



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Chapter 11

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Introduction

- St. Paul continues defending his apostolic authority, out of concern for their faithfulness to Christ and his fear that others may have corrupted their minds (1-4)
- He also finds himself have to explain why he did not accept support from them. (5-15)
- While not desiring to act foolishly, he finds it necessary since it seems that the Corinthians are so willing to accept those who do (16-21)



Introduction

- With some foolish boldness, then, St. Paul claims equality with his opponents as it pertains to physical heritage
- But when it comes to service as a minister of Christ, he far surpasses them as is evident in the things he suffered
- After listing many examples of suffering, he concludes that if he must boast it will be his infirmity (escape from Damascus) (22-33)

Concern for Their Faithfulness (11:1-4)



- The criticism by the false teachers made it necessary that he should defend himself
- One like St. Paul, so forgetful of self and consecrated to Christ could only do this with a sort of sense of shame
- Hence he apologizes for doing so, though compelled
- Still I wish you to bear with me further, while I enter at large into self-commendations

Concern for Their Faithfulness (11:1-4)



- His way was induced because of his jealousy for them, not in behalf of himself, but of Christ
- He had espoused them to Christ, the Bridegroom of whom the church is the bride (Rev 21:2)
- He has a fear lest this bride may be led astray
- As Eve was seduced by the serpent (Gen 3:1), so he fears that the Corinthians may be led away by the false teachers
- Simplicity: single-minded devotion to Christ

Concern for Their Faithfulness (11:1-4)



- Most critics think that the verse is ironical
- The Judaizers so perverted the gospel that it was really another gospel (Gal 1:6)
- Hence Paul is supposed to say that if these men preach another Jesus, another Spirit, and another gospel than those you received, which they do, you might well bear with them!
- Or he means these men discredit me, but have no new gospel, Spirit or Christ to offer

St. Paul and False Apostles (11:5-15)



- St. Paul says he is not behind these pre-eminent who claimed to be apostles (a stroke of sarcasm)
- He had not the expression of a Corinthian orator, but he was not wanting in divine knowledge
- His knowledge had been manifest among them
- He had supported himself by his labor (Acts 18:3)
- Yet these false apostles seemed to have charged that he did not dare to ask for the support
- Exalted: by preaching the gospel to them

St. Paul and False Apostles (11:5-15)



- Other churches sustained him when he came to Corinth
- This seems to have been the usual custom
- Philippi aided him more than once while preaching in Thessalonica (Phil 4:16)
- The churches of Macedonia aided him at Corinth
- When his supplies fell short, he work at tent-making (Acts 18:3) until Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia with supplies (Acts 18:5)

St. Paul and False Apostles (11:5-15)



- As he has done, so he will do. It shall be his boast that his gospel was freely preached in Achaia
- Do I refuse to receive anything of you, because I do not love you? God knows that is not the case
- One reason that he did this was to give no excuse to these opponents to ask the church for support
- He would force them by his example to be found even as they, that is, to maintain themselves
- These men are not real, but false apostles

St. Paul and False Apostles (11:5-15)



- Even Satan can take the shape of an angel of light
- He deceives by coming in a false appearance
- It is not strange if persons really doing Satan's work should appear as ministers of righteousness
- The sorest wounds of the church are not found from without, but from agents of Satan within
- The test of things is the end which strips off every false form and they will be dealt with according to their works and not according to their pretensions



Reluctant Boasting (11:16-21)

- Even though he should boast, let no one regard him foolish, since he compelled to by the criticism of his labors
- Whether he be regarded as foolish or wise, let his words be received
- “Not according to the Lord” that is, not consistent with Christian humility
- This verse guards against his boasting being made a justification of boasting in general



Reluctant Boasting (11:16-21)

- According to the flesh: Boast of external and secular things
- He will boast because he has the same privileges
- You are so wise that you can bear with the folly
- Part of their wisdom was to tolerate fools gladly
- They let men bring them into bondage to the law, to devour their property by their greed for gain; to take them by cunning snares; to exalt themselves overly, and to physically abuse them



Reluctant Boasting (11:16-21)

