

⁵ But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree—in order not I not be burdensome—to all of you.

These 3 are in focus in Verse 5-

1. Feeling pain

2. Causing pain

3. Avoiding pain

1. Sorrow had filled Paul's heart.
2. Grace had communicated to the saints, Paul's grief at the Corinthian scandal.
3. The hearts of all would be soothed, and even he.

*⁶ Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the **majority**,*

- The man was made to feel that they all abhorred and disowned his sin.
- The punishment was inflicted not by Paul merely, or by one or two of the more **spiritual** at Corinth, but by **all of the saints**.
- DARBY: Verse 6 does not imply that they were not unanimous, it should read "**the many**."
- His conscience was reached. He was brought to repentance.
- This is the point that discipline is designed to reach.

The type of plow employed has much to do with the resultant harvest. The primitive stick-plow places quite a limitation upon what will be harvested-if anything. But if the Husbandman's plow is cutting deep into our lives, we can expect a rich harvest. *As Samuel Rutherford said, "Why should I start at the plow of my Lord, that makes deep furrows on my soul? He purposes a crop!"*

²⁴ Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed? Does he continually turn and harrow the ground? ([Isa. 28:24](#)).

No, of course not! It is a job that has got to be done-the breaking up, the turning over, the exposing to the elements, the harrowing. The Lord is speaking to His faithful people who are feeling that they are under the plow; furrows are being cut deep into their souls; they are being turned up and turned over, laid bare, exposed, broken, harrowed. **The Father says, even to faithful people, 'This is necessary, we are looking ahead to a harvest, to real values; this is an essential aspect of the work. But. . . take comfort-this is not going on forever.'**

"No matter what we may encounter in this life, we who belong to the Lord Jesus have this definite knowledge-**our Father will use it all in love as an instrument in the carrying out of the glorious purpose to which He has destined us.** If that purpose is to be wrought by delivering us from a trial, He will do so. But if it is to be accomplished by means of the trial, He, in His perfect love, will not free us from it but strengthen us to go through it and be victorious over it." -A.M.

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" ([1 Pet. 5:6](#)).

*⁷ so that on the contrary you should rather **forgive** and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.*

Forgiveness

Galatians 6:1 (NASB)

*¹ Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, **restore such a one** in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.*

Ephesians 4:32 (NASB)

*³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.***

⁷ so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

- It was possible otherwise that he might be overwhelmed with excessive sorrow.
- Sorrow for sin is good; but there is a point where it may become excessive and harmful — a point where sorrow should cease and the joy of forgiveness be known.
- **The joy of the Lord, and not sorrow for sin, is our strength.**

Colossians 3:21 (NASB) ²¹ Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

⁸ Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.

- The action taken at Corinth was so **effective** that the man was brought into considerable distress and anguish of heart over his sin.
- The danger now was that the Corinthian church would, in their zeal against his sin, **overlook** his sorrow, and **not** forgive him and **restore** him to his **place** in their body.
- So, Paul writes to them urging them to do this, and **confirm** their **love** towards him.

*⁹ For to this end also I wrote, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are **obedient** in all things.*

Philippians 2:2 (NASB)

² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

The saints are to prove their obedience in all respects, in gracious **restoration** of the man, as before in solemn **judgment** of his dreadful sin; and Paul also had all this in view when he wrote both epistles.

Verse 9, in particular, is consistent with verses 7, 8, and others

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¹⁰ But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

- This verse shows that if the assembly at Corinth **forgave** the man, **their** forgiveness carried with it Paul's **forgiveness**.
- It would **not** have been adequate healing of the church to have forgiven the Corinthian offender because the apostle had done so and commanded it.
- And again, that if Paul forgave any, by reason of his apostolic authority, he did so for their sakes, and as acting on behalf of Christ.

¹⁰ But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

Kelly:

But it is of deep moment to mark and learn that, though he has to awaken the assembly **both to judge and to restore, for they had failed in both respects**, he will have them to feel and act aright, joining them in their acts, and in no way acting for them.

Darby:

The effect at Corinth is given in 2 Corinthians 7:11 (NASB) *¹¹ For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.*

***11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan,
for we are not ignorant of his schemes.***

The very devil himself in some cases likes to see believers righteously excessive, at the expense of "*the meekness and gentleness of Christ.*"

It is beautiful to see him urging both righteousness and grace; and in the end Satan did not get an advantage - they were of one mind in the Lord.

We are not ignorant of the mindset of Satan.

¹¹ so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Our weakness is immense,
the difficulty as various as humanly impossible,
the danger from Satan's wiles constant;

but greater is He that is in the saints than he that is in the world;

for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

We know that the enemy's thoughts and designs are levelled pre-eminently at Christ's Body, the only **divine society on earth.** Darby