

# “Would the Real Apostle Please Stand Up”

## 2 Corinthians Chapter 11

The television show “*To Tell The Truth*” aired on tv from 1956 - 1968 and another 12 years in syndication. This was a show where 3 people standing before a panel of celebrity judges, all 3 claiming to be the same person. Only one was telling the truth. Only one was the real deal. After the panel was allowed to ask question of the 3 persons, everyone including the audience voted for who they thought was the real deal. Once all the votes were cast, the announcer would say, “*Would the real \_\_\_\_\_ please stand up.*”

Chapter 11 Paul is still defending his Apostolic Authority. He is going to compare his Apostolic Ministry against some False Apostles.

### 2Cr 11:1 1) Paul Introduces His Concern vs 1-3

**I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me.**

- In 2 Corinthians 10:17-18 “*HE WHO BOASTS IS TO BOAST IN THE LORD. For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.*”
- His critics have driven him to the point of needing to give his credentials. He calls this foolishness. Not that his credentials are foolish but that the time and energy spent on doing this would have been better spent preaching the gospel.
- Yet it is very important currently because by not doing this the Corinthians are in danger (see v 2-3)

### 2Cr 11:2 **For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.**

- There is a difference between Human Jealousy and Godly Jealousy.
  - Human Jealousy in the scriptures is often translated to the word “envy”. The King James will usually use the word envy while other translations even the New King James will use jealousy.
  - 2 Corinthians 12:20 “*For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances*”
  - Romans 13:13 “*Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.*”
  - Yet God is Jealous - This is different than Human Jealousy.
  - Exodus 20:5 “*You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God*”
  - Exodus 34:14 “*for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God*”
  - Human Jealousy is selfish.
  - Godly Jealousy is thinking of the benefit of others.
  - Human Jealousy wants things for my pleasure to have to satisfy me.
  - Godly Jealousy wants the best for others for their best interest for their satisfaction.
- Paul is jealous for the Corinthians for their best. Paul was the one who came first to them with the gospel and introduced Christ to them.
- Paul takes the place of the father of the Corinthians. For it was the father’s role to “betroth” his daughter to a husband. He desires for them a husbandman in Christ and them to be a pure bride.
  - Luke 15:8-9 A woman lost a coin and search and search for it and rejoiced when she found it. Why? The coins were tokens from her father that she had been kept a virgin. So when she lost one it was a huge potential crisis. Embarrassment, shame, and relationships and reputations ruined.

### 2Cr 11:3 **But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.**

- Paul is concerned that the purity of the Corinthians had been spoiled by false apostles.
- The serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness of using ½ lies. Out and Out lies are usually easy to spot. It is when the lie is missed with partial truths that they are more difficult to discern.
- Paul is defending his ministry as an apostle. It is important because the false apostles were putting his calling into question which caused his message to be in question.
- Paul’s message was the Message of a Risen Christ. It was pure and simple. Christ alone saves mankind through grace.

2Cr 11:4

## 2) True Verses False Apostles vs 4-33

Paul compares himself to these false apostles in five areas:

In various times in our journey we are in need of finding a new church or pastor. These are also some guidelines to help in that search.

The Gospel

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear *this* beautifully.

- Galatians 1:8-9 "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!"
- We know that there were "Judiazers" who would come in after Paul and present Christ but a Christ who would demand fulfillment of the Law of circumcision for acceptance to God. These who came to Corinth may not be the same yet they preached not the same gospel nor the same Jesus and did not have the same Spirit as Paul/
- ANOTHER JESUS
  - Jesus is God who dwelt among men in flesh. Because of this incarnation he is referred to as God's only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
  - Jesus is NOT just a prophet. He is NOT just a man. He is NOT Lucifer's brother. He is NOT just one of many ways to God. He is NOT just a good idea
- DIFFERENT SPIRIT
  - The Spirit we received is one of "Love, Power and Sound Mind" Love for people. Power to live the life of a Christian before people and Sound Mind is a discipline to be consistent in the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not exalt His own name but the Name of Jesus.
  - The Spirit is NOT a mystical experience that only enlightened can understand or possess.
- DIFFERENT GOSPEL
  - Simple as Paul says. Man had sinned and unable to save himself. Sin MUST be accounted for. The payment is death. The debt we owed was paid for by Jesus on Calvary's cross. Because of His Love and Grace all we need to pay is acceptance of Jesus work on the Cross.
  - It is not fulfillment of obligations or duties. It does not require performance from man.
- Paul says that the Corinthians "bear *this* beautifully". What he is saying is that the Corinthians allow or "put up with" another Jesus, Spirit or Gospel. They do not separate the error from them.

Humility

2Cr 11:5

For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles.

2Cr 11:6

But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not *so* in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made *this* evident to you in all things.

