



The
ENJOY THE BIBLE

Quarterly

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Second Quarter 2005

The Indescribable Honour of Being “Ambassadors for Christ”

A previous article on not being “ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (Second Quarter 2003) prompted the desire for this closer examination of the honour and privilege that it is for us to be “ambassadors for Christ,” especially in view of Paul’s exhortation in II Corinthians 6:1–2 and the fact that many of us are not very enthusiastic ambassadors.

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.

²¹ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

¹ We then, as workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

² (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) (II Corinthians 5:20–6:2)

Of all of the opportunities that we have to labour together with God in His various operations in this present dispensation of His grace, the one that probably comes to mind first is our ambassadorship for Christ. And indeed it should. For in the process of our sonship edification it is the first such operation that God tells us about, and accordingly it is the first one for which He equips us to labour together with Him. In addition, being “ambassadors for Christ” is an operation in which each and every saint has the opportunity to participate. Besides this it is also an operation for which the ability to participate in it is actually generated by the “gospel of Christ” itself working within the Christian after he believes it, and as he becomes established in it by the effectual working of the doctrines of Romans 1–5. Wherefore it is only natural and logical that this particular operation would occur to our minds first when we think of labouring together with God in what He is doing.

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Moreover when we think of our ambassadorship we are also quick to acknowledge that it certainly is an honour and a privilege for us to be entrusted with “the gospel of Christ,” and thereby to be used by God to offer unto other people its effectual working as “the power of God unto salvation” that it is. Indeed, how could we think of such an opportunity as anything less than an honour and a privilege. It just naturally possesses such qualities. Therefore all the more does our ambassadorship for Christ naturally stand out in our minds.



An Embarrassing Problem

Now though we readily acknowledge these things, and even talk about this privilege with other saints; and though we also know how to clearly preach “the gospel of Christ” to others so as to faithfully provide for it to effectually work in them as we tell them about it; many of us still have a problem when it comes to actually functioning as ambassadors. And it is a problem that is embarrassing to us because it seems so incredible that we should have it in view of what we know. Yet we have it nonetheless. What we have is a *lack of zeal for our ambassadorship*. To be frank, we do not have much enthusiasm for actually doing the work of an ambassador; with the result that we usually do not do it very often.

Naturally this is embarrassing for us, since it is so unbecoming. But it is also a cause of consternation to us. For much to our dismay the privilege of being “ambassadors for Christ” does not really seem to captivate our hearts all that much. For some reason our minds seem to come short of being gripped to their full extent by this

 We want to say a belated “Welcome” to those of you who are new to our readership during the past year. We usually send our greetings in the First Quarter edition, but we failed to do so this year. We hope that you will find the *Quarterly* to be a benefit to you in your study of God’s word, as well as the rest of Enjoy The Bible Ministries.

 Though we are well into this year and a number of fine grace Bible conferences have already taken place, we hope that many of you will be able to attend one or more of the meetings that are scheduled for this summer and fall. Some of these are listed on our web site at GraceOnline.org under “Conferences.” Or you can also find other conference and camp information on the individual web sites of grace churches and ministries that are listed in the “Directories.” So if you have not already made plans to attend an upcoming conference or camp, why not check out the listings to see what might be available in your area, or in an area to which you will be traveling.


***Our thanks to those
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privilege. Oh we may occasionally witness to people, but we find that we lack a full measure, (as well as a constant measure), of any real ambition and/or zeal to be telling others about “the gospel of Christ.” Consequently our ambassadorship is not only frequently subject to waxing and waning, but we find that it is always waning more than it is waxing. In fact for many of us it has been weeks, or months, or maybe even years, since we have even attempted to tell any unjustified person about “the gospel of Christ.” In other words we may be “ambassadors for Christ” by virtue of the privilege, and we may call ourselves such; yet we are anything but “ambassadors for Christ” in function.

Even More Embarrassing

To make matters worse, we know that this is not how God has designed for us to be. We realize that we should have a zeal for our ambassadorship that is truly constraining and compelling. It should not need to be constantly stirred up or resuscitated. It should not be characterized by spikes of periodic activity occurring between lengthy spans of idleness. Instead we know from our epistles that the same kind of remarks that Paul makes about zeal when describing, for example, the saints in Rome and Thessalonica, ought to be able to be said about us as well.

