

Being a Team Player

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II Corinthians 6:1-13 ¹As God's fellow workers, then, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ²For He says: "In the time of favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, now is the time of favor; now is the day of salvation! ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no one can discredit our ministry. ⁴Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships, and calamities; ⁵in beatings, imprisonments, and riots; in labor, sleepless nights, and hunger; ⁶in purity, knowledge, patience, and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷in truthful speech and in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸through glory and dishonor, slander and praise; viewed as imposters, yet genuine; ⁹as unknown, yet well-known; dying, and yet we live on; punished, yet not killed; ¹⁰sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything. ¹¹We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians. Our hearts are open wide. ¹²It is not our affection, but yours, that is restrained. ¹³As a fair exchange, I ask you as my children: Open wide your hearts also. (BSB)

I. Here are the details of this passage.

- A.** Paul is trying to convince them that they are on the **same** team. V. 1
- B.** He then goes on to urge them to respond to God's grace by **giving** grace to others. V. 1-3
- C.** He then goes on to state some of the positive **traits** of his ministry of preaching the Gospel to others. V. 4-12
 - 1.** It is an **enduring** ministry. V. 4
 - 2.** It has been a **difficult** ministry, but it stayed **faithful** to God. V. 5-6
 - 3.** It has not lowered itself to **conventional** warfare. V. 7
 - 4.** It has been a **persecuted** ministry but still managed to keep a **soft** heart toward people. V. 6, 8-10
- D.** He then asks for the Corinthians to **reciprocate** by opening their hearts to him. V. 11-12

II. How can we apply these truths?

- A.** We must stop **"friendly fire"** to other Christians. We are on the same team!
- B.** It is important **not** to be one strike and you are out toward others.
- C.** We need to look for the **positive** in others.
- D.** We should be **blessing** those who look after us spiritually. It is hard to minister in this climate. Many churches are closing their doors because they are refusing to adapt to a new culture.