

TRUE AND FALSE TEACHERS (APOSTLES)
(2 CORINTHIANS)

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Brief Outline Of 2 Corinthians.

1. Chapters 1 - 7: Paul's love and apostolic authority.
 - a. Salutation. (1:1-2)
 - b. Paul's use of affliction to help others. (1:3-14)
 - c. Paul defends himself against the charge of fickleness which false teachers had brought against him, and states his reason for not coming (i.e. to spare them so that he would not have to come in grief). (1:15 - 2:2)
 - d. Purpose stated for writing 1 Corinthians: To remove cause of this grief. (2:3-5)
 - e. Offender disciplined, in accordance with Paul's first letter, has now repented and is to be forgiven. (2:6-11)
 - f. Good news from the Corinthians leads Paul to thank God and magnify his work. (2:12-17)
 - g. Paul replies to anticipated charge of self-commendation (i.e. they are his epistle). (3:1-11)
 - h. Contrast between the old and the new covenant. The old covenant passed away. (3:12-18)
 - i. The treasure in earthen vessels. (4)
 - j. Assurance of resurrection and judgment. (5:1-10)
 - k. The work of reconciliation. (5:11 - 6:13)
 - l. The Christian to be separate. (6:14 - 7:1)

- m. Paul's appeal to the Corinthians to receive him instead of associating with evil. (7: 2-3)
- n. Paul's confidence in them vindicated by news which Titus brought. (7:4-16)
- 2. Instructions and exhortations for contribution for the poor. (8 & 9)
- 3. Additional defense of Paul's apostleship against false teachers. (10 - 13)
- B. The Emphasis Of This Lesson Will Be On True And False Teachers.

II. AIM.

- A. To Learn That There Were False Teachers In Corinth.
 - 1. To see how they worked.
 - 2. To see how Paul dealt with them.
- B. To Learn That There Will Be False Teachers Today.
 - 1. To learn how they work.
 - 2. To learn how we are to deal with them.

III. OUTLINE.

- A. THERE WERE FALSE TEACHERS IN CORINTH. (2 Cor. 11: 1-4, 12-15)
 - 1. How did they work?
 - a. First worked to alienate the Corinthians' faith in, and affection for, Paul.
 - 1) Undermined Paul's authority.
 - a) Questioned his apostleship. (3:1; 12:11-12)
 - b) Contrasted his behavior when present, with the tone of his letters; insinuating that he knew he did not have the authority to do what he said he would do. (10:1-2, 10)

- 2) Misinterpreted Paul's financial sacrifice.
 - a) False teachers had used this against him, probably inferring that Paul knew he was not worthy of hire because he was not a true apostle. (11:7-10)
 - b) Misinterpreted Paul's motive. (11:11)
 - c) False teachers insinuated that even though Paul did not accept money directly from them, he managed to obtain their money through the messengers he sent for the collection for the poor in Jerusalem. (12:16-18)
- 3) Misinterpreted Paul's lack of eloquence. (10:10; 11:6)
- 4) False teachers gloried in appearance and fleshly status, boasting in themselves. (5:12; 10:7; 11:18)

b. False teachers worked to undermine faith in the message Paul preached.

- 1) Discredited the messenger as has just been shown.
- 2) Corrupted the gospel which he preached. (11:3-4)

2. How did Paul deal with the false teachers?

a. First, Paul worked to reestablish the faith and affection of the Corinthians in himself, so that God's work would not be destroyed. (11:1-3)

NOTE: Only when the attack on the gospel involves discrediting the teacher, should the teacher spend time vindicating himself. (5:12)

- 1) Reaffirmation of Paul's authority as an apostle.
 - a) The Corinthians were indeed his credentials as an apostle. (3:1-6; 1 Cor. 9:1-2)

b) Their conversion and spiritual gifts were evidence of the glory of the ministry committed unto him. (3:6-13)

c) Paul's conduct of his ministry was evidence of his divine commission. (4:1-7)

d) Paul's ability to maintain his equilibrium throughout a life of persecution is a demonstration of Jesus' presence in his life. (4:8-11)

e) Paul assures them that he will act authoritatively, if necessary, explaining his behavior versus the tone of his letters. (10:11; 13:2, 10)

2) Explanation of Paul's financial sacrifice for the Corinthians. (12:13-14)

a) Paul did not want to be burdensome to them.

