

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 245 – September 2nd – 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

1 Corinthians 6:1

Συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δεξασθαι ὑμᾶς·

συνεργεω work with, work together with

In all probability this means workers together with God (so Calvin, Hodge, Denney, Tasker, Hering, Barrett, Hughes, Martin, AV, NIV). Cf. 1 Thess 3:2.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
κενος, η, ον empty, to no purpose
δεχομαι receive, accept, take, welcome

They had responded to the preaching of Paul the ambassador and had believed in Christ. Paul now urges them to go on as they began (cf. 1 Cor 15:2). Martin suggests that to have 'received the grace of God in vain' means that "the grace of God ... has not produced the desired results... Having learned that Jesus died for them, they had not yet died to themselves. And this failure to die was partially exhibited in their failure to have stood by Paul. This 'frustration of grace' (Barclay ...) is an example of non-gratitude for God's love."

Verse 2

λέγει γάρ· Καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι· ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας·

The quotation in this verse is from Is 49:8

καιρος, ου m time
δεκτος, η, ον acceptable, favourable
ἐπακουω listen to, give attention to
σωτηρια, ας f salvation
βοηθεω help

"For Paul the coming of Christ marked the inauguration of the messianic age, the better time when God in his mercy accepts man in grace." Martin

"In the faithful discharge of his apostolic office Paul, the servant of the Servant, had made himself their servant; they had been brought into the participation of the messianic kingdom and all its blessings." Hughes

εὐπροσδεκτος, ον acceptable

Paul underlines the urgency – 'act now!'

Verse 3

μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία,

"Grammatically, this verse resumes the construction of 6:1, with v 2 as a parenthesis." Martin

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing

διδόντες the participle is the "first in an extraordinary series extending to verse 10." Barrett. The sense is 'we do not put a stumbling-block in anyone's path.'

προσκοπη, ης f cause for offence, obstacle

μωμηθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s μωμομαι find fault with; aor pass be found fault with

The verb is found only here and in 8:20 in NT.

διακονια, ας f ministry, service

"The messenger must not do anything to direct the people away from the real cause of the σκανδαλον, which is the cross." Martin

Verse 4

ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ συνιστάνοντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι· ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις,

συνιστημι and συνιστανω commend

"What is involved here is not primarily personal commendation, something which the apostle eschewed (3:11; 5:12), but the commendation of a ministry." Kruse. Cf. also 3:1; 4:2.

Note that διακονοι is nominative, not accusative. The sense is 'We, as ministers of God, commend ourselves,' not, 'We commend ourselves as ministers of God.'

ὕπομονη, ης f patience, endurance

This first is a characteristic which marked the way he responded to the things listed in the remainder of this verse and v.5.

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

Cf. Rom 8:35.

ἀναγκη, ης f necessity, distress

Unavoidable circumstances, maybe dictated by the "great and overruling necessity" (Hughes) of preaching the gospel.

στενοχωρια, ας f distress, difficulty, trouble
'in straits', again, constrained circumstances.

Verse 5

ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις,

"Paul shifts to a more specific description of the perils of his ministry, both involuntary and voluntary in nature." Martin

πληγη, ης f misfortune, beating

Cf. 11:23,24.

φυλακη, ης f prison, imprisonment
ἀκαταστασια, ας f disorder, mob violence
κοπος, ου m work, labour, trouble

The word means not only the exertion of the work itself but also "the weariness which follows on this straining of all his powers to the utmost." Trench

ἀγρυπνια, ας f sleeplessness

Martin says "Paul has in mind voluntary periods where he went without sleep, as in vigils, in order to devote more time to ministry. Apparently this was a frequent event occasioned by Paul's exposure to risk, or more likely, by his desire to 'watch and pray' (cf. Eph 6:18; Heb 13:17)."

νηστεια, ας f fasting, hunger

Unclear whether voluntary fasting or whether necessitated by lack of provisions.

Verse 6

ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ,

Verse 6 returns to the qualities with which Paul and his companions faced the above trials. It is by these qualities that his ministry was commended.

ἀγνοτης, ητος f purity, sincerity

Integrity of life.

γνωσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

May mean knowledge and understanding of the divine plan of salvation. Barrett suggests an intelligent apprehension and application of Christian truth – a practical knowledge exemplified in the qualities that follow.

μακροθυμια, ας f longsuffering, patience
χρηστοτης, ητος f kindness, goodness, mercy

Cf. Gal 5:22; 1 Cor 13:4. "Goodness in action" Tasker

Plummer argues that ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ here refers to 'a spirit that is holy,' i.e. a human quality. Martin argues that Paul would have used the phrase πνευμα ἀγιοσυνης if that had been his meaning (cf. Rom 1:4). "Therefore, we conclude that when Paul writes πνευμα ἅγιον he means or implies a reference to 'the Holy Spirit' (so the consensus, Hughes, Tasker, Filson, NIV, KJV/AV, RSV, NEB), but with emphasis on the 'power' that derives from him." The reference to the Holy Spirit makes it clear that those qualities were not simply of human origin. His ministry was commended by evident presence of the Spirit – see v.7 and its reference to the power of God.

ἀνυποκριτος, ου sincere, genuine

"The true minister of God evinces kindness and longsuffering as well as many other qualities (Col 3:12, 13). To do otherwise would not promote God's working. Paul loves his people, unlike the example of the false apostles who seek to promote their own interests and not the interests of the Corinthians (11:13-15, 20; 12:14-17, on which Hering comments: 'He has not sought after their goods, but themselves, that is their good')." Martin

Verse 7

ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὀπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἄριστερῶν,

"With the beginning of this verse Paul shifts attention from inward qualities to his preaching ministry." Martin

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

"The proclamation of the revealed truth of the gospel." Tasker. Cf. Eph 1:13; Col 1:5.

δυναμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

"The genuineness of Paul's message and person is made apparent by the power manifested in his preaching and experienced by his Corinthian listeners (... cf. Rom 1:16; 15:19; 1 Cor 1:18; 2:4-5; 2 Cor 4:7; 1 Thess 1:5). Paul's convincing manner was due not only to his own eloquence but to God's power (1 Cor 2:3-5; 1 Thess 2:13)." Martin

ὄπλον, ου n weapon, tool

Compare 10:3-5

δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness
δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξιά right hand
ἀριστερός, α, ον left, left hand

Perhaps a reference to weapons both of offence and defence – a sword in the right hand and shield in the left. However, Martin follows Barrett in suggesting that "Paul simply meant to show that one equipped with the weapons of righteousness is thoroughly equipped."

Verse 8

διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς,

"Paul further commends his ministry by setting forth nine antitheses. In each case, one part of the antithesis represents an evaluation of his ministry 'from a human point of view', and on the other part, the true view of one 'in Christ'." Kruse

δόξα, ης f glory

Here in the sense of good opinion or reputation.

ἀτιμία, ας f disgrace, shame, dishonour
δυσφημία, ας f slander, insult
εὐφημία, ας f good reputation or report

"No evil report, however false, can harm him and no good report, however true, can distract him." Hughes

πλάνος, ον deceitful, deceiver, imposter
ἀληθής, ες true, genuine

"We are treated as imposters, and yet are true" NIV. "Regardless of others' evaluation of him, Paul knows his standing before God is secure. It is true standing, held with good conscience (4:2; 5:11). He had been faithful to God's call; he was open and sincere to the Corinthians." Martin

Verse 9

ὡς ἀγνοοῦμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι,

ἀγνοεω not know, disregard

"He was unknown as a 'true' or 'super' apostle ... Many of Paul's contemporaries, with a flick of the hand, could dismiss him as a 'nobody.'" Martin

ἐπιγινώσκω understand, recognise

"Yet, Paul was recognised by some – and in particular by God – as a 'full-fledged' apostle. In short, he was understood for who he truly was. But by whom? His use of ἐπιγινώσκω in 1:13, 14 expresses the hope of being understood by the Corinthians. Moreover, 1 Cor 13:12 speaks of being fully understood by God (ἐπεγνωσθῆναι). Hence, both God and the Corinthians appear to be in his mind." Martin

ἀποθνήσκω die, face death

ζῶω live, be alive

Cf. 7:3; Rom 8:35-39.