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. (Romans 1:8)

⁸ For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything. (I Thessalonians 1:8)

Not only do verses such as these improve us, but we realize that if our zeal was on par with that of the saints at Rome or Thessalonica, or if it was like that of Paul himself, then we too would probably be criticized just as Paul was for being too zealous or too enthusiastic; even to the point that we also might be thought of by others as being ‘beside ourselves’ or fanatical.

So then it should be obvious that if our zeal for being “ambassadors for Christ” is ‘hit or miss’; or if it is generally weak; or if it bears little or no resemblance to Paul’s zeal; or worse yet if it is non-existent; then something is definitely wrong. We are surely missing something. More to the point, something is not effectually working within us as God has designed for it to work. For ambassadors by nature are not silent. It is contrary to their position and purpose, for they are designed and commissioned to speak.

Therefore if we are ‘silent ambassadors,’ and if we are honest both with ourselves and with God’s word to us, then we ought to want to have this problem rectified.

A Common Problem

Many of the Corinthian saints had this kind of problem as well. Though they had been taught and had learned about their sonship status, and they knew full well that by being “sons” they were privileged with the opportunity to labour together with God their Father in a number of His operations, they did not always have the appropriate and corresponding zeal for doing so.

Now pointing this out is not designed to be a consolation to us. Rather it simply underscores the fact that the problem is not an uncommon one for saints. Moreover it also points out that often times when Christians are in the beginning stages of their sonship edification, (as with the Corinthians), they fail to perceive, (or may even fail to be taught), some fundamental issues belonging to their privilege of labouring together with God in His operations. In connection with this what they often fail to perceive are the very issues that ought to generate within them an appropriate and corresponding zeal for engaging in the operation of God that they are given the privilege of participating in. And unfortunately when this happens it makes it so that they are easily subject to becoming either apathetic or neglectful of participating in God’s operations. Or they may even abuse or misuse them.

Once again as Paul's epistles to the Corinthians testify, this frequently occurred with many of them in connection with a number of God's operations, including being "ambassadors for Christ."

The Root of Our Problem

With respect to our ambassadorship a common root to our problem is that many of us have not learned, (and so do not fully realize), just *how great* an honour and a privilege it is for us to labour together with God as "ambassadors for Christ." Yes, we acknowledge the privilege per se, but this is about as far as we usually go. However we should acknowledge much more than this. For not only is there more for us to understand about each and every privileged opportunity that we have to labour together with God in one of His operations, but as God's "sons" we are expected to investigate each of our Father's operations in order to learn more about them. This is a natural part of our sonship responsibility, as well as an important part of our sonship education; though we often neglect it, or overlook it.

Yet when we as 'wise sons' do investigate an operation, we come to realize much more about it. In particular we learn that there are matters of grandeur and glory belonging to each of God's operations. What's more as we learn about an operation's grandeur and its glory, and as we come to deeply appreciate them, this in turn works to produce within us a strong and compelling zeal and delight for participating in the operation. For this knowledge deeply impresses us with just *how great* an honour and a privilege it is for us to labour together with God in the operation.

Now when it comes to our ambassadorship we usually have no trouble seeing things like the reason

for it, or appreciating its worthwhile nature. However its grandeur and glory, (especially the grandeur of what it means to be an ambassador and the glory that is behind this privilege), often either escape our attention completely, or our understanding and our appreciation of them are weak.

So this, once again, is often the root of our problem. And since we have failed to perceive the grandeur and glory of our ambassadorship, our hearts have come short of being fully penetrated by, and overcome by, what in truth can only be spoken of as the *indescribable honour* that it is for us to be "ambassadors for Christ." Consequently we often lack the full measure of godly zeal and enthusiasm, with its constraining and compelling force, that participating in this *indescribable honour* is designed to produce within us.

