

AFFECTIONATE APPEALS FROM AN APOSTLE

Lesson 8

Review: *As Ambassadors charged with the Ministry of Reconciliation, we are called to do our part in protecting this purpose by...*

- 1) Availing ourselves of His grace
- 2) Avoiding any offense
- 3) Approving ourselves in all things to be qualified ministers

THE PARADOXICAL OPPORTUNITIES TO FLORISH IN THE FISHBOWL

I. The Paradoxical Opportunities To Approve Ourselves - *II Cor. 6:1-5*

A) Opportunities ALLOWED by God - vs. 4

- *In patience - *the timing and duration of trouble*
- *In afflictions - *the times physical, mental, or spiritual anguish*
- *In necessities - *the times of material want and deprivation*
- *In distresses - *the times of external pressures or difficulties*

B) Opportunities by the ACTIONS of others - vs. 5a

- *In stripes - *when another unfairly "lashes out" at us*
- *In imprisonments - *unjustly restricted/restrained by some authority*
- *In tumults - *when attacked by the "crowd" for the Truth's sake*

C) Opportunities we have ADOPTED for ourselves - vs. 5b

- *In labours - *working to the point of exhaustion to produce excellence*
- *In watchings - *trading rest/relaxation to earnestly pray and intercede*
- *In fastings - *spiritual disciplines of denial to gain insight and power*

II. The Paradoxical Process Approved By God - *II Cor. 6:6-7*

A) The approved process of PREPARATION

- *By pureness - *confessing any wrong actions, attitudes, or motives*
- *By knowledge - *search God's Word for correct perspective and response*
- *By longsuffering - *surrender to God's plan and purposes for the test*
- *By kindness - *refuse to retaliate, but seek opportunity to ministers*
- *By the Holy Ghost - *draw near to God in humility*

B) The approved process of PRACTICE

- *By love unfeigned - *demonstrate genuine compassion for them*
- *By the word of truth - *demonstrate genuine concern by testifying*
- *By the power of God - *demonstrate genuine trust in His power*
- *By the armour of righteousness - *demonstrate a genuine testimony*

III. The Paradoxical Testimony Of Approved Ministers - *II Cor. 6:8-10*

A) The testimony ADVANCED by others - vs. 8

- *By honor and dishonor
- *By evil report and good report
- *As deceivers, yet true

B) The testimony APPARENT to us - vs. 9-10

- *As unknown, yet well known
- *As chastened, but not killed
- *As poor, yet making many rich
- *As dying, behold we live
- *As sorrowful, yet rejoicing
- *As having nothing, yet possessing all things