Balancing between λύπη and ἀγάπη in 2 Corinthians

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1. Introduction

Pleasure (ἡδονή) or what is pleasant is one of the desired outcomes a speaker should produce by his deliberation. Aristotle says, "one delivering an exhortation must prove that the courses to which he exhorts are just, lawful, expedient, honourable, pleasant [ἡδέα] and easily practicable".[1] Thus, a speaker would naturally want to avoid causing his/her audience pain or grief, the opposite of pleasure. For Aristotle, "pleasant things are those that cause delight [τὰ χαρὰν ἐργαζόμενα]".[2] But it seems certain from what is written in 2 Corinthians that Paul chose to cause the Corinthians pain with his "tearful letter" (2:1-2; 7:8). Not only that, in chapters 2 and 7 Paul frequently used λύπη and its cognates to explain the purpose and impact of the tearful letter. This paper will examine Paul's use of the λύπη language in 2 Corinthians and articulate his attempts to balance λύπη and ἀγάπη in his ministry for the Corinthians.

2. Λύπη and Its Cognates in Ancient Rhetorical and Epistolary Traditions

In Greek literature, λύπη is almost always used as a counterpart of ἡδονή[3] and at times as that of χαρά.[4] Λύπη can mean pain that one can feel either in body or

in spirit. When it comes to psychological pain in particular, it can mean "sorrow, pain or anxiety at misfortune or death, or anger at annoyances or hurts, esp. insults and outrages".[5] One seeks ἡδονή while hoping to flee from λύπη.[6] But the Greeks see λύπη and ἡδονή as essentially intermingled in our human life.[7]

Λύπη and ἡδονή are presented antithetically even in the rhetorical handbooks and rhetorical speeches. In *Rhetorica*, Aristotle contrasts λύπη and ἡδονή when he states:

> Let it be assumed by us that pleasure [ἡδονὴν] is a certain movement of the soul, a sudden and perceptible settling down into its natural state, and pain [λύπην] the opposite. If such is the nature of pleasure, it is evident that which produces the disposition we have just mentioned is pleasant [ἡδύ], and that which destroys it or produces the contrary settling down is painful [λυπηρόν].[8]

For Aristotle, what is compulsory or necessary (τὸ βίαιον or τὸ ἀναγκαῖον) such as study or intense effort "is contrary to nature [παρὰ φύσιν]" and, accordingly, "painful [λυπηρόν]", whereas the pleasant things (ἡδύ) include "what is not compulsory [οὐδὲν γὰρ πρὸς ἀνάγκην]", such as "recreation [αἱ ἀναπαύσεις]", "everything of which we have in us the desire [οὗ ἂν ἡ ἐπιθυμία ἐνῇ, ἅπαν]", "things which we hope for … when their presence seems likely to afford us great pleasure or advantage, without accompaniment of pain [τὰ δ' ἐν ἐλπίδι ὅσα παρόντα ἢ εὐφραίνειν ἢ ὠφελεῖν φαίνεται μεγάλα, καὶ ἄνευ λύπης ὠφελεῖν]", "revenge [τὸ τιμωρεῖσθαι]", "victory [τὸ νικᾶν]", "loving [τό τε γὰρ φιλεῖν]" and "being loved [τὸ φιλεῖσθαι]", and "things which give rise to zeal or a feeling of emulation [ζῆλος]".[9]

In *Charidemus*, Dio Chrysostom quotes a wandering philosopher who finds pleasure and pain intertwined like the links of a chain:

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5) R. Bultmann, *TDNT* 4, 313.
6) Aristotle, *Eth. nic.*, 1172a 25-26 (10.1.1); 1172b 19-23 (10.2.2).
7) E.g., Plato, *Phaedo,* 60b c.
8) Aristotle, *Rhetorica,* 1.11.1-2 (1369b-1370a), J. H. Freese, trans. The English translations of classical literature cited in the paper come from the Loeb Classical Library unless specified otherwise.
9) Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.11.4, 9, 17 (1070a-1071a); 2.10.11 (1388a).

