Paul’s Fears For His Brethren
2 Cor. 7:5

Introduction:
A. Paul - with fears??
   1. The one who stood fearless before persecuting powers.
   2. The one who stood alone when all forsook him.
B. Paul had real fears - fears shared by many faithful brethren.

Discussion:
I. The Fear of Disappointment in Brethren. (2 Cor. 7:4-7)
   A. Possible disappointment in news from brethren.
      1. Had rebuked them in first letter.
      2. Was waiting results of the rebuke.
   B. Possible disappointment in conduct of brethren. (2 Cor. 12:20-21)
      1. Possible attitude problems. (v. 20)
      2. Possible rebellion problem. (v. 21)
   C. Realized fear did not mean despair for Paul. (2 Cor. 4:1-15)

II. The Fear Of Deception Of Brethren. (2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15)
   A. He knew how deceptive false teachers could be.
      1. "Smooth words and flattering speeches" (Rom. 16:18)
      2. "Swelling words of emptiness" (2 Pet. 2:18-19) -- sweet nothings. (Gal. 4:17)
   B. He knew how gullible good brethren can be.
      1. In face of pleasing and powerful personality. (cf. 2 Cor. 10:7)
      2. In face of oratorical skill. (cf. 2 Cor. 10:10; 11:6)
      3. In face of sophistry and flattery. (1 Cor. 2:4,5; 1 Thess. 2:5).
      4. In face of emotional pull on itching ears. (2 Tim. 4:2 ff).

III. The Fear Of Defilement Of Brethren. (2 Cor. 11:3,4)
   A. Corruption of their thinking. (cf. 11:4; 10:5).
   B. Corruption of their loyalty. (11:2,3)
   C. Corruption of their lives. (11:3).
   D. Corruption through compromise (11:4)

IV. The Fear Of Defection Of Brethren. (Gal. 4:11)
   A. To another gospel. (Gal. 1:6-10)
   B. To a false system. (Gal. 2:5; 4:8-20)

Conclusion:
A. If Paul were present today, would be give him reason to fear?
B. If Paul were present today, would we give him reason to rejoice?