

Necessary Boasting

2Corinthians 11:5-33

3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. 4 For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

Satan deceives, he does so to draw to his plan-**bait a hook**—Paul says those coming to you are like the Serpent enticing Eve...they come w/ a false gospel, counterfeit savior, unholy spirit Gal 1:6-12

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.....11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Judaizers...salvation by works **plus** grace is not salvation at all but works righteousness...your own version of salvation not Gods...He's not impressed. What they really are **11:13-15**.

And yet you accepted them, brought them into fellowship, you took the bait: hook, line & sinker. Believed their claim as super apostles, cut above the rest, superior to Paul w/ their clever speech, flamboyant sermons, showy personalities saying Paul is no preacher **10:10**

Paul points out the immaturity of church unable to discern spiritual things. He was w/ them in gentleness, soft spoken manner and yet he was judged as being weak, ineffective, w/o authority when compared to those who came in. Paul is jealous w/ Godly jealousy for their spiritual wellbeing.

5 For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles. 6 But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made this evident to you in all things.

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Contrast false apostles & himself...they might have greater speaking ability, better oratory, more professional, academic skills but they don't have my passion for Christ, love for the gospel, commitment to truth of word of God & heart for Corinthian believers.

Congregation gathered to celebrate 20 years of God's faithfulness. On the agenda was the reading of Ps 23 by oldest & most humble member. It came to pastors attention one of the congregation had invited a friend who was a dramatic Shakespearian trained actor. This prompted the pastor to ask him to use his talent & recite Ps 23--w/ dramatic flair, sweeping gestures, resounding eloquence his recitation was flawless--tremendous applause erupted as he finished & sat down. Pastor feeling awkward that the older parishioner was upstage in reading of the Ps asked the older saint if **he** would now read....the humble man told the pastor he was never as gifted as that man but the pastor insisted--so nervously he stood, fumbled then recited Ps 23. As he sat down, no applause only silence, some w/ tears in their eyes. The actor leaned over to his friend who brought him and said. "I know the Psalm but he knows the Shepherd".

Paul may have been unskilled in his delivery but He knew the Shepherd and they didn't. Paul was not impressed w/ reputations or persons **Gal 2:6** *But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.*

We should not get too impressed w/ ourselves or others. A package wrapped can be very impressive but what's inside is what matters.

Genuineness in ministry is a high priority. What that person is in the pulpit should be the same when out of the pulpit.

Greeks were skilled in rhetoric & philosophy which appealed to the baser instincts of the people. *Artificial eloquence?* Politician! Rhetoric can be attractive to the ear but having no spiritual depth.

Preaching should be directed to the heart, mind, will & concerned w/ content, not simply delivery—Seeking to bring a person face to face w/ their creator....' *he knows the Shepherd'* kind of teachings

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7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge?

TV evangelist turn gospel into business-multi-mill \$ business. To Paul it's sin....*Mexico city..give\$....Marriage conference*. False teachers had things upside down—proud-greedy charlatans were praised by the people & all the while this humble, giving congregation were looked down on. *W/o charge*-Phonies “if Paul be true apostle he'd be taking their money like us.”

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to serve you;

Support by other churches, benefited you. But in reality should have gone to their own needs & yet I used that money to support me for your sake. *Sometimes people from other churches want us to counsel them or give money*--and we do--but it's robbing our people of time & \$ doing what is the responsibility of the church that sent them to us.

9 and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.

When I had a need I didn't ask you...but missionaries from Macedonia supported me. *We have Pastors on mission field being supported for years so not a burden*. Corinthians needed to own the ministry.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be stopped in the regions of Achaia. 11 Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! 12 But what I am doing, I will continue to do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting.

Necessary boasting to counter those who take pride in appearances. 200 AD Paul short, stout, balding, bowl legs, hooked nose, bushy eyebrows touching in middle. Carnal man wants to be impressed w/ performance outward show, wow people, having ears tickled-no depth or substance. Trying to impress just looks phony.

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One who has God's authority never tries to prove it they just use it. Humbly downplay it. But when occasion arises, wolf among the sheep, sin in the camp, then authority shows itself--standing up for truth in face of opposition-- in your face authority to protect God's sheep.

False teachers crave status, to be recognized--regarded as Paul, eminent apostle, but they aren't although they boast as if they are.

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.

False ministers are like wolves among the flock. Not a shepherd who feeds the sheep but they eat the sheep. They build upon another man's foundation. Corinthians were Paul's harvest field—he founded and built them. Judaizers showed up to draw away to themselves and their false teaching...Cult mentality. Judaizers stole sheep & claimed them their own.

16 Again I say, let no one think me foolish; but if you do, receive me even as foolish, that I also may boast a little. 17 That which I am speaking, I am not speaking as the Lord would, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting.

True humility doesn't think high or low of self but truthfully, realistically. Let what they do speak for them. Don't draw attention to themselves but in this case Paul is compelled to speak as a fool because it is what moves them.

Jer 9:24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.—1Cor 1:31 that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." They prone to glory in men---compared to Judaizers Paul seemed insignificant.

18 Since many boast according to the flesh, I will boast also. 19 For you, being so wise, bear with the foolish gladly. 20 For you bear with anyone if he enslaves you, if he devours you, if he takes advantage of you, if he exalts himself, if he hits you in the face. 21 To my shame I must say that we have been weak by comparison. But in whatever respect anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am just as bold myself.

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Since you respond to those bragging about their credentials...so impressed by those who are impressed w/ themselves and hold it over you & you cower under them. *Enslave* thru legalism; *devour* by exploiting you financially; take *advantage* fool you like bird in snare, fish on hook—you took the bait. *Exalts*, loves to be honored, glory in themselves and not Christ. Hits face, verbal, physical abuse—Public embarrassment.

Pauls meekness viewed as weakness. Corinthians saw Judaizers--*in your face* arrogance as attractive, the power of God.

Wm Barclay 'The Corinthians had come to the curious stage of seeing in the very insolence of the Jewish teachers a guarantee of their apostolic authority'

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as if insane) I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

Speaking Hebrew language a plus which some in dispersion had forgotten—Israelites members of God chosen people living in land....Abraham direct descendant--heir of promise. How little do we know of Paul's trials—only ¼ of what's revealed here is in book of acts.

Rods – Birch wood...Roman law said it a crime to scourge Roman citizen. But violent mob & weak magistrates, scourge five times thirty nine stripes...Jewish punishment Dt 25 if exceed 40 Lictor break law and scourged himself so one less....men died under scourge.

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30 If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, 33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hand

False leaders would never boast in weakness, yet refreshing, Paul does & uses as his credentials—the bruises, scars & weaknesses.

What may be hard to believe to some especially critics I'm not lying God is my witness. **Demo eliminated 'so help you God' in swearing in ceremony**

At Paul's conversion Jesus told him how much he would suffer—basket thru window was first Acts 9:23-25 Went to Damascus full of himself, left humbled full of Christ. King Aretas escape 37-39 AD