

2 Corinthians

6:3-7:1

1. **In 3-13, what was important to Paul and why?** Paul wanted nothing to hinder God's work. See 1 Cor 2:1-5 and 9:19-27.
 - a. He viewed himself as a servant of God (6:4).
 - b. He trusted that God would glorify Himself through His ministry in all circumstances (Phil 3:7).
 - c. He did not want to be a stumbling block or cause of needless offense.

2. **From 3-13, in what situations did Paul and his fellow workers seek to glorify God?**

Wow, there is a lot here. As Paul describes his "triumphal" ministry, we see the full range of things that he and his coworkers experienced: in great endurance (steadfastness, which comes by God's power), troubles ("afflictions"), hardships, distress ("narrow places," straits - things that hem them in), beatings (1 Cor 4:11, 2 Cor 11:23-24, Gal 6:17) imprisonments, riots (Act 16:19-23), hard work, sleepless nights, hunger, purity, understanding, patience (having a "long fuse"), kindness (and all this steadiness in good and bad is a fruit of the Spirit's work in our lives). Sincere ("unmixed," "without hypocrisy") love, truthful speech, trust in God (weapons of righteousness), glory, dishonor, bad and good report, genuine yet regarded as false, known yet regarded as unknown, dying yet still living, beaten yet not dead, sorrowful yet rejoicing, poor yet making many rich and having everything yet possessing nothing. Through thick and thin they soldiered on!

 - a. **In what ways do stress and hardship reveal who a person truly is?** Under stress the "vener" peels away and they are seen more easily for who they truly are. The Corinthians *knew* Paul and had observed him and his companions closely over time.
 - b. **In what way does relative peace and fruitful labor reveal the same thing?** Success can also reveal a person's true character. Many will lean on God in hard times but in good times they can rely on their own wits and strength. Nothing is static and through change, a person is truly known (e.g., 1 Tim 5:17-25).
 - c. **In what way does perseverance in and through all circumstances reveal it?** We see a person's character and commitment lived out as they struggle on through adversity and as they enjoy success.

3. **From 6:11-13, what charge is Paul seeming to be defending his ministry against?** He wasn't flashy, outwardly always triumphing, famous etc. Just faithful and consistent. The Corinthians needed to consider his way of life and fruit.

4. **6:14-7:1 is often used to warn believers against being unequally yoked with unbelievers. This principle certainly does apply to romantic relationships and business partnerships but that is not the main thrust of this passage. Consider the context and write down what you think God, speaking through Paul is getting at?** We should guard against any activity or relationship that would involve spiritual compromise, especially with false teaching/teachers. The Corinthian believers were tolerating and cooperating with teachers of a questionable authenticity. These men called themselves "super apostles" (11:5, 12:11) and were servants of the enemy (11:13-15). Paul was telling them to get clear of these apostates. Yes, the principle also applies to romantic relationships, business relationships or any connection that would engender spiritual compromise.

