

FBC POWELL, 2-10-19 AM NOTES
“Warnings from a Jealous Leader”
2 Corinthians 11:1-15
20 in Series, “Be Encouraged”

Exodus 20:5b (NASB) “...for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God...”

Exodus 34:14b (NASB) “...for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

Joshua 24:19b (NASB) “...the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God...”

Ezekiel 39:25 (NASB) “Therefore thus says the Lord God, ‘Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.’”

2 Corinthians 11:2 (NASB) “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy...”

Deuteronomy 32:16 (NASB) “They made Him [God] jealous with strange *gods*; with abominations they provoked Him to anger.”

“Jealousy is a sin if it means being envious of what others have and wanting to possess it, but it is a virtue if it means cherishing what we have and wanting to protect it. A faithful husband and wife are jealous over one another and do everything they can to keep their relationship exclusive. Jealous and zealous come from the same root, for when you’re jealous over someone, you are zealous to protect the relationship.”
—Warren Weirsbe

1 Corinthians 4:15b (NASB) “...for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”

2 Corinthians 11:2b (NASB) “...for I betrothed you to one husband...”

2 Corinthians 11:2c (NASB) “...so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.”

I. The Methods of Our Adversary (vv. 3-4)

A. Corrupt the Mind (v. 3)

1. Satan Questioned God’s Word

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2. Satan Denied God’s Word

Genesis 3:4 (NASB) “The serpent said to the woman, ‘You surely will not die!’”

3. Satan Offered a Lie in Place of the Truth

Genesis 3:5 (NASB) “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

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1 Corinthians 2:2 (NASB) "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

B. The Leader's Sacrifice to Remove Obstacles (vv. 7- 12)

"He gave up his rights for the Gospel's sake and for the sake of lost sinners who might stumble over anything that gave the impression of being religious business...The false teachers were preaching a false gospel and robbing the church (2 Corinthians 11:20). Paul used a bit of irony in **2 Corinthians 11:8 (NASB)**, "I robbed other churches by taking wages *from them* to serve you."
—Warren Weirsbe

III. The Masquerade of the Enemy (vv. 13-15)

A. The False Apostles Are Darkness Masquerading as Light (vv. 13-14)

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 (NIV) ¹⁴"And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve."

B. The False Apostles Are Unrighteousness Masquerading as Righteousness (v. 15)

Sermon 20: Warnings from a Jealous Leader

2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Is jealousy good or bad? It depends on who is the one that is jealous, and why they are jealous. Sometimes being jealous is good. The Greek word translated "jealous" in verse 2 is used with both a good and bad connotation in the Scripture. In this text, it is obviously used with a good connotation. It is called "a godly jealousy" in verse 2. The word "jealous" itself literally means to burn with zeal. The negative meaning of this Greek word translated jealous or jealousy means basically what it does in English – to be distrustful, to be moved with envy or contentious rivalry. In this passage, "jealous" is used in the positive sense.

Let me give you some more scriptural examples of jealousy being used in the positive sense.
Exodus 20:5b: "... for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God..."

Exodus 34:14b: "...for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." God's name is jealous!

Joshua 24:19b: "...the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God..."

Ezekiel 39:25: “Therefore thus says the Lord God, ‘Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.’”

And in the New Testament, in our text for today Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11:2: “For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy...” As we will see later in the message, our God will not tolerate rivals!

Let me summarize jealousy like this: Godly jealousy is being provoked to anger by an intrusion into an exclusive relationship. Deuteronomy 32:16: “They made Him [God] jealous with strange *gods*; with abominations they provoked Him to anger.” Warren Weirsbe has a good word here:

Jealousy is a sin if it means being envious of what others have and wanting to possess it, but it is a virtue if it means cherishing what we have and wanting to protect it. A faithful husband and wife are jealous over one another and do everything they can to keep their relationship exclusive. Jealous and zealous come from the same root, for when you’re jealous over someone, you are zealous to protect the relationship.

