

This is an unusual part of Paul's writing. He feels very uncomfortable having to defend himself in this way. He simply cannot permit the false teachers to continue poisoning the minds of his beloved Corinthians. In no uncertain terms Paul defends his apostleship, and his ministry. This is a desperate situation which calls for desperate measures.

In order to have a clear understanding into this chapter we must read it several times to become familiar with it and pray asking God to open our hearts to exactly what Paul is saying.

1. What does Paul ask of them in verse 1?

Paul has stated before that he feels like a spiritual father to the Corinthian believers

2. Notice in verse 2, what does Paul compare the believers in Corinth to? If he is the father who are they?

3. In verse 3 Paul states his concern for them. What does he fear will happen to those he cares so much about? Who does he use as an example?

This can happen so quickly, you might want to go back and read Genesis 3:1-7 **Briefly write out the chain of events.**

4. I'm sure you know God has a plan for you? But did you know that Satan has one too?

He comes disguised so we will be more at ease to stand and converse with him. His plan is to cause you to doubt the love and provision of God, to discourage you by having you focus on the problem and not the problem solver, to cause diversion by getting our eyes on the wrong things instead of what is right and good, to defeat us by making us feel a failure, to convince us to delay obedience to Christ and much, much more.

When we lose our focus on Christ we will be deceived just as Eve was and led astray.

5. What is distracting you? What is threatening to sidetrack your walk of faith?

I love verse 4 because he states it so concisely how we can recognize a false teacher. Read

verse 4, what are the three red flags



that would prove someone is a false teacher?

Notice Paul's disagreement is not with the men personally but with their doctrine, their teachings.

6. How does Paul reference the false apostles in verse 5? What does he call them?

7. Why do you suppose he referred to them in this way?

8. Remember in 2 Cor. 10: 11-12 how do these false teachers measure themselves?

9. Who is the only one who has the right to judge and commend? 2 Cor. 10:18

- 10. In verse 6 Paul shows one of the marks of a true follower of Christ, humility. We were never intended to excel at everything. Why is it so difficult for us to humble ourselves sometimes when we are facing conflict? When our limitations surface?**
- 11. How much did Paul say he had charged them when he was with them preaching the gospel to them?** It is unfortunate that all too often we feel that something that costs little is of little value and what is expensive is valuable.
- 12. If Paul did not ask the Corinthians to meet his needs while he was with them, how did he live?**
- 13. What very strong word did Paul use in verse 8 that hinted to the fact that they should have been sensitive to the daily needs of Paul while he was with them?**
- 14. Are you sensitive to the needs of those who minister to you? What needs could you meet?** There are many needs that your leaders have not all are monetary, some are emotional, and some are spiritual. Try to think of a way you could be a blessing to those who are helping you grow in your walk. Perhaps you could drop your pastor a note of thanks for something he has shared lately that has been a benefit to you. Often people only write their pastor when complaining.
- 15. What does Paul reaffirm in verse 11?**
- 16. Paul minces no words in verse 13-15, what does he say about these false teachers? List all the things he says describing them.**
- 17. Now let's take a look at Paul's credentials in the ministry. Verses 16-28**
Would you call them credentials or hardships?
- 18. If you were to list your credentials what would you write down? Would it look like Paul's list?**
- 19. Make a list to compare the credentials of Paul and these false teachers. (note of the question he asks in verse 23, he has already answered it in verses 13-15)**

FALSE TEACHERS CREDENTIALS	PAUL'S CREDENTIALS
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- 20. What is the proof of Paul's true shepherd's heart? Vs. 28-29**
- 21. What feelings are stirred up in you when a brother or sister in Christ is distracted and led astray from their obedient walk of faith? When they fall into sin?**

22. In verse 30-31 Paul makes another unusual statement, what does he say he will boast about? Read 2 Cor. 12:10, the world will never see the power of God in our lives quite like they will when we are operating in God's His strength, not our own.
23. In verses 32-33 Paul shares one final example of his suffering for Christ and God's care and deliverance. Read Acts 9:20-25, why do you believe Paul brings this up here? What was so significant about this deliverance?
24. In 2 Tim.4:5 Paul wrote to Timothy *"As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."*
Does Paul ask more of his beloved Timothy than he was willing to do? This was Paul's instructions to Timothy but also to us.
25. How will you apply what you have learned this week to your own walk of faith?
26. Do you believe you will be better equipped to recognize a false teacher now? What were the three red flags?
27. How does Paul's attitude in suffering inspire you?
28. Do you know a believer who is currently suffering for their faith? How could you be an encouragement to them this week?
29. Jesus suffered at the hands of those who did not understand and accept him. Paul suffered at the hands of those who wanted to stop him from sharing the gospel. What have you suffered for the cause of Christ? What have you suffered to share the gospel with someone?

<u>Christ suffered for me.</u>	<u>Paul suffered for the gospel.</u>	<u>I have suffered.</u>