

2 CORINTHIANS 11 Concern for Their Faithfulness; Paul and False Apostles; Reluctant Boasting; Suffering for Christ

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2 CORINTHIANS 11 Concern for Their Faithfulness;

The tenth, eleventh and twelfth chapters, were written, more or less, to deal with the false teachers that had come into Corinth after Paul left. There are always those who are pioneers. Those who are willing to go into uncharted territory and to do a work for the Lord and to blaze new trails. But then there are always those who are willing to come in after the initial work has been done and try to sort of reap the fruit of another man’s labor. They try to come and rather than going out to the lost, they are trying to build their churches by drawing from those that are already saved, appealing to them by some new slant on the Scriptures. Their whole thrust for outreach is proselytizing. They are not really out on the street winning the lost. They are only trying to proselytize off the established churches by introducing some new twisting, some new blessings, some new tingling. They’re parasites on the body of Christ, trying to draw them from the true gospel.

2Co 11:1 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly—and indeed you do bear with me.

2Co 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

2Co 11:3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2Co 11:4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!

2Co 11:5 For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles.

v. 1 folly - Paul calls it *folly* because he knows that the things he believed to be honorable about his apostleship would be regarded as foolish by some of the Corinthians.

v. 2 Paul’s *godly jealousy* is a good thing, and it will be offended if the Corinthians are seduced by a false understanding of what being an apostle is all about. Human jealousy is a vice. But the Lord said, *I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God (Exo 20:5)* “God’s jealousy is love in action. *Betrothed... one husband* – The Corinthians are to trust Paul as being like the friend of the groom, who watches out for the bride in the period between the engagement and the wedding (when eventually the Corinthians stand before Jesus.) The betrothal (engagement) then was binding. Unfaithfulness during the engagement period was considered adultery. An engagement could only be broken by divorce.

v. 3 deceived Eve... Satan’s deception in the Garden of Eden (*Gen 3:1-5*) is a good example of Satan’s deceptive tactics. His lie to Eve (*You will not surely die*) was surrounded by half-truths and enticing deception. *your minds may be corrupted* -: It is important that the Corinthians understand and trust Paul’s apostolic credentials because Paul knows the subtle nature of Satan’s deceptions.

v. 4 . For if he who comes preaches another Jesus: The Corinthians need to understand and trust Paul’s apostolic credentials because we see them being attracted to those who preach *another Jesus. Gal. 1:6-9 Whom we have not preached . . . a different spirit . . . or a different gospel: If He who comes*: An apostle is “one who is sent.” These troublemakers where the exact opposite of apostles. *You may well put up with it*: The main problem wasn’t so much that these false teachers had come to Corinth, but that they were putting up with them! We have the same problem today with false teachers in the church today, that of the church putting up with them and embracing them.

v. 5 Paul here is comparing himself to *the most eminent apostles*. Apparently, these were apostles the Corinthian preferred over Paul. Most likely he is referring sarcastically of the false apostles who claimed to be superior to Paul, describing themselves as “extra-super apostles.” *I am not at all inferior*: Whoever these *most eminent apostles* are, Paul will not claim to be *less* than they. Later Paul will explain how he (in an unlikely way) is *greater* than these supposed *most eminent apostles*.

1– (1 Cor. 4:7) what do you have but what you have received? And if you have received it, then why do you boast as though as you didn’t receive it? So how can you really boast in what God has done as though you were somehow responsible? Are we boasting in the gifts God has given us?

2– Because of their worldly ways and not having the mind of Christ, the Corinthians didn’t admire Paul’s apostolic credentials. Not only were Paul’s apostolic credentials under attack; the very nature of Jesus was being attacked. Do we ever attack the church or Christ? Anytime we give our hearts to something other than God, we are committing “spiritual adultery” during the period of our engagement

3– We need to note Satan’s tactics well: First, he creates doubt in your mind about God. He then offers partial truth and finally offers a substitute to the Jesus Christ and the gospel. **We need to be alert!**

4– The “other Jesus” was probably one who knew no weakness, persecution, humiliation, suffering and death. A “super Jesus” is another Jesus, not the real Jesus. And another Jesus cannot save! Paul warned the Galatians against receiving another Jesus. *But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. (Gal 1:8-9)*

v. 5– The false teachers were saying, Paul is not a true apostle. He’s sort of a self appointed. But Paul is saying here, I’m not at all inferior. Do we not often look on the outward appearance and opinions of others with too much emphasis?

