



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Chapter 6

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Introduction

- In the Chapter 5, St. Paul described himself as an ambassador for Christ who pleads for people to be reconciled to God
- Now, he makes a plea not to receive God's grace in vain, since now is the time for salvation (1-2)
- In the final description of his ministry, St. Paul focuses on its "approved" nature
- Determined not to give offense nor reason for blame, St. Paul has acted commendably



Introduction

- This is seen in the physical sufferings he has endured and the spiritual graces he has displayed
- Even the conflicting reactions and reports, help to confirm that his ministry is "approved" (3-10)
- With a wide open heart, he begs for them to open wide their hearts to him as well
- Then he pleads with them not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, in order that they might receive the promises of God (11-18)



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- We: St. Paul and Timothy (2 Cor 1:1)
- As ambassadors, we are workers with Christ
- The grace of God is the grace of the Holy Spirit, gospel, the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18)
- To receive it in vain would be to receive it and then fall away (1 Cor 15:2)
- The prophecy (Isa 44:8) is an offer of salvation to the Gentiles, to whom the Corinthians belonged



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- The point is that God has offered the salvation, but that now *is* the accepted time
- They were careful that the ministry be not blamed
- It does not matters what are the talents of a servant, if there is no confidence in his purity of life, his influence will be neutralized
- Every one should be anxious that his life does not hinder the gospel
- St. Paul next gives some details of his life



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- Patience: endurance in trials
- In tribulations, in needs, in distresses. The first three details are general
- In stripes (2 Cor 11:23,24)
- In imprisonments: in Philippi (Acts 16:24), Jerusalem (Acts 22:24), Caesarea (Acts 24:23), and Rome (Acts 28:16), at least
- In tumults: The word implies such attacks as a man cannot stand against



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- In labors: working with our hands and to spread the Gospel of God through all countries
- In sleeplessness: Passing many nights without sleep or rest
- In fastings: Partly through want of food; and partly voluntary
- By purity: In simplicity of intention together with that chastity and holiness of life
- By knowledge - Of the Divine mysteries



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- By longsuffering: Under all provocations
- By kindness: even to our powerful persecutors
- By the Holy Spirit: Showing forth the Spirit's influence and power
- By Sincere love: Love without hypocrisy
- By the word of truth: The doctrine of truth received from God
- By the power of God: Confirming this doctrine



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- By the armor of righteousness: Eph 6:13-17
- On the right hand and on the left: the shield on the left and the sword in the right hand
- We have the armor to protect us on all sides, every where, and on all occasions
- The right hand signifies prosperity, and the left signifies adversity
- The armor (word of truth and power of God) defends us both in prosperity and adversity



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- By honor and dishonor: sometimes respected, sometimes despised
- By evil report and good report: Sometimes praised, at other times accused
- As deceivers - Said to carry about a false doctrine
- And yet true - Demonstrated by the nature of the doctrine, as well as by our life
- As unknown, and *yet* well known: Obscure in the indifferent world, but well known to God



Marks of the Ministry (6:1-10)

- As dying, and, behold, we live: Always exposed to death, and yet preserved, and having eternal life
- As chastened, and not killed: Though many a blow fell upon him, his life was spared
- As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing: His suffering caused him grief, yet he rejoiced in hope
- As poor, yet making many rich: Without worldly wealth, but carrying the riches of Christ to men
- Possessing all things: if we are Christ's



Be Holy (6:11-18)

- I speak to you with the utmost freedom because of my affection for you
- Our heart is expanded to take you and all your interests in; and to keep you in it
- You do not have a narrow place in our affections
- But I do not have the same place in your affections which you have in mine
- The bowels are used in Scripture to denote the most tender affections



Be Holy (6:11-18)

- Repay me for my affection towards you, I speak to you as unto my children, whom I have a right to command, love me as I love you
- This prohibition is from Deut 22:10, Lev 19:19
- Christians are not to pair off with unbelievers
- The primary reference is to intermarriage and to association in heathen festivals
- All close fellowship with unbelievers is included



Be Holy (6:11-18)

- How then could they keep up the profession of Christianity, being associated with the unrighteous
- Belial, a heathen god like Beelzebub, is used as a synonym for Satan
- As Christ has nothing in common with Satan, how can a believer have a close intimacy with one who is still under the dominion of Satan
- As God's temple has nothing with the idol temple, so the saints are to be separated from idolaters



Be Holy (6:11-18)

- The Christian is the sanctuary of the Lord, (Lev 26:12), God dwells in His people as the Shekinah dwelt between the cherubim (Ex 25:22)
- A call to cleanse oneself from paganism Isa 52:11
- It is the Divine will that His worshipers should be separate from the world (Jer 31:1,9 Isa 43:6, and other passages)
- Then He will receive them, and will accept them as His own children. (Rom 12:2, Joshua 1:27)



Conclusion

- How does St. Paul describe himself as he pleads with the Corinthians to? (v. 1)
- Why was St. Paul so careful not to give offense in anything? (v. 3)
- List some of the physical sufferings which commended St. Paul as a Minister of God. (v. 4-5)
- List those areas where St. Paul demonstrated his integrity as a minister of God. (v. 6-7)
- List the contrasting experiences St. Paul had as a minister of God. (v. 9-10)



Conclusion

- How does St. Paul describe his affection toward the Corinthians? (v. 11)
- What does he say about the Corinthians' affections toward him?
- What charge does St. Paul give concerning our relation to those in the world? (v. 14)
- List the contrasting pairs that St. Paul uses to show the strangeness of believers being unequally yoked with unbelievers. (v. 14-16)
- What is necessary to receive the promise of having God as our Father who dwells among us? (v. 17-18)