

LIFE APPLICATION

THEME: HOLDING ON IN THE STORM (12.10.2014)

PASSAGE:

2 Corinthians chapter 7 vs 2-7

² Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one. ³ I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you. ⁴ I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

⁵ For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within. ⁶ But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, ⁷ and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

LAUNCH

- Think about some difficult task that you had to complete recently. It might have been a challenging presentation, a long journey or a difficult meeting. What made it hard?
- Can you think of anything that made the task slightly easier (a cup of coffee or a word of encouragement). How did that small thing help the situation?

DISCOVERY

- As the Corinthians were reading or hearing this bit of the letter, what would they have learnt about Paul's feelings towards them?

UNDERSTANDING

- Paul asked the Corinthians to make a room in their hearts for him. What is it about the behaviour of others that can cause us to block them out of our hearts? What should we do about this?
- Paul seems to have felt a need to defend his cause (verse 2) by asking a series of questions. Sometimes it is helpful to defend ourselves when

accused and sometimes it is not. In what sort of situations should we explain ourselves and in what situations should we keep quiet?

- Who in this world would you live and die either with or for because of their place in your heart? Does the church have a similar place? Do you think it should? If so why? If not why not?
- In his sermon, Dave suggested that loyalty was becoming a diminishing commodity in our society. Do you agree with this? If so why and why do you think that loyalty is a key attribute in the Christian character?
- Despite their problems together, Paul still found it important to speak words of encouragement to the Corinthians (vs 4). When was the last time someone gave you a word of encouragement and how did it make you feel?
- Who in your immediate circle do you need to encourage and what would be the best way of doing this?
- Paul was comforted by God in the form of the arrival of his friend Titus. Can you think of a time when God comforted you by means of something fairly simple (like the arrival of a good friend)
- What good advice have you received from a friend during times of difficulty?

APPLICATION

- Is anyone in the group facing a situation of 'conflicts on the outside and fears within'. Take time to pray for them
- Pray that when we face difficulties which we inevitably will, we will
 - a) Seek to engage with God
 - b) Remain committed to the church & not drift away
 - c) Learn to rely on and seek good advice from our friends