This chain, he said, is composed entirely of both pleasure and pain, and these things are intertwined, the pleasant and the painful, and the one always of necessity follows the other, just as, I suppose, are the links of a chain. Great pleasures are followed by great pains, the small pleasures by smaller pains, and the very greatest pleasure at the end is death. This is the reason that the pain which comes before death is the greatest; for it is clear that man has no greater pain and suffering than this which ends in death.[10]

In rhetorical speeches, causing the audience pain or grief has often been considered undesirable. For example, at the very beginning of his forensic speech against Timarchus, Aeschines stresses that he has never "vexed any men when he was rendering account of his [Timarchus's] office [οὔτ' ἐν εὐθύναις λυπήσας]".[11] Similarly in a forensic speech, Demosthenes demonstrates a speaker's desire not to grieve others particularly when it is not beneficial to him:

Such am I, Pantaenetus, the fast walker, and such are you, who walk slowly. However, regarding my gait and my manner of speech, I will tell you the whole truth, men of the jury, with all frankness. I am perfectly aware – I am not blind to the fact – that I am not one of those favored by nature in these respects, nor of those who are an advantage to themselves. For if in matters in which I reap no profit, I annoy others, surely I am to this extent unfortunate [μηδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι ποιῶν, λυπῶ τινάς, πῶς οὐκ ἀτυχῶ κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος; ἀλλὰ τί χρὴ παθεῖν;].[12]

Demosthenes also acknowledges that a speaker would want to avoid causing his/her audience pain while he or she feels obliged to present a letter that is not pleasant to hear:

[A Letter of Philip's is read.] Most of what has been read, Athenians, is unfortunately true – possibly, however, not pleasant to listen to [οὐχ ἡδέ' ἀκούειν]. But if all that a speaker passes over, to avoid giving offence [ἵνα μὴ λυπήσῃ], is passed over by the course of events also, then blandiloquence is justified; but if smooth words out of season prove a curse in practice, then it is our disgrace if we hoodwink ourselves, if we

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10) Dio Chrysostom , *Or.* 30.21, J. W. Cohoon, trans.
11) Aeschines, *Or.* 1.1, C. D. Adams, trans.
12) Demosthenes, *Or.* 37.55, A. T. Murray, trans.; see also *Or.* 45.77.

shelve whatever is irksome and so miss the time for action.[13]

Finally, Pseudo-Libanius indicates that even a letter-writer would share the desire not to cause his/her recipient pain with the letter:

> The conciliatory letter. In addition to making the statements that I did, I went on (to point them) into action, for I most certainly did not think that they would ever cause you sorrow [λυπηθήσεσθαι]. But if you were upset by what was said or done, be assured, most excellent sir, that I shall most certainly no longer mention what was said. For it is my aim always to heal my friends rather than to cause them sorrow [σκοπὸς γάρ μοι θεραπεύειν ἀεὶ τοὺς φίλους ἐστὶν ἤπερ λυπεῖν].[14]

Despite this general tendency among rhetoricians and letter-writers, a speech or letter could sometimes cause pain to the audience or recipient(s). For example, in a first-century AD papyrus letter, Sarapion said to Herakleides that he was caused pain (ἐλυπήθην) by the letter he had received through Arabus.[15] And Plutarch points out that a speech of admonition or rebuke (ἡ νουθεσία καὶ ὁ ψόγος) could be even intended to cause the audience a particular kind of pain (λύπη), that is, repentance (μετάνοια).[16]

3. Λύπη and Its Cognates in 2 Corinthians

Paul uses λύπη in three of his letters (Rom 9:2; 2Co 2:1, 3, 7; 7:10; 9:7; Phi 2:27). In Romans and Philippians, Paul uses λύπη to refer to pain or grief he is experiencing or could have experienced. But in 2 Corinthians, he applies λύπη *not just* to himself *but also* to others in a rather complicated manner (see Table 1 below).

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13) Demosthenes, *Or*. 4.38, J. H. Vince, trans.

14) A. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 76-77; L. L. Welborn, "Paul's Appeal to the Emotions in 2 Corithians 1.1-2.13; 7.5-16", *JSNT* 82 (2001), 36.

15) *BGU* IV, 1079; cf. also *BGU* III, 884. See also L. L. Welborn, *An End to Enmity: Paul and the "Wrongdoer" of Second Corinthians*, BZNW 185 (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gryter, 2011), 43-59; P. Arzt-Grabner and R. E. Kritzer, *2. Korinther*, Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament 4 (Göttingen; Bristol: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 150-154.

16) Plutarch, *De virtute morali* 12 (452C).

