

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 252 – September 9th – 2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

2 Corinthians 11:1-15

Martin suggests that 11:1-15 is "an interlude in which Paul turns aside from his chief theme of missionary service and the dispute of territoriality (in 10:12-18), only to revert to the topic in 11:16 with the common link of 'boasting.'"

Verse 1

Ὅφελον ἀνείχεσθέ μου μικρόν τι ἀφροσύνης· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνέχεσθέ μου.

ὄφελον would that, I wish that
 ἀνείχεσθέ Verb, imperf midd/pass dep indic,
 2 pl ἀνεχομαι endure, be patient with

The μου belongs with ἀφροσύνης

μικρόν here adverbial, 'a little'
 ἀφροσύνη, ης f folly, foolishness

The final phrase may be an imperative, 'Yes, please put up with me!' so Martin, or an indicative, 'but you have already done so.'

Verse 2

ζηλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς θεοῦ ζηλω, ἡρμοσάμην γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἀνδρὶ παρθένον ἀγνήν παραστήσαι τῷ Χριστῷ·

ζηλω be jealous of, be very concerned about

ζηλος, ου m, and ους n zeal, jealousy

'With the jealousy God inspires [in me]'
 Martin

ἁρμοζομαι promise or give in marriage
 ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man, husband

Cf. Hos 1-3; Ezek 16; Is 50:1-2; 54:1-8; 62:5; Jer 2:32,33.

παρθενος, ου f virgin, unmarried girl
 ἄγνος, η, ον pure, holy, innocent
 παριστημι and παριστανω present, bring into one's presence

"The verb παραστήσαι, 'to offer, render,' looks on to the Parousia, as in 4:14." Martin

"Marriage among the Jews of Paul's day involved two separate ceremonies, the betrothal and the nuptial ceremony which consummated the marriage. Usually a year elapsed between the two, but during that period the girl was regarded legally as the man's wife, while socially she remained a virgin. The betrothal contract was binding, and could be broken only by death or a formal written divorce. Unfaithfulness or violation of a betrothed girl was regarded as adultery and punishable as such... Paul sees himself as the agent of God through whom his converts were betrothed to Christ, and feels under obligation to ensure that they are presented as a pure virgin to her one husband at the nuptial ceremony when the marriage will be consummated (i.e. the parousia of Christ)."

Kruse

"Paul's role in this partnership between Christ and his bride is one of φίλος του νυμφίου (John 3:29...)." Martin

Verse 3

φοβοῦμαι δὲ μή πως, ὡς ὁ ὄφις ἐξηπάτησεν Εὐάν ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτοῦ, φθαρή τὰ νοήματα ὑμῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπλότητος καὶ τῆς ἀγνότητος τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν.

φοβεομαι trans fear, be afraid (of)

μη πως that perhaps, lest somehow

ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent

ἐξαπαταω deceive, lead astray

Εὐα, ας f Eve

πανουργια, ας f trickery, deceit, craftiness

φθαρή Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s φθειρω

corrupt, ruin, destroy

νοημα, τος n mind, thought

Satan's attack on Eve was not of a sexual nature but was the seducing of her mind to doubt the truth of what God had said. This is the danger facing the Corinthians. "The situation is that alien powers have worked dangerously – in Paul's view – to turn the Corinthians' minds (νοήματα: as in 3:14; 4:4; and 10:5 seems germane ...) away from their true allegiance, expressed as ἀπλοτης (see on 1:12...), 'sincere devotion' or wholehearted commitment to Christ." Martin
We need also to maintain a *Christian mind* (cf. Paul's use of the term νοήμα).

ἀπλοτης, ητος f liberality, sincerity
ἀγνοτης, ητος f purity, sincerity

There are a number of variants. The longer text is supported by p⁴⁶ κ B G 33 etc., the omission by κ^c D^c H K P Ψ etc. Other MSS include both nouns but in the reverse order. It is difficult to determine whether the shorter reading arose through accidental omission (haplography) or whether the longer reading arose through dittography or a conflation of texts including the accidental variant ἀγνοτητος in place of ἀπλοτητος. Allo and Hughes favour the longer reading.

