

Sermon Notes | 2 Corinthians 11

I. Guard Sound Doctrine

"I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! ²For I feel a **divine jealousy** for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³But I am afraid that as **the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning**, your thoughts will be **led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ**. ⁴For if someone comes and proclaims **another Jesus** than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a **different spirit** from the one you received, or if you accept a **different gospel** from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough. ⁵Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. ⁶Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things. ⁷Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you **free of charge**? ⁸I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. ⁹And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way. ¹⁰As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! ¹²And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to **claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do**. ¹³For such men are **false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising** themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no wonder, for even **Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**. ¹⁵So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

II. Follow Good Leaders, Reject Bad Ones

¹⁶I repeat, let no one think me foolish. But even if you do, **accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little**. ¹⁷What I am saying with this boastful confidence, I say not as the Lord would^[a] but as a fool. ¹⁸Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. ¹⁹For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves! ²⁰For you bear it if someone **makes slaves** of you, or **devours** you, or **takes advantage** of you, or **puts on airs**, or **strikes** you in the face. ²¹To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!

III. Value Godly Strength Over Human Strength

But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. ²²Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. ²³Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater **labors**, far more **imprisonments**, with countless **beatings**, and often near death. ²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty **lashes** less one. ²⁵Three times I was **beaten** with rods. Once I was **stoned**. Three times I was **shipwrecked**; a night and a day I was **adrift** at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger

from **robbers**, danger from my **own people**, danger from **Gentiles**, danger in the **city**, danger in the **wilderness**, danger at **sea**, danger from **false brothers**; ²⁷in **toil** and **hardship**, through many a **sleepless night**, in **hunger and thirst**, often without food, ²⁸in **cold and exposure**. ²⁸And, apart from other things, there is the **daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches**. ²⁹Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?" ³⁰**If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness**. ³¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. ³²At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, ³³but I was **let down in a basket through a window in the wall** and escaped his hands."

Big Idea: Godly maturity requires responsibility.

Discussion Questions | 2 Corinthians 11

- What did God speak to you this weekend?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:1–6

- What is sound doctrine?
- What is your responsibility in guarding sound doctrine?
- How can you grow in learning sound doctrine this month?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:7–21

- What kind of leaders were Paul and his opponents?
- Paul chastises the Corinthians for putting up with these abusive leaders. What influences are you putting up with?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:22–33

- What human qualities have you been enamored with?
- How can you ask God to change your heart to value godly qualities?
- What responsibilities is God asking you to take on as you mature in Christ?