

- I) V13-15 For such are **false apostles** **deceitful workers** transforming themselves into Paul has been put in the position of defending his ministry
- II) The Corinthians have been influenced by intruders, and Paul is concerned for them These false teachers have exalted themselves before the people They are presenting themselves as **super apostles** (V5)
- III) By doing so they are undermining Paul's influence and ministry to the church **THEY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL**
- IV) Their attacks on Paul have caused the church to be **disturbed** and **divided** Some of the Corinthians are siding with the intruders, and it concerns Paul **THEIR TACTICS**
- V) These intruders have attacked everything about Paul that they could They have attacked the way he writes, the way he speaks, and the way he looks Everything about Paul has been scrutinized, and criticized
- VI) Out of concern for the Corinthians, Paul has been compelled to defend himself This is something they should have done on his behalf, but they hadn't This has made Paul take the time to defend himself and his ministry
- VII) He now is cutting off opportunity for these false teachers to be considered real The fact is, they are not real ministers at all but are actually agents of Satan **PAUL CLEARLY UNMASKS THEM**
- VIII) V13 They are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves In V4-5 He spoke of them as **false teachers** posing as **eminent apostles** Here he makes it clear: they are impostors, making false claims **to seduce them**
- IX) These men **claimed to be apostles** of God, but they were deceivers Paul was an apostle **because God chose him** to be one
- X) These are deceitful (crafty) workers **fashioning themselves into** apostles of Christ As we will see, they promote themselves to **profit off** of the people They wear a mask of holiness and devotion in order to deceive the innocent
- XI) They are like the Pharisees in their hypocrisy Mt 23:25 Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence

- I) V14 And no wonder! For Satan himself **transforms** himself into an angel of light  
**Transforms**: masquerades; disguises; fashions himself  
This speaks of something that he is continually and actively doing
- II) Satan does not reveal himself for what he truly is, pure evil  
He disguises himself as good, **an angel of light**: of glory, holiness, and purity
- III) Why does he say angel of light?  
1 Jn 1:5 This is the message which **we have heard from Him** and declare to you, **that God is light** and in Him is no darkness at all  
**WHY LIGHT?**
- IV) We normally are not tempted to do evil knowing how evil it really is  
We are tempted to do something evil because we think **it is something good**  
We are drawn to it because we think it will be a benefit to us
- V) This is what happened to Eve when she was tempted by Satan  
Eve partook of the forbidden fruit because she thought it would be good to do so  
Gen 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was **good for food**, that it was **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree **desirable to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.
- VI) She was deceived and fell into his trap  
Satan presented disobedience as being a good thing, one that would benefit Adam partook of the fruit and sin and death entered into the world  
Ro 5:12 Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because **all sinned**
- VII) V15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves  
These false apostles claim to be ministers of light
- VIII) Paul calls them out for what they actually are: **ministers of Satan**  
For their false teachings and deception, they will receive their **proper reward**  
Mt 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea  
Gal 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you**, let him be accursed

- I) Paul was a genuine apostle, called by God  
Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)
- II) These men were self-appointed, false teachers who were deceived and deceiving  
**PAUL RESUMES HIS THEME FROM V1**
- III) V16 I say again, **let no one think me a fool**. If otherwise, at least receive me as  
In V1 he had asked them to **bear with him** in a little folly  
He did not want to be thought of as a fool **for appearing to boast**
- IV) Boasting is something that his detractors were constantly doing  
Because they brag about their deeds, Paul felt compelled to share of his
- V) Normally we should simply ignore foolish questions and arguments  
We should not allow ourselves to be goaded into acting foolishly
- VI) With that said, on occasion it might be necessary for us to respond  
Pr 26:5 Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.  
When we do, we need to listen, choose our words wisely, and then respond  
**THIS IS WHAT PAUL IS DOING**
- VII) He does not want to do this because he desires to simply serve the Lord (10:17)  
They glory in the flesh, so he now begins to share with them what he has done
- VIII) Of all people, they should have acknowledged his ministry  
He had planted the church in Corinth, and had taught them the foundation of faith
- IX) V16 If otherwise, at least receive me **as a fool**  
Since you put up with the boasting of false teachers, at least put up with me  
**QUESTION**
- X) Why would he ask them to receive him, even **as they would a fool**  
He says this because **the stakes are eternal**
- XI) If they reject his ministry, they are rejecting the **genuine gospel**  
If they reject the genuine gospel, they are rejecting the **genuine Savior**
- XII) V17 What I speak I speak not **according to the Lord**, but as it were, **foolishly** in this  
He is saying my boasting is not something that God commands me to do

