

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
You Shall Know Them By Their Fruits
2 Corinthians 11

Last time...how an unhealthy Body dysfunctions – spiritual warfare within the Church
False teachers/apostles, false gospels
Comparing and competing amongst ourselves

This time...Paul, who loves this church, challenges the Corinthians to be fruit inspectors.
And so are we, having in mind

- the warning of Jesus Christ (Matt 7:15-20)
- the exhortation of the Holy Spirit
 - Eph 4:11-16 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
- the spiritual battle in the Church with Satan, who is nothing but a counterfeiter

v1 Continuing directly after Ch 10:18 is Paul's desire for "an audience"

You put up with those who commend themselves, just bear with me whom the Lord commends
Many of you think I am a fool; hear me out, please...just humor me.

Why should they?

The respect due a father by his children

1 Cor 4:14-15 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn *you*. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

And in keeping with that relational dynamic,

v2 I am jealous with a Godly jealousy

- hotly zealous affection
- pure as God's jealousy

Ex 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God:

Deut 4:24 For the LORD thy God *is* a consuming fire, *even* a jealous God.

- not a jealousy corrupted by man's self-serving sin nature

I, as your spiritual father, have espoused/betrothed you, my spiritual "daughter",
to be the Bride of one Husband, Jesus Christ

In my Godly jealousy for you I will present you to Him as a chaste virgin, an innocent,
pure, modest, faithful, beauty-radiating-from-the-inside Bride

One of the many mysteries in the Scripture: the Church, Body and Bride

I am NOT a grievous wolf entering in among you, not sparing the flock, speaking
perverse things to draw away disciples after myself...as the false apostles are
(Acts 20:29-30).

But...

v3 Paul is alarmed, fearful that his children will be deceived and seduced by the devil as was
Eve

Because the church is not standing against the wiles/tricks/cunning of the devil,
they are not alert soldiers in the spiritual battle raging inside the church
(Ch 10:3-5, Eph 6:12)

The battlefield is...the mind

Their minds are being polluted/corrupted with flesh-appealing but God-appalling
thoughts, ideas, imaginations, concepts, and "theologies" steering them away
from the simplicity (of salvation from death) that is in Christ

John 6:28-29 trust Jesus, His Person and work, with your eternal soul
turn from Self and the world, and turn to Him

Rom 5:8-12, 15-21 the simplicity of 1

Rom 10:4, 8-13 Gen 15:6, Hab 2:4

1 John 2:12, 22-23a, 26

1 John 4:15

1 John 5:4-5, 11-13

And Paul is alarmed, fearful because his spiritual children are entertaining counterfeits
As many in the Church do to this day due to Biblical illiteracy and spiritual apathy

1. false/counterfeit teachers and apostles preaching another Jesus

An Apostle was Personally and directly called and discipled by
Jesus Christ; there are 12 and only 12

Any person who claims he is an apostle is a wolf in sheep's clothing

JW: Jesus is a created being, Michael the Archangel, not Deity

LDS: Jesus is Lucifer's brother, a more highly evolved human

New Age: an enlightened master, a highly evolved and spiritually attuned
human

Islam: a prophet but less than Mohammed, just a man, not Deity

Do JW's and Mormons think they are Christians? Yes

Do ignorant Christians think they are Christians?

Are they? No

Why not? They have another Jesus

Do Muslims think they worship the same God as Jews and Christians? Yes

Do they? No

The god of the Koran is radically different than the God of the Bible

2. false/counterfeit spirits, unholy spirits...the spirit of antichrist

JW: The Holy Spirit is God's active and impersonal force in the world.

LDS: Moroni

New Age spiritism: all humans are divine

Islam: the Holy Spirit is the angel Gabriel

Pantheism: Everything is God and God is everything

1 John 4:1-6

Rev 13, for which the world is ripe

3. false counterfeit gospels

Judaizers: must be Jewish and keep the Law (salvation by works)

JW, LDS, all other religions: salvation by works

RCC: the Church saves you + salvation by works

Prosperity: Jesus was rich and wants you to be rich (materially)

Love: God loves everybody and everybody goes to heaven

Is every human being a child of God? No

John 1:12-13

John 3:3-8

Word of Faith: our faith vs the faith of Christ e.g. healings (Judy)

