

May 10: 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6-7

## Chapter 6

Vs. 1-13, “Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation” : God is active in our lives and in our world TODAY. Paul urges the Corinthians to open their hearts and their lives to God’s activity today as revealed through Paul and his companion’s ministry to them. Paul and his companions have been endured terrible afflictions for the sake of the gospel, some from those outside the church, and some from those within the church (including from the Corinthians themselves). And yet, Paul and his companions have been and pledge to continue to be faithful to their calling to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even in the midst of afflictions, God has been present with and has equipped Paul and his companions with what they have needed for their journey. Paul urges the Corinthians to open their hearts..... Christian faith and life is living with an open heart.

Vs. 6: 14-7:1, This chunk makes up a completely separate letter to the church. Light and Dark, Good and Evil are seen as absolutely contradicting realities, this is classical Geek dualistic thinking. Because of this Greek thought, and because the church is in its infancy and vulnerable to outside influences Paul urges believers to not enter into formal partnerships (like marriage or business alliances) with unbelievers so as not to be led astray. Beliar was another name for Satan. The temple of God was viewed as the opposite of idols. Paul quotes a number of old testament passages in these last few verses. Certainly this passage seems to conflict with the idea of the mission to the Gentiles, and Peter’s experience of God saying that no human being will be viewed as unclean. Paul urges this advice for the fledgling Corinthian church in their time and place to protect their faith, but that does not make it the rule for God’s people of every time and place. Perhaps there are people in our lives who are “toxic” for us to be around, in those cases, perhaps God urges us to steer clear of them for our own spiritual and emotional wellbeing, but generally speaking this passage does not apply to everyone.

## Chapter 7

Paul continues the theme of making room in the heart. Paul’s pride in the flourishing of the Corinthian church and in their flourishing offers consolation to him. In spite of what he continues to go through as a minister of the gospel, he sees that his work in the Corinthian church has not been in vain, but that the church continues to bear fruit (in this case, specifically the fruit of repentance). Paul sees God at work in consoling him

through the people God places in his life (Titus, the church). Titus has followed up with the church since Paul sent the “tearful letter” and the church has really turned itself around and returned to God with their whole hearts. The letter produced “godly grief” that is, sorrow for sin that results in God’s reconciling love. This is one of the few times where Paul writes about repentance, though Jesus and John the Baptist spoke extensively about repentance. True reconciliation is only possible through a godly grief over what caused the break in relationship. Repentance leads to restoration of relationship.

How has God brought you consolation through placing another person in your life when you needed them?