

Exegetical Notes – 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen for Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2

Verses 11-15

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.¹² We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart.¹³ If we are “out of our mind,” as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.¹⁴ For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

- Because Paul and those with him respect God as Lord they do what God has asked them to do. They attempt to lead others to Him through Christ.
- God knows the desire of Paul’s heart. He knows that Paul’s desire is to lead others to Jesus. Paul hopes that the Corinthians also know this about him. He is not “pushing” Paul, but Jesus. This should cause the Corinthians to take pride in him and the members of his team. However, some in Corinth did not take pride in Paul (see 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:20). Some of the Corinthians thought Paul was a weak and unimpressive speaker. Some of them thought that he was personally unreliable (see 2 Corinthians 1:12-2:4). Apparently, some of them thought he was crazy, “out of his mind” (see verse 13).
- Paul explains that what he did, he did because he was compelled by Christ’s love for him and for others. He believed that Christ’s love should be the controlling factor in the life of every believer.
- Paul is saying that he is compelled by the love of God to do what he does. To some, this could sound like a shameful boast. But for Paul, it is not a boast. It is an explanation of how he lives and why he does what he does. Knowing his heart is to honor God, should make others proud of him.

Others should be glad that he and those with him seek to honor God in all things.

Verses 16-19

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

- Paul says that Christians should not look at each other from a worldly point of view. Christians ask different questions about others than do the people of the world. Success for a Christian is not measured by wealth or position or numbers. Success for a Christian is found in his attempt to honor God in all things and above all things.
- Paul says that there was a time when he looked at Jesus from a worldly perspective (see Acts 7:58, 22:1-10). He did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and persecuted Christians for their belief in Jesus.
- When Jesus confronted Paul (Acts 9:1-10), Paul accepted Jesus as Israel's Messiah. In Christ, he was changed and became a "new" person. This change was of God, not of Paul.
- Paul was commissioned by God to take the news of Jesus to the Gentiles (see Acts 22:21). His ministry was to reconcile nonbelievers with God through Jesus Christ. The "Ministry of Reconciliation" to which Paul refers is not to bring people into relationship with people. It is to bring people back to God (see Matthew 28:18-20).

Verses 20-6:2

²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ² For he says,

***"In the time of my favor I heard you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you."***

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

- Paul says that because of what Jesus did for him, and the ministry entrusted to him by God, the Corinthian Christians should receive him and the members of his team as ambassadors for God. An ambassador is one sent by another to speak in place of the one who sent him. God is making his appeal to others through Paul and the members of his team.
- His plea is that all people be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. This reconciliation is made possible by God. Jesus took our sin on Himself so that we might be justified before God.
- Paul calls on the believers in Corinth to recognize that they are coworkers with him. They are not enemies and should not be divided. To misunderstand each other's motives is to receive the grace of God in vain. Christ died to forgive you, but you cannot forgive each other? How petty! This attitude declares that what Christ has done is null and void. God says, "when you needed me I saved you" (see Isaiah 49:8, Isaiah 55:6, and Psalm 69:13). Now, we must forgive one another as God has forgiven us.
- Now, this present moment, is the time to practice forgiveness. It is time for the believers in Corinth to act like those who found favor with God. This is the day for them to show they are saved!

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon based on 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by Cornerstone Fellowship & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)