<Table 1> λύπη in 2 Corinthians

	The one who causes pain	The one who is made to pain	Mode of Paul's presence	Notes
2:1 τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν	Paul	Corinthians	Bodily presence	Factual (second visit) & Hypothetical (third visit)
2:3 ἵνα μὴ ἐλθὼν λύπην σχῶ ἀφ᾿ ὧν ...	Corinthians	Paul	Bodily presence	Hypothetical (third visit)
2:7 μή πως τῇ περισσοτέρᾳ λύπῃ καταποθῇ ὁ τοιοῦτος	Corinthians	The offender	Epistolary presence (implied)	Factual (via tearful letter)
7:10a ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence (implied)	Factual (via tearful letter)
7:10b ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence (implied)	Hypothetical (via tearful letter)
9:7 μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence (implied)	Hypothetical (via 2 Corinthians)

In addition to the noun, the verb λυπέω is attested in four of his letters (Rom 14:15; 2Co 2:2, 4, 5; 6:10; 7:8, 9, 11; Eph 4:30; 1Th 4:13). Again, in 2 Corinthians, the objects of the verb are both himself and the Corinthians. As evident from Table 2, moreover, he presents himself as the one who indeed caused the Corinthians pain via his tearful letter or, more precisely, through his epistolary presence in it (2Co 7:8-9, 11), but he does not want to do this with his forthcoming bodily presence (2Co 2:2; cf. 12:21).

<Table 2> λυπέω in 2 Corinthians

	Mood/ Tense	The one who causes pain	The one made to feel pain	Mode of Paul's presence	Notes
2:2 εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼ λυπῶ ὑμᾶς	Active, Pres.	Paul	Corinthians	Bodily presence	Hypothetical (third visit)
2:2 εἰ μὴ ὁ λυπούμενος ἐξ ἐμοῦ	Passive, Pres.	Paul	Corinthians[17]	Bodily presence	Hypothetical (third visit)
2:4 οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γνῶτε	Passive, Pres.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
2:5 Εἰ δέ τις λελύπηκεν, οὐκ ἐμὲ λελύπηκεν	Active, Perf.	Someone (the offender)	Paul	Bodily presence	Factual (second visit)
2:5 ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ μέρους ... πάντας ὑμᾶς [λελύπηκεν]	(Active, Perf.)	Someone (the offender)	Corinthians, to a certain degree	Bodily presence	Factual (second visit)
6:10 ὡς λυπούμενοι	Passive, Pres.	—	Paul	—	Factual
7:8a Ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ , οὐ μεταμέλομαι	Active, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
7:8b εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, βλέπω ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς	Active, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
7:9 οὐχ ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε	Passive, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
7:9 ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε εἰς μετάνοιαν	Passive, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
7:9 ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν	Passive, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)
7:11 ἰδοὺ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι πόσην κατειργάσατο ὑμῖν σπουδήν	Passive, Aor.	Paul	Corinthians	Epistolary presence	Factual (tearful letter)

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17) M. E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, ICC (London; New York: T & T Clark, 1994), 166: "general rather than specific, referring to the Corinthian reader (any Corinthian reader) who might cheer Paul, were he not saddened by him". Cf. R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, WBC (Waco: Thomas Nelson, 1986), 35, who identifies ὁ λυπούμενος as "the person responsible for the pain".

Paul never uses ἡδονή as the counterpart of λύπη in his letters. Rather, in 2 Corinthians, he uses χαρά for the emotion of joy when λύπη is a matter at hand (2Co 1:24; 2:3; 7:4, 13; cf. Joh 16:20; 4Ma 1:22-23). He also uses its verbal forms, χαίρω and εὐφραίνω as the counterparts of λυπέω (2Co 2:2, 3; 6:10; 7:7, 9).[18] It is apparent from 2Co 2:2-3 that Paul is determined to have a joyful reunion with the Corinthians at his forthcoming third (physical) visit to Corinth (cf. Rom 15:32 [ἐν χαρᾷ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς]).

4. Λύπη and Paul's Bodily Visits to Corinth

One of Paul's aims in the first chapter of 2 Corinthians is to defend himself about the change of his promised travel plan, which is outlined in vv.15-16: "And in this confidence I intended at first to come to you, that you might twice receive a blessing, that is, to pass your way into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be helped on my journey to Judea."[19] Paul originally planned to come to Corinth via Macedonia, stay longer there, and be sent off to the next mission field or carry the Gentile churches' collection to Jerusalem if he has to (1Co 16:1-9). But for some unknown reasons, Paul visited Corinth a second time after the composition of 1 Corinthians. At this second visit, he presented to the Corinthians a revised travel plan, according to which he would make a visit to Macedonia and return to Corinth so that the Corinthians might have another chance for collection. But Paul cancelled this second part of his travel plan and hurriedly went back to Ephesus. This probably led some Corinthians to criticize him for his fickleness or lack of integrity. Both the appeal to God as his witness and the denial of his own vacillation should be understood against the backdrop of such criticism (v.17: μήτι ἄρα τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ ἐχρησάμην).[20]

Then in 1:23-2:2,[21] Paul explains why he chose not to return to Corinth at the

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18) Cf. also Joh 16:20; 2Clem 19:4; Pro 14:13; Plato, *Republica,* 572a; Aristotle, *Problemata* 917b [19.1].

