

# Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## 2 Corinthians 6.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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*Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.*

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## 2 Corinthians 6.

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### Topics.

- Do not to receive the grace of God in vain.
- The wonder, splendour and beauty of Bible prophecy.
- Hardships, persecutions and weapons of righteousness.
- You are restricted in your own affections.
- Do not be unequally yoked.
- We are the Temple of God.
- The eternal splendour, wonder and beauty of the Temple of God.

**The Previous Chapter:** the previous chapter talked about walking by faith and not by sight, appearing before the judgment Seat of Christ and of the love of Christ controlling Paul and those ministering with him. Paul told the Corinthians that he regarded no-one according to the flesh and that whoever is in Christ is a new creation. The chapter ended with Paul stating, "God is reconciling the world to Himself in Christ."

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

- In certain chapters this letter is written as though Paul is having a conversation with the Corinthians (i.e., he asks them a question and then answers it etc.).
- Though Paul's letter is directed to the Corinthian church the content applies to any church or believer in the same situations.

### Do not to Receive the Grace of God in Vain.

2 Cor. 6:1-3 -----<sup>1</sup>Working together with him then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says, "In a favourable time I listened to you and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favourable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. <sup>3</sup>We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry,

Paul is alluding to the following words which Isaiah spoke to the nation of Israel: -

- Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you. "Thus says the LORD: "In a time of favour I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages" (Isaiah 49:7-8).

Here we see the glory and majestic wonder, splendour and beauty of Bible prophecy. Though Isaiah's prophetic words applied to his generation and the nation of Israel, they do not remain in that period of history nor do they stop with the nation of Israel, but rather take up spiritual wings and soar through time until they finding their true resting place on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Shining a spot light on Isaiah's words: -

- Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One.

This refers to God who is the Redeemer of Israel working through His Holy One the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah.

- To one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers.

At the time of Isaiah this applied to the nation Israel, but through the language of prophecy it transcends the nation of Israel and echoes Christ.

- Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the LORD, who is faithful.

This applied to the nation of Israel when Isaiah was speaking, but through the language of prophecy it transcends Israel and echoes Christ.

- The Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.

This verse firstly refers to God choosing the people of Israel, but through prophecy Isaiah's words transcends his generation and travels through time until they rest on the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Thus says the LORD: "In a time of favour I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped you.

At the time of Isaiah these words of comfort applied to Israel, but now by extension they apply to all the faithful (Jews and Gentiles) who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people.

When these words were spoken they applied to the nation of Israel, but through prophecy and by extension now apply to the Lord Jesus Christ as do the words: -

- To establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages (Isaiah 49:7-8).

### **To Establish the Land.**

Isaiah's words "To establish the land" apply to the following three periods of time: -

1. To God establishing Israel in their land during the time of the Old Testament prophets.
2. To the spiritual Kingdom God is establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ at this present time.
3. To the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish.

The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce.

All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

**For further information see titles: -**

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **The Glory of Bible Prophecy.**

Such is the majestic wonder and splendour of much of the Bibles prophetic language. It is like a heavenly eagle that soars through time stopping for brief moments to rest at certain time periods in God's eternal plan of salvation. Bible prophecies are very rarely one dimensional this should not surprise us since it is the God of time and of language who is inspiring the prophets to speak. Though Isaiah is prophesying to the people of Israel, Paul is applying his prophetic words to the Corinthian brothers and sisters in Christ and by extension to all who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Do not receive the Grace of God in Vain.**

The words, "Do not receive the grace of God in vain" (v1) means do not go back under the law, this is a common danger since human nature is such that it feels worthy when it attains to certain standards or follows religious ceremonial practices. In Paul's generation it was Jewish Christian's being enticed back under Moses Law, i.e., circumcision and keeping holy days and Sabbaths etc., to be favoured by God and saved to eternal life. While with the Gentiles it most likely was adding some of their pagan practises to their faith in Christ.

The words, "Receiving the grace of God in vain" applies to self-effort, i.e., the moment we think we can make ourselves righteous by good works is the moment we nullify the grace Christ achieved for us on the Cross. Since not one of us can ever attain to the perfect Standard of God's Holiness.

### **Put no Obstacle in anyone's Way.**

It would not only be wise but the global body of Christ would look very healthy if all those serving Christ kept the following statement of Paul, "We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry" (v3) engraved on the four-front of their mind. This was one of the reason's Paul worked as a tent maker to support his ministry, though he had the right to be supported by others and there are times when certain churches did provide aid, he mostly supported himself since he did not want to place a financial burden on others and hinder the gospel. Obviously the words, 'no obstacle' is not limited to financial aid, but embrace anything that would hinder a person coming to Christ.

