

Letters to the church in...



Corinth

Focus: 2 Corinthians 11:1-33

Lesson 28-Deceptive Ministers and Suffering Servants

- **The Apostle Paul greatly desired to present a pure and undefiled church to Christ at His coming, just as a father desires to present a pure virgin daughter to her husband (v.1,2)**
 - (v.1,2) Paul longed to present an undefiled church to Jesus Christ at his coming. **"...as a chaste virgin."** She was to be unpolluted by sin and the world.
 - **These verses also express to us the purity and perfection of God's plan for human beings.—A young woman is to keep herself pure and undefiled.** The sinful world today has not valued righteousness and chastity. They try to sleep around with as many boyfriends and girlfriends as they like, before ever getting married to anyone.—**this is a terrible sin; against God, against our own bodies, and against a person's future mate.** We must keep our bodies pure and value rightly the gift of chastity (virginity).
 - Sexual intimacy was designed by God to create an intimacy and closeness between husband and wife that should never be broken. It creates a significant part of the bonds of the family (love, closeness, vulnerability, openness, intimacy, secretiveness), and from that intimacy comes the children, born to their mother and father! Outside of the committed marriage relationship there should be no such action! **God will punish all such sin** (Galatians 5:19,21). Sexual relationships outside of marriage make connections and bonds which should never be formed. It can make people feel disoriented, foolish, hurt, used, and emotionally abused. Not to mention the risk of disease, unwanted (or unplanned for) children, embarrassment, forced or ill-chosen marriages, and subsequently, future divorces. **God's plan is so much better!!**
 - **Young people, keep yourself pure for God and for your future spouse. If you're married, stay committed and faithful to your spouse in both thought and action! If you have fallen short of God's plan already, then find your forgiveness and cleansing in Jesus Christ! Choose to be pure and faithfully following Christ's way from this day onward! Parents, drill this concept into your children while they are still young and innocent. Tell them to stay pure! Teach them to value their chastity and to virtuously live and preserve themselves for marriage. God requires this of us! Tell them, "No sex until you're married!" Teach them God's way and about our accountability to God! (And keep watch over your kids, their activities, and who their friends are!)**
- **Beware of the corrupting influence and subtlety of Satan! (v.3,4)**
 - Satan deceived God's people in Eden. He misled them into sin. He would do the same today to "corrupt" our minds "from the simplicity that is in Christ" (v.3). So, if someone comes along and starts preaching something different from what you heard or learned from God's word, you must be very discerning and careful. **God commands us in the**

right way (Genesis 2:15-17). The **Devil comes along** and **tries to put the word of truth in doubt.** He quotes God's word (**Genesis 3:1-3**), then **he contradicts it (Gen. 3:4).** He then **presents some supposed benefit for disobeying (v.5),** trying to discredit God and His messengers. **He leads people to throw out God's principles** and to follow their own sinful desires (**v.6,7**).

- **Paul and the Macedonian's heart of Sacrifice for those in Achaia (v.5-12).**
- **The Perilous danger of false ministers (v.13-15)**
 - (v.13)—*that is, those who desire to bring in false things (ref. v.12,3,4). They "are false apostles, deceitful workers..." Paul and God would have for their opportunities to be "cut-off."*
 - (v.13-15) **Presenting themselves as if they were the teachers of Christ,** they present false teachings along with some things that are true! **Of course they profess to serve, teach, and preach Jesus, as if "the apostles of Christ" (v.13). Of course they share some true principles about righteousness,** as if they were "ministers of righteousness" (v.15). **But, their other teachings lead us away from the truth of Christ and His word.** They present a distorted view of Christ and so often a distorted view of God's law. **Not everything they say is wrong,** but there's enough falsehood and error mixed in to lead people away from the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. **Rat poison is about 99% good food!! The other 1% is toxic poison that kills them!**
 - **It's possible for false teachers to rise up in or among any church!!** The Apostles greatly warned us of these things (**Acts 20:28-30; Jude 1:3,4**). This happened even amidst the early, formerly biblical, Sabbath-keeping, Christ professing early church! If it happened to them, don't be fooled, it could and does happen to us!!! (**2 Peter 2:1,2**). **"...and of some, making a difference" (Jude 1:21-23).** We should be praying for and meekly instructing in the truth, those who are in error, if perhaps they may repent of their ways and acknowledge the real truth of God's word (2 Timothy 2:25,26).
 - **Can you trust every "minister" or teacher with full confidence? No. But, you can become a discerning listener,** trusting in Jesus and relying upon Him and His word. **False teachers will generally always cross themselves** (their teachings will not all add up rightly). **Their teaching won't line up with God's Law or His prophets' words.** They will undermine the Law and the truth of God's word in some way or another! **Always check everything by the Bible!! (See Isaiah 8:20; Acts 17:11).** A great motto to live by is, "If it's truly in the Bible, we believe it. If it's not in the Bible, it's not for us!"
- **Paul says, "You put with others. Put up with me also." (v.16-21)**
- **The life of Paul's suffering is here compared to some others who've thrown accusations at him, as if he were a weak and false-hearted man (v.22-33)** *Paul had surely been through his share of suffering for the gospel!! People had been accusing a real burden bearer for God!!*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Is it your desire to be faithful to Christ in all aspects of life? _____ Will you choose to be a faithful and diligent student of the Bible (and to become a discerning listener for truth or error)? _____