

2 Corinthians 1:23-24 New International Version – UK

²³ I call God as my witness – and I stake my life on it – that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. ²⁴ Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

Paul decided not to make a second painful visit to Corinth – but out of love for the church, he decided to write instead to correct some of the errors that were creeping into the church. He wanted to work with the church and felt a written response would be more gentle and build faith, rather than angry words which may have been destructive. Pray for those who, faced with difficult circumstances, need to make wise decisions on how to handle situations.

2 Corinthians 2:1-3 New International Version - UK

¹ So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. ² For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved?

Paul's motivation for avoiding the visit was to maintain the relationship he had with these brothers and sisters in Corinth. He considers the best way to handle the situation to cause the least pain so that the relationship can heal and continue. Pray for those who are struggling to make decisions on handling difficult situations that they will make wise decisions to maintain relationships and help build faith.

2 Corinthians 2:3-4 New International Version - UK

³ I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. ⁴ For I wrote to you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

Paul wanted to show the depth of his love for his readers, hoping that a heart felt letter would pave the way for a much more joyous visit later. He gave careful, prayerful thought to the words he wrote. Do we take care in our written messages? Pray that God will help us make wise choices when sharing our feelings that we can protect and strengthen relationships rather than be destructive.

2 Corinthians 2:5-7 New International Version - UK

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. ⁷ Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

Paul speaks of reconciliation amongst the believers, that those who have caused grief and suffered as a result, should be forgiven and comforted. Paul seeks unity and restoration of harmony amongst the church. Paul sets a pattern for believers, restoration forgiveness and harmony are things we should strive for. Pray for those churches who are struggling because of broken relationships and disharmony amongst believers, pray for forgiveness and restoration.

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⁸ I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹ Another reason I wrote to you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. ¹⁰ Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. 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.

Reaffirming our love for Jesus also puts into perspective our relationship with other believers, those who also love Jesus. Forgiving those who have hurt us or who have sinned, is easier when we remember how much Jesus has forgiven us for the hurts we have caused and the sins we have committed. Paul promises not to hold a grudge against those the fellowship have forgiven. Pray for those who find it hard to forgive others or refuse to seek the forgiveness of others.

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 New International Version - UK

¹² Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, ¹³ I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.

Despite the opportunity to preach the Gospel, Paul could not settle to do the work because Titus had not arrived with news of the Corinthians, it showed his level of concern for them, that he moved on to Macedonia seeking Titus and news of his brothers and sisters in Corinth. Are there things which distract you from doing the Lord's work? Pray for missionaries that wait for news of home. Pray we will not be distracted from opportunities to share the Gospel.

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 New International Version - UK

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.

Paul sees the move as an opportunity to share the Gospel in other places, are you always looking for an opportunity to share your faith? Are you bringing a pleasing aroma of Christ among the people you meet? Pray we will be aware of opportunities to witness for our Lord.
