

## “Of Repentance unto Life” part 15 WCF 15.6.4, The Duty of Renewed Affection and Fellowship

2021.09.12 Sabbath School Lesson

Hopewell ARPC, Culleoka, TN

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WCF 15.6 (TPH p928)

VI. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof;<sup>(l)</sup> upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy:<sup>(m)</sup> so, he that scandalizeth his brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession, and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended,<sup>(n)</sup> **who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.**<sup>(o)</sup>

<sup>(l)</sup> Ps. 51:4, 5, 7, 9, 14; Ps. 32:5, 6.

<sup>(m)</sup> Prov. 28:13; I John 1:9.

<sup>(n)</sup> James 5:16; Luke 17:3, 4; Joshua 7:19; Ps. 51 throughout.

<sup>(o)</sup> II Cor. 2:8.

**2Corinthians 2:3 And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. <sup>4</sup>For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.**

**<sup>5</sup>But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent—not to be too severe. <sup>6</sup>This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, <sup>7</sup>so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. <sup>8</sup>Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. <sup>9</sup>For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. <sup>10</sup>Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, <sup>11</sup>lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.**

▫Confronting sinning believers ought to aim at joy

▫In a corporate context, punishment may be necessary at first for rebuke, v6

▫But the one showing the right sort of sorrow (cf. 7:8–12) must become an object of forgiveness/grace and comfort/strengthening, v7

▫This includes confirmations of love, v8

▫This is just as much a command as the church discipline was, v9

▫Which in the context helps him see it coming from the apostle, v10

▫One of the designs of Satan is that churches which are holy enough to deal with sin would be unhealthy enough to be crippled or fractured by conflict, v11

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

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So, let's begin with prayer.

Our father in heaven. How we? Thank you and praise you. That you have given your son as promised to become the seed of the woman who had crushed the circus head, who praise you Lord Jesus that you came to destroy the works of the devil. We praise you, our God.

That you are crushing and will soon finish crushing Satan underneath our feet. We pray that you would help us as we think of what your word describes as one of the ways that he attacks and that you would give us the ministry of your Holy Spirit, working the fruit of your word out in us that this would be a place that is mighty in Christ and not overcome by the schemes of the devil and so we pray that you'd help us.

Now as we study particular, we pray that this would result in our being of congregation where there is not only repenting but forgiving and reaffirming love and walking in love, that shows us to be your beloved children who are kind and tenderhearted and forgiving. As you in Christ, have forgiven us as he offered himself for us as a sweet smelling.

Roma. So help us now as we study in Jesus name. Amen.

So, we have come to the end of chapter 15. The paragraph that we're in, is, or the section that we're in, is section, six as every man, is bound to make private confession of his sins. To God praying for the pardon thereof upon which in the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy.

So he that scandalizes his brother or the church of Christ or to be willing, by a private, or public confession and sorrow for his sin to declare his repentance, to those that are offended, who are there upon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him. So you can hear even in the reading of the section that the way we respond to one another's, confessing CN and repenting to one, another ought to have an imitated value.

It ought to look like how God responds to us, and we rejoice that we can come and we forsake our sins and confess our sins to God, praying for their pardon and couple of weeks ago when we were in the second sentence of this or the second. Yeah. Clause, I guess of this section we were joined in upon which in the Forsaking of them, he shall find mercy.

Now in the church of Jesus Christ, it ought to be that brothers who are loving one, another not sinlessly, but in a way that handles sin and the way the Lord tells us to do so that that feels like a rule among us, that when we come to one another and we confess our sins, we and forsake our sins, we shall find mercy with one another.

Now, that does not happen 100% of the time. In fact, sadly in a mobile church culture that takes, vows does not take vows very seriously. We don't have a lot of opportunity for confessing repenting reconciling and enjoying that imitation of, he shall find mercy in the section, that's footnoted in with the one that we have today.

Who are there upon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him. But even as we were praying, just before we started here, from the end of Ephesians 4 and the beginning of Ephesians 5, that being kind to one another tenderhearted, forgiving one another. Just as God in Christ.

