

2 Corinthians 21 - 11:1-15

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This week

Paul's defense 10:7 - 12:21

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Bear with me 11:1-5

Manner 11:6

Payment 11:7-12

True nature of the super-apostles 11:13-15

Paul's defense 10:7 - 12:21 (cont'd)

Bear with me 11:1-5

2 Corinthians 11:1-5 (LSB)

1I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness, but indeed you are bearing with me.

2For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy, for I betrothed you to one husband, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

3But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be corrupted from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

4For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive, or a different gospel which you did not accept, you bear this beautifully.

5For I consider myself in no way inferior to the most-eminent apostles.

- v1 Plea
 - I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness
 - Paul has just repudiated boasting (10:12 For we do not dare to classify or compare ourselves...). However, he must answer the charges of the false teachers. Hence his "foolishness".
 - but indeed you are bearing with me.
 - Better imperative "Do Indeed, bear with me." since they are bearing with the false teachers.

- Three reasons
- v2-3 First reason: I am jealous for you
 - I betrothed you to one husband.
 - Illustration from Jewish marriage customs. The father selected his daughter's future husband and betrothed her to him. Betrothal was a serious commitment; only cancelled by an official certificate of divorce. At the end of the betrothal period (usually a year) was the marriage ceremony, after which the new wife moved into her husband's house. During the betrothal period the father had the responsibility of keeping his daughter a pure virgin.
 - Paul (as the father) had betrothed the Corinthians (his daughter in the faith) to Christ at their conversion.
 - For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy... so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ
 - Now he is anxious to keep them pure until the marriage (at the second coming of Christ)
 - As Mt 28:19-20 the great commission includes both baptizing and teaching to keep all that Christ commanded.
 - But I fear that. Why Paul is anxious
 - as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness
 - In the garden, Satan denied God's word and deceived Eve into obeying him rather than God (Gen 3). Paul fears that the false teachers will do the same to the Corinthians.
 - your minds will be corrupted from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.
 - Illustration of corruption
 - Be corrupted. Brought to a worse state
 - Simplicity. Single-mindedness
 - Purity. Moral purity.
 - As 10:4-5: Paul fears that the Corinthians will be taken captive by deception and held prisoner in strongholds of speculation against the knowledge of God.

- v4 2nd reason: You are bearing with the false teachers
 - For if one comes and preaches
 - If. Actually happening
 - Paul does not focus on the content of the false teaching (as in Galatians) but on its fruit. Mt 7:15-16 Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. "You will know them by their fruits..."
 - another Jesus whom we did not preach
 - A disciple becomes like his teacher (Mt 10:25).
 - Paul's Jesus was crucified in weakness (13:4) and is Lord (4:5). Thus his ministry is characterized by suffering, weakness, service, and obedience.
 - The false teachers' Jesus is shown by their manner: haughty, self-exalting, putting down opponents, worldly customs and values, ministry for gain. They likely knew little about the actual Jesus but were using His name while acting like typical religious teachers in the culture. As Ro 12:2 they were not transformed but conformed to the world.
 - or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive
 - False prophets bring false spirits (1 Jn 4:1-3)
 - When the Corinthians were saved through Paul's ministry they received the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the HS is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
 - The false teachers were bringing another spirit. Its fruit was the deeds of the flesh. Hence all the sins described in 1 Cor: divisions, sexual immorality, lawsuits between believers, misuse of liberty, misunderstanding of gender roles, misuse of the Lord's Supper, misuse of spiritual gifts, disorderly worship, etc.
 - or a different gospel which you did not accept
 - Paul brought the true gospel which is manifested in living sacrifices and transformed minds (Ro 12:1-2).
 - The false teachers' gospel is being manifested in self-serving and continuing in the ways of the world.
 - you bear this beautifully
 - Since the Corinthians had no problem with the false teaching, they should be willing to listen to Paul.
 - Where were their elders? Likely deceived and held captive in strongholds.

- v5 3rd reason: I am not inferior
 - For I consider myself in no way inferior.
 - As 10:2 Daringly confronting his opponents.
 - inferior. Of lower status
 - to the most-eminent apostles
 - Either speaking ironically of the false teachers who exalted themselves.
 - Or speaking of the Twelve in Jerusalem who the false apostles say they represent. But Paul is commissioned by the Lord as an apostle just as they were (1:1). And Peter, James, John recognized him as an apostle when he visited Jerusalem (Gal 2:8).