19) New Revised Standard Version (1989) has been used for Scriptural quotations unless specified otherwise.

20) Cf. Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.16.

21) Such demarcation is supported by V. G. Shillington, *2 Corinthians*, Believers Church Bible

moment. First of all, he intended not to return to Corinth because he wanted to "spare" the Corinthians (φειδόμενος ὑμῶν) (1:23). According to BDAG, φείδομαι can mean "to save [someone] from loss or discomfort". It is not clear from v.23 alone what kind of loss or discomfort Paul means by this verb. 2 Corinthians 13:2, however, may be helpful because Paul uses the very same verb to explain the situation that he hopes not to be placed in at his upcoming third visit: "I warned those who sinned previously and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again, I will not be lenient [ὅτι ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν οὐ φείσομαι]." It is interesting here to note that Paul already warned the Corinthians, particularly "those who sinned previously," at his second visit to Corinth and that he hopes his third visit should not entail another disciplinary action that he is now warning them about in this letter.22) Accordingly, then, it seems probable that Paul wanted to spare the Corinthians from the discomfort that would have been caused by the disciplinary action he would have to initiate at his forthcoming visit.23)

Second, Paul decided not to return to Corinth because he did not want to cause the Corinthians pain with his third visit (2:1). The phrase "not to make you another painful visit [τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν]" seems to indicate that his second visit was indeed a painful one (to himself as well as to the Corinthians).24) The adverb πάλιν is to be read in connection with ἐν λύπῃ rather than with ἐλθεῖν. And the phrase ἐλθεῖν ἐν λύπῃ may indicate Paul's active role in causing pain.25) It is clear from 2:1 that Paul was firmly determined not to again cause pain at his forthcoming visit. Paul's rhetorical question in 2:2 also points to his strong determination not to do so: "For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained [εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼ λυπῶ ὑμᾶς, καὶ τίς ὁ εὐφραίνων με εἰ μὴ ὁ λυπούμενος ἐξ ἐμοῦ]?" Colin Kruse suggests that "the one"

Commentary (Scottdale: Hearld Press, 1998), 49.

22) This does not necessarily point to the identification of the offender whom the Corinthians disciplined (2:5-8) with "those who sinned previously" against whom Paul warns (13:2).

23) See also C. Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, TNTC (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987), 78.

24) Cf. also M. E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 165; "The two occasions (the actual past visit and the present hypothetical one) would not have been exactly identical, since on the actual earlier occasion it seems likely that it was primarily Paul himself who experienced the sorrow, whilst on the visit he refrained from making he would have been the cause of sorrow to the Corinthians (2.2)."

25) R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 35, suggests that ἐλθεῖν ἐν corresponds to the Aramaic verbal phrase *'aṯā' bᵉ* ("to come with", "to cause", "to bring").

(singular) in the apodosis is not to be identified with "you" (plural; the Corinthians) in the protasis but with the offender (singular) in vv.5-8.[26] But, as Margaret E. Thrall suggests, it seems more likely that ὁ λυπούμενος ἐξ ἐμοῦ refers to the Corinthians whom Paul may have to cause pain again with his third visit unless they discipline the offender properly. Paul does not want to have another painful experience with the Corinthians at this upcoming visit; he rather wants to have a joyful reunion with them. This seemingly egoistic desire of Paul can be justified by his concern for their joy expressed earlier in 1:24: "Rather, we are workers with you for your joy [ἀλλὰ συνεργοί ἐσμεν τῆς χαρᾶς ὑμῶν]."

What did then happen to Paul during his second visit to Corinth? Second Corinthians 2:5 indicates that there was one person who stood in between Paul and the Corinthians. Paul admits that this person indeed caused him pain (ἐμὲ λελύπηκεν). The perfect tense may indicate the residual effect of the pain.[27] But Paul believes that it would not be wrong to say that the offender also caused pain to the Corinthians as a whole (πάντας ὑμᾶς). This offender can be identified with the wrongdoer (τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος) Paul mentions later in 7:12.[28] Having observed in Greek literature (especially conciliatory letters) that a wrongdoing (ἀδικεῖν or ἀδικεῖσθαι) often points to "an action which generally involves the parties in a legal context"[29] and can be related to "a financial matter",[30] Laurence Welborn suggests that Paul might have been wronged by an influential member of the Corinthian church with high social status, particularly with a contemptuous insult, "in a legal dispute, which a fraudulent use of funds was somehow a factor".[31] Whatever his identity was, both Paul and the Corinthians had to suffer the consequences of the pain he caused. Their mutual trust and friendship have been significantly undermined. As a consequence, Paul had to cancel his promised visit.