[Warren Weirsbe, *Be Quoted*, Adair, page 86]

In the last message, we saw in Paul an example of an effective spiritual leader. Today, we see that he was a jealous leader. He was jealous with a godly jealousy. What provoked Paul’s jealousy? His jealousy was stirred by Satan’s false teachers tampering with the exclusive relationship that God has with His people.

Verses 1-2 give us a great introduction into the text. 2 Corinthians 11:1-2: “I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me. For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.”

Paul viewed himself as the spiritual father of the Corinthians. This was because he led them to Christ and established the church at Corinth. He uses the analogy of a father and his betrothed daughter. Let’s examine some biblical background of a Jewish marriage that Paul is referring to here. In a Jewish marriage, there was first a betrothal period (something like our “engagement” but stronger). The betrothal usually lasted about a year. Though the betrothed couple was not allowed to consummate their marriage physically, the betrothal could be broken only by divorce, death, or unfaithfulness. During this betrothal period, it was the bride’s father’s responsibility to ensure that his daughter remained faithful to her pledged husband. The father would then present her at the wedding ceremony to the one she was betrothed to (the bridegroom). Watch the analogy Paul is laying out here. When Paul brought the Gospel to Corinth, he became their spiritual father. 1 Corinthians 4:15b: “...for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.” As their spiritual father, when he shared the Gospel with them and they received that gospel, he betrothed them to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:2b: “...for I betrothed you to one husband...” As their spiritual father he was jealous for them and was determined to present them to Christ as a pure virgin. 2 Corinthians 11:2c: “... so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.” A true spiritual leader is jealous for those they lead so that they will be faithful to the bridegroom – Jesus Christ.

In this passage, Paul gives us great insight into how the enemy of our souls seeks to corrupt the pure relationship we have with Christ, to steal away our affection for Christ, and make us ineffective in our desire to glorify God.

I. The Methods of Our Adversary (vv. 3-4)

One of the keys to successful physical warfare is to know the enemies' strategy (example Patton and Rommel in WW2). In verse 3, Paul is taking us back to Genesis 3 and the first temptation. Just as Satan deceived Eve in the perfect garden called Eden, he still seeks to drag us down and thus we miss the glorious opportunities to love the Lord and enjoy Him forever. In verses 3-4 we see how our enemy works. Satan's strategy doesn't really change much. Why should he change; it seems to still work. What are his methods?

A. Corrupt the Mind (v. 3)

As Paul begins talking about the enemy's methods, he uses the phrase in verse 3, "But I am afraid..." Every true shepherd, every true spiritual leader agonizes over God's sheep that are deceived and then go astray. Paul had a deep passion for their purity, and he agonized over them falling into the enemy's traps. I remember as a young pastor, I diligently prayed for a "pastor's heart" (a shepherd's heart). By that I am speaking of a deep love for the people God has put under my care. God answered that prayer. He gave me that pastor's heart and it really is painful sometimes. A not so enjoyable part of that shepherd's heart is agonizing over people who listen to the enemy's lies and then having to watch their lives fall apart as they spurn godly counsel and continue in rebellion. It hurts so bad because I know where they are headed. I would never be so arrogant as to compare myself with the Apostle Paul, but to some extent I can relate to him as he agonizes over the people he loves as they fall into Satan's traps. Those traps, those lies typically are placed in the mind of God's sheep by the enemy to deceive them.

The word translated "craftiness" in verse 3 is translated "cunning" in the NIV. The Greek word means to pull a stunt or perform a trick. From Genesis 3, notice how the enemy corrupted Eve's mind through his cunning and craftiness.

1. Satan Questioned God's Word

Genesis 3:1b: "...And he said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said, You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" Satan begins corrupting our minds and seeking to make God seem unreasonable and holding good things from us. Satan plants a thought that is a lie in Eve's mind about God not being reasonable. Look at the facts. Far from not eating from "any tree", what God said was "one tree". The prohibition was minimal. But with Eve, God came off seeming unreasonable and uncaring. That is the way the enemy still works.

