

II Corinthians 7

v.1 from verse 17 of last chapter

- two things that we need to do in light of that

One- cleanse from filthiness- defilement and two perfect holiness

Here, Paul writes about a cleansing that isn't just something God does for us as we sit passively; this is a self-cleansing for intimacy with God that goes beyond a general cleansing for sin.

There is a main aspect of cleansing that comes to us as we trust in Jesus and His work on our behalf. This work of cleansing is really God's work in us and not our work. This is the sense of [1 John 1:9](#): *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

But there is another aspect of cleansing that God looks for us to do with the participation of our own will and effort; not that it is our work apart from God, but it is a work that awaits our will and effort: **let us cleanse ourselves**. This aspect of cleansing is mostly connected with intimacy with God and usefulness for service

Ephesians 5: 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

James 4: 7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Sometimes it is easier to deal with the **filthiness of the flesh** than the **filthiness... of the spirit**. During Jesus' earthly ministry, those who were stained by the **filthiness of the flesh** (such as harlots and tax collectors) found it easy to come to Jesus. But those stained by the **filthiness... of the spirit** (such as the scribes and Pharisees) found it very hard to come to Jesus.

Our pride, our legalism, our self-focus, our self-righteousness, our bitterness, and our hatred can all be far worse to deal with than the more obvious sins of the flesh.

Perfect holiness in the fear of God

- the Lord says a number of times- “ be holy for I am holy”
- set apart; different

v.2-4 open your hearts to us- Paul pleads with them to listen, not because he wants to condemn them but listen because he is living the message he's giving them.

v.4-6 Paul was struggling when he first came to Macedonia because of outside trials and also his concern for the Corinthian church

v.6 God who comforts the downcast **theme of the letter** - Jesus at the beginning of His ministry quotes *Isaiah 61* ***The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*** –

Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation- We have been given the Holy Spirit, who does these things for us and further we are ambassadors to take that comfort as Titus did to Paul.

v.7-12 Paul says that he rejoices because the letter had the desired effect- Godly repentance, not just sorrow because we can be sorry without repenting or turning from our sin. We as a ministry can either rail on someone or hold out the ministry of reconciliation. I want this study to have the desired effect

read COLOSSIANS 1:9-17 AND 2:6-10

- * For this reason we pray for you
- * filled with the knowledge of His will in wisdom & spiritual understanding
- * fully pleasing to the Lord
- * fruitful in every good work
- * increasing in knowledge
- * strengthened with His power (the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us -Eph.)
- * patience and longsuffering with **JOY**
- * delivered and translated
- * redemption and forgiveness

- * 2:6 as we received walk- by faith
- * rooted and built up and established in faith
- * we are complete in

Close with II Cor. 7:16 I rejoice that I have confidence in you