



## Part 3: When You're Misunderstood

Relationship tensions can make us discouraged and upset! As we continue our series in Second Corinthians, we get to one of the reasons Paul wrote this letter: Conflict with the Corinthian church. They felt he had broken his word to them about a promised visit. Tensions from earlier letters also remain. How will Paul resolve these issues? How do you handle conflict with others?

### Seven steps to clearing up misunderstandings

#### 1. Check

*Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but according to God's grace. 2 Cor. 1:12*

*For we do not write you anything you cannot read or understand. And I hope that, as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us just as we will boast of you in the day of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 1:13,14*

#### 2. Clarify

*Because I was confident of this, I planned to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. I planned to visit you on my way to Macedonia and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to Judea. When I planned this, did I do it lightly? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say, "Yes, yes" and "No, no"? 2 Cor. 1:15-17*

#### 3. Communicate

*But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." 2 Cor. 1:18,19*

#### 4. Emphasize

*For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 2 Cor. 1:20,21*

#### 5. Stay

*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 Cor. 1:24*

#### 6. Explain

*I call God as my witness that it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. For if I grieve you, who is left to make me glad but you whom I have grieved? I wrote as I did so that when I came I should not be distressed by those who ought to make me rejoice. 2 Cor. 1:23; 2:1*

#### 7. Reaffirm

*I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. 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. 2 Cor. 2:3b-4*

## Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today's topic!

**This week's memory verse:** *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. 2 Cor. 1:20a*

### Monday

Which of the points stood out to you last weekend? Why? Which is most difficult for you?

Is there a relationship in your life with tensions you need to resolve?

Read 2 Cor. 1:12-14. Paul says his conscience is clear in his relationship with the Corinthians. Is yours? Ask God to help you fearlessly examine your own conscience in this area.

*Ask God to show you where you need to resolve tension in relationships. Use Paul's example -- and the Holy Spirit's strength-- to do so this week!*

## Tuesday

Read 2 Cor. 1:15-19. Paul emphasizes that his communication is not “yes” and “no” - in other words, he speaks with integrity, not out of both sides of his mouth. When he means no, he says it; when he means yes, he says that too. Jesus says something similar-- read Matt. 5:37.

What is the principle here?

Why do we sometimes couch our statements in vague, noncommittal terms?

What statements of trust do you hear most often? (For example: “Trust me”; “Would I lie to you”; “To tell the truth”; “I really mean it this time”; etc.) What do these imply?

Read these verses: Prov. 10:19; Prov. 12:19; Prov. 26:28. How do they relate to today’s topic?

*Ask God to help you make your conversation with others simple and truthful, yet tactful.*

## Wednesday

Read 2 Cor. 1:20-22. What does it mean that Jesus is the “Yes” of all God’s promises to you?

Lyman Coleman points out that Corinth was the commercial center of the empire. What do the three trading metaphors of verses 21 and 22 indicate that God has done for you?

Paraphrase the “business deal” of verses 21 and 22 in modern terms:

How have you experienced this?

*If you haven’t yet, ask God to do this work in your life right now! Invite Jesus in. If you already have, thank Him for what He has done 100% by His grace!*

## Thursday

Read 2 Cor. 1:23-24. What do you think Paul means when he says “we do not lord it over you”?

Read Matt. 20:25-28; Luke 22:25-26; and 1 Peter 5:1-3. What consistent principle do these verses teach that matches Paul’s description of his ministry in 2 Corinthians?

Why do you think the Bible has to emphasize this over and over?

Why do you think leaders of the church are tempted to “lord it over” others?

How can pastors teach truth fearlessly and exhort people to live holy lives without “lording it over” others?

How does this principle apply to other relationships, such as marriage, parenting, managing employees, etc.? How does it apply to your life?

*Ask God today that He would give you wisdom to lead, manage, and discipline those in your charge without “lording” your authority over them.*

## Friday

Read 2 Cor. 2:1-4. and 2 Cor. 7:13-16. Even in the middle of a misunderstanding causing much tension in their relationship, Paul is able to reemphasize his positive feelings for the Corinthians. What positive things does he express to them in these verses?

What relationships in your life need a dose of this kind of encouragement? Write down three names here:

List three encouraging things you could honestly express to those people:

Person #1:	Person #2:	Person #3:
1.		
2.		
3.		

How and when will you take the time to express these things?

*Thank God for the people you mentioned above. Ask Him for the strength and opportunity to express those positive thoughts to them.*

## Saturday

In preparation for this weekend’s messages, please read 2 Cor. 2:5-11. Consider this: How might Satan “outwit you by his schemes” in the area of unforgiveness? Please pray for this weekend’s services-- that God may be honored! Thanks for your prayers!