Has forgiven us is part of in love as beloved children. Our father has in Christ forgiven us and thus he has adopted us as his children and so we respond by being kind to one another. Just tenderhearted being kind to one another tenderhearted and forgiving one another. Just as that's why I don't know.

If you've seen them around there, those little lawn signs everywhere that say just be kind and I raise my physical say, no it's not just be kind, is be kind and tender-hearted and forgiving as God in Christ as forgiven you it's be kind as recreated adopted people who are, who are expressing the gospel in our kindness.

Yeah, that just be kind of good as our father or brothers. All are we that's a liberal horrible song from the things that had been churches and became synagogues of Satan around. The 20th turn of the 20th century. You don't have to like, you know, clench your well, you can, if you want clench your face every time, you hear it because so many souls have been shipwrecked on the loss of the gospel that has this universally humanity kind of thing.

No, the church is the place where you see Ephesians 4:32 because the church knows God's. Forgiveness in Christ God's fatherhood we as beloved children walk in love. Just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a sweet smelling aroma. And so since it is the image of our father, and the example of our God who became man in order that he might be our elder brother and both die for us and set an example for loving one.

Another since that is, what is at stake in forgiveness? And the reaffirm of love for one another, it is not surprising that this is one of the places where Satan attacks the church. Now, I'm not sure why they wouldn't have included. And, you know, I don't know the addendum after the Lord's Prayer, right?

Who are there upon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him and you have that parallel between that and the, he shall find mercy from earlier in the paragraph. Seems like what Jesus says, after the conclusion of the Lord's prayer. For, if you do not forgive men's stress passes, neither will your father, forgive yours, that, that, that also is helpful for this, who are there upon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him.

Perhaps, the reason is because what Jesus is highlighting there in Matthew 6 is a forgiveness that is extended to all and it is a forgiveness that does not necessarily result in reconciliation. The way that, you know, that forgiveness with a brother in Christ will or ought to result in reconciliation.

So perhaps perhaps, that's why. But you again have that imitating how God has been with us. So the footnote, they give us the reference against us is therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him and that's plenty in and of itself especially if, as we been reminding ourselves week by week.

There's expectation that we understand some context now, there's a lot more context in second Corinthians chapter two, than what we put on the page, because they had a man who wasn't great sin in first Corinthians and we're actually not entirely sure. Paul refers to a letter. That sounds

like it could be first Corinthians, but many speculate that it's actually another letter that was not inspired scripture that had come between first Corinthians and second Corinthians.

And as you could tell, especially from reading first Corinthians, they probably had a lot of good candidates for people who needed discipline and Paul might write about. And so we don't know if it's a hundred percent if it's the, the guy from first Corinthians five. But there was someone about him, Paul has written and he they have dealt with it now and he's writing, second Corinthians and part of his message.

And second Corinthians is what they are supposed to do now that they have carried out the church discipline. So I'm going to read beginning in verse three and ending in verse 11 says and I wrote this very thing to you last. When I came I should have sorrow over those from whom.

I ought to have joy having confidence in you all that. My joy is the joy of you. All proud of much affliction and English of heart, I wrote to you with many tears. Not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love, which I have so abundantly for you.

But if anyone has caused grief, he is not grieved me. But all of you to some extent not to be too severe the punishment, which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man. So that all the contrary you want rather to forgive and comfort him. But for perhaps such a woman, be swallowed up with too much sorrow.

Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him for to this end. I also wrote that I might put you to the test, whether you're obedient in all things. Now, whom you forgive anything? I also forgive indeed. I have forgiven anything. I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ.

Less Satan should take advantage of us for. We are not ignorant of his devices. Second Corinthians chapter 2 verses 3 through 11. Incidentally if you're interested I you know I don't think it's good for believers to obsess about angels and demons. The Lord does not tell us that much in the Bible about them and every once in a while I run into someone who just wants to know, that's all they want to study.

Don't want to study God. Christ and believers about which the Lord proportionally tells us a vast amount more. So not to indulge obsession but you should know your enemy. That's one thing that's at the end of this passage, we are not ignorant of his devices. And Thomas Brooks has a a very, very helpful book.

