

2 Corinthians #26 (11:29 – 12:5)

I. Let us Look at 11:29- 33

- A. Verse 29 – Paul taught and lived bearing with the weaker brother
 - 1. Romans 15:1, 2; Romans 14:1; 1 Cor. 9:22; 1 Cor. 8:13
 - 2. We must also be indignant with those who take advantage of weak
 - a. Jesus was this way- Matthew 23:15; 18:6; 21:12 – 14
 - 3. All Paul's trials had helped him to learn to identify with weak
- B. V. 30- Paul is only going to boast in things that show his weakness
- C. V. 31- Paul takes another oath- World is so given over to lying
- D. Vs. 32, 33- Experience that would highlight Paul's weakness
 - 1. As first persecution would stick in Paul's mind – Act 9:23-25
 - 2. Enters in strength as persecutor- leaves in weakness as persecuted
 - 3. Talks about "descent" in basket before his "ascent" into 3rd heaven

II. Let us Look at 12:1 - 5

- A. V.1 – Paul knows nothing to be gained by boasting- but must go on
 - 1. Revelation is probably the result of receiving the vision (Gal. 1:11, 12)
 - 2. There are only a few actual visions recorded for us in New Testament
 - a. Acts 9:10-12- Ananias has vision telling him to see Paul
 - b. Acts 10:1-6, 9-16 – Peter & Cornelius get vision (Gentile reception)
 - c. Acts 16:9; 18:8-10 –Paul receives direction for ministry
 - d. Book of Revelation is apparently succession of visions
 - e. Visions are not that common- nor given for trivial matters
 - 1. And normally only given for benefit of person receiving them
 - f. So called "visions" have done great damage in church history
 - 3. Today with God's word we have no need for new revelation
 - 4. Note difference here in how man treats Paul and how God treats him
- B. V. 2- "A man in Christ" – Paul's way of humbly referring to himself
 - 1. Obvious in context he is referring to his own experience – V. 7
 - 2. Uses repetition in vs. 2&3-"knew a man" "in the body, out of the body"
 - 3. Timing of the revelation was 14 years ago- Can't be Damascus Road
 - a. Some think it was what he had in temple- Acts 22:17
 - b. Paul waited 14 years before telling- but it was still clear to him
 - 4. Paul refers to "third heaven" and "paradise" – probably synonymns
 - a. Luke 23:42, 43; Revelation 22:1, 2; Revelation 2:7
 - b. 3rd heaven is dwelling place of God-Perhaps 3 as a perfect number
- C. V. 4- oxymoron- "Heard unspeakable words" – Wasn't able to tell them
 - 1. Scripture is mostly silent on heaven – Lazarus said nothing

Conclusion: Notice the things that we are to boast about

- A. Paul boasts in something he had nothing to do with "Caught up"
- B. Paul boasts in himself "in Christ" – Favorite expression of Paul's
 - 1. Eph. 1:4- Chosen in Christ; Eph. 1:6- Blessed in Christ
 - 2. Eph. 2:10 – Created in Christ; Rom. 16:10- Approved in Christ
 - 3. Col. 1:28- "Mature in Christ" Col. 2:10- "Complete in Christ"
 - 4. I Cor. 15:18- Even after death we are "asleep in Christ"
- C. Before Christ we have nothing to boast about- Rom. 6:21
- D. Now boast about what we are in Christ. Phil. 4:13; Jn 15:5; 1 Cor. 1:31