

Narrative Lectionary 9C – Sunday, May 29, 2006
2 Corinthians 1.23 – 2.11 in Various Translations

2Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (NRSV)

²³But I call on God as witness against me: it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth. ²⁴I do not mean to imply that we lord it over your faith; rather, we are workers with you for your joy, because you stand firm in the faith.

^{2.1}So I made up my mind not to make you another painful visit. ²For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? ³And 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 am confident about all of you, that my joy would be the joy of all of you. ⁴For I wrote you out of much distress 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.

⁵But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate it—to all of you. ⁶This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person; ⁷so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. ⁸So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹I wrote for this reason: to test you and to know whether you are obedient in everything. ¹⁰Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, ¹¹And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs

2Cor 1.23 - 2.11 (GNT)

23 I call God as my witness—he knows my heart! It was in order to spare you that I decided not to go to Corinth. 24 We are not trying to dictate to you what you must believe; we know that you stand firm in the faith. Instead, we are working with you for your own happiness.

2 So I made up my mind not to come to you again to make you sad. 2 For if I were to make you sad, who would be left to cheer me up? Only the very persons I had made sad. 3 That is why I wrote that letter to you—I did not want to come to you and be made sad by the very people who should make me glad. For I am convinced that when I am happy, then all of you are happy too. 4 I wrote you with a greatly troubled and distressed heart and with many tears; my purpose was not to make you sad, but to make you realize how much I love you all.

5 Now, if anyone has made somebody sad, he has not done it to me but to all of you—in part, at least. (I say this because I do not want to be too hard on him.) 6 It is enough that this person has been punished in this way by most of you. 7 Now, however, you should forgive him and encourage him, in order to keep him from becoming so sad as to give up completely. 8 And so I beg you to let him know that you really do love him. 9 I wrote you that letter because I wanted to find out how well you had stood the test and whether you are always ready to obey my instructions. 10 When you forgive people for what they have done, I forgive them too. For when I forgive—if, indeed, I need to forgive anything—I do it in Christ's presence because of you, ¹¹in order to keep Satan from getting the upper hand over us; for we know what his plans are.

2Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (NJB)

23 By my life I call on God to be my witness that it was only to spare you that I did not come to Corinth again. 24 We have no wish to lord it over your faith, but to work with you for your joy; for your stand in the faith is firm.

1 I made up my mind, then, that my next visit to you would not be a painful one, 2 for if I cause you distress I am causing distress to my only possible source of joy. 3 Indeed, I wrote as I did precisely to spare myself distress when I visited you, from the very people who should have given me joy, in the conviction that for all of you my joy was yours too. 4 I wrote to you in agony of mind, not meaning to cause you distress but to show you how very much love I have for you.

5 If anyone did cause distress, he caused it not to me, but ~ not to exaggerate ~ in some degree to all of you. 6 The punishment already imposed by the majority was quite enough for such a person; 7 and now by contrast you should forgive and encourage him all the more, or he may be overwhelmed by the extent of his distress. 8 That is why I urge you to give your love towards him definite expression. 9 This was in fact my reason for writing, to test your quality and whether you are completely obedient. 10 But if you forgive anybody, then I too forgive that person; and whatever I have forgiven, if there is anything I have forgiven, I have done it for your sake in Christ's presence, 11 to avoid being outwitted by Satan, whose scheming we know only too well.

2Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (NIV)

23 I call God as my witness—and I stake my life on it—that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm. 2.1 So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. 2 For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved? 3 I wrote as I did, so that when I came I would not be distressed by those who should have made me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. 4 For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you.

