

Feb 22, '10 H.M.

AN APPEAL FOR CONSISTENCY

2 Cor. 6:1 - 18

Some have ^{been} oversimplifying the remedy for the world's woes -
The Gospel does not leave the convert kneeling at the altar - it follows him in everything in his life -
Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth had as its great concern

the discipline of the church.

His second letter has as its chief burden the discipline of a Christian.

Chapter six is an appeal to the Corinthian Christians to live consistent consecrated Christian lives.

V. 1 - The opening verse is suggestive of our theme. Appeal not to dissipate the grace of God - that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

All his fullness of blessing, take heed not to receive these things in vain - empty.

Workers together - true nature of Paul's ministry.

Test of anything is its workability - failure to stand this test can mean catastrophe.

It always has been. It always is if we understand our work as ministers of Jesus Christ, and the whole church is in direct co-operation with us in those aims.

They are to be in harmony with Paul's letter. Urges them to live up to it. That is what he meant here by vain. Do not let it be an empty thing - linked with him.

V. 2 - He quotes from Isa. 49:8 - Salvation does not come automatically.

This verse says one thing I know:

God's time for receiving life in Christ is now - today - reconciliation is at this moment.

If you hear his voice harden not your hearts.

Devil's time is always tomorrow.

God's grace is always coming to my heart now - yesterdays experiences are gone - burdens of today need heaven's resources now!

This is the moment for your situation - you must seize upon your God given opportunity. Therefore, you dissipate God's grace by flinging away our opportunity.

V. 3 - Another way the grace of God is dissipated is by using it as a ground to continue in sin.

To keep my ministry from being blamed - I will not put a hindrance in anybodys way.

Every Christian is called upon to live as broken bread, as poured out wine in the service of the King of Kings for the blessing of his fellowmen.

Heavy demands are made upon man to live day by day for the glory of God. The demands are fuller than the law could ever make.

They are not to put anything in the way for someone to strike his knee against it. Not even one stumbling occasion. That there be not one blemish on the ministry.

This is an appeal for them to follow His example.

V. 4 - First speaks of physical.

Wm. Barclay calls this a "blizzard of troubles". Application to all Christians, overtakes us sooner or later.

Remember Paul is pleading for stability - consistency.

Much patience - this enables a man to pass the breaking point without breaking.

✓ I ask myself the question - where do I fit in - to be honest with you, I have to admit that Paul leaves me right behind.

As I listen to him opening his heart about what it means to be a Christian, somehow he is so far ahead - nevertheless, I would like to attain this.

V. 6 - Second He Speaks About the Mental

Things just mentioned was an appeal to bring the physical body into consistency - next he appeals to the mental - the attitude of the Christian.

✓ Pureness - the purity of life, blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

✓ Knowledge - Knowing the things of God through experience. Zeal without knowledge is a dangerous thing.

✓ Long Suffering - Tenderheartedness, bearing hard treatment kindly.

✓ Kindness - Gentleness - charity.

✓ By Holy Ghost - Power and source of these graces.

✓ Love unfeigned - Christian love not hypocritical. I love you not for the wrong motive but simply for the blessing I can bring you.

V. 7 - Third, He Speaks About The Spiritual

Little overlapping.

Here are some elements of strength for consistency.

✓ Word of truth - Scripture - His message of truth.

✓ Power of God - expressed through them.

✓ Armour of Righteousness - weapons of Christian soldier. Eph. 6:10-17.

Best defense against temptation. Right suggest sword in R. hand and left shield in L.

V. 8 - Paul was bragged on by his friends and slandered by his enemies. Both of these must be used for the Glory of God.

Contrast - honor - dishonor.

Evil report - good report.

Considered deceiver - yet considered as true.

V. 9 - Considered as unknown - yet well known.

(Lacking credentials) (Fully recognized).

Dying and live - refers to hazards of his life. It is reported that on occasions his enemies reported him as falsely dead to gain an advantage - yet He keeps right on living.

Chastened - As for sin. His enemies interpreted his troubles as such.

V. 10 - He also does not deny the chastening but has not been put to death.

Sorrowful but always rejoicing. Poor yet making many rich, penniless but really possessing everything.

God calls for the same consistency in your life - God gives this grace not to the crowd but to the child of God.

To the woman who watches over her home as she lives day by day a consistent life.

Have you advanced in your prayer life - devotional life?

Amid all the pressures that have come upon you, because you are a Christian. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, forever is waiting to dispense his grace to those who are prepared to live on this principle.

Paul closes by making a personal appeal - V. 11-18.

V. 11 - First, He Bares His Soul To Them.

Mouth is open - he held back nothing - His Gospel is true - nothing to hide.

Heart is enlarged - expanded in kind feelings. Includes them in his love.

We have spoken to you about our life in the first part of the chapter - told you how we live it.

V. 12 - Your attitude toward me Paul said is due to the condition of your hearts - straightened. Cramped - narrow place.

V. 13 - A command for a broader outlook.

Here is a platform upon which the grace of God is displayed - it is in a time of crisis!