παιδεύω instruct, discipline, punish

'Divine discipline'

"In the OT and Jewish works we see that the discipline of Yahweh is likened to the action of a father for the correction and training of his children, and is meant to be received as evidence of God's loving concern (Prov 3:11-12; Job 5:17; Pss 94:12; 119:67, 75; Jer 31:18, 19;... for the New Testament, see Heb 12:5-13; Rev 3:19). No doubt Paul viewed his strife and sufferings in this way (cf. for his actions 1 Cor 5:5; 11:32). No doubt also, the opponents of Paul who considered him as 'unknown' pointed to the apostle's past as a Pharisee and persecutor of the church as grounds for God's anger in consigning him to a life of pain and hardship. But Paul strives to show that rather than his suffering being a mark of divine wrath, it is a sign of divine love." Martin

θανατοῦω kill, put to death

Cf. Ps 118(117):17,18.

Verse 10

ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

λυπεῖω grieve; pass be sorrowful

"With all the disappointments, frustrations, and dangers of the apostolic life, it was inevitable that Paul, being human, would feel sorrow... No doubt the Corinthians were a major source of his sorrow." Martin

ἀεὶ always, constantly

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

"All this notwithstanding, Paul rejoiced (2:3; 7:4, 7, 9, 13; 13:9; see too Rom 12:12, 15; 14:17; 15:13, 32; 16:19; 1 Cor 16:17; Gal 5:22 [where *χαρά* 'joy,' is mentioned as a fruit of the Spirit]; Phil 1:4; 2:17; 3:1; 1 Thess 2:19f.; 3:9; 5:16). This was an 'inalienable feature of his life' (Barrett ...). No matter the situation or context, Paul was not overcome with a defeatist mood. Rather he exhibited a 'perennial spring of joy' (Tasker ...). This is seen in his insertion of *ἀει*, 'always.' Paul was constantly rejoicing in the Lord (see esp. Phil 4:4)." Martin

πτωχος, η, ον poor, pitiful
πλουτιζω enrich, make rich

Cf. Phil 3:8. "Paul possessed and shared the riches of the Gospel (cf. Eph 3:8)." Martin.
Cf. 8:9

μηδεις, *μηδεμα*, *μηδεν* no one, nothing
κατεχω hold fast, possess

'having all things to the full'
"He does not have the hallmarks of success and protection from harm and disaster that appear to have characterised his opponents and because of which they chided that he was no real apostle. He had no wealth, no power as a charismatic force, no wonder-working ability to create an impression, no ecstasy to attest to his being a 'special' person... But he does have what really matters: Christ." Martin

Verse 11

Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Κορίνθιοι,
ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτνται·

στομα, *τος* n mouth, utterance
ἀνοιγω open

"A Greek idiom denoting candour or straightforward speech. By adding, *our heart is wide*, Paul affirms that there is plenty of room for the Corinthians in his affections." Kruse

πεπλάτνται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s
πλατυνω enlarge, open wide

Verse 12

οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε ἐν ἡμῖν, στενοχωρεῖσθε δὲ
ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ὑμῶν·

στενοχωρεομαι be held in check, be limited

I.e. they do not have a limited place in Paul's affections. "Paul has not allowed the Corinthians to be squeezed out of his affections." Martin

σπλαγχνον, ου n affections, heart

'But you withhold your affections from us.'

Verse 13

τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν, ὡς τέκνοις λέγω,
πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς.

ἀντιμισθια, ας f response, return

ἀντιμισθια signifies an exact return, the repayment of what is owed. The rather abrupt phrase *τὴν δε ἀντιμισθιαν* has the sense of 'now by way of recompense'. *τὴν αὐτὴν* underlines the idea of sameness.

"Paul is appealing to the Corinthians, requesting that they return what he has given them, namely, love." Martin

τεκνον, ου n child

The sense, 'my children' is implied. Cf. 1 or 4:14,17; Gal 4:19 etc.

πλατύνθητε Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 pl
πλατυνω see v.11

Paul continues his appeal that the Corinthians open their heart in 7:2.