

A CALL FOR CHANGE
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2 Corinthians 5:14-6:2
November 11-13, 2005

Introduction

What a great congregation we have. We are blessed with gifted teachers and worship leaders. We are blessed to be here.

Friday, as I was getting ready to come here, I was in prayer and in deep thought. I was walking to my car (yes, it is OK to pray and to walk!). I got into my car and I continued to pray. I was just thinking about God. I was thinking about what an amazing God we serve.

I was thinking about the first time, eight years ago, that I walked into this congregation. I sat in the back. I doubted anything the teacher Zac had to say about God and about this Yeshua. Those of you who knew me then, you know that I had a big afro, and I was a pretty crazy, angry young man. I was thinking about what God has done in my life over eight years.

Look at me now! I am thankful that I can be here today and share from God's word. I am on stage, going to share with you about the same God that I had rejected, that same God I had blamed for a lot of things in my life. We serve an awesome God! We serve a God who is real and who is mighty.

Not long ago, during one of my trips to Israel, my dad asked me a question that made me think. He said, "Moran, let's say that I have accepted the fact that you believe in Yeshua (which is an amazing praise report for me, the fact that my dad accepts the fact that I believe Yeshua), but one thing I don't understand: Why do you have to tell every person in this world about Yeshua? Why do you desire each person to believe in this Yeshua? Why can't you keep your faith to yourself? Why do you want to see everyone else believe in this Yeshua?" And that's an amazing question, a very important question for us as believers to think about.

So I answered my dad with a simple question: "Dad, let's say you discovered four steps to get one million dollars. You knew for sure that if you took those four steps, you would get one million dollars. You knew that whoever took those four steps would also be sure to get one million dollars. Would you keep it to yourself, or would you also share it with all your family and friends, knowing that if you shared with them those four steps, they too would get one million dollars?"

"Well, of course I would share it with my family and friends," he replied.

"Well, Dad, I have found something worth much more than a million dollars. I got my life back. I found my hope. You say that you know two persons in the same son. You know the Moran before he believed in this Yeshua, and you know the Moran after he accepted Yeshua as his Messiah. And those two are completely different people.

"You say that you like the new Moran more than the old Moran; you like the one after accepting Yeshua much more, the one who is at least trying to honor his father and mother, and you want me to keep it to myself? You want me to deny the person who has done this in my life? I desire every person in this world to receive the same gift that I have gotten. I want every person to come to know the God of the universe, the creator of the world, and to be in a personal relationship with Him."

This made me think of some questions: Do we have hope as believers? Do we see something different in our lives? In the last few weeks, I've been thinking a lot about this: Who are we as

believers? What does it mean when I say, "I believe in Yeshua"? What is our job and role in this world? If we have hope in Yeshua, does it show in our lives?

What does it mean when you sing, "This is my desire: to honor You. Lord, with all my heart, I worship You. With all I have within me, I give You praise."

Does it mean anything? Do you mean those words that you just sang? Or are those merely empty words that really mean nothing because the minute we leave through those doors, our lives aren't committed?

Today we will touch those issues. We will talk about the key for making a difference in this world.

But before we go any further, I would like to ask you to open your heart to what God may have to tell you today personally, for each of you. Today, if you hear something you know the person next to you needs to listen to, try not to give them an elbow, but be open to what God may be telling you. Some of what I will say today may cause you some pain, convict you, touch you. Please be open to the work of the Holy Spirit [Ruach HaKodesh].

A lot of times when we hear a message that convicts us from our teacher Zac, especially from Zac, the first thing we do is we point fingers. If he says something that makes us angry, uneasy, we think he is directing it at us personally. "You said this personally against me! How dare you? You don't know what I am dealing with!" We say, "How dare you speak to me that way?" "How dare you say that to me?" How often do we stop and we ask God, "God, are you trying to tell me something here today through Zac?" "Are You trying to speak to me?" Zac does not have any personal issue with anyone here, but is a man of God who comes here to speak the Word of God.

