

Pray and ask God to quiet your heart to hear from him as you read his word and go over this study guide.

Last week we took a quick look 2 Cor. 7:1 together with 6:16-18 but let's spend a few minutes looking at it again. There were four promises in verses 16-18.

- I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them
- I will be their God.
- I will welcome you.
- I will be a father to you.

1. If you are a believer, a child of God's, do you believe that it is His desire to have a close and intimate relationship with you?

What is hindering you? Try to answer this as objectively as possible.

God desires time with us. He longs for us to choose him. We become like those we are around the most. Since God has extended his grace to us in salvation and given us such wonderful promises why would we hesitate even for a moment to separate ourselves from all that is distracting or defiling? Remember these things can look innocent enough sometimes but are they drawing you closer or farther away from God?

A few years ago I had to tell myself to stop watching home improvement shows. They were causing me to be dissatisfied with what I had and constantly looking to change my home. This had become a distraction and defilement. They do not affect everyone this way but they were consuming my time and my thoughts and my checkbook.

1 Tim.6:6 "there is great gain in godliness with contentment"

2. What is distracting you?

3. What is defiling you?

Purifying ourselves is a twofold action: turning away from sin, and turning toward God.

4. What are the two areas that Paul points out that need cleansing? Vs.1

In Matthew 23:25, Jesus speaking to the Pharisees says *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.”*

5. Which is more important, the cleansing of the inside or the outside or are both important?

6. Even though the work of salvation is entirely by the grace of God, it is a gift that we receive by faith; we too have a part to play in a transformed life. What is that part?

7. Let's take a moment to stop and give God our undivided attention.

Is there something that is enticing you, luring you taking your focus off God?

Satan is a great fisher of men and women. He studies us throughout our lives in order to fine tune his tackle box. He has bait prepared especially for you.

What bait is he luring you with at this time? He does not want us to spend time in God's word or to allow God's word to have a chance to work its change in us.

We are all creatures of motivation. We love to be around those who have successfully completed a task that we are struggling with. It proves it is possible.

Look at Hebrews 12:1-2,

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith,...”

These witnesses are not a cheering mob watching us hoping we succeed, but are those who have gone on before us and finished the course. We have many examples in scripture of those whose lives are a witness to the goodness and faithfulness of God to the obedient child of God.

8. How do we finish well? Look at Heb.12:2 again.

9. In verses 2-6, Paul states his love for the Corinthians and his complete dependence on God. In spite of trials and great affliction that he has endured at

the hands of false teachers and those that openly opposed him; he wants them to know that God has been faithful to _____.

10. What is the good news that Paul receives in vs.6-7 and who brought him this good report?

As a loving father correcting his child who was heading for danger Paul had written them a letter of correction and to their credit they had received it and repented.

11. What does verse 10 tell us is the benefit of godly grief?

12. Underline the 7 things Paul mentions which godly grief had produced in his beloved Corinthians? vs. 11

For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

Now read this verse in other translations to see what you can learn. Or if you know how to use a Strong's Concordance look them up. If you do not have a way to look up the Greek words and definitions pray and ask God to speak to your heart and reason each of these out in light of fact that Paul now says they are innocent of the matter.

Since their repentance, the Corinthians had proven by their actions that they were now innocent of the previous sins. True godly repentance always involves seeing our sin as God sees it, asking forgiveness and changing our ways and habits.

John MacArthur Commentary on 2 Corinthians 7

"Sin's deceitfulness had caused them to lose sight of their eagerness, loyalty and love for Paul and the truth he preached. Their repentance restored their spiritual sight and enabled them to see Paul as the trusted servant of God they had always known him to be."

13. Notice what Paul tells them in verses 12-13.

I did not write you _____

14. Who had led their hearts away, we do not know, only that someone had caused him much grief during his painful visit to Corinth. 2 Cor.2:1

I did not write you _____

15. Paul did not write them for vengeance sake. He was not trying to hurt them or get even for his suffering while he had been there.

But I wrote you _____. They were making a huge mistake. They were forgetting all the truth they had been taught and falling for a deception. Paul had brought the gospel to Corinth; he loved them dearly as a parent a child. At one point they had known this truth.

16. What was Paul comforted by and rejoicing over in verses 13-15?

17. How easily corrected are you?

18. How would you handle it if a trusted friend shared a correction from God's word with you with the hope and expectation that you would see your wrong direction and repent?

Notice the final words of assurance Paul shares with them. How happy they must have been to hear these words of closure. They knew the matter was now behind them.

19. Are you careful to let others know when the matter is settled? Or do they fear it will be brought up again in the future. We can apply this to our mates, children, friends and extended family. The past needs to stay there.