

Sermon: Nobody Said This Would Be Easy

Text: 2 Corinthians 6:3-7:16

Discussion Questions:

- Paul begins this section in 2 Corinthians 6:3 by expressing his concern that his “ministry” might be discredited by the accusations that some in the Corinthians church (or community) were making. Think about this in light of the ongoing challenges that ministry leaders face today...
 - What are some of the things that Satan tries to do in order to discredit churches or pastors?
 - Why do you think this approach (discrediting churches and pastors) sits right at the top of Satan’s playbook?
 - How effective is this approach?
 - Who, ultimately, gets hurt by these various accusations?
 - How do you see this continuing to happen today?
- Read through the various things that Paul has endured in verses 4-10. There are over twenty different challenges that Paul has dealt with (depending how you measure it). Make a list of each of the things that Paul has faced, and then try to rank them from “worst” to “least worst” in terms of how you think Paul would have viewed them. (In other words—what do you think Paul would have struggled with more—being hungry, or being beaten, or being viewed as an imposter?)
- Paul shifts gears in chapter 6 verse 14, and begins discussing people that we “yoke” ourselves with. The obvious application is marriage. But this principle could extend to any area of our lives where we enter into partnership with others (e.g. business partnerships). Why do you think Paul is so adamant about not being yoked with unbelievers? Do you agree?
- What are the things that Paul is encouraging us to purify ourselves from in 7:1? How do we do this?
- Why do you suppose it was so important to Paul that the people in the church in Corinth “make room for him in their hearts”? What was at stake if they didn’t?
- How does 2 Corinthians 7:6-7 connect to the way that Paul begins this letter back in 1:3-11?
- Paul refers in verse 8 to a letter that he had written the church (almost certainly not the letter we now call 1 Corinthians), indicating that he engaged in some correspondence with them that aren’t now included in the Bible. What does Paul tell us about this letter, and how does he feel about having sent it?
- We are told in Ephesians 4:15 to “speak the truth in love.” How difficult can this be to do? Do people who consider themselves “non-confrontational” get a pass on this—as if this command doesn’t apply to them? Have you ever been helped by someone confronting you with truth?