Manner 11:6

2 Corinthians 11:6 (LSB)

6But even if I am unskilled in word, yet I am not so in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made this evident to you in all things.

- But even if I am unskilled in word
 - Accusation by the false teachers (10:10)
 - Not true. Paul had spoken well enough in Athens to get invited to the Areopagus (Acts 17:17, 19)
 - Paul intentionally did not come to Corinth with superiority of word (1 Cor 2:1).
 - Also, Paul was likely not trained in Greek rhetoric.
- yet I am not so in knowledge
 - Paul was “a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel” (Acts 9:15)
 - He received his knowledge by revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12).
 - He speaks God’s wisdom (1 Cor 2:6-7)
- in fact, in every way we have made this evident to you in all things.
 - Lit “in all we have manifested this to you in all”
 - Manifested the true knowledge of God at all times in every situation by word and deed.
 - 2:14 Paul is In triumphal procession in Christ manifesting the aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.
 - In 2:15 - 6:18 Paul has explained this knowledge because the Corinthians do not fully understand (1:14).

Payment 11:7-12

2 Corinthians 11:7–12 (LSB)

7Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I proclaimed the gospel of God to you without charge?

8I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to minister to you.

9And when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brothers came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept and will keep myself from being a burden to you.

10As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia.

11Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

12But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be found just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting.

- About payment for ministry. A sensitive area since the false teachers sought personal gain from their ministry. Paul was undercutting them by preaching for free.
- Or did I commit a sin. Re v6: Did I not manifest the knowledge of God?
- Charges from the false teachers
 - I proclaimed the gospel of God to you without charge
 - Paul did not and would not take money from the Corinthians.
 - Not charging meant that he was not a real apostle and his teaching had no value.
 - I robbed other churches
 - Paul received support from the Macedonians while he was in Corinth.
 - This showed that he deceitfully took advantage of his converts for his own benefit.
 - False teachers accusing him of practices they were familiar with.
 - by taking wages from them to minister to you
 - Paul's refusal to accept support from the Corinthians showed he didn't love them.

- Paul's policy for receiving support
 - As a minister of the Lord he had a right to support from the people he was ministering to. However, he did not use that right so as not to impede the gospel (1 Cor 9:12). He was willing to work to support himself even though this made him seem "humble" (of low status).
 - He accepted support to go to the next place of ministry or to advance the gospel in other regions (Ro 15:24; 1 Cor 1:16) . This support made the givers partners with him in the ministry. (Ph 4:10-19)
 - Support was not essential because he was never in want. He had learned to be content in both abundance and poverty (Ph 4:12).
 - Main benefit of support was spiritual benefits accruing to the giver (Ph 4:17).
 - He refused to accept support from those to whom he was ministering.
 - To avoid being seen as a peddler of God's word (2:17).
 - To avoid the social obligations that came with accepting gifts (11:9 being a burden). Since he could not reciprocate, he would be seen as inferior to the giver and socially obligated to show them gratitude. Result was loss of respect, independence, impartiality
 - To model the free gift of salvation: "Freely you received, freely give." (Mt 10:8).
 - In Corinth: to remove the opportunity for the false teachers to be seen as true apostles. They would need to give up receiving money for their ministry.

True nature of the super-apostles 11:13-15

2 Corinthians 11:13–15 (LSB)

13For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

14And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15Therefore it is not surprising if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

- For such men. Direct attack on the false teachers. Naming them as ministers of Satan.
- Their methods:
 - Deceit. As Satan deceived Eve (11:3)
 - Disguise. As true apostles of Christ. As ministers of “true” righteousness.
- Their end
 - 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
 - Appear before the Judge
 - Be recompensed for their deeds

Application: Fellowshiping in the gospel

2 Cor 11:9 ...when the brothers came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need...

Ph 1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, because of your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.

- The Macedonian churches sent gifts to support Paul in his ministry.
- fellowship. Gk koinonia: an association involving close mutual relations and involvement. More than just money.
- Same thing needed today with our missionaries.

References

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