In 2Co 12:20, Paul makes it clear that at his upcoming visit he neither wants to see in the Corinthian community what he does not wish to see nor does he want them to see in him what they don't wish to see. Then he says in v.21, "I

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26) C. Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, 41-45, 79.
27) L. L. Welborn, *An End to Enmity*, 51.
28) This identification seems to be supported by R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 237-238; M. E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 496; C. Kruse, *2 Corinthians*, 146.
29) E.g., Aristotle, *Rhet* 1.10.6 [1868b]; cf. 1Co 6:7-8.
30) E.g., Philostratus, *Vita sophistarum* 2.1.550-561; cf. Phm 1:18-19; 1Co 6:7-8; 2Co 7:2.
31) L. L. Welborn, *An End to Enmity*, 56-59.

fear that when I come again, my God may humble me before you [μὴ πάλιν ἐλθόντος μου ταπεινώσῃ με ὁ θεός μου πρὸς ὑμᾶς] and that I may have to mourn over many who previously sinned and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced." If mourning over someone or something can be a kind of λύπη one may experience, the church's siding with the offender while discrediting Paul's apostolic authority and integrity[32] may have been at the root of the pain that Paul experienced at his second visit. And it is this very pain that he does not want to have again at his third visit.

5. Λύπη and Paul's Epistolary Presence

Paul's tearful letter to the Corinthians should be understood in light of his strong determination not to cause the Corinthians pain during his upcoming physical visit. It is interesting to note that in 2 Corinthians Paul frequently uses λύπη and λυπέω in close connection with the letter writing (note ἔγραψα and ἐπιστολή) (chaps. 2 and 7).

In 2:3-4, Paul uses ἔγραψα twice to explain his tearful letter:[33]

v.3: καὶ ἔγραψα τοῦτο αὐτό, ἵνα μὴ ἐλθὼν λύπην σχῶ ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἔδει με χαίρειν, πεποιθὼς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἡ ἐμὴ χαρὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐστιν

v.4: ἐκ γὰρ πολλῆς θλίψεως καὶ συνοχῆς καρδίας ἔγραψα ὑμῖν διὰ πολλῶν δακρύων, οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γνῶτε ἣν ἔχω περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς

In 2:3 Paul makes it clear that τοῦτο αὐτό (which is the tearful letter) was intended not to cause the Corinthians pain at his upcoming bodily visit. For him, they are the ones who should make him rejoice, which will in turn bring joy to them too. This is more than just reiterating but intensifying what has already

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32) Cf. J. M. Scott, *2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 57. Who compares Paul's pain to that which the Teacher of Righteousness had to experience when "the silent majority who stood idly by when the Teacher of authority was openly challenged in the midst of their whole community by an individual called the 'Man of Lies'" (1QpHab 5.8-12).

33) Although commentators also consider ἔγραψα in 2:9 a reference to the tearful letter, T. D. Stegman makes a convincing case for the epistolary aorist in his article, "Reading ἔγραψα in 2 Corinthians 2:9 as an Epistolary Aorist", *NovT* 54 (2012), 50-67.

been said in 2:2. And in 2:4 Paul explains his state of mind at the time of letter writing and the purpose of his tearful letter. He wrote this letter "out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears". As a matter of fact, the true intention of the tearful letter was not so much to cause the Corinthians pain as to show his abundant love for them.

Despite this intended purpose for writing the letter, however, Paul's tearful letter indeed caused the Corinthians pain. Later in chapter 7, Paul admits this when he says, "For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly) [Ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, οὐ μεταμέλομαι· εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, βλέπω [γὰρ] ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς]" (v.8). Both indicative verbs ἐλύπησα and μετεμελόμην in the protasis may point to the realities Paul assumed to be true.[34] Paul apparently caused the Corinthians pain with his tearful letter and with his epistolary presence in it. This in turn caused him pain with the feeling of regret. Aristotle considers the regret of those who "intended the opposite of what they have done [τοῖς τἀναντία ὧν ἐποίησαν βουλομένοις]" and "admit and are sorry for [it] [καὶ τοῖς ὁμολογοῦσι καὶ μετα μελομένοις]" a kind of pain (τὸ λυπεῖσθαι).'[35]

Not only that, Paul also had to struggle with emotional uneasiness or anxiety while he was waiting for Titus, who had been sent to deliver the tearful letter to the Corinthians (2:13: οὐκ ἔσχηκα ἄνεσιν τῷ πνεύματί μου; cf. 7:5: οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἡ σὰρξ ἡμῶν ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι· ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι). Paul could only find rest and consolation when he finally met Titus in Macedonia and heard his report on the positive changes that the tearful letter had brought about for the Corinthians: their longing (τὴν ὑμῶν ἐπιπόθησιν), their mourning (τὸν ὑμῶν ὀδυρμόν), and their zeal for him (τὸν ὑμῶν ζῆλον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ) (7:7; cf. 7:13 [ἀναπέπαυται τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ὑμῶν]; 1Co 16:18; Phm

