



Painful Experiences

2 Corinthians 1:23 – 2:4

PAINFUL SPARING

- Paul desperately wanted to visit those he truly loved, but knew he shouldn't at this time.
- Paul knew the current circumstances would bring more sorrow if he visited them.
- Paul wanted to spare them from this sorrow.

PAINFUL SORROW

- Paul had already experienced one sorrowful visit at Corinth, and desired the next to be joyful.
- The sorrow caused by Paul's former letter was not, in the final analysis, regretful, but very purposeful. (2 Cor 7:8-10).

PAINFUL LOVE

- Paul's previous letter (likely 1 Corinthians) was written with great 'affliction and anguish' – he knew it would be very painful, but it needed to be written, for their good.
- Paul wrote truth in painful love – things they needed to hear, even though it would cause sorrow, for a season.
- Love ... seeks not its own, ... rejoices with the truth (1 Cor 13: 5,6).
- Love, properly expressed, will demonstrate Christ's love (2 Cor 5:14-15, Phil 2:1-11)

APPLICATION

There will be times in your life when you will experience the painful correction from others. What will your response be? Will you be prepared to recognize the underlying love of those from whom the correction comes, or simply look for excuses to doubt their love?

There will be times in your life when you will be required to exercise correction towards others. Will you be able to examine your conscience, claiming God as your witness, and have no other motive than the spiritual well being of the one to be corrected?

There will be other times in your life when you will think it necessary to intervene in the spiritual affairs of others. Will you be willing to allow the indwelling Spirit of God to direct your actions, so as to enable them to learn the lessons the Spirit desires, and not necessarily the lessons you desire?

And remember – suffering for righteousness sake is always purposeful. It is not to be avoided.