

- I. Review: 2Cor. 11:4-6**
- A. The Corinthians were allowing themselves to be easily influenced by Paul’s critics.**
 - i. Their lack of spiritual maturity allowed them to be influenced by men who followed a different Jesus, a different spirit and a different gospel!**
 - B. Paul sarcastically refers to his opponents are “super apostles” because they prided themselves in being servants of Christ with great oratory skills.**
 - i. Paul admits that he is not as skilled in speech as they are but he did possess divine knowledge!**
 - ii. Divine knowledge, not oratory skills, is what marks a true apostle.**
 - 1. Inspired knowledge was confirmed by signs and wonders (cf. Mark 16:20; Acts 2:42-43; Acts 14:3; Romans 15:18).**
 - C. Paul brings up his policy regarding financial support to show his self-sacrificing love for the Corinthians and to expose his critics’ deception...**
- II. Continuation**
- A. 2Cor. 11:7 (ESV), “*Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge?*”**
 - i. Paul had written earlier to them that apostles have the right to refrain from secular work and get their living by the gospel (1 Cor. 9:1-14).**
 - ii. But he chose not to exercise this right so as to not put a stumbling block in the way of the gospel (cf. 1Cor. 9:12b).**
 - 1. He did not want anyone accusing him of preaching the gospel for the sake of money.**
 - iii. He chose to get his living from being a tent maker (cf. Acts 18:3).**
 - 1. Apparently, this was used against him by his critics.**
 - a. They were convincing some that Paul was an inferior apostle because he refused financial help from them.**
 - b. The other apostles normally accepted support from the recipients of their ministries, and these “super apostles” evidently did so as well.**
 - c. It seems that to his critics...**
 - i. If Paul were a true apostle, he would have not worked a menial job -- like tent making-- to support himself in missionary work.**
 - ii. Nor would he have dishonored the Corinthians by refusing financial support from them.**
 - 1. In the ancient world, a refusal of gifts was a refusal of friendship and dishonor.**
 - 2. Such actions would be thought as a sign that Paul did not love them (cf. v. 11) but desired to shame them.**
 - 3. This also would have been interpreted by them as Paul saying that they are less favored than the other churches (cf. 12:13).**
 - d. And since wealth was a sign of status, Paul’s poor status in working as a lowly tent maker would make the Corinthians bare the shame of being associated with an impoverished apostle.**
 - i. Many modern churches feel no different in desiring their preacher to be someone they can point to with pride, saying: “That’s our successful minister!”**
 - iv. Yet Paul states the reality here by way of a rhetorical question:**
 - 1. He did not do wrong by preaching the gospel free of charge?**
 - 2. Nor did he do wrong by working as a tent maker or receiving financial help from other brethren while ministering to them as the next 2 verses show...**

- B. 2Cor. 11:8 (ESV), “*I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you.*”
- i. Paul uses the term “robbed” as a hyperbole (an exaggeration).
 1. He did not actually rob churches of their money.
 2. His point is this:
 - a. Since apostles usually get financial support from churches they currently minister in, Paul accepted support from churches so that he can go from one mission field to the next.
 - b. In this way, he saw it as “robbing” other churches because they did not financially support him as he worked among them, but rather, they financially supported him as he journeyed to plant other churches!
 - ii. And because of the financial support of these churches, the gospel was preached to the Corinthians!
 - iii. Paul’s implies here that they should be thankful and not feel humiliated (or unloved) that the gospel of salvation came to them because of the sacrificial giving of others!
- C. 2Cor. 11:9 (ESV), “*And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.*”
- i. Paul gives a second reason as to why he did not accept financial support from the Corinthians:
 1. He did not want to burden anyone!
 - ii. Paul is referring to the time when he first preached to them in Acts 18.
 1. When Paul ran short of funds as a tent maker, he did not ask them for money.
 2. He did this, not to make them feel guilty, but to show that he was a man of integrity.
 - a. He did not veer from his convictions of not accepting funds from people he sought to preach and teach.
 3. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia (Acts 18:5), Paul then left his tent making job and devoted himself exclusively to preaching supported strictly by the generous gifts brought to him by these brothers.
- D. 2Cor. 11:10-11 (ESV), “*As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹ And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!*”
- i. Paul’s boast is that he proclaims the gospel free of charge (cf. 1Cor. 9:15-18)!
 1. Paul was determined to never change his policy and convictions on the issue of financial support!
 2. And what were his convictions?
 - a. He admits that he has the right to be supported as an apostle (cf. 1Cor. 9:11-12)
 - b. But refused to exercise that right (cf. 1Cor. 9:12b; 2Cor. 11:9)
 - c. He did, however, accept funds when he traveled to the next place of mission (cf. 1Cor. 16:6; 2Cor. 1:16)
 - i. Paul did not consider this form of support to be a burden but rather, he viewed it as a partnership to advance the gospel to other regions (see Phil. 4:15).
 3. The phrase “*regions of Achaia*” serves as a reminder to the Corinthians that his policy applies not only to them, but the other surrounding churches of their region.
 - a. The two churches mentioned in the NT that are in the region of Achaia are Corinth and Cenchrea.

E. 2Cor. 11:12 (ESV), “*And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do.*”

i. Paul gives a third reason for refusing financial support:

1. To expose the lie of his critics who say they work on the same terms as Paul!
2. If that were true, they would need to serve the church without accepting their money!
3. If they work on the same terms as Paul, they would have to stop commending themselves and preach Jesus Christ as Lord, viewing themselves as mere slaves of Christ, promoting Christ and His teachings and way of life in the Church (cf. 4:5).

ii. Paul professed to be Christ’s slave, not His hired hand.

1. Paul understood that God did not tell the world: “You can have the gospel if you pay for it!”
2. In the world, everyone and everything seems to have a price tag.
 - a. The gospel, however, is priceless! No monetary value can be attached to it. Therefore, to Paul, it is free!
 - b. As Christ became poor so that others may be rich (8:9), Paul depicts himself as “*poor yet making many rich*” (6:10).
3. None of this could be said of the critics!
 - a. They were all about themselves!