

"Paul's Defense of his Apostleship"

Part 4

2 Corinthians 11

Introduction: In our study of 2 Corinthians we have been in chapter 11 where we are currently looking at Paul's defense of his apostleship. Paul was very concerned about the believers at Corinth for he knew that just as Eve had been deceived in the Garden of Eden so too they also could fall into the deception of the false teachers who had made their way into Corinth. Tonight, in our study we are going to consider some verses which some people claim are very sharp and they say the verses are possibly to abrasive.

Notice 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

These are the verses and it is within these verses that Paul calls the false teachers exactly what they are and that is false apostles. They had come from Jerusalem with their letters of commendation calling themselves SUPER APOSTLES and in so doing they were claiming superiority over Paul. As we have said many times this was a spiritual battle over the Truth of the Word of God. Paul became the target because he was a TRUE APOSTLE and the church followed the apostle's doctrine which was the Word of God. As we begin tonight I want to consider a few thoughts outside of this passage to help you to understand a little more about the spiritual battle which we are engaged in today and the battle which Paul was engaged in.

I want to take you back to the book of Genesis for a moment to show you where the battle began. In Genesis 3 after sin entered the world God pronounced a curse upon man and He also foretold of the destruction of Satan.

Genesis 3:14-15

¹⁴ And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

In these verses God announced that the Seed of the woman would destroy Satan. It was this announcement that would start a spiritual war. From this prophecy forward Satan was determined to destroy the Promised Seed of the woman. Shortly after this Satan worked through Cain to kill Abel in an attempt to kill the Promised Messiah. Sixteen hundred years later, in the days of Noah Satan tried to corrupt the entire human race in an attempt to

destroy the Seed of the woman. During the days when Israel was in Egypt Satan launched another major attack when he had Pharaoh issue a decree to have all the baby boys born to Israel put to death. Throughout the Old Testament Satan would raise up false prophets in an attempt to lead Israel into destruction and all of this was an attack upon the promise of the woman's Seed. We can even see it in the days when Jesus was born when Herod ordered to have all the babies killed within Jerusalem. Then we can project ahead to the Tribulation and see Satan's attacks against Israel in an attempt to destroy them so that Christ will not return to set up His Kingdom and eventually cast Satan into the Lake of Fire.

But in all of this there is a question which comes into my mind, "Why is Satan so set upon attacking the Church and the Bible today?"

I believe the answer to this question is twofold.

1. **He is a murderer and a liar.**

John 8:44

⁴⁴ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Because Satan is a murderer he will do all he can to distort the Truth of the Bible to keep people from being saved. We know that faith cometh by hearing [the Truth] and hearing by the Word of God.

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

I believe there is another reason behind this attack.

2. **He knows his days are numbered.**

Revelation 12:12

¹² Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

This verse describes what happens at the mid-point of the Tribulation. I use this to show you that Satan knows when the Tribulation period begins his time is limited. I believe he also knows that the Tribulation cannot and will not begin until the Church/the Bride of

Christ is complete. He does not know when that will be and that is why he seems to be constantly grooming a man to be the anti-Christ. At the same time if he can distort the Truth of the Bible and keep people from coming to Jesus Christ then he believes he can hold off the rapture which will hold off the Tribulation and buy him more time. If Satan could destroy the Church he would certainly do so because then the Bride would never be complete and the Tribulation would never begin and he could then continue to be the god of this world.

So, the battle today is all about distorting the Truth of the Bible to confuse people and keep people from salvation.

Getting back to our text, Paul knew the importance of protecting the Pure Word of God and so in the section we are approaching tonight he will expose the false teachers for who they really were.

I. The Exposure of the False Teachers

Notice 2 Corinthians 11:13

Paul calls them exactly what they were in this verse. They were false apostles who were transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. When I read this, I try to imagine what the setting would have been like when the church at Corinth was gathered together and this letter was read for all to hear. Then I imagine that these false teachers were probably sitting in the gathering. It may have been uncomfortable for some but this was a Truth that needed to be exposed. I want us to look at the next verse and then we will come back to this verse.

Notice 2 Corinthians 11:14

Satan and his demonic spirits will often transform themselves into angels of light. This is a very important statement and one that needs our greatest attention. Let me borrow your mind for a few minutes to help you to see something.

In the Bible LIGHT is associated with God.

James 1:17

¹⁷ *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

1 John 1:5-7

⁵ *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

⁶ *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

⁷ *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

When we are walking in fellowship with our Lord we are said to be IN THE LIGHT.

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

When we were saved God shined His light into our hearts.

2 Corinthians 4:6

⁶ *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

I point to all of this to remind you that as believers we are drawn to the Light or anything that we perceive to be of the Light. This is exactly what Satan capitalizes on. He knows that we are drawn to the Light or anything which we perceive to be of the Light and so he will masquerade as an angel of Light in order to lure us into deception. Let me explain to you how Satan does this and then you will see clearly what Paul is saying here.

There are certain sins which the church is very diligent about standing against. They are the sin of abortion, homosexuality, same sex marriages and the list could probably go on with many more. The church can be so determined to stand against these that they will often join up with others of totality different beliefs. Someone may raise the question, "How can we get on board with others who teach doctrines that are completely contrary with what we stand for?" In these movements the church will often join with Roman Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah Witness and many others. When the question is asked it is often answered with the reply, "There are times when we must set doctrine aside and come together as brothers and sisters in Christ in order to fight against this terrible sin." When we buy into that we are placing our stamp of approval upon the statement, "THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS."

When we buy into this we have just been deceived by Satan as he has transformed himself into an angel of light. He has used something that we are willing to stand against but in our stand, we have joined up with unbelievers.

Let me remind you what Paul said in chapter 6.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

¹⁷ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

When we focus upon the end result and we do not look closely at the MEANS to get to that end result we can very easily be deceived by Satan. We must remember that the END does NOT justify the means! When we join with unbelievers in order to reach an end we get swallowed up by the roaring lion which Peter spoke of.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Getting back to our study of 2 Corinthians let us understand that Satan will always try to deceive God's people by using Light. One way to guard against this is to guard against anything that is ecumenical. That means to guard against anything that attempts to bring many different religions together in order to reach an end result.

Let me give you an example of how Satan did this several years back. His spirit moved certain men to start a group called "Promise Keepers". It was started with the purpose of developing stronger men in our society and that sounds really good. But they encouraged their members to set aside their doctrines in order to come together. Let me show you from the Old Testament how the end does not justify the means. In 2 Samuel 6 David has defeated the Philistines and they had possessed the ark of God. David then desires to bring the ark to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 6:1-13

Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

² And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.

³ And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

⁴ And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

⁵ And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

⁶ And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

⁷ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

⁸ And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day.

⁹ And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

¹⁰ So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

¹¹ And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household.

¹² And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness.

¹³ And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

Bringing the ark to Jerusalem was an honorable mission but God had specific ways in which the ark was to be moved. David was focused upon the end result the first time and not the means. The second time they got it right.

Now let me get you back to the thought of Satan using Light to deceive. How can we know when the Light is of God and not of Satan?

This discernment comes by knowing the Word of God.

Psalm 119:105, 130

¹⁰⁵ Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

¹³⁰ The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

The more of God's Word we know the better we will be able to discern between deceptive Light and True Light.

When the Truth of God's Word is ignored there will be darkness. Let us notice God's Words as recorded by Isaiah concerning Israel and what would happen as they sought to find Light from Satanic sources.

Isaiah 8:19-22

¹⁹ And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

²¹ And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

²² And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.

Notice 2 Corinthians 11:15

In God's time the false teachers will receive their judgment.