We need to say, "God, maybe You want me to change in that area. Maybe there is a certain area where You want me to grow." It doesn't matter how many years you've been a believer. Every day we need to grow.

It doesn't matter how many times I've spoken in places all over the world. Every time, before I speak, I'd be sitting over there on the side and I'll be nervous. Because I am here to put myself aside and allow God to speak through me, and I want to make sure that it is God's word that is spoken.

So please be open to the work of the Holy Spirit.

This morning is a call for change in our lives.

I would like to show you a small clip from a DVD called "Forbidden Peace". "Forbidden Peace" is the story of Israelis and Palestinians. These are Israelis and Palestinians who used to fight against one another, who used to be on opposite sides of the fence. But something happened to these Israelis and Palestinians on this DVD. The God of the universe, who is sitting up there, laughing at human efforts to bring peace, because all human efforts have failed and will fail, takes enemies, reconciles them to Himself, gives them a new heart, and then reconciles them to each other. He has given them love for one another. That is the story of Forbidden Peace. This is the story of the God of the Universe.

[DVD clip]

The key for making a difference in the world!

Hatred is sin, and sin is not acceptable to God.

Let's pray. Father, I thank You for the great privilege of being here. I ask You, Lord, that You would open our hearts to receive Your wisdom. Lord, I pray that You would change our hearts and draw us closer to You. Lord, if anyone here does not know You today, I pray that today would be the day of salvation, that today would be the day that they come to know in a personal way the God of the universe. And I pray that I may put myself aside and that You speak through me and that You be glorified, for Your name's sake, in the name of Yeshua, our Messiah. Amen.

Looking at Lisa's story, one might ask, how can she forgive the person who tried to kill her son? What gives her the power to do so? What gives her the right to do so?

People ask me, "How can you forgive the Arab people, the Palestinian people?" About ten years ago, a few of my close friends died in a suicide attack in Israel. People ask me, "What gives you the right to forgive them?" The answer is found in understanding God's Word and His will for our lives.

The choice between the "I" way or "Yah" way.

We have two choices in life: the "I" way or the "Yah" way. "Yah" is God. The "Yah" way is God's way. It's my way or God's way. Every day, every moment of our lives, we need to make a choice whether we go the "I" way or God's way.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15: It was Messiah's love toward us that brought here.

¹⁴For the love of Messiah controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Or, as the NIV says, *He who died for them and was raised again.*

If we understand verses 14 and 15—really understand them—then we will understand the foundation of one of the most important things for us as believers: it was God's love toward us that brought each one of us here today. He brought each one of us to a personal relationship with the God of the universe.

Ephesians 1:4

⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him In love

Think of Zac's teachings about the Tabernacle and the holiness of God. If the priest would walk into the Tabernacle into Holy of Holies and there was any sin in him, he would die right in that place. He would be struck dead.

It's that same holy God that chose You and I to be His children and brought us here. The mighty God of the universe, who chose me, who chose each one of us who profess with our mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and made us His children. It's not a different God. It's that same God who made us His children. It's not a different God; it's the same God. It's the same God who has chosen you and me. I am in awe. How can it be?

What does it mean for me when I say, "I believe"?

When we say, "We believe," when we say, "We follow," what does it mean? Are these just empty words? Is it OK to say, "I believe in Yeshua," and it really means nothing, that I can do whatever I want? If I say, "I believe in Yeshua," does it mean I can do anything I want?

When I was just a few weeks old in my faith, I was riding in a car with someone who called himself a follower of Yeshua and we had a debate I'll never forget for the rest of my life. We were talking about sin. The debate was over the fact that he said, "Well, now that I believe in Yeshua, I can do whatever I want. I can do what I want because He has forgiven me." He declared, "I can cheat. I can use drugs. I can drink. I can lie. I can steal. I can do these things because I believe in Yeshua and He's forgiven my past, present, and future sins. That means I can do whatever I want" Even as a young believer, this did not sound right to me. It did not make sense to me that I could do whatever I want.

