

2 Corinthians 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent—Hoti ei kai elypēsa hymas en tē epistolē, ou metamelomai, ei kai metelomēn (ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, οὐ μεταμέλομαι, εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, "although I caused you sorrow with the letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it"). Paul uses metameleomai (μεταμέλεομαι, "to regret") not metanoēō (μετανοέω, "to repent")—he questioned his timing/harshness, not the truth spoken. Elypēsa (ἐλύπησα, "I caused sorrow") from lypeō (λυπέω, "to grieve/pain").

For I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season—Blepō gar hoti hē epistolē ekeinē ei kai pros hōran elypēsen hymas (βλέπω γὰρ ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς, "I see that letter grieved you, though only for a while"). Temporary pain produced lasting gain—a pastoral calculus faithful leaders must embrace. Paul distinguishes method (the letter's severity, which he momentarily regretted) from message (confronting sin, which he never regretted).

Historical Context

The 'severe letter' (probably lost, though some identify it with 1 Corinthians or chapters 10-13) was delivered by Titus. Paul's anxiety (2:13) about its reception shows even apostles wrestle with doubt after difficult confrontations. His relief

that the sorrow was 'for a season' (pros hōran, "for an hour") teaches that godly discipline may cause immediate pain but shouldn't produce permanent estrangement.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. When have I avoided necessary confrontation because I feared causing 'sorrow,' and what was the long-term cost?
2. How do I distinguish between godly regret over my tone/timing (which Paul felt) versus compromise on truth (which he rejected)?
3. If someone's correction causes me temporary sorrow, do I immediately dismiss them or wait to see if the pain produces spiritual fruit?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ οὐ
For G1487 G2532 **I made** **you** **with** G3588 **a letter** **not**
G3754 G3076 G5209 G1722 G1992 G3756

μετεμελόμην εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην βλέπω γὰρ ὅτι ἡ
I did repent G1487 G2532 **I did repent** **I perceive** **for** **For** G3588
G3338 G991 G1063 G3754

ἐπιστολῇ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς
a letter **the same** G1487 G2532 **for** **a season** **I made** **you**
G1992 G1565 G4314 G5610 G3076 G5209

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 3:19 (Repentance): As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org