

LESSON 12: 2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-7:16

Our Ministry of Reconciliation, Part 2

1. What does it mean to accept the grace of God in vain (6:1)? What would it mean today for you or someone else to accept the grace of God in vain?
2. Why is it significant for Paul that he should write “now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation”?
3. “We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path,” Paul writes in verse 3, “so that our ministry will not be discredited.” What’s his point here. List the hardships in verses 4-5, the good things in verses 6-7, and the contrasts of verses 8-10. Again, what point is he making for his Corinthian hearers? For us? With which of these “credentials” can you identify? Why would such a list remove, rather than place, stumbling blocks in the way of persons trying to find their way to God?
4. In verses 11-13, Paul asks the Corinthians to do for him (and his apostolic companions) what he’d done for them. What is this thing he wants them to do? Why, do you think? What does it mean to “open wide your hearts”?
5. In verse 14, Paul writes, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.” List the series of contrasts he sets forth in verses 14-16. What is his point (see verses 16-18)? Why do you think he feels it necessary to make that point? And how should we, as Christians today, interpret and apply this message? (Note that this passage is usually understood to apply to marriages between Christians and pagans. However, what other close relationships or partnerships might these verses speak to?) What do we learn here about separation and holiness?
6. What are the promises to which Paul refers in 7:1, and how are these connected with our imperative to “purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God”?

Paul's Joy at the Church's Repentance

1. Paul's appeal to the Corinthians in v. 2 follows from what he wrote a few verses earlier (see 6:11-12). What does he mean when he declares that "we have wronged ... corrupted ... exploited no one"?
2. What does 7:3 teach about the nature of Christian fellowship? Is this related to what Jesus was talking about in John 13:34-35, or to what John was talking about 1 John 3:16? How is all this related to God's purposes for Faith Presbyterian Church?
3. Why is Paul so confident, proud, and encouraged about the Corinthians (v. 4)? Explain the situation about which he is speaking in verses 4-7? What had made him so upset, and what brought him such great relief?
4. Take note of the language Paul uses in verses 6-7, and compare it with 1:3-7. From whom does Paul find comfort, ultimately? Through whom in this situation? Where do you find comfort? Is there a Titus in your life?
5. Paul compares godly sorrow and worldly sorrow in verses 8-11. Paul did regret writing his letter at first, but now he does not regret it. In fact, he is happy. Why? What are the positive indications and constructive results of godly sorrow? How does this differ from worldly sorrow? Do you agree? What is the value of repentance in Christian life?
6. In verses 12-16, Paul speaks of his joy in Titus' report of his own reception by the Corinthians, and ties it to his not being disappointed in what he'd "boasted" to Titus concerning them. What's Paul's point in these verses? What do you learn about Titus? About the Corinthians?