

MESSAGE NOTES:

2 Corinthians 12:11-24

¹¹ I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the “super-apostles,”^[a] even though I am nothing. ¹² I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles. ¹³ How were you inferior to the other churches, except that I was never a burden to you? Forgive me this wrong!

¹⁴ Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. ¹⁵ So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less? ¹⁶ Be that as it may, I have not been a burden to you. Yet, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you by trickery! ¹⁷ Did I exploit you through any of the men I sent to you? ¹⁸ I urged Titus to go to you and I sent our brother with him. Titus did not exploit you, did he? Did we not walk in the same footsteps by the same Spirit?

¹⁹ Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening. ²⁰ For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. ²¹ I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.

3 Foolish Smart Priorities: It is Foolish Smart

1. To Prioritize the Work of God (vv. 11-8)

2. To Prioritize Harmony in Relationships (vv. 19-20)

3. To Prioritize Sexual Purity Before God (v. 21)

STUDY GUIDE:

STEP ONE: Icebreaker (*Optional*):

- If animals could talk, which kind of animal do you think would be the most fun to have a conversation with?

STEP TWO: Prayer & Scripture reading

- Ask someone in your group to pray to open your time together.
- Ask another person to read **2 Corinthians 12:11-21**

STEP THREE: Discuss Questions

1. What was challenging, encouraging, confusing, or stood out most to you from this past weekend's teaching?
2. Go back and read **2 Corinthians 12:1-10**. According to Paul, why do you think he needed to become a fool in this situation? How do you suppose his foolishness was a good thing in this instance?
3. Look at verse 14 again. Where do you see evidence of Paul's heart for the people in the Corinthian church? Take a moment to consider your own life. What evidence could someone else find in your own life that would point to your heart for others?
4. Can you point to a few examples of how Paul displays genuine humility from the text? How do you think this attitude helped his message spread throughout the Corinthian church?
5. Paul is concerned about some of the behavior he fears is prominent in Corinth (verses 20 and 21). Why do you think he's so concerned about these specific behaviors? How have you observed your own sinful behavior damaging your own relationships?
6. How could growing into a deeper understanding of God's love for us help "move the needle" in terms of the way you live in community with others?

STEP FOUR: Prayer

- Ask someone in your group to close in prayer.