

**"Paul's Partnership with the Gospel"**

**Part 6**

**2 Corinthians 6:1-7:1**

**Introduction:** The last time we were together we were looking at what life is like when we are walking in the will of God. When we are following God life can be paradox at times as Paul points out in the section before us. Let us review quickly over what we looked at last week.

**Notice 2 Corinthians 6:8-9a**

1. **By honour and dishonour** - When we share the Gospel it is going to divide people into 2 groups. Those who approve and those who don't.

**Matthew 10:34-36**

<sup>34</sup> *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

<sup>35</sup> *For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.*

<sup>36</sup> *And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

2. **By evil report and good report**- This means "to defame someone" or "to damage someone's reputation". There will be people who say things about you that are not true.
3. **As deceivers and yet true** - There will be people who see us deceivers.
4. **As unknown yet well known** - The word "unknown" has the idea of being a nobody. The world will see us as insignificant people.
5. **As dying and behold we live** - The devil desires to end our lives but we are under the protection of God.

I. **The Contrasts of Ministry**

**Part 2**

Now before we get into our study this evening I want to refresh your memory on a few things. Last week we talked about how we are in a spiritual battle as members of the family of God.

### **Ephesians 6:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

<sup>13</sup> *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

This means that Satan will use anyone who will allow themselves to be used by him and he will work through those people and convince them to oppose us. Now let us get to our text.

### **Notice 2 Corinthians 6:9b**

#### **6. As chastened and not killed.**

Paul understood the chastening of God in his life. Last Wednesday night and this morning we talked about God's chastening in the lives of His children. When we think of chastening we think discipline for sin which we have committed. That is only part of God's chastening process. I want to borrow some thoughts from our Wednesday night study in Hebrews.

Here is how the Blue Letter Bible defines the word "CHASTEN":

1. *the whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment) It also includes the training and care of the body*
2. *whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, esp. by correcting mistakes and curbing passions.*
  1. *instruction which aims at increasing virtue*

Martin Luther's words shine much light on the idea behind the word "chastening".

**"The purpose of discipline is the maturity of the son. God's purpose is not to persecute us, but to perfect us. Chastening is not the work of an angry judge as he punishes a criminal. It is the work of a loving Father as he perfects a child. This chastening is not always because we have sinned. Sometimes God permits suffering in our lives simply to build us up and help us mature. We experience God's education through hardship or affliction. So the preacher to the Hebrews, who exhorts his flock to "endure hardship as**

*discipline," is enjoining them to a most positive pursuit that has as its goal the very growth of their souls."*

Chastening is not just discipline for sin but it also takes in **all** situations which God allows in our lives for the purpose of bringing us to maturity. This chastening takes place in every believer's life.

### Hebrews 12:6

*<sup>6</sup> For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth **every** son whom he receiveth.*

Now let us get back to 2 Corinthians. Paul knew how God was working in his life and he fully understood that EVERY trial and EVERY difficulty was something which God used to bring Paul into spiritual maturity. Paul also knew that God was a loving Father and no matter what Paul faced he knew he was under God's protection.

### Romans 8:28-39

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

*<sup>29</sup> For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

*<sup>30</sup> Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

*<sup>31</sup> What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

*<sup>32</sup> He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

*<sup>33</sup> Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

*<sup>34</sup> Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

*<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*<sup>36</sup> As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*<sup>37</sup> Nay, **in all these things we are more than conquerors** through him that loved us.*

*<sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

<sup>39</sup> *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Paul knew that every situation which he faced and no matter what man did to him God would use it for good in Paul's life for it would be used by God as a classroom where Paul would learn. He was chastened but he was not killed. There were trials in Paul's life that were extremely difficult but they were allowed and permitted by God and used by Him.

Paul's words echo the words of the Psalmist.

### **Psalm 118:18**

<sup>18</sup> *The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.*

### **Application:**

There will be times which you and I go through which will be extremely difficult and in those times you may have very few friends. But we can know for sure that God is always there.

Let me show you some of Paul's departing words to Timothy as he describes the time when he stood before Nero in Rome.

### **2 Timothy 4:16-18**

<sup>16</sup> *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.*

<sup>17</sup> *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

<sup>18</sup> *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

7. **As sorrowful yet always rejoicing.**

### **Notice 2 Corinthians 6:10**

The word "sorrowful" here means "to be grieved". We need to notice another place where this word is used and this will help us to better understand what Paul is saying here.

### **Ephesians 4:30**

<sup>30</sup> *And **grieve** not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

The word "grieve" here is the same word and it is a LOVE word. By that I mean that we can only be grieved by someone we love. This is the very idea which Paul had in 2 Corinthians 6:10. He was grieved by many of those whom he had led to the Lord because of sin, slow growth and believing the lies of the false teachers of his day. There were times when Paul's heart was broken by those he loved and yet at the same time he was always rejoicing.

**Application:**

In this world in which we live in there are going to be people we love who grieve our hearts. It may be because of their actions, choices they make or teaching which they believe. We live in a society of sinful people and so we will experience sorrow at times. Let me just say that we cannot allow that to discourage us. We do not find our joy in people by our joy is in the Lord and He will never disappoint us or grieve us.

**Philippians 4:4**

*<sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

The storm may rage around us and people may grieve us but we can rejoice in the Lord for He is faithful and true.

The night which Jesus was arrested there was much to grieve the heart of our Lord. Judas betrayed Him. The entire company of disciples forsook Him. The disciples argued among themselves as to who would be the greatest showing their lack of understanding. But in all of this John was able to see something few others could see and that was a joy in heart of His Savior. He was sure to record what Jesus said.

**John 15:11**

*<sup>11</sup> These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

**John 17:13**

*<sup>13</sup> And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

Jesus faced the terrible cross but in the shadow of the cross there was joy in His heart because He was in the center of the will of the Father. As we walk in the will of the Father we too will have the joy of the Lord in our hearts even when others grieve us.

8. **As poor yet making many rich.**

The word "poor" here means "beggar". The world viewed Paul as a poor beggar who had very little but what the world did not understand was that in Christ he was rich. The world also did not understand that when others received Paul's message of the Gospel they too were made rich.

**Application:**

As we follow the will of God through this world we need to understand that we may not have much of this world's "stuff". But in Christ we are rich.

**1 Peter 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

<sup>4</sup> *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

**Romans 8:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

<sup>17</sup> *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ:*

9. **As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.**

This has a connection with what we just consider but it also has a different idea. As we live in this world we may not own a warehouse full of things to choose from in our daily lives. But we can be sure that whatever it is that we NEED in this life God will provide it in His own way. In a sense we can say that we possess all things or all things belong to God and we are His children and when we have a need he will place in our hands that which we need. This is a Truth which will set us free from worry when we grasp it. There is nothing we need that God our Father is not able to provide.

**Philippians 4:12-13**

<sup>11</sup> *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

<sup>12</sup> *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*

<sup>13</sup> *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Paul had learned that God would provide what he needed and so in whatever state he was in he had learned to be content. Therefore he could state the words found in verses 19.

**Philippians 4:19**

<sup>19</sup> *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

**Conclusion:**

Walking in the will of God and serving the Lord is an adventure. It is not easy but there is no better place to be. It is in the trials and the storms that we are able to see the mighty hand of God at work within our lives and therefore we endure and continue to run the race.