Verse 4

εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν κηρύσσει ὃν οὐκ ἐκηρύξαμεν, ἢ πνεῦμα ἕτερον λαμβάνετε ὃ οὐκ ἐλάβετε, ἢ εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον ὃ οὐκ ἐδέξασθε, καλῶς ἀνέχεσθε.

Leitzmann states that this verse is "a key to the understanding of the opponents who appeared on the scene at Corinth and for the interpretation of chapters 10-13." The news of an alien presence at Corinth draws from Paul "some of the strongest language of condemnation found in his corpus (cf. the nearest parallels in Gal 1:8; 2:11; 5:10; and Col 2:8)." Martin

ὁ ἐρχομενος "this group is evidently headed by a ringleader since it appears that the rival mission had a spokesperson." Martin. This party had come from *outside*, in contrast to 10:14,15 and had come on its own volition – it had not been sent.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"It was the character of Jesus as setting the norm for Christian existence which is at stake." Martin

ἢ or
ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different
ἐλάβετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl λαμβανω

πνεῦμα here "will be the effects of Christian living seen in outward deportment: their attitude to living before the congregation betrays a spirit in contradiction of Paul's strength-as-weakness (ἀσθενεια) teaching and practice." Martin

εὐαγγέλιον, ου n good news, gospel

Cf. Gal 1:6-9

δεχομαι receive, accept

"They preached a lordly figure, with themselves as his powerful and 'charismatic' exponents." Martin. These preachers arrived *claiming* some sort of authorisation from the Jerusalem church as representatives of Jewish Christianity (11:22). Paul claims that his apostleship stands alongside that of the Jerusalem apostles and that it is he who has been given the office of 'apostle to the Gentiles' (Rom 11:23). He has been given 'knowledge' (11:6) of the authentic Gospel of 4:4-6 which conveys saving truth from God. "But why is Paul's indignation so virulent in 11:13-15? The answer is given in Bultmann's exposition of 11:4. The alien 'Jesus-Spirit-Gospel' triad adds up to a wrong-headed perception of the entire Christian kerygma as Paul understood it. The Christ they proclaimed is *κατα σαρκα* (5:16) which means that the power on display is visible and self-centered. The πνεῦμα is manifest in a spirit of ἐξουσια, which they construed as lordly power which in turn leads to a posture of *καυχασθα*, 'boasting'... The 'gospel' is branded as a false message since it contradicts Paul's message of the cross and of the Christ who 'did not please himself' (Rom 15:3). They glory in outward appearance (5:12), because they have no place for the hiddenness of Christ's weak demeanour (10:1; 13:3, 4) and the life based on 'faith' (5:7)... 'Another Jesus' for the opponents is the wonder-working Jesus, rather than Paul's crucified and risen Lord. The alien 'spirit' is the spirit of power and ecstasy which these messengers claimed to possess and embody in their ministry, rather than the Spirit of Christ which Paul exemplified. The new 'gospel' is the message of power and present glory, based on demonstrable tokens of the divine and evidences of authority in their lives as Christ's servants (v.13), rather than Paul's kerygma of the suffering Christ whose power is displayed incognito and in patient love (13:3,4). Above all, the contrast is seen in the way the rival preachers overlooked, and Paul expounded, the truth that the 'true apostle' not only is a proclaimer of the passion story; he also lives it out." Martin (following Fallon).

ἀνεχομαι endure, be patient with

καλως ἀνεχεσθε an ironical 'you put up with ... right well!' referring back to ὁ ἐρχομενος

Verse 5

λογίζομαι γὰρ μηδὲν ὑστερηκέναι τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων·

λογίζομαι reckon, suppose

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing; no;

μηδεν adverb not at all, in no way

ὑστερηκέναι Verb, perf act infin ὑστερεω

lack, fall short of, be inferior to

ὑπερλίαν (adv. used as adj.) outstanding, special, extra-special

Martin thinks this a reference to the leaders in the Jerusalem church, reflecting the claim of Paul's opponents that they had links with the *real* apostles. Paul is not disparaging the authority of the Twelve but is stating that his apostleship is on a par with theirs. This does not imply that these preachers were genuinely commissioned or sent by the Twelve.

