

# GOSPEL-TRANSFORMATION PRODUCES OPEN HEARTS

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-13

**Gospel-grace permeates \_\_\_\_\_ . 1, 2**

*<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 favorable time I listened to you,*

*and in a day of salvation I have helped you."*

*Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

TRANSFORMED

**Gospel-grace produces \_\_\_\_\_ . 3-10**

*3 We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry,*

*4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way:*

*by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger;*

*6 by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;*

*7 by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left;*

*8 through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise.*

*We are treated as impostors, and yet are true;*

*9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed;*

*10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.*

**Gospel-grace promotes \_\_\_\_\_ . 11-13**

*11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open.*

*12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections.*

*13 In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.*

# Gospel-Transformation Produces Open Hearts

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August 15, 2021

**Open:** What's something that you think you can do well?

**Read & Discuss:** 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

1. Paul exhorts the Corinthians "not to receive the grace of God in vain" (v. 1). In view of what we have learned about the attitude of the Corinthians toward Paul, what do you think he means? Do you know people who seem to have received the grace of God in vain? Explain.
2. In verses 3-4a, Paul says "no fault may be found with our ministry," yet even Paul was not perfect. How was he able to say such a thing? Is this something we should ever claim for our ministry? Why or why not?
3. Verses 4-10 list the many characteristics that commend Paul and his team as true servants of God contrary to his accusers. Notice that Paul describes various difficulties (vv. 4-5), virtues (vv. 6-7), circumstances (v. 8) and misperceptions (vv. 8b-10) that he encountered.
  - a. Of the negative experiences mentioned, how do they serve to authentic Paul's ministry?
  - b. Thinking of the positive traits, how does the presence of these traits among Paul and his team distinguish them from false or worldly teachers?
  - c. As you look back over verses 4-10, where can you personally identify with Paul's experiences? Where could you grow to become more like Paul and his team?
4. In verses 11-13, Paul makes an emotional appeal to the Corinthians. How would you put verses 11 and 12 in your own words? Given the context of 2 Corinthians, why do you think the Corinthians have become "restricted" in their affections for Paul?
5. Paul exhorts them to "widen their hearts" (v. 13). When do we know if we need to widen our hearts toward God or someone else? How would you advise someone to go about doing this?
6. Paul had made great sacrifices to minister to the Corinthians, and yet their attitude toward him had soured. How do you think he maintained a spirit of love and openness toward them? What does this passage tell you about the need for emotional resilience as a servant of Christ?

**Apply:** How would you summarize what Paul wants the Corinthians to gain from this section of his letter? What is God bringing to your attention for personal application?

**Pray:** Pray that God would keep us from receiving His grace in vain.

## 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

<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 favorable time I listened to you,

and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable 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, <sup>[4]</sup> but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>[5]</sup> beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, 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 honor and dishonor, 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.

<sup>[11]</sup> We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. <sup>[12]</sup> You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. <sup>[13]</sup> In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also. (ESV)