

2 Corinthians: Chapters 10-11

Opening Question: Discuss the boasting that is being done in this letter. Which groups are boasting and what is the motivation of each?

Key Takeaways:

1. “Flesh” and judging or walking “according to the flesh” in this letter means to be circumcised and keep the Law and is advocated by the non-believing Jews who oppose Paul’s gospel.
2. Paul contrasts the Spirit and the flesh throughout this letter, with Paul walking according to the New Covenant and the antagonists by the Old Covenant and Law keeping.
3. Paul explains that those who put their faith in the Law will be judged by the Law and will be found wanting.
4. In chapters 10-11, Paul returns to defending his gospel, explaining why he does what he does.
5. Paul only boasts in his ministry in Christ while the antagonists boast in themselves because they are Jews.
6. Paul explains that the antagonists use the wrong standard of comparison which leads to their boasting and self-elevation.
7. Paul’s concern is that the Corinthians will be deceived by Satan through these messengers who are bringing a false gospel to them which appeals to Law keeping.

Discussion Questions:

1. Together read 2 Corinthians chapters 3-5 and chapters 10-11 and discuss the connections you find. In what way is Paul explaining and defending his apostleship to the Corinthians in these chapters?
2. What is the historic situation or problem that caused Paul to write this letter? Why is it important to first understand what Paul was saying to them, then and there before applying the letter to our own lives? Is this difficult for you? Why or why not?
3. Reread 2 Corinthians 11:21-33. From what Paul says about his ministry of the gospel in verses 23-29, what weakness is he referring to in verse 30?

Practical Application:

1. Reread 2 Corinthians chapters 1-11. List the repeated language Paul uses and determine what Paul means by the words he has chosen.
2. Are there ways in which you may have misunderstood or misapplied 2 Corinthians in the past? If so, write down the verses that you have misunderstood and what you now understand them to mean.
3. What is the process for understanding how Paul's letter to the Corinthians (or any Scripture) relates to us today? Are you practicing reading well in order to first understand why the author wrote what he wrote to his original audience? That is what must come before application and theological implications. Is this difficult for you? Why or why not?

Closing Prayer:

Father, Thank You for the far-reaching impact of Paul's ministry. We are indebted to his obedience to proclaim the gospel despite the extreme hardship that he faced. May we too walk faithfully and endure well so that others may hear the gospel and place their faith in Jesus. Amen.