

## 2 Corinthians 6:3–10

- <sup>3</sup> We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed.
- <sup>4</sup> But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses,
- <sup>5</sup> in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;
- <sup>6</sup> by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,
- <sup>7</sup> by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,
- <sup>8</sup> by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true;
- <sup>9</sup> as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed;
- <sup>10</sup> as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

### *How We Minister 2 Corinthians 6:3-10*

#### INTRO:

In **2 Corinthians**, the Apostle Paul told us why he did what he did in **Chapters 3-5**. He detailed his message or what he did in **5:18-6:2**. In our text today, Paul wrote about how he did what he did. Paul wrote first about how he served, the internals that made him serve this way, and how this service looked.

#### *I. How He Served (v. 3-5)*

#### *II. The Internals (v. 6-7)*

#### *III. The Externals (v. 8-10)*

#### *I. How He Served (v. 3-5)*

**2 Corinthians 6:3-5** *“We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors in sleeplessness, in hunger;”*

A. The first thing that was a major priority to Paul in his ministry was to avoid putting stumbling blocks in the way of folks. He endeavored to always have a clear conscience before God and man.

B. He then repeated his assertion in different words. He wanted people to see God's approval of him personally in all of his activities. Lest we think this was easy, the Apostle listed some of the situations in which he strove to be a good example for the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. The list starts with the situations in which he had to draw upon the Lord Jesus Christ to be a good testimony for Him. The first is in *"much endurance, patience with circumstances, spiritual tenacity."* When bad things intruded in his life he had to welcome them as James taught in **James 1** with all joy, knowing that the trial of his faith produced *"endurance, patience with circumstances, spiritual tenacity."* He responded in a Christ honoring way in sufferings (when he hurt) and hardships (when he suffered some needs and felt distress about it). Do you remember in **Philippians 4:11-12**?

***"Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."***

The last bunch Paul lists are probably where we would have the hardest time having the right attitude. Paul wrote he strove to be a Christ honoring servant in **verse 5**

***"In beatings, in imprisonments, in [riots], in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger."***

Some of us get really ornery when we are tired and supper is a little late. How do we measure up to the Apostle Paul?

## ***II. The Internals (v. 6-7)***

A. Perhaps our reaction would be to ask, *"Paul, how in the world could you do this?"* He would reply it was because of the internals of His relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 6:6-7** ***"By purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, [through] the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left."***

B. This second part of Paul's list focuses in on what was happening inside of Paul where only the Apostle and the Lord could see. Paul's goal was to be pure. Why did Paul mention this? The first Corinthian epistle shows us. It is a priority to be morally upright if we are to glorify God.

C. Paul also drew on his knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing the Lord Jesus was a major priority in his inner life. The next part of this list sounds like the fruit of the Spirit in **Galatians 5**.

***“By the word of truth, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love.”***

Longsuffering is in dealing with people. All of these are produced by our submission to the Holy Spirit of God in our lives. The fruit or produce of the Spirit is to show each of us whether the Holy Spirit or our sinful flesh is ruling in our hearts. (3) Paul list of the internals pertaining to our relationship to Christ concludes with two more important elements.

**v7 *“By the word of truth, by the power of God, [through] the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left”***

The key to this is the Word of truth. We must read and learn the word if we are going to function in this way. We also need to ask God to help us put on the full armor of God.

### ***III. The Externals (v. 8-10)***

A. Because Paul made the internals of his relationship with the living Christ his priority this list is how his ministry looked to those who were on the outside.

***vs.8b-10a “As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich;”***

B. These are qualities that seem to contradict but do not. We will look at two of them to get the point. First, as the false prophets tried to present Paul, ***“As deceivers, and yet true.”*** Because Paul was always submissive to God in his planning and actions, it looked at times he was deceptive and fickle when, in fact, Paul was true to God. Second, Paul appeared, ***“as poor, yet making many rich.”*** Paul recognized that whatever his physical state, ***“My God shall supply all your [and my] need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”*** (Philippians 4:19)

### **What Do We Take From This?**

1. Do we want to never put an obstacle between unbelievers and Christ? We need to have the internals that Paul embraced.
2. If you want to have your life transformed, you need to trust Christ as Savior.