

II CORINTHIANS 6:1-18

INTRODUCTION...

- **I CORINTHIANS 1:1-2:16 - PAUL'S JOY AT THE REPENTANCE OF THE CHURCH...**
- **I CORINTHIANS 3:1-4:18 - LIFE IN THE SPIRIT / STANDING UP FOR THE TRUTH...**
- **I CORINTHIANS 5:1-21 - THE HOPE OF HEAVEN...**
 - 1st - We will receive a new body - our old 'tent' is wearing out...
 - Just like we change our old stinky clothes - one day we will change into a new body...
 - Because our old body was never meant to live forever - we need an eternal one!
 - Jesus has given us the guarantee of His Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come...
 - So we please God - knowing we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ...
 - Those who are saved - the Bema Seat / those who are not - the White Throne!
 - 2nd - The motivation for all we do is the Love of Christ...
 - We are not trying to impress anyone - we learn so we can give an answer for our hope
 - And because Jesus died for us - we no longer live for ourselves - bought with a price!
 - 3rd - We are no longer our 'old man' - we are 'new creations' in Christ Jesus...
 - And we have been reconciled/restored in our relationship with God...
 - He has called us to go and share that message of restoration - Ambassadors for Jesus!

PREACH THE GOSPEL... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST - TODAY IS THE DAY... vs. 1-2**
 - Partners with Christ... vs. 1
 - In light of the fact that we are new creations - and Ambassadors for Jesus...
 - We have in effect become co-workers with God - we are his partners in the ministry...
 - We (*us and God*) both plead with the world not to receive the Grace of God in vain...
 - **Jesus died for the sins of the whole world - John 3:16 - that all might be saved!**
 - **It is a free gift/grace from God we present to everyone - but it is their choice...**
 - **They have the power to refuse - they can negate God's grace - reject His salvation!**
 - The day of salvation - **Isaiah 49:8...** vs. 2
 - Paul exhorts - 'today is the day' - today is the day to be saved - believe in Jesus!
 - No one thinking clearly wants to go to hell - a place of eternal suffering / separation...
 - But most people just don't think about it - they put off the decision till another day...
 - The plan is one day - after they have had 'some fun' - enjoyed the 'good things' in life...
 - Then they will make the time to 'get right' with God - address the issue of salvation...
 - **The problem is God does not guarantee anyone tomorrow!**
 - **There are many people who wait till 12:00 to receive Jesus - only to die at 11:59...**
 - **No one plans to have a heart attack/stroke - or have a car accident...**
 - **Right now is the time to believe - to receive the free gift/grace of God!**
- **2ND - NOT KEEPING OTHERS FROM CHRIST... vs. 3-10**
 - Paul was extremely careful not to stumble others by his example... vs. 3
 - He did not want to do anything that would cause people to reject the Gospel message...
 - **It is a sobering thought that although the Gospel has the power to save the lost...**

