

2 Corinthians 7:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

Analysis

Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong—Ara ei kai egrapsa hymin, ouk heneken tou adikēsantos oude heneken tou adikēthentos (ἄρα εἰ καὶ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, οὐχ ἐνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἐνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος, "so although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the wrongdoer nor the one wronged"). Paul's pastoral focus transcends individual justice—he addresses systemic spiritual health. The offender (possibly from 2:5-11) and victim matter, but the church's response reveals its spiritual state.

But that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you—All' heneken tou phanerōthēnai tēn spoudēn hymōn tēn hyper hēmōn pros hymas enōpion tou Theou (ἀλλ' ἐνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, "but that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you before God"). Phaneroō (φανερόω, "to manifest/reveal") suggests uncovering what was hidden. Paul's letter revealed the Corinthians' true spiritual loyalty—not to manipulate but to clarify covenant relationship enōpion tou Theou (ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, "before God"). Discipline serves diagnostic and restorative purposes.

Historical Context

In Roman legal culture, personal honor and restitution drove justice. Paul subordinates personal vindication to ecclesial health—revolutionary in a patronage-based society. The 'severe letter' functioned like prophetic confrontation in Israel: exposing covenant unfaithfulness to prompt repentance. Paul's concern for the church's 'earnestness' (*spoudē*) 'before God' shows he pastored with eschatological accountability (1 Cor 3:10-15, 4:1-5).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Do I seek resolution in conflicts primarily for personal vindication or for spiritual health of relationships?
2. How does Paul's focus on revealing the Corinthians' 'earnestness before God' challenge shallow reconciliation that avoids heart issues?
3. What does it mean to conduct ministry 'in the sight of God' rather than playing to human audiences?

Interlinear Text

ἄρα	εἰ	καὶ	ἔγραψα	ὑμῖν	οὐχ	εἶνεκεν	τοῦ
Wherefore	G1487	G2532	I wrote	unto you	I did it not	for his cause	G3588
	G686		G1125	G5213	G3756	G1752	
ἀδικηθέντος	οὐδὲ	εἶνεκεν	τοῦ	ἀδικηθέντος			
that had done the wrong	nor	for his cause	G3588	that had done the wrong			
G91	G3761	G1752		G91			
ἀλλ' εἶνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν							
but for his cause	G3588	might appear	G3588	care	you	G3588	
G235	G1752	G5319		G4710	G5216		
ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ							
for our unto you in the sight	G3588	of God					
G5228	G2257	G4314	G5209	G1799	G2316		

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 2:9 (Parallel theme): For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

1 Timothy 3:5 (References God): (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

2 Corinthians 7:8 (Parallel theme): For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

2 Corinthians 2:17 (References God): For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:28 (Parallel theme): Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:11 (References God): Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

