

2 Corinthians 6- Nigeria

I am here because God has changed my life. I was a very wicked man. God says when He saves a man, He makes him a new creature. Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. When God changes a man, He causes that man to hate the sin that he once loved. That's why I am here. Because I see in Nigeria what has been in myself before God changed me and I fear for you all because God's name is holy, He will not allow it to be blasphemed. And yet I have great hope for you as well, I have hope because in the past when my church has come, we have seen fruits of repentance in you. We desire that those would last and that you would grow in holiness. I see that your theme, you have two themes this year, 'Behold I am doing a new thing' and 'There shall be showers of blessings'. I want to challenge all of you, do not just look at those words and think that they automatically apply to you. Go home, read the chapters, not just the verses. Those chapters are also about God's judgement. Why does He have to do a new thing? Because we've sinned, because we are sinners. Unless He does a new thing in the earth, we will perish before God. That's why He must do a new thing, that is why we must seek His blessing, because without His blessing, without Him changing us we will be destroyed. In 2 Corinthians 6, God talks about holiness. You have heard today from the Pastor, Psalm 24, where it says the gates will open to God. You know God is the only so holy that gates will open to Him without anyone helping them. There is not a gate in Nigeria that you will go through where a guard or someone, does not have to open that gate. God is not like that, everything moves for God. I want to read 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:2, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty." Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one." God is not like the rest of the world, we must all look at ourselves and our churches and ask if we are like the rest of the world or are we holy? Do we put our hands with the wicked and do like they do or do we walk by faith? Here it says that it's only when you separate yourselves from the world and the sin around you, it's only then that God receives you and treats you as sons and daughters. How do you become perfect in holiness? How do you stand before God in holiness? It's when you fear God. Who are those that you should receive? Paul here says 'receive us' and he gives the reason why the church should receive Him, because they have wronged no man, they had corrupted no man, they had defrauded no man. Paul, and the laborers in Christ, were not taking bribes, they were not changing prices, they were not oppressing the fatherless and the widow. They say this is why you should receive us, because we were walking in holiness. I fear for you because the culture of Nigeria is largely what many of you would call a Christian culture. Many of you would say even half the country is Christian, and that's not true. It's not true because of these things. My question to you is are you receiving those as brothers and sisters in Christ those who defraud their neighbor? This is not what the

church should do. It's our prayer that you would understand this and that you would look and make sure you are not doing this. It's our prayer that God's name would be honored by you walking in the fear of God and holiness. I want to turn to Jeremiah 7, so we can see an example of what God says how we should walk. What does it look like when we walk in holiness or we do not? I want to start in the beginning of the chapter. "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, "Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the Lord!'" Understand here that God is telling Jeremiah to speak to the church in Israel. "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." Is this what God is saying to you today? Have you turned from your sin? Have you changed your ways? He says, "Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.'" We see here that he is saying they are lying. When they look around and see all that's around them they say this is the temple of the Lord. He says, "For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever." You see He says the Jews here in Jerusalem were lying when they said they were part of the temple of God because they did not walk in the fear of God. They did not execute judgement and justice. They oppressed the fatherless and the widow. It's my desire that that would not be true in this church, that that would not be true in those that call themselves churches across Nigeria. You have to ask yourself, is it true in you? You have to ask yourself, am I doing evil to my neighbor? What does God say? You see, God says in another place, in Proverbs 29:12, that if a ruler listens to lies, if a ruler hearkens to lies, all his servants are wicked. Do you understand that that means that the pattern of this nation is a pattern of wickedness because we all know that the rulers of your land listen to lies, the rulers of your land speak lies? Honestly, the rulers of my land do too. That should frighten us all because that means those under their authority are not doing their job and are doing wickedly. The ones in authority listen to lies because those who they are over are not speaking truth either and the rulers know they can get away with it, they know they can speak lies and everyone will accept it. Be slow to dismiss yourself from the crowd that says they serve God, but they do not serve Him in heart. Search you heart, search the Word of God, ask God to search your heart and tell you if you are walking in truth. Verses 8-10 "Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'?" The apostle Paul spoke of this too. He said, should we send that grace may abound? God forbid. He says, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? You see, this is why God says you speak lying words when He speaks to the people in Judah. They were lying, they were committing adultery, they were stealing and they came to the house of God and said they were righteous and that they knew God. God said, you don't you blaspheme My name. Verse 11, "Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the Lord." I want to ask you, how does God look at your worship? Does God look at your worship and say that's not worship? You are stealing from Me, you are stealing from My holy name because you will not do justly and you say you are sons of the just and holy God? God gives an example, I want you to understand that God gives us

