



POWER IN WEAKNESS | THE GRACE-DRIVEN LIFE (8)

October 26, 2025

2 Corinthians 6:1-16

PURPOSE

To discover and experience Jesus Christ in our midst
To cultivate mutually encouraging relationships
To participate in God's mission to the world

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Discussion Question

- What is an activity that helps you relax whenever you start to feel anxious or stressed out?

WORSHIP 10 MIN

PLEASE OPEN IN PRAYER

RESPONSIVE PRAYER — Isaiah 49

Thus says the LORD:

"In a time of favor I have answered you;

In a day of salvation I have helped you;

I will keep you and give you

As a covenant to the people,

To establish the land,

To apportion the desolate heritages."

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;

Break forth, O mountains, into singing!

For the LORD has comforted his people

And will have compassion on his afflicted.

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 6:1-16

¹*Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.*

²*For he says,*

*"In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you."*

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

¹¹We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. ¹²You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. ¹³In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? ¹⁵What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? ¹⁶What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

*“I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.”*

BIBLE STUDY **Summary** **40 MIN**

The Apostle Paul's words in this passage emphasize the grace-soaked nature of the Christian life. Grace should not be thought of as merely the instrument of salvation, because it is also necessary for sustaining believers through all of life's circumstances. Paul begins by reiterating to his readers that his ministry is not his own but is from God, and that all Christians share in this calling as “fellow workers” (verse 1). By carrying the message of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20), believers become participatory instruments in God's redemptive mission. Yet this cooperation is itself a gift of grace, which must not be received “in vain” (verse 1; cf. 1 Cor. 15:10). The urgency of that grace is underscored in verse 2: “Now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” What tomorrow will bring is not known (James 4:13-15), and so Paul exhorts the Corinthians to receive and act on God's grace in the present. As the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF 14.1) reminds us, saving faith enables believers to “accept, receive, and rest upon Christ alone,” a reality that bears fruit in the daily life of the Christian.

Paul then turns to the marks of endurance that accompany the grace-filled Christian life. In verses 4-10, he offers a catalogue of trials — afflictions, hardships, beatings, and imprisonments — yet through them, the grace of God enables steadfast patience. As Paul demonstrated throughout his life, believers are called to persevere with integrity and gentleness (Galatians 5:22-23), enduring both honor and dishonor, praise and slander — and these extremes are important. The grace of God guards us both against the pride that comes with honor on the one hand and the bitterness that arises from reproach and slander on the other (verse 8; WCF 13.1). Paul then introduces the paradox of Christian life “as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything” (verses 9-10). Though believers are empty in themselves, they possess all things in Christ, who supplies every spiritual blessing and sustains His people through every hardship (Ephesians 1:3; Philippians 4:11-13; Romans 8:17-18).

Finally, Paul warns against being “unequally yoked with unbelievers” (vv. 14-16). This is not a call to isolation from the world (cf. John 17:15-18) but to holiness and discernment in one's closest relationships and partnerships. As the very dwelling place of God through the Holy Spirit, Christians are temples of the living God (verse 16; 1 Cor. 6:19-20) and must therefore avoid mingling light with darkness, righteousness with lawlessness, or Christ with idols. To defile the temple through worldliness or unwise relationships with unbelievers is to show ingratitude for the grace that made us holy (WCF 13.2). Yet even this command is grace-filled. God calls his people to separation in order to preserve their joy and integrity

as his dwelling place (verse 16; Leviticus 26:11-12; Ephesians 2:19-22). Having received the grace that calls us into God's work, sustains us in suffering, humbles us in both honor and reproach, and sanctifies us for holy fellowship with him, believers respond by walking in gratitude, bearing the paradoxical joy of those who "have nothing, yet possess everything" in Christ.

1. Looking at the Bible

- From the passage, share with the group some key phrases or ideas that stood out to you.

2. Looking at Jesus

At Central we believe that all of Scripture points to Jesus. In other words, Jesus is the theological center of the Bible. Every passage not only points to Jesus, but the grand narrative of the Bible also finds its fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

- Discuss what it would look like to "receive the grace of God in vain" (verse 1).

3. Looking at our Hearts

- Read verses 4-10. What do you notice about the list of Paul's credentials?
- What is Paul's underlying message of the seemingly contradictory phrases in verses 8-10?
- Jesus is both the source and the example of a grace-driven life. How does Jesus and his earthly ministry demonstrate Paul's list in verses 4-10?

4. Looking at our World

- Verse 14, "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers," has sometimes been misinterpreted to mean that Christians should not have any affiliation with unbelievers. What is Paul actually urging the Corinthian believers to do here as "temples of the living God" (verse 16)?

PRAYER 15 MIN

Pray for each other: Share any prayer requests you have.

Please pray for the finances of Central. Pray that God will supply all that's needed according to his great riches.

Praise God that he is bringing more people to Central and that he is using Central Presbyterian Church to reconcile the people of New York to himself.