



POWER IN WEAKNESS!

The Epistle of 2 Corinthians

The Simplicity of Christ!

2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Message #13 of 17 – S889

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Sunday Morning Service

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The Simplicity of Christ!

2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Opening Comments

- For you watching online, welcome – we are glad to have you with us
- Turn to **2 Corinthians 11**
- Today we continue our journey through **2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness!**
- I love the Bible – it played a huge role in saving me **Romans 10:17**
So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
- I have had the privilege and joy to study and teach God’s Word for almost twenty years
- One of the things that continues to amaze me is the simplicity of God’s Word
- The gospel message is so simple that a child can understand it
- We are even instructed by Jesus to keep it simple **Mark 10:15**
Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.
- Don’t get me wrong – there are some things that are hard to understand, but the problem is not with the Bible – it is me!
- The Bible – God’s Word is God’s revelation of Himself to mankind
- The Bible reveals to us the infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing, eternal, Triune God
- My finite human mind tries to understand God fully **Isaiah 55:8-9**
For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”
- You might know the children’s song that says, ‘Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so!’
- Is that true, does Jesus love me – you? Yes! It’s simple!
- The problem that some people have with Christianity is that it is too simple for them
- If I believe in the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ I will be forgiven of my sins and will go to heaven for the rest of eternity
- That’s too simple – There must be more to it than that

- And so, humans start adding to the gospel message what they think it needs for it to make sense
- Man's ideas of right and wrong, justice and righteousness, man's traditions, sometimes even borrowing from other religions things that help them to make sense of the gospel
- The problem is that adding anything to the gospel makes it a different gospel and one that cannot save anyone
- That is what Paul is dealing with in today's text
- People have come into the church in Corinth with a gospel that is different than what Paul taught and they are questioning his qualifications as an apostle
- Paul is concerned that the church is vulnerable to these men
- He is going to remind them why he is qualified to be an apostle
- Not for his own reputation, but for their faith
- He is concerned that they may be being deceived
- I am guessing that most of you are like me, your routines have been shattered
- This is a time that our enemy can use to deceive us and draw us away from God **1 Peter 5:8-9**

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

- This is an exhortation to remain vigilant
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Simplicity of Christ!**
- Paul is going to do something in this chapter that he is not happy about – he is going to boast about himself
- We all know people who love telling you about how great they are
- Paul considered that kind of thing foolish – previous chapter ended
- **2 Corinthians 10:17-18**
- Paul feels compelled to do this obnoxious thing because wolves in sheep's clothing have infiltrated the church
- **2 Corinthians 11:1**

- Bear with me while I do this foolish thing
- **2 Corinthians 11:2**
- We tend to view jealousy as a character flaw, and in a lot of people, it is

Jealous - Fiercely protective or vigilant of one's rights or possessions.

- Paul is expressing paternal jealousy
- The church in Corinth has been betrothed to be married to Jesus
- This Scripture and others like it impacted my understanding of my role in my daughter's life
- I came to understand that my responsibility to her was to help her to be pure, sexually, emotionally, physically, spiritually, until the day I walked her down the aisle and placed her hand into the hand of her husband.
- I tried to be 'fiercely protective and vigilant'
- Paul was concerned that the bride of Christ in Corinth was in trouble
- **2 Corinthians 11:3**
- This is one of only two places Eve is mentioned in the New Testament
- In the Garden, Adam and Eve were pure, they were perfect
- Satan came in and deceived Eve and led her away from purity and the consequence of that changed human history
- Satan convinced Eve that she could have a better life if she did what he said – it was a lie – He is still telling that same lie
- Paul's detractors were telling the Corinthians they could have a better life, could be better Christians if they would follow them instead of Paul
- Problem was that they were preaching something different than what Paul taught
- **2 Corinthians 11:4**
- This is one of the reasons why we exhort you to read, study, and know your Bible – protects you from those teaching a different gospel
- Only the true gospel can save!
- **2 Corinthians 11:5-6**
- Paul is honest about his weaknesses – not the most dynamic speaker
- What he lacked in charisma he made up for in knowledge

- Paul knew more about the gospel and the things of God than anyone else on earth
- One of the problems that we have in our culture is that people care more about the speaker than the message **2 Timothy 4:3-4**
For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
- Most people prefer a concert that moves them emotionally rather than to be led into the throne room of God in true worship
- And they want a charismatic, culturally relevant speaker who makes them feel good about themselves
- Paul's goal, which is also mine, is that the church would grow to be more like Christ – a pure and spotless bride for Christ
- As you watch this online, you have access to thousands of other speakers – probably a lot better than me – be careful
- Paul's detractors are attacking everything about him
- They are even calling his virtues evil
- **2 Corinthians 11:7-12**
- When Paul got to Corinth, he got a job (Acts 18) as a tentmaker
- Before too long a church was birthed from the people he led to Christ
- Corinth was a very prosperous city, but also very carnal
- Paul decided to refuse to receive support from them
- Paul didn't want money to stand in the way of the message
- That was a sign of weakness to Paul's detractors
- It was common for these travelling preachers to be paid for speaking
- What was true then is true today, the more money people will pay to hear you speak, the more important or prestigious you are
- Barrack Obama can make as much as \$400,000 per speech
- Paul's detractors were saying that Paul's insistence to refuse support from them called into question his qualifications as an apostle of Christ
- Because, if his message was valuable, they would have to pay him to hear it
- In verse 12, Paul says he was not going to change because it prevents his detractors from claiming to be like Paul

- Then Paul verbally punches his detractors in the face
- **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**
- Paul calls his detractors ministers of Satan
- Not because they are saying mean things about him, but because of verse 4
- **2 Corinthians 11:4**
- They were teaching something other than the simplicity of Christ
- There is only one gospel – one Holy Spirit – one Jesus Christ
- Anyone who teaches something other than what the Bible clearly and simply teaches is a minister of Satan
- Don't be surprised that Satan has ministers or servants in churches
- He uses deception to get them in there – they look just like ministers of Christ
- But eventually their true nature will reveal itself
- Paul saw the church in Corinth as betrothed to Christ
- He wanted to present the church to Christ as a pure and spotless bride
- Paul was responsible for birthing this church
- So, he responded with paternal jealousy, like the father of the bride, when that purity was threatened by ministers of Satan
- I so understand what Paul is feeling as God has given me the privilege of birthing this church
- And my desire is that I will someday present all of you that I care about deeply to Christ as a pure and spotless bride
- So, this is what we as a church are going to do
- We are going to keep it simple – it is all about Jesus!
- We are going to pray like God is listening to every word!
- We are going to worship like we are standing in the throne room of God in heaven!
- We are going to teach like every word in the Bible is true!
- And we are going to live like Jesus every day!
- That's what we as the church are going to do – what should you do?
- Keep it simple – it is all about Jesus!
- Pray like God is listening to every word!
- Worship like you are standing in the throne room of God in heaven!
- Receive the teaching like every word in the Bible is true!

- But don't do that blindly, hold us accountable to as Pastor Chuck Smith was fond of saying, 'Simply teach the word simply!'
- And finally, live like Jesus every day!
- We are in a time of upheaval and disruption – now is a time to be vigilant and draw nearer to God
- As we await the day that Jesus comes to collect His bride
- Let's keep it simple – it is all about Jesus!
- **Pray!**