2. Satan Denied God's Word

Genesis 3:4: "The serpent [Satan] said to the woman, 'You surely will not die!'" Once we begin questioning God's word, we head down a slippery slope that ends in denying His Word. I'm telling you that this is how the enemy still works. I have seen it time and time again. And yet Satan's tactics still work, and people keep falling for his deception. Learn this: God means what He says and says what He means. Satan said that they would not die, but they did! We know that Adam and Eve died in two ways. First, their spirit, that part of man that allows us to know and have fellowship with God, died to God. They were separated from God and could no longer have sweet fellowship with God. Second, their body began to die; the death process began moving Adam and Eve toward the grave yard.

3. Satan Offered a Lie in Place of God's Word

Genesis 3:5: "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." This was Eve's real temptation. Eve wanted to be her own god. Instead she didn't become as God but lost her relationship with and was separated from the true God. Instead of the precious fellowship with her creator, she tried to hide from Him.

The word translated "minds" in 2 Corinthians 11:3 can be translated "thoughts". The enemy desires to corrupt our thoughts and rob us of the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. Our lives get complicated and we miss the true simplicity of lovingly obeying and walking day by day in fellowship with Him. The Christian life isn't complicated; it is living according to our flesh that gets complicated.

The enemy plants lies in our mind and when we choose to believe the lies, we "will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (v. 3).

B. Counterfeit the Gospel (v. 4)

Here is another method the enemy uses. For believers, he seeks to corrupt the mind, but to the lost he counterfeits the Gospel. Satan has a counterfeit Gospel with a counterfeit savior and a counterfeit spirit. For the Corinthians, the counterfeit gospel was an unholy mixture of law and grace that wasn't the true gospel at all. A slick talker (as the devil is) can make something false and evil sound true and good if you are not grounded in the truth. Let me give you an example.

I read about a woman who acquired great wealth and social prominence and decided to have a book written about her "blue blood genealogy". She hired a well-known author and researcher to do the job. However, he discovered that one of her grandfathers was a murderer who died in the electric chair in Sing – Sing prison. When the researcher told the socialite, she pleaded with him to not put that in the book. The writer and researcher explained that he had to put it in the book, but he would try to make it not sound so bad. When the book was published, it said this about her grandfather: "One of her grandfathers occupied the chair of applied electricity in one of America's best-known institutions. He was very much attached to his position and literally died in the harness." That's a good illustration of how Satan works. He is a slick talker. He counterfeits the truth. Let's look at his counterfeits.

1. A Different Jesus (v. 4a)

All the cults claim to believe in Jesus. Here is the truth. It is "another Jesus". The Jehovah's Witnesses believe in a Jesus that is not God in the flesh. Before he lived on the earth, he was Michael the archangel. On earth, he was a man who lived a perfect life. After dying on a stake (not a cross) he was resurrected as a spirit; his body was destroyed. He is not coming again; he already returned invisibly in 1914 in spirit. The Mormons believe in Jesus, but it is another Jesus. The Mormon Jesus is a separate god from the father, who was created as a spirit child by the father and mother in heaven. His body was from a literal union between God and Mary. The Mormon Jesus is not the Jesus of Scripture who is God incarnate and the Jesus who saves by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone apart from works.

When we move to false religions, they speak of another Jesus. The Muslims believe in Jesus, but it is another Jesus, not the one revealed in Scripture who is God in flesh and who alone provides salvation apart from works. They believe Jesus is one of up to 124,000 prophets sent by God to different cultures. The Jesus they proclaim is not the Son of God, not God in flesh, and

was not crucified. The Buddhists in the west believe that Jesus was simply an enlightened man. The Jesus of Hinduism is a teacher, a guru. His death did not atone for sins and he did not rise from the dead.

