

I. Review

A. 2Cor. 11:23b-25

i. Paul's foolish boasting

1. With far greater labors:
 - a. He worked more than his critics did in the spreading of the gospel.
2. Far more imprisonments
 - a. Acts records one such imprisonment at Philippi (Acts 16:23-40)
3. With countless beatings and often near death
 - a. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews forty lashes less one.
 - i. Depending on the severity of the crime, a man would be flogged a certain amount of time, but 40 lashes was to be the limit (Deut. 25:1-3).
4. Three times I was beaten with rods.
 - a. Acts 16:22 provides at least one instance of Paul, along with Silas, receiving a public beating at Philippi.
5. Once I was stoned.
 - a. Acts 14:19ff provides the time when Paul was stoned by an angry crowd while he was in Lystra.
6. Three times shipwrecked, adrift at sea (cf. Acts 27).

II. Continuation

A. 2Cor. 11:26 (ESV) "*on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers;*"

i. Paul's travels across the Roman Empire exposed him to endless dangers...

1. In danger from rivers
 - a. Water ways often posed a threat to one's life from rushing currents.
2. In danger from robbers
 - a. Since Roman armies would police the main roadways, robbers would use minor routes to rob travelers.
 - b. Jesus made a reference to road bandits in the parable of the Good Samaritan, where thieves beat and robbed a traveler (cf. Luke 10:30ff).
3. In danger from my own people (Jews)
 - a. We see this Jewish hostility towards Paul in Acts
 - i. Acts 9:23-25 – In Damascus, the Jews were waiting by the city gate to kill Paul, so his friends lowered him in a basket through a hole in the city wall.
 - ii. Acts 9:28-29 – In Jerusalem, he spoke to the Greek Jews and they tried to kill him. But he escapes again by the help of friends...
 - iii. Acts 13:50 – In Antioch in Pisidia, the Jews stirred up the crowd and had Paul expelled from the area...
 - iv. Acts 14:1-5 – In Iconium, the Jews and Gentiles plotted to mistreat and stone him, so he escaped to Lystra...
 - v. Acts 14:19 – The Jews followed Paul from Antioch and Iconium and incited the crowd to stone Paul, leaving him for dead.
 - vi. Acts 17:1-5 – In Thessalonica, Paul convinced some members of the Jewish synagogue to believe in Jesus, causing the rest of the Jews to incite a riot against him. He went on to Berea...
 - vii. Acts 17:10-13 – When the Jews of Thessalonica heard that Paul was preaching to the Bereans, they incited a crowd against him.
 - viii. Acts 18:12 – In Corinth, the Jews brought Paul before court.
 - b. Therefore, the Corinthians would have firsthand knowledge of these attacks against Paul.

4. In danger from Gentiles
 - a. Acts 16:19-21 – In Philippi, Paul was beaten and thrown in prison for driving a spirit out of a girl who made money as a fortune-teller for her masters.
 - b. Acts 19:23-41 – In Ephesus, there was a violent reaction against Paul because he convinced many that mad-made idols are no gods at all.
 5. In danger in the city, wilderness, at sea
 - a. This statement sums up almost everywhere Paul went.
 - i. In cities like Damascus and Ephesus, he barely escaped an angry crowd.
 - ii. In deserted regions he faced dangers from thieves and even wild beasts.
 - iii. Even on the seas, he faced dangers as stated earlier in verse 25.
 6. In danger from false brothers
 - a. This is the most startling of the list of dangers, because you would suspect that fellow Christians would help Paul, not harm him.
 - i. Paul mentioned the false brothers who taught that one must be circumcised to be right with God (cf. Galatians 2:1-4).
 - ii. Paul’s critics at Corinth were also false brothers, claiming to be servants of Christ but in reality, were servants of Satan (cf. 2Cor. 11:13-15).
 7. Paul now goes from his travels to his life as an apostle...
- B. 2Cor. 11:27 (ESV) *“in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.”*
- i. Sleepless nights
 1. Caused by his concern for the churches (cf. Acts 20:31), preaching till daylight (Acts 20:7-11), working day and night so as to not be a burden to the church (2Thess. 3:8).
 2. Unlike his critics, Paul’s life as an apostle was a stressful life
 - a. It often came with many sleepless nights of teaching, preaching, working, traveling and concerns.
 - ii. Hunger, thirst, cold, exposed (poorly dressed).
 1. Paul mentioned this to the Corinthians in his earlier epistle (1Cor. 4:11).
- C. 2Cor. 11:28 (ESV) *“And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.”*
- i. Daily concerns for the churches he planted
 1. Paul did not give an exhaustive list of his trials.
 - a. He decided to omit mentioning other hardships and went right into mentioning his concerns for the churches he planted.
 2. Was Paul concerned over the Corinthians? Yes!
 - a. Earlier in the epistle, Paul has shared how he was so anxious to receive news from Titus about how things were going in Corinth that he was unable to take advantage of a mission opportunity in Troas (cf. 2Cor. 2:12-13; 7:5-7).
 - b. And later on in this epistle, he will voice his fear that when he returns to Corinth things will not be well (cf. 2Cor. 12:20-21).
 3. Another example of Paul’s concern is found in 1Thess. 3:1-5:
 - a. He could no longer bear the anxiety of not knowing how their faith was doing in the midst of afflictions so he sends Timothy to them.

- ii. **Note: it is interesting to note that Jesus viewed “anxiety” in a negative light (cf. Matthew 6:25-34)**
 - 1. **His disciples were encouraged not to worry about the daily cares of life because God can be trusted to take care of them.**
 - 2. **So was Paul going against the teachings of Christ? No!**
 - a. **Notice here that Paul was not worried about his daily provisions.**
 - b. **His worries were for others, new converts and disciples in the churches.**
 - i. **His concern was for their ability to withstand the temptations from ungodly cultures and influences.**
 - ii. **His concern was for their faith to remain strong during trials and hardships.**
 - iii. **His concern was that they do not give into the false teachings by false teachers.**
 - iv. **And Paul’s concern for the Corinthians is very evident by his writing them at least 4 letters:**
 - 1. **One that encourages them not to associate with the sexual immoral (1Cor. 5:9).**
 - 2. **Another that encourages them to live in holiness and unity, along with answering their many questions (1Corinthians).**
 - 3. **A harsh third letter (cf. 2Cor. 7:8)**
 - 4. **And the heart-wrenching words of 2Corinthians.**