Not saved unless speak in tongues

Not saved unless baptized in a particular church/denomination

1 Cor 15:3-4 He said it, He did it

Eph 2:8-9

Gal 1:6-12

Gal 2:20-21

Counterfeits add and/or take away from the written Word of God

Deut 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Rev 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

There are so many divisions in the Church and so much doctrinal corruption in the Church because “Christians” are deceived by counterfeits... false christs, false spirits, and false gospels that

- lure them away from the simplicity that is in Christ
- appeal to the flesh

The deceiver preys on the weak: babes, complacent, lazy, apathetic, ignorant

If we “Christians” are unwilling to put in the time and effort to know Jesus, the Truth, we will be spiritually weak and we will be deceived

Be not deceived:

- Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God and our salvation from eternal death is found in the simplicity that is in Christ
- the antidote to deception is Truth... The Word of God, to be known personally and intimately, which comes only by time and effort (as does every other relationship)

Be discerning!

Not with an unsuspecting and naïve mind but with an open Bible critique all you see and hear in the world so you can put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean (Lev 10:10)

The Chosen

creative license but the Gospel is preached, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached (Phil 1:18)

Jesus Revolution

faulty history but the Gospel is preached, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached (Phil 1:18)

NOT “Calvary Chapel Movement” but a movement of the Holy Spirit that began in Acts 2

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

v5-6 The false teachers and false apostles have been attacking Paul, his person and character and ministry

Here Paul declares that he is in no way inferior to the other Apostles who are not being attacked...like Peter and John

He says he may be more rude in speech...less polished as an orator in his style of teaching and preaching...but plays second fiddle to no one when it comes to knowledge of Scripture, as testified by Peter himself

2 Peter 3:15b-16 even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

And they cannot claim that Paul has been playing games with them

They know where he is coming from!

He has been as transparent as an open book

No hidden agendas, no secrets, no “higher knowledge”...unlike the false apostles

v7-9 Paul has been radically different from the false apostles in another way – he has been feeding the flock while the false have been fleecing the flock and throwing shade on Paul’s approach

Have I caused you to stumble in your walk with the Lord because I humbled myself in ministering to you by working and living among you preaching the Gospel so that none of you misconstrued my motives?

I refused to take an offering from you so you would not think the Gospel was a money-making scheme or that I was a self-serving religious shyster.

I trusted the Lord Jesus Christ to take care of me, His servant...I never implored you to “dig deeper” into your pockets so I lacked nothing

The Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel (1 Cor 9:14) but I worked among you as a tent maker to earn what I needed to live on and when I was in need, the churches in Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea) supported me.

v10-12 Paul, in stark contrast to the false prophets, boasts in his feeding the flock rather than fleecing the flock
Why did he humble himself in order to lift up the Corinthians?
He loved them, he had God's heart for them...compelled by the love of Christ
The false prophets were motivated by love of Self and love of Mammon

And Paul will stand immovable upon not being a financial burden to the church in Corinth for a very good reason – to expose the frauds among them

His true love for the Corinthians will win out over the false love of the false apostles... they will be “outed” in their “holy façade” of Mammon worship (Matt 6:24).
Paul is going to see to it that their true colors are revealed, as his true colors have been revealed...for the good of the saints

v13 Those that “desire occasion”
(looking for opportunities to enrich themselves in their self-appointed ministries)
are

- false apostles...counterfeits
- deceitful workers...children of the counterfeiter (Satan)
- chameleons...masquerading, disguising themselves as the apostles of Jesus Christ...spiritual drag queens
- playing charades...frauds
 - “an absurd pretense intended to create a pleasant or respectable appearance”
 - like modern day televangelists and “healers” that blow people over

Is that surprising?

v14-15 Not in the least!

After all, Satan himself, the master of counterfeits, disguises himself as an angel of light to deceive and destroy
The deception of the deceiver is a false light – darkness
Like the false light coming to Israel...John 5:43

Therefore, it only follows that those who are serving and following Satan would masquerade as followers of Jesus Christ
2 Peter 2:1-3

Paul is speaking plainly, directly, boldly
Calling out who is behind the spiritual warfare in the Church
Calling out the self-serving false apostles as children of the devil

And they may fool the ignorant, complacent, lazy, spiritually undiscerned people, but there is no fooling God!

v16-18 Paul knows what he knows and he knows that he knows

The false apostles are bragging about themselves...the carnal work of their flesh
Paul will also brag...about the Lord and the work of His Spirit

As should we

How can I boast about what Almighty sovereign God has done thru me...

as if I had anything to do with it except say "Here I am Lord, send me."

as if I added anything to His work except my sin

as if He could not have used a donkey!