- In verse 4 we see these false apostles "COME". But Paul was "SENT" to the Corinthians.
  - Romans 10:15 "And how shall they preach, **except they be sent?** as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"
  - 1 Corinthians 1:17 "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."
- The "most eminent apostles" are not the other apostles like James or Peter but Paul is referring to the self proclaimed "super apostles" that have come into Corinth and were critical of Paul. These "super apostles" had a charisma and a great oratory skill. Being near Athens, this brought people who loved to debate and speak. And they were quite good at it and it was desired entertainment for the Greeks.
- Paul acknowledges that they are really good speakers. But he has something they do not have. Paul has KNOWLEDGE. A relational knowledge of Jesus personally
- Today we have very polished speakers who can speak clearly and insert a story at just the right time, tell a joke and entertain. What we need from our teachers is KNOWLEDGE. Our teachers need knowledge of Jesus

## Finances

- 2Cr 11:7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge?
- 2Cr 11:8 I robbed other churches by taking wages *from them* to serve you;
- 2Cr 11:9 and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.
- Did you get your money's worth? Paul when he was with the Corinthians he worked as a tentmaker. He worked that preached not expecting financial compensation. He did this so the Gospel would be received without suspicion.
  - Here is the problem. If it is offered free it can be perceived as having no value.
  - Our big conferences today charge an admission fee. To get a big named speaker we must pay a fee plus expenses. Well they must have something more valuable to say than our pastor who simply takes up a voluntary offering or worse yet just has an offering box in the back.
  - Paul said, "Did I commit a sin for not charging you?" "Actually, took from others to minister among you"
  - It is understood that ministers need financial resources just like everyone else. But due to the suspicion and mistrust that occurs the ministry MUST be above board and maintain humility and full disclosure where finances.
  - Paul disclosed where he received his support and why.

## Guardianship

- 2Cr 11:10 As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia.
- 2Cr 11:11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows *I do!*
- 2Cr 11:12 But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting.
- 2Cr 11:13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.
- 2Cr 11:14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
- 2Cr 11:15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.
- Sometimes Love has an unexpected appearance. Like a mother slapping a child's hand as he reaches for the hot burner on the stove.
  - Sometimes Love from Paul looked strong and inflict discipline to modify behavior. Paul understands that in the carrying out of the discipline it may seem that it is an unloving action. Paul affirms his love for the Corinthians and yet gives some very strong words.
  - Paul wants to cut off Satan's opportunity. He is going to expose the truth.
  - It is interesting that he is accused of being strong in his letters but unimpressive in person. But the accusation doesn't slow him down a bit.
  - False apostles are deceitful. They come in a disguise. They attempt to look as though they embrace Christ but they do not.
  - Here is a strong truth! If Satan disguises himself. His messengers do too.
  - Our ministers need to love us enough to tell us the truth. Our feeling may get hurt. But in the end we will know they have been looking out for our best interest.
  - Ephesians 4:11-15 "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, **to the building up of the body of Christ**; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, **we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,**"

Ministry  
Record

- 2Cr 11:16 Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if *you do*, receive me even as foolish, so that I also may boast a little.
- 2Cr 11:17 What I am saying, I am not saying as the Lord would, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting.
- 2Cr 11:18 Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast also.
- 2Cr 11:19 For you, being *so* wise, tolerate the foolish gladly.
- 2Cr 11:20 For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the face.
- 2Cr 11:21 To *my* shame I *must* say that we have been weak *by comparison*. But in whatever respect anyone *else* is bold—I speak in foolishness—I am just as bold myself.
- Just as before Paul considers this boasting foolish. Paul would rather speak of Jesus.
  - 2 Corinthians 4:5 "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord;"
  - The false apostles are so arrogant that they can get away with mistreatment. Demanding sacrifice, humiliation, or forced servitude are the tools of arrogant false apostles. They are a perversion of a devoted heart given to sacrificial living, humility and service to others.
  - Paul says if this is what you desire in your apostle, than we are "weak by comparison"
- 2Cr 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.
- 2Cr 11:23 Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I **more so**; in far more labors, **in far more** imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.
- 2Cr 11:24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine *lashes*.
- 2Cr 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.
- 2Cr 11:26 *I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;
- 2Cr 11:27 *I have been* in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.
- 2Cr 11:28 Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.
- 2Cr 11:29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?
- 2Cr 11:30 If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness.
- 2Cr 11:31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.
- 2Cr 11:32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me,
- 2Cr 11:33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and *so* escaped his hands.
- Paul will go on in Chapter 12 with another account of his ministry experiences.
  - Paul is saying here is a test of a true apostle. Does he have durability? Someone who is in it for himself will not be around when it gets tough.
  - How could Paul endure?
    - Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
    - 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the

*things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*

Imagine you are on "To Tell the Truth" The questions are asked and answered. It is time to place your vote. Who will it be that stands when it is asked, "Would the Real Apostle Please Stand Up?"

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