5 If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you to some extent—not to put it too severely. 6 The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient. 7 Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. 9 Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 10 Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

1Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (AB)

23 But I call on God as my soul's witness, that it was to spare you [pain and discouragement] that I did not come again to Corinth— 24 not that we rule [like dictators] over your faith, but *rather* we work with you for [the increase of] your joy; for in your faith you stand firm [in your strong conviction that Jesus of Nazareth—the Messiah—is the Son of God, through whom we obtain eternal salvation]. 2.1 But I made up my mind not to grieve you with another painful visit. 2 For if I cause you grief [by a well-deserved rebuke], who then provides me enjoyment but the very one whom I have made sad? 3 And I [a]wrote this same thing to you, so that when I came, I would not be filled with sorrow by those who ought to make me glad, for I trusted in you *and* felt confident that my joy would be shared by all of you. 4 For I wrote to you out of great distress and with an anguished heart, and with many tears, not to cause you sorrow but to make you realize the [overflowing] love which I have especially for you.

5 But if [b]someone has caused [all this] sorrow, he has caused it not to me, but in some degree—not to put it too severely—[he has distressed and grieved] all of you. 6 For such a one this punishment by the majority is sufficient, 7 so instead [of further rebuke, now] you should rather [graciously] forgive and comfort *and* encourage him, to keep him from being overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 Therefore I urge you to reinstate him in your affections *and* reaffirm your [c]love for him. 9 For this was my purpose in writing, to see if you would stand the test, whether you are obedient *and* committed to following my instruction in all things. 10 If you forgive anyone anything, I too forgive [that one]; and what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of [and with the approval of] Christ, 11 to keep Satan from taking advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

2Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (NLT)

23 Now I call upon God as my witness that I am telling the truth. The reason I didn't return to Corinth was to spare you from a severe rebuke. 24 But that does not mean we want to dominate you by telling you how to put your faith into practice. We want to work together with you so you will be full of joy, for it is by your own faith that you stand firm.

2.1 So I decided that I would not bring you grief with another painful visit. 2 For if I cause you grief, who will make me glad? Certainly not someone I have grieved. 3 That is why I wrote to you as I did, so that when I do come, I won't be grieved by the very ones who ought to give me the greatest joy. Surely you all know that my joy comes from your being joyful. 4 I wrote that letter in great anguish, with a troubled heart and many tears. I didn't want to grieve you, but I wanted to let you know how much love I have for you.

5 I am not overstating it when I say that the man who caused all the trouble hurt all of you more than he hurt me. 6 Most of you opposed him, and that was punishment enough. 7 Now, however, it is time to forgive and comfort him. Otherwise he may be overcome by discouragement. 8 So I urge you now to reaffirm your love for him.

9 I wrote to you as I did to test you and see if you would fully comply with my instructions. 10 When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ's authority for your benefit, 11 so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.

2Cor 1.23 – 2.11 (REB)

23 I appeal to God as my witness and stake my life upon it: it was out of consideration for you that I did not after all come to Corinth. 24 It is not that we have control of your faith; rather we are working with you for your happiness. For it is by that faith that you stand.

2.1 So I made up my mind that my next visit to you must not be another painful one. 2 If I cause pain to you, who is left to cheer me up, except you whom I have offended? 3 This is precisely the point I made in my letter: I did not want, I said, to come and be made miserable by the very people who ought to have made me happy; and I had sufficient confidence in you all to know that for me to be happy is for all of you to be happy. 4 That letter I sent you came out of great distress and anxiety; how many tears I shed as I wrote it! Not because I wanted to cause you pain; rather I wanted you to know the love, the more than ordinary love, that I have for you.

5 Any injury that has been done has not been done to me; to some extent (I do not want to make too much of it) it has been done to you all. 6 The penalty on which the general meeting has agreed has met the offence well enough. 7 Something very different is called for now: you must forgive the offender and put heart into him; the man's distress must not be made so severe as to overwhelm him. 8 I urge you therefore to reassure him of your love for him. 9 I wrote, I may say, to see how you stood the test, whether you fully accepted my authority. 10 But anyone who has your forgiveness has mine too; and when I speak of forgiving (so far as there is anything for me to forgive), I mean that as the representative of Christ I have forgiven him for your sake. 11 For Satan must not be allowed to get the better of us; we know his wiles all too well.