2 CORINTHIANS 11 Concern for Their Faithfulness; Paul and False Apostles; Reluctant Boasting; Suffering for Christ

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Paul and False Apostles;

2Co 11:6 Even though I am untrained (idiōtēs Ignoramus, “idiot”, ignorant, rude, unlearned) in speech, yet I am not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

2Co 11:7 Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge?

2Co 11:8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you.

2Co 11:9 And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.

2Co 11:10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

2Co 11:11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows!

2Co 11:12 But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast.

2Co 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming (continually masquerading) themselves into apostles of Christ.

v. 6 Paul didn’t have all the polish and panache of a great speaker; but he knew God, and thus preached the gospel with power. He would give them himself. He *thoroughly manifested* himself among the Corinthian Christians *in all things*. Maybe he wasn’t a polished speaker, according to the standards of the Greeks, but he was an honest and transparent speaker.

v. 7. In the culture of that day, if a public speaker didn’t take money for his speaking, he was often disregarded as a poor speaker, with worthless teaching. Many people thought of someone who charged no speaking fee as strictly an amateur. But Paul didn’t care about the opinion of others when it came to his heart for preaching the gospel without being accused of doing it for money. Some Corinthians who despised Paul were so worldly in their thinking they actually thought Paul might be in *sin* because he *preached the gospel of God to you free of charge!*

v. 8. Paul received support from Christians in other cities during his time in Corinth. He could say he *robbed* those other churches in the sense that by right, the Corinthian Christians should have been supporting him when he was ministering to their spiritual needs (*1Co 9:4-11*). Instead, Paul *was a burden to no one* among the Corinthians.

v. 9. *For what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied:* The *other churches* Paul “robbed” were in the region of *Macedonia*, including the Philippian church. Paul thanked them for their generosity in *Php 4:14-18*.

v. 10. *No one shall stop me from this boasting:* Paul, as a true apostle could “boast” that he took no money, and that he was more interested in the integrity of the message than in his own needs.

v. 11. God knows! Paul’s boasting in his weakness and unimpressive image was an embarrassment to the Corinthians. It was only because he loved them, and would find a way to bring them back from their worldly thinking.

v. 12. Paul’s desire was to expose these “most eminent apostles” as frauds. If it took biting sarcasm or embarrassing the Corinthian Christians to expose them, Paul would use them.

v. 13 Now, being even more direct, without sarcasm, he plainly calls his detractors in Corinth (or at least the leaders among them) *false apostles* and *deceitful workers*. Few of us want to deal with *false apostles* and *deceitful workers* among Christians. But they were clearly there in Paul’s day, and they remain to this day. They are *transforming themselves into apostles of Christ*. In fact, no one can *transform themselves* into a true apostle of Christ. It is only a calling from God. As Paul will explain in the following sentence, those who *transform themselves* are more like Satan than like God!

v. 6 Paul’s faith and doctrine, his manner of life, were well known unto them. He had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God unto them; his knowledge in the mystery of Christ’s person and grace, and in all the parts of the everlasting Gospel, was no secret to them. He had used no artful methods to hide himself, or conceal the truth; but by manifestation of it, had commended himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. **Does your speech usually have an emphasis toward eloquence or toward the trust of the gospel?**

vs. 7–9 Paul humbles himself and tells them how he came to them. He served and worked with them. He worked along side of them. He abased himself in order that they might be exalted. He said, I didn’t take up any offerings, because I didn’t let you support me. I came as a servant to minister to you. Did I do wrong in doing that? He said, I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. He was like a missionary who had been sent out by the other churches. So Paul was supported by the churches in Macedonia as he was there in Corinth. They were the ones sending his support so that Paul didn’t have to receive an offering or take from the church in Corinth. What an example for us!

vs. 10–12 Paul says that he is boasting because it is the truth and because he is jealous over them and fearful for them. Other men, such as Apollos, may have been more eloquent and polished than Paul and did not stoop to do manual labor. Comparison with others is not the issue. Paul worked as a tentmaker. He did not take remuneration from the Corinthians. This does not detract from his apostleship. We need to be careful in boasting and carefully consider our motives and purpose.

vs. 13–14

Most likely there were deceitful workers who attempted to make themselves apostles of Christ when they were actually servants of Satan. Satan himself is an angel of light. If he would make himself visible to you, you would see a being of breathtaking beauty. We need to be careful in our behavior regarding Satan,, always keeping our Lord Jesus between him and us.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 11:14 *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*

2Co 11:15 *Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

Reluctant Boasting:

