

## ZOOM

### "BACK IN THE GAME"

#### 2 CORINTHIANS 2:5-11

#### **This Week's Core Competency**

**Gentleness** – I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm in dealing with others. Philippians 4:5, *Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.*

What do you do daily? Do you take a daily multivitamin, go for a daily walk, do your dishes daily, write each day in your diary or even do your daily devotions (with The Scrolls, of course!)? We understand that tasks we do every day foster greater success than sporadic episodes of high exertion. Cramming extra hours at the fitness center in a weekend will not make up for weeks of inactivity spent on the couch. Daily tasks beat drastic measures hands down when it comes to long-term life change.

Jesus taught his disciples the importance of daily dependence upon God (Matthew 6:9-13). Jesus used this model prayer, often referred to as "The Lord's Prayer," to teach his disciples how to address God with daily persistence. The phrase "give us this day our 'daily' bread" suggests that our prayers to God for His provision should be prayed every day. Every day we should be praying in the fashion of this model prayer. If we ask for God's provision every day, then we should also be honoring His name every day. Every day we should be asking for His kingdom to come and His will to be done in our lives. Every day we should be seeking God's power to overcome

*To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.*

– Lewis B. Smedes

temptation. Every day we should be seeking God's protection from the evil one.

In the very center of all these daily petitions, Jesus challenges us to daily ask God for forgiveness. Every day we need God's grace to forgive us of the daily sins we commit. Daily prayer is daily cleansing from sin. Daily requests for forgiveness are not exclusively a personal matter. Daily, as we pray for our own forgiveness from God, we are challenged to ask God to help us forgive others also. Forgiveness from God and forgiveness for others display the full flower of this daily discipline. Asking God to forgive us and asking for His help in forgiving others are both just as important as asking for daily bread, avoiding daily temptation or asking for God to protect us from the devil.

Daily pursuit of forgiveness may be the most important part of daily prayer. Immediately following the model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13), Jesus warned that a lack of forgiveness for others on our part may negatively influence the way that God the Father deals with us (Matthew 6:14-15). A highly probable outcome of unforgiveness for others may influence God to refuse to answer our prayers for other daily needs. Daily devotion to God without daily consideration of forgiveness of others misses a key ingredient for successful spiritual devotion.

Sometimes our passion for God and His righteousness can make us hard and harsh to those who we see as against Him. If we are forgiven people, we can express more gentleness and compassion toward those who need forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35).

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Today, for what do you need to be forgiven? Whom do you need help forgiving today? If this person asked for your forgiveness today, would you be able to quickly embrace them and treat them with gentleness and love?

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God’s word to put yourself in touch with him.

### 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

*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 for him. 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 The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. 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.*

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \*Circle forms of the word "grief" in v. 5.
- \*Draw a line from "punishment" to the word that modifies it in v. 6.
- \*Underline the *temporal* word found in v. 7.
- \*Underline the *contrastive* word found in v. 7.
- \*Box the phrase that shows *purpose* in v. 7.
- \*Double underline the extreme words in v. 7.
- \*Circle the word showing Paul's desire in v. 8.
- \*Underline forms of the word "forgive" in v. 10.
- \*Box the phrase that shows *purpose* in v. 11.
- \*Double underline "outwit" in v. 11.
- \*Draw an arrow from "schemes" to their source in v. 11.
- \*Highlight all of the words speaking to a group in the passage (us, we, you, etc.).

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day **2**

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Who caused grief to Paul and the believers in Corinth? How big was the grief?
2. To what punishment might Paul be referring in 2 Cor. 2:6 (see 1 Cor. 5)?
3. What change of action takes place from the description of "he" in 2 Cor. 2:5 and the description of "he/him" in 2 Cor. 2:7?
4. What role does "punishment" (2 Cor. 2:6) play in the experience of forgiveness?
5. How does "sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7) contribute to the experience of forgiveness?
6. According to 2 Cor. 2:7, what purpose does forgiving and comforting have?
7. Along with forgiveness and comforting, Paul urges believers to share something more (2 Cor. 2:8). Why is this so important?
8. What is Paul trying to communicate about forgiveness in 2:10?
9. How does Satan "outwit" Christians when they are unforgiving?
10. How does 2 Cor. 2:5-11 apply to situations beyond formal church discipline?

