

## **II Corinthians: Lesson #26 – Our Ministry Among You**

### **Notes for Parents to Study with Their Children**

### **For Wednesday, July 16th**

Read II Cor. 5:12 – 7:16 (a simplified explanation of the text is supplied at the end of these notes).

**Memory Verse:** II Cor. 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. “

In this lesson Paul talks about things they do, ways they act, and things they had to go through in their work of preaching and teaching in service to God.

#### **Working to Reconcile People to God**

- Sinning does two terrible things: Sin makes us spiritually dead and it makes us enemies of God.
- Sin hurts us spiritually. When we sin it takes us away from God and that is a bad place to be. That’s why Jesus had to die on the cross because everyone was dying in sin. Jesus wanted to give us eternal life.
- Sin also makes us enemies with God. When you sin you aren’t listening to what God in His wisdom told us. Sin is like saying that the Devil is right and God is wrong. Sin chooses to do things the Devil’s way. That hurts God. He can see that we don’t really love Him.
- But because God loves us so much and wants us to love and obey Him, He gave a way to be saved from our sins. Even though we had done wrong, God says that if you obey the gospel and live for Jesus that you can be saved.
- When you become a Christian, you become friends with God once again. In the scriptures in our lesson it talks about reconciled and reconciliation. Those are big words that we don’t know very well, but they really mean that we are now friends with God because we have decided to obey Him. That makes God happy.
- When we tell people about needing to serve God we are trying to help them to reconcile with God or to be friends with Him instead of disobeying Him and being God’s enemy.

#### **Time to Get Busy Serving God**

- One thing that Paul said was important as they preached, was that we shouldn’t put off serving God.
- Sometimes people think they will obey God someday, but right now they want to do things their own way.
- But Paul said we must realize that Today (or Now) is the day of salvation. We should choose to obey God now, not later.
- God is trying to be kind to us giving us an chance to serve Him. He has done so many good things for us giving us His Son, the Bible, the church, Christian friends, good parents. We need to be thankful that God gave us these things and want to serve God even more.

### **Paul Talks about the Bad Things They Had Been Through**

- Paul and other apostles had been through a lot. They had been beaten, sometimes they didn't have a good place to sleep, they didn't always have enough food to eat, they had been put in prison several times just because they preached.
- If all that happened to you or me, we would probably feel very sad and upset. But Paul said they still tried to be kind, loving and help people understand God's Word.
- Sometimes we don't think about all they had to go through, but we should love people like Paul who work so hard to help the church.

### **Christians are Told They Need to Stay Pure**

- What happens when we go outside and play in the dirt? We get dirty, of course. What if our mom or dad says, "we are about to go somewhere important (like to church) so don't go outside and get dirty"? You know you'll have to stay away from any place that would get you messy.
- Paul said that Christians have to stay away from the parts of the world that get them dirty. The "dirt" he is talking about is sinful things that make us look terrible in God's sight.
- We have to come away from any place like that and try to stay clean. For instance, if other kids are doing bad things or saying bad things then we need to get away from them.
- When you decide to be a Christian, you are making a decision to stay away from things that don't please God.
- Do you know what a yoke is? It is a piece of wood they put around an animal's neck to keep it under control and working. Sometimes the one yoke would go around two animal's necks. Paul says we don't want to be yoked with people who don't follow God. We don't want to be stuck with them because they might pull us away from God.

### **Godly Sorrow Helps Us to Repent**

- Sometimes even God's people don't always act right. Sometimes they sin. But when you really care about God and love Him, it makes you sad to know you have done wrong and displeased Him.
- Actually, if we do wrong and then feel bad about it, it's a good thing. Being sorry that you did wrong helps you repent. By repent, I mean changing the way you've been acting.
- When we do wrong and we get in trouble, we might be sorry we got caught. But that's not godly sorrow. When we do wrong, and we get punished, we may be sorry. But that's not godly sorrow. But when we do wrong and are sorry that we didn't please God, that's a good kind of sorrow, a godly sorrow.

### **Simplified Explanation of the Text**

### **The Work of Reconciling People to God.**

II Cor. 5:12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but we want to give you a reason to be proud of us. Then you will have something to answer to those who take more pride in looks than in the heart.

13 So if we seem disturbed, keep in mind it is for God. Or if we act with sound minds, it is for you.

14 Just remember that whatever we do, the love of Christ controls us. We have determined this: If One died for all, then all were dead.

15 And He died for all, so that those who now live will no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

16 So from now on, we will think of no one from a human point of view; even though we once thought of Christ from a human point of view, we don't think of Him that way any longer.

17 So then if any one is in Christ they are a new creation; the old has passed away. Give careful attention to this: All has become new!

18 And it all came from God, who through Jesus Christ reconciled us, He changed us from enemies of God to friends of God. Then He gave us this work of reconciling people to God.

19 Just as God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting people's trespasses against His Law, He also gave us the Word to speak about this reconciliation.

