

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-10 | PAUL'S CAREFUL MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

- Verse 1 -
 - Paul begins to explain that this **ministry of reconciliation** (2 Cor 5:18) is carried out with great care.
 - When Paul says that they are **workers together** one must determine whether this *synergy* (coming from the Greek word used, *συνεργέω* [synergeo] is *working together*...
 - *with each other* (Paul, Timothy, Silvanus),
 - *or with the Corinthians*
 - *or with God* (as in the KJV editorial insertion).
 - The text does not answer the question, and any of the three make logical sense without greatly altering the meaning.
 - The first matter of concern is that **ye receive not the grace of God in vain**.
 - Those who read any kind of potential to lose salvation are guilty of eisegesis, because this passage says nothing of the sort. Rather, the verse expresses a fear that the Corinthians receive God's grace but do nothing with it from this point.
 - To receive God's grace IS to be saved. To do something with the salvation given is optional. To receive God's grace and do nothing further is tragic. It is this tragedy of which Paul shares his concern.
- Verse 2 -
 - This verse contains a quote and an application.
 - The quote is Isaiah 49:8a, which is a millennial era prophecy of the day in which an **accepted...day of salvation** would arrive.
 - Paul then applies the passage saying, **behold, now is the accepted time...**
 - This is a key aspect of the current dispensation: the time of grace was prophesied for the millennium, yet God has *graciously* made it available in *this* dispensation. This is why Paul says that he was **as one born out of due time** (1 Cor. 15:8) and that he was the *first* and the *pattern* for those of us saved in this dispensation (1 Tim. 1:15-16).
 - What shame it would be if we received this grace *in emptiness*.
- Verse 3 -
 - Paul's second matter of concern in carrying out the ministry (see v. 1 for the first matter) is that **no offence be given in any thing so that the ministry [of reconciliation] be not blamed**.
 - Paul expressed a similar concern in 1 Corinthians 10:32. Since the ministry of reconciliation is of such glory and importance, Paul wanted to do nothing that would reflect poorly on that ministry.
 - The word **offence** is found in verb form in Romans 9:32, which says **they stumbled at that stumblingstone**.
- Verses 4-10 -
 - Rather than giving offense, Paul shares a list of at least 30 things (mostly in pairs) that he will bear in order to promote and be faithful to the ministry.
 - It is by these things that Paul (and his companions) say they are **approving ourselves as the ministers of God**. The word **approving** is *συνίστημι* [synistemi] from *syn* (together) and *histimi* (to stand).
 - Thus, "we stand together with the following things in order to show we are faithful ministers of God" (see note on 1 Cor. 3:1, where the same Greek word appears).
 - The list is mostly self-explanatory, explaining the things that Paul is willing to *stand together with* in order to carry out the ministry of reconciliation.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:11-18 | PAUL'S CALL TO HOLY ALIGNMENTS

- Verses 11-13 are a general introduction. Verses 14-18 is the specific call.
- Verse 11 - Paul expresses his love for the Corinthians by saying **our mouth is open** and **our heart is enlarged**. Both are metaphorical statements, the first being a "Hebraism" found many times in Scripture that refers to abundant and clear speech, the second being a presumed statement of love though not found in other places in Scripture.
- Verse 12 -
 - Notice that the word **straitened** is *not* the word *straightened*.
 - The former has to do with "making straight," while the latter has to do with "constricting" (as in a geographical strait).
 - Something that is straitened might be crooked, and something not yet straightened might still be straitened.
 - Paul says that the Corinthians *are straitened* but that he and his companions are not the ones who did it. Rather, they were **straitened in your own bowels**, with **bowels** being used to refer to affections (the word is used 11 times, 10 being symbolic and one, Acts 1:18, referring to Judas' death and being literal).
- Verse 13 -
 - Paul asks for a **recompence in the same** (i.e.: payment in kind) for the open mouth and enlarged heart that he and his companions have for the Corinthians, expressed in v. 11.
 - Rather than being **straitened** (constricted) he asks them to **be ye also [as we are] enlarged**.
- Verse 14 -
 - The Greek ἑτεροζυγέω [heterozygeo] is "another (kind) of yoke."
 - We have the Yoke of Christ (Matthew 11:29), and God yokes a husband and wife (Mk 10:9) and we have fellow servants who are "yokefellows" (Phil 4:3).
 - We are not to have a *heterozygeo*, another yoke not put there by God. These yokes can be any yoke (alliance) with unbelievers (as in this verse) or even a yoke with the law (Gal 5:1).
 - This verse is often applied in the context of marriage, but it is not given in that context, and has a broad application.
 - Paul uses the words **fellowship** and **communion**. The first is μετοχή [metochē], which emphasizes *partaking together* and the second is κοινωνία [koinonia] which emphasizes the *commonality* of resources.
- Verse 15 -
 - Continuing on the same theme, Paul uses the word συμφώνησις [symphonesis], translated **concord**, another *partnership* word. This time Paul speaks of the impossibility of a partnership with **Christ and Belial**.
 - The Hebrew word *belial* (sometimes *beliar*) means *worthless* or *wicked* and is most often left untranslated in the KJV (see Deut. 23:13) but is sometimes translated (see Deut. 15:9).
 - In the intertestamental period (such as in the Dead Sea Scrolls) the word began to be used as the name given to Satan, thus in KJV it is most often understood that way but not translated as such.
 - An **infidel** is an unbeliever, the same Greek word being used in verse 14 (where it is in the plural, **unbelievers**). To understand the word, consider the Latin phrase *sola fide* (only faith), where you see the *fide* of *infidel*. The Latin prefix *in* means "not," thus *infidel* is "not of the faith."