Verse 6

εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ γνώσει, ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ φανερώσαντες ἐν πᾶσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς.

ἰδιώτης, ου m untrained, unskilled man

'untrained in public speaking.'

γνωσις, εως f knowledge, understanding

φανερώσαντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl

φανερωω make known, reveal, make evident

'In every way we have made [God's truth] known to you all.' Paul's preaching made it quite evident that he had a God-given insight into the purposes of God in Christ (see Col 1:26,27; Eph 1:9; 3:1-6).

Verse 7

"Ἡ ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησα ἑμαυτὸν ταπεινῶν ἵνα ὑμεῖς ὑψωθῆτε, ὅτι δωρεὰν τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγέλιον εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν;

The introductory ἦ probably marks a question.

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

ἑμαυτὸν Pronoun, acc s ἑμαυτου, ης

reflexive pronoun (not used in nom)

myself; possessive pronoun my own

ταπεινοω humble, humiliate

Maybe a reference to how Paul's tent making was viewed by some. "The typical Greek 'upper class' sentiment, represented by Aristotle ... was to treat manual labour with disdain, and insist that no free citizen – certainly no philosopher – should get himself entangled in physical work, except under extreme pressure." Martin

ὑψωθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl ὑψωω
exalt, lift up

δωρεαν without cost, freely

εὐαγγελίζω act. and midd proclaim the good news

Cf. Acts 18:1-4; 1 Cor 9:6-18. The Greeks would have regarded it as degrading for a philosopher or travelling teacher to work with his hands to supply his own need.

Verse 8

ἄλλας ἐκκλησίας ἐσύλησα λαβὼν ὀψώνιον πρὸς τὴν ὑμῶν διακονίαν,

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

Particularly Philippi (Phil 2:25; 4:10-20).

συλαω rob

συλαω is a very strong word, generally used of pillage in war. Paul uses dramatic language to shock the Corinthians into realisation of what he and other churches have done for them.

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω
ὀψώνιον, ου n pay, wages

διακονια, ας f ministry, service, help

"He took gifts from other Christians – by using his rights as an apostle of Christ, 1 Thess 2:6 ... – only to make good his ministry (διακονια) at Corinth, that is, to fulfil it in a way consonant with his proclamation of a crucified Lord and a Gospel of free grace (its δωρεαν character)." Martin

Verse 9

καὶ παρὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑστερηθεὶς οὐ κατενάκησα οὐθενός· τὸ γὰρ ὑστέρημά μου προσαναπλήρωσαν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἐλθόντες ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας· καὶ ἐν παντὶ ἀβαρῆ ἑμαυτὸν ὑμῖν ἐτίρησα καὶ τηρήσω.

παρων Verb, pres ptc, m nom s παρειμι be present

I.e. on the initial visit of Acts 18:1-17.

ὑστερηθεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

ὑστερεω lack; pass be lacking

καταναρκαω be a (financial) burden to

οὐθεις equivalent to οὐδεις no one, nothing

ὑστερημα, τος n what is lacking, need

προσαναπληρωω supply, provide

ἀβαρῆ Adjective, m/f acc s ἀβαρης, ες of no (financial) burden

τηρεω keep, maintain

Verse 10

ἔστιν ἀλήθεια Χριστοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ὅτι ἡ καύχησις αὕτη οὐ φραγῆσεται εἰς ἐμὲ ἐν τοῖς κλίμασι τῆς Ἀχαΐας.

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγω

'As certain as God's truth is on my side.'

