

2 Corinthians Chapter 11

2 Corinthians 11:1 "Would to God ye could bear with me a little in [my] folly: and indeed bear with me."

In the last scripture of chapter 10, Paul had just pointed out the folly of self-commendation, but he certainly did not want to engage in it. But the Corinthians' acceptance of the false apostles' claims forced Paul to set forth his own apostolic credentials as that was the only way he could get them to see the truth.

Unlike the false apostles, Paul's boasting was in the Lord and motivated by concern for the Corinthians' well-being under the threat of false teaching.

In the latter part of (chapter 10), we saw Paul saying, if any one had anything to boast of, it would be him. Now he is calling that folly. Whatever it takes for Paul to make them realize he has authority from God to teach them, is the argument Paul will give. Look over my boasting and understand what I am trying to tell you, would be another way of putting it.

2 Corinthians 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

Paul's folly was caused by his deep concern for the Corinthians to the point of jealousy, not for his own reputation, but zeal for their spiritual purity. Jealousy that was inspired by his zeal for God's causes, and thus similar to God's own jealousy for His holy name and His people's loyalty.

This jealousy is not in the physical sense. Paul is saying, I have claimed you for the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul wants these Corinthians, who started out with him, to stay loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Being a "chaste virgin" is saying not to stray away from pure Christianity. This has to do with the spiritual. God will not take second place to anything. In fact, He will not share you with any other God, or any other teaching.

Paul portrayed the Corinthians like a daughter, whom he betrothed to Jesus Christ at their conversion. The Old Testament pictures Israel as the wife of the Lord while the New Testament pictures the church as the bride of Christ.

Paul loves them as dear children. He tries to keep them with the simple message of the gospel they had received through him. We must walk in our salvation, after we have received it.

2 Corinthians 11:3 "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Paul does not want them to receive any other message than the simple message of the cross. He compared the danger facing the Corinthian church to Eve's deception by Satan. He feared the Corinthians, like Eve, would fall prey to satanic lies and have their minds corrupted. The tragic result would be the abandonment of their simple devotion to Christ in favor of the sophisticated error of the false apostle.

Galatians 1:8-9 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." "As we said before, so say I now again, If any [man] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

The mind is at enmity with God. The mind will lead you astray. Christianity is of the heart. Even today, some of the doctrines (that claim to be of Christ), are not telling the truth. Many people, looking for something new, find something very old, a false doctrine. Christianity is simple. It is not complicated.

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

2 Corinthians 11:4 "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him]."

The false apostle(s) came into the church from the outside just as Satan did into the Garden. They were like the Judaizers, seeking to impose Jewish customs on the Corinthians.

Their fascination with rhetoric and oratory suggest they had been influenced by Greek culture and philosophy.

Despite their vicious attacks on him, Paul's quarrel with the false apostles was not personal, but doctrinal.

Paul is explaining to them that he had already brought them the gospel, and had even taught them of the Spirit. If this person or persons is teaching them a message better than the one Paul gave and one they had rather believe, then stay with them. If they are not, why break away?

Why are they seeking for something else, when they already have Jesus as Savior and Lord? They also, have been introduced to the Holy Spirit. There is no need to seek another.

Though the precise details of what the false apostle(s) taught are unknown and don't matter, they preached "another Jesus" and "a different spirit", which added up to "a different gospel".

2 Corinthians 11:5 "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles."

It seems that the Corinthians (led by this new teacher), have begun to compare Paul with the other apostles. Possibly, because he was not of the original 12, they have questioned whether he is an apostle at all, or not.

Here, Paul is more likely making a sarcastic reference to the false apostles, based on their exalted view of themselves.

2 Corinthians 11:6 "But though [I be] rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things."

Paul, after he had seen the Light, went into the desert.

Galatians 1:15-18 "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called [me] by his grace," "To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:" "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."

Whatever deficiencies Paul may have had as an orator, he had none in terms of knowledge.

It seems from this, that Paul was taught of the Spirit for three years. Paul was not necessarily a great orator, but was a minister of truth which he had received directly from God. Paul's ministry was verified over and over by the signs and wonders that followed him.

Paul was an educated man in the ways of the temple, but had no formal training to be a Christian minister. None of the apostles were formally trained. Their training was by the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 11:7 "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?"

Greek culture measured the importance of a teacher by the fee he could command. When Paul opened the church at Corinth, he asked nothing for himself. He preached the good news of Jesus Christ to them, free of charge. Because he did not charge them to preach, does that make him less a preacher? Being a tent maker was not thought of as a prominent job.

This is possibly what he is saying being "abased". The message of good news from God that Paul brought them free of charge is the most precious possession of any of us.

Paul asked his accusers how foregoing his right to support could possibly be a sin. In fact, by refusing support he had humbled himself so they could be exalted That is, lifted out of their sin and idolatry.

2 Corinthians 11:8 "I robbed other churches, taking wages [of them], to do you service."

Paul is probably speaking of the church at Philippi. This is the only church that recorded helping Paul with his expenses. The workman is worthy of his hire (whether secular work, or church work).

God established the high priest and his family to live of the things of the offerings. Everything Paul had ever done for Corinth had been at no charge.

Why Paul refused to accept the support he was entitled to from the Corinthians is not clear. Perhaps some of them were suspicious of his motives in promoting the offering for the Jerusalem church.

2 Corinthians 11:9 "And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all [things] I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and [so] will I keep [myself]."

Paul took great pride in the fact that he did not minister for the money they would pay him. Mostly he worked as a tent maker to feed and clothe himself. The church that is mentioned that helped Paul with funds was the church at Philippi in Macedonia.

Silas and Timothy were the brethren who came from Macedonia, bringing money from Philippi and possibly Thessalonica. The Macedonians; generous financial support allowed Paul to devote himself full time to preaching the gospel.

2 Corinthians 11:10 "As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia."

He is just saying that he would not take their funds, even if they offered, because he wanted to prove to them that his gospel message was with no strings attached. Paul would give them no room for suspicion of his motives.

"The regions of Achaia": The Roman province of which Corinth was the capital and leading city. The false apostles apparently were affecting more than just the city of Corinth.

2 Corinthians 11:11 "Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth."

They were of a suspicious nature, and it seemed right to Paul to not help that suspicion along. He says, God knows that I love you as a parent would.

2 Corinthians 11:12 "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we."

Because Paul's refusal to accept financial support from the Corinthians', was a source of embarrassment to the false apostles, who eagerly sought money for their services. Paul intended to keep his ministry free of charge and thereby undermine the false apostles' claims that they operated on the same basis as he did.

We see in this, that the new teachers who have been opposed to Paul are saying, they are not interested in being paid for their services. At the same time, they are secretly receiving from the church at Corinth themselves. Paul is saying that all who minister in the church have needs for their own personal care.

2 Corinthians 11:13 "For such [are] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

Paul was no longer speaking with veiled irony or defending himself, but bluntly and directly exposed the false apostles for what they were, emissaries of Satan. Not only was their claim to apostleship false, so also was their doctrine. As satanic purveyors of false teaching, they were under the curse of (Gal. 1:8-9).

Galatians 1:8-9 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." "As we said before, so say I now again, If any [man] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Paul says that these new teachers that have come into the church are not truly apostles of Christ. These are people who have chosen to minister as a way of making a living. Paul believes they are not really called of God. They are pulling Paul down to pull themselves up.

Paul's forceful language may seem harsh, but it expressed the godly jealousy he felt for the Corinthians. Paul was unwilling to sacrifice truth for the sake of unity.

2 Corinthians 11:14 "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

Not every one in the church proclaiming Christianity is truly of God. Satan, himself, tries to mimic all the things the Lord does. He even many times pretends to be of the Light, when he is really darkness to the utmost. We are told to try the spirits, and see whether they are of God, or not.

Since the Prince of Darkness masquerades as an angel of light, that is, deceptively, disguised as a messenger of truth. It is not surprising that his emissaries do as well.

The truth is that Satan is a counterfeit. He may appear, at a glance to be of God, but a closer examination will reveal who he is. He counterfeits the gifts of the Spirit many times.

2 Corinthians 11:15 "Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

The really sad thing about false doctrines is that at a glance they appear to be real. A person, who is not well versed in the Scriptures, would quickly accept the teaching, because it is close to truth. One quick giveaway is that anything that elevates man up to the level of God is false. Also, any doctrine that denies that Jesus was Immanuel (God with us), is false.

Satan deceived Eve and holds unbelievers' captive. His emissaries were attempting to deceive and enslave the Corinthians. The terrifying "end" these self-styled "ministers of righteousness" will face is God's judgment, the fate of all false teachers.

Jesus is God the Word who took on the form of flesh and dwelt among us, and anything less than that is a false doctrine. Anything or anyone, who denies the power of the shed blood of Jesus is also false. The reason so many people, then and now, fall for this false teaching, is that it usually elevates man and brings God down to the level of man.

Lucifer's sin was in wanting to be God. Jesus said that there would be false teachers, and many would follow them. Study your Bible carefully, and do not be deceived. Test every spirit by the Word of God.

1 John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

2 Corinthians 11 Questions

1. Boasting is _____.
2. What is verse 1 saying?
3. I am jealous over you with _____ jealousy.
4. What is meant by "chaste virgin" in verse 2?
5. We must _____ in our salvation after we have received it.
6. Who did the serpent beguile in the Garden of Eden?
7. What did Paul fear would happen to their minds?
8. Christianity is of the _____.
9. In verse 4, what is Paul telling them to do with this new minister?
10. These Corinthians led by this new teacher, have begun to do what?
11. What had Paul charged the church at Corinth when he ministered to them?
12. What is he probably speaking of when he uses the term "abased"?
13. What is the most precious possession we have?
14. What church is Paul speaking of, when he says, he robbed other churches?

15. What were the high priest and his family to live of?
16. What had Paul taken great pride in about ministering to these Corinthians?
17. How did Paul love these Corinthians?
18. What are these new teachers secretly doing?
19. What did Paul call the new teachers in verse 13?
20. Satan himself, is transformed into an angel of _____.
21. Satan is a _____.
22. What is so sad about false doctrines?
23. How can we defend against false doctrines?