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## day 3

# EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

As we continue our "zoom" into the life of the Church in first-century Corinth, Paul addressed a past issue that had ongoing consequences. In 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, the Apostle Paul reminded believers in Corinth about someone who caused both himself and the Corinthian believers great grief (2 Cor. 2:5). So much grief was caused by this individual that Paul stated that "all of you," meaning the entire congregation at Corinth, suffered as a result. Paul did modify the scope of his congregational inclusion by mentioning "some extent" and "not ... too severely." But even with this qualification, Paul attempted to communicate that many in the church were individually hurt by this offending individual and the negative effect of this person's actions was felt by the entire biblical community of Corinth.

We do not know exactly who this "grievous grinch" was nor exactly what he did. No doubt the Corinthian believers knew exactly to whom Paul was referring. It is noteworthy that Paul neither rehearsed the name nor the specific misdeeds of this individual. Paul was pursuing a higher goal than naming names and spreading gossip. Many scholars make a strong case for connecting 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 with 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. In 1 Corinthians 5, a man was described as practicing a highly offensive and observably public sexual sin. Paul admonished the church to publicly and corporately confront this man about his sin and "not associate" with him as he continued to live this way. This "putting out of fellowship" (1 Cor. 5:2) was proper punishment that the Apostle Paul instructed the church at Corinth to carry out against one who claimed to be a brother in Christ, but continued to live in a way that even unbelievers found offensive and harmful. Even if 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 is addressing someone other than the 1 Corinthians 5 offender, the principles of congregational discipline for an offending brother as instructed in 1 Corinthians 5 apply to this 2 Corinthians situation.

A major component of frustration for Paul as described 1 Corinthians 5 was that church was proud of the fact that they were embracing someone living in overt and public sinfulness. Paul preached the message of grace, but this did not mean that sinfulness was to be ignored or even worse, embraced and celebrated. In 2 Corinthians 2:9 Paul mentioned an earlier correspondence that was sent as a "test" of obedience to the Corinthian believers. This earlier letter could have

been a letter lost or it could be referring to the letter of 1 Corinthians. Regardless of the letter's origin, Paul communicated both in visits and numerous letters that the Corinthians must openly and publicly confront sin and not "do community" with those who chose to continue living in such offensive pursuits. Confronting and refusing to condone sinful behavior is a hard and difficult assignment. But doing so is obedience to God (2 Cor. 2:9).

Sometimes, while carrying out this hard assignment of church discipline, Christians can become "hard" or "extreme" in their treatment of offending believers. Christians tend toward the extreme opposite poles of either being overly permissive or excessively harsh and condemning of those they discipline. Just as Paul had to correct an unhealthy perspective regarding sinfulness in 1 Corinthians 5, now he was correcting a swing to the excessive opposite pole of being too harsh toward those who had seen the errors of their ways.

Paul was concerned that the previous offender may have become "overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7). This individual who was so grievous to a large portion of the Corinthian believers (2 Cor. 2:5) was now the one overly grieved with sorrow. Paul stated that the "punishment" or the "reproof" had done its job and produced the sufficient effect of sorrowful repentance (2 Cor. 2:7), a turning away from sin and a turning toward God. Paul instructed the believers to "forgive and comfort" this individual who had changed. Paul strongly "urged" that the Corinthians "reaffirm your love for him." This "reaffirming" intimates a public, observable and repeated embrace of this person who had embraced God's forgiveness and now sought it again from his brothers and sisters in Christ. Just as the "punishment" was carried out, so now the embrace of his returning brother should be reestablished and made clear publicly.

A great story, illustrative of this kind of loving forgiveness, is the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Here a father saw his son depart into a life of sinfulness. The father did not send a search party out to rescue the errant son. The prodigal's separation from the father was painfully real. While the sinful son was away, he was considered "lost" by the sorrowful father. But, when the son "came to his senses" and he left his past conduct and returned to the life of his father, the father was instantly able to embrace his son with exuberant

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love and joy. In contrast, the older brother was not able to embrace his repentant brother. Instead, he questioned the love of his father while focusing on the past sins of his brother.

After doing the hard work of opposing sin, we must be prepared to do the equally difficult work of forgiving sin and loving those who have harmed us in the past. Christian community is not a "one and done" single elimination tournament bracket. "Offend me once and I will never have to play with you again" - this is not the ethos of biblical fellowship. Rather, if sin is dealt with appropriately, the desired result of reconciliation should be the final fruit of sin's confrontation.

