

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Ruled for Good

Speaker:

Steve Heitland

Date:

June 14th, 2026

Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 7:2–16

Theme: Submit to the Lord's rule and you will enjoy his goodness.

Introduction: Paul has been caring for the Corinthians through conflict, and he has spent the past four chapters of Second Corinthians defining and defending his apostolic ministry, calling out false teachers, and calling the church to respond appropriately when the truth was under threat. In short, Paul was exercising godly authority. Many times, we are called to submit to authority; sometimes, we are called to exercise it. In both cases, we need to recognize the goodness of power and authority in God's world.

Paul understood and practiced the goodness of godly rule in three ways:

1. The nature of Christian rule (2–4)

- Paul gives two categories highlighting the nature of godly rule:
 - 1) Godly rule aims at winning hearts.
 - It aims at the heart because Christian rulers lead in love.
 - 2) Godly rule works for the good of those under it.
 - Paul worked for the Corinthians' good in three ways: boldness toward them, pride in them, and comfort for them.
- When you are under authority, the attitude God requires is respect and loving obedience.

2. The fruit of Christian rule (5–11)

- Verse 5 marks a transition in the letter, as Paul resumes the story (from 2:12–13) of how he interacted with the Christians in Macedonia.
- Paul reveals two categories as he describes the fruits of godly Christian rule:
 - 1) Burden and comfort
 - Paul was burdened for the Corinthians and the Macedonians, and he found comfort in God's providence.
 - 2) Correction and consequence
 - Paul gives a succinct explanation of repentance and the difference between wordly and godly sorrow.

3. The purpose of Christian rule (12–16)

- There are two purposes that Christian rule seeks to accomplish:
 - 1) Corporate good
 - Paul engaged in the difficult task for the good of the church.
 - 2) Expanding joy
 - In responding rightly to Paul's letter, everyone was happier.

Questions:

1. Where has God called you to rule? Evaluate how you are doing at (1) aiming at winning their hearts, and (2) working for their good.
2. How are you responding to those ruling over you? Do you love them? Are you obeying them?
3. How do you differentiate between wordly sorrow and godly sorrow in your life?