On and on we could go with most of the cults and false religions that believe in Jesus in the sense that he existed, but on closer examination, their Jesus is another Jesus.

2. A Different Spirit (v. 4b)

The Holy Spirit is not the Jehovah's Witnesses spirit who is simply God's impersonal influence – not a person. He is not the spirit of the Mormon's "spirit", who is a god separate from the Father and the Son. Mormonism says the holy spirit is a "fluid-like" substance by which the father exercises his influence. [The above is mostly from *Christianity, Cults, and Religions* by Rose Publishing]

3. A Different Gospel (v. 4c)

The exact form of the false Gospel at Corinth is not defined, but it undoubtedly denied that salvation was by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It was no doubt involved human works and keeping the law. Every cult and every false religion have a false gospel that minimizes or ignores grace.

In our day, this false and deceptive teaching is not limited to cults and false religions. Many liberal mainline churches never condemn sin. Their "gospel" often involves society's ills more than the soul's lostness.

We've seen the methods of the adversary.

II. The Mindset of the Leader (vv. 5-12)

A. The Leader's Sufficiency in Christ (vv. 5, 6)

Paul is simply saying that he didn't trust in oratorical skills, but in the power of Christ and the true Gospel. Paul is not bragging on himself. He is simply stating facts. He is not inferior to any of his detractors. Even if he was not known as a strong and eloquent teacher, he was qualified to speak to these issues since he truly was an apostle. Paul may not have come with eloquent speech, but he did come with the truth and the knowledge and the power of the Gospel. I think that there are 2 verses that describe why Paul was so powerfully used. First is Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." The second passage that best describes Paul is 1 Corinthians 2:2: "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." Paul trusted in Christ and the power of the Gospel and not in human charisma and eloquence.

B. The Leaders' Sacrifice to Remove Obstacles (vv. 7-12)

It is in this passage that we see some sanctified sarcasm. Paul made it clear in many places that it is good and acceptable for church leaders to be paid for their labors. Paul, however, saw that as a possible obstacle in establishing a new church. Paul chose to work as a "tentmaker" (work for the basic necessities of life) outside the church. Warren Weirsbach described it this way:

He gave up his rights for the Gospel's sake and for the sake of lost sinners who might stumble over anything that gave the impression of being religious business... The false

teachers were preaching a false gospel and robbing the church (second Corinthians 11:20). Paul used a bit of irony in 2 Corinthians 11:8: ‘I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you.’

[Warren Weirsbe, *The Bible Expository Commentary, Volume 1*, page 670]

With Paul it was all about the Gospel – whatever it would take! Whatever the sacrifice.

III. The Masquerade of the Enemy (vv. 13-15)

Paul is saying here that these false apostles are not super apostles as they claimed; they are pseudo – apostles. The Greek word is *pseudapostolos*. In other words, they are phony.

A. The False Apostles Are Darkness Masquerading as Light (vv. 13-14)

In 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 (NIV): “And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.” In other words, Satan doesn’t come with a pitchfork and a tail; he comes as an angel of light. It is interesting that the fastest growing false religion and one of the fastest growing cults were both begun (about 1100 years apart) when the founders (Mohamed and Joseph Smith) had a vision of a bright angel who told them that Christianity was corrupt and all wrong and gave them the “true religion”.

B. The False Apostles Are Unrighteousness Masquerading as Righteousness (v. 15)

Satan would rather have his people in the pulpit than attacking the pulpit. We must listen to these warnings from a jealous leader. We are not to become cynical, but we are to be discerning.

Conclusion

I sometimes marvel at how gullible some Christians are. Our adversary is always on the prowl. Don’t be cynical, assuming every teacher or preacher is probably wrong. Don’t set out to become an expert on false teaching; become knowledgeable of the truth; the errors will then be clear.

NASB (New American Standard Bible)

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