20 So we are ambassadors for Christ – God admonishing you through us. So we are begging you in Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

21 He who knew no sin was made to be sin in our behalf so that we might become God's righteousness in Him.

### **Now is the Time to Receive God's Grace Properly**

6:1 So since we work together with God, I admonish you not to receive God's grace in a worthless and empty way.

2 Remember what God said, "I listened to you at the acceptable time, and in the day of salvation I helped you." Listen carefully! Now is that "acceptable time"; This is the "day of salvation."

### **How We Have Conducted Our Service to God**

3 As we do our work, we give no reason in anything for a person to stumble, so that no one has a reason to find fault with our service to God.

4-5 But in everything we want to demonstrate that we are God's servants by being steadfast in many things: through the pressure on our lives that troubles bring, through times when we need things, through times when we feel the stress of problems closing in on us, through the stripes from beatings, through being imprisoned, through times when the chaos of a disorderly mob took over, through tiring, sleepless, hungry times.

6-7 And through it all we tried to demonstrate purity, knowledge, endurance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, sincere love, the Word of truth, the power of God, the armor of God on the right and on the left.

8 We have done all this through times of glory and times of dishonor, while some people were saying slanderous things and other people were saying good things, being treated like we are deceivers and being treated like we speak what's true.

9 In some places we are well known and others we are unknown. At times it looks like we will die; but, look at us, we are still alive. We are punished, but not killed.  
10 We go through sorrowful times, but are always rejoicing. We are like poor people, yet we make many people rich; like we have nothing, but possess everything.  
11 Our mouth is open to you, Corinthians, our heart is opened wide.  
12 You are not held back by us, but you are held back in your own affections.  
13 So let me speak to you like you were my children: In return for how we have opened our hearts to you, open up your hearts for us.

### **Let's Make Up Our Minds to Be God's Holy People**

14 Don't be bound together with unbelievers as if you were joined in a yoke. Can righteousness and lawlessness be in fellowship? What can light have in common with darkness?  
15 And what possible agreement could Christ have with Satan? Or how can a believer partake of the same things an unbeliever does?  
16-18 And how can you put the Temple of God together with idols? You are the Temple of the living God.  
It's just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them; I will be their God, and they will be My people. So come out from among them and be separate," says the Lord, "and don't attach yourself to anything unclean, and I will take hold of you and draw you in. I will be your Father, and you will be My sons and daughters."  
7:1 Dearly beloved, since we have these promises, let's cleanse ourselves from anything that might defile us in flesh or in spirit, making our lives holy in the fear of God.

### **Paul Wants the Corinthians to Love Him**

2 Make room for us in your hearts. We've wronged no one. We've corrupted on one. We took advantage of no one.  
3 I'm not saying this to condemn you. You know that I've said it before, "You are in hearts to die together and to live together."  
4 It's true that I have been very plain and bold in the way I've spoken to you, but I also speak great things in regard to you. It fills me with comfort and makes me overflow with joy through all our troubles.  
5 For when we got to Macedonia, we still could not rest, but were troubled on every side. On the outside there were struggles and on the inside there were fears.  
6 But the God that comforts those who've been made low, brought comfort to us by the coming of Titus.  
7 But it wasn't just the fact he came, it was the comfort he received from you. He told us of your great longing, your sadness, and your great zeal for me. And that made me rejoice even more.

### **Godly Sorrow Leads to Repentance**

8 For though I made you sorry with the letter, and though I have not changed my mind about what was written, I did to a certain degree have a change of heart. For I realize that that same letter did cause you sadness, even though that sadness was just short time.

9 Now, however, I rejoice, not because I caused you sadness, but because your sorrow led you to repent (change your minds). For your sorrow was the way God would have it, so that we didn't cause you harm.

10 That is true because God's kind of sorrow will work out to be repentance that leads to salvation, and that's nothing you'll ever want to change your mind about. But the world's kind of sorrow will only work out death.

11 So take a good look at this very thing you sorrowed about in God's way: Look how much diligence in brought out in you, how you saw the need to give an answer about this, what indignation you felt about the sin, what reverential fear you had, what great longing you had, what zeal you developed, and what desire for right to be done. In everything you gave us a reason to commend you as pure in this matter.

12 So though I wrote to you, it was not just because of the one who did the wrong, nor was it just because one had been wronged. I wrote to help you see if you were really being diligent about us in the sight of God.

### **Titus Arrived with Good News About Corinth**

13 Now it was through this that we were comforted in the comfort you gave us. And when we saw that you had refreshed Titus and given him new strength and how that brought him joy, it cause us to rejoice even more so.

14 So if I had bragged about you to Titus, I have no reason to be ashamed. But just like we spoke the truth to you, what we boasted to Titus about you also proved to be true.

15 And now Titus' affection for you has grown even greater as he thinks about how you all obeyed and how you took him in with fear and trembling.

16 I can really rejoice now because I have confidence in you in all things.