

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

**Part 2**

**2 Corinthians 11**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of 2 Corinthians we were in chapter 11 and it is in this chapter that we find Paul's defense of his apostleship. Paul was very concerned about the believers at Corinth. He had been used of God to reach them with the Gospel and now it was Paul's desire to lead them in a life free of any spiritual contamination.

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:1-2**

Paul desired to present them as a chaste virgin to Jesus Christ. He had led them to Jesus Christ and he was walking them through life doing all he could to keep them pure. His desire to keep them free from spiritual contamination is seen clearly in this chapter for in this chapter he will actually boast of his own apostleship. That is the "folly" he speaks of in verse 1.

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:3**

Here in this verse Paul speaks of his "fear". He knew the tactics of Satan all too well. He knew that Satan would use ANY MEANS possible to pollute the minds of the Corinthians. Paul remembered what happened back in the Garden of Eden and he also brought it to their attention. When Satan desired to get to Adam he went through Eve. He attacked the weaker of the two. She proved to be unskilled in handling the Word of God and for that reason she was deceived.

Paul knew there were some at Corinth who were weak and who were unskilled when it came to handling the Word. This was a major concern to Paul. If the enemy could get to the weak he knew he would use them to wear down the strong. This was a spiritual battle and there was far too much at stake for Paul to walk away. He would do all he could to help the Corinthians to trust him and his teaching.

**I. Paul's Concern**

**Part 2**

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:3 again.**

There is something else here that I want to draw your attention to. Paul was concerned their minds would be corrupted from the "simplicity" in Christ. The word "simplicity" means

"singleness" and the idea here is the legalistic teaching of the Judaizers would take away their single devotion to Jesus Christ. When a believer gets a deep understanding of the grace of God which has saved them their devotion is centered completely upon the Lord. They understand that they are saved by grace and they are kept by grace so they are devoted to the One who has saved them and the One who keeps them saved. This person understands that any good that comes from his or her life is because of Christ in them. But when legalism comes in then man begins to believe he has something to do with his salvation. He begins to think because he keeps a set of man's rules he is better than those who do not. When this happens, man begins to be elevated in his own mind and his devotion is not "single" any more for now he sees himself as someone who is worthy of praise.

Now this would have been very appealing to the Corinthians. Let me show you some verses from 1 Corinthians where Paul focused upon the subject of human wisdom.

**1 Corinthians 1:17-22, 26-27**

*17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*

*18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

*19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.*

*20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?*

*21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

*22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:*

*26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*

*27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty:*

The Corinthian were deep into human wisdom and human philosophy. They would often have debates over wisdom. There was a great deal of pride that went along with this. So, for the Corinthian believers to be presented with a false doctrine that appealed to their pride

would have been a great temptation. It was their background that made them so vulnerable and Paul knew that.

**Application:**

Pride was their weakness and Satan knew it and he would do all he could to use that weakness against them. We all have our weaknesses and we must understand that Satan will do everything he can to use our weaknesses against us. Let me show you the temptation of Jesus.

**Matthew 4:1-3**

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

<sup>2</sup> *And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.*

<sup>3</sup> *And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

Jesus had been 40 days without food and the first temptation for him was to turn the stones into bread. This was an attempt by Satan to use the weakness against Him.

As I said we all have weaknesses so we must be sure to know them and to be very careful we do not get into a situation where the weakness can be used against us. The Corinthians were saved out of a life of human philosophy and human wisdom and with that came pride. The false teaching of legalism would definitely appeal to their weakness. This was a "back door" approach by Satan.

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:3 again.**

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write the phrase "BY ANY MEANS". This was a means that many in Corinth would miss. It was a way to steal away their single-minded devotion to Jesus Christ.

**II. Paul's Warning**

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:4**

Here in this verse we see an extension of Paul's fear. He was concerned that someone would come in preaching another (of a different kind) Jesus, controlled by another spirit, and preach another gospel and they would permit this person to have a platform. This was his extended concern and at the same time we can see a warning here.

Let us understand again what was happening in Corinth. The Judaizers were attempting to mix Law with grace. They had come in and maybe preached that in order to be saved a man had to be circumcised. They may have preached that in order for a man to be saved he had to keep the Sabbath. They may have preached that in order for anyone to be saved they needed to keep certain feasts or rituals that were practiced under the Law.

The bottom line was they were preaching that salvation by grace through faith was not enough and so certain works had to be combined with their faith. The Bible is very clear that salvation is by grace through faith.

### **Ephesians 2:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

<sup>9</sup> *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

The Bible is also clear that we are not under the Law.

### **Romans 7:1-4**

*Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?*

<sup>2</sup> *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.*

<sup>3</sup> *So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

<sup>4</sup> *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ: that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Believers are in Christ and therefore are dead to the Law.

### **Colossians 2:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

<sup>17</sup> *Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

The Corinthian believers were not under the Law but the Judaizers attempted to place them under the Law.

We do not face Judaizers today but we do face those who want to add works to salvation. There are those who believe we are saved by grace through faith BUT we are kept saved by our works. There are also those who teach that you must recognize certain days and rituals in order to be saved. These people do not understand that we are COMPLETE in Christ.

**Colossians 2:10**

*<sup>10</sup> And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

**Notice 2 Corinthians 11:4 again.**

This verse makes it very clear that ANYONE who preaches salvation is by works or is kept by works falls into 3 errors:

1. They are preaching another Jesus than the Jesus of the Bible.
2. They are energized by another spirit than the Holy Spirit.
3. They are preaching another gospel than the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is very frightening! I know people who this clearly applies to. But the Truth is the Truth. The Jesus of the Bible paid the price for ALL our sins, and He keeps us saved through his present ministry. Salvation is completely of our Lord. Those who preach salvation is gained by works or kept by works are NOT energized by the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit's mission is to glorify Jesus Christ not you or me.

**John 16:13-14**

*<sup>13</sup> Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

*<sup>14</sup> He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

To preach ANOTHER Jesus is very dangerous.

**Galatians 1:6-9**

*<sup>6</sup> I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:*

<sup>7</sup> Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

**Accursed** means to be devoted to God without hope of redemption!

We need to understand that the Gospel is always under spiritual attack and there are many false spirits energizing people to be used against the Gospel. Let us consider some verses.

### 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

<sup>2</sup> That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, **neither by spirit**, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

<sup>3</sup> Let no man deceive you **by any means**: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

### 1 Timothy 4:1-6

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, **giving heed to seducing spirits**, and doctrines of devils;

<sup>2</sup> Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

<sup>3</sup> Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

<sup>4</sup> For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

<sup>5</sup> For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

<sup>6</sup> If thou **put the brethren in remembrance of these things**, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

**1 John 1:1-3**

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

*<sup>2</sup> Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

*<sup>3</sup> And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is **that spirit of antichrist**, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

We live in a day when the darkness is ever increasing. Let me show you what Paul wrote to Timothy.

**2 Timothy 3:1**

*This know also, that in the last days **perilous times shall come**.*

**Conclusion:**

There were deceptive spirits in Paul's day and they also exist in our day. We must be very careful about guarding our minds.

**2 Peter 2:1-2**

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

*<sup>2</sup> And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*