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34) The hypothesis presented in the first class condition does not always point to an assumed fact, as Daniel Wallace notes (*Greek Grammar beyond the Basics* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 690-692). But Paul's use of λύπη and its cognates elsewhere in 2 Corinthians makes it clear that his tearful letter (epistolary presence) indeed caused the Corinthians pain and he regretted sending it until he heard from Titus.

35) *Rhet*. 2.3.4-5 [1380a]. J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida rightly classify both λύπη and μεταμέλομαι under "Attitude and emotions: sorrow, regret" (J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. [New York: United Bible Societies, 1989]).

1:7, 20; Rom 15:32; 2Ti 1:16). These changes made Paul rejoice all the more (ὥστε με μᾶλλον χαρῆναι) (cf. 1Co 16:17). It is interesting to note that rest (ἀνάπαυσις) and zeal (or better, feeling of emulation) (ζῆλος) are what Aristotle classifies under the pleasant things.[36] In 7:9 Paul expresses his joy once again ("Now I rejoice") because his tearful letter indeed caused the Corinthians pain but led them to repentance (μετάνοια), that is, to their change in mind and behavior. As observed earlier, μετάνοια is the very desired outcome of hortatory rebuke.[37] It seems, then, that Paul's tearful letter was an effective vehicle as a hortatory rebuke.[38]

In 10:1-11 Paul presents an interesting comparison between his bodily and epistolary presences. Paul recognizes that he is bold toward the Corinthians in his absence (ἀπὼν δὲ θαρρῶ εἰς ὑμᾶς), probably with the epistolary presence, while he is (made) humble when face to face with the Corinthians (κατὰ πρόσωπον μὲν ταπεινὸς ἐν ὑμῖν) (v.1). And he hopes that at his upcoming third visit he will not need "to show boldness [θαρρῆσαι]" by confronting those who falsely accuse him for acting according to human standards (v.2). In order to prevent such an unwanted bodily presence, Paul intentionally chose to use his epistolary presence because it is perceived by the Corinthians as weightier and more powerful than his bodily one (v.10: ὅτι αἱ ἐπιστολαὶ μέν, φησίν, βαρεῖαι καὶ ἰσχυραί). Paul's epistolary presence via the tearful letter was so powerful that it indeed led the Corinthians to take disciplinary action toward the offender, although it had caused them pain for a while.

6. Balancing between λύπη and ἀγάπη

In the preceding two sections, we have considered how Paul relates the λύπη language to his bodily and epistolary presence in 2 Corinthians. It is now clear

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36) Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.11.4 (1370a); 2.10.11 (1388a).
37) Plutarch, *Virt. mor. 12* [452C].
38) See also S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 134; I. Vegge, *2 Corinthians – A Letter about Reconciliation*, WUNT 2:239 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 180-181. Who finds what Paul does with the tearful letter parallel to "a painful, but appropriate, correction done by a moral teacher with authority" in the Greco-Roman psychagogical tradition.

that in chapters 2 and 7, Paul presented himself both as the one who caused pain and the one who suffered pain. And this is exactly what the Corinthians have also experienced in their relationship with Paul or even with the offender. The Corinthians caused Paul pain during his second visit (2:3). They, in turn, suffered pain by what Paul had written in his tearful letter (2:4; 7:8-11). And it seems clear from 2:5-11 that the Corinthians not only suffered pain from the offender (who grieved Paul too) (v.5) but also grieved him excessively with their disciplinary action toward him (v.7). Based on the shared reciprocal experiences of pain, Paul presents himself as an example of balancing between λύπη and ἀγάπη for the Corinthians to follow.

In 2:6, Paul, above all, gives his consent to the disciplinary action taken by the Corinthians toward the offender when he says, "This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person [ἱκανὸν τῷ τοιούτῳ ἡ ἐπιτιμία αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων]." It is still not certain what Paul means by "this" punishment. But 7:11 clearly indicates that the punishment (ἐκδίκησις) inflicted on the wrongdoer (ὁ ἀδικήσας)[39] – whatever it is – is one of the positive outcomes produced by Paul's tearful letter. Paul, on the other hand, encourages the Corinthians to "forgive and console [χαρίσασθαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι]" the offender so that he "might not be swallowed by excessive pain [μή πως τῇ περισσοτέρα λύπη καταποθῇ]" (2:7).

