

It's All About God

II Corinthians 11:16-33

4/21/02

Intro

- Missions auction soon and trip in August.
- Men's retreat.

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In the first verses of this chapter, Paul confronts the troublemakers straight on. First, he says that he is jealous for them with a godly jealousy. These people were drawing the church away from the simplicity of the gospel.

Then he takes off the gloves and says that they are actually servants of Satan, and in the same way that Satan comes as an angel of light, these people appeared to be servants of righteousness, but were not.

In these verses here, we see that Paul's heart for them is truly like that of a father, showing them at what great cost love has come for them.

In showing the church how they fell for this false teaching, we gain great insights into Paul's heart and that's where we gain great wisdom for ourselves.

These verses show very clearly that it's all about God and not about us.

I. Don't be taken in by the boasting of men.

Vs 16-21

A. You were taken in because they came to you boasting?

- Paul is chiding them, using some sarcasm to try and get their attention.

- I'm always suspicious when someone starts boasting as they attempt to persuade me.

Illus – Like when a salesman starts a routine. This is one of life's hardest lessons.

B. Paul then says, *don't blame the Lord for what I'm about to do.*

- A refreshing change from what too often happens. It's common for too many people to say that God told them this or that – how can anything be discussed?

C. They were challenged as to why they would allow such abuse.

- It was common in Jewish tradition for a teacher to actually slap a student if he didn't get it.

Illus- Once back in the 80's I visited a church in another city where the pastor would ridicule and remove people in the middle of the service.

II. It's all about God.

Vs 22 **A. The false teachers were trying to brag about their Jewish heritage.**

- This problem started early in the church.

See Gal 2:11-14 Paul confronts Peter.

- Today, people boast about the school they went to, or the famous pastor they had.
- Paul says, I have all that, but so what?

*Illus – Paul says it’s all rubbish.
See Phil 3: 2-9*

B. They were teaching legalism.

- Which is about man’s effort of showing righteousness.
- This actually appeals to the flesh.
- It’s easier to put on pretenses.

III. Love comes at great cost.

Vs 23-33

- A. Paul would rather boast about things that show his weakness.

*Illus – We all have things that show it’s not about us.
When I was asked to play piano and teach a new song with ten minutes notice.*

- Yet it also shows his heart for them and for the Lord.

B. These could be called the sufferings of Christ.

- See Col 1:24 “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.”

- See Romans 8:17 “We are fellows heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.”
- However, may we not suffer because we have chosen to sin.

C. Some people would say that Paul suffered because he lacked faith.

- The Faith Movement has this completely backwards.
- We should not judge our faith by our circumstances; we should judge our circumstances by our faith

Conclusion

What would cause Paul to endure such hardships in his life? He could have a very comfortable life as a Jewish leader?

- 1) The reality of eternity with Christ. (Paul said I consider these present sufferings as nothing compared to the surpassing glory of eternity with Christ.)**
- 2) The power of the gospel. Paul said he was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ because it was the power of God for salvation.**
- 3) The love of Christ truly compelled him. Paul considered himself chief among sinners – he used to persecute the church with a vengeance. If anyone understood the depth of Christ’s love, it would be Paul.**