

THE BASIS OF BOASTING

Introduction: Paul's situation. Enemies who questioned his apostleship and criticized him. They were evidently great boasters, (11:12-15). This passage in II Cor. chaps. 10, 11, 12 contains much irony as Paul too does a little

I. Foolish Boasting, II Cor. 11:16-29

1. v. 23, "I talk like a madman"- a man beside himself, clean out of his senses.
2. His ancestry, v. 22
3. His sacrificial service for Christ, 23-27.

II. Boasting of Weakness, 11:30-12:9

1. The narrow, humiliating escape at Damascus, vs. 30-33, his "matriculation in the school of persecution."

2. The Thorn in the flesh. 12:7-8

A. Nature of it not certainly known.

B. Purpose of it

(1). To keep him from being too elated

(2). For God's power to be perfected in his weakness.

3. Boasting in tribulations. Rom. 5:3

A. The privilege of suffering for Christ.

B. "It is easy enough to be pleasant

When life goes by with a song

But the man worth while is the man

who can smile

When everything goes dead wrong.

"For the heart is tested by trouble
And it grows with the passing years;
And the smile that is worth all the
treasures of earth
Is the smile that shines through
our tears."

I. Improper Basis of Boasting

1. In religious bigotry, Rom. 2:17, "You call yourself a Jew and rely upon the law and boast of your relation to God..."
2. In perishable riches, Ps. 49:6, "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches." None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."
3. In the uncertain future. Prov. 27:1, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."
4. In Moral Works.
 - A. Rom. 3:27, 28, Boasting excluded; we are Justified by faith apart from works.
 - B. Eph. 2:9, Not of works, lest any man should boast.

V. The Proper Basis for Boasting

1. "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord."
A. II Cor. 10:17
2. "God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - A. Glorifying in the cross.
 - B. Neither is uncircumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATION."