

# 2 Cor 5:20-7:16

## Corinthians, Session Fourteen

### **Ambassadors for Christ (5:20-21)**

Which more closely relates to ambassador: disciple or apostle?

What things must an ambassador get right?

Verse 21 is especially profound. Christ, the sinless One, becomes \_\_\_\_\_. Note this is saying more than bearing simply the curse of our sin. The transformation works the other way too. We don't just receive righteousness, we \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness.

"Therefore, Christ is both the greatest and only \_\_\_\_\_ on earth, for He bears the sins of the whole world, and also the only righteous and holy One, since no one is made righteous and holy before God except through Him" (Luther's Works, Vol. 58, p. 45).

### **The High Cost of Ministry (6:1-6:13)**

While avoiding synergism (the idea that we are co-contributors to our salvation), how do we embrace and "working together with him" (v. 1)?

V. 2 quotes Is. 49:8. Paul applies the promise to the present moment. Today is the day of God's favor, the day of salvation. Tomorrow is the judgment.

What are the "weapons of righteousness"?

Note how the "as x, yet y" formula is like 4:8-10.

Calling them by name (v. 11) is a personal touch, he's deeply moved. See Gal. 3:1, Phil. 4:15.

"There was no contradiction between mouth and heart, between what Paul said and what Paul meant. His words expressed the feelings of his heart. He had held nothing back from the Corinthians. There was no hidden agenda" (Valleskey, 107).

Do we need to also be reminded to "widen our hearts"? When and why?

### **The Separated Life (6:14-18)**

"Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers" (v.14). Is this yoking about marriage, or something else? This is a \_\_\_\_\_ yoking or fellowship. We shouldn't try to avoid unbelievers, as Paul acknowledges in 1 Cor 5:9-10. Five rhetorical questions follow and the answer to them is all "none".

Belial (v. 15). Only mention in the NT. The term is widely attested in Second Temple Jewish literature, referring to God's archenemy, whose domain is \_\_\_\_\_. See 4:4.

Remember, there were at least a dozen temples in Corinth. But Paul says the real one is them! He quotes Lev. 26:12, Is. 52:16.

"The effort to define the church in terms of a haven from the world has an element of truth to it, but it also offers all sorts of danger. It can produce a kind of 'enclave' mentality in the church. In this environment, the church is not a fellowship in which we are not equipped to function with integrity in the world, but a place where we do everything to hide from the word" (Chafin, 248).

### **When Pain Produces Joy (7:1-16)**

I think v. 1 is an excellent call to confession!

Now open wide...(think the spiritual equivalent of spoon feeding "here comes the airplane")...how did Paul convince the Corinthians to open their hearts?

I have seen hearts open up. I've also seen them snatch shut. Another person's heart really is God's territory. But in as far as it is up to us, the best we can do is what Paul does here: open wide your own heart to them and don't let there be any incongruity between what we say and what we do.

Godly grief is good grief because it produces...

In v. 12, Paul is most likely referring to 1 Cor 5. The injured party, in this instance, is the man's father. The greater issue, though, was how it demonstrated a greater good: Paul—as well as Titus—still had standing with the Corinthians.

When is it necessary to cause a little pain?

When has someone hurt you for your own good?

One of my favorite proverbs: "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses" (Proverbs 27:6).

Why was Paul refreshed by what Titus reported when they met in Macedonia?

What is the basis for Paul's confidence in the Corinthians?

What does a church look like, or feel like, when there is two-way confidence between pastor and congregation? How is this confidence maintained? Restored?