

## 2 Cor 11:1-7

1 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly – and indeed you do bear with me. 2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted – you may well put up with it!

5 For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 Even though I am untrained in speech, yet I am not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge?

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

**Paul used a military metaphor in this verse when he says that he robbed other churches.**

9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.

Keep in mind that Paul was teaching the Corinthians because he had a heart for them. However, he was not willing to take any money from them.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows!

**Paul didn't boast in himself but in Christ.**

**In fact, he said in 1 Cor 9:15** it would be better for him to die than that anyone should make his boasting void.

In 1 Cor 11 he issued a challenge to all believers there he said,

1 Cor 11:1

1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

**Later in Ephesians 5** he said to be imitators of God as dear children.

1 Peter 1:15-16

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Holy - morally pure, upright, blameless in heart and life.

12 But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast.

**A true test would be for the**

- Corinthians to stop supporting the false teachers,

**They wouldn't stick around**

- because they weren't shepherds,
- they were hirelings.

John 10:11-13

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

**They transform themselves. They wear a mask.** Jesus called them wolves who come to you in sheep's clothing.

14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

**There is a time coming in the future**

- when a false prophet will come looking like a lamb
- but he speaks like a dragon.

**I mentioned a few weeks ago that we have these visuals of Jesus and of Paul.**

- But we also have visuals of Satan, the devil.

**This visualization comes from an ancient Greek myth god, Peneus**

- who was later worshipped as Dionisius
- pictured as half man and half beast

**Satan if you'll recall from scripture was an angel of light in the beginning,**

**Paul says:**

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

These people weren't apostles, they were imposters.

Three times in verses 13-15, Paul used the word *transform*

- in referring to their work.

This Greek word simply means “to disguise, to masquerade.”

Satan's workers, like Satan himself,

- never appear in their true character;

The two previous verses say that the ministers of Satan transform themselves into ministers of righteousness whose end will be according to their works.

These ministers (AKA false apostles and deceitful workers) were working for Satan, therefore, we know their end will be the same as that of Satan.

**Matt 18:6**

6 "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

The Greek word “mikrós” meaning “small or little” also means in this particular verse “low or humble” and figuratively, of dignity or authority.

There is no gray area that exists with respect to the treatment of young believers.

**2 Cor 11:16-17**

16 I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little. 17 What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

**2 Cor 11:16-17**

16 I tell you again: No one should think that I am a fool. But if you think I am a fool, then accept me as you would accept a fool. Then I can boast a little too. 17 But I am not talking like the Lord would talk. I am boasting like a fool. (ERV)

Paul mentions the word “fool” 4 times in these two verses. It's not the Greek word “mōros” meaning “stupid” but the Greek word “aphrōn” meaning “ignorant.”

The Corinthians were willing to put up with the foolishness

- and somehow avoided the truth

18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast.

19 For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise! (He doesn't mince words when it comes to the Corinthian intruders. In verse 13 he calls them false apostles and deceitful workers now he calls them fools.)

20 For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes from you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. 21 To our shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold – I speak foolishly – I am bold also.

The teachings that the false apostles were bringing to the Corinthian church did not bring liberty but bondage.

**Jesus said it best when speaking to the scribes and Pharisees.**

**Matt 23:23-24**

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

These false teachers devoured the Corinthians by taking advantage of them monetarily, and not for the sake of love.

These false apostles also tried to humiliate the Corinthians. Paul closes verse 20 by saying, *if one strikes you on the face.*

A shepherd is supposed to watch over the sheep not beat them!

**Paul says in verse 21 almost sarcastically:**

21 To our shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold – I speak foolishly – I am bold also.

Paul's accusers accused him of being weak.

Paul's response was basically, if being strong means that I'm going to take advantage of people, I'd rather be weak than strong because I'm not treating people as such.

In this last section of chapter 11 Paul goes into what one might call "foolish boasting."

**2 Cor 11:22-33**

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. (There was a distinction between the Hellenistic Jews, those raised in the Greek culture versus those who were raised in the Hebrew speaking culture.)

**Paul would later give his credentials to the Philippians:**

**Phil 3:4-6**

## 5

4 If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Are they Israelites? So am I says Paul:

Being an Israelite meant that the person could trace his lineage. Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin.

Are they of the seed of Abraham asked Paul? Do you have the covenant promises that have been passed down, are you part of that lineage?

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (Of course they're not ministers of Christ!

I speak as a fool — I am more: (Paul is now going to give his credentials as if the Corinthians didn't already know. The false apostles had no such credentials.

In Acts 9:15-16 after Paul was blinded by the Lord, Ananias was told that Paul was to suffer for the Lord's sake.

15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Have we suffered for the Lord? Not compared to what Paul suffered.

in labors more abundant (Paul worked harder than most), in stripes above measure (he was beat on many occasions),

in prisons more frequently (No one wants to spend time in jail, thankfully Paul was willing and wrote many of his letters from a jail cell),

in deaths often (his life was threatened often).

24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one (one third of those beatings would have been in front and two thirds on the back).

25 Three times I was beaten with rods (this was the Roman punishment, it was unlawful to beat a Roman without a trial. But corruption existed then as today and people sometimes took the law into their hands. For example, Acts 16:25-34

once I was stoned;

three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; (Acts 27) 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness,

in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Paul's credentials came from his time on the battlefield. He was a true shepherd. He says in verse 28, besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Almost as if to say, I'm concerned for all of the churches, not just the church in Corinth.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

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2 Cor 11:29

29 Who is weak without my feeling that weakness? Who is led astray, and I do not burn with anger?

That was Paul, I'm going to hurt when you hurt, when you're weak I'm going to feel it as well. But don't mess with God's people because that's where we draw the line.

30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

The false prophets showed up in Corinth uninvited. We don't have to go out to them, Jesus said, they will come to you in sheep's clothing.