

“The Age Of Grace”
2 Corinthians 6:1-2

Introduction:

* “Thy Word is like a garden, Lord, with flowers bright and fair;
And every one who seeks may pluck a lovely cluster there.
Thy Word is like a deep, deep mine; and jewels rich and rare
Are hidden in its mighty depths for every searcher there.”

1. Knowing This About God’s Word - Please Turn In Your Bibles With Me To:

- 2 Corinthians 6 - Where:

- As We Begin Looking At This New Chapter:

- We Must Not Forget The Ministry:

- That God Has Given Us As Christians!

- Because The First 2 Verses Of Chapter 6:

- Are Closely Related To The Last 2 Verses Of Chapter 5:

- And I Would Like To Read All 4 Of These Verses Together!

- 2 Corinthians 5:20 - 6:2:

- “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. / For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. / We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. / (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)!”

2. The Primary Ministry Of The Apostle Paul:

- Who Wrote These Words:

- Was The Preaching Of The Gospel Of Jesus Christ!

- And Even Though Much Of What He Wrote In These Verses:

- Can Apply To All Of Us!

- He Was Originally & Specifically Talking About Ministers Of The Gospel!

- Although It Is True That:

- Every Christian Is An:

- “Ambassador For Christ!” - 5:20:

- It Is Also The Special Ministry & Function Of Pastors & Preachers! And:

- Although It Is True That:

- Every Christian Is A:

- “Worker Together With God!” - 6:1:

- This Too Is The Special Ministry & Function Of Pastors & Preachers!

- And So - If We Look At These Verses:

- From The Perspective Of Paul:

- The Pastor & Preacher Of The Church Of Corinth:

- It Will Reveal His Continuing Ministry & Message To This Young & Struggling Church!

3. And His Message Was A Two-Fold Message!

- Directed To The Two Kinds Of People:

- Paul Now Saw!

- Those Who **Need** Christ & Those Who **Know** Christ!

- For Those Who:

- **Needed** Christ:

- His Message Was:

- 5:20 - “Be Ye **Reconciled** To God!”

- And Freely Receive God’s Gift Of Salvation, As Well As God’s Forgiveness,
God’s Friendship, And God’s Fellowship!

- And This Message:

- Was All Made Possible:

- By God’s Grace!

- Which We See In 5:21 - By Imputing & Transferring All Our Sin To The
Account Of Jesus / And By Imputing & Transferring All Christ’s Righteousness
To The Account Of Those Who Believe In Jesus!

- But Now - In Chapter 6 - Paul Turns His Attention:

- To Those Who:

- **Know** Christ!

- And His Message Was:

- 6:1 - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!" (2x)

4. And This Message That Paul Brought:

- To The Christians There In Corinth:

- Was Nothing Less Than:

- God's Message To Them!

- Because Paul Was "Working Together" With God!

- He Was - In A Sense - In Partnership With God:

- To Fulfill God's Ministry In This World & To That Church!

- And It Is This Same Message That I Am Compelled:

- To Bring To You This Morning!

5. If You Have Been "Reconciled With God" By:

- Faith In Jesus Christ As Your Savior - Then:

- You Have "Received - The Grace Of God!"

- And This Is God's Own Message To You This Morning:

- 6:1 - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"

- In Other Words:

- If You Are A Christian:

- Then Every Single Day Of Your Life As A Christian:

- You Need To Remember These Three Things About The Grace Of God That Brought You Salvation! (Titus 2:11)

- You Need To Remember:

- The Purpose Of God's Grace!

- To You!

- The Pattern Of God's Grace!

- And:

- The Privilege Of God's Grace!

- And:

- "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"

* So - The First Thing You Must Never Forget Is:

1. **The Purpose Of God's Grace!**

- 6:1 - "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain!"

- This Is An Important Message For Every Person Who **Knows** Jesus Christ As Their Savior!

- And It Is Just As Important & Just As Urgent:

- As The Message For Those Who **Need** Jesus Christ As Their Savior!

- Back In 5:20 - We Are Told That:

- In The Message Of Reconciliation:

- "God Did **Beseech** You By Us!"

- But Now - Here In 6:1 - Paul Says That:

- "We - **Beseech** You Also!"

- It Is The Same Word:

- And Describes The Same Passion & Persistence That God Has Toward You!

- And So Paul - In Partnership With God Himself:

- Is Warning Us To Not "Receive" What God Has Given Us - Our "Great Salvation!" (Hebrews 2:3)

- "In Vain!"

- To Ignore It Or To Use It For Useless Things!

- Because God's Grace Is Great!

- **IE:** Learned A New Song At Rachel's Graduation - "Grace Amazing! Grace Sustaining! Grace Unveiling Christ Above! Grace Astounding! Grace Abounding! Grace Surrounding Me In Love!"

- God's Grace To You Is Great!