- To our shame (in your eyes), we did not exercise power over you
- The opponents had said that his bodily presence was weak
- Instead, he had suffered what he had described in 2 Cor 11:20, but he had never been so bold
- Yet, wherein any were bold, he had the right to be bold also
- He next states his grounds for boasting

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- St. Paul was a pure Hebrew, he was of the seed of Jacob, and the heir of the promises to Israel
- Not only of the fleshly seed of Abraham, but of his spiritual seed also
- Not only a minister, but a pre-eminent sufferer for Christ
- To show how much he exceeded them, he gives some account of his sufferings
- Speaking foolishly, that is, commending himself

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- The record of book of Acts shows how his labors abounded
- In stripes above measure (2 Cor 11:24,25)
- Clement, at the end of the first century, says in his Epistle to the Corinthians that St. Paul was imprisoned seven times, one of them was at Philippi (Acts 16:24)
- St. Paul was exposed to death; or suffering pain equal to death; in danger of death often

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- Stripes: The Jews were not allowed to exceed this number (Deut 25:3)
- Beaten with rods: This was the Roman scourging. Only one is reported in Acts 16:23
- Once was I stoned. See Acts 14:19
- Shipwreck. No account is given of these. The shipwreck, in (Acts 27:44), was of later date
- In the deep: In an open boat, or on driftwood, after a shipwreck

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- Journeys: Through several countries and kingdoms to preach the Gospel
- Perils of waters. by the floods being out, which made it very dangerous travelling
- Perils of robbers. In his travels he was often exposed to danger from this source
- Perils by my own countrymen. The Jews, who constantly persecuted him. See 2 Cor 11:24
- Perils of the Gentiles. see 2 Cor 11:25

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- Perils in the city. Damascus (Acts 9:22-24), Jerusalem (Acts 21:28-31), Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:44,45,50), Lystra (Acts 14:11-13), Philippi (Acts 16:18-24), and Corinth (Acts 18:12)
- Perils in the wilderness: by robbers and wild beasts, hunger and thirst, and by the sands
- Perils in the sea: shipwreck, pirates, the ill usage of mariners, and want of provisions
- False brethren: the Judaizers

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- In weariness and toil: Often weary and in pain
- The verse shows the self-denial made necessary in preaching the gospel
- Sleeplessness: in preaching, or praying, or work
- Fastings: voluntary ones
- Often in want, hunger, thirst nakedness and cold
- Why should all these have been endured? Only conviction and love could have led him to this sacrifice

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- His physical sufferings and labors were not all. There was constant care for all the churches
- He had not only the care of the churches, but of every person therein
- His sympathy for the churches and people was so great that if they suffered, he suffered with them
- Who is offended and suffer pain as though I had fire in my bosom
- Infirmity: my weakness, rather than my strength

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- He has given as astonishing catalogue of suffering. Yet, God knows that every word is true
- In Damascus. This seems to be cited to show that from the first day he was amid peril (Acts 9:23-25)
- Aretas was king of Petra, and the father-in-law of Herod Antipas.
- Damascus was usually, under Roman rule
- Aretas engaged in war with Herod because he sent off his daughter and took Herodias for a wife

Suffering For Christ (11:22-33)



- He defeated Herod and became involved with the Romans
- It is likely that in the war Damascus fell into his hands for a time
- Garrison, shows that it was war times
- The Jews, who were very strong in Damascus, do induced the governor to try to seize St. Paul
- Houses are built against walls with windows looking out over them



Conclusion

- How did St. Paul desire to present the Corinthians to Christ?
- What was St. Paul fearful of concerning the Corinthians?
- What were they seemingly willing to put up with?
- In what area did St. Paul concede that he was untrained? In what area was this not so?
- What practice of St. Paul evidently was used as a charge against him?
- Why would St. Paul continue the practice of not accepting support from the Corinthians?



Conclusion

- While at Corinth, from whom did St. Paul receive support?
- How does St. Paul describe these opponents of his?
- How does Satan often transform himself? And his ministers?
- How did St. Paul view the confidence of boasting?
- Then why does St. Paul engage in such boasting?
- In what three ways was St. Paul equal to his opponents?
- List five things endured by St. Paul as a minister of Christ
- If St. Paul must boast, in what would he boast?
- What event does he relate as an example of his infirmity?