Precious remedies again, Satan's devices. Better of truth, is made a little, a bridge site in modernized paperback of it. And it's basically a catalog of ways that the Bible describes Satan attacking and ways that the Bible describes defending neutralizing defeating those attacks. Well, here is one, it is a very subtle attack because it can only come to a church that hasn't already succumbed to being unholy The Corinthian church.

Thought they had unity but it wasn't Christian unity. The Corinthian church thought that they had grace, but it wasn't Christian or Biblical. Grace. The Corinthian church had cheap grace false grace false unity. If we were to go back into first Corinthians 5, and this man who is committing us in sin that even a Corinthian would blush act and they were proud of the fact that that they could tolerate that that there was room for him in their church.

Very, very frightening when you think about the way a lot of people a lot of churches, even a lot of reform to churches. Talk about how there's room for all kinds of sinners here. When they apostle actually wrote to a church that was thinking and acting like that in first Corinthians and said no there's no room for sinners like that in the church, they're through four repentant, sinners from that in the church.

And so if you, if you don't have church discipline at all, if you don't have a commitment to holiness, if you don't have confronting one another calling to repentance asking for forgiveness, those kinds of things. The Satan's already, one in a church like that. And all the unity celebrations and the, and the grace celebrations, and the boasting that the, why are you boasting?

You should be grieving instead the apostle tells them in the first first letter. But for those who do care about holiness and churches that do exercise church discipline, there are other attacks in Satan's arsenal and one of them is failing to be a church in which love is reaffirmed when repentance occurs.

And so he says, and I wrote this very thing to you last, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom. I ought to have joy. He's just been saying in the opening verses of the chapter that that he hopes to have, but that he decided not to come to them at first because he didn't want to be a to be a sorrowful interaction because when they interacted he hoped that they would be making one another glad we go.

If you ever have to receive a letter of rebuke from your session or just a letter asking to engage over some sin know that there's apostolic wisdom sometimes in writing and giving an opportunity to see whether the response is going to be sorrow over the sin or whether the response is going to be some kind of confrontational rejection of that.

Rebuke that correction Praise God Paul in spirit. Given wisdom said face to face as not always right away the writer best thing. Sometimes, we take things that are generally true. Most communication is best face to face, you know, second John third John at the end is stuff that he wanted to write, but he didn't want to use pen and ink because he wanted the joy of it face to face.

Well, in this case, it wasn't going to be joy face to face. And so the apostle by the spirit says, I didn't come face to face because I wanted to have the opportunity to resolve the sorrow first. So that when we did get face to face we would be a well on the way to joy.

He says and I wrote this very thing to you last. When I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom. I ought to have joy having confidence in you all that. My joy is the joy of you. All proud of much affliction, and anguish of heart. I wrote to you with many tears.

Not that you should be grieved. And he talks about that later in chapter 7. You can see it noted actually there versus 8 to 12, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love, which I have so abundantly for you. And so the first thing to note is that confronting centering, sinning believers, ought to aim at joy which means that if if you've gotten as far as and it's good to get that far where there's grief over what happened and there's grief over the consequences of it and what became what became necessary.

And there's admitting of the sin and renouncing of the sin and desire to do rightly but they're still sorrow. It's still in the condition of sorrow. You're not done yet that their needs to be that forgiveness, that reconciliation, that love that receiving. So, you know, where we are in the chapter, in the confession, who are there upon to be reconciled to him and in love to receive him.

So, when we are practicing this with our children and you deal with the sins of each individual child, and then you bring them together and you walk them through, you know, naming their sin confessing that, it's against God, confessing that it's against them and one says sorry. And one says I forgive you you're not done until there's genuine affection and smiles, right?

We're not just training Pharisees here to follow the the order of service for. You know, can, you know, child conflict resolution in the Hakeem household, we are we are learning how to interact with one another as Christian brothers and sisters. And it's amazing how know with the smile and then a bigger smile than eventually the child who may even still at that point, be clinging to that last shred of wanting to hold on to their offendedness, will eventually give in or have more discipline than we could do it again later, but that's neither.

