ARE YOU MEASURING YOUR LIFE BY THE WRONG STANDARD
2 Corinthians 10:7-18

JUDGING OTHERS BY PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND ELOQUENCE SHOWS LACK OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY (vss. 7-11)

- **Spiritual maturity is not demonstrated by how impressed you are with someone's appearance or abilities, but by how well you recognize the evidence of Christ at work in their life.**
- *"Humans do not see what the Lord sees, for humans see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart.""* (1 Sam. 16:7)
- **Be careful not to dismiss someone simply because they don't look, sound, or communicate the way you think they should. God's power is not limited by our preferences.**

COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS WILL HAVE YOU FALLING SHORT OF GOD'S STANDARD AND CALLING (vs. 12)

- **When you make someone else's life the measuring stick for your own, you may feel successful by comparison while completely missing what God has called you to become.**

EVERY CHRISTIAN NEED TO BE COMMITTED TO WHAT THE LORD HAS CALLED HIM OR HER TO DO (vss. 13-16)

- **God will not hold you accountable for fulfilling someone else's calling, but He will hold you accountable for what you did with the calling He entrusted to you.**
- *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do."* (Ephesians 2:10)
- **You don't have to accomplish what someone else is accomplishing to be successful in God's eyes. You just need to be faithful with what God has assigned to you!**

IT IS THE LORD WHO MAKES MINISTRY FRUITFUL SO HE ALONE SHOULD RECEIVE THE CREDIT AND THE GLORY (vss. 17-18)

- **The goal of Christian ministry is not to make our names famous, but to make the name of Jesus known.**
- *"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."* (1 Corinthians 3:6)
- **If people leave impressed with us but unchanged by Christ, we've missed the point!**
- **The greatest measure of your success is not how many people applaud what you've accomplished, but whether the Lord is pleased with how faithfully you've served Him.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- What criticisms were being made about Paul's appearance and speaking ability, and how did Paul defend the legitimacy and purpose of his authority? (vss. 7-11)
- What does Paul say about people who measure themselves by comparing themselves with others? Why does he describe this practice as lacking understanding? (vs. 12)
- How does Paul describe the boundaries and responsibilities of the ministry God assigned to him? What did he hope would happen as the Corinthians grew in faith? (vss. 13-16)
- What does Paul say about boasting and receiving approval? Whose commendation ultimately matters? (vss. 17-18)

Understanding

- Why are we often tempted to evaluate someone's spiritual maturity, credibility, or effectiveness based on outward appearance, personality, communication skills, education, or popularity?
- How can our personal preferences or expectations cause us to overlook or underestimate someone God is using?
- How can we create a church environment where people are valued for their character and faithfulness rather than their appearance, background, personality, or abilities?
- How can comparison distract us from recognizing the work God is doing in our own lives?
- What are some ways Christians can unintentionally adopt the world's standards of success rather than evaluating their lives according to God's Word?
- What are some practical ways we can discover and develop the gifts, opportunities, and responsibilities God has entrusted to us?
- Why is it possible for someone to begin serving God with sincere motives but gradually become more concerned about recognition, influence, appreciation, or personal success?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?