Let me suggest that if you say that, you need to question your relationship with the God of the universe. If you believe that, something is wrong in your life. You don't know the same God I know. I'm not here to condemn anyone. I am here today to share with you about the God of the universe, who He is and what He is, and what is our role in this world.

If we say we believe in Yeshua, let me suggest that what we are saying is that we died with Him. It means death. It means death to myself. It means death to my wants, death to "I want," death to the "I" word. We died to the "I" word, and "can't" and "won't." Once again, we have to choose that it's the "I" way, but the "Yah" way. It's not about you and me. It's all about God and His glory, according to 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.

It's death to one of our favorite words: But. That's one of our favorite words.

"But you don't understand. When I woke up this morning, my wife did not make me coffee. How can I forgive her?"

"But you don't understand. When my husband came home, he didn't give me a kiss."

"But you don't understand what my dad told me today..." or, "But you don't know what my mom told me," or, "But you don't understand what my child told me."

"But you don't understand. My neighbor today told me that I am a fool because I believe in Yeshua."

Yes, I do understand. I understand the covenant you made with God. What I understand is that when you say you believe in Him, you are saying you died with him. Your life is no longer about you, but about Him and His glory. Now you need to react according to what He wants you to do, for His glory. If your wife didn't make you coffee, you go and make coffee for yourself and for her. If your husband didn't give you a kiss, you go and give him a kiss.

Can you imagine if someone does evil to you and you told them, "I love you," and they laughed at you and continued to do evil to you? And you continue to tell them, "I love you." If someone treats you wrongly, you need to reply in love. The Bible says not to repay evil for evil. If your neighbor laughs at you, you go bring him flowers or send him chocolates. If you do it one time, then a second time, and then a third time, one day, he will start to acknowledge the fact that you love him, although he tried to treat you badly. He will appreciate it. He will ask, "What enables him to still love me?" It may be your love for that person that God will use to bring that person to Himself and into the Kingdom of God.

We died with Him, and now we are no longer to live for ourselves but for Him and His glory.

We made a covenant with God.

Understand that we made a covenant with Him.

The Hebrew word for "covenant" is b'rit.

A couple of weeks ago, I was in a room with my wife and my sweet, little, precious newborn baby son. His name is Oriah. "Or" means "light" and "Yah" is one of the names for God. He has definitely brought light to us. There was one more person in the room, and his job was the moel. The moel is the one who does the circumcision. In the photograph I have here of Oriah, he is smiling, but that was before the circumcision, not after.

So we stood in the room with this guy, who gave us instructions, told us what he was going to do, how the ceremony was going to go, how he was going to read from the Bible, and he turned to me and asked me, "Moran, would you like to do the actual circumcision?"

Ouch! I looked at him and I asked, "What if I miss? My boy will blame me and hold it against me for the rest of my life!"

But then he told me, "Don't worry: It will be OK. I will arrange it in a way that you cannot do any damage. Only one other father before you has agreed to do it, but no pressure!"

Well, after praying about it, I agreed to do it. I decided to go for it. I like challenges. It was not scary. I can speak freely about it because God told the children of Israel to do this to their children and I obeyed God. When we obey God He gives us the power to do it. It was a great honor for me to do it. It was a great honor for me to welcome my son to join the children of Israel. Through this covenant, my son joined the children of Israel, because that's God's commandment to us.

I was thinking about the b'rit [the term "b'rit" is also used to refer to the circumcision ceremony itself, since this is the means by which one enters into the Covenant with God]. In order for Oriah to join the children of Israel, something had to die. A small piece of skin had to die in order for him to join the family of Israel.

I was thinking about us as believers. In order for us to join the Kingdom of God, something had to die. I would suggest that not only did the Messiah have to die, but we also have to die to ourselves in order for us to join the Kingdom of God.

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

We hear terms among believers like, "Walk in the Spirit."

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? Many people will say that to walk in the Spirit means love, joy, peace, faithfulness, self-control. Is this what it means to walk in the Spirit or are these the fruit of walking in the Spirit, the result of our actually walking in the Spirit?

Let me suggest that walking in the Spirit means total surrender to God and His Word and full submission to God and His Word. When we understand this, this is how we can start to live for Him and make a difference in this world. This is how we can start to love those who do evil to us, and pray for those who hurt us or persecute us.

I met a guy from Syria, a sweet man with a beautiful smile. But something was wrong with his body: his right arm was bent backwards at the shoulder. I asked him, "What happened to you?"

He told me, "They took me to jail in Syria and they tortured me and they broke my arm in such a way that it will never be able to recover."

I asked him a question: "Have you ever forgiven those who did this to you?"

He had a beautiful smile and he replied, "I forgave them before they did it to me," because he understood his relationship with God.

Do you understand your relationship with God?

Do we understand our relationship with God?

Do we understand the covenant that we made with God and His call for our lives? When we understand our covenant with God and His call for our lives, we can do as it says in Matthew 5:44-50:

⁴⁴"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶"For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

"If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Turn to each other and say, "You are to be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect."

And now that you point fingers, look at yourself and say, "I am to be perfect, just as my heavenly Father is perfect."

Live for the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17: We are new in Messiah

¹⁶So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Messiah in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

I have a very simple way to explain these verses. At one point in my life, I was an angry man, "over there," on "that side." I was full of anger, full of sin, full of bitterness, unable to love, unable to forgive people. Most importantly, I was unable to have a relationship with God. I didn't know God, didn't care about God, doubted God. But then something happened to me. The God of the universe, the Almighty, my Messiah, called me, and I said "yes" to Him. I said I believed in Him. Now I have moved "over here" and I have died to myself. Now I am a new creation, free to love, free to honor my father and mother, free to love my wife, free to love my enemies—those who persecute me.

Something else has happened. Here's my brother Jay. At one point in his life, he was "over there" also. Jay is Armenian. The same God, the same Messiah, the same Spirit, called Jay to His Kingdom, and he also said "yes" to this same God. And he also moved "here."

Now Jay and I are of the same family. Now I don't have to look upon Jay as an Armenian. I can look upon Jay not as an Armenian, but as a brother in the Lord. Now we are one in Messiah. Now we are new in Messiah. We are able to look at each other with new eyes, as brothers. Have you considered that the person sitting next to you is your brother, your sister?

We have a way for Jew and Gentile to be one in Messiah. We have a way, since He broke down the wall that separated us, to show love. We now can look at one another through the eyes of Messiah.

There is a way for Israelis and Armenians to be together and love one another, for black and white to be together and love one another, for North Korean and South Korean to be together and love one another, for Iraqis and Americans to be together and love one another.

We can show the world that there is hope, that there is a future. We can look at people who are still "over there" and yet to come to the Kingdom of God through Yeshua's eyes. We can treat people in a way that they would be drawn to the Kingdom of God. We can have love for them; we can have compassion for them. We can have understanding for them. We just have to remember that at one point, each one of us was "over there."

So, what does it mean? It means instead of looking with evil, judging eyes at same sex marriages, we are to pray for them; we are to set an example for them; we are to show them God's love. And maybe they will see there is something better, because we were no better than they. Or instead of looking at someone who is using drugs or is in a gang, or even is a terrorist, with evil eyes, we are to love them; we are to pray for them in hope that they will come "here."

In Israel, there are many people, Hamas members, Al Aksa Brigade members, and other members of terror organizations, who are accepting Yeshua as Messiah and Savior. They are taking their belts off and taking their Bibles and going and giving the good news to the rest of the Palestinian people. They don't care about their lives any more, because they didn't care before. Before, they were willing to die for a lie, but now how much more are they willing to die for the truth!

But it will take some of us to pray for them and love them in hope that they will come to the Kingdom. Because they don't know God; they don't know the truth. They don't know any better.

2 Corinthians 5:18: All this is from God

¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

These are not my words; all these things are from God!

Remember, we are to live for His glory. These are God's words.

2 Corinthians 5:18b-19: I have the ministry of reconciliation

...gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Messiah, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20a: I am an for kingdom

²⁰*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors,...*

Remember, we are to live for God and His glory. God Almighty, the one who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, chose you and I, and He has given each one of us here who says he believes in Him a mission. He gave a mission to all of us, not just to me because I'm in full time ministry, but to each one of us. It's not just the Chinese outreach or the Cambodia outreach or the Mexico Outreach. Each one of us here is in full time ministry. To each one of us, He has given a mission. Wherever you work, your work environment is a mission field where you can reach out to the lost. God has called you to reach people that I cannot. He called us to bring hope and good news to this world.

Look around us. Look at what is happening in the world. The world is falling apart! Look at Europe. Europe is on fire today. Look at the Middle East. The Middle East has always been on fire.

"But we live in America; we are safe!" We are not safe here. Have you turned on the TV lately? Look at the news. We see that one person got shot here; another person got shot there. We have a short memory: we forget what happened in New York on 9/11. There is no guarantee that it won't happen again. Why aren't we looking at what is happening in Florida, in the South, with the hurricanes? Bad news! Bad news! If we keep quiet, if we don't bring the good news to those who only see bad news, how would they know?

People ask, "Why don't people bring "Forbidden peace" to the media?" It's because the media don't want to bring good news; they only want to bring bad news. So we have to bring the good news to them. We have an important task as believers. We have good news and we need to start bringing that good news to this world.

We are therefore God's ambassadors. How do you represent God on this earth? Do people see God through your witness, through your life? The biggest blessing ever in my life was when an Israeli nonbeliever to whom I was witnessing was crying, and said to me, "Moran, I want to have what you have. I want to have that life. I want to have that hope! I want to have good news to share with people."

I told him, "Romans 10:9 says, ⁹*that if you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* If you want it, this is what you need to do. That's all you have to do. But it will cost you something." And he said "yes." And he joined the Kingdom of God. He saw something different in my life and he wanted it.

When was the last time you spoke up for God? Stood for what His Word says?

We just had an election here. Voting is an opportunity to take a stand for God. Did you take a stand for God? Look at what happened in California: Young kids now can choose about abortions. It grieves my heart. But I don't blame them: I look at us-- it starts from here. It's because we remain quiet. We don't go and explain to them that what they are doing is wrong. We spend more time being angry at that instead of praying and reaching out and explaining to them. Let's clean ourselves first and be what God wants us to be.

When was the last time that you shared with someone that there is good news? When was it?

There is good news; there is hope. You don't need to go to the bars to find comfort. You can

come to God. You don't have to go and use drugs to find comfort. You can come to God. The Holy Spirit will make you feel like you've never felt before.

God is making His appeal through us. We implore you on God's behalf: be reconciled to God. Be reconciled. If you don't know God in a personal way, I want to encourage you on God's behalf: be reconciled to God. I beg you: please be reconciled to God. You will see your whole life changed. You will get to know the creator of the universe. You will have a personal relationship with the God of the universe and He will give you power.

I am not going to lie. I am not going to tell you that your life will become perfect or that when you believe in Yeshua that your life will be wonderful and you will fly like an angel or that your life is going to be beautiful. No. You will have challenges. You will have trials. We are to be real. We deal with the same things that everyone else does.

We have the same fears, the same struggles. We deal with the same problems that everyone else does. But there is a difference. We have hope. We look at things above and not on earthly things. We look at God and His power. Because I know where I am going to be, it doesn't matter what happens to me.

People ask me, "Aren't you afraid to go to Israel?"

I ask, "Why? What's the worst that can happen? That I'll get to go and be with my Father?" Really! Let's put things in perspective!

If you don't believe in God, and you say in your heart, "there is no God," at least do one thing: I would ask you to ask Him, "God, are You there? If You are there, please show me." It's a simple question.

Romans 1:20 says:

²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

If you ask God to show you the truth, open your eyes and look around you. There is a reason why you are here today to hear this message. It's not a coincidence. It is so you would hear that there are no more excuses. God is real.

I haven't seen too many mothers who have the power to go forgive those who tried to kill her son.

I just had the great privilege of being with my wife in the hospital for 14 hours of labor, and then this small, wonderful creation of God came to this earth. I had the privilege to cut the cord of this precious little boy. I have a new appreciation for the word "life" as I saw life come into this world. I look at my son and ask, "How can anyone deny God when they look at such a wonderful creation? How can anyone deny God's creation?" How can we? There are no more excuses.

But I also understand because of that the love that Lisa has for her son. Already, I am thinking if someone gets near my son, "You can touch what you want, but stay away from this little one." But Lisa had the power to forgive those who tried to kill her son. The power to forgive is God's power.

Maybe you don't look for the truth. Our faith in God is not an easy way out. It is the people who deny God who find it easy to do so, because they know that if they believe, if they believe in God, it will cost them something. It's not enough to just say, "I believe." We need to follow what we say.

People say it is easy for us to believe because we are weak, we are poor people, we are needy. But it's not an easy way out to believe in Yeshua. It's not easy to go and continue to love and forgive those who persecute us. It's not easy to forgive those who do evil to us. It's not easy to love those who hurt us. It would be much easier to go do what everyone else does to those who do evil to you: to go punch them in the face. It's much easier to get angry when someone cuts you off on the freeway; that happens to everybody. It's not easy to bless them instead of curse them.

It's much easier to stay out, to stay in the world, and to say, "There is no God." That's much easier.

2 Corinthians 20b-21: Be reconciled to God

...as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Messiah's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

We all deserve death and separation from God. But because of His love for us, He gave us Yeshua as Kapporah for our sins, as an atonement for our sins. Yeshua is our Kapporah by the sprinkling of His blood—remember the Tabernacle.

700 years before Yeshua came to this world, the prophet Isaiah said, in Isaiah 53:4-6:

*⁴Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.*

*⁵But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.*

*⁶All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him.*

700 years after these words were given, Yeshua came to this earth and fulfilled this prophecy. The Prophet Isaiah spoke of what Yeshua would do. We need to study those prophecies so we could share them with others. You know, when I read those verses to Jewish nonbelievers, they say, "That's from the New Testament." No, that's not in the New Testament. That's in the Hebrew Scriptures.

There are no more excuses.

Brothers and sisters, those of us who do follow Yeshua, you cannot ignore God's words:

2 Corinthians 6:1 of us will give an account of himself to God.

¹*As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.*

If you say, "I follow Him," it is not enough to just receive His grace and do nothing about it.

As a reminder, Romans 14:12 says:

So then, each of us shall give an account an account of himself to God.

God is true to his promises. Each one of us, whether we believe or not, is going to face God one day. There is a day called "Judgment Day." For those of you who don't believe, this day will come, so you'd better make it right with God before that day. This day will come, and you don't know when. All we need is to say, "I believe in Your Son," to have eternal life with Him, but we are going to give an account.

For those of us who do believe, we will also have to face God. What are we going to say to God? What are we going to say? "You don't understand what they did to me?"

What is He going to tell us? He'll say, "You don't understand what you did to Me!" He forgives us every day for all the bad thoughts that we have against Him, or that we have against someone else. So what excuse do we have?

Most of us are familiar with Ephesians 2:8-9:

⁸*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;*
⁹*not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Yes, we are saved by grace through faith, and faith alone. Most of us who follow Yeshua are familiar with this verse. But as strongly as I stand for Ephesians 2:8-9 and the fact that we are saved by grace through faith alone, I stand strong for the next verse, which people don't like to read or to remember—the least-read and least comfortable verse in the Bible:

¹⁰*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

What works? Bad works? Good works!

What does it mean to do good works? Again, what does it mean to walk in the Spirit? It means to serve. It means submission to God's Word, obedience to His call on our lives. Bring good news to this world. Bring God's hope. Bring the message of reconciliation to this world.

