

## **Bible Study for Ash Wednesday – February 17, 2021**

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10

### **Notes:**

Today is Ash Wednesday, the day we begin our 40 day journey toward Easter, traditionally with a day of fasting and repentance. On a normal Ash Wednesday we mark our foreheads with dust, acknowledging that in time we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. On this day we humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean, while at the same time we rejoice that the day of salvation is still ours.

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

### **Questions to Ponder:**

Have you ever been given a gift you didn't care for? What did you do with it?

What do you consider to be God's gift to you? Have you used it by a) using it every week? b) using it every day? c) storing it in a safe place, so safe you forgot where it is? Or d) used it so much that you wore it out?

By what standards do you gauge a successful ministry? Why? How do they compare with verses 4-10?

Would Paul be a successful minister by your standards?

What, from Paul's example, might you want to incorporate into your life?