- Often those who are going to hell reject salvation - because of who shares it with them!
- If a person lies / backbites / steals / cheats / or is just not a nice person...
- Then turns around and tells you about the 'Grace of God' - would you listen...
- Our example is far more powerful than our words - people see before they hear...
- If we are not showing the lost a life that matches our words - why would they listen
- o Paul describes a good example - three different aspects...
 - 1st - The challenges faced for the sake of the Gospel... vs. 4-5 (*4 things*)
 - The need for patience - people do not receive the Gospel the first time...
 - o Often when someone rejects the Gospel message - we give up trying...
 - o We need to be patient - realizing it can take time for someone to come to Jesus!
 - The reality of tribulations - having needs - and extreme hardships...
 - o **John 15:18** - "If the world hates you, you know it hated Me before it hated you."
 - o Like a light shining in the darkness – Jesus reveals the sin of the world...
 - o Because men LOVE sin they hate the light that reveals their sinfulness...
 - o We have Jesus in us – so as they hate the light – Jesus – they also hate us...
 - Being put in prison - beaten for the sake of the Gospel - political uprisings...
 - o Paul was thrown into prison and beaten for sharing Jesus in Philippi - **Acts 16**...
 - o He also started a riot by sharing the Gospel in Ephesus - **Acts 19**...
 - o Even today the Gospel can get you arrested and beaten - China / Saudi Arabia...
 - o Are we willing to suffer for the sake of the Gospel - maybe not end up prison...
 - o But it might mean we lose friendships - it might mean people don't like us
 - Intense labor / no sleep / fasting...
 - o Paul worked hard to ensure as many people as possible would go to heaven...
 - o It meant many a night lying awake in bed - concerned about those trapped in sin...
 - o It meant many a day going with out food - in fasting and prayer for the lost...
 - o What are we willing to give up so that those we love come to know Jesus...
 - o Are we willing to go without some sleep / food - praying for those who are lost...
 - 2nd - The resources given to be able to spread the Gospel... vs. 6-7 (*7 things*)
 - Purity - we are no longer the unclean/unrighteous man we used to be...
 - o One of the greatest barriers for us sharing Jesus - we don't think we are worthy...
 - o Who are we to tell someone about God - we see all our flaws and shortcomings...
 - o Yet we are not the old sinful man we used to be - we are new in Jesus...
 - o And we are not preaching ourselves as the answer - we are preaching Jesus!
 - Knowledge - we know the truth - we are no longer blinded...
 - o We know there is only one way to get to heaven - and only one alternative - hell...
 - o Knowing the truth - how can we hold back from sharing - how can we keep silent!
 - o * **Jeremiah 20:9** - "Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not."
 - Longsuffering and kindness - we know we are fighting for people's eternal salvation...
 - o The people we are reaching out to - are currently working for our enemy - satan...
 - o That means they will say and do many hurtful things to us...
 - o Rather than react - we need to be longsuffering - and show them kindness...
 - o Because it is the goodness of the Lord that brings them to Jesus - **Romans 2:4**
 - The Holy Spirit - we have the power of God giving us strength...
 - o Many times we are too shy to share Jesus - we are afraid of what people might say...

- o But we do not go out in our own strength - we go out in the power of the Spirit...
- o The number one result of being filled with the Holy Spirit - is boldness!
- The Word of truth - we have the power of the Word of God
 - o Many times we are also shy because we don't know what to say...
 - o But it is not our words people need to hear - they need the Word of God...
 - o The Gospel is what has the power to soften a sinners heart - **Romans 1:16**
- Sincere Love - the motivation that can crack the hardest heart...
 - o Before people are willing to listen to what we say - they need to see we care...
 - o When the men preach on the Ceres about the love of God - we do not listen...
 - o Because we know their real motive is to pass out the offering envelope afterwards!
- The armor of righteousness - one the right hand (*offensive*) and the left (*defensive*)...
 - o The idea is that we are heading out into a battle – fighting to save the lost...
 - o Like any good soldier we need to prepare ourselves for the battles...
 - o * **Ephesians 6:13** – “Therefore take up the whole armor of God...”
 - o What is the armor of righteousness – Jesus - **Romans 13:14**...
 - o He is both our offense (*power to save*) - and our defense (*keeps us safe*)!
- 3rd - The contrasting perspectives others have of us when we share the Gospel... (8 things)
 - We are honorable - through others will try to shame us...
 - o Don't be surprised when people mock you for your faith in Jesus...
 - o Accuse you of changing religions - try to shame you into silence
 - We have a good reputation - but others will speak badly about us...
 - o People will attempt to discredit you through spreading untrue rumors...
 - o Dave Matthews - was accused of being the cause of bagios hitting his Island...
 - o The purpose is to justify why they are unwilling to come around or listen to you...
 - o It is also to try and keep others away from hearing the Gospel
 - We have the truth - but others will say we are lying...
 - o Everyone thinks they have the truth - Mormons / JW's / Iglesias / Muslims...
 - o And of course they assume everyone else is wrong - especially us...
 - o But we have the one and only truth - we have Jesus - **John 14:6**
 - People know who we are - but do their best to ignore us...
 - o When you walk down the street and even family pretends you are not there...
 - o It is not us we they are ignoring - it is the conviction we bring because of Jesus!
 - We are attacked/killed - but still we are alive...
 - o The worst they can do is kill us – then we go to heaven (*not a bad thing*)...
 - o In most cases the worst thing that happens if we preach Jesus - we are made fun of...
 - o But keeping people from Hell is worth a little ridicule – worth being made fun of...
 - o We are talking about men's eternal destination – people are worth fighting for!
 - We are sad because of people's disbelief - but rejoice when someone gets saved...
 - o 100 people might break our hearts by refusing the wonderful Gospel of grace...
 - o But when that one person says yes - even the Angels in heaven rejoice!
 - We are poor - but we make many rich through the Gospel...
 - o The Gospel is not a means to gaining wealth - we are not here for money...
 - o We preach not to take - but to give the riches of the Kingdom of God...
 - We have nothing - but we are the Children of the King...
 - o We will not receive our reward for our work here in earth...
 - o Our reward is far greater - beyond imagination - our reward wait for us in heaven...