Let's start to be serious about God. Let's stop saying, "Yes, I believe in Yeshua and I can go down to Hermosa Beach to the bars and get drunk." How can they know there is good news, that there is a better option?

What about marriages? Why would anyone want to come to church? Why would they want to come when they look at the marriages in the church and see they're no different?

We are to be salt and light on this earth. We are to be a place where nonbelievers can come and find comfort and be an example for them.

If you are struggling in your marriage, forgive one another. Give it to God. If Lisa could forgive those who killed her son, you can forgive your spouse for something they did to you.

God is true to His promise!

2 Corinthians 6:2: We live in very special times!

²*For he says,
"In the time of my favor I heard you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is
the day of salvation.*

We live in special times. If everything I have said so far is not enough, let me give you one more thought that God is true to his promises, that He is real.

Many years ago, prophets were prophesying about a group of people that God promised to gather His children from the four corners of the world into a small land called Israel. And in 1948, against all odds, a miracle happened: a group of people, the Jewish people, God gathered them back to this Land.

And in 1948, Israel did not have a big army; they didn't have the best intelligence in the world, and they didn't have America supporting them. There was just the few people who had just survived the Holocaust, who returned to the land. They had some old machine guns, and suddenly that had to face the millions of the Arab army, who wanted to push them into the sea. They didn't have a big army. Against all odds, Israel won the war against the armies of the Arabs. Since 1948, Israel is there, and there is no one who is going to remove it from there. That's the first one.

Then in 1973, there was the Yom Kippur war in Israel, in the Golan Heights. There is an amazing story of a great battle where Israel had only two tanks against the whole Syrian division. Some information came to the Syrian intelligence that all of the Israeli army was there against them, and Syria was told they would be destroyed, so they pulled back. Doesn't this sound familiar, like something from the Bible, where God gave some information to the enemy and the enemy pulled back? Yet this happened only 32 years ago. God is the same yesterday and today and forever. God is real, He is alive, and He is working to change lives.

If this is not enough, Romans 11 speaks of the partial hardening of the hearts of Jewish people in order that those of you who are Gentiles would be grafted in, would be a part of the family of God. Praise God for this! For those of you who are Gentiles, welcome to the family. But it also speaks of when the time of the Gentiles will come to an end. And then the Jewish people will accept the Messiah, whether they fight it or not. You are looking at one.

Since 1967, we see a movement more than ever in history of Jewish people coming to faith in Yeshua as their Messiah. It means the time of the Gentiles is coming to an end.

Do you know friends, family members, neighbors, who might need to hear the good news? Because we live in very special times.

There are two groups of people here today.

The first group is those who still don't believe in Yeshua. Whether you fight it or not, you will come. I fought it for many years, and now I am speaking about it. Now you have no more excuses. You have heard enough evidence about God. What gives Lisa the power to forgive those who tried to kill her son? You have heard from me, who works with Palestinian people. You have heard enough.

If this is the day you want to make things right with God, all you have to do is take a step of faith. Be responsible and take a step of faith. It's time to say, "I know there are no more excuses; I have heard enough evidence. I want to ask Yeshua to come into my life." Don't miss this day.

The other group of people is those already who are already believers in Yeshua. Today this is a call to change. Today is a time for you to make a change, to make things right with God. I believe that almost everyone here today got something from this message. Some of you may need to forgive and be reconciled with someone. Others of you may not be ambassadors. Make it right with God. Let's bring hope. Let's make a difference in this world. Let's turn this world upside-down, back to God. Let's turn America back to God, one nation under one God, Yeshua, no other God. There is only one true God.

Let's pray. Lord, I thank You for the privilege to be here today. I pray for those who do not know You, that they would take a step of faith and go ask for prayer. For any of us who say we are followers of You but still have not lived our lives for You, we pray that today would be a day of change. Be glorified in our lives. Come and touch our hearts. In the name of Yeshua our Messiah, Amen.

Food for thought:

1. **What does it mean for me to follow Yeshua?**
2. **Where can I grow?**
3. **Where can I serve?**
4. **With whom can I share the Good News?**