2Co 11:16 *I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little.*

2Co 11:17 *What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.*

2Co 11:18 *Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast.*

2Co 11:19 *For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise!*

2Co 11:20 *For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours you, if one takes from you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face.*

v. 14 Even as Satan may appear as an *angel of light*, so false apostles may have a “good” appearance, Paul is showing how foolish it is to rely on image and outward appearances. If Satan were to appear before a human audience, they would be strongly tempted to worship him as a creature of almost divine beauty. He would be regarded as *an angel of light!* It has been said that Satan has *three forms* under which he tempts men: 1. The *subtle serpent*. 2. The *roaring lion*. 3. The *angel of light*. He often, as the *angel of light*, persuades men to do things under the *name of religion*, which are subversive of it. In the form of heathen persecution, like a *lion* he has ravaged the heritage of the Lord. And by means of our *senses* and *passions*, as the *subtle serpent*, he is frequently deceiving us, so that often the *workings of corrupt nature* are mistaken for the *operations of the Spirit of God*.

v. 15 A terrible condemnation is reserved for these false apostles: to be judged *according to their works*.

v. 16 Here we sense both Paul’s sarcasm and his hesitancy to promote himself. He would rather talk about Jesus, but that message is hindered by the Corinthians’ disregard of Paul’s credentials as a true apostle, a true representative of Jesus. Paul is not like the “real” fools who boast of their credentials. This will be evident when Paul starts stating his credentials as a true apostle!

v. 17 Paul speaks *not according to the Lord* in the sense that his defense of his credentials focuses on himself. He didn’t like to talk about himself. He was happy to write *for we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord (2Co 4:5)*.

v. 18 Paul feels forced into writing about himself: *Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast*. But his boasting will be nothing like the boasting of the *many* who *boast according to the flesh*.

v. 19 Again we see Paul using sarcasm. If the Corinthians are *wise* enough to put up with so many fools, surely they can listen to Paul for a while!

v. 20 The *bondage* Paul speaks of may indicate that these false apostles were legalists, trying to put people under the bondage of the Law. It seems the Corinthians were so taken with their “super false apostles” they would accept all kind of ill treatment from them. They were so impressed with the image of authority and power of the “super false apostles,” they meekly submit to this kind of treatment. Too many people are more comfortable with authoritarian “super false apostles” than with freedom they have in Jesus.

v. 15 The frightening and somewhat disheartening statement here is that Satan has ministers. As Satan is transformed into an angel of light, so his ministers are transformed as the ministers of righteousness. They are very attractive. Be careful in judging all by their fruit. Are they feeding the sheep or fleecing them. Are they drawing people to the Jesus of the Bible? On judgment day, what will our works look like?

vs. 16-19 In the following verses Paul is saying, I have been through many trials, but the greatest trial of all, (vs.28) the heaviest burden of all, is my concern for the churches!” Before listing the various kinds of trials he had experienced, Paul was careful to explain why he was “boasting” in this way. Paul never had any problem boasting about Christ and telling of His sufferings, but he was always hesitant to speak of his own painful experiences as a servant of God. It was the immature and unspiritual attitude of the Corinthians that forced Paul to write about himself and “glory” (boast) in these experiences. However, he had to do it to prove his love for the Corinthians and protect them from those who would lead them astray. Also, Paul was boasting so that he might help the church, while the false teachers boasted so that they might “help themselves” to what they could get out of the church. Paul’s motive was pure; theirs was selfish.

vs. 20-21 Paul ended this exposure of the unspiritual attitudes and actions of the Judaizers by bringing in some more “inspired irony”: *“To our shame I say that we were too weak for that!”* The Corinthians thought that Paul’s meekness was weakness, when it was really strength. And they thought that the Judaizers’ arrogance was power. How ignorant the saints can sometimes be.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 11:21 To our shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also.

Suffering for Christ

2Co 11:22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.

2Co 11:23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often.

2Co 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.

v. 21 Paul confesses that he is too “weak” to abuse his sheep the way the “super apostles” do. Guilty as charged! ***But in whatever anyone is bold - I speak foolishly - I am bold also:*** The *most eminent apostles* were ***bold*** in proclaiming their greatness. So, Paul will be ***bold also***, but in doing so, he will ***speak foolishly***, but about the things that prove him a true apostle

v. 22 Paul’s human ancestry was enough to qualify him as an apostle. He was of ***the seed of Abraham***, the ***Israelites*** and of the ***Israelites***, he was of the ***Hebrews***, meaning he was a Jew of Judean descent, as opposed to Jews who were born in areas far from Judea. Paul knows that his blood ancestry does not make him an apostle or a servant of Jesus. But the false teachers were saying or implying that it was important. Knowing the silliness of this, Paul says ***I speak foolishly***.