understanding and knowledge so we fear Him. God even says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. You can see in history; the way He has worked in the world so we will fear Him. Verse 12, "But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel." Shiloh was where God set His tabernacle, where He had met with His people even before Jerusalem. When God's people came into the Promised Land they set up the tabernacle in Shiloh and that's where they met with God, that's where they set up their offerings. God tells the people in Judah now who are coming to His temple in verses 13-14, "And now, because you have done all these works," says the Lord, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer, therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh." God's name will be praised. God desires and calls us to worship Him in truth and God has given us examples of what happens when we do not worship Him in truth. I exhort you, I plead with you, make sure you are worshipping God in truth, that you are not going out into the community and doing evil, but coming back and saying you know God. Those of you who God has worked in, who God is turning from sin, continue to grow in holiness. Just because God destroyed Shiloh and later destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, destroyed the nation, does not mean that no one was following Him but most people were not. Most of the people were walking after their own ways, please do not do this. Worship God the way he desires. Make sure that you are not oppressing your neighbors and understand that so often judgement comes and people die because God's name is not made holy among the people. I want to read a little bit from Psalm 78 because this is where God talks about what He did in Shiloh and I want to leave this on your mind so that you would consider the works of God. Psalm 78:1-3, "Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." Understand that none of this is new. Verses 4-8, "We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know them, the children who would be born, that they may arise and declare them to their children, That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments; And may not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not set its heart aright, and whose spirit was not faithful to God." God has given us history to know and remember. You should look at what happens in your own land and ask what God is doing. Why have things happened in Nigeria that have happened? God says you should remember so you will consider and know. Verse 54-72, "And He brought them to His holy border, this mountain *which* His right hand had acquired. He also drove out the nations before them, allotted them an inheritance by survey, And made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents. Yet they tested and provoked the Most High God, And did not keep His testimonies, But turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers; They were turned aside like a deceitful bow. For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their carved images. When God heard *this*, He was furious, And greatly abhorred Israel, So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, The tent He had placed among men, And delivered His strength into captivity, And His glory into the enemy's hand. He also gave His people over to the sword, And was furious with His inheritance. The fire consumed their young men, and their maidens were not

given in marriage. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation. Then the Lord awoke as *from* sleep, like a mighty man who shouts because of wine. And He beat back His enemies; He put them to a perpetual reproach. Moreover He rejected the tent of Joseph, And did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, But chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved. And He built His sanctuary like the heights, Like the earth which He has established forever. He also chose David His servant, And took him from the sheepfolds; From following the ewes that had young He brought him, To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.” See God here says that He destroyed Shiloh because of their wickedness, because of their false worship. Then He restored the nation, He brought them back from captivity and made David their king. He placed the temple in Jerusalem in the tribe of Judah. Remember what He says in Jeremiah. He says to look at Shiloh, this place where I placed my name, I destroyed it and if you don’t depart from false worship and sinning against your neighbors, if you will not put a difference between what is holy and what is profane between the unrighteous and the righteous, if you will not say that my brothers and sisters in Christ are the ones who do righteously, not the ones that say they are Christians, if you will not say that God makes a difference then consider what God will do to make His name holy. He destroyed Shiloh, Jerusalem, and the temple where He placed His name. It’s our desire that you would fear God, that you would walk in holiness before Him and that you would not be like the rest of the world around you. Let me close in prayer. Gracious heavenly Father, You are the true and living God, the God who is holy and does just and right, the God who will not allow His name to be blasphemed. The God who cares for Your children who will draw them closer to You, who will cause them to walk in Your Word, who will cause them to walk in the light. Father, we ask You that You would help us all, that You would help us to put the difference between the rest of the world and Your church. That we would put a difference between Your name and the name of the false gods who the rest of the world worships. Have mercy on us. We ask that You would cause Your Spirit to turn us from our own iniquities, to turn us from lawlessness, from sin. That we would not things of the world, that we would not walk in the ways of the world, that You would glorify Your name through us by keeping us from sin and making a difference between Your church and the world. We pray in Your Son Jesus Christ’s name, amen.