Here are there. If there's still sorrow, you haven't reached a conclusion. You haven't reached the aim, the confrontation aims that joy. Now, it may end in the grief of x communication thankfully there as if it is. The guy from first Corinthians there's been not only excommunication but there's been restorations.

One of the reasons why we think it might be might be someone else, but if anyone has caused grief, he says, is not grieved me. But all of you to some extent not to be too severe. So on the one hand, the congregation was needing to confront this particular person who is singing.

On the other hand, the apostle was needing to confront the congregation for the sin of not confronting sin, right? So you got kind of two, two dynamics here. Not only not only has Paul had to write that to them, but as he wrote to them, he was teaching them and leading them through this reconciliation of their own.

So he says he's, you know, you know, the idea is the grief caused Paul was small even though he just wrote in the previous verse that he wrote with many tears but Paul cares about the church more than does about himself. And so the grief that to the church is a whole is greater in Paul's mind, but to all of you to some extent, so confronting centers, believe that confronting sinning, believers ought, to aim at joy.

That's one of the things that you're going for, and if you have had in your life and hopefully, you've had multiple opportunities because I know you've sinned or been sending in small times. I hope you've had multiple opportunities to enjoy the sweetness of a restored relationship restored, affection and fellowship with one another in the second place.

In a corporate concept, context punishment, may be necessary. At first, for rebuke, the word that's translated punishment is a noun form of a verb that usually means, rebuke, rebuke or reproof. So, whatever this action was wasn't, it's not punishment in the sense of vengeance, but it is a penalty that serves as a review.

That's why sometimes in a particularly scandalous case, even when there's repentance, they're still some kind of penalty. So that the sin continues to be reproved or rebuked and the person who receives that that temporary penalty. If they do tape, the sin of which they are repenting, they will want the sin to be shown as, as something that everyone should avoid when everyone should hate the that sin, but there was, there was a penalty.

He doesn't tell us exactly what it was. He tells us that it was inflicted by the majority. Which means this penalty is something that the whole church had to participate in that as another difficult thing that happens often and needs to happen often in church discipline but it's over.

He says it was sufficient for such a man. So that on the contrary you ought rather to forgive and the the verb there is caritamay which you may recognize. Probably shouldn't know, she's mortified of anything public but one of my what am I children's names? Comes from the Greek word for grace and that's, that's the that's the root idea of this word.

That's translated forgive to gracify someone so show them grace and comfort is actually that word that that is translated a whole bunch of different ways because it's the word from which we get parakeet, the comforter the Holy Spirit, that's why we call him the comforter, but it means it can mean not just comfort.

But in this case, especially gladden, since you're coming alongside him in a case of sorrow and maybe strengthened in since, in this case, he's repenting from some sin and, and his resolved against it, it means a lot more than just comfort. So so if he's saying you need, you know, penalty time is done now, there is showing grace.

Now, there is comforting and gladdening and helping in whatever way you can. So on the contrary rather to forgive and comfort, him less, perhaps such, and one being swallowed up, such in one, be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

You'll know the word for love there. It's it's agape and reaffirm means to confirm to show to to prove validate. So there's there's affection here and there's affection that depends to some extent on whether or not the other person is perceiving it. Now, you don't carry that too far.

You don't make someone else the Lord of your own conscience. But there, there is someone who is wounded and someone else. The rest of the congregation in this case, who is being instructed by the apostle, to, to demonstrate love, and show love, and communicate, love in a way that that is convincing to this person.

Now, if this person is demanding, here's how you can show me that you love me. That's not a wounded person. That's, hey, still trying to wound people person and that's not repenting. That's a whole different thing. But remember, that love is many faceted and in, after he says, you know, basically gracify him and come alongside him in whatever way is helpful.

He adds. Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love to them. Believers are to some extent to people who are in the process of getting over themselves. And so in Christ, they show affection, even in ways that are beyond what the culture does. You know not going to argue for the holy kiss but the you know the holy hug or you know side squeeze of righteousness.

If you've you want to go that way with with people for whom hugs are not appropriate or you know they're ought to be genuine affection. If it's a introverted need my space handshake person then at least a warm handshake and a smile and showing affection that someone who observes can at least tell their glad to see each other and to renew fellowship again.