vs. 23-25 The *most eminent apostles* claimed to be ***ministers of Christ***. To them, the term sounded like an honored, privileged title. Paul has no problem with the title *minister*, but he has a big problem with the understanding of the title promoted by the false teachers received by the Corinthians. ...***labors more abundant:*** “I am a minister of Christ because I work harder, as opposed to a matter of privilege, than any of the other apostles for Jesus’ sake...***stripes above measure:*** “I am a minister of Christ because I have been beaten many times for Jesus’ sake.” Paul received beatings from both the Jews (***five times I received forty stripes minus one***) and the Romans (***three times I beaten with rods***).

Deu 25:3 - So the Rabbis restricted the number of stripes you could give to 39 (***forty stripes minus one***). Not out of mercy, but they feared that there might be a miscount and forty stripes would be exceeded by accident. ***In prisons more frequently:*** “I am a minister of Christ because I have spent a lot of time in prison for Jesus’ sake.” Paul speaks of being in prison several times, even though Acts only tells us of one instance to this date (in Philippi, ***Act 16:20-24***). This reminds us that as wonderful as the book of Acts is, it is an incomplete record. ***In deaths often:*** “I am a minister of Christ because I have been close to death many times for Jesus’ sake.” We know Paul was close to death when an angry crowd tried to execute him by stoning in Lystra (***Act 14:19***), but there were many other times as well. The incident in Lystra, recorded in ***Act 14:19***, which may be what Paul refers to when he says ***once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils:*** “I am a minister of Christ because I have traveled many miles for Jesus’ sake, and have endured many hardships traveling for Jesus’ sake.” In the modern world, a busy travel schedule can be hard on anyone. Think of what it was like in the ancient world!

. 22 When it came to their Jewish heritage, the false teachers were equal to Paul; but when it came to ministry for Christ, it was Paul who was the “super-apostle” and not the Judaizers. Consider what Paul endured for the cause of Christ and the care of the churches. **How strong is our commitment to the ministry calling the LORD has on our lives?**

vs. 23-24 The Jews had a method in those days of delivering thirty-nine stripes, and to prevent killing the person, they would apply thirteen stripes on one side, thirteen stripes on the other side, and thirteen stripes on the back. Paul had had this kind of torture five times. Can you imagine yourself ever going through this once for the gospel, let alone five times?

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 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 been in the deep;*

2Co 11:26 *in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;*

2Co 11:27 *in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—*

vs. 23-25 *con't* Through the book of Acts, we read of 18 journeys Paul took by ship, with half of them occurring before the writing of 2 Corinthians. Since the book of Acts is an incomplete record, there were many more in addition to this. Possibly, no other man in the ancient world who may have traveled as much as Paul did.

v. 26 “I am a minister of Christ because I have endured many perils and many discomforts for Jesus’ sake.” All these *perils* simply add up to a hard, stress-filled life. **In perils of waters:** This refers to the great dangers Paul faced in crossing rivers as he traveled. **In perils of robbers:** One of the worst dangers of travel in the ancient world were muggers ready to rob isolated travelers in the middle of nowhere (as Jesus illustrated in Luk 10:30). **In perils in the city:** Paul experienced many hostile mobs in the cities where he preached (Act 13:50; Act 14:5; Act 14:19; Act 16:19, and so forth). **In perils in the wilderness:** In his travels, Paul spent many dangerous days and nights *in the wilderness*. **In perils in the sea:** This refers to Paul’s many shipwrecks and difficulties when traveling by sea.

v. 27 *In weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness:* In our modern world, we are isolated from so many of the difficulties Paul would have faced. We can get water and food and warmth so much more easily than Paul ever could. Paul simply lived a hard life as a missionary, traveling and preaching the gospel! ii. It wasn’t the mere fact of a hard life that made Paul a true minister of Christ. Many people have hard lives, but are in no way servants of Jesus. But for Paul, all these perils and hardships were *freely chosen*, when he could have lived differently if he wanted to. But he didn’t want to. He wanted to serve Jesus, and if these hardships were part of serving Jesus, he would accept them. How could the man who lived this life possibly be *happy*? Because he had died to himself! Because he could say, *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.* (Gal 2:20) Because of this, Paul could practice what he preached when he wrote, *we also glory in tribulations* (Rom 5:3). This wasn’t just “spiritual talk” from Paul. He really lived it! Paul could say, and mean, what he wrote earlier in 2Co 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.*

v. 25 How many of us today could say that we have been through even the smallest part of anything like Paul went through? We sit in the lap of luxury. We live in an affluent society. We know practically nothing of hardship for the sake of Jesus Christ.