The Solution to Our Problem

A direct-fix-solution to our problem resides in what Paul says to the Corinthians in II Corinthians 5:12-6:2. For in this passage Paul has reason to describe both the grandeur and the glory belonging to our ambassadorship, as he deals with a particular tactic of the policy of evil that is designed to dampen our enthusiasm when it comes to telling others about "the gospel of Christ."

This then is a passage that addresses our problem of lacking zeal. And regardless of whether our lack of zeal has always existed, or whether we have acquired it as the result of discouragement, or dejection, or disappointment, or intimidation, the doctrine that Paul sets forth is able to remedy it.

Wherefore let us briefly look at this passage in order to understand and appreciate the basics of the grandeur and glory of our ambassadorship. This will at least allow them to

begin to impact our hearts, as well as begin to generate within us their compelling motivation and irrepressible zeal.

II Corinthians 5:12-6:2

¹² For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance and not in heart.

¹³ For whether we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause. (II Corinthians 5:12-13)

As the opening verses to this passage relate, Paul was being criticized, even slandered, by ones who not only disagreed with what he preached, but who also found fault with his enthusiasm for preaching it. They were saying that he must be "beside" himself, both mentally and emotionally, in view of the message that he preaches, and especially in view of the zeal and passion with which he preaches it.

Now Paul himself was not upset or unduly bothered by this criticism. He did not find it to be a cause for shame or disgrace. Nor did he respond to it as if it was a discrediting stigma. He, therefore, was not intimidated by it, as his detractors (and the policy of evil) hoped would be the case.

Yet it was a different story with many of the Corinthians, particularly when they found themselves being criticized as well. They felt ashamed to know that others thought that they were "beside" themselves. Because of this many of them 'pulled back,' so to speak, and were no longer preaching "the gospel of Christ." They were bullied by this kind of criticism, being intimidated by its innuendo. What enthusiasm they used to have was now dampened,

being overpowered and displaced by the discomfort they felt in their minds from being criticized. Their minds were now gripped by the uneasiness of their own self-consciousness. And with this being so, their own preaching of the gospel had more or less ground to a halt.

Once again, however, this was not the case with Paul. Though he experienced the same intimidating criticism, (and actually did so far more frequently than the Corinthians), it did not dampen his enthusiasm and zeal at all. For Paul had something powerful and effectual working within him, which successfully withstood the zeal-robbing intimidation. Moreover it was something that God has specifically designed to enable every saint to ‘despise the shame’ that such criticisms are designed to produce, and thereby to be able to enthusiastically continue on in spite of it.

Now because of this, neither the Corinthians nor we ourselves need to lack enthusiasm, or be robbed of it, when it comes to telling others about “the gospel of Christ.” All we need is to have the same thing operating within us as operated within Paul.

And what powerfully operated within Paul was the thrill of what it meant for him to be an ambassador for Christ. Compared to this, the ‘slings and arrows’ of criticisms, slander, reproach, ridicule, and the like, meant nothing to him. And this is the way it should be with us as well.

Sober, Not Beside Himself

As Paul begins dealing with this intimidating criticism, he opens with a declaration which makes it evident that he is by no means “beside” himself at all, neither mentally or emotionally. Instead he is perfectly “so-

ber” on both counts. For both his mental judgment and his emotional judgment are sound, being logically based, just as he shows.

¹⁴ For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

¹⁵ And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. (II Corinthians 5:14–15)

Then after making this opening statement, Paul takes up these two components to the criticism and deals with them in detail. Whereupon in verses 14–17 he first pointedly shows

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and proves the perfect soberness and sound logic that there is to *what he preaches*. Even though his message says things that are radically different from what has been preached before, nevertheless it is sound and truthful in view of what God has now revealed that He has done through Christ.

¹⁶ Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

¹⁷ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (II Corinthians 5:16–17)

Indeed what Paul, (and we), are given to preach is perfectly logical and sound. In fact in view of what

God has done through, with, and in Christ, it is the *only* message that is perfectly logical and sound. Wherefore we need not be intimidated by any criticisms, reproaches, and/or slander to the contrary.