καυχῆσιν, εως f boasting, ground for boasting

φραγήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s φρασσω silence, muzzle, stop
κλιμα, τος n region, district

On Paul's conduct, cf. 1 Cor 9:15-18

Verse 11

διὰ τί; ὅτι οὐκ ἀγαπῶ ἑμᾶς; ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν.

ἀγαπαω love, show love for
οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

Verse 12

Ὅ δὲ ποιῶ καὶ ποιήσω, ἵνα ἐκκόψω τὴν ἀφορμὴν τῶν θελώντων ἀφορμὴν, ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καυχῶνται εὐρεθῶσιν καθὼς καὶ ἡμεῖς.

"It is possible to take the opening clause leading to the first ἵνα in two ways: either 'but what I am doing I will also continue to do, that... (ἵνα), or, 'what I am doing and will continue to do [is] in order that ...' (ἵνα). The latter is preferred by Allo ... on the score that the scene goes back to v 9 where Paul says that he will refrain from placing burdens on the Corinthians. Either way the point is the same." Martin

ἐκκόψω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἐκκοπω cut off, remove

ἀφορμη, ης f occasion, opportunity
θελω wish, will

καυχασθαι boast, boast about
εὐρεθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl εὐρισκω

Paul's meaning here is not entirely clear. It would seem that the false teachers who opposed Paul were only too ready to take money and were perhaps greedy for it. Paul's conduct removed from them the possibility of saying that their ministry was just like his. Martin suggests that "The underlying objection Paul has against them is their 'pride' (καυχασθαι) in laying claim to the same missionary territory as he believes he has, i.e., at Corinth. So they are interlopers, who have entered upon a field of mission service where they do not belong. As long as Paul persists in his mission work based on a crucified Jesus and a Gospel freely offered ... they will have no room to manoeuvre in Corinth. He will effectively check their activity as poachers on his field of operation."

Verse 13

οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι ψευδαπόστολοι, ἐργάται δόλιοι, μετασχηματιζόμενοι εἰς ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ·

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind
ψευδαποστολος, ου m false apostle, one who claims to be an apostle

"The basis of Paul's argument requires the affirmation that he alone has been sent to Corinth; they have not, and so their 'mission' (implied in ἀποστελλειν, 'to send') is a misnomer." Martin

ἐργατης, ου m labourer, workman
δολιος, α, ον deceitful, dishonest

In claiming to be working for Christ they are deceitful.

μετασχηματιζω change, transform (mid disguise)

Verse 14

καὶ οὐ θαῦμα, αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Σατανᾶς μετασχηματίζεται εἰς ἄγγελον φωτός·

θαυμα, τος n wonder, miracle, amazement

οὐ θαυμα is read in \aleph B D* F G, with a variant οὐ θαυμαστον in D^{b,c} E K. The latter is probably an attempt to turn a rare term into a well-known one, found often in LXX and not infrequently in NT.

Σατανας, α the Adversary, Satan
φως, φωτος n light

Verse 15

οὐ μέγα οὖν εἰ καὶ οἱ διάκονοι αὐτοῦ μετασχηματίζονται ὡς διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης, ὧν τὸ τέλος ἔσται κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

'It is no great surprise that ...'

διακονος, ου m & f servant, minister
δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness, what is right

τελος, ους n end, conclusion, termination
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι

Cf. 5:10; 1 Cor 3:17; Phil 3:19; 2 Tim 4:14.
"In the end the reward they will receive is the penalty of the misdeeds they have enacted. They have done Satan's work; to Satan's fate they will go." Martin

"The 'cosmic' setting of vv 13-15 is well brought out by Kleinknecht ... who shows how the vocabulary, idioms, and concepts in vv 13-15 are all chosen to demonstrate that Paul's engagement is with no familiar earthly power; but rather he shares in the conflict between God and his nonhuman adversary, Satan. Paul's role is as God's advocate and 'fellow-warrior' ..., a link going back to 10:3-6, but also picking up the imagery of 11:8... The next section will show the valid credentials he has which authorise him to engage in this conflict as 'apostle of Christ.'" Martin