Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Third Quarter 2026: *1 and 2 Corinthians*
Lesson 12 "Dealing With False Teachers"

Read for this week's study

2 Corinthians 10:1–17; Jeremiah 9:24; 2 Corinthians 11:1–15, 22–28; 2 Corinthians 12:20, 21; 2 Corinthians 13:5.

Memory Text

"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4, ESV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

I. Introduction
II. Spiritual War
III. Boasting in the Lord
IV. False Teachers Identified
V. Sufferings for the Sake of the Gospel
VI. Appeal to the Unrepentant
VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration
Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. "As if Paul didn't have enough problems already, another one arose that he had to deal with as well: false teachers in the church. These people were opposed to him and to his work and ministry. Worse, these false teachers had seduced members of Corinth as well. Paul refers to his fight against this problem as a spiritual war." (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. Satan seeks to blind minds to God's light (4:3-6), fortify minds against God's truth (10:1-6), and seduce minds from God's love (11:1-4). That's why Paul gives some practical counsel for victory in spiritual warfare. Paul describes his strategy in the battle for the mind in 10:3-5: "we take every thought prisoner and make it obey the Messiah".
3. How do we balance the meekness and gentleness of the Messiah with the boldness that tears down the enemy's strongholds? (Sunday's lesson) Our enemies are not people held by Satan's power. The problem with confrontation is that it is easy to make the mistake of thinking that every position or view which is not explicitly Christian (or mine; remember, Paul is inspired; we are not!) must be totally and

utterly wrong. Paul knows that all truth is God's truth, but all truth can be also twisted to serve human pride and arrogance. The battle for the mind must be fought against those outside the church and inside the church as well. That's why Paul will take on these false teachers.

4. Tuesday's lesson focuses on the false teachers. Just as we do not know who Paul sent along with Titus (8:18), so we do not know who exactly these people were who are 'commending themselves' (10:12.18). It is obvious from 11:7-15 that they accuse Paul for not taking money for supporting himself in Corinth – Paul shows that he is damned if he does and damned if he does not. Paul unmasks these false teachers, not as super-apostles, but false apostles teaching a false gospel and servants of Satan (=Accuser in Jewish thinking).

5. In the text for Wednesday's lesson (11:22-28), Paul decides to boast, not of the sort of things the rival teachers have been boasting about, but about a different sort of thing entirely. But he knows that the gospel will be shining through, even in his "foolish" boasting.

6. Paul lists as his own "achievements" things that normal people in the Roman world would be too ashamed even to mention, let alone to celebrate. Cultured and educated people of his day would not go hungry, cold, without sleep, etc. They would have insisted on a military escort, or at least travelling with people who could protect them against such mishaps.

7. The crunch of the whole passage is in 11:30: "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness." Paul received not "*corona muralis*" ('the crown of the wall') but "*corona Christi*" ("the crown of the Messiah"). How can we in our time learn to stand out against prevailing cultural values which go against the values of God's kingdom?

8. Thursday's lesson deals with what will happen when Paul arrives in Corinth for his third visit (12:14-13:10). Is the anxiety that Paul expresses in 12:20-21 contradicting what he said in 7:5-16? Or does Paul know enough about human nature and church life that some of the Corinthians will return to the old patterns of behavior?

9. The sins mentioned here (12:20-21) threaten the very life of a community and Paul promises to deal with them. This would require the consent and cooperation of most of the church, but Paul believes he can count on that. That's why he quotes (in 13:1) the principle from Deuteronomy (19:15 cf. Numbers 35:30) that accusations must be supported by at least two witnesses.

10. How do we maintain that delicate balance today between never daring to warn people about the consequences of their behavior, never disciplining and leading them and exercising almost tyrannical rule over people, rule that does not tolerate anyone who disagrees with us? How can this combination of weakness and strength (13:1-4) inform our attitudes and actions?

11. When you look at yourself in the mirror (13:5), do you see someone in whom King Jesus is living and active? When you listen to things you are saying, does it sound like words coming from Jesus? How can the church grow to full maturity (13:9)?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

You notice that Paul even mentions forged letters being circulated, pretending to be from him and causing early Christians much distress. Look at 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3:

> We ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us. . . . Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. (NIV)

And from then on he signed his epistles with greater care.

John also warns of false teachers who arise, claiming to have the Holy Spirit, and yet it is a fraud. 1 John 4:1, 2:

> My dear friends, do not believe all who claim to have the Spirit, but test them to find out if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere. (GNT)

Paul surely agrees that we should test everything before believing. That familiar text in 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Test everything. Hold on to the good." (NIV) God is not afraid to be tested. That's what is so believable about God. The reason He is not afraid to be examined is that the truth and evidence are on His side.

Because truth and evidence were on Christ's side, He spoke with great authority—with real authority. And you know those two familiar verses that follow. Matthew 7:29: "When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority. . . .", (NIV) And Luke 4:32 adds: "His message had authority." (NIV) {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #7, "The Question of Authority" recorded February 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* http://pkp.cc/7MMCAG

Note how he combines the good news with Christ's death, with power. Now put with that the famous Romans 1:16, 17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel [the good news]: it is the power of God for salvation. . . . For in it [something is revealed] the righteousness of our God" (RSV). Now notice how the good news, power, God's righteousness, and the cross are all tied together. And there's nothing new about this. This is the everlasting good news. Or, to pick just one place in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 9:24:

> Let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the Lord (NIV).

