

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## II CORINTHIANS 11:1-15

Lesson 17

### FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Share a way have you been able to apply II Corinthians 10 to your life this week.
  
2. Even from the first phrase of II Corinthians 11 we can sense Paul's intense concern as a spiritual shepherd. A study of verses 1-15 will give us a better understanding of a pastor's zeal to protect his congregation from cunning and deceitful men. Because believers are continually being exposed to false teachers and doctrine, these verses are as important today as they were to Christians living in the First Century. Read the following paragraphs and write one or two phrases that especially stand out to you:
  - a. II Corinthians 11:1-6
  
  - b. II Corinthians 11:7-12
  
  - c. II Corinthians 11:13-15
  
3. Cover your study time with prayer, asking the Lord to help you receive and retain spiritual insights from II Corinthians 11:1-15. Include any specific needs you may have in relationship to the completion of your lesson this week. Write your prayer here.

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God,  
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*  
II Timothy 2:15

**SECOND DAY:** Read II Corinthians 11:1,2

1. In II Corinthians 11 Paul continued to defend his ministry and deal with those who were endangering the spiritual life of the Corinthian believers. He prefaced this with a heartfelt request. What was it? verse 1
  - a. Although he viewed *boasting* as *foolishness*, he reluctantly continued with his defense. He felt compelled to warn the believers about false teachers. In II Corinthians 11:2,3 Paul gave two compelling motivations for this. Find and record the first of these motivations from verse 2a.
    - (1.) How would you explain the difference between *godly jealousy* and *fleshly jealousy*?
2. Why was Paul *jealous* over the Corinthian believers? Pause and think about this as you print your answer from II Corinthians 11:2b.
  - a. This is a beautiful picture of the Church as the Bride of Christ. List a few character qualities of a *chaste* (pure) bride.
  - b. How should knowing you are the Bride of Christ affect the way you live?

Advanced Students: Research and explain a marriage *espousal* or *betrothal* during Paul's time.

3. Godly jealousy rises over deep concern for the spiritual welfare of others. Cite an example of when this is appropriate.

*And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever;  
yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment,  
and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.  
I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness:  
and thou shalt know the LORD.  
Hosea 2:19,20*

**THIRD DAY:** Read II Corinthians 11:3-6

1. Every Christian needs to understand II Corinthians 11:3. This verse not only exposes the subtility and influence of the false teachers but reveals the destructive results that occur because of their deception. Observe this as you write verse 3 here phrase by phrase.
  - a. With the words *beguiled* and *subtilty* in mind read Genesis 3:1-5. Describe in your own words the serpent's (satan) clever manipulation of Eve's mind.
  - b. Think about the phrase *lest by any means*. What does this say to you about the enemy's tactics for corrupting a believer's mind?
2. Consider Paul's second motivation for warning these Christians from II Corinthians 11:3 NLT: *But I fear that somehow you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to Christ, just as Eve was deceived by the serpent.* How does this warning in verse 3 speak to you today?
3. Read II Corinthians 11:4-6. In verse 4 we find one of Paul's reasons for continuing to indulge in a little *folly* (verse 1) as he defended his apostleship and ministry. What troubled Paul about the Corinthian believers? Use other versions of verse 4 to help you with your answer.
  - a. Instead of being gullible and accepting of false teachers, what instruction does Romans 16:17 give Christians?

Advanced Students: Use present day examples to briefly explain the meaning of *another Jesus*, *another spirit* and *another gospel*.

4. Most expositors think II Corinthians 11:5 was sarcasm about the deceitful workers in Corinth who claimed to be *chiefest* or *super-apostles*. According to II Corinthians 11:6 how did Paul counter their accusations? To help you with your answer you may want to use other versions.

Challenge: In Acts 17:22-32 Paul is shown to be a skilled orator, yet in II Corinthians 11:6 Paul described himself as *rude* (unskilled) *in speech*. What insight does I Corinthians 2:1-5 give you concerning this?

**FOURTH DAY:** Read II Corinthians 11:7-12

1. In Paul's day a speaker was paid according to his speaking ability and the importance of his message. The fact that Paul was not paid for his speaking caused his accusers to assume that he had nothing worthwhile to say. Notice the sarcasm in Paul's response as you record a few phrases from II Corinthians 11:7-9.
  - a. In verse 8 the expression *I robbed other churches* meant that while Paul was serving the Corinthian church he received financial support from other churches. Paul kept himself *from being burdensome* (verse 9 NKJV) in every way possible. What did Paul do when he was in Thessalonica to avoid being a burden? Use I Thessalonians 2:9 and II Thessalonians 3:8 for your answer.
  
2. Read II Corinthians 11:10-12. Paul's refusal to minister for money made his accusers look bad. In spite of their criticism why did Paul say he would never stop *boasting* about preaching the Gospel without charge? Answer from the following verses, using other versions if you desire:
  - a. verse 11
  
  - b. verse 12
  
3. The word *glory* in II Corinthians 11:12b could be translated *boast*. It has been said: *If the false teachers wanted to engage in a boasting match with Paul, let them follow his policy. But he knew they would never be able to boast of serving without monetary reward.* What does this reveal about the motive of the false teachers?
  - a. According to I Corinthians 9:18 what was Paul's attitude concerning preaching the Gospel?

(1.) Read the verse printed below and summarize what it reveals about this:

*Yet I have never asked you for one penny.  
And I am not writing this to hint that I would like to start now.  
In fact, I would rather die of hunger than lose the satisfaction  
I get from preaching to you without charge.*

I Corinthians 9:15 TLB

**FIFTH DAY:** Read II Corinthians 11:13-15

1. In II Corinthians 11:13-15 Paul went on the offense against the false teachers. How did he describe them? verse 13
  - a. The Greek word translated *transforming* and *transformed* in these verses means *disguise* or *masquerade*. Why do you think these men *transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ*?
    - (1.) Why shouldn't Christians *marvel* or be surprised that these *deceitful workers* do this? verse 14
2. According to II Corinthians 11:15 how did *satan's ministers* transform themselves?
  - a. Share a practical way they might operate among believers today.
  - b. The wonder is not that they can *transform* themselves as *ministers of righteousness*, but rather that we don't recognize them. What criteria do you use to recognize a true minister of Christ and a *deceitful worker*?
3. How should the following verses alert us to the dangers of those who would deceive us:
  - a. Matthew 7:15
  - b. Mark 13:21,22
  - c. Link the last phrase of II Corinthians 11:15 with Philippians 3:19a. What do you see?
4. Summarize the crucial instructions Jude 17-21 gives that will keep believers from being ensnared by deceivers.

**SIXTH DAY:** Review II Corinthians 11:1-15

1. Why did Paul feel he had to resort to the *folly* (foolishness) of boasting? verses 1-3
  
2. *As a believer you are the Bride of Christ.* Share your response to this.
  
3. How would you explain what it means to move away or be led away from the *simplicity in Christ*?
  
4. With this week's study in mind write a brief comment about the following:
  - a. *satan's subtilty*
  
  - b. *in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you*
  
  - c. *deceitful workers*
  
5. In what way has your study of II Corinthians 11:1-15 spoken to you?

*And so, young saint, test every teaching by searching the Word,  
and if you do not find it plainly revealed in the Book,  
reject all unscriptural reasoning, no matter how learned may be  
the one who does the reasoning.  
-selected*