Paul and those ministering with him acted and laboured from good principles so that no-one who saw or knew them would have any occasion to speak against their ministry or the ministry of others since the misconduct of one minister of the gospel brings a reproach upon all Christianity and therefore at some level hinders the effectiveness of others. This principle is not limited to Christianity i.e., the misconduct of a physician exposes the whole profession to reproach and the bad conduct of a lawyer reflects itself in some degree on the entire profession.

Though no-one can be responsible for the errors and failings of others all are indirectly affected by the sins of others. A minister's actions good or bad affect in some degree the effectiveness of all others who proclaim the 'Good News' of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel message of Christianity all over the world.

Paul is saying that as far as it lies within our power we should live in a manner that causes no offence so that not only our service to the Lord, but the service of others would not be reproached on our account. A minister or leader of any profession to earn people's respect must be living in the manner which that profession demands when a minister of the gospel lives by the message they proclaim respect and honour will follow as a matter of course

**NOTICE:** the introduction, "Working together with him" (v1), Paul in his mind's eye saw himself working alongside the Lord

### **Hardships, Persecutions and Weapons of Righteousness.**

2 Cor. 6:4-10 ----- <sup>4</sup>as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, *genuine love*; <sup>7</sup>by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>through honour and dishonour, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

These verses are interesting since there is a circle of religion today that teaches the Christian message is one of prosperity and a charmed life, but here we read of the author of the majority of the New Testament writings and those ministering with him living a life in Christ that is far removed from being charmed and prosperous in this world. Within their service to Christ we see four characteristics i.e., they suffered, lived in a right manner, had weapons that protected them and received blessings.

These four characteristics are common to the Christian life: -

1. **Suffering:** Paul and those ministering with him suffered, afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots and long hours of work, sorrow, dishonour and slander, sleepless nights, and hunger. They were poor, treated as strangers and at times left for dead. Notice they managed to survive these hardships and persecutions not by miraculous power, but by great endurance (patience, persistence and tenacity) (v4).
2. **Right Living:** they lived in a manner that honoured God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were patient with people and showed them kindness, they were not deceitful, but spoke the truth and ministered from a genuine (honest, sincere and unpretentious) love not only for Christ but for those they ministered to. The words, "Making many rich" (v10) does not apply to money and material possessions, but to divine forgiveness of sin, contentment, joy and eternal life etc., and also shines a floodlight on the fact that Paul and those with him lived to serve others not their own selfish ambition or gain.
3. **Weapons:** Paul in his beautiful words, "The weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left" Clearly shows that living a life that honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will not only keep us in God's favour and protect us in this life, but will reward us in eternal life.

4. **Blessings:** blessings, in this context refer to receiving honour and respect from man and from God, to having a hidden joy and hope alive in the heart and to being well-known by other brother and sisters who care (i.e., having many friends).

**NOTE:** the words, "Possessing everything" (v10) refers to the following three things: -

1. The faithful in Christ possess everything they need for salvation to eternal life (i.e., divine forgiveness and God's grace and mercy will keep them to the day of salvation).
2. To the inner spiritual life that Christians have with God and with Christ that is veiled by the body of flesh.
3. To the inheritance of the entire world and the Kingdom of God when Christ returns and the promise of everlasting life in eternal glory.

### **You are Restricted in your Own Affections.**

2 Cor. 6:11-13 ----- <sup>11</sup>We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. <sup>12</sup>You are not restricted (Straightened in KJV) by us, but you are restricted in your own affections (Bowels in KJV). <sup>13</sup>In return I speak as to children widen (Enlarged in KJV) your hearts also.

Here Paul is asking the Corinthians to open their hearts in love in the same manner toward him as he has done toward them. This is all the reward or compensation which Paul asks of them in return for all the love which he had shown them and for all his toils and self-denials on their behalf. He does not ask for silver or gold or any earthly possessions, but only a return of love toward him and devotedness to the gospel of Christ which he loves and endeavours to promote.

### **I Speak as to Children.**

Paul's words, "I speak as to children" means he speaks as a parent speaks to their children. He talks to them as a spiritual father and as such has only their best interest at heart, thus the words, "Be enlarged in your hearts," means love me as I love you, give to me the same affection which I have given you. He is basically asking the Corinthians to "Enlarge their love toward him" in contrast to giving their affections to unbelievers and idol worshippers.

### **You are Not Restricted by Us.**

Paul statement "You are restricted in your own affections" (v12) to the Corinthian church carry the idea that it is their affections and passions for the things of this world that dwell in their heart that hinders some from giving their love and affections to Paul and the messages that he has been teaching throughout this entire letter. The greatest hindrance to a person receiving the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is inward human affections for the things of this world and love for its joys and pleasures.

