

## ZOOM

### "FILTERS"

#### 2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15

### This Week's Core Competency

**Authority of the Bible** – I believe the Bible is the word of God and has the right to command my belief in action. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

As Christians, we believe that the Bible is inspired—that is, 'God-breathed.' Further, we believe that God's self-revelation is for us—that is, those who have been saved *and* are being saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Lastly, we should be united in our affirmation that the Bible has the right to command our belief in action—that is, the Bible doesn't just hold the words for eternal life (i.e. salvation) but for our life that remains on earth (i.e. sanctification). Given all of this, persistent due-diligence in personal Bible study should be a central preoccupation in the life of a believer. Unfortunately, reality paints a different picture.

In George Barna's book *Growing True Disciples*, he exposes a portrait of the patterns of Christian belief and living indicative of too many of 'us' believers today. In chapter 4, 'Living the

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***Not to be interested in the study of Holy Scripture . . . is the height of spiritual folly.***

— Robert Reymond

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Christian Life,' he shares that while most of us purport to engage in various spiritual disciplines, including weekly Bible reading, our "attitudes, opinions and values" (Table 4.5, p 64) are statistically "identical" to that of non-Christians. Loose translation: outside of 'church circles,' our life doesn't look much different from theirs.

He concludes this chapter with the following summation. "Clearly, impeccable historical foundations and the development of good intentions have not been enough to compel believers to lead a life that truly honors and serves Christ. We buy into the importance of worship without really knowing what it means or rarely engage in anything beyond rote behaviors. We are generally willing to share our faith, but huge numbers of believers never or rarely do so, *and the content of our sharing is frightening*. The Bible knowledge of born again believers is a combination of Scriptural substance and worldly wisdom blended into a distasteful theological mash.

"Believers have been incredibly blessed by God with material possessions, but we are loath to return the favor and invest in His priorities. We serve others when we must, but few believers have a love of serving people; our culture has seduced us into loving to be served, instead of committing ourselves to meeting the needs of others. We are good at relating to other believers, but not good at having faith-based relationships in which our goal is to help each other mature in Christ. More often than not, our goal is to feel happy, comfortable and secure, and we surround ourselves with people who share a love of Christ and a willingness to

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affirm and appreciate us. Most disappointingly, we also find that the net outcome is a lifestyle that fails to demonstrate the practical realities of the Christian faith" (Barna, 68).

So much of what led to the tension expressed in Paul's correspondence to the Corinthians could have been alleviated had they heeded his words to them 'the first time around.' Disregarding moral purity (cf 1Co 5:1-5) and having a lax attitude towards theological truth (2Co 11:4) almost brought this congregation to its knees. My hope is that we would be a congregation of Bereans who diligently test everything through the lenses of God's word...and then, as a result, live a noticeably different life than our unchurched neighbors.

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### 2 Corinthians 11:1-15

1 I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness; but you are already doing that. 2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. 3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough. 5 But I do not think I am in the least inferior to those "super-apostles." 6 I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way.

7 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? 8 I robbed other churches by receiving support

from them so as to serve you. 9 And when I was with you, and needing something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brother who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so. 10 As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this boasting of mine. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? 12 And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us I the things they boast about.

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle "pure virgin" and draw an arrow to "to Christ" in v 2.
- \* Box each occurrence of "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 1-6.
- \* Highlight all of v. 3.
- \* Number the three 'differences' in v. 4.
- \* Circle "serpent's cunning" (v. 3); connect with a line.
- \* Underline "I may...knowledge" in v. 6.
- \* Bracket Paul's question indicating *irony* in v. 7.
- \* Circle "Satan himself" (v. 14)
- \* Letter each term used for Paul's opposition in vv. 5, 13-15.

