

A Little Folly
(A study of 2 Cor 11)
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Introduction: When it comes to a battle for the minds and hearts we often find ourselves in opposition to those who seek a following.

- A. Many times it seems that Satan has an advantage. He has no limit to the weapons his followers use!
 - 1. God "limits" us to a few weapons. **(2 Cor 10:3-5)**
 - 2. Christian, never despair because you only have the truth!
- B. There are times where we must deal with matters that are irrelevant to the issue at hand because of the insistence of false teachers.
 - 1. There is a place and time to deal with "foolish" matters. **(Prov 26:5)**
 - 2. Do not let the forces of error win the "spin" war. There are ways to show them what a real servant of God does.

I. These False teachers thrived in the Corinthians "tolerance." (11:1-5)

- A. We are going to move into the mindset of the boastful.
 - 1. These men had lured others into their following by boasting.
(2 Cor 3:1-2, 5:12, 10:12-13)
 - 2. Paul will now speak on their ground.
- B. The heart of Paul revealed. **(11:2-3)**
 - 1. Paul is like a father who has given his daughter to be married! He wanted them to be ready when Christ returned for the wedding! **(Eph 5:27; Jude 1:24)**
 - 2. In order to be ready they needed to have a sincere mind.
 - 3. haplotēs 1) singleness, simplicity, sincerity, mental honesty 1a) the virtue of one who is free from pretence and hypocrisy 2) not self seeking, openness of heart manifesting itself by generosity.
 - 4. If they followed these false teachers they would be corrupted.
- C. The Corinthians had a wrong view of tolerance. **(11:3-4)**
 - 1. Like today, men of the world exalt those who have no standards! "Don't judge me."
 - 2. Their weakness had already been manifested in this area. **(1 Cor 5:1-2)**
 - 3. The result was to leave them wide open to men who would use this tolerance to separate them from the people of God and then to enslave them.
 - 4. They were in fact letting men come in and preach "another Jesus."
 - 5. How can one preach "another Jesus" and what should be our reaction?
(2 Jn 9-11)

II. Paul set an example that these proud men would not follow! (11:5-12)

- A. Paul did not fall short in what God values, knowledge! **(5-6)**
 - 1. The "eminent apostles" was like a reference to these false apostles.
 - 2. What is the bottom line in God's sight? **(1 Jn 4:1, 5-6)**
 - 3. Paul's speech was powerful because of the message. **(1 Cor 1:21-23)**
 - 4. What do you look for in a teacher?

- B. Paul set an example that these "apostles" would not follow.
 1. Paul choose not to take support from the church while he was with them. Why? He knew that there would be some who would take advantage of it.
 2. He was going to be criticized either way so he choose the way that would best teach them a lesson. This same critical attitude was directed at John the Baptist and Jesus. **(11:7; Lk 7:33-35)**
 3. Paul would not burden them out of love. **(11:8-11)**
 4. Paul knew the false teachers would not follow his example here because they loved money and wanted others to serve them! **(11:12)**

III. These leaders were Satan's workers in disguise. (11:13-16)

- A. Why would men use deception? **(11:13, 3; Eph 4:14, 5:6)**
 1. Because they wanted to reach a goal! **(Rom 3:8; 1 Tim 4:1-2)**
 2. Because they want to have a following. **(Gal 4:17)**
- B. Satan tries to get as close to the original as he can!
 1. How do you judge a man's work?
 2. How does God judge a man's work?

IV. Paul's folly to expose the empty claims of Satan's workers. (11:17-33)

- A. Their "tolerance" forces Paul to this folly. **(11:17-21)**
 1. In God's sight, what were these men doing to the Corinthians?
 2. When one thinks he is wise he will believe anything, no matter how foolish! **(1 Cor 8:1-2)**
 3. Be careful of those who look down on the ignorance of brethren in private!
- B. Paul could exceed them in heritage. **(11:22)**
- C. Paul could exceed them in service. **(11:23-28)**
 1. By their standards Paul exceeds them all!
 2. A list of the suffering Paul endured as a minister of Christ **(24-29)**
 - a. Five times he was beaten with 39 stripes by the Jews **(24)**
 - b. Three times he was been with rods **(25a)**
 - c. Once he was stoned **(25b)**
 - d. Three times he was shipwrecked **(25c)**
 - e. A night and a day in the deep **(25d)**
 - f. Miscellaneous perils on his many journeys **(26)**
 - g. Miscellaneous discomforts **(27)**
 - h. His daily concern for the condition of churches **(28-29) (11:29-**
- D. These things were verifiable. **33)**

Conclusion: Let us speak the truth and live a life that will back it up!