

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

2 Corinthians 11

Lesson 12

In 2 Corinthians 11, we find Paul in a dilemma. How does he defend himself in light of the accusations made against him by those who opposed him in Corinth? Does he stoop to boasting of his accomplishments as they did of theirs? When is this kind of boasting appropriate, or even necessary, in order to expose deceitful methods and those who use them? May Paul's example reveal God's heart in this matter.

DAY ONE: Read 2 Corinthians 11

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheets and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?
 - a. The eleventh chapter of 2 Corinthians has been divided into three paragraph divisions. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 1-15

Verses 16-21

Verses 22-33

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet. Now record a title for the eleventh chapter of 2 Corinthians.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

God, Jesus, Paul, boast(s)/exalts

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 2 Corinthians 11. Remember, as you mark the key words to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. You do not need to mark every word that refers to them - only those that you feel are significant.

3. Choose one of the key words above and make a list of what the text reveals about it.

Challenge: Choose, mark, and make a list of another key word.

4. Paul draws a very important conclusion in verse 15. What is it and what is it based upon?

DAY TWO: Read 2 Corinthians 11:1-12

1. Paul seems to exhibit that he is uncomfortable with the way he has been forced to defend himself. He begins chapter 11 with the plea *bear with me*. How does he describe his care for them in verse 2?
 - a. Human jealousy is a vice, but to share godly jealousy is a virtue. It is the motive and object of the jealousy that is important. There is a place for a spiritual father's passionate concern for the exclusive and pure devotion to Christ of his spiritual children. What is the difference between human *jealousy* and godly *jealousy*?
2. According to verse 3, what was Paul's *fear*?
 - a. How might this *corruption* occur? verse 4
 - b. What are we told to do if someone *preaches another gospel*? Galatians 1:8
3. *Even though I am untrained in speech...* 2 Corinthians 11:6. What were some saying about Paul according to 2 Corinthians 10:10?
 - a. What did Paul have that was more important than a great *speaking* ability? verse 6

- 1.) This *knowledge* is the Greek word *gnosko* – knowledge gained by experience. Why is sharing what we have learned about Christ more important than how we share?
 - b. Think about how God used Paul to convert the souls of so many. How does this encourage you when you feel like you don't express the gospel well?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 11:7-9. Where did Paul get his financial support so that he could minister to those in Corinth?
 - a. What do we know about the churches in Macedonia? 2 Corinthians 8:1-2
5. Why did Paul refuse to ask for support from the Corinthian church? 2 Corinthians 11:12
 - a. Although Paul had the right to receive support from those he ministered to, he did not want those who opposed him to have any opportunity for criticism. What lesson can we learn from this?

DAY THREE: Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

1. Paul had some strong words regarding *those who desired an opportunity* to oppose him. How did he describe them in 2 Corinthians 11:13?

Challenge: Define the word *transform*.

2. As these *deceitful workers* transform themselves into apostles of Christ, Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Satan does not present himself to us as evil and deceitful. How does he present his ideas to us?

- a. In what way are *deceitful workers* like satan?

- b. These *deceitful workers* are people that are in the church. They are not always those who present doctrines that are obviously false. What other means might they use to cause disunity in the church and stumble its members?

3. *It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve (2 Corinthians 11:15 NIV).* Describe these *servants of satan* using the following verses:
 - a. Philippians 3:18-19
 - b. Titus 1:10-11
 - c. 2 Peter 2:1-2
4. What can you do to avoid being *deceived* by those who *masquerade as servants of righteousness*?

DAY FOUR: Read 2 Corinthians 11:16-21

1. Paul did not hesitate to boast about Christ, but was reluctant to boast about himself. He felt *foolish* and feared they would also think him *foolish*. Paul made a clarification in verse 17. What did he say?
 - a. What sort of *boastings* are characteristics of foolishness?
2. *Boasting* in one's own sufferings or accomplishments is not something that God encourages us to do. However, in this case, Paul believed he had the Lord's permission. Why do you think it was needful for Paul to defend himself as he did?
3. In asking the Corinthians to *put up with his foolishness*, Paul reminded them in verse 19 of the *fools* (deceitful workers) they were already *putting up with*. What were the results of this tolerance? verse 20
 - a. Summarize these effects using your own words or another translation.
4. In 2 Corinthians 11:19, Paul, using sarcasm, calls the Corinthians *wise*. How do *deceitful workers* appeal to man's desire to be wise?
 - a. What did satan say to appeal to Eve's desire to be *wise* in Genesis 3:5?

5. In 2 Corinthians 11:21 Paul expressed his *shame*. The Corinthians thought that Paul's meekness was weakness, when it was really strength. And they thought that the arrogance of the *deceitful workers* was power. How might we fall prey to the same thinking as those in Corinth?

DAY FIVE: Read 2 Corinthians 11:22-33

1. Paul begins this section comparing himself with those that opposed him. What did they have in common? verse 22
2. After the similarities of question 1, Paul's life is much different. He knew from the onset of his ministry that he would suffer. What does Acts 9:15,16 say about this?
3. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, 32 is an account of some of the sufferings Paul endured as a result of his obedience to God's calling on his life. Choose three and list them.
4. What challenge was Paul *daily concerned* with? verse 28
 - a. What does it say to you that Paul would list this among examples of extreme hardship?
 - b. What are some challenges your pastor might experience in leading your congregation?
5. One of Paul's concerns is reflected in verse 29. *Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?* NIV What do you think he meant by this?
6. In verse 30, Paul seems to again reflect on this idea of *boasting*. What does he say he *will boast in?* (We will cover this in depth when we study chapter 12).

DAY SIX: Review 2 Corinthians 11

1. Paul was hesitant to *boast* of his claims to apostleship. What did you learn from this lesson about when *boasting* might be appropriate?
 - a. When is it not appropriate?

2. When do you think a person should charge for labor they do for the ministry? (Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answer.)

3. If you were in ministry, what would you do to show the people you ministered to in your congregation that you loved them?
 - a. If you had a large congregation, how might what you do to show your love be different?

4. What did you learn from Paul's example in this lesson?

*But let him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,
That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness,
judgment, and righteousness in the earth.
For in these I delight," says the LORD.
- Jeremiah 9:24*