



Today's Message

Date: October 21, 2018
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Love, Joy, and Leadership*

Text: 2 Corinthians 1:23–2:4; 12-13

^{1:23} But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. ²⁴ Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

^{2:1} For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you. ² For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? ³ And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all. ⁴ For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

¹² When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, ¹³ my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

Introduction: At the outset of this letter, Paul responded to critics who accused him of insincerity because he had changed travel plans that included two visits to Corinth. In the face of the accusations, he declared his integrity (1:12-14) and vigorously denied the charges (1:15-22). In today's text, he explains the reason he changed his itinerary. The details of this mundane conflict allow us to peer into the heart of Paul to see the love that moved him to invest his life as a servant-leader in the churches.

I. God gives leaders to local churches . . . 1:23a

- A. He appoints them.
- B. He invests them with real authority.
- C. He holds them accountable for their work.

II. who serve the interests of the congregation . . . 1:23b-2:4

- A. They exercise wise gentleness. 1:23b
- B. They lead without a heavy hand. 1:24a
 - 1. This facilitates a growing faith. 1:24b
 - 2. This encourages mutual joy. 1:24b-2:3
- C. They discipline in love. 2:4

III. for the advancement of the church's mission. 2:12-13

- A. Unresolved conflict distracts and distresses God's leaders . . . 12-13a
- B. causing their effectiveness in the church's mission to suffer. 13b

Today's take-home truth: Christ strengthens his church and enlarges his mission as you follow the leaders he appoints.

An objection answered:

Implications: