

2 Corinthians 11

2 Corinthians 11
Tape 8162
Pastor Chuck Smith

Now in our study in the tenth chapter, we told you that the tenth chapter, the eleventh and the twelfth, were written, more or less, to deal with the false teachers that had come into Corinth after Paul left. There are always those who are trail-blazers. Those who are willing to go into uncharted territory and to do a work for the Lord and to blaze new trails. But then there are always those who are willing to come in after the initial work has been done and try to sort of reap the fruit of another man's labor. They try to come and rather than going out to the lost, they are trying to build their churches by drawing from those that are already saved, appealing to them by some new slant on the Scriptures. Their whole thrust for outreach is proselytizing. They are not really out on the street winning the lost. They are only trying to proselytize off the established churches by introducing some new slant, some new blessings, some new tingling. They're parasites on the body of Christ.

So Paul was the trail-blazer. Paul was not interested in building on another man's foundation. He was willing to go out into the territories where Christ had not been preached, to blaze the trails. There were always those who would follow Paul. They would seek then to turn the people from the gospel that Paul that preached to them which was of course the gospel of God's grace. And they would introduce a "works" righteousness. They would introduce the law. They would try to tell the people that unless they adhered to the law of Moses, they were converted and became Jews, they could not be saved. They were always in trying to establish their own ideas and doctrines with the people, they found it necessary to discredit Paul. And so Paul had his problems with these men, these parasites, who would come in and try and draw the people away from Paul. They had a natural love for Paul. He had brought them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. So somehow they had to discredit him in the eyes of the people in order to establish themselves and to bring in their pernicious doctrine. And so it happened in Corinth. There were those in Corinth who sought to turn people away from the pure, simple doctrine of Jesus Christ, that Paul had preached. And bringing to them other gospels.

So in chapters ten, eleven, and twelve, Paul is speaking on this issue. He is addressing these people who have come into the church of Corinth, trying to pervert the gospel of grace and lead them to become followers of these teachers. They were taking advantage of the people. They were spiritually abusing the people. They didn't have a true love as did Paul, but there are always those are interested in feeding the flock of God. And then there are those who are always interested in fleecing the flock of God. These fellows were fleecing the flock of God. And so Paul in this eleventh chapter, here, is dealing with these individuals, these false teachers, that had come into Corinth.

So he started this in chapter ten and he closed out the tenth chapter by declaring, the person who commends himself is not the one that's truly approved, but the one whom the Lord commends. These guys were coming in bragging about themselves, telling how great they were, the marvelous things that they had accomplished for the kingdom of God. They were always puffing themselves up. Paul said the fellow who puffs himself up is not the one who is truly commended but it's the commendation of God that is the most important. It's not what I think about myself, it's what does God think about me?

So in as much as they were boasting and bragging on themselves, Paul said, *Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.* In other words, they want to boast and they want to tell how much they have done. Let me share a little bit about myself. And he calls it folly, the boasting. Actually he wrote (1 Cor. 4:7) what do you have but what you have received? And if you have received it, then why do you boast as though as you didn't receive it?

You see, how can you really boast in what God has done as though you were somehow responsible? God in His sovereign grace, God in His sovereign mercy has chosen to work and to do a work. And if you are fortunate enough to be there and have the privilege of seeing God work, you recognize that this is the work of God and there is no way to boast in it. But Paul said just put up with my folly for a bit. Let me tell you a

bit about some of the things I have experienced.

²*For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy:* I'm jealous because these fellows are coming in and trying to draw you away from me and from my love for you. They are trying to draw your love for themselves and I'm jealous with a godly jealousy, for my interest is in you.

It is my desire to present you, *for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* Paul was the father of the church in Corinth. Paul said you might have many teachers, but you don't have many fathers. The one who brought you into the faith, I'm your father. And as the father, here is my child, my daughter, the church. And as Paul is desiring, he's espoused the church. Now marriages were by arrangement in those days. And the father had sort of the power over the daughter as far as whom she was to marry. And it was the father's responsibility to see that when the time came to see that she was married, that she was a virgin. He would arrange the dowry with the father of the groom. So as he presented his daughter, he wanted to present her pure as a virgin. So Paul is using that figure as far as the church is concerned. I've espoused you to Jesus Christ. I have made the arrangements. I, as a dad, am going to present you to Jesus Christ. It's my desire to present you as a chaste virgin to Jesus Christ.

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.* That they be drawn away to another gospel, which is not really a gospel, to another lord, to another Jesus. In so being drawn away, they would not be a pure virgin. They would be polluted by the other concepts and ideas. My desire is to present you, Paul said, as a chaste virgin. But I fear, lest by any means, the serpent who beguiled Eve through his subtilty, that these teachers through their subtleties have come in and beguiled you. And your minds have been taken away just from the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ.

The simple gospel, it's amazing how complicated, men can make it. It's amazing the requirements that men can add. Where the Bible just says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Where the Bible says, God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. It makes salvation so simple! It is just believing on Jesus Christ. Choosing to believe that He came, sent from God, took my sin, died in my place, rose again! Simple gospel! But they started saying, oh no, that's not enough, you've got to keep the law of Moses. You've got to be circumcised. You've got, you know, pray so much. You've got give so much. You've got to...and they started adding all of these other things. And they made it very complicated. Simplicity, Paul was fearful that they would turn from this simple truth.

⁴*For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus,* There have been other Jesus' that have been preached, other than have been revealed in the New Testament. Now the Jesus that has been revealed in the New Testament is God.

In the beginning (John 1: 1-14) was the Word, the logos, the Word was with God. Literally God was the Word. And the same was in the beginning with God and all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. Now there was a man who was sent from God. His name was John. He was not the light, but he was said to bear witness of the light, that is the true light, that shines unto man that cometh into the world. He came into the world. The world was made by Him, but the world knew Him not. He came to His own. His own received Him not. But as many as received Him to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. Those who were born not of the blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

In the beginning was the Word, the Word was God. The Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us. Clear teaching that Jesus Christ is God, the Creator. He came into the world, the world was made by Him, but the world didn't know Him. And throughout the New Testament, there is the assertion that Jesus is God. Jesus said (John 10:30), I and the Father are one! Jesus said (John 14:9), if you have seen Me you have seen the Father! And He declared that relationship that He had, one with the Father.

Now the Jehovah Witnesses come along and they preach Jesus, but the Jesus that they preach, was Michael the archangel. He's not God. The Jesus they preach is a created being. He is less than God. So He is another Jesus.

The Mormons come and they preach Jesus. And they talk about Jesus dying for their sins and their believing in Jesus. But the Jesus that the Mormons believe in, was the brother to Lucifer. And He and Lucifer presented to Elohim, to God, their plans of redemption of the world. Elohim accepted the plan that Jesus gave and it made His brother, Lucifer, mad. So he was determined that he was going to upset the plan. And so there was this heavenly kind of rivalry and jealousy. The brothers, sibling rivalry kind of a thing, but the Jesus they preach is the brother of Lucifer. Well, that is not the Jesus of the New Testament!

There is nothing in the New Testament at all that would indicate that Jesus was Michael the archangel or that Jesus, as the New Testament teaches, was the brother of Lucifer. The Jesus of the New Testament is God! And He was manifested in the flesh. He came in a body of flesh and dwelt among us. And as John said (John 1:14), we beheld His glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

So there have been other Jesus' that have been preached to people, but not the Jesus of the New Testament. So he that comes preaching 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.* Paul is sort of rebuking them. These guys are coming along, preaching another Jesus, teaching another gospel. And you bear with them! You listen to them! They are putting you into bondage. They are putting you into slavery and you are listening to them!

⁵*For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chieftest apostles.* Now one of the things they were doing, were denigrating Paul. They would say, well, He is not a true apostle. He's sort of...and Paul is saying here, I not a bit behind the chieftest of the apostles.

⁶*But though I be rude in speech,* And this is the thing that they were capitalizing on. Paul was probably not a very eloquent speaker. He said that when he came, his desire wasn't to convert them with the eloquence of speech, but he wanted his speech to be the power and the demonstration of the power of God. So I might be rude in my speech, he said.

yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things. You know me. I've been an open book to you, thoroughly manifested.

⁷*Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted,* Paul came in to them. He humbled himself. He served among them. He worked with them. He worked along side of them. He abased himself in order that they might be exalted. He said, did I commit an offense when I did that?

because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? Because I didn't take up any offerings, because I didn't let you support me. I came as a servant to minister to you. Did I do wrong in doing that?

He said, ⁸*I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.* He was like a missionary who had been sent out by the other churches.

They supported him, even as our church supports hundreds of missionaries around the world. They have been sent out by us. We are supporting them that they might preach the gospel in these other areas because in many of the areas where they are going to preach, the people are living in conditions of poverty and they could not support the missionaries among them. So we support them that they might labor there.

So Paul was supported by the churches in Macedonia as he was there in Corinth. They were the ones sending his support so that Paul didn't have to receive an offering or take from the church in Corinth.

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.* I haven't taken anything and I'm not going to take anything from you. I'm not going to be a burden to you.

¹⁰*As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.* You can't say, you know, that I ripped you off and you're not going to be able to say it. These people won't be able to stop me from the fact that I boast of the fact that I served freely. I was not chargeable to any of you that I wasn't there to take from you or to make gains from you. That wasn't my desire or purpose.

¹¹*Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.* That is, no one will stop me from boasting of this because I don't love you. No, Paul said! Perish the thought, ridiculous, God knows.

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.* I do this. These guys are looking for something against me. They are trying to find some kind of a thing about me. So I'm going to cut off any occasion of their charging me of serving the Lord for the profit.

For the first seventeen years that I was in the ministry, I had to work in secular work to support the needs of the family. I didn't pastor a church that was large enough to take care of our needs. And so it was necessary to work in many different types of jobs in order to support the family. I'm thankful for that because I sort of feel like I've paid my dues in the sense that I proved that I wasn't in the ministry in order to get rich or to make money.

In our first church we received fifteen dollars per week. In the second one, we received twenty-five dollars per week. The third one, we received twenty dollars a week. So naturally it was impossible to support the family with that kind of a salary. It was necessary that I work and I gladly did in order to stay in the ministry because I wasn't ministering in order to get money. I was in the ministry because I felt God called me in the ministry. And now that God has blessed, I'm glad that I have that kind of proof of my sincerity in the ministry that I can point back to the first seventeen years. When I first came to Calvary Chapel, I worked mobile home repairs, moving mobile homes and things of that nature in order to support the family when we first pastored here at Calvary Chapel. I'm glad for that.

Paul is saying much the same thing, that while he was there in Corinth, he wasn't there trying to get rich off the people. He was there just to minister to them, to spend and to be spent. So, he said I want to cut off the occasion, any occasion that these guys might try and pick up on to accuse me. Let them be found as I am.

These guys were ripping the people off. Paul said, if they are really sincere, let them stop taking money from you. Let them be as I am. He knew good and well as soon as they cut off the support of these guys, they would be gone.

¹³*For such are false apostles,* They are not true apostles.

They are *deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.* In other words, they are self appointed apostles.

¹⁴*And no marvel (no wonder); for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.* 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.* So Paul is talking about these fellows. They are really false apostles. They're false teachers. They are deceitful workers. They present themselves as something they really aren't. But that isn't any wonder because Satan comes along. He presents himself as an angel of light in order to deceive people. There are a lot of people that are deceived by those that really transform themselves as angels of light. So it's no great thing, if Satan's ministers be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.

This is a pretty strong accusation that he is now making about these men. He's taking the gloves off. This is bare-knuckles stuff. These guys are false apostles. They are ministers of Satan. They are not ministers of Jesus Christ. And the end will be according to their works.

¹⁶*I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.* ¹⁷*That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.* Now this isn't inspired, Paul is saying. This is just foolish talking because I feel it's sort of necessary because of how these guys have exalted and magnified themselves just to share just a little bit about me, personally.

¹⁸*Seeing that many glory after the flesh,* These men were boasting about all they had done. If you want to know what Paul is talking about, watch Channel 40 sometimes, if you can.

Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. ¹⁹*For ye suffer fools gladly,* You allow these guys. They are fools. And you receive them.

And this is very sarcastic in a way, *seeing ye yourselves are wise.* You know, you have been suckered by these guys.

²⁰*For ye suffer, (you allow it) if a man bring you into bondage, (that's what they were doing, bringing them under the bondage of the law) if a man devour you, (taking advantage of you) if a man take of you, (If he is ripping you off.) if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.* I mean these guys were abusive.

There is a cigar smoking fellow on TV, that you know, he yells at the people. He abuses them. He curses at them. Send money in or I'm not going to...send your money in! Can you believe that people send money? And here Paul is saying, you allow these kind of guys. And it was a mystery to Paul, how that they would allow someone to come in and abuse them spiritually.

²¹*I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.* I can be just as bold.

²²*Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.* I mean, these guys are coming in, we're Jews, you know. They were putting them under the law. They were judaizers.

²³*Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft* (facing death often). ²⁴*Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.* Forty is a number of judgment. There is a significance to numbers in the Scriptures. And Scripturally, forty is a number of judgment. You remember it rained for forty days and forty nights, God's judgment upon the earth. So often the number forty is associated with judgment. Interestingly enough, thirty-nine is the number of mercy. So when they would flog a person in justice. Justice demanded his being flogged. They would flog him thirty nine times, one short of judgement. They showed a little mercy. So, Paul five times was beaten forty stripes save one, or thirty-nine stripes.

²⁵*Thrice was I beaten with rods,*(or caned. We heard a little bit about caning a year or so ago with that young American boy in Far East, there.) *Thrice I was caned.*

once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; Paul was out in a ship that had sunk and was hanging on to a plank for a night and a day.

²⁶*In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;* ²⁷*In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.* ²⁸*Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

One of the fellows, a minister, drove up in a new Porsche. These guys around here are severe. They said, well, what have you suffered for Christ lately?

But Paul talks about the things that he suffered for the cause of Christ, the perils that he faced, the weariness, the painfulness, the watching and hunger and thirst, fasting often, cold, nakedness, beside all of these churches that he had established, the care of them, the letters that he had to send, the issues that he had to deal with as the news would come of the various things that were happening in the different fellowships. Paul would have to take care of them.

²⁹*Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* Yes, I'm weak. Yes, I burn. I have feelings. I'm human. And Paul is saying, look, it isn't easy. It's not been a bed of roses. It's been difficult.

³⁰*If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.* But if I must glory, I will glory in the things that concern my weaknesses. I'm not going to glory in my accomplishments. I'll glory in my weaknesses in order that the power of God might be manifested in my life.

³¹*The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.*

³²*In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:* ³³*And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.* Paul, had a very inglorious departure from Damascus. He went through so much to share the gospel of Jesus Christ freely with those who had never heard.

In chapter twelve, he will go on with some of the things that he now experiences. He is going to turn the

dial. He's going to tell them now, you know, he has been dealing with the things that he had endured, the suffering, the pain, the hunger, the cold, naked, you know, out in the ocean and things.

Now he is going to turn to the wonderful glorious revelation that he had received. So he is going to take us into heaven in chapter twelve as he tells us of the revelations that were given to him by the Holy Spirit.

I think that it would probably be well to take chapter twelve and thirteen next week. So go ahead and cover them both and we will try to cover them next Sunday night. If we only get twelve, fine. But read them both and we will probably...thirteen is so short a chapter. It's just sort of a winding up and greetings and so forth. So we will endeavor to take twelve and thirteen next week. So we are moving along and then into Galatians, a great, great letter.

Father, we just give thanks to You tonight for men such as Paul who gave his life to follow Jesus Christ. Who ran the race in order to win! Giving to us Lord, an example of commitment. Help us Lord, to live a truly submitted life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.