

2 Corinthians 1:23

²³ *But I call God as **witness to my soul**, that to **spare** you I did not come again to Corinth.*

Remember in 1 Cor.4:21 the **option** of a visit with them either a **rod** or gentleness

1 Corinthians 4:21 (NASB) ²¹ *What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a **rod**, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?*

Here, as he states, that the reason he had not as yet come to Corinth, was **to spare them.**

Shall I come to you with a rod,

24 Not that we lord it over your faith but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith, you are standing firm.

- Look how far Paul's thinking was **to not lord it over their faith**, as some might have drawn from his threat of a **rod**.
- He rushed to clarify that it was **as an apostle**, not their lord.

1 Peter 5:1,3 (NLT2)

1 And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you:

3 Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example.

Delay would give time to **grow and change their minds**. His delay is very **Godlike**.

1. God acts with the world today delaying His coming:

a. **2 Peter 3:9 (NASB)**

⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance..

2. Delay is not a sign of weakness.

a. **Romans 2:4 (NASB)**

⁴ Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

3. Delay is love-like. Paul acting in a love-like way.

a. **The hardest thing for a sinful mind of man to see is God's love.**

If we can see that, then there are no bad encounters with God.

4. Canceled visit was not a misuse of authority; it was an act of love.

*²⁴ Not that we lord it over your faith but are workers with you for your joy; **for in your faith, you are standing firm.***

- All the apostles communicated God's mind, that the saints might have the same assurance of it as themselves, and so their joy be full. *for in your faith you are standing firm*
- So it must be in order to please God. **Without faith it is impossible.**
- It is not by the fear or favor of men, however blessed, that the saints stand, **but by faith.**
- **Nothing is truly done that is not accomplished in the soul by God. Even an apostle like Paul, John or Peter would not step between the faithful and God.**

(NKJV)

¹ But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow.

Note that Paul "determined" not to come again in sorrow.

Paul Had made up his mind "I determine not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified ." ([1 Cor. 2:2](#)).

This was the third time he had purposed going; and it was the putting off the visit when intended which gave rise to the charge of light-mindedness (flakey).

He was anxious to avoid sorrow, so, instead of going as intended, he went to meet Titus, that he might know how his first letter had been implemented at Corinth.

² For if I cause you sorrow, who then makes me glad but the one whom I made sorrowful?

How did Paul get to this mindset from that of Acts 9:1?

¹ Now Saul, still breathing threats and even of murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest. [Acts 9:1 \(NASB\)](#)

To

I endure all things for the elect's sake." ([2 Tim. 2:10](#)).

"I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." ([2 Cor. 12:15](#)).

The will of man is guided by what he knows and what he desires. The divine method of reaching the will is by graciously increasing man's knowledge and by stimulating his desires, while on the divine side of this method there remains not the shadow of possible failure. The end is as certain as any eternal reality in God.

On the human side, man is conscious of doing only what he actually does: he chooses as an act of his own volition to receive the grace God offers in Christ Jesus. By persuasion and enlightenment God realizes His purpose to the point of infinite completeness; yet no human will has ever been coerced, nor will one ever be." -L.S.C.

Acts 9:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

⁶ but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

How does a servant of the Lord acquire such an attitude as this in his dealing with other believers?

The **burden** over the **need** of **others** develops our **hunger of heart to be** a "*vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*" ([2 Tim. 2:21](#)).

“Life, power, blessing, deliverance for others - and nothing for thyself, but to lie in the will of the Father, and accept from His hand all that He pleases to permit to come upon thee.”

None But the Hungry Heart

*³ This is the very thing **I wrote you**, so that when I came, I would not have sorrow from those who ought to make me **rejoice**; having confidence in you all that my joy would be the joy of you all.*

His reference to this former letter simply strengthens his point made in verse 2 that when he came to visit them again he wished to be a source of joy, not sorrow. He wanted them to make him joyful too. CONSTABLE

How do you react when someone has confidence in you?

He said, I had this confidence that if once these evil things were really brought to your attention, your Christian conscience would make you see the importance of dealing with them, you would **not go on tolerating the wickedness.**

IRONSIDE

⁴ For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.

Foolish and carnal though they were, yet he loved them with a tender affection.

Love lies as the rock-bottom foundation of everything.

Not cleverness, not ability, not sarcasm, not anger, but **LOVE** is God's way of blessing.

Paul had a special affection Especially: *perissoterōs*: Abundance, Exceeding for the Corinthian believers.

*“Out in the darkness, shadowed by sin
Souls are in bondage, souls we would win.
How can we win them? How show the way?
'Love never fails,' Love is the way.
'Love never fails,' Love is pure gold;
Love is what Jesus came to unfold,
Make us more loving, Master, we pray,
Help us remember, Love is Thy way.”*

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