



I. INTRO

1 Corinthians 15:3-10 (NKJV) ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. ⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was with me.*

- God is not impressed by what the world thinks it knows. God is impressed by what you know about the grace you are given and the works it produces

II. NOW IS THE TIME TO BE FAITHFUL

- A. Paul delivered three basic truths:
 1. Christ's death for our sins
 2. Christ's burial
 3. Christ's resurrection
- B. He reminded them of other witnesses
- C. He acknowledged the grace of God in his life

2 Corinthians 12:9 (AMP) but He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you [My lovingkindness and My mercy are more than enough—always available—regardless of the situation]; for [My] power is being perfected [and is completed and shows itself most effectively] in [your] weakness." Therefore, I will all the more gladly boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ [may completely enfold me and] may dwell in me.

- It's not what we alone can do, but what we by the grace of God can do

Psalm 147:10-11 (NCV) ¹⁰ He is not impressed with the strength of a horse or with human might. ¹¹ The LORD is pleased with those who respect him, with those who trust his love.

III. NOW IS THE TIME TO TRUST GOD'S LOVE

"God's strength behind you, His concern for you, His love within you, and His arms beneath you are more than sufficient for the job ahead of you." — William Arthur Ward

Galatians 2:20 (NLT) My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1 Corinthians 3:10 (NKJV) According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

- People steeped in idolatry, debauchery, demonic manifestations, and immoral lifestyles were face to face with truth as Paul ministered

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 (Phillips) Now to deal with the matter of meat which has been sacrificed to idols. It is not easy to think that we "know" over problems like this, but we should remember that while knowledge may make a man look big, it is only love that can make him grow to his full stature. For whatever a man may know, he still has a lot to learn, but if he loves God, he is opening his whole life to the Spirit of God.



A. Love was needed for the church to succeed

- Love and knowledge working together can build up, edify and strengthen a church, a family, an organization, etc.
- Love will surpass knowledge (Eph 3:19)
- Love will fulfill the law (Rom 13:10)
- The Holy Spirit fills our hearts with His Love (Rom 5:5)

Acts 17:18 (NKJV) Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, “What does this babbler want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,” because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

IV. NOW IS THE TIME TO SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES

A. Babblers = “Seed Picker”

“I will permit no man to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him.” — Booker T. Washington

- B. Paul didn't give offense a place**
- C. Paul didn't let challenges stop him**

Acts 17:20-21 (TPT) ²⁰ You're presenting strange and astonishing things to our ears, and we want to know what it all means. ²¹ Now, it was the favorite pastime of the Athenians and visitors to Athens to discuss the newest ideas and philosophies.

- D. When we understand our position in Christ and stay open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we will be able to seize our opportunities. We will recognize “Divine Appointments”**

Acts 17:24-26 (TPT) ²⁴ The true God is the Creator of all things. He is the owner and Lord of the heavenly realm and the earthly realm, and he doesn't live in man-made temples. ²⁵ He supplies life and breath and all things to every living being. He doesn't lack a thing that we mortals could supply for him, for he has all things and everything he needs. ²⁶ From one man, Adam, He made every man and woman and every race of humanity, and He spread us over all the earth. He sets the boundaries of people and nations, determining their appointed times in history.

- E. We are placed in the earth with God's plan and purpose for our lives to worship, honor and bring Him glory, if we will only believe, receive and do His will!**

Acts 17:27 (TPT) He has done this so that every person would long for God, feel their way to him, and find him—for He is the God who is easy to discover!

- If we remain open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, He will bring opportunities our way. He will give us the right words at the right time to make a difference in someone's life. It could be a stranger we've never met, but God has us at this place in history together. It's our time NOW.

V. NOW IS THE TIME TO OVERCOME OUR EXCUSES

“Whatever God has designed for man, we must claim it now. We will always have greater demonstrations of power if we are living in the now instead of in the future. We must experience a now power, a now blessing, a now God, a now heaven, a now glory, a now virtue.” — Smith Wigglesworth