

2 Corinthians 6:1-13^{vii}

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

^{vii} **About 2 Corinthians 6:1-13**

Paul continues his explanation of how God’s reconciling action is made manifest in his own mission and activity. Paul appeals to the Corinthians to “work together with him” (v. 1) so that God’s merciful gift of salvation will not be “in vain.” Now is the moment when God’s saving love becomes a reality in their lives.

But Paul is realistic when he notes that participating in God’s reconciling activity requires a cost for the disciple. In fact, in a curious reversal of the usual practice, Paul recommends himself as an authentic Christian missionary by boasting not in his successes but in his

apparent failures and sufferings. He catalogs his own hardships in the ministry (vv. 4-8) as an indicator of the type of things a Christian will face. To those outside, the external appearances never coincide with the internal reality. Contradictions abound because results come not from the minister but from God working in all for salvation.