(1) Paul was always concerned that he give no offense in spreading the gospel. (6:3)

(2) Paul had stated in his first epistle to the Corinthians that he did not use the right of financial support lest he hinder the reception of the gospel. (1 Cor. 9:6-18)

(3) It was rewarding to Paul to be able to preach the gospel without charge. (1 Cor. 9:13-18)

(4) Paul planned to continue supporting himself to undermine any claim of a favorable comparison of the false teachers with himself. (2 Cor. 11:12)

b) Paul is like a good parent who will sacrifice for his children, even though this sign of his great love for them is misunderstood. (12:14-15)

- c) Paul points up the absurdity of questioning his integrity by trying to implicate his highly respected co-workers. (12:17-18)
- 3) Explanation of Paul's lack of eloquence.
- a) Paul had already explained at length in 1 Cor. 2:1-5, that his lack of eloquence would magnify the power of God.
 - b) Eloquence may becloud the message and make it ineffective. (1 Cor. 1:17)
- 4) Paul's ^{status} ~~stress~~ as a Jew, his sacrifices for Christ, his visions and revelations of the Lord, would never have been mentioned except to avert the disastrous consequences of their being led away by false teachers. (2 Cor. 11:22-32; 12:1-11)
- a) Acceptance of truth or error is sometimes caused by following human personalities.
 - b) Paul had warned them against following human personalities in his first letter. (1 Cor. 1:11-13; 3:3-7)
- b. Paul reaffirms the source of the message he preached.
- 1) God is the source. (2 Cor. 4:5-7; Gal. 1:11-12; 2 Cor. 12:1-9)
 - 2) Paul handled the word of God with sincerity and integrity. (2:17; 4:2)
- B. THERE WILL BE FALSE TEACHERS TODAY. (Matt. 24:4; Col. 2:8; 1 John 4:1; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:13-15; 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:1-2)
1. How do they work?
- a. Some work within the church to lead away disciples after them. (Acts 20:28-29; 2 Pet. 2:1)

- b. Some claim to have exceptional love and to have an intimate relationship with Christ.
 - c. Some claim to be Christ's special messengers.
2. How are we to deal with them?
- a. Know the word. (*2 Tim. 2:14-18, 23-26*)
 - 1) To avoid being deceived. (*Eph. 4:14; 2 Pet. 3:17*)
 - a) Search the scriptures. (*Acts 17:11*)
 - b) Avoid foolish questions. (*Titus 3:9; 1 Tim. 6:4-5; 2 Tim. 2:14, 16, 23*)
 - 2) To be able to help others see their error. (*2 Tim. 2:24-26*)
 - a) Show that love and an intimate relationship with Christ are based upon obedience to His will, not emotional verbiage. (*Matt. 7:21; John 14:15, 23; 1 John 3:18; 2 John 9*)
 - b) Any special messenger who does not preach the same gospel that Paul preached is condemned. (*Gal. 1:8-9*)
 - b. Make a conscious effort to give no occasion of offense to hinder the gospel. (*2 Cor. 6:3*)
 - 1) Be willing to make sacrifices for others. (*1 Cor. 8:9, 13; 9:22-23; 2 Cor. 11:29; Rom. 14:15, 20*)
 - 2) Concentrate on what we can give up rather than on what we can gain by serving God. (*Phil. 3:7; 1 Cor. 9:4-12*)
 - c. Mark and reject false teachers. (*Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 3:10-11*)
 - 1) Elders must be qualified to detect and deal with false teachers. (*Titus 1:9-11*)
 - 2) Faithful Christians are not to help false teachers. (*2 John 9-11*)

IV. CONCLUSION.

- A. False Teachers Have Been A Threat To Man From The Beginning. (i.e. It Was The False Teaching Of Satan Which Caused The Fall Of Man.)
- B. God Warned Of False Prophets (Teachers) When Giving The Law To Israel. (*Deut. 18:20-22*)
- C. John Continued To Warn Christians Of The Same Danger Today. (*1 John 4:1*)
- D. The Only Way One Can Be Sure Of The Message Taught By Any Teacher Is By Comparing What Is Taught With That Which Is Written. (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*)