

Let’s carefully examine the verse:

2 Corinthians 11:4 (ESV):

“For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.”

Understanding the Context and Meaning

At first glance, this statement might sound like Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to tolerate false teachers and their messages. However, this is not the case.

Paul’s tone here is ironically critical. He is expressing astonishment and disappointment that the Corinthians are so eager to accept false teachings. The phrase *“you put up with it readily enough”* is sarcastic—Paul is rebuking them for being too tolerant of heresy.

Why is this serious?

- Paul preached the true gospel of Jesus Christ, emphasizing salvation through His death and resurrection alone (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
- The “another Jesus” refers to false christs or distorted views of Christ, such as denying His true divinity, incarnation, or redemptive work.
- The “different spirit” contrasts with the Holy Spirit, meaning teachings inspired by demonic or deceptive spirits (cf. 1 John 4:1).
- The “different gospel” is any message that adds to or subtracts from the gospel of grace (Galatians 1:6-9).

Paul’s rebuke highlights the danger of compromising the gospel by tolerating teachings that distort the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Theological Significance

This passage teaches us several important theological truths:

1. The Uniqueness of the Gospel

There is only one true gospel — the message of salvation by grace through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). Any teaching that changes this gospel is a perversion (Galatians 1:7).

2. The Danger of False Teaching

False teachings often come cloaked in religious language but deny essential truths about Christ’s identity and work (2 Timothy 3:13). Accepting such teachings leads believers away from salvation (2 Peter 2:1-3).

3. The Role of the Holy Spirit

True believers receive the Holy Spirit, who guides into all truth (John 16:13). A “different spirit” represents a counterfeit spirit

promoting error and deception.

4. The Responsibility to Discern and Reject Error

Christians must be vigilant, testing all teachings against Scripture (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Tolerating false doctrine endangers the church’s purity and the souls of believers.

How Should We Respond to False Teaching Today?

1. Do Not Continue Listening to False Messages

Once we recognize a teaching contradicts Scripture, we must stop listening to or following it. For example:

- If a preacher denies that drunkenness is sin, we must reject that teaching because the Bible clearly calls drunkenness a sin (Ephesians 5:18).
- If a church promotes idol worship or syncretism, we must separate ourselves because the Bible forbids idolatry (Exodus

20:3-5).

Continuing to listen to false teachers is effectively “putting up with it”, which Paul condemns.

2. Publicly Expose and Warn Others

When false teaching spreads, it must be confronted openly. Paul commands us to contend for the faith (Jude 1:3) and to warn others of spiritual danger. This protects the community from being deceived.

Galatians 1:6–9 (ESV) gives a stern warning:

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.”

Conclusion

Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 11:4 challenge us not to be passive or tolerant toward false teaching. Instead, we must:

- Hold fast to the true gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Discern spirits and teachings carefully through Scripture.
- Reject and separate from any teaching or teacher who distorts the gospel.
- Protect the church by warning others and exposing error.

Let us stand firm in the truth of Christ alone for salvation.

Maranatha! The Lord is coming!

Share This Message

What Did Paul Mean When He Said, “You Are Well-Pleasantly
Enduring it”? (2corinthians 11:4)

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