

2 Corinthians: Encouragement in Troubling Times
"Angel of Light" # 23
2 Corinthians 11: 12-15, 20
10-16-16 Sun PM

The book of 2 Corinthians is Paul's defense of his call and ministry as a true apostle. The lack of biblical discernment had created a mess in the Corinthian church. So Paul directly confronted the false teachers in 2 Cor. 11-13.

TT- Paul gives a stark contrast between himself and the false apostles by boldly sharing Paul the marks of a true apostle 11:7-11 - humility, truth, and love. He then gives the marks of a false apostle 11:12-15, 20- Pride, deception, and abuse.

I. Pride not Humility (v. 12).

These false teachers manifested their pride in their greed. Paul did not take money from the Corinthians and this made the false teachers look bad.

Let me read this verse another way. "But I will continue to do what I am doing, in order to deny the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be regarded just as our equals in what they boast about."

Paul would not change his policy of not taking money so the false teachers would look good. We see the selflessness of Paul contrasted with the greed of the false apostles (v. 9).

II. Deception not Truth (vs. 13-15).

Paul strongly exposes the greed and lies of the false apostles because the truth was at stake. Paul believed truth was at stake by sacrificing for a false unity.

Paul said these men peddled the word of God walking according to the flesh. He said they preached another Jesus and another gospel.

These false teachers have been present throughout history and will grow worse and worse.

Matt. 24:24, "False messiahs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

vs. 13, 15- They deceitfully disguised themselves as apostles of Christ to deceive the gullible and undiscerning. They were Satan's servants who posed as servants of righteousness.

2 Tim. 3:13, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

v. 14- Satan's as well is disguised as a messenger of light. He comes into the church, not a red creature with a pitchfork and horns, but as a false friend.

Someone said, "We might say he poses as a minister of the gospel, wearing religious clothing, and standing in the pulpit of a fashionable church. He uses religious words such as *God*, *Jesus*, and *the Bible*. But he deceives his hearers, teaching that salvation is by good works or by human merit. He does not preach redemption through the blood of Christ. He will not get away with it and neither his false teachers.

Rev. 20:1-2, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. (2) And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, (3) And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Matt. 7:21-23, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

I. Pride (v. 12).

II. Deception (vs. 13-15).

III. Bondage not Love (v. 20).

This word "bondage" means "enslavement." This word appears in Gal. 2:4 where the Judaizers enslaved the Galatians.

They were so seduced they willingly tolerated harsh treatment. "Devour" pictures the false teachers preying on the Corinthians like predatory animal.

Note four takeaways from this contrast of Paul and the false apostles:

1. Satanic lies and deception is often masked by smooth, clever oratory. They use biblical terms but change the meaning.
2. Those consumed with accumulating wealth and power are not true servants of Christ.
3. Believers are not to be tolerant of false teachers or their false teachings. We should have strong bold convictions.
4. Discernment comes from the knowledge of, and skill of God's Word.