- And 1 Peter 4:10 - Tells Us That We Need To Be:

- "Good Stewards Of The Manifold Grace Of God!"

- This Means That God's Grace Comes To Us In Various Ways & In Various Forms!

- Just Think Of All That God Has Done For You:

- Entirely Because Of His Grace!
 - Not Because Of Anything He Saw In You:
 - But Because Of What He Could Do In You & For You!
- He Communicated With You:
 - And Brought His Word To You:
 - By His Grace!
- He Called You:
 - And Said “Be Ye Reconciled!”
 - By His Grace!
- He Cleansed You:
 - And Forgave You Of All Your Sin!
 - By His Grace!
- He Changed You:
 - And Made You Into A “New Creature!”
 - By His Grace!
- He Commissioned You:
 - To Be His “Ambassador!”
 - By His Grace!
- Now - The Question & The Challenge Is This:
 - What Are You Doing With The Gift Of God’s Grace? (2x)
 - **IE:** How Many Times Have You Received A Gift You Did Not Use? You Unwrapped It, But You Didn’t Use It! In A Sense - You Received That Gift In Vain!
 - God’s Grace To You Is A Gift!
 - And Even Though You Cannot Do Anything To Earn God’s Grace:
 - You Can Use God’s Grace In Your Life For Him!
 - Have You? Are You?
- See This Once Again In The Life Of The Apostle Paul!
 - 1 Corinthians 15:10 - “But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me!”
 - Paul “Received Not The Grace Of God In Vain!”
 - He Sought To Use The “Manifold Grace Of God” To Pursue After Things That Had Eternal & Spiritual Value!
- You “Receive” The “Grace Of God In Vain” When:
 - “The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and [you become] unfruitful!” (Matthew 13:22)
 - You Live For Yourself:
 - And Not For The Lord!
 - You Yield To Temptation:
 - And Sin!
 - You Remain Faithless:
 - And Fruitless In Your Christian Life!
- So - “Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!”
 - And Remember That - God Has A Purpose:
 - For The Gift Of His Grace In Your Life!
 - It Is Meant To Be Used!
 - So - 2 Peter 3:18 - “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!”

* Second Thing You Need To Remember Is:

2. ***The Pattern Of God’s Grace!***

- Which We Find In The First Part Of 6:2 - Where Paul Quotes A Verse:
 - From The Old Testament Book Of Isaiah:
 - Isaiah 49:8 - “For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee!”
 - The Reason Paul Quotes This Verse Is Because It Reminds Us Of Just How Good & Gracious God Is!
 - Because - Even 700 Years Before Jesus Was Born Into This World - God’s

Plan To Shower This World With His Grace Was Already In Place!

- Back In Isaiah - God Is Giving To His Messiah:
 - Assurance That His Mission On Earth:
 - Will Be Successful!
 - But Now - That Jesus Christ Has Come - We See How These Words Reveal God's Grace To Us!
- The First Part Of This Quotation Reveals To Us:
 - The Life Of Christ!
 - "For He Saith, I Have Heard Thee In A Time Accepted!"
 - This Describes:
 - The Special Period:
 - Of Time!
 - A Time That Was Certain & Fixed:
 - In The Overall Plan Of God!
 - Reminds Us Of:
 - Galatians 4:4-5 - "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, / to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons!"
 - But We Also See In This Time:
 - The Special Pleasure:
 - Of God!
 - It Was A "Time Accepted!"
 - A Time That Was Acceptable & Pleasing To God!
 - And The Main Reason For This:
 - Was Because Everything Jesus Did During That Time & In His Life:
 - Was Pleasing & Acceptable To His Heavenly Father!
 - Jesus Came At:
 - The Right Time / To The Right Place / Lived The Right Life / Spoke The Right Word / Made The Right Sacrifice!
 - And So - We See:
 - The Special Pledge:
 - From God - To His Only Begotten Son!
 - "I Have Heard Thee In [That] Acceptable Time!"
 - John Gill - "During This Time The Lord Heard Christ! He Always Heard Him Interceding For Himself, And For His People! He Heard Him In The Garden, And On The Cross, And At All Other Times!"
 - Jesus Himself Testified To This - John 11:41-42 - "And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. / And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me!"
 - And So - Paul Wants You To Remember:
 - That The Life Of Jesus - At That "Time Accepted" Is The Revelation Of God's Grace To You!
 - Because Now - You Can Be Accepted As Well - By Faith In Him!
 - Now - What Are You Doing With His Grace To You?
 - The Second Part Of This Old Testament Quotation Reveals To Us:
 - The Death Of Christ!
 - "And In The Day Of Salvation Have I Succoured Thee!"
 - This Describes:
 - A Special Event!
 - And A Special "Day" In Which:
 - Something Special Was Accomplished!
 - What Happened On That Day?
 - A Special Effect!
 - It Was A "Day Of Salvation!"
 - And A Day Of Deliverance!
 - This Seems To Point Us To The Day Of Jesus Christ's Own Death On The Cross!
 - But Once Again:

- We See God The Father Actively Involved In The Life & Ministry Of God The Son!
- For There Was:
 - A Special Enablement!
 - When He Says - "In [That] Day Of Salvation Have I Succoured / Helped Thee!"
 - God The Father Helped His Son:
 - In That Day & Through That Day!
 - Isaiah 42:1 - "Behold My Servant, Whom I Uphold!"
 - And So Again - Paul Wants You To Remember:
 - That The Death Of Jesus - And That "Day Of Salvation" Is The Revelation Of God's Grace To You!
 - Because Now - You Can Be Delivered From Your Sin - By Faith In Him!
- So - Remember The Pattern Of God's Grace:
 - Even In The Life, Ministry & Death Of Jesus!
 - If God Heard & Helped His Son:
 - God Will Hear & Help All Those Who Come To Him Through His Son!
 - And That's Grace!
 - So - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"
 - As God The Father Heard His Son:
 - All Throughout His Life:
 - He Will Hear You - For Now You Are His Child! And:
 - As God The Father Helped His Son:
 - Especially At His Death:
 - He Will Help You!
 - What Are You Doing With God's Grace To You?

* Also Need To Remember:

3. ***The Privilege Of God's Grace!***

- Because Now Paul - Back In 6:2 - Applies This Old Testament Quote About Jesus - To You!
 - He Says - "Behold, Now Is The Accepted Time; Behold, Now Is The Day Of Salvation!"
 - Now - Most Of The Time When We Hear These Words:
 - It Is When The Gospel Is Presented & The Appeal Is Made To "Be Ye Reconciled To God!"
 - And This Is An Appropriate Use Of This Verse!
 - But - When You Look At It More Closely:
 - Paul's Appeal Here Is Not Just To:
 - Those Who ***Need*** Christ:
 - But To Those Who Already ***Know*** Christ!
 - ***This Appeal Is For You!***
 - Because Of All That Has Been Accomplished:
 - By Jesus Christ:
 - In His Life:
 - At That "Accepted Time!" And:
 - In His Death:
 - In That "Day Of Salvation!"
 - You Need To:
- Pay Attention:
 - To God's Grace In Your Life!
 - Stop Ignoring It!
 - Stop Living Like God's Grace Means Nothing To You!
 - He Says "Behold" Two Times!
 - Means - Look At This!
 - Pay Attention!
 - Pay Attention:
 - To God's Grace!
 - All Of God's Grace To You!
 - And Respond To It!
 - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"
 - And Then:

- Pay Allegiance:
 - To God's Grace In Your Life!
 - Because - "Now" Paul Says!
 - "**Now** Is The Accepted Time!"
 - "**Now** Is The Day Of Salvation!"
 - Another Way To Look At This Is:
 - The Time & Day When Jesus Lived:
 - Was Just The Beginning!
 - But **Now**:
 - The "Accepted Time" And The "Day Of Salvation" In Your Life Continues!
 - **You Are Living In The "Age Of Grace!"**
 - And Now - As A Christian - As A Child Of God Yourself:
 - He Will Continue Do For You What He Did For Jesus!
 - He Will **Hear** You!
 - When You Pray & Cry Out To Him!
 - He Will **Help** You!
 - In Your Time Of Need!
- And That's Grace!

Conclusion:

1. So - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"
 - **IE:** Don't Just Unwrap The Gift Of His Grace!
 - Remember It! Be Grateful For It! And Use It!
 - Remember That God's Grace To You Is Great! "Grace Amazing! Grace Sustaining! Grace Unveiling Christ Above! Grace Astounding! Grace Abounding! Grace Surrounding Me In Love!"
 - Now Let His Grace:
 - Take Full Effect In Your Life!
 - "Let The Lord Have His Way In Your Life Every Day!"
 - Because:
 - You Have Been Accepted By God:
 - Through The Righteous Life:
 - Of Jesus Christ! And:
 - You Have Been Delivered By God:
 - Through The Vicarious Death:
 - Of Jesus Christ!
 - 2. And Now Is The Time & This Is The Day:
 - That God Has Given You To:
 - Remember & Respond To:
 - The Grace Of God In Your Life!
 - In Fact - If You Have Been Ignoring Or Neglecting Or Misusing God's Grace To You:
 - "Now" You Can Start Afresh!
 - Lamentations 3:22-23 - "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. / They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness!"
 - 3. So - Use The Gift Of God's Grace!
 - To Love Him More!
 - To Look To Him More!
 - To Live For Him More!
 - To Labor For Him More - As His Ambassador!
 - And - "Receive Not The Grace Of God In Vain!"

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