Even though Paul was known for being hard on sin, he was a lover of people and a promoter of gentleness. In 2 Cor. 2:10, Paul made it clear that he was "pro-forgiveness." He communicated in this verse that he was practicing frequent forgiveness and was embracing of those whom the Corinthians had properly forgiven. Paul was not one to play the role of the "older brother" of Luke 15. Forgiveness and the gentle acceptance of those returning were as important to Paul as confronting sin. We should strive to be so passionate for people as well.

God's enemy seeks to destroy through temptation. From Adam and Eve to our day, Satan is forever pitching the allure of doing the opposite of God's design. He has a shop in every market. Satan is a multimarket purveyor of harm. Forgiveness is not beyond his meddling. We may righteously stand strong against sin. But even a good cause, Satan can twist to his advantage. If God's enemy cannot destroy us with temptation, he will strive to turn our righteousness into hypocrisy and hatred. If we cannot forgive as God has forgiven us, then our faith is fruitless and our gospel is graceless.

Often, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 is treated primarily as a passage about official church discipline. If someone sins in a public or considerably scandalous way, he or she is confronted and officially "disfellowshipped" by the church. If later the disciplined person repents,

demonstrating sufficient sorrow and change, they are to officially be welcomed back into the church. This is a fair treatment of this passage in its strictest and most literal sense. But if considered valid only at this congregational level, the passage may not seem to have much importance in our daily lives. You may not be aware of any Christians currently disfellowshipped from your church. In the experience of many churches, "disfellowshipped people" are never seen or heard of again by the congregation. If this passage speaks only to the formalities of church discipline, then you and I personally may feel like not much here applies to us.

In broader strokes and considerations, even if we do not currently know a person like the one described in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, we all struggle with forgiving those who "grieve" us. Being ready to forgive someone is not easy. It is something we need to work on daily. Are we harsh and hard with sinful people or are we gentle and ready to quickly forgive, especially those who seek our forgiveness? This challenge to forgive, comfort and love urged by Paul in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 lifts this passage out of only technical, legal, church government proceedings and places it into our daily lives. Christians should be known as people who are ready to forgive, comfort and love. Even as we should stand strongly against sin and its expression, we should be known even more for our grace, gentleness and compassion for those who have fallen.

People of forgiveness do the hard work of confronting sin. People of forgiveness also excel in the expression of gentleness, comfort and love to those who are working to overcome sin. If you are known for being hard on sin, are you also known for being gentle and loving toward sinners? Are we ready to enthusiastically embrace returning prodigals? Or do we continue to harbor grudges against those who have wasted God's goodness? Every day we need God's help to make us forgiving, comforting, loving and gentle people.

### *The Message of the Passage*

***Don't fail to include correction in your biblical community. After sufficient remorse and reversal by those corrected, strongly and publicly demonstrate your forgiveness and love to them. Refusal to forgive gives Satan advantage; temptation is not our enemy's only tactic.***

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# day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following living questions:**

- How is God making himself known to you?
- How does God want to change you?
- How is God calling you to change your world?

## notes **N** **STUDY** – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v.5 *anyone/he* "That Paul is referring to one particular offender at Corinth is plain from the verses that follow: he had been punished through the discipline imposed on him by the church in accordance with instructions given in a previous letter of Paul's, and now he was to be forgiven and afforded the comfort of the Corinthians' love (Philip Hughes, *Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 59). Exactly who this offender was is unclear. This could be the offender mentioned specifically in 1 Cor. 5. Alternatively, he could have been a "puffed-up" person (1 Cor. 4:18) or someone resistant to Paul's leadership (2 Cor. 10:11). Others have thought maybe Paul was referring to one of any number of people in the Corinthian church, which struggled with many vices (1 Cor. 1:10; 3:1; 4:18; 6:18; 2 Cor. 7:12; 12:20-21; 13:2).

v.6 *punishment* Word form found only here in all of the New Testament. More of a rebuke than a formal punishment exacting a penalty. Does carry the weight of public expression and perhaps censure. Other noun forms of the root word may include the concept of penalty, but the New Testament form of a similar verb is most often used to communicate rebuke or reproof. "This is confirmed by the general NT usage of the verb which occurs 30 times, but only once (Jude 9) where it could possibly mean 'to impose a punishment', and especially by Luke 17:3 which provides an important parallel to Paul's situation. An offending brother must be rebuked or reproofed; and as soon as possible forgiven" (C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Harper's NTC, 90).

