

Studies from 2 Corinthians, Pt. 10
2 Corinthians 6:1-10

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² 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. 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.
—2 Corinthians 6:1-10 (ESV)

v 1 – “working together...”

working together [with him]

This is God's work, God's appeal—we are Christ's fellow-workers, although he is Lord
We are also to work with one another.

What is our mindset, our view, of what church is and what the wider Church is?

The appeal here is not to receive the grace of God *in vain*.

kenós – empty, amount to nothing, “for nothing”

grace of God

salvation

opportunity

sanctification—becoming like Christ

obedience—good deeds that are according to God's will and purposes

It is not enough—it is not the point—of reconciliation with God to say we believe but
there be nothing to show for it

v 2 – “For he says...”

Thus says the LORD: “In a time of favor I have answered you; in a day of salvation I have helped
you... —Isaiah 49:8

The highlight is on *time* (as in times, “times like these,” seasons) and *day*

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

idou nun kairos euprosdektos
idou nun hēmera sōtērias

Paul enlarges upon this verse to say that the “times” are *now* and the day is *now*!
As much harm can be caused to people by delay and procrastination as by outright
rejection and defiance—the end result is the same: no change.

God's call, His extended grace, His invitation, His instructions...—they have a time component, and that component is His to determine, not ours.
Jesus taught us to be watchful and alert, and not to make excuses when He calls

v 3 – “we put no obstacle in anyone's way...”

The apostles cannot be used for an excuse by those who are “receiving the grace of God in vain.”

“so that no fault may be found with our ministry”

Meaning no *legitimate* fault! (Some can always find fault.)

This should be the goal of all ministers—and also all churches in their ministry programs

vv 4 – 10 – “as servants of God...”

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

Following Christ cannot be understood unless a person understands that it will involve some hardship—and that some of that hardship will seem “random”

The apostles were not exempt; we are not exempt—we may certainly pray to be spared as much as possible

The focus of the apostles during hardship was their service to Christ and to proclaiming the Gospel. They did not retreat from their devotion to Christ because of circumstances.

by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left

These are qualities that should characterize the servants of Christ—every one of them.

There are no age exemptions, gender exemptions, vocational exemptions (variations—yes, of course), or cultural exemptions.

This is a summary of teachings that are pervasive throughout the New Testament

Notice how far, far beyond this goes than the simple expedient of a person stating what he or she believes.

through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise

We will have both.

We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed

We will be misrepresented—the apostles were especially treated so, in order to discredit them and the Gospel

The devil has long been involved in “public opinion”

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

There is also irony in the way the way God's servants are misunderstood and misrepresented.

All in all—there is how the world sees things and represents things, including God's servants, and there is how things actually are in truth and for eternity.