

2 Corinthians 9:1-15 ESV

1 Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, 2 for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year. And your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3 But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be.

4 Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated--to say nothing of you--for being so confident. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.

6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

9 As it is written, "He has distributed freely, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.

13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission flowing from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 *Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!*

2 Corinthians 10:1-18 ESV

1 I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ--I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!-- 2 I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of walking according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.* 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

7 Look at what is before your eyes. If anyone is confident that he is Christ's, let him remind himself that just as he is Christ's, so also are we. 8 For even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be ashamed.

9 I do not want to appear to be frightening you with my letters. 10 For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account." 11 Let such a person understand that what we say by letter when absent, we do when present.

12 Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. 13 But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you.

14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ.

15 We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, 16 so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence.

17 "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 18 For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

2 Corinthians 11:1-33 ESV

1 I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! 2 For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

4 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.

5 Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. 6 Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things. 7 Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge?

8 I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. 11 And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! 12 And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do.

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

16 I repeat, let no one think me foolish. But even if you do, accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little.

17 What I am saying with this boastful confidence, I say not with the Lord's authority but as a fool. 18 Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. 19 For you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves!

20 For you bear it if someone makes slaves of you, or devours you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or strikes you in the face. 21 To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of--I am speaking as a fool--I also dare to boast of that.

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one--I am talking like a madman--with far

greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death.

24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; 26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; 27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? 30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

32 At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

2 Corinthians 12:1-21 ESV

1 I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a

man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. 3 And I know that this man was caught up into paradise--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- 4 and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.

5 On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. 6 Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me.

7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

11 I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. 12 The signs of a true

apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

13 For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong! 14 Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

15 I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? 16 But granting that I myself did not burden you, I was crafty, you say, and got the better of you by deceit. 17 Did I take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you?

18 I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps? 19 Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved.

20 For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish--that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.

21 I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned

earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.

2 Corinthians 13:1-14 ESV

1 This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 2 I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them-- 3 since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you.

4 For He was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but in dealing with you we will live with Him by the power of God.

5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you fail to meet the test! 6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

7 But we pray to God that you may not do wrong--not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed.

8 For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.

10 For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 12 Greet one another with a holy kiss. 13 All the saints greet you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Psalms 71:19-24 ESV

Your righteousness, O God, reaches the high heavens. You who have done great things, O God, who is like You? 20 You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth You will bring me up again.

21 You will increase my greatness and comfort me again. 22 I will also praise you with the harp for Your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to You with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to You; my soul also, which You have redeemed. 24 And my tongue will talk of Your righteous help all the day long, for they have been put to shame and disappointed who sought to do me hurt.