

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL

09 - TUESDAY – August 25, 2026

Changing Plans for Love

We saw that some in Corinth doubted Paul's intentions and love. Today, we will look into one particular reason: his changing travel plans (**2 Cor. 1:15–2:4**).

2 Corinthians 1:15-2:4 (NKJV) “(15) And in this confidence I intended to come to you before, that you might have a second benefit— (16) to pass by way of you to Macedonia, to come again from Macedonia to you, and be helped by you on my way to Judea. (17) Therefore, when I was planning this, did I do it lightly? Or the things I plan, do I plan according to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No? (18) But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No. (19) For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. (20) For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. (21) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, (22) who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (23) Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. (24) Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. (1) But I determined this within myself, that I would not come again to you in sorrow. (2) For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad but the one who is made sorrowful by me? (3) And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. (4) For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.”

1. Paul's Plans Were Sincere and Not Fleshly

Key Verses: 2 Corinthians 1:17–18 “Therefore, when I was planning this, did I do it lightly? Or the things I plan, do I plan according to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No?”

Truth:

- Paul did **not act carelessly or inconsistently**
- His plans were:
 - Thoughtful
 - Spirit-led
 - Grounded in God's faithfulness

Insight:

- His change of plans was **not hypocrisy**
- It was **integrity guided by God**

2. Paul's Plans Were Motivated by Love—Not Control

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 1:23-24 (NKJV) “(23) Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. (24) Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.”

Truth:

- Paul delayed his visit **to spare them pain**
- He did not want to:
 - Dominate them
 - Discourage them

Instead, he desired: Their **joy** AND Their **growth**

Insight:

- True spiritual leadership is not about control
- It is about **care and compassion**

Philippians 2:3-4 (NKJV) “(3) Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. (4) Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

3. Paul's Plans Were Driven by Deep Emotional Love

Key Verses: 2 Corinthians 2:3-4 (NKJV) “(3) And I wrote this very thing to you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow over those from whom I ought to have joy, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. (4) For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.”

Truth:

- Paul's decisions came from:
 - **Affliction**
 - **Anguish**
 - **Tears**
- His correction was not harshness
- It was **love expressed through pain**

2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NKJV) “(24) And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, (25) in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, (26) and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”

Insight: Sometimes love:

- Confronts
- Corrects
- Waits
- But always does so with a **broken heart, not a hard heart**

Final Summary

Paul's plans reveal:

1. **Integrity** – Not fleshly or careless
2. **Compassion** – Designed to spare and build up
3. **Deep Love** – Expressed through sacrifice and tears

Power Statement: “When people misunderstand your actions, let your motives remain rooted in truth, guided by love, and anchored in God.”

1 Corinthians 16:5–7. What was Paul's original travel plan?

1 Corinthians 16:5-7 (NKJV) “(5) Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia). (6) And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go. (7) For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits.”

THREE THINGS WE MUST DO WHEN GOD CHANGES OUR PLANS:

1. Trust God's Will Over Our Plans

Bible: Proverbs 3:5–6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart... and He shall direct your paths.”

Truth:

- God sees what we cannot see
- When plans change, it is not confusion
- It is **divine redirection**

Insight: Trust replaces frustration when we believe: **God's plan is better than ours**

2. Remain Flexible and Submitted

Bible: James 4:13–15 “You ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.’”

Truth:

- Our plans must always be **subject to God's will**
- Spiritual maturity says:
- “Lord, not my way—Your way”

Isaiah 55:8-9 (NKJV) “(8) “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. (9) “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Insight: Rigidity resists God

Surrender: flows with God

3. Keep Moving Forward in Faith, Not Fear

Bible: Romans 8:28 “All things work together for good to those who love God...”

Truth:

- Even unexpected changes serve God's purpose

- What feels like a setback
- Can be a setup for something greater

Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV) “(20) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, (21) to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Insight:

- Don't stop when plans change
- **Walk forward trusting God is still leading**
- **We don't need to see God to trust His plans**

Final Statement: “When God changes your plans, it's not a disruption—it's a redirection.”
2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”