He says it is right behind the scenes, that tells us the reactions of the man - NOT when he is in the public arena, but when he is alone with God.

There are conditions in our lives that have to be borne patiently.

This has first to do with what happens to a man's body. Second what happens to a man's mind and third, a man's spirit.

Here is a man exposed to the scrutiny of heaven. What about the conditions we must bear patiently? Faithfulness and courage in midst of difficulties.

Necessities - some of life's burdens are inescapable. Sorrow is inevitable and death is certain.

Distresses - means a narrow or tight place. Hemmed in by adverse circumstances. These get so narrow there is no place left to stand.

V. 5 - Stripes - after one is hemmed in then blows and wounds are put upon him. One occasion he took 45 stripes. 5 times save one for the Gospel sake. 195 stripes because he was a Christian.

Tumults - either inward or outward state of being tossed to and fro - a commotion - these were Paul's experiences.

Next 3 are common place experiences.

Labors - wearisome toil.

Watchings - sleeplessness - insomnia - Paul knew all about this - travels, many sleepless nights.

Fasting - simply want of food. Often forced personal denials.

Do you see why I say that Paul leaves me behind?

I suppose you say he has left you behind too!

Principles we must learn in daily living.

Recompence - enlarge your heart. Do not hide behind some shelter -
be prepared, to walk in God's way.

Many had accounted him an enemy saying he was narrow or legal.

Why shouldn't I?

What is the harm in it?

You get in a bomb - proof shelter. Paul is now making a passionate
appeal that they maintain - consistently - consecration.

Don't hide in your own little shelter - nice little corner.

God has always intended his people to be different - solid - steady -
steadfast.

V. 14 - First for their preservation - Israel secure only as they were consistent
in worship of God.

Even Solomon had his heart turned by the fascination of heathen women.

How much more easily than could it happen to the ordinary people?

People mingling in marriage with the heathen.

This marked them out as seperate people.

He forbids them to continue to enter into such marriages with pagans.

Proceeds to tell you why --

Such marriages can only produce discord and dishonor to Christ.

What partnership - righteousness and lawlessness.

What fellowship things of light to darkness.

V. 15 - What symphony Christ to Satan personification of lawlessness.

What portion has faith on same side as unbelief.

V. 16 - What agreement has putting together the votes of the temple of God
(inner where God dwells) on same side with idols.

Questions are unanswerable.

For you are a temple of the living God as opposed to dead idols.

V. 17 - Stop forming inconsistent relations - come ye from among them - come out.

This is the ground of Paul's appeal - this is what he is leading up to Great Promise.

"I will dwell in them
be then God.
Receive them
Be my people."

That is whole significance of the cross - if any man will come after me, let him deny himself to take up his cross daily and follow me". L. 9:23.

Christian is to reckon himself dead unto sin and alive unto God. He is a soldier in active duty at all times.

Paul appeals for this that God might preserve you spiritually and in purity. Also preserve his children until they see his lovely face. Two little girls excited about visit by School Board. You better clean up your deak - I'll clean it up tomorrow. But they might come today - I'll clean it this afternoon. But they might come this morning. I guess I'll keep it clean at all times.

Some say preacher that was alright for the dark ages but most dangerous for a Christian today!

When Christian principles are applied today some cry they are obsolete. This attitude pulls the church of Jesus right down to the level of godless, sinful, Christ rejecting world. We have set aside the call to seperation.

To what extend do you think Christian principles are really applied in modern society.

The vener is very thin - same world that rejected Jesus Christ, does so still.

Absurd for one generation for the sake of worldly convenience to imagine that it can lower the bars of separation.

Most Christians are satisfied to conform to custom, to dress, and to opinion

of the day.

Great command "come out from among" ceases to grip our hearts and is regarded as ancient.

Honeck records - the church never had so much influence on the world as when she kept herself aloof from it. A church conformed to the world will never lead it. She must be separate if she would live.

It will be true in those until Jesus comes again.

How do I apply it in daily living?

Do you know where you have gone wrong?

What Christians found to be harmful in days gone by, they are most likely to find harmful today.

It is not simply putting your life in a compartment labeled "separated" and making everybody mad at you.

It is living in harmony with the passion in the heart for God and a lost world.

Separation is investing each moment of your secular life to the Glory of God. Day by day living in such a way as not to disturb your harmony with God.

I am not so concerned that people like me, but very concerned I lose harmony of relationship with Holy Spirit.

Not saying Thou shalt not do this etc.

Do you recognize what God has done for you through Jesus Christ?

Here is a principle - anything in your life that is a problem?

Is it to the Glory of God for you? I C. 10:31.

Has it the appearance of evil? 2 Thess. 5:22.

Is it a stumbling block to a weaker Christian?

Does it drag you down?

Does it make your prayer life more difficult?

Does it dim your vision of your wonderful saviour?

Does it increase your love for the Bible?

V. 18 - What a promise for obedience.

Nothing else matters except this.

God calls for a Clean Church - consistent -