But then in verses 18–21 Paul goes on to show the perfect soberness and sound logic that there is in *his irrepressible zeal to preach his gospel*. And this now is where we need to focus our attention. For once again we too ought to have the same irrepressible zeal as Paul did.

Our Reason For Irrepressible Zeal

¹⁸ And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (II Corinthians 5:18–19)

The particular aspect of “the love of Christ” that constrained Paul to the point of producing an irrepressible zeal for preaching “the gospel of Christ,” was his realization of what God did when He gave “to us the ministry of reconciliation”; when He “committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” And what Paul realized is that God has given unto us the most phenomenal ministry that He has given unto any of His people. Likewise He has committed unto us the most phenomenal message that He has committed to anyone. And indeed this is just what God has done.

Think of this! And think of the privilege! God, (who brought in this astounding dispensational change with its gospel that Christ “died for all,” and with its “new creature,” and with its glorious ‘new things’; and

who has “reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ” making us a part of His “new creature”), has actually given to us “the ministry of reconciliation.” In other words He has given to us the amazing privilege of being the very ones who actually inform men of the magnificence of what He has done and what He is doing. What a phenomenal honour! For God did not want to give this “ministry” unto angels, or even unto a select group of specially chosen men. But He gave it unto each of us whom He has ‘reconciled unto Himself by Jesus Christ.’

Moreover not only do we have the privilege of this “ministry,” but in connection with it God has committed unto us “the word of reconciliation” — i.e. the very “word,” or message, that has the power to personally reconcile a man to God before it is too late. Wherefore we have the further amazing honour of being entrusted with, and being preachers of, the very message which is God’s ‘power unto salvation,’ and by which a man passes from death unto life upon believing it. What a thrilling ministry!

Even More Phenomenal

This, however, is not all. There is something that makes this privilege all the more honourable and phenomenal; all the more thrilling. And it is the fact that we were granted this privilege by God our Father *at the specific request of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself*. For the truth of the matter is that our Lord, out of His great love for us, asked His Father that we be given the privilege of being His spokesmen and representatives. The Lord, therefore, actually wants us to personally represent Him and help Him.

For this reason we are called “ambassadors *for Christ*.” Not simply because we represent Him; and

certainly not because of any inability on Christ’s part. But especially because the Lord specifically requested that we be honoured with the privilege of helping Him.

Now it exceeds the limits of this article to deal with the glory of this matter in any amount of detail. Yet suffice it to say that the Lord requested of His Father that we be able to represent Him in this present dispensation of grace, in much the same manner as He had previously requested that the saints of the remnant of Israel represent Him in the final stage of God’s program with Israel.

Simply put, in accordance with the Lord’s accomplishment of His re-

There is something that makes this privilege all the more honourable and phenomenal; all the more thrilling.

demptive work, and in accordance with the need to offer the benefits of His redemption to the ones needing it, the Lord exercised His right to enlist help in heralding the good news of His redemption and in bestowing its benefits. And in both the climactic stage in Israel’s program, and in this present dispensation of God’s grace, the Lord requested that the help not come from the angels, or any other creature. Instead He requested that it come from the very ones who become beneficiaries of His redemption.

Wherefore in the climactic stage in Israel’s program the Lord speaks of His disciples as ones who have been given to Him of His Father, especially in connection with their role of ministering to Israel for Him once

He returned to the Father. For this cause the Lord’s disciples functioned in accordance with what He had declared back in the prophets when He said...

¹⁸ Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion. (Isaiah 8:18)

As Christ said, the “children” of the remnant were “given” to Him. And indeed they were, especially when it came to labouring with Him in His Father’s business. For the Lord requested of His Father that they be given to Him for this very purpose.

So it was, then, that the “children” of the remnant had the privilege of representing the Lord, and of speaking for Him, during Israel’s prophesied ‘accepted time’ and during their ‘day of salvation,’ just as the opening chapters of the book of Acts relate. And this truly was a phenomenal honour and privilege for them.

