

## Worksheet #10: 2 Corinthians 11:1–33

**Summary:** In chapter 11, Paul warns the Corinthians that they stand in imminent danger. He denounces his opponents, arguing that their purpose is to lead the Corinthian church astray from the true gospel of Christ (11:3). He then reminds them that he labored among them without asking for financial support (11:5–11), and asserts that he will continue his ministry to disrupt the efforts of his opponents (11:12–15).

Following this warning against the dangers of the false teachers, Paul gives a catalogue of sufferings that serves as his apostolic *curriculum vitae* in 11:16–33. The false teachers had boasted about the authenticity of their ministry and teaching, but none of them could claim to have endured more suffering for their teaching than Paul had for the gospel message.

### Abbreviated Outline<sup>1</sup> (current passage in bold):

- I. Introduction (1:1–11)
- II. Paul's Relationship with the Corinthians (1:12–2:11)
- III. Paul's Defense of his Ministry (2:12–7:16)
- IV. The Collection for the Believers in Jerusalem (8:1–9:15)
- V. **Paul's Renewed Defense of his Apostleship (10:1–13:4)**
  - A. The Tone of Paul's Appeal (10:1–11)
  - B. Divine Commendation of Paul's Ministry (10:12–18)
  - C. Danger of the False Apostles (11:1–15)**
  - D. Paul's Sufferings (11:16–33)**
  - E. Paul's Visions and Revelations (12:1–10)
  - F. Paul's Miracles (12:11–13)
  - G. Paul's Final Defense (12:14–13:4)
- VI. Final Exhortations (13:5–12)
- VII. Closing (13:13)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, The Cross, and The Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Academic, 2009), 484.

**Interpretation:** *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. What right does Paul have to claim that he has “betrothed” the Corinthian church to Christ, as though he were their father (11:2)?  

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2. What threat does Paul fear that might “corrupt” the Corinthians’ minds (11:3), and what could be the disastrous result (11:4)?  

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3. What could Paul mean that he is “untrained in speech, [but] not in knowledge” (11:6)?  

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4. What is Paul’s motivation for continuing in his apostolic ministry, according to 11:12?  

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5. If Paul’s opponents are “deceitful workers” (11:13) and are Satan’s ministers (11:14), in what sense(s) will their end be “according to their works” (11:14)?  

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6. What does Paul’s statement, “what I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly” (11:17) tell us about Paul’s tone in 11:16–21?  

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7. What is the one distinction does Paul draw between his opponents and himself (11:23), and why is this significant?  

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8. What does Paul seem to consider most significant in his list of burdens and sufferings (11:23b–30)?  

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**Application:** *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?  

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10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?  

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