v.6 *majority* The grief endured was public (2 Cor. 2:5); so was the official reproof delivered from the broader body of the church. "That the punishment had been carried out by 'the majority' speaks of intensity; to have the bulk of one's community confront one with discipline would be sobering. Further, Paul's reference to 'the majority' also hints that a faction exists that did not support the disciplinary action" (George H. Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, Baker ECNT, 135).

v.6 *sufficient* "reaching to," "adequate," "attaining to" - When used to describe things rather than people it means to complete or satisfy, such as the demands of justice. "That the 'punishment' is 'sufficient' implies a forensic context (see Acts 17:9), which however, here points to the 'sufficiency' of the duration of the punishment' rather than of its severity" (Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 125).

v.7 *comfort* "To assure and encourage him that he is now restored to their fellowship... The verb is used of the father in the parable seeking to conciliate the estranged older brother (Luke 15:28)" (Barnett, 126).

v.7 *overwhelmed* "The verb 'overwhelm' was also used of animals who 'devour' their prey, and of waves or waters which 'swallow up' objects and people. Paul is afraid that that the offender, if not forgiven, may 'drown' in his sorrow" (Colin G. Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, Tyndale NTC, 82).

v.8 *reaffirm* "The word 'reaffirm' is technical and legal in character, adding weight to the hypothesis that a congregational 'hearing' would occur to 'forgive and comfort' just as a 'hearing' had apparently occurred at which the man was subject to some form of discipline" (Barnett, 128).

v.9 *test* "Paul demanded sanctions against him [the offender of 2:5] in order to test the church's obedience to his apostolic authority (cf. the later allusion to the affair in 7:12; see also 10:6). There was now danger that the church, in its revulsion and indignation (cf. 7:11) might proceed too far in its disciplinary measures against the offender" (F.F. Bruce, *I & II Corinthians*, New Century Bible Commentary, 185).

v.10 *forgive* "C.S. Lewis has said, 'We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.' In urging forgiveness and forgiving the offender himself, Paul would seem to be putting into practice what Jesus taught in the Lord's Prayer and in the admonition recorded in Luke 17" (David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, NAC, 127).

## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Growing up in a large family it was important for my siblings and I to learn to forgive quickly and often. A recent article on [www.allprodad.com](http://www.allprodad.com) gives 10 helpful tips on teaching our kids to forgive and let it go. Giving forgiveness is difficult but beautiful. When we forgive we set healing in motion. (1) Resolve even the smallest issues. Teach reconciliation skills early. (2) Forgive regardless of the other person's response. (3) It's not about being right. It's about the relationship being right. Teach your kids to care more about that. (4) Forgive without expectations or conditions. We are not responsible for the response of others. (5) Give it time. Forgiveness must come from your heart so keep praying until you are ready to forgive. (6) There are two sides to every story. Listen to learn the other person's perspective. (7) Being unforgiving cause bitterness and anger - let it go! (8) Harboring bitterness will cause it flow out of you. Fill your heart with peace and forgiveness and that will define you and flow out of you. (9) Serve others. Serving develops humility in us. Humility and forgiveness are related. (10) Treat others how you want to be treated. Do you want to be forgiven when you have done something wrong? Most important, remember that the Lord has forgiven you. When we reflect on that truth we can't help but forgive others.

### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 2Co 2:5-11

1. In verses 2-6, what does Paul say about the person who has made them sad?
2. What should the Corinthian church do instead (v. 7)?
3. What happens when we are unforgiving (v. 11)?

### What Do You Think

Sometimes it's hard to forgive especially when the person who hurt you is not sorry. Read Romans 5:8. When did Christ forgive us? Is there someone you need to forgive even if they haven't said they are sorry?

### What R U Going To Do

On a piece of paper write about a time when someone hurt your feelings. Decide to forgive that person. Rip the paper up in pieces. Soak it in a glass of water. Squeeze it out into a ball and throw it away. It's gone and can never be retrieved!

### Core Comp

Gentleness - I respond to others in a calm, thoughtful way.

### Memory Verse

2 Corinthians 4:16 - *Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.*

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed *Scrolls* \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

*6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).