Now think of this. If it was a phenomenal honour and privilege for the remnant of Israel to have the Lord Jesus Christ request their help in bringing to pass the operations of God during Israel’s “accepted time” and “day of salvation,” how much more of a thrilling thing would it be for a similar kind of privilege to be granted to ones who are not even of God’s nation? Obviously much more. For if such an honour and privilege is phenomenal to the ones to whom it naturally belonged, much more would such an honour be phenomenal and thrilling to ones to whom no such right belonged. In fact it would not only be phenomenal and thrilling, it would be astoundingly so. For the honour would be given to ones who had no sort of expectation whatsoever of being so honoured, or even of ever being able to be so honoured.

Yet as astounding as this would be, this is exactly what has occurred with us. For we, (who in “time past” were twice-dead Gentiles in the flesh), have now been graciously honoured with the opportunity to be labourers together with God in His operations in this present dispensation. In another, yet unprophesied, “accepted time” and “day of salvation.”

Wherefore we, who had absolutely no hope of such an opportunity ever occurring, ought to be awe-struck by the glory of the privilege, to say the least. Our hearts should ‘skip a beat,’ so to speak, as we come to grips with the glory of what this means to us.

Irrepressible Zeal Indeed

Such, then, is the gist of the grandeur that belongs to the privilege of the “ministry” that we have of preaching “the word of reconciliation” unto others; as well as the basic appreciation we should have for the glory of “the love of Christ” behind the privilege.

No wonder it captivated and thrilled Paul’s heart! No wonder “the love of Christ” behind it constrained him as it did, filling him with irrepressible zeal and enthusiasm for telling others about “the gospel of Christ.” For as this thrill penetrated and filled Paul’s heart, it took over and it could not be budged or displaced from its position of ‘being in the driver’s seat,’ so to speak, within him.

Wherefore the criticism that he was “beside” himself, either mentally or emotionally, or both, could not dampen Paul’s zeal or trodden down his enthusiasm. Such criticisms and reproaches were no match for the thrill generated by the honour and the privilege that it was for him to be the Lord Jesus Christ’s personal representative and spokesman. Hence his

zeal to witness was irrepressible indeed.

Unabashed Ambassadors

Therefore, instead of withering or wilting in the face of such criticism; instead of being ashamed one whit of being as zealous as he was to preach “the word of reconciliation”; Paul both gloried in the privilege and he passionately went about fulfilling it, just as he proclaims.

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.

²¹ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (II Corinthians 5:20–21)

“Ambassadors *for Christ*” is what we are, just as Paul joyfully and unabashedly declares. And in view of just *how great* the honour and the privilege of our ministry is, the title ‘ambassador’ truly describes exactly what we are, as well as the passion with which we should carry out our ministry.¹

For in meaning the title first of all denotes the official and serious nature of our ministry, and the glory of the fact that we represent a sovereign. And in being Christ’s “ambassadors” we truly do officially represent Him, being sanctioned and commissioned by God the Father in connection with the glory of the Lord’s request.

Also in accordance with an ambassadorial ministry, we have serious and urgent business to conduct on our Sovereign’s behalf. We have the serious and urgent ministry of bearing God’s glorious good news — “the word of reconciliation” — to ones who are at odds with Him; who are in a hostile position to Him; and who are subject at any time to being judged by Him for being His enemies.

In addition to this, the title also denotes the fact that the ambassador has the honour of *personally* representing his sovereign to others; i.e. of authentically standing in his stead. He, therefore, presents himself to others as one who possesses the very same mind and attitude that his lord has to them, and he acts with the very same fervent zeal, passion, and/or emotion towards them with which his lord would act. This is something that an ambassador is able to do because he has been directly schooled by his sovereign so that he has his lord’s frame of mind and attitude; so that he possesses his very desires and passions; so that he speaks and acts in the very same way that his sovereign does; thereby making it so that as an ambassador he can authentically, faithfully, and effectually represent his sovereign, even to the point of eliciting the same kind of response from his hearers as his sovereign would receive.²

Wherefore being Christ’s “ambassadors” we too have received such an education and training from Him.³ Whereby we are enabled by Him to speak for Him accurately, and to act for Him appropriately, as we authentically and personally represent Him to His enemies.

