

## A Study in II Corinthians

### Strength in Weakness

#### Chapter Eleven - Lesson Eleven

Again, this chapter and chapter 12 are Paul's boasting and glorying on his behalf as a defense against the accusations from the Corinthians because of deceitful workers, ministers of Satan.

**Godly Jealously (1-15):** Paul beseeches them to bear with him in what he calls his folly, his godly desire for them to be clean and godly church, and thereby present them as a chaste virgin to Christ (1-2). All of Paul's sufferings, fears, worries have been to present them to Christ, not having spot or wrinkle that they would be without blemish, holy people for the Lord.

But Paul's fear is that others had come within their assembly and corrupt their minds from the simplicity of the gospel and thereby preach another Jesus, another spirit or another gospel than that which Paul preached unto them (4). Paul is the Apostle to the Gentles and to him alone was commissioned the gospel of the Grace of God (Eph. 3:2; Acts 20:24). Paul was not behind the very chief of the Apostles as he makes abundantly clear in Galatians chapter 2 (vs 5).

Paul's care for the Corinthian believers was so intense that he would abase himself in an effort to exalt them. Paul abasing himself was meant for their edification. However, the Corinthians perceived Paul's abasing as a sign of weakness (7). Paul had to work as a tent maker to provide for this own needs. Paul provided for himself so that he would not have to ask anything from the Corinthians. This he did so that when he preached the gospel to them it would be without offence (7). Paul was also provided for from his own brethren with him, the men of Macedonia, just to keep from being a burden to the Corinthians (8-10). The mere fact that Paul did this should have been humiliating to the Corinthians, however they looked at this as a sign of weakness. Had Paul done all this for them because he did not love them? (11).

Paul did all this to separate his ministry from that of false and deceitful workers, those who working is after Satan. These are the Judizers seeking to thwart the churches Paul started, by moving them from the gospel of the grace of God back under the law (11-15).

**The Foolish Boasting of Paul (16-33):** Paul understood what he is about to do in boasting in the flesh is truly foolish, for no man of God should have to boast of all that he has done for his approval need only be from the Lord. However, Paul was pushed into this (see vss. 18-21), so if he is going to boast in the flesh he is going to boast of what the Lord has done through him , his sufferings for Christ (30).

*The boasting of pedigree (22):* The Jews boasted of their pedigree, being from the seed of Abraham (see John 8; Phil. 3:4&5). These workers of Satan that came into the church at Corinth and move them from the simplicity of the gospel were Jewish leaders, they were the wolves in sheep's clothing that followed Paul and his ministry trying to move the newly established churches back under the law (see Acts 9:23; 12:1-2; 13:45, 50; 14:2, 19, 17:5; 18:12, 20; 20:3; 21:27; 23:12, 21, 27; 25:2, 7, 24; 26:21).

*The Boasting of Suffering (23-28, 32-33):* Paul's list of sufferings he had endured up to this point is truly mind-boggling to say the least. The reader of this passage needs to keep in mind that Paul has not completed his suffering at this time for he has yet to travel to Jerusalem and then to Rome. For instance, Paul's 3 shipwrecks (25) were before the one he would encounter on his journey to Rome! Notice, Paul adds his narrow escape from the city of Damascenes (32-33).

Yes, all of Paul's glorying was concerning his infirmities for Christ. What had those who seek the Corinthians attention suffered? And specifically, for Christ? Paul had, and he testifies that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows he lies not (31).