v. 26 *In perils among false brethren:* Paul had the danger of those who said they were brothers and his friends, and who were not (2Ti 4:14 is a later example of this).

v. 27 Such is the price that Paul paid. How does that react upon you? Do you congratulate yourself that you have escaped it? One week of such living and we would be done, but Paul went through it for a lifetime and gloried in his infirmities.” The *perils* of Paul’s life were really plenty enough to kill any man. But men could not kill him until God had finished His purpose for Paul on this earth! The *most eminent apostles*, and the Christian Corinthians who had bought into their worldly lies, must think Paul is *crazy* at this point. They found nothing to boast about in these hardships Paul glories in. For them such hardships said, “God is not with me. I’m a loser. I’m weak. I’m not happy. My life is too hard.” They could only glory in the image of power and the appearance of success. If they did not have that, they felt God was against them. They thought this way because their thinking was worldly, instead of having the mind of Jesus as reflected in Php 2:5-11

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

2Co 11:28 *besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.*

2Co 11:29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?*

2Co 11:30 *If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity*

2Co 11:31 *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.*

2Co 11:32 *In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me;*
2Co 11:33 *but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.*

v. 28 *Besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches:* In addition to all the stressful *perils* previously mentioned, Paul lived *daily* with another burden. He lived with a *deep concern for all the churches*.

v. 29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?* Paul's *deep concern* was not for himself. It was for others; for the *weak* and those *made to stumble*. Paul had many burdens, but few of them were for himself. He, like Jesus, was truly an others-centered person. Paul's *deep concern* was not a “faithless fussiness.”

v. 30 *If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity:* What is Paul's boast? What are his credentials as an apostle? Only his scars, *the things which concern my infirmity*. The *infirmity* Paul refers to may be a specific illness or weakness; more likely, it is the life of hardship and stress he lived as a whole.
 ii. “I will not boast of my *natural* or *acquired powers*; neither in what God has done by me; but rather in what I have *suffered* for him.”

v. 31 *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying:* Paul recognizes that what he has just written may seem incredible to some. Some may doubt Paul has actually lived such hardship. But probably even more doubt that Paul could actually boast of such hardship! So Paul uses strong language to declare God is his witness that he is telling the truth.

v. 32 - 33 *In Damascus . . . I was let down in a basket through a window:* This was perhaps the first real peril or hardship Paul faced for Jesus' sake (**Act 9:23-25**). He thinks way back to this beginning event, perhaps thinking that his escape from Damascus was his “apprenticeship in persecution.” It is as if he is saying, “This is how my ministry began and this is how it continues.” This Damascus escape was an event which emphasized, at the very beginning of his ministry, his own abject weakness and frailty. The reference to *Aretas the king* dates Paul's escape from Damascus between 37-39 AD. Taking into account the three years mentioned in **Gal 1:18**, and that this incident happened at the end of those three years, we can surmise that Paul was converted sometime between 34 and 36 AD.

v. 28 The *perils* Paul mentioned were not everyday occurrences. But his *deep concern for all the churches* never left him. Paul's burdens were not only physical, they were also emotional.

v. 29 “This anxiety was based not only on disturbing reports which came to his ears, but on his knowledge of the savage subtlety of the enemy of souls who, he realized, would stop at nothing in his attempts to overthrow the work of the gospel.”

v. 30 The *false apostles*, those *most eminent apostles*, would never dream of boasting in such things. They thought any *infirmity* made one look weak and far from God. But Paul did not care if it looked foolish in the eyes of the world or those in the church who thought like the world. Paul lived with an eternal perspective, not a worldly perspective.

v. 31 “‘God knows.’ He knows what? Knows all the suffering, knows all the trial, knows all the facts, which he has already referred to, that he is led everywhere in triumph all the way. ‘God knows.’ That is the secret of his deepest boasting.”

vs. 32-33 It illustrates with power the contrast between Saul of Tarsus and Paul the Apostle. Saul of Tarsus traveled to Damascus full of man's power and authority, directed against God's people. Paul the Apostle left Damascus humbly in a basket! Is there anything more descriptive of weakness than being let down in a basket over a wall? “Could we think of anything more likely to rob a man of any sense of dignity than that?”

2 CORINTHIANS 11 Concern for Their Faithfulness; Paul and False Apostles; Reluctant Boasting; Suffering for Christ

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.