Yeah, I know, this sounds very kind of nuts and bolts over detailed kind of specific but that's what the obedience to second Corinthians 28 was going to look like in Corinth. So just some some things for us for us to think about confirmations of love, is more than a list of stuff that I've done for you.

And although it up to be able to include that if necessary, now was interesting, is he challenges them in verse 9, if you caught that that the command to confirm love is as much of a command as when he had instructed them to exercise church discipline. For to this end.

I also wrote that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. Yeah, there are some of you who would have said ha apostolic warrant to exercise church discipline, you're going down center man. That's the flesh right talking that way. There's some people who are wired that way and there are some people who are like, how can we get out of doing church discipline because I don't want to, but the apostle commands it.

And then there are other people who in God's constructing us. They're eager to show the love and to restore and they don't need a whole lot of other like, yes, apostolic word to go hug that guy that everyone is still shutting, you know, throw their arms around him and say Paul said, so, you know, and then there are those who, you know, there kind of like from the other side, I really have hard time showing people that I love them, but the Apostle says so.

Right? So both are commands and both are designed to help us do this for to this end. I also wrote that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. Now, whom you forgive anything? I also forgive for offended. I have forgiven anything. I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ and make sure since I can't be there yet, since I haven't come yet.

And I'm just writing a letter. If he feels like well, sure, the church loves me, but Paul commanded them specifically in a letter to discipline me, you know, what's it gonna be like, when I see him again? And he, he includes that there to say, you know, from my end, your carrying this out, let that carry with it.

The weight of what I have done, not only before God in Christ but what I am expressing through your expression of it and that is, I think, included not not only are perhaps even prim early for the sake of the congregation as a whole. But for that one that Paul is being an example in verse 10 of

what he wants, the rest of the Corinthians to do for this restored, brother in the rest of the passage and then less Satan should take advantage of us not just you Corinthians but of us.

Paul and the Corinthians for we are not ignorant of his devices. Here's the apostle and he's ministering somewhere else and he's writing and he's praying and he's got all of these things that he has to do. And he says, one of the ways that Satan would attack me is, by in all of this other stuff that I'm doing is by causing this conflict between me and this fellow in corn, the fractured relationship or the stressed relationship to continue.

That's gonna weaken. My ministry isn't gonna attack. My ministry is also of a danger to the church husbands. Of course, hopefully we've hit you with first Peter three, at some point and how God says your prayers are hindered. If you don't deal gently with your wife, as a fragile vessel weaker vessel which yes includes some natural order created order things that are cultural rails against but also means handle with care.

And that if you don't live with her according to knowledge, or if you don't live with her in an understanding way, then your prayers will be hindered. That's one of the ways. Satan attacks you in everything you do is if you are hard hearted and not understanding with your wife.

Well that's also a way that Satan attacks the church. It's also a way that Satan attacks. Apostles, ministers the gospels elders deacons. So God grant that not only we would see that this line at the end of our confession, chapter 15, really is expressing in very succinct form. Some important Bible theology and command.

But God grant also that we would see how this is something in which we imitate, our father of whom it has said, when we make private confession to him praying for the pardon of our sin and forsaking it, we shall find mercy. Wouldn't it be a blessing? If when they put you in the yard those with whom you have had whatever reconciliation's in your time here.

Could say that was one with him. When you came and you confess your sin, you knew you shall find. Mercy. They would reconcile and in love receive. All right, any questions.

Very good. Let's pray.

Our father in heaven. How we thank you that our forgiveness from you has come at the cost of Christ. And that in him, we see you and he loved us and he gave himself up for us and as an offering to you, we pray that you would reproduce in our congregation quickness, for getting through whatever the conflicts are and arriving at last at joy.

Glorify yourself. We pray. We ask now that you would help us as we go over for the worship, for the public worship that you would glorify yourself in Christ and particular as we have a passage in which his divine character is front and center. We pray that you would help us all convince us, all and capture our hearts with who Jesus is, and what Jesus is done, we ask it in his name, amen.