- I) I don't want to blame God for my own speaking of my experiences  
I don't want you to think that God prompts people to brag about themselves
- II) The fact is, I don't want to do the same thing the false apostles are doing  
I am uncomfortable being forced into boasting of my accomplishments
- III) Self-commendation is not the way of the Lord, but in reality, is carnal (V18)  
It is always better for someone else to speak well of you  
Pr 27:2 Let another **praise you**, and not your own mouth; **someone else**, and not your own lips.
- IV) V18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh **I also will boast**  
I do not desire to boast in what I have done, but I find that I must  
**KEY**
- V) Since I am being questioned, I will remind you of what Jesus has done through me  
This is not for self-glory, but to counter the false teachers threatening the church
- VI) V19 For you put up with **fools gladly** since you yourselves are wise  
**Sarcasm**: You have shown yourselves remarkably tolerant to the foolish!  
**QUESTION**
- VII) Does your tolerance have no limits? Look at all that you put up with  
You casually put up with false teachers, as if truth does not matter!  
**THIS REVEALS TWO THINGS**
- VIII) It reveals a deep relationship with them that has made it possible to speak this way  
This is very direct: you only speak like this to those who are close to you  
**SECOND**
- IX) It shows the jealous concern of a godly pastor: this is not an academic debate!  
This is something that concerns Paul deeply, and they need to hear this!  
**FIRST**
- X) V20 You tolerate someone bringing you **into bondage**  
You are having your freedom in Christ stolen from you and it does not alarm you
- XI) They are neglecting the fact that the truth of the gospel sets a person free  
Jn 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know (perceive; understand; comprehend; realize) the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

- I) Jesus sets you free, but false teachers bring you into bondage  
2 Pe 2:19 They promise them **freedom**, while they themselves are slaves of depravity --for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.
- II) What kind of bondage were they yielding to? Perhaps the bondage of **false doctrine**  
These false apostles were Jewish and may have introduced **legalism**
- III) **False doctrine** promises freedom but always produces spiritual bondage  
Gal 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh
- SECOND**
- IV) If one **devours** you: Pillages; strips you of your goods; Preys upon you  
Makes merchandise of you; make demands on you for financial support!  
2 Pe 2:3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.
- THIRD**
- V) If one **takes** from you: Takes you in; catching you like fish in a net  
They do not respect you, are using you, and making fools out of you  
They are lying to you and capturing your trust
- FOURTH**
- VI) **Exalts** himself: Have set themselves as rulers over the Church; are arrogant  
They are guilty of lording it over people  
1 Pe 5:2-3 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers --not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; **not lording it** over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock
- FIFTH**
- VII) If one **strikes you** on the face: Humiliates you: (May have been struck)  
They treated them with scorn, dominating and humiliating them
- VIII) V21 To our shame I say that we were **too weak for that!** (Height of sarcasm!)  
This is a reference to the taunts of the false apostles  
He had already stated that the false apostles said his bodily presence was weak

- I) You, who claim to follow the gentle and gracious Jesus **respond better to force**  
You think my gentle love for you is weakness, and you are wrong
- II) Since the false teachers have boasted in their successes, let me introduce myself
- III) V22-23a Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed  
I must now recite my own credentials, as much as I hesitate to do so  
**FIRST**
- IV) V22 He speaks of them as Hebrews, Israelites, and the seed of Abraham  
**Hebrews**: Speak Hebrew, of Hebrew parentage, born in Israel: culturally Hebrew  
**Israelites**: Tracing their genealogy to their tribe: Paul of the tribe of Benjamin  
**Abraham**: Do they boast of being descended from Abraham? So am I
- V) V23 Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more In labors more  
They are claiming to be ministers of Jesus, apparently in some higher sense
- VI) I speak as a fool (as these false apostles have labeled me) and must respond  
Let us compare their **claims** to my own actual **works**  
Let me remind you of my Trials, not my triumphs: these have a deeper impact  
**BRIEFLY HIGHLIGHT**
- VII) V23 In labors **more abundant**  
Paul was constantly moving about, preaching where Jesus' Name was not known
- VIII) He traveled extensively, preaching, and teaching throughout the known world  
Ro 15:17-20 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in **the things which**  
**pertain** to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not  
accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient--in mighty  
signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round  
about to Illyricum (Albania) I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. And so I have  
made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on  
another man's foundation
- IX) V23 In stripes without measure (will elaborate in V24)
- X) In prisons more frequently  
Paul spent **much time in prison**, for preaching: 5 are recorded in Acts  
Ac 16:23, 22:29f, 23:10ff, 23:35, 28:16