- o We are heirs to all that God has - joint heirs with Jesus Christ - **Romans 8:17**
 - o Meaning God will give us EVERYTHING - His KINGDOM - **Luke 12:32**
 - o To the extent we will even sit on Jesus throne with Him - **Revelation 3:21**
- **3RD - DO NOT BE UNEQUALLY YOKED... vs. 11-18**
 - o Paul was being completely open with the church - transparent... vs. 11-13
 - He had great love for the whole church - he was not hurt by them - or offended...
 - But the church had been affected by the influence of the false teachers...
 - These men had managed to harden the hearts of the believers towards Paul...
 - So Paul encouraged the church to be careful who they spent their time with...
 - o Do not be friends with unbelievers - do not be yoked to them... vs. 14
 - The pictures of a yoke is when an ox and goat are attached to plow a field...
 - **Deuteronomy 22:10** - "You shall not plow with an ox and a [goat] together."
 - If the ox were not 'equally yoked' the goat would pull down the ox...
 - It is a powerful picture - you cannot have a friendship with an unbeliever...
 - They are not the same as you are - they are going to pull you down!
 - Paul was not talking about avoiding people who don't know Jesus...
 - In order to avoid them - you would have to leave this world!
 - We need to be interacting with those who do not know Jesus...
 - If we are not out in the world - we cannot show the world the hope of Jesus!
 - But though we are in the world - we should not be like the world - **John 17:15**
 - He is saying be careful who you spend your time with...
 - Don't spend all your time with 'friends' and family who don't follow Jesus...
 - Don't seek their counsel or advice - they are not going to point you to the Word
 - People will either draw you closer to - or father away from Jesus...
 - **I Corinthians 15:33** - "...bad company corrupts good character."
 - Surround yourself with godly men - those who encourage your walk in the Lord...
 - That includes not get married to an unbeliever...
 - Be very careful whom you choose to be your spouse - it is a permanent decision...
 - If someone is 'religious' and knows 'about Jesus' does not mean they are saved...
 - Don't marry someone just because they are cute - marry one who loves the Lord...
 - Find a man/woman who loves the Lord - not just in words - but also in actions...
 - Otherwise they might end up drawing you away from your walk with Jesus...
 - That includes a business partnership...
 - An unbeliever may think it is alright to 'pass a bribe' / or 'doctor the books'...
 - Do not get involved in a business with unbelievers - you have different values...
 - o We are the Temple of the Holy Spirit... vs. 15-18
 - Paul gives five contrasts to illustrate his point...
 - What fellowship does righteousness have with lawlessness...
 - What communion does light have with darkness - or agreement Jesus with satan...
 - What part does a believer have with and unbeliever - or the Temple of God with idols...
 - Jesus dwells in our hearts - we are the Temple of God - we are His people!
 - Therefore come out from among them - be separate - and we will be the sons of God...
 - God calls us to be Holy - saints/*hagios* – means to be holy – set apart...
 - We are called saints – it means we are to be set apart from the world for God!
 - The NT word for church - *ekklesia* - mean to be called out - of the world...
 - If we as Christians look and act just like those who do not know Jesus...

- Why would anyone want to hear about Jesus - come to church...
- It is only as we are HOLY - that we are able to shine and point others to Christ!