

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 29TH–30TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

THE FEAR (2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–4) BOASTING OR NOT?

After saying a lot about not boasting, Paul asks the Corinthians to put up with some of his boasting. Pushed into a corner, Paul will defend his calling and ministry if it means protecting the integrity of the gospel he has given his life to declare and defend. Jesus, the gospel, and the people are that important.

A PROUD DAD

In Paul's time, a father's greatest joy was to present his daughter to her groom as a "pure virgin." Paul is afraid that the Corinthians are becoming "impure" in their faith by turning from the true gospel to false teachers and their false teachings.

- **Staying true to the majors is the priority.**

EASILY SEDUCED

As Eve was deceived by the serpent in the garden of Eden, Paul says the Corinthians are being deceived by the false teachers. This deception occurs when one teaches a **false Jesus** through a **false gospel** with a **false spirit**.

- **Can we discern truth from distortions?**

IT'S AMAZING WHAT WE CAN GET USED TO

Paul sarcastically says the Corinthians put up with false teaching "splendidly." As the serpent questioned God's word, so the false teachers are questioning Paul's word. These teachers are cunning and slowly dilute the truth.

- **Most false teachers don't start off with a sledgehammer but with a chisel.**

THE PROOF (2 CORINTHIANS 11:5–15)

CONTRASTING THE "SUPER-APOSTLES (SA)"

The false teachers tried to make Paul look weak and helpless by pointing out both physical and pastoral deficiencies they believed he had. The SAs had great oratory skills, but Paul's content was truth even if he didn't bow to the rhetorical practices of the times.

- **Truth is always more important than style.**

NOT OUT OF GREED

While Paul was not opposed to pastors making their living from the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:8–14), to contrast the greediness of the SAs, Paul chose to work and allow other churches to support him so he could do his ministry in Corinth without burdening them.

- Sometimes, we should lay aside preferences.

THE REALITY

The SAs weren't simply confused. Paul makes clear that they have demonic motives as is seen by their deceitful teaching and their desire to be Paul's equal.

- While not every false teacher is demonic, **the origin of false gospels about a false Jesus is demonic...be careful!**

THEIR END...

Because these SAs were deliberately deceptive by disguising themselves as apostles, without repentance they would reap what they had sown—eternal separation from God.

- **What are we sowing? Are we unashamedly proclaiming the one true Lord through the one true gospel?**

THE BOAST (2 CORINTHIANS 11:16–21A)

BOASTING IS FOOLISH

Paul knows that comparison among people is foolish because Jesus is our model, not people. However, the SAs boasted in themselves and so Paul will boast as well, not to compare but to contrast with the SAs.

- **"What do you have that you didn't receive" (1 Corinthians 4:7)? So why boast?**

PAUL IS WEAK

Paul points out the overbearing nature of the SAs. Apparently, they were incredibly abusive spiritually, psychologically, and physically. Paul was happy to boast that he was too weak to act that way!

- **Kingdom living is an upside-down reality that opposes this world.**

THE COST (2 CORINTHIANS 11:21B–33)

DON'T MEASURE YOURSELF AGAINST PAUL

Paul reluctantly boasts, first in an expected way and then in an unexpected way. Paul first boasts in his lineage (which he has renounced in Philippians 3:2–7).

- **Our lineage always depends on God's providence which should produce gratefulness and humility, not pride.**

SERVANT OF CHRIST

The SAs boasted in their service to Jesus by their accomplishments and achievements. Paul's service to Christ was demonstrated in his weaknesses and suffering. What the SAs saw as disqualifying, Paul saw as Jesus' endorsement of him as His servant.

- **Our culture doesn't get us. That's ok!**

ETERNAL OVER TEMPORARY

The physical torments that Paul faced were heavy, but the emotional weight of caring for the churches was heavier because it was daily. Paul didn't always suffer physically (Philippians 4:12), but he was always thinking of the churches.

- **The enormity of our work makes silly distractions pale in comparison.**

JESUS' NAME, NOT PAUL'S

If Paul can make Jesus look supreme over any other person or desire, even in suffering, persecution, and humiliation, then he'll do it. These were living illustrations that showed the world how Paul valued Jesus.

- **What in our lives shows people that we value Jesus as our greatest treasure?**

STAY CLOSE TO JESUS AND AWARE OF SIN

- Most of us won't have a spectacular fall from grace. **We will slowly slip away.**
- We have to fight the desire to be loved by people at the expense of being known by God.
- **Reading the Bible** is a far better practice than **reading/hearing about the Bible.**
- We must know the majors of the faith well so that we can discern truth from distortion.
- Pay more attention to what is said than how it's said.
- **Don't become enamored with celebrity speakers/writers who are clever and entertaining but aren't Bible-saturated.**

ARE WE BORED WITH JESUS?

- Be careful that boredom with the old story and a desire for new knowledge might lead to us having itching ears (2 Timothy 4:1–4).
- Our walk with and knowledge of Jesus and His Word doesn't take us wider, it takes us **deeper.**
- **Theology fuels doxology (worship).**

JESUS OVER ALL

- Do we have a tendency to boast in all kinds of things that are temporary rather than in Jesus and the eternal?
- Do the investments of our money, our time, and our talents magnify Jesus and the eternal?
- **Is Jesus really all we need?**