
2 CORINTHIANS VERSE-BY-VERSE | DR. RANDY WHITE

SESSION 20 | 2 CORINTHIANS 10:11-11:3

2 CORINTHIANS 10:1-18 | PAUL'S ADDRESS TO HIS ENEMIES IN CORINTH

- Verses 1-9 - see session 19
- Verse 10 -
 - The complaint: the letters of Paul are much more vicious than the presence of Paul.
 - Note that this is not a *truth*, but rather an *accusation*. We should not get our evaluation of Paul based on accusation of his enemies.
 - Note that, though the King James says **they**, the verb is third person *singular*, thus *he*. See notes on verse 7.
- Verse 11 -
 - Notice that he speaks again in the singular, further evidence that there is a particular unnamed individual involved.
 - Paul warns this individual that his physical presence will match his letters.
- Verse 12 -
 - There is indeed a large number who **commend themselves** and who are **measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves**.
 - Becoming your own standard of measurement is an easy trap to fall into, and the devil loves us to "measure up" using self-determined standards. Paul is clear that those who do this **are not wise**.
 - Measuring ourselves (or our churches) against any human measuring rod is self-deception.
- Verse 13 -
 - Paul determines not to go beyond **the measure of the rule which God has distributed to us**. What humility!
 - There is a blessing that comes to the one who determines not to be the one who is constantly "sizing up" others.
 - We should learn from the Apostle Paul who says he will only use the measuring rule that God has revealed.
 - Paul's **measure** reached **even unto you** (the Corinthians). Perhaps the one who accused Paul of weakness also accused Paul of overstepping his boundaries.
- Verse 14 -
 - Paul expresses his belief that he was "in bounds" in addressing the Corinthians, both in the past and in the present. He is not, after all, one who had no former influence in Corinth or current apostolic authority.
 - It would be one thing if Paul's missionary journeys had never brought him to Corinth (**as though we reached not unto you**), but since Paul *started the church in Corinth*, he certainly had a relationship that allowed for him to speak directly to them.
- Verse 15 -
 - Paul (unlike his enemies), would not boast **of things without our measure**, that is, things that he had no authority in nor right to measure. Nor would he boast of **other men's labours**.
 - Rather, Paul has the **hope** that in growing faith of the Corinthians would give even greater opportunity for ministry in the future.
- Verse 16 -
 - Paul was praying for an enlarged ministry by the growth of the Corinthians' faith (v. 16). This ministry, he prayed, would be **in the regions beyond you**.
- Verses 17-18 -
 - Paul summarizes with this practical advice to **glory in the Lord** rather than to commend ourselves.
 - Earlier he had said **henceforth know we no man after the flesh** (2 Cor. 5:16), so boasting in the flesh is "out of bounds" for the Christian. We seek the approval of God, not man.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-12:13 | PAUL'S BOAST OF APOSTOLIC CREDENTIALS

- Verse 1 -
 - Paul is about to enter into a "sermonette" in which he is going to attempt to prove his Apostolic credentials against those who seek to deny him of those credentials (and perhaps even claim them for themselves).
 - He is going to use irony and sarcasm, so he announces or warns the readers ahead of time to **bear with me a little in my folly**.
 - Fortunately, the Bible always comes with clarity when it speaks with irony, sarcasm, allegory, illustration, etc. Beware the one who attempts you to see these things where the Bible does not make their presence clear to the reader.
- Verse 2 -
 - The reason Paul is entering into this **folly** of defending himself against fake-apostles because he was **jealous over the Corinthians with a godly jealousy**.
 - The next portion of the verse is often misconstrued to somehow make the church to be the Bride of Christ, but we should not make the words say more than they say, namely that Paul has **espoused the Corinthians to one husband** in order to **present you as a chaste virgin to Christ**.
 - Many take this *illustration* to become a *doctrine*, and in order to do so must ignore the clear teaching of Scripture when and where it does speak clearly about the bride.
 - Not only do they ignore Scripture's clear teaching, but they defend their created doctrine with a near theological violence.
 - If this verse teaches that the church is the bride of Christ, does it also teach that Paul is the bride's father? If Paul's role as the party who set up the engagement is not taken literally, then what merits making the church into the Bride of Christ?
 - Note that there are only two New Testament passages which are used to teach the church as the Bride of Christ, this verse and Ephesians 5:25-33 (especially verse 32).
 - Neither passage actually teaches what is claimed by the vast majority of the church (almost without question).
 - The Ephesians passage speaks of *two being one* and is an illustration of the *unity* of the church with one another and with Christ is the topic at hand.
- Verse 3 -
 - Though Paul's desire was a church that was fully devoted to Christ as an engaged wife would be to her fiancé, he had **fear** that the church would be **beguiled by subtilty** and thus **corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ**.
 - Indeed, most deception (if not all) is *subtle* (even as the "bride) deception that has arisen from this very passage). If one is deceived that the church is the Bride, there are consequences:
 - The church behaves with *opulence* rather than **simplicity**.
 - The church becomes a substitute for Israel.
 - The focus turns to the church rather than to Christ (for whoever heard of the *groom* having the position of honor at a wedding?)
 - Every believer should glory in the **simplicity that is in Christ**. The Greek word ἀπλότης [haplotes] is translated **simplicity** and is a word which focuses on *single* rather than *double* or *multiple*. What a joy to have a single-mindedness in Christ! Has the modern church lost the joy of this **simplicity**?