

# 2 Corinthians 7:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

## Analysis

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**I speak not this to condemn you**—Pros katakrisin ou legō (πρὸς κατάκρισιν οὐ λέγω, "I do not speak for condemnation"). Paul clarifies his self-defense isn't counter-accusation. Katakrisis (κατάκρισις) means judicial condemnation or sentencing—Paul refuses to turn reconciliation into litigation.

**For I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you**—En tais kardiais hēmōn este (ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν ἔστε, "you are in our hearts"). The phrase eis to synapothanein kai syzēn (εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν, "unto dying together and living together") echoes marriage covenant language and military loyalty oaths. Paul's affection isn't sentimental but covenantal—he's bound to the Corinthians in life and death. This pastoral love constrains his correction: he wounds to heal, not to destroy.

## Historical Context

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Ancient friendship literature (e.g., Aristotle's *Ethics*, Cicero's *De Amicitia*) emphasized loyalty unto death as the highest friendship ideal. Paul appropriates this cultural value but grounds it in Christ's self-giving love. His 'severe letter' (v. 8) risked the relationship but demonstrated true agapē—love that tells costly truth.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How do I distinguish between godly correction (that seeks restoration) and ungodly condemnation (that seeks destruction)?
2. Who has God placed 'in my heart' with such covenantal commitment that I'd risk the relationship to speak truth?
3. Do I receive correction from spiritual leaders as evidence of their love or attack on my dignity?

## Interlinear Text

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οὐ	πρὸς	κατάκρισιν	λέγω·	προείρηκα	γὰρ	ὅτι	ἐν
not	this to	condemn	I speak	I have said before	you for	that	in
G3756	G4314	G2633	G3004	G4280	G1063	G3754	G1722
ταῖς	καρδίαις	ἡμῶν	ἐστε	εἰς	τὸ	συναποθανεῖν	καὶ
G3588	hearts	our	ye are	to	G3588	die	and
G2588	G2257	G2075	G1519			G4880	G2532
συζῆν							
live with							
G4800							