

# Session 6: WE ARE AMBASSADORS/REPRESENTATIVES OF CHRIST JESUS

**2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2,** *“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sinfor us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As God’s co-workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. 2For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.”*

**Paul says that he is an “ambassador for Christ!”**

**What does he mean?**

***The Greek word is “presbeutes”…the Latin word is “legatus.”***

* Means to have a direct commission from the King or Emperor…usually a province or kingdom.

*Paul regarded himself as one commissioned by Jesus Christ…the King of Glory.*

* Also means to be the ones bringing new provinces under rule or authority of the King…when a country takes over another country. The “presbeutai…legatai” were the envoys to bring into the kingdom new citizens from the new province. These envoys were the ones that convinced through negotiations and contracts…and understanding that these people in the new province would become part of the family of the Roman Empire.

*Paul thinks of himself as the man who brings to others the terms of God, whereby they can become citizens of God’s country (heaven bound) and members of the family of God. He was an ambassador of Christ.*

* An ambassador of the United States (in a foreign land)—spends his life among people who usually speak a different language, who have different traditions, and who follow a different way of life.

The Christian is always like that (should be). He lives in the world; he takes part in all the life and work of the world; but he is a citizen of heaven .

* An ambassador speaks for his own country. When a United States ambassador speaks, his voice is the voice of the United States.

***There are times when the Christian has to speak for Christ.***

In the decisions and counsels of the world his must be the voice which brings the message of Christ to the human situation.

* The honor of a country is in its ambassador’s hands.
* His country is judged by him. His words are listened to, his deeds are watched and people say, “That is the way such-and-such country speaks and acts.”
* The duty of the ambassador is not only to deliver a definite message, but to carry out a definite policy. He is obliged to watch for opportunities, to study the citizens character, and to make the best use of his time in order to place his country’s policies in the best light…and to make it the most attractive in order to prove our friendship and to gain our trust.

The Christian has the proud privilege…yet terrifying responsibility…of showing the honor of Christ and the Church to the world in which he must deal with every day.

* ***The honor and respect given to Christ and the Church is in the ambassador’s hands.***
* ***By his every word and action he can make men think more—or less—of his Church and of his Master.***

**Note: that we are to be reconciled to God…not God reconciled to us.**

It is not God who is the one on the outside…who has pulled away (strayed away). Because of our sin, we must move to be reconciled to God by “accepting His Son who gave His life as ransom for our souls.” BUT, GOD DOES TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE WHEN WE CHOOSE TO RESPOND.

**God has always held out His hands to us….as the Father of the Prodigal Son.**

*He does not have to be reconciled to us…we have to be reconciled to Him. He will love us until our dying breath…hoping that the choice will be to accept His only son’s sacrifice…for your atonement!*

*Like Paul said, Salvation is for today…Don’t miss it!*

## **2 Corinthians 6:3-10, “***We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. 4Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; 5in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; 6in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; 7in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; 8through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; 9known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; 10sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.”*

In all the challenges…chances taken…and changes of life, Paul had one concern—to show himself a sincere and profitable minister of Jesus Christ.

As he made this claim, Paul stated all the “blizzard of troubles” he had gone through…and is still going through to prove he meant what he said and believes in what he lives.

The word he uses for the triumphant Christian life is “Endurance.”

*This “endurance” for the Christian is the courageous and triumphant ability to pass the breaking point and not to break and always to greet the unseen with a cheer. It is the chemistry…that miraculously changes tribulation and heartache to strength and glory (it is a metamorphosis that can only happen when mind and heart is so far ahead of circumstances that nothing can shake the knowledge of victory).*

Three (3) areas that produces victorious endurance:

1. **Internal Conflicts of the Christian**

* **The things which press sore upon us (troubles)**

That which weighs down a man…sorrows which are a burden on the heart.

* **Hardships (inescapable pains of life)….**Greek word means “necessities of life.”

Certain burdens man may escape, but others are inescapable. Death of loved ones…betrayal of friends…

* **Distresses (anxieties)…**a place where man feels that the walls are closing around him…like there is no escape.

IN IT ALL, THE TRIUMPHANT ENDURANCE CAN COPE WITH THEM ALL.

1. **External Tribulations of Life**

* **Beatings (Stripes)…**for Paul, not just spiritual or emotional suffering, but physical suffering. He knew that there were those that suffered a martyr’s death (Stephen)…and Paul had also experienced terrible physical pain.
* **Prisons…(Imprisonment)…**Paul was in prison at least 7 times.

There are always those who would abandon their freedom sooner than abandon their faith.

* **Riots…(violence of the mob)…**those that were after Paul. They wanted his head. Today, other religions despise Christianity…they want it defeated and will do anything to see that it is done!

The mob has often been the enemy of Christianity; but nowadays it is not the violence but the mockery or the amused contempt of the crowd against which the Christian must stand fast.

1. **The Strain and Effort of the Christian Life.**

Such as:

* **Toils**—Greek “kopos”; technical term for the Christian life…describing toil to the point of sheer exhaustion….which takes everything of body, mind and spirit that a man has to give. The Christian really is the “workman” of God.
* **Sleepless nights**—some of those sleeplessness nights were spent in prayer…other nights in a situation with the world…conflicts with the worldly…discomfort and peril where sleep was impossible.
* **Hunger**—times when Paul and the Christian followers went hungry for the work’s sake. In prison where food was not in great proportion…nor did it come often.

Paul then turns away from the trials, hardships and tribulations…which Godly endurance enabled him to conquer, to his own God given, God blessed, God anointed equipment for the Christian life.

Three Groups of 3 items each:

1. **God-Given Qualities of Mind**

* **Purity**—Greek word “hagnotes” is defined as “the careless avoidance of all sins which would dishonor a Holy God.”…or, “freedom from every stain of flesh and spirit.”

It is the quality which enables a person to enter into the very presence of God…unencumbered with conflict of interest (having sins in a life that make you question whether God can hear you in His Holiness and Righteousness).

* **Knowledge**—meaning “knowledge of things that must be done…for the cause of Christ….and knowing that is your responsibility and privilege to do it.”
* **Patience**—this type of patience is normally used to denote patience with others (people)…the ability to bear with them even when they are wrong…and when they are cruel and insulting. This type patience is the quality of a man who may lose a battle but who will never admit defeat in a campaign.

1. **God-Given Qualities of Heart.**

* **Kindness**—the sympathetic kindliness or sweetness of temper which puts others at their ease and shrinks from giving pain. It is the quality which thinks far more of others than of itself.
* **The Holy Spirit**—probably meaning not the person of the Holy Spirit…but the spirit of holiness. Paul…and you (hopefully) realize that no useful word can be spoken nor any good deed done without the help of the Holy Spirit.

However, this probably means that Paul’s dominating motive was one which was holy….one which was directed solely towards the honor and service to a Holy God.

* **Unfeigned Love**—Unconditional love, Agape love, ……meaning the spirit which, no matter what anyone else does to it, will never seek anything but the other person’s highest good…and will never dream of revenge.

1. **The God-Given Equipment for the Work of the Preaching of the Gospel.**

* **The declaration of truth**
* **The power of God…to which was to Paul…everything.**

Paul would never have said in pride, “I did this,” but always in humility, “God enabled me to do this.”

* **The weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left.**

This means that God has given to Paul and to us the weapons for defense and for attack.

The sword or the spear was carried in the right hand and the shield on the left arm;

**God has given to us the power to attack our task…and to defend ourselves from temptations of the world.**