Now combine them all together. The good news is about God. It's about His righteousness. It cost the death of Christ to prove it. This good news about God's righteousness has great power to

move people, if they're willing to listen, to win them back to repentance and faith. It has great power because it is the truth. It has great power because it is such good news. Now that is the meaning of Romans 3:25, 26 that we discussed at more length before. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG

Further Study with Ellen White

The religion of Christ reveals itself as a vitalizing, pervading principle, a living, working, spiritual energy. When the heart is opened to the heavenly influence of truth and love, these principles will flow forth again like streams in the desert, causing fruitfulness to appear where now are barrenness and dearth. {PK 234.1}

The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver; it never makes him coarse or rough, discourteous or self-important, passionate or hardhearted. On the contrary, it refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and purifies and ennobles the thoughts, bringing them into captivity to Christ. God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. He has given in His holy law a transcript of His character. {8T 63.3}

God takes men as they are and educates them for His service if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfill the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of righteousness that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God.—GW 285, 286 (1915). {1MCP 11.1}

"Blessed are the meek." The difficulties we have to encounter may be very much lessened by that meekness which hides itself in Christ. If we possess the humility of our Master, we shall rise above the slights, the rebuffs, the annoyances, to which we are daily exposed, and they will cease to cast a gloom over the spirit. The highest evidence of nobility in a Christian is self-control. He who under abuse or cruelty fails to maintain a calm and trustful spirit robs God of His right to reveal in him His own perfection of character. Lowliness of heart is the strength that gives victory to the followers of Christ; it is the token of their connection with the courts above. {DA 301.3}

Jesus, the brightness of the Father's glory, thought "it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." Philippians 2:6, 7, R.V.,

margin. Through all the lowly experiences of life He consented to pass, walking among the children of men, not as a king, to demand homage, but as one whose mission it was to serve others. There was in His manner no taint of bigotry, no cold austerity. The world's Redeemer had a greater than angelic nature, yet united with His divine majesty were meekness and humility that attracted all to Himself. {MB 14.2}

Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. The promise, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul. Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear. Some have strong traits of character, that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. . . . If we will give ourselves unselfishly to the work, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about us the everlasting arms, and will prove a mighty helper. If we will look to Jesus as the One in whom we may trust, He will never fail us in any emergency. {ML 316.4}

The mind devoted unreservedly to God, under the guidance of the divine Spirit develops generally and harmoniously. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed through the power of God to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion and piety establish so close a relation between Jesus and His disciple that the Christian becomes like Him in mind and character. After association with the Son of God the humble follower of Christ is found to be a person of sound principle, clear perception, and reliable judgment. He has a connection with God, the Source of light and understanding. {TMK 124.4}

Satan cannot touch the mind or intellect unless we yield it to him (MS 17, 1893). {6BC 1105.8}

Satan is determined to keep up the warfare to the end. Coming as an angel of light, claiming to be the Christ, he will deceive the world. But his triumph will be short. No storm or tempest can move those whose feet are planted on the principles of eternal truth. They will be able to stand in this time of almost universal apostasy (MS 74, 1903). {6BC 1106.3}

Satan has ascribed to God all the evils to which flesh is heir. He has represented Him as a God who delights in the sufferings of His creatures, who is revengeful and implacable. It was Satan who originated the doctrine of eternal torment as a punishment for sin, because in this way he could lead men into infidelity and rebellion, distract souls, and dethrone the human reason. {FE 176.2}

Heaven, looking down, and seeing the delusions into which men were led, knew that a divine Instructor must come to earth. Men in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and He must be revealed to their understanding. Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness

and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds: for He was the Light of the world. By His presence He could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character. {FE 176.3}

From the opening of the great controversy in heaven, Satan has maintained his cause through deception; and Christ has been working to unveil his schemes and to break his power. {DA 210.2}

God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan's deceptions. {CT 457.1}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

The manifestation of God's love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. {5T 744.2}

As we near the end of time, falsehood will be so mingled with truth, that only those who have the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be able to distinguish truth from error. We need to make every effort to keep the way of the Lord. We must in no case turn from His guidance to put our trust in man. The Lord's angels are appointed to keep strict watch over those who put their faith in the Lord, and these angels are to be our special help in every time of need. Every day we are to come to the Lord with full assurance of faith, and to look to Him for wisdom. . . . Those who are guided by the Word of the Lord will discern with certainty between falsehood and truth, between sin and righteousness (MS 43, 1907). {7BC 907.1}

This mighty conqueror of death, who had reached to the very depths of human misery to rescue a lost world, assumed the humble task of walking with the two disciples to Emmaus, to teach and comfort them. Thus he ever identifies himself with his suffering and perplexed people. In our hardest and most trying paths, lo, Jesus is with us to smooth the way. He is the same Son of man, with the same sympathies and love which he had before he passed through the tomb and ascended to his Father. {6Red 30.2}

Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His "little ones," dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. He has toward them an exceeding tenderness, as far surpassing what our father or mother has felt toward us in our helplessness as the divine is above the human. {DA 327.2}

He who took humanity upon Himself knows how to sympathize with the sufferings of humanity. Not only does Christ know every soul, and the peculiar needs and trials of that soul, but He knows all the circumstances that chafe and perplex the spirit. His hand is outstretched in pitying tenderness to every suffering child. Those who suffer most have most of His sympathy and pity. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He desires us to lay our perplexities and troubles at His feet and leave them there. {MH 249.3}