

Homework #9 - *Restoration in Progress: Handle With Care!*

II Corinthians 6:3-7:4

"We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you."

--II Corinthians 6:11

Day One:

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 6:3-7:4. What are the key words in this passage?

Contrasts in Corinthians: What contrasts can you find in this section?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

2. How would you describe a "stumbling block"?

What can you learn from the following verses: Proverbs 18:19,
Romans 14:13, I Corinthians 8:9?

According to verse 3, what do stumbling blocks do?

Can a representative of Christ be THE reason others reject Christ and His message? Explain:

3. Write all the ways Paul "commends the message of Christ in 6:4-5, through physical hardships:

Circle the ones to which you can relate personally.

What does this tell you about the process of reconciliation?

How does this speak to your own life about the cost of sharing God's love with others?

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4. Re-read 2 Corinthians 6:6-7. How is Christ's life evidenced through us to others? Write your answers under "Things that Commend":

Things that Commend

Things that Offend

Now write each word or phrases' opposite meaning under "Things that offend" above.

Can you give an example (*not* using names or places) of a situation in which Christ was received or refused because of something on the list above?

How does Galatians 5:22-23 also speak to this situation?

5. 2 Corinthians 6:7 talks about the importance of "truthful speech". What can you learn about this from Ephesians 4:15 and 2 Corinthians 4:2?
6. What do you think "weapons of righteousness" are? (6:7:c)
(See also 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and Ephesians 6:17.)
7. How can a person be like this and do these things? (6:7b)

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. Looking back to question 4, how are you "commending" Christ to others? Are there any "Things that Offend" in your life right now? In what area do you struggle most to represent Christ to others?

Pray, asking to be filled with the "power of God"!

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Day Two

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 6:8-10. Write all the words that pertain to one's reputation:

Write the words pertaining to one's physical and emotional condition:

Write the words that pertain to one's possessions:

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

2. Read Philippians 4:11-13. How does this relate to the passage above?

What does John 16:22 & 33 say about joy, peace and circumstances?

3. Re-read 2 Corinthians 6:8-9a. Why do you think we can be misunderstood even when, like Paul, we do all we can to "commend" Christ?
4. What do you think it means to be "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing"?
5. What do you think it means to be "poor, yet making many rich, having nothing, and yet possessing everything"?

What can you also learn from I Timothy 6:17-19, and how does this relate to 2 Corinthians 6:10?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

6. As you have shared God's love with others, has your reputation ever suffered, or have you been misunderstood, or has there been a cost that is emotional, physical or material? Explain:

How does Paul's example encourage you to keep on sharing God's message?

Day Three

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-13 and 7:2-4. How does Paul speak to the Corinthians? How does he approach these people?

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2. What does Paul ask in return? (6:13; 7:2)
3. How does Paul describe their heart connection in 7:3c?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. What do you think it means to "open wide our hearts" or "make room for us in your hearts"?
5. What is Paul not saying in 7:3 and why do you think this is important?
6. Read I Corinthians 13:7. What does love do? How does this relate to Paul's relationship with the Corinthians?
7. Write down all the encouraging words that Paul uses in 7:4:

What can you learn from Paul's attitude in this strained relationship?

How does this express the Father's heart toward His children?

How would God have you approach a strained relationship?

8. Read Isaiah 2:3-5. How does God want His people to "settle disputes" (verse 4b)?

Explain the different uses for the sword and spear versus the plowshare and pruning hook:

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

9. How do you usually respond to conflict in relationships--when someone disagrees with you or resists your will in some area?

What have you learned today that can help change your response?

Day Four

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 6:14-16. What does Paul tell them not to do? (6:14) Why?

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2. From what you know so far about the Corinthians, who do you think are the "unbelievers" among them? (Hint: Who is challenging the Corinthians' relationship with Paul? See 2 Corinthians 10:12-13.)
3. Read I Corinthians 5:9-13. How does Paul describe the people who do not imitate Christ's life, yet are inside the church (5:11)?

Read Matthew 7:15-23. How does Jesus describe these people?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. What do Galatians 6:1-3 and Matthew 7:1-5 say about living with imperfect believers?

How can we hold 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 in tension with Galatians 6:1-3 and Matthew 7:1-5?

5. We do not see yoked animals in our culture, but can you guess what would be the purpose and result of the yoke?
6. Write down all the words that pertain to a close relationship in 6:14-16:
7. How does God describe the relationship He wants to have with His people, in 6:16?
8. Read Matthew 12:29. What does Jesus encourage us to do and how does it apply to this passage in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

9. To what or whom are you most attached? Who are you allowing to shape your life? (Think also of the impersonal relationships we can have with those in the media.)

Are you being drawn to Christ by any relationship? Or does any relationship discourage you from walking with Christ? Explain:

What have you learned from today's lesson that can give you greater discernment in your relationships?

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Day Five

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1. What are believers in Christ? (6:16)
2. What are we to do because of who we are?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. What is a temple?
4. Read I Peter 2:4-5; 9-11. How does Peter describe God's people?

In I Peter 2:11, what does he urge us to do, because of this truth?

What do "sinful desires" do (2:11), and what do you think this means?
5. Read Matthew 22:37-38. What does Jesus tell us to do and why?
6. Read I John 2:15-17. Why are we not to love the world or focus on its "sinful cravings"?
7. How would you define the word "contaminates"? (7:1)

Why do you think our "selfish desires" or "sinful cravings" can "contaminate" our relationship with God?
8. What is our motive for purity according to 6:18-7:1?

Read I John 3:1-3. How does this passage echo 2 Corinthians 6:18?

How does I John 3:3 say that we purify our lives?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

9. What is the most important relationship in your life right now? Is any other relationship or pursuit worth more to you than following Christ?

Write a prayer expressing your desire to love God best and first, above all!

