

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 30TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP (2 CORINTHIANS 11:1—4)

"YES, DO PUT UP WITH ME!"

Paul encouraged the church to put up with a "little foolishness" from him as they had already done so.

- They viewed his authority and attempt to reestablish his authority as foolishness. **Paul is reasonably asking that they continue reading his letter and put up with him a little longer.**

A GODLY JEALOUSY

Paul says **he is jealous for the Corinthians in the same way that God is jealous for us.** The sinful jealousy mentioned in Galatians 5:20 is different from the jealousy attributed to God when we worship and serve idols (Exodus 20:5).

- Paul is jealous for the Corinthian people because **they were given to him by God, and he desires an intimate and loyal relationship.**

COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP

Paul says, **"I have promised you in marriage to one husband—to present a pure virgin to Christ."**

Paul is like the friend of a bridegroom who is responsible for procuring a bride, protecting the bride, and presenting the bride on her wedding day.

- Paul was called to procure, protect, and present the church to Christ.

THE BATTLE FOR OUR MINDS

Paul feared that the Corinthians had allowed their minds to be **seduced away from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ** in the same way the serpent deceived Eve.

- The words spoken from the enemy through false teachers may not always draw followers to themselves, but **they will always draw others away from sincere and pure devotion to Christ.**

"...YOU PUT UP WITH IT SPLENDIDLY!"

There were some who taught a message contrary to what Paul taught, and instead of calling out these false teachers, **they allowed them to spout out a false gospel.**

- Like the Corinthians, **we will all have to answer to Jesus for our lack of discernment and willingness to accept and embrace false teachers and leaders.**

DISGUISE (2 CORINTHIANS 11:5–15)

"I AM UNTRAINED IN PUBLIC SPEAKING"

Polished, sophisticated, and theatric speech was popular in Paul's time and **the Corinthians desired teaching by this standard.**

- Though Paul lacked the eloquent speech of the self-proclaimed "super-apostles" **he was in no way inferior but was superior to them** because of the God-given knowledge and ability to divide the word rightfully (2 Timothy 2:15).

"I HAVE KEPT MYSELF, AND WILL KEEP MYSELF..."

A speaker who spoke free of charge would have been **regarded as an amateur or as someone with worthless teaching.**

- Paul said he instead **"robbed other churches"** to provide for him so that he was not a burden. **What Paul lacked, the people in Macedonia provided in their poverty, when the Corinthians should have.**

BOASTING IN OUR WEAKNESSES

What the Corinthians viewed as weakness and unimportance Paul viewed as a reason to "boast" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

- His unimpressive speech and appearance embarrassed the Corinthians, but Paul would continue to embarrass them in this way because **He loved them and wanted to pull them out of worldly thinking.**

"DISGUIISING THEMSELVES AS APOSTLES OF CHRIST"

Paul calls the opposition in Corinth **false apostles and deceitful workers.** In reality, those who disguised themselves as apostles were **more like Satan, who disguises himself as an angel of light, than God.**

- **Many of us only recognize evil when it presents itself as such, but can we recognize evil when it is disguised as good?**

PERILOUS LIFE (2 CORINTHIANS 11:16–33)

GIVING HIS CREDENTIALS AS AN APOSTLE

Paul is caught in the trap of having to boast though **he would rather be preaching Christ to those who deny his apostolic authority.**

- Instead of focusing on Christ as he desired (2 Corinthians 4:5), he was backed into a corner where in defense of his credentials **the focus was removed from Christ and placed on himself.**

"...BEING SO WISE, GLADLY PUT UP WITH FOOLS!"

Essentially Paul says, **"You've unwisely put up with fools this far, who put you in bondage. Why not continue to put up with me?"**

- The Corinthians **meekly submitted to all kinds of spiritual abuses of authority because they were impressed with the image of authority and power of the "super-apostles."**

TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK...

Following the wisdom of Proverbs 26:5, Paul knew the time called for him to **"answer a fool according to his foolishness."**

- There are times when it is not profitable to contend with a fool in their foolishness lest we look like a fool as well. Other times, when our tongue is guided, **we must expose folly to avoid someone becoming wise in their own eyes.**

PAUL'S PERILOUS LIFE

Paul **responded to the foolish in ways that spoke to them, though they were of little consequence to him.**

- Paul spoke of his **ethnic pedigree** as a Hebrew, the many **external sufferings** for the sake of the gospel, and the many **internal sufferings** out of "concern for all the churches."

HE IS WORTHY TO BE PRAISED FOREVER

After being "forced" into boasting, **Paul ends this section with a more appropriate boasting.**

- Paul abandoned the standards of his opponents showing that boasting in **his weakness exalted God as the source of his strength and protection** in a time when he barely escaped with his life while in Damascus (Acts 9:23–25).

WE ARE THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

- **We have been betrothed** ("promised to," sealed until the day of redemption) **to Christ.**
- **Jesus will come back to claim his bride** (us) **and invite us to a great wedding banquet** (Revelation 19:7–9).
- Until our wedding day, **if we give our hearts to something other than Jesus, we are committing "spiritual adultery."**

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

- **Spending time in truth is the only way to distinguish what is false.**
- **We must be diligent in studying the word and presenting ourselves as a workman approved by God** (2 Timothy 2:15).
- In studying the word, our goal is to know the author. **Do we know Psalm 23, or do we know the Shepherd?**