### **Do not be Unequally Yoked.**

2 Cor. 6:14-15 ----- <sup>14</sup>Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?

This group of verses has been used throughout history to make many who love Christ not only feel condemned and unworthy before God, but also to feel rejected by the Lord. Since we all live in a fallen body full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations and have a deep need to be loved and accepted many young, new and naive Christian converts and others (not so young) out of deep loneliness have established a loving relationship to a man or woman who has treated them kindly and accepted their faith committed themselves in marriage to an unbeliever. Though they will most likely find a certain degree of emptiness in not being able to intimately share their faith and their devotion with their spouse they should never feel condemned, unworthy or unaccepted before the Lord. Rather if their partner is

treating them in love and kindness and accepting their faith they should simply live as all in Christ are called to live, i.e., to show love, kindness, forgiveness, patience, grace and mercy not only to our brothers and sisters in Christ, but also to whoever does not know the Lord.

The context of these verses is: -

**Righteousness contrasted to Lawlessness:** it is about people who do the right thing, being bonded to people who do wrong.

**Light contrasted to Darkness:** meaning those who believe in God, being bonded to those who deny God.

**Christ contrasted to Belial:** is about people who believe in Christ being bonded with those who believe in idols and pagan gods (Belial is a name for satan and by extension ungodly people i.e., the corrupt and the wicked).

**Believers contrasted to Unbelievers.**

Naturally no brother or sister desires to marry a person who is corrupt, wicked and lives a lifestyle of doing wrong or one who worships other gods rather their heartfelt passion is to marry someone who loves God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only is this wisdom and common sense, but also God's desire. This is because once the fleeting emotions of love pass there will be an enormous gap in not being able to share the discoveries of Scripture and passion for Christ with the one we should be closest to in life.

Nevertheless if a person is in this circumstance they should not feel unworthy or condemned since our entire salvation is based on grace and our love for Christ. Though they may later live with regrets on this side of Christ's return they should be comforted knowing that providing they remain in faith they will be accepted by the Lord as we all will be despite our mistakes, sinful dysfunctions and aberrations.

**NOTE:** Paul in his first letter wrote: -

- If any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her, likewise if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him because the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise their children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).

This means that those in Christ are to treat and accept an unbelieving spouse as a brother or sister in Christ for the sake of the believing partner. This does not mean that they have eternal life, but for the sake of fellowship and the well-being of the believing brother or sister the unbelieving spouse should be shown all the respect, favour and acceptance we would show to our brothers and sisters in Christ (primarily for the sake of the believing spouse and their children).

**We are the Temple of God.**

2 Cor. 6:16-18 ----- <sup>16</sup>What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>17</sup>Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, <sup>18</sup>and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."

The words, "We are the temple of the living God" (v16) refers to the global body of Christ, we know this because God says, "I will walk among them and they shall be my people" (v16) and then we are told to separate from those who worship idols and other gods. The picture here is one of a spiritual temple in which every brother and sister in Christ are the bricks and mortar God is building it with. This temple is so vast it covers the entire world and cannot be contained within any single building. It is this global temple that God is walking amongst.

The words: -

- Touch no unclean thing.

Does not mean that we should never allow an unbeliever into our midst since if they are willing to be amongst us it shows that there is something within them that is drawing them to seek the Lord. Rather the focus is the people of God mixing in fellowship with idols (i.e., those who blatantly deny Christ and worship other gods and of course those who are purposely corrupt and wicked in their manner of life). Simply put it means, don't allow things in God's temple that are offensive to God or bring a bad testimony to the name of Christ.

### **The Eternal Splendour, Wonder and Beauty of the Temple of God.**

The words: -

- As God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (v16).

Is alluding to the following words of God in the book of Exodus: -

- I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God (Exod. 29:45).

And cited from the book of Leviticus: -

- God said to His people Israel, "I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people (Lev. 26:12).

As we excitedly travel through the Bible we not only discover that this is the eternal desire of God, but we also find when we arrive at the end of our journey an amazing and majestic heavenly vision that God gave to a godly man named John while on the Isle of Patmos. In this glorious and eternal vision John sees God Himself comforting and tenderly walking amongst His people.

The following glorious words are John's record of the majestic and royal heavenly vision God gave him.

- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the *dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them*, and they will be his people, and *God himself will be with them as their God*. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

Can there be any more glorious words of comfort, joy and hope for those who belong to the global and spiritual temple God is at this present time building in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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End