

An Appeal for Reconciliation

Key Verse: “*Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.*”
—II Corinthians 7:2

Selected Scriptures:
II Corinthians
6:1-13; 7:2-4

reminds us of the great honor we have in becoming coworkers with God in helping to carry out his great plan of salvation that will benefit the entire human family during the Messianic Kingdom. During this present Gospel Age, there is a special opportunity for the body of Christ to be developed and prepared for its future work by responding to the invitation of sacrificing its earthly rights and privileges and being transformed into the image of our Master.—II Cor. 6:1,2

Paul then describes how he carried out his commission in serving the cause of Christ. Realizing that he was a servant of the Most High, he always sought to conduct himself in a manner worthy of his calling. He persevered in doing his Father's will despite the physical sufferings he endured. Additionally, his labors were characterized by purity, knowledge, love, and obedience to God's Word. He was strengthened by divine power, and always had the standard of righteousness at the forefront of his activities, that the ministry be not blamed. Nevertheless, he noted sharp contrasts in his service for Christ, having both mountaintop and valley experiences, and being the object of both good and evil report. None of

these matters swayed him from a determination to lay down his life daily as a follower of Christ. This portion of his epistle commends itself to us as a pattern worthy of emulation.—vss. 3-10

Continuing his instructions, Paul says, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”—vss. 14-16

The foregoing passage reminds us that as believers our lives should be distinctly different from those who have not professed consecration to God. We cannot isolate ourselves from outside influences completely. Rather, we are in the world, but not partakers of its spirit.—I John 2:15-17

Another vitally important admonition given in this lesson concerns the fact that we have received many precious promises as to what God will provide for his faithful children. Having these assurances, we are to be so imbued with righteousness that the cleansing power of the Scriptures will assist us daily in manifesting holiness in our conduct.—II Cor. 7:1

In our Key Verse, Paul appeals to the Corinthian brethren and, by extension, to other believers who had been the beneficiaries of his missionary tours. He asks that they examine the integrity of his ministry, and expresses the desire that they receive the import of his admonitions in carrying out their own life of sanctification.

It is evident that the Apostle Paul was used mightily by the Heavenly Father as an instrument in the ministry of reconciliation to fulfill the divine purpose. Let us heed the counsel of this faithful servant that we also may be participants in this important work. ■