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## day 2

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Read chapter 10 and ascribe a sentence or title to each of its three paragraphs.
2. Based upon ancient Near East marriage customs, in what 'familial' role did Paul place himself in relation to the Corinthian congregation? How does this imagery contribute to the significance of the situation about which he is writing?
3. What 'triad' of the faith is Paul concerned the Corinthians are deviating away from?
4. Some translations interpret "different spirit" to mean a disposition of 'fear/bondage' (compared to 'faith/freedom'). Other translators interpret "different spirit" to reference a demonic spirit (compared to the Holy Spirit). What say you and why?
5. What are the two main attacks lodged against Paul that he addresses?
6. Paul claims to have a "knowledge" that is unique from his detractors. In what sense?
7. Summarize why Paul refused to take money from the Corinthians during his original stay.
8. Why does Paul insist on continuing this "free of charge" policy despite criticism?
9. Identify the terms Paul uses to describe those who seek to advance a counterfeit gospel.
10. **Discussion:** What are some 'best strategies' for believers to arm themselves against false teaching regarding the Christian faith?

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## day 3

## EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

Up to this point, Paul has successfully defended the authenticity of his apostleship and ministry (1:3-7:16) and made a final plea for their monetary gift which he purposes to take to the poor in Jerusalem (8-9). In the final chapters of 2 Corinthians (10-13) Paul dismantles the credibility of, most likely, the Judaizers—a band of Jewish 'converts' who have encroached upon the Corinthian congregation (much as they had done prior amongst the churches in the region of Galatia). These disruptors sought to undermine Paul's credibility and, at the same time, advance a false pretense for salvation; namely that a person must have faith in Jesus *and* "follow Jewish customs" (Gal 2:14) in order to be truly saved.

In the first paragraph of chapter 10 (vv. 1-6), Paul draws the 'battle lines' against his ministry adversaries asserting "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (v. 5). The second paragraph might best be titled "Don't Judge a Book by It's Cover." Paul who boasts of his "weakness" (11:30; 12:9-10; 13:4; 1Co 2:3) and had been criticized for being "timid" in person (10:1) but "forceful" via his letters (v.10) is ready and willing to exercise authoritative strength if/when 'push comes to shove' (vv.2,11b). In the third paragraph, Paul makes his first explicit distinction between him and 'Satan's emissaries' (cf. 11:14-15). While the Judaizers were content to bloviate their sense of importance through self-congratulatory means (v.12), Paul relegates his "boasting" to his obedient commitment to bring the true gospel message wherever God directed—including to Corinth! Paul concludes, "For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends" (v. 18)

Paul sees that this 'need' to defend himself, by contrasting his ministry with that of these "false apostles" (11:13), as unnecessary and therefore, "foolishness" (v. 1). Yet, Paul acquiesces. Immediately after the sharp sarcasm of verse 1, verse 2 reveals Paul's deep-seeded love and devotion to both the Corinthian congregation and their groom, Jesus. These false apostles purported to have impressive credentials (vv. 21-23), be accomplished orators (v. 6) and having received "visions and revelations from the Lord" (12:1). But Paul sees through their 'smoke

and mirrors' charade. Their claims of superior knowledge on religious matters were actually just as cunningly deceptive as the serpent's entrapping words to Eve (v. 3). The Corinthians were entertaining the idea of adding religious (Jewish) practices to their faith in order to have assurance of their salvation. The looming result? They would find themselves devoted to Christ *and* to legalistic works. For Paul, and all true believers, their religiosity represents a "Jesus other than" (v. 4a) the one who uttered "It is finished" (Jn 19:30). As such, it is of a "different spirit from the one (i.e. a human attitude/disposition-NIV (c) 1984 or "the Spirit" (NIV (c) 2011) you received" (v. 4b) when you came to saving faith. Resultantly, it is an altogether "different gospel" (v. 4c)—unlike the true gospel of which Paul had to remind the Galatians. "Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ" (Php 2:16).

