

**"Paul's Defense of his Apostleship"**

**Part 1**

**2 Corinthians 11**

**Introduction:** Tonight, as we continue our study of 2 Corinthians we are stepping into chapter 11. Before we look at the opening of this chapter I need to explain what we are about to see here and why Paul recorded what we read here.

As Paul finished up the previous verses he seems to have stopped and thought about the entire situation at Corinth. There was too much at stake within this church to just sit back and allow his critics to gain a foothold within the church. He had just made mention of how he was not of those who commended themselves.

**2 Corinthians 10:12**

*<sup>12</sup> For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

But it seems the more he thought it over the more he realized he needed to defend his apostleship. Now to defend himself Paul would need to speak of things which he was not comfortable speaking about which was his own integrity, in detail.

I. **Paul's Plea**

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:1**

The "folly" which Paul speaks of here is his boasting which we he does verses 21-33. This would be against Paul's practice but this needed to be done because of what was at stake and that was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The critics desired to remove the True Gospel and preach another gospel which was no gospel at all. So, Paul will answer them as the writer of Proverbs states:

**Proverbs 26:5**

*<sup>4</sup> Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.*

*<sup>5</sup> Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.*

There are times when it is best just to be quiet and say nothing and allow the fool to put his foot in his mouth. But there are other times when it is proper to put a fool in his place by stating the Truth. This is exactly the path Paul had to choose. If he chose to remain silent the false teachers could turn the hearts of the Corinthians right away from the Truth and the Gospel would be contaminated. Therefore, Paul will boast of his apostleship to help the Corinthians to see the error in the teaching of the false teachers.

## II. Paul's Desire

### Notice 2 Corinthians 11:2

Paul was jealous over the Corinthians with a godly jealousy. He had given 18 months to these people and he had led them to Jesus Christ. They were Paul's spiritual children in a sense. Let me show you what Paul wrote about Timothy and Onesimus.

### 1 Timothy 1:2

<sup>2</sup> *Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

### Philemon 1:10

<sup>10</sup> *I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:*

These men were the spiritual sons of Paul and it was the same way with the church at Corinth. God used Paul to establish the church at Corinth and there was therefore a strong bond. But there was more.

### Notice 2 Corinthians 11:2 again.

Paul had ESPOUSED the Corinthians to one husband and it was his desire to present them as a chaste virgin to Jesus Christ. The idea here is that Paul sees these believers as his own daughter and he sees himself walking them down the aisle to present her to the Bride Groom Jesus Christ. He has invested much of his time and energy into them and it is his desire that they remain pure. He will do whatever he needs to keep them from being contaminated with false teaching. Let me show you a picture of what Paul had in his mind found in the Old Testament.

### Genesis 24:1-10, 15-16, 58, 61-67

*And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.*

<sup>2</sup> *And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:*

<sup>3</sup> And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

<sup>4</sup> But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

<sup>5</sup> And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

<sup>6</sup> And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

<sup>8</sup> And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

<sup>9</sup> And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

<sup>10</sup> And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

<sup>15</sup> And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

<sup>16</sup> And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

Abraham's servant went to Laban's house and told them all how the story had unfolded and then the choice was placed upon Rebekah.

<sup>58</sup> And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

<sup>61</sup> And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

<sup>62</sup> And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country.

<sup>63</sup> *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.*

<sup>64</sup> *And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.*

<sup>65</sup> *For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself.*

<sup>66</sup> *And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.*

<sup>67</sup> *And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.*

The entire way back Abraham's servant would have talked about Isaac. Rebekah would have had many questions and the servant would have been happy to answer them all. As the trip progressed the anticipation would have grown in Rebekah. What will he be like? Will he be kind and gentle? Will he be tall and handsome? What will his voice be like? And the questions would have continued. Then the day came and she met her groom.

This is exactly what Paul had in mind. God had used him to win these people to Christ and now he was walking them through life telling them everything he knew about Jesus Christ. Paul knew the day would come when they would get to see the Groom face to face and he desired that on that day they would be presented as a chaste virgin. Free from the contamination of the false teachings of Paul's day.

Before we leave this verse, there is something here that is wonderful concerning the forgiveness of Jesus Christ. Paul desired that these believers would be presented to Christ as a chaste virgin which means PURE. Now let me remind you of what had been said in 1 Corinthians about these people.

### **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

<sup>9</sup> *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

<sup>10</sup> *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

<sup>11</sup> ***And such were some of you:*** *but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Some of those at Corinth were involved in the sins listed in verses 9-10 but now they were PURE.

**Application:**

What a marvelous Truth for anyone who thinks they may be too sinful to be forgiven or for some believer who has a difficult time forgetting the past. The blood of Jesus Christ is powerful enough to wash away EVERY sin we have ever committed or will ever commit! The Corinthians were as chaste virgins (spiritually pure).

III. **Paul's Concern**

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:3**

Paul was concerned that the very thing which happened to Eve would happen to the Corinthians. Notice the words "BY ANY MEANS". Satan will do whatever he can to lead God's people away from the Truth. He will use any means available to corrupt the minds of God's people to see that they buy into a false doctrine. Let us notice what had happened to Eve.

**Genesis 3:1-6**

*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

*<sup>2</sup> And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

*<sup>3</sup> But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

*<sup>4</sup> And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

*<sup>5</sup> For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

*<sup>6</sup> And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

Let us consider some very important lessons from this account of sins entrance into the world.

1. **Satan deceived the weaker of the two.**

Satan needed to get to Adam to contaminate the human race. So, he went through the weaker of the two to accomplish his plan. Adam knew the animals could not talk but Eve did not have that knowledge.

**Genesis 2:18-22**

*<sup>18</sup> And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*

*<sup>19</sup> And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.*

*<sup>20</sup> And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

*<sup>21</sup> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*<sup>22</sup> And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

Adam had a day with the animals and he knew they could not speak but Eve did not have this truth. Satan therefore went to the weaker of the two to get to Adam.

**Application:**

Satan will work his ways of deception in the minds of those who are less knowledgeable in the Word. He will then use these people in a very deceptive way to spread a false teaching within the body of Christ. Therefore, it is so important to be under the sound and solid teaching of the Bible. Satan desires to get to your family and if he can deceive one person in the family he will work through that individual in an attempt to contaminate everyone.

The father is appointed to be the spiritual leader of the family so it is his responsibility to know the Truth and to watch over his family so as to keep his wife and children away from the contamination of false doctrine.

**2. Eve was not skilled in handling the Word of God.**

Let me show you what God had commanded to Adam.

**Genesis 2:16-17**

*<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*

*<sup>17</sup> But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Now let me show you the conversation she had with the serpent.

**Genesis 3:1-3**

*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

*<sup>2</sup> And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

*<sup>3</sup> But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, **God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.***

Now I want you to see exactly what happened here and I will borrow the insight of John Phillips:

***"Eve abandoned the PURE WORD OF GOD for a free-flowing paraphrase!"***

Eve left two things out completely and she added one thing from her own personal thoughts. Eve had one weapon on that day which was the Sword of the Spirit and she proved to be unskilled in the use of the Word.

Phillipps comments:

***"Satan's attack on Eve was threefold. He began with DOUBT, he then followed that up with DENIAL, and it ended with DELUSION."***

**Conclusion:**

We will pick this thought up again next week. From what we looked at tonight we can see how important it is to KNOW the Word and then to be skilled in using the Word. The weak are prime targets for the enemy. Let us be committed to knowing the Bible!