The Lord does NOT need me or you to accomplish His work

He humbles Himself to use me and you if we are available to be used

It does not matter what I or others think of me

All that matters is what the Lord God thinks of me

v19-21 Now the Apostle Paul boldly rebukes/calls out the church at Corinth for thinking more highly of themselves than they should, thinking themselves as wise when in fact they are foolish in their entertaining of counterfeits

The church is putting up with, enduring, ministers of unrighteousness that are

- playing on their emotions (part of the flesh)
- bringing them back into bondage (of the Law and salvation by works)
- exalting themselves over them, ruling/lording over them
- oppressing, insulting, and taking advantage of them

with their

- false Jesus'
- false spirits
- false gospels

that appeal to their flesh

And the fruit of the false is apparent in the church at Corinth: divisions and confusion

v22-23a In the context of the issue in the Church at Corinth (Judaizers), Paul asks,

"Are they Jewish?"

"So am I!"

But, since heritage does not mean salvation from eternal death, that is not the question

The question is: "Are they ministers/servants of Christ?"

"I am more!"

John 15:12-14 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Implied: examine the false apostles in the light of Christ's love

v23b-28 Then Paul presents the evidence, the fruit, of his Apostleship...
things the false apostles would not tolerate and could not bear!

1. labors/troubles exceedingly and frequently
2. stripes/wounds innumerable
3. imprisonment frequently
4. potentially lethal circumstances frequently
5. scourged 5 times by the Jews
6. beaten with rods 3 times
7. stoned (to death, Acts 14:19) once
8. shipwrecked 3 times
9. 24 hours bobbing in the sea once
10. always on the go, travelling here and there as the Lord led him
11. perils/dangers everywhere from everyone
12. weariness...bone-tired exhaustion
13. painfulness...sadness and discouragement, travail of soul
14. watchings/sleeplessness often
15. being hungry and thirsty was commonplace
16. fastings...seeking the Lord's face and will
17. cold and naked (insufficient clothing)
18. daily: care of all the churches
[FB post]

All evidence/fruit of a minister of righteousness, a minister of the Gospel

John 10:11-13
John 15:18-21

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. (after being stoned and left for dead)

Phil 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

2 Tim 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Gal 6:17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Col 1:24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

v29-31 Those things Paul has endured do NOT demonstrate his strength but his weakness
And Paul is not declaring that he has “arrived” but that he too is enticed to sin and has emotions/feelings too!

But Paul will boast of...his weaknesses
Why?
Next week

v32-33 Then this seemingly disconnected recounting of his escape from Damascus after his conversion/salvation
Acts 9:19-25

But in the flow of the contrast between a true apostle and the false apostles,

- such is the life of a true apostle
- such is NOT the life of a false apostle who faints in the day of adversity

- the world hates the true apostle
- the world loves the false apostle

- for the true apostle: suffering then glory eternal
- for the false apostle: glory then suffering eternal

- the true apostle: tends the sheep
- the false apostle: hunts the sheep

This is a message for the Bride of Christ today!

We live in the last of the last days, Days of Noah and the Days of Lot,
days of violence and deception...false christs, false spirits, and false gospels

There are many deniers, militant and violent as well as smiling “angels of light”
The spirit of antichrist is everywhere, preying on the “young”, the unsuspecting, the uncaring,
the complacent, the lazy, the ignorant

The Church is to be on High Alert, not sleeping!
The world is not our friend and the god of this world is our enemy
Followers of Jesus Christ who are unlearned (Biblically anemic), apathetic, and/or naïve
are in danger
The babes in Christ need to grow up, and to be protected while they do

We can only know the false by knowing the true
The Bible is our Final Authority on truth
Be jealous/zealous for the Truth!
Study the true, not the innumerable false
2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to
be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Be a diligent and vigilant soldier in the Lord’s army
Be discerning...we are being tested/refined

Deut 13:1-3

The Lord did to Israel
The Lord was doing to the Corinthians
The Lord is still doing in the Church...to us!