

2Corinthians – Week 22

I. **(FRAME)** Review

A. Paul uses his life to describe what a life made effectual by the grace of God looks like...

- i. It puts no stumbling blocks in other people's way.
 1. Paul would not do anything that would discredit Christianity!
 2. A life impacted by the grace of God should strive to be blameless in all he or she does!
- ii. It suffers for Jesus' sake.
- iii. It behaves in a godly fashion despite the suffering

II. Continuation: It behaves in a godly fashion (part 2)

A. 2Cor. 6:7a (ESV), "*by truthful speech,...*"

- i. A life made effectual by God's grace speaks truth despite the grief it may cause.
 1. Many compromise the word of God so that they may be more acceptable to men.
 2. But God's grace caused Paul to speak the truth of God's word no matter the outcome!

B. 2Cor. 6:7b (ESV), "*...and the power of God;...*"

- i. A life made effectual by the grace of God does not operate on its own strength, but by the divine power of God
 1. Paul's strength came from God...
 - a. **(FRAME)** 2Cor. 12:9-10 (ESV), "*But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*"
 2. His preaching of the gospel was not made effective by persuasive speech or human wisdom, but by the power of God!
 - a. **(FRAME)** 1Cor. 2:4-5 (ESV), "*and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*"

C. 2Cor. 6:7c (ESV), "*... with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left;*"

- i. Paul's point here is he goes into spiritual battle fully prepared!
- ii. He fought his battles by displaying a Christ-like character towards all!

D. **(FRAME)** A life made effectual by God's grace is a life filled with contrasting experiences...

- i. Paul describes the positive and negative reactions he experienced as a servant of God...
 1. 2Cor. 6:8a (ESV), "*through honor and dishonor,...*"
 - a. Paul experiences the praises of men, but he also experienced disrespect!
 - b. However...
 - i. Insults did not devastate him!
 - ii. Nor did praise puff him up!
 - iii. Paul's only desire was to please God (cf. 2Cor. 5:9)!
 2. 2Cor. 6:8b (ESV), "*... through slander and praise...*"
 - a. Some spoke well of Paul while others spoke badly of him!
 - i. Paul understood the nature of the ministry: Insults will come...
 1. **(FRAME)** Matt. 5:11-12 (ESV), "*Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*"

3. 2Cor. 6:8c (ESV), “... *We are treated as impostors, and yet are true;*”
 - a. Some viewed Paul as a phony who misleads people while others regarded him as a true servant of God!
 - ii. And the contrasts continue...
 1. 2Cor. 6:9a (ESV), “... *as unknown, and yet well known;*...”
 - a. To some, Paul was obscure among the renowned but he was well-known to God and to those who knew and loved him!
 2. 2Cor. 6:9b (ESV), “... *as dying, and behold, we live;*...”
 - a. To some, Paul was a man often condemned to death, yet he continues to live! He survives!
 3. 2Cor. 6:9c (ESV), “... *as punished, and yet not killed;*”
 - a. To some, Paul was a man often punished; like a man whose life is ebbing away from constant beatings, yet he didn’t die from those beatings!
 - iii. And the contrasts continue...
 1. 2Cor. 6:10a (ESV), “... *as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;*...”
 - a. Though some viewed Paul as a downcast man because of his mishaps
 - b. And yes, he was sorrowful when the gospel was rejected or when a Christian returned to the old way of life, but he was sorrowful for them, not for himself!
 - c. He always rejoiced in the fact that he was heaven-bound!
 2. 2Cor. 6:10b (ESV), “... *as poor, yet making many rich;*...”
 - a. Though poor, Paul made many rich through the message of the gospel!
 3. 2Cor. 6:10c (ESV), “... *as having nothing, yet possessing everything.*”
 - a. And although outwardly, Paul possessed nothing, he possessed everything pertaining to the Spirit!
- E. This was how the world viewed Paul!
- i. Yet, through all these hardships, Paul never placed a stumbling block in anyone’s way!
 - ii. He did not want to discredit the ministry in any way!
 - iii. By this, Paul commends himself as a servant of God!