 - >you comforted Titus in difficult times: Vs 7 *To come along side and support*
 - >you refreshed him: Vs 13 *To give ease, rest and respite*
 - >received him Vs 15 *To welcome (fear and trembling) not anger bitterness*
- >You responded positively to the letter...and turned and started going in the right way
- >You wanted to set things right by me!
 - >Longed for me: *You didn’t turn your back on me because I called you out!*
 - >Deep sorrow Instead *You turned your back on your sin...and got it right with God and each other*
 - >Great concern *You have a passionate desire to see me again...let me know of your love!*

Paul is writing the Corinthian church after the fact and he is saying. Listen. I KNEW you would respond well. I believed in you...that you truly do love the Lord Jesus, and that it is your desire to honor Him So I stretched myself...and you...by writing you something that was hard to hear...I called you out...Because I loved you I felt I could do that because I believed in you! AND YOU CAME THROUGH

3. I Did The Hard Thing Because I Understand Different Kinds Of Sorrow! 7:10-11

This is a very important distinction here that we need to understand in our spiritual life.

Paul is identifying and describing for us two different kinds of Sorrow (*Emotional pain/struggle/Difficulty*)

- Godly Sorrow leads to repentance, which brings about Life!
(*change of mind and action*)
- Worldly Sorrow leads to remorse, which brings about Death!
(*sadness, anger, gloom, despair, bitterness*)

Both of them START the same way. We are emotionally upset by what has happened, the DIFFERENCE is in how we RESPOND to the pain! Do we respond by changing our mind, and our actions, and our behavior? If so, then that kind of sorrow lead to repentance...which produces life. If we respond with gloom, anger, despair and bitterness...brings death.

- Godly Sorrow takes responsibility and changes
- Worldly Sorrow gets angry and bitter and blames...but does not change
You can be full of remorse without having repentance. You can feel bad...and not change!
>Judas had remorse: Mt 27:3-5 "seized w remorse, returned silver, went and hanged himself..."
>Esau had remorse: Heb 12:17 "Sought the blessing he earlier rejected with tears...but no change of mind!"

KEY: Here is the Key, Both kinds of sorrow are painful...but one puts away sin...the other puts away responsibility!

Paul is telling the Corinthian Church...I believed you would get it right...and you did.

I loved you enough to let you know...you are on the wrong path...you need to change...

You listened...didn't get angry, didn't get defensive...didn't reject me, turn me off, turn your back...CHANGED!

4. Finally, Paul Says, I Did The Hard Thing Because I Know The Difference Between Pain...and Damage! Vs 8-9

This is a critical element of the spiritual life that runs counter cultural to the world in which we live.

We live in a world that has come to the place that we will do anything, put up with anything...to avoid pain.

We have little if any toleration or understanding for the fact that sometimes pain is a GOOD thing!

A LITTLE pain sometimes helps us avoid a greater amount of pain in the future...but we don't embrace that!

Illus: Surgeon understands...cutting the cancer out is painful. The shots are painful. The treatment painful
But, the pain of NOT doing those things is so much greater...and THAT is what Paul tells the Corinthians.

This is a critical passage...you should highlight this in your bible someway

Notice what Paul says:

- 4x "I hurt your feelings"
- You were not HARMED (SPIRITUAL DAMAGE)

Paul said: Listen, I know I hurt your feelings...and I'm not even sad that I did!

At first I was...but now I'm not...because I understand there is something more important than your feelings!

DAMAGE TO YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE!

You were on a path that was going to destroy you; and others; and the reputation and holiness of the Church

The Gospel message was being called into question and repudiated...because of your actions

So I called you out...IN ORDER TO SPARE YOU DAMAGE!

WHY do we do hard things: Because "*Genuine Love cannot remain silent when it sees the one it loves in danger!*"

CONCL: What about you this morning? Are there hard things that need to happen...in your life...or someone you know?

- Maybe you are being remorseful about your life: But there has been no real change: Time to ask God to help you
- Maybe you need to act...or speak...in order to help someone in danger: Bad Path: But you have been afraid
- Maybe you KNOW that someone in your life needs Jesus...but afraid to speak to them...Time to step up

Yes, there is a risk involved. Not everyone responds the way the Corinthian church did. Some get angry or bitter

But here is my encouragement to you

- Leave the response in their hands...and in the hands of God
- Be willing to act...and Speak the Truth in Love! Be cautious, be careful, be kind, But speak...Do the Hard Thing

If you need to take action you come

If you need to ask for strength you come

If you need to pray God will work when you do speak...you come