

## STUDY ON THE BOOK OF CORINTHIANS

### Second Corinthians – Chapter 6

#### God's Co-workers

*“Now, since we are God's co-workers, we beg you not to take God's marvellous grace for granted, allowing it to have no effect on your lives.” (v1 TPT)*

Paul makes an emphatic statement here “since we are God's co-workers”. We are God's co-workers! Do we say we are colleagues at this kingdom work or we work for Him i.e. He is the boss and we are the employees? Co-worker will connote we are working together for a common vision, purpose, and to end up with some profit.

*“And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?”” (Luke 2:49)* – This will indicate that that we are co-working in the Father's business.

*“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all...” (1 Corinthians 12:7)* – This will indicate that the Spirit of God is given that the Father's business might yield profit. We are therefore co-working for the profitability of the Father's business which is the advancement of His kingdom.

#### God's Grace

Paul goes on to admonish his hearers and even beg them not to take God's marvellous grace for granted. When we take this marvellous grace for granted, it will have no effect on our lives.

#### **Q – How do we take God's grace for granted in today's world?**

The Amplified version of the bible says we take God's grace in vain “by turning away from sound doctrine and His merciful kindness”.

In his first letter to the church in Corinth, Paul used himself as an example and stated that he had not taken the grace of God for granted:

*“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (1 Corinthians 15:9-10)*

In these verses Paul attached God's grace on his life to his ability to labour more abundantly than his colleagues in the same apostleship. So, we see that attachment between being God's co-worker, labouring in the kingdom and God's grace.

The other situation to which God's grace is attached is living our lives above sin. To live in sin is to take the grace of God for granted.

*“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup>Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Romans 6:1-2)*

#### **Positional Salvation is always Now!**

*“... Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”” (v2)*

It is important to note that positional salvation is always in the NOW! The acceptable time before the Lord is always in the present therefore, positional salvation is always in the present.

You do not come tomorrow to get saved or forgiven... It is always now.

“And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9)

### Salvation Hinderers

“We will not place obstacles in anyone’s way that hinder them from coming to salvation so that our ministry will not be discredited.” (v3 TPT)

**Q – How is it possible to put obstacles in anyone’s way towards salvation? What might these obstacles be?**

Paul had spent time arguing for the truth of God’s grace and salvation in other letters he had written to other churches. For example:

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8-9)

No one should put an obstacle in anyone’s way in receiving God’s salvation. Jesus puts it this way:

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6)

### Paul’s Proof of Authentic Ministry

“Yet, as God’s servants, we prove ourselves authentic in every way. For example:

We have great endurance in hardships and in persecutions.

We don’t lose courage in a time of stress and calamity.

We’ve been beaten many times, imprisoned, and found ourselves in the midst of riots.

We’ve endured many troubles, had sleepless nights, and gone hungry.

We have proved ourselves by our lifestyles of purity,

by our spiritual insights,

by our patience,

and by showing kindness,

by the Spirit of holiness

and by our uncritical love for you.

We commend ourselves to you by our truthful teachings,

by the power of God working through us,

and with the mighty weapons of righteousness—

a sword in one hand and a shield in the other.

Amid honour or dishonour,

slander or praise—

even when we are treated as deceivers and imposters—

we remain steadfast and true.

We are unknown nobodies whom everyone knows.

We are frequently at death’s door, yet here we are, still alive!

We have been severely punished yet not executed.

We may suffer, yet in every season we are always found rejoicing.

We may be poor, yet we bestow great riches on many.

We seem to have nothing, yet in reality we possess all things.” (vv4-10)

Anyone that would be in ministry (to which we all are to various degrees) should learn from Paul's statement here. To walk with the Lord will usually involve a price to pay to various degrees. Among what Paul has listed in these verses, we see:

- Hardships
- Persecutions
- Stress and calamity
- He had been beaten many times, imprisoned and being the centre of riots
- He had endured many troubles, sleepless nights... and had gone hungry

All of these and much more for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In his concluding remarks from these verses, we see the heart of Paul

- We are frequently at death's door, yet here we are, still alive!
- We have been severely punished yet not executed.
- We may suffer, yet in every season we are always found rejoicing.
- We may be poor, yet we bestow great riches on many.
- We seem to have nothing, yet we possess all things

**Q – What will you consider the greatest price you had paid for the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

**Q – What is your motivation to further the message of the gospel of Jesus in this society filled with apathy?**

### **Openness**

*“O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.” (vv11-13)*

Paul is speaking to the church at Corinth as children. If I can paraphrase: “you are hiding from me although my heart is open to you. The reason you are hiding is not because of me, it is because of your own affections that are negative, worldly, and unrighteous. Now, come to me with an open heart”.

Why do people hide from God? Why do people draw away from those they consider “spiritual”?

It is because of what they are hiding!

*“The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.” (Proverbs 28:1)*

### **Be Separate**

*“Don't continue to team up with unbelievers in mismatched alliances, for what partnership is there between righteousness and rebellion? Who could mingle light with darkness? What harmony can there be between Christ and Satan? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What friendship does God's temple have with demons? For indeed, we are the temple of the living God, just as God has said: “I will make my home in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” For this reason, “Come out from among them and be separate,” says the Lord. “Touch nothing that is unclean, and I will embrace you. I will be a true Father to you, and you will be my beloved sons and daughters,” says the Lord Yahweh Almighty.” (vv14-18 TPT)*

Further to the point of hiding and openness above, Paul was addressing their unholy alliances. Who are your close buddies, friends, and associates? Paul asked series of questions that should get us thinking:

- What partnership is there between righteousness and rebellion?

- Who could mingle light with darkness?
- What harmony can there be between Christ and Satan?
- Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?
- What friendship does God's temple have with demons?

**Q – How would you answer these questions?**

**Who Are You?**

*“... For you are the temple of the living God...” (v16)*

If you are the temple of the living God i.e. God has made you His habitation then you are denied the privilege of associating with rebellion or mingling with darkness nor being comfortable with Satan, his demons and their devices.

As the temple of the living God, you should not have anything in common (character and way of thinking) with an unbeliever neither should you be friends with demons.

In conclusion, the Message Translation of the bible puts it this way:

*“Don't become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That's not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands? Who would think of setting up pagan idols in God's holy Temple? But that is exactly what we are, each of us a temple in whom God lives.” (vv14-16 MSG)*

This is good food for thought and a place to commit our hearts once again to the Lord... and then, choose wisely who we associate with.