

Super Apostles

Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece

Lord's Day November 5th, Anno Domini 2023

Scripture Reading - 2 Cor 12 Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Psalms 119 O & P

Outline & Features of 2 Corinthians

A book about Comfort [strength giving] through Suffering

I) 1-9 - Part 1 - Pleased (With the Majority)

- 1) 1:1-24 - The Greeting, Thanksgiving, & Defense
- 2) 2:1-17 - The Excommunicated Offender and the Continuing Triumph of the Gospel
- 3) 3:1-11 - Proof of the Apostle's Fitness for His Work, and Its Nature
- 4) 3:12-18 - The Clarity and Freedom of the Gospel as Contrasted with the Obscurity of the Law
- 5) 4:1-18 - God's Treasures in Jars of Clay
- 6) 5:1-10 - The State of Believers After Death
- 7) 5:11-21 - Paul's Defense of Himself Against the Charge of Self-commendation (Verses 11-21)
- 8) 6:1-18 - The Apostle's Faithfulness and Love
- 9) 7:1-16 - The Effect Produced on the Church in Corinth by the Apostle's Previous Letter, and His Consequent Satisfaction and Joy
- 10) 8:1-24 - Exhortation to Be Generous to the Poor
- 11) 9:1-15 - Continuation of the Discourse in the Preceding Chapter on Making Collections for the Saints

II) 10-13 - Part 2 - Most Seriously Displeased (with 'the Super Apostles' & Minority)

- 12) 10:1-18 - Paul's Assertion of His Authority and the Vindication of His Apostolic Prerogative
- 13) 11:1-33 - Reasons for His Self-commendation; Paul's Labors and Sufferings
- 14) 12:1-21 - Paul's Revelations and Visions
- 15) 13:1-14 - Paul's Warnings and Exhortations¹

¹ Outline edited from work from chapter headers in Charles Hodge 2 Corinthians, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1995)

TEXT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-33

Reasons for His Self-commendation; Paul's Labors and Sufferings

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

- 1) The Folly of commending self - sometimes it is wise to do, though it is generally a folly
- 2) Godly Jealousy
- 3) The Simplicity that is in Christ
- 4) Satan, another Jesus, another Spirit, another Gospel
- 5) The sin of tolerating / putting up with any of these.

5 For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 Even though I am untrained in speech, yet I am not in knowledge. But we have been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

- 6) “Most eminent apostles” - sometimes translated as Super Apostles
 - a) The Equality of Office
 - b) Individuals are of greater eminency
 - c) Difference of Work quality, quantity, assignments
- 7) Rhetoric vs Knowledge
 - a) Priestly - Pathos, Niceness, Being in style, Coolness, In Crowd, Lesser or wrong Loyalty, Lesser or wrong objectives, Pleasure of listening
 - b) Kingly - Ethos, Inspirational, Based, motivating
 - c) Prophetic - Prejudicial Logos, Money, Class, Intellectually respectable
- 8) We have made this clear in every way
 - a) Doctrine, Worship, Government, Love, Gifting, Effect, Signs

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? 8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. 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. 10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows!

- 9) Humility of service exalts the served. Service for Free further exalts the one served and humbles the one serving.
- 10) “Robbed” took without right, though they obviously gave it willingly and Paul was not defrauding them. - Missionaries being supported from “home churches”
 - a) This supports the idea of organizing missionary work at the presbyterian level and higher.
- 11) V. 9 - the lost opportunity by grumbling of being of service and of gaining reward
- 12) V. 10 - an oath - it is true that I will boast of lawful authority and qualification and blamelessness
 - a) Calvin, Beza - Oath view
 - b) Hodge - not an oath, causal
- 13) V. 11 - an oath - These evidence love for Corinth

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. 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 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.

- 14) His exemplary behavior undermines usurpers
- 15) V. 13 - False apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ
- 16) V. 14-15 - Why? Because they learn well from Satan
 - a) Satan - Angel of light costume
 - b) Lesser servants of Satan copy - Minister of Righteousness costumes
- 17) Doctrine, Worship, Government (including lawful calling)

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. 17 What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. 18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. 19 For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise! 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. 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.

18) Do not think me a fool, but even if you do, then hear me out

19) Qualifications according to the standards used by the Super Apostles (using the criticisms of Paul offer by them and the boasting in themselves they do)

20) V. 19 - putting up with fools shows them to be fools

21) V. 20 - bondage rather than Christian Liberty, wolves devour, robbing, exalting over brothers, strike on face - harm and dishonor

22) V. 21 - Paul is too weak to suffer slavery, devouring, robbing, usurpation, striking without response

a) Matthew 5:38-48

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 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. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 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; 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; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity [weakness].

23) Ad hominem boasting - 22-23a

24) Turning it on its head - suffering as positive sign - 23b-29

25) 30 explains

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

26) 31 - oath

27) 32-33 - resisting arrest - a joking way of talking about being honored by a king.

Reverse hospitality.