Now when we understand and appreciate all of this, and more, our hearts should be filled with the thrill of the great honour that it is for us to be “ambassadors *for Christ*.”

So then in accordance with this thrill, and particularly in accordance with being taught by God our Father to have His and our Lord’s desire and passion, we (as Paul) should zealously and passionately preach to men “as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” For by no means is such passionate ‘beseeching’ and ‘praying’ the product of ab-

normal emotional fanaticism. Rather it is perfectly logical in view of the great honour of our ambassadorship, and it is the very kind of passion that should be expected from ones who are soberly constrained by “the love of Christ.”

Silent Ambassadors No More

As was pointed out earlier, many of the Corinthians, (like many of us), either lacked real zeal for their ambassadorship all along, or the criticism of being “beside” themselves robbed them of what zeal they had. But from what Paul has set forth, clearly this does not need to be the case with them, or with us, anymore. Instead we should be enthusiastic ambassadors, being overwhelmed in our hearts by the lofty honour of our privileged ministry and filled with an irrepressible zeal to carry it out.

So then with Paul now having given us the godly remedy to our lack of zeal; and in view of the power of its effectual working within us to overcome our inertia; Paul now exhorts us — no, he ‘beseeches’ us — to be silent ambassadors no more.

¹ We then, as workers together *with him*, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

² (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) (II Corinthians 6:1–2)

Being the properly thrilled and fervent worker with God that Paul was, he now earnestly beseeches us not to receive this “grace of God in vain.” Not to remain silent anymore. Not to continue to have little, or no, participation in the grace of our ambassadorship.

And without a doubt, for us to receive this “grace of God in vain” any longer would not only be completely inconsistent with the great honour that it is for us to be “ambassadors for Christ,” it would also be a direct repudiation of our Father’s *personal appeal* to us to stop being a silent ambassador. For as Paul goes on to relate in verse 2, our Father Himself now concludes this beseeching by *personally and individually* appealing to us by saying,...

² (..., I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) (II Corinthians 6:2)

Indeed God the Father did hear both you and I “in a time accepted.” And “in the day of salvation” He “succoured” us, just as He says. In doing so He not only reconciled us unto Himself when we responded positively

to His “word of reconciliation,” but He also granted His Son’s request regarding us that we be honoured with the privilege of helping Him spread the “word of reconciliation” to others as His ambassadors.

Wherefore our Father says to us, “Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.” And indeed it still is. Therefore we need to act like the “ambassadors *for Christ*” that we are, and enthusiastically labour together with God in His operation of evangelism, before it is no longer “the accepted time”; before it is no longer “the day of salvation.”

Two Questions Remain

Now this has only been a brief and simple look at the grandeur and the glory of our ambassadorship for Christ, and at the lack of zeal for it that many of us possess. Nevertheless it has directed our attention to God’s remedy to our problem, and it has described in gist-form the effectual working of that remedy. And though only briefly described, (with many details not even touched upon), clearly the honour we have of being “ambassadors for Christ” is a lofty one, being of the highest order. Without a doubt the full grandeur of the privilege is indescribable; the glory behind it is purely amazing; and its grace is ineffable.

Wherefore two questions remain: *Have you been one who has been receiving this “grace of God in vain?”* And if so, *For how much longer are you going to do so?*

— K. R. Blades

1. Today’s use of the word “ambassador” is much broader than it used to be. Because of this it has lost some of the features and characteristics and qualities that belonged to its former and more restricted use.

2. Though not completely gone from today’s use of the word, in former times an “ambassador” knew that he was so closely tied to the one whom he represented that to receive him was to receive his lord. Likewise to disregard him, or even hate him, was to do the same to his lord. In fact an ambassador knew that his representation was so authentic and so real, that he could be killed by anyone who hated his sovereign; seeing that he actually and genuinely stood in his sovereign’s stead, and thereby personally, officially, and with manifest like-mindedness, spoke for and acted for his sovereign.

3. This is the very thing that Romans 1–5 does for us, as it educates us in how to be unashamed, faithful, and effectual “ambassadors for Christ” with “the gospel of Christ.”

“rightly dividing the word of truth” II Timothy 2:15

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