- I) V23 In deaths, often: His life was seriously threatened, often  
Remember how he began the letter  
2 Co 1:8-9 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead,
- II) V24 From the Jews **five times** I received forty stripes minus one (living death)  
Mt 10:17 But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.
- III) Ellicott: The punishment was inflicted with a leather scourge of three knotted leather straps: thirteen strokes were given on the chest, thirteen on the right shoulder, and thirteen on the left.
- IV) V25 Three times beaten with rods (flexible sticks, tied together) Ac 16:22-23
- V) V25 Once I was stoned (in Lystra after the healing of a crippled man)  
Ac 14:19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. **They stoned Paul** and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.
- VI) 3 times I was shipwrecked: None mentioned in time before the time of this writing  
Paul sailed on 9 voyages in Acts recorded between 9-18, giving ample opportunity  
A night and a day in the deep: Not recorded in Acts
- VII) V26-27 In journeys often: his life was a nonstop effort to reach the world for Jesus  
In perils (dangers) of waters (swollen rivers)  
In perils of robbers: from his frequent journeys in dangerous areas  
In perils of my own countrymen
- VIII) This happened from almost the beginning of his ministry  
Ac 9:22-25 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ. Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let *him* down through the wall in a large basket.  
Acts records various attacks on him: Ac 9:29; 13:50; 14:5-19; 17:5-13; 18:12)

- I) In perils of the Gentiles  
Ac 17 records how a riot broke out when he preached in Thessalonica  
Ac 19 records the riot in Ephesus over Diana
- II) In the city: Acts records: Jerusalem, Antioch,  
In the wilderness: The ordinary dangers of the wilderness (beasts, hunger, thirst)  
In perils of the sea: long journeys under dangerous conditions; pirates, storms
- III) In perils amongst **false brethren** (which could point to the super apostles)
- IV) This was especially sorrowful: Counterfeit Christians endangering him  
Phil. 1:15-17 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.
- V) V27 In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings  
These were his common experiences as he tirelessly preached the gospel
- VI) V28 Besides the other things, what comes upon me daily my deep concern for all  
On top of all these concerns, my greatest is for the Churches
- VII) He was constantly concerned for the spiritual well being of the believers
- VIII) Chuck Jr: Dad lived for your growth in the knowledge and the grace of Jesus...Why was he here teaching as sick as he was, disregarding his doctors and his family?  
Because he loved you. He loved being with you and teaching you. He cared about you and your progress. And he felt that if he brought God's Word to you, in the power of the Spirit and helped you see Jesus here and now, he could help you find your way
- IX) Obviously ministry is not for the faint of heart: it can be very heavy
- X) V29 Who is weak and I am not weak Who is made to stumble and I do not burn with  
I am completely identified with the body of Christ  
I have compassion for the Church: When you are hurt, **I hurt with you**  
1 Co 12:26-27 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

- I) V29 Who is made to stumble and I do not burn with indignation  
When someone is caused to stumble, I have great anger at the one causing it  
This is because of my love for the Lord and my fatherly love for you
- II) V30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity  
I do not boast in what are accomplishments, but in what appears to be weakness
- III) The things that my adversaries call my negatives are really my qualifications  
They have gone in to transforming me into a minister of the gospel
- IV) V31-33 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who is blessed forever  
I have told you some of my story, and God is my witness that it is all true  
God knows and He is my judge, and I pray you will understand why I say this  
**ONE LAST THING**
- V) These kinds of things have happened from when I first came to Jesus  
From the start, my life has been in danger, and this has strengthened my faith
- VI) Ac 9:20-25 reports how Paul preached in Damascus that Jesus is the Messiah  
The response was great anger, and the Jews plotted to kill him  
The plan was made known, and the disciples took him by night and saved him
- VII) God delivered me from the governor, and God will continue delivering me  
**CONCLUSION**
- VIII) In the end: I am what I am through grace:  
I am but a frail vessel, but He is everything  
1 Co 15:10 By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not  
without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them --yet not I, but the grace of God that  
was with me.