In the verses to follow, Paul addresses the two main attacks against him by the Judaizers. In verse 5, Paul introduces some biting sarcasm as he speaks against the claims of his inferiority in public oratory compared to these self-proclaimed "super-apostles" (See also 10:12) and their apparent effectiveness as "trained speakers" (v. 6a). Paul's retort: that may be true, "but I do have [inspired] knowledge" (v. 6b) of God's saving grace in/by/through Christ alone! He concludes, "we have made this perfectly clear to you in every way" (v. 6c).

The following paragraph (vv. 7-12) introduces his second line of defense against the accusations bent on undermining his credibility. During his original eighteen-month stay in Corinth, Paul refused to receive any financial support from the Corinthian congregation. The prevailing sentiment was that he did not request funds because even Paul knew his speaking skills were not worthy of monetary gain. Or, even more egregious to Paul's character, it was somehow construed that he didn't take money because of some lack of love/affection he had for them (vv. 10-11). But these assertions could not be further from the truth. As was Paul's 'policy' toward church plants, he refused to receive compensation so to "elevate you by preaching the gospel free of charge" (v. 7). To do this, Paul employed several strategies. First, he made tents to support himself (Ac

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18:3). Second, he received support (note his use of the term "robbed" to highlight the extent he went to in order to not burden the Corinthian congregation) from other churches (2Co 11:8). Third, he would do without (v. 9a) until "the brothers" (likely Timothy and Silas) would bring supplies to him (v. 9b). And undergirding all of this is the statement Paul communicated to them previously: "But we did not use this right [to request support]. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ" (1Co 9:12).

And it is on the back of this foundational conviction that he seeks to posit an indictment

against his critics. He will continue to not charge churches in whose company he resides *contrary to* those who are seeking to usurp his prior evangelistic work in Corinth in favor of financial gain (v. 12). "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workman, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve" (vv. 13-15).

### *The Message of the Passage*

*Beware of false teachers who pervert God's gospel of grace with crafty argumentation and ulterior motives, individuals that lead believers astray from a pure, whole-hearted devotion to Christ in right response to his finished work on the cross.*

## day **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 *living* questions to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answer to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

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# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

**chap. 10-12** "But why must he resort to boasting? Why not just expose the intruders for the frauds they are and leave it at that? Unfortunately, by the time the news reached Paul, the intruders had already made significant inroads at Corinth. This was largely because of the Corinthians' penchant for impressive credentials (vv. 21-23), fine-sounding words (v. 6) and extraordinary shows of power (12:12). So in order to win the congregation's ear, Paul must match the opposition point for point: *What anyone else dares to boast about...I also dare to boast about* (11:21)" (Linda L. Belleville, *2 Corinthians*, IVPNTC, 268-69).

v. 2 **pure virgin** "In ancient Near Eastern culture, parents typically chose a wife for their son and arranged for the marriage by legal contract. It was then the responsibility of the father of the bride-to-be to ensure his daughters' virginity during the betrothal period. As church founder, Paul pictures himself as the Corinthians' spiritual father, whose responsibility it is to ensure their faithfulness between (betrothal) and Christ's return (consummation), when the church will be presented as a pure virgin to her groom. But something now threatens to rob the Corinthians of their purity. Other suitors are on the scene, seeking to lure them away from fidelity to their betrothed" (Belleville, 270).

v. 3 **serpent's cunning** "That these false teachers are tools and emissaries of Satan, serpent-like in the versatility of their cunning, is implicit in what Paul says here, and is explicitly stated in verses 13 to 15. Like him, they appear in friendly and alluring guise, but like him again, they contradict the Word of God and lead their victims to spiritual disaster, described here by Paul as the corruption of their minds, that is, of their whole outlook, volitional as well as intellectual. They are distracted from the simplicity—that is, wholeheartedness, singleness of devotion, freedom from duplicity and from the purity with a faithful bride should maintain towards the one to whom she is betrothed" (Philip E. Hughes, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT, 376).