Then, in 2:10, Paul gives himself as an example of forgiving and consoling the offender (the one who grieved him and the Corinthians during his second visit). It should be noted here that Paul is not saying that he has already forgiven this man and, therefore, they should also do the same whether they like it or not. He rather says, "Anyone whom *you* forgive, *I also* forgive [κἀγώ]" (emphasis added).[40] Then he makes it clear that whatever he has forgiven, he has done it for the Corinthians' sake and "in the presence of Christ". Just as the communal

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39) Aristotle does not use ἐπιτιμία or ἐκδίκησις in *Rhetorica*. But he makes a distinction between revenge (τιμωρία) and punishment (κόλασις): "The latter is inflicted in the interest of the sufferer, the former in the interest of him who inflicts it, that he may obtain satisfaction [ἡ μὲν γὰρ κόλασις τοῦ πάσχοντος ἕνεκά ἐστιν, ἡ δὲ τιμωρία τοῦ ποιοῦντος, ἵνα πληρωθῇ]" (1.10.17 [1369b]).

40) F. J. Matera, *2 Corinthians: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 62. Citing Chrysostom, *Homily* 4:5, points out that Paul "avoids lording it over their faith and encourages them to do what is in accord with the gospel so that they may be obedient in all things".

disciplinary action toward the incestuous man in 1Co 5 has to be carried out in the presence of Jesus Christ our Lord (vv.4, 7), forgiveness and restoration of the offender in 2Co 2 should also take place in Christ's presence (v.10; cf. 2Co 1:14; 4:5; 7:10, 12; 8:21; 1Co 5:5; 2Th 1:9).

In 2:8, Paul also encourages the Corinthians "to reaffirm their love for him [κυρῶσαι εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπην]". Punishment can be a legitimate way of causing pain to the offender (or the wrongdoer). It should not be considered the ultimate goal of a communal disciplinary action toward the offender in the church. Instead, punishment should be an expression of true love for that person. Paul has already made it clear in 2:4 that although it is true that he grieved the Corinthians with his tearful letter (οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε), the real motivation of the letter was his abundant love for them (ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γνῶτε ἣν ἔχω περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς).[41] Paul claims that he intentionally caused them pain with his tearful letter so as to show his abundant love (ἀγάπη) for the Corinthians.[42]

The Corinthians no doubt did the right thing when they took disciplinary action toward the offender in responding to Paul's tearful letter (2:6). In doing so, they proved themselves "guiltless in the matter [ἀγνοὺς εἶναι τῷ πράγματι]", as Paul acknowledges later in 7:11. And yet, they are to keep the balance between λύπη and ἀγάπη, following Paul's example,[43] by "forgiving and consoling" the offender and by "reaffirming their love" for him (2:7-8). This will give them another chance to prove their "obedience in everything" (2:9: εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ἔγραψα, ἵνα γνῶ τὴν δοκιμὴν ὑμῶν, εἰ εἰς πάντα ὑπήκοοί ἐστε; cf. 10:6).

Thomas D. Stegman has recently suggested that ἔγραψα in 2Co 2:9 is a case of the epistolary aorist (cf. also 1Co 5:11) and, accordingly, 2:9 should be seen as a call to forgive and console the offender.[44] He attempts to read this call in

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41) The phrase οὐχ ... ἀλλά does seem to negate Paul's intention to cause the Corinthians pain absolutely. But this may reflect a Jewish way of highlighting the important of the second (e.g., Hos 6:6). See further R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 237, who finds a similar use of the phrase in 2Co 7:12 (ἄρα εἰ καὶ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, οὐχ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος ἀλλ᾽ ἕνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ).

42) Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.11.17, 1370a.

43) L. L. Welborn, "Paul's Appeal to the Emotions", 37-38, similarly finds the theme of imitation in Paul's emotional appeals: "The emotions that belong to the pathetic proofs are (1) those Paul seeks to arouse in his readers and (2) those to which sustained appeal is made. Sometimes Paul seeks to *exploit an emotion he believes to be present* in his reader. At other times, Paul himself *exemplifies the emotion he wishes to inspire* in the Corinthians" (emphasis added).

light of what Paul says of the ministry of reconciliation in 2Co 5:11-21:

> Returning to 2:5-11, I submit that Paul here puts into practice the message and ministry of reconciliation. He is willing to move beyond what transpired during the painful visit. In response to the community's initiative to punish the offender, Paul now extends the olive leaf as part of his strategy to clear up past hurts and misunderstandings. He wants the Corinthians to be fully reconciled to him because he regards himself as God's special envoy to the community and as their father in faith (see 1Co 4:14-15; 2Co 6:11; 10:13-14; 11:2). Moreover, he wants the community to be fully reconciled with one another. Because of his understanding that the ἐκκλησία constitutes the body of Christ (Rom 12:1-8; 1Co 12:12-31), Paul is passionate about the need for mutual love, edification, forbearance, and forgiveness in local communities. Therefore the obedience to which he calls the Corinthians in 2:9 is, ultimately, the obedience to *God's* work of reconciling the world to God through Christ, the reconciliation that also entails the horizontal dimension of offering forgiveness to fellow community members.[45]

For Paul, love is at the heart of Christian life and ministry. The ministry of reconciliation is strongly motivated by the self-giving love of Christ (2Co 5:14; cf. 13:11, 13). If the Corinthians have truly experienced this self-giving love of Christ, they should no longer live for themselves but for Christ (2Co 5:15); they are to reconcile people to God through Christ (2Co 5:18-20). The Corinthians should also abound in the love Paul inspired in them (περισσεύετε ... καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ἀγάπῃ) and prove the genuineness of their love for others (διὰ τῆς ἑτέρων σπουδῆς καὶ τὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγάπης γνήσιον δοκιμάζων) (2Co 8:7-8). This love goes beyond the boundary of the Corinthian church as Paul expects them to show their true love with their earnestness in the collection ministry for the poor saints in Judea (see especially 8:24: "Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love [τὴν οὖν ἔνδειξιν τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν] and of our reason for boasting about you"). Paul makes it clear that the collection is not meant to give relief (ἄνεσις) to others (the poor saints in Judea) while affliction, to the Corinthians; it is rather "for a fair balance between" the Corinthians'

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44) T. D. Stegman, "Reading ἔγραψα in 2 Corinthians 2:9 as an Epistolary Aorist", 58.
45) Ibid., 62 (his emphasis).

abundance and the need of the poor saints in Judea (8:13-14). It is a chance to show their true love. Therefore, the Corinthians should not make the collection a painful task that they carry out only under compulsion (μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης); they should rather become a cheerful giver whom God loves (9:7: ἱλαρὸν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός).

7. Conclusion

Thus far, we have examined Paul's use of the λύπη language in 2 Corinthians in light of Greco-Roman rhetorical and epistolary traditions and have tried to articulate his attempts to balance between λύπη and ἀγάπη in his ministry for the Corinthians. Paul admits that he indeed caused the Corinthians pain with his tearful letter (via his epistolary presence). The hortatory rebuke presented in the tearful letter effectively led them to repentance (μετάνοια), which entails a change in their mind and attitude (their restored relationship with and zeal for Paul) and in their behavior (a disciplinary action toward the offender). But Paul, by highlighting his abundant love for them and his sacrifice for them, tries to demonstrate the balance between λύπη and ἀγάπη in his own ministry for them. This balance is what the Corinthians also need to have in their relationship with Paul or with the offender who caused the pain. The Corinthians, following Paul's example, should reaffirm their love for the offender whom they punished quite severely. In doing so, they will "prove their obedience to God's work of reconciliation". They should also prove the genuineness of their love beyond the boundary of their local Christian community by showing their earnestness in their collection ministry for the poor saints in Judea.

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<Abstract>

Balancing between λύπη and ἀγάπη in 2 Corinthians

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In 2 Corinthians Paul frequently uses the λυπέω verb (2:2, 4, 5; 7:8, 9) and its noun form, λύπη (2:1, 3, 7; 7:10; 9:7). Most of the references are attested in chapters 2 and 7. In chapter 7 Paul seems to acknowledge that he intended to cause pain or grief to the Corinthians with his tearful letter (vv.8-9). But in chapter 2 he makes it clear that the tearful letter aimed not so much at causing them pain as at showing them how much he loves them (v.4). He also states that he is determined not to cause them pain in his upcoming (third) visit to Corinth (v.1). Further, he fears that he might have to suffer pain from them again in this visit as in his second visit (v.3; cf. 12:21). Thus, we see that Paul presents himself both as the one who causes others pain and the one who suffers pain from them. Similarly in 2:5-11, Paul finds the Corinthians in a comparable relationship with the offender. They not only suffered pain from him (who grieved Paul too) but also caused him pain – overly so – in turn. As he intended to show his love (ἀγάπη) for the Corinthians when he had to play the role of one causing grief (2:4), Paul also encourages them to do the same for the offender (2:7-8). Thus, the present paper seeks to explicate Paul's use of λύπη in 2 Corinthians in light of Greco-Roman rhetorical and epistolary traditions and his attempts to balance λύπη and ἀγάπη in his own ministry for the Corinthian church.