v. 6 **trained speaker** "In his earlier letter Paul had already exposed the incompatibility of artificial eloquence and human philosophy with the style and content of Christian preaching. As a minister of the gospel, the alluring tricks of oratory and the persuasive arguments of philosophy were not his stock and trade (see 1Co 1:18-2:5; Ro 1:21ff)" (Hughes, 381). The author continues, "It would, however, be a mistake to conclude from this that he was necessarily a poor or clumsy speaker. The contrast in its essence is between rhetoric *and preaching*. The former is superficial, artificial, formal, ephemeral, attractive to the ears, but unrelated to the depth of human need; the latter is direct, serious, earnest, directed to heart and mind and will, related to eternal issues . . ." (381-82).

v. 6 **knowledge** (Gk *gnosis*) "Paul knows, with the absolute certainty of the Holy Spirit's inner witness, that the only genuine gnosis is to be found in the revelation of Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:3)" (Hughes, 382).

v. 7 **free of charge** "Among the Greeks the accredited rhetorician or philosopher was a 'professional' man who charged for his services and lived by his art. For a speaker to refuse remuneration, or not demand it, would at once cause his listeners to suspect him of being spurious, a mere poseur, and his teaching worthless" (Hughes, 383).

v. 8 **robbed** (Gk *sylao*) A military term that means to "strip bare." "Paul is making a bold statement. His ministry at Corinth was at no cost to the Corinthians because he had, as it were, plundered other churches of their funds instead of expecting the Corinthians to support him. Quite likely it means that the Macedonian churches could not afford to give what they did but gave regardless" (Belleville, 279).

v. 15 **their end/actions** "With Hodge's observation that God, whose judgments are according to the truth, 'does not pass sentence...on the mask, but on the man,' and 'the end, i.e. the recompense of every man, shall not be according to his professions, not according to his own convictions or judgments of his character or conduct, not according to appearances or the estimate of men, but according to his works,' we are of course in complete agreement (cf. Mt 16:27; Ro 2:6); but we cannot help suspecting a *double entendre* in the terminology which the Apostle uses here—a satirical innuendo suggesting that these intruders, who vaunt themselves as 'ministers of righteousness' and lay such emphasis on the necessity of 'works' at the expense of free grace, will, as though by a kind of poetic justice, meet with an end 'in accordance with their works.' As they sow works, they will not fail to reap works!" (Hughes, 396).

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## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

As parents, we are in tune to things that our children should stay away from. Most of these things are blatantly evil and we know to protect our kids from the direct influence of the enemy. Some things, however, may appear fine for our kids but in reality or in excess they may lead to sin and bondage. These things may come in many forms but as our text says, “just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be lead astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. “ (verse 3) In my home, with my teenagers, Netflix is the culprit. The ability to have TV on demand is great! There are many old episodes of series that I love to go back and watch but the fact that we have entire seasons at one click of a button can mean trouble. In the summertime, my kids usually latch onto a particular series and spend their days cramming them all in before school starts again. While the series aren’t bad in themselves, they often lead to other less desirable behaviors. Primarily, they become extremely lazy! It’s our job, as parents, to monitor these activities (sports, gaming, TV watching) so that they don’t become stumbling blocks to our kids. I’m praying for you as you find a healthy balance that places God first in your lives.

### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 2Co 11:1-15

1. What does Paul think has happened to the Corinthian church?
2. Does Paul love the Corinthian church?
3. How does Satan masquerade?

### What Do You Think

What are some ways Satan tries to trick us? Can you think of something that seems good but can be bad under certain circumstances?

### What R U Going To Do

It’s almost time for school to start! This is a great time to come up with a good plan to read your Bible everyday. Sit down with your parents and make a plan. Post it on the wall! Need an idea? Start with the book of John.

### Core Comp

Authority of the Bible – I believe the Bible is God’s book that tells me what to believe and do.

### Memory Verse

No memory verse this week.

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed *Scrolls* \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child’s name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Parent’s signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.**  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

*6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).