

Study 12

Read 2 Corinthians Chapter 12

SUMMARY

We find Paul compelled to continue his "foolish boasting". Coming to the issue of visions and revelations of the Lord, he describes "a man in Christ" (most commentators believe Paul has reference to himself) who fourteen years before had been caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words unlawful to utter. Paul would boast of "such a one", but in direct reference to himself he would only boast in his "infirmities", lest people think too highly of him (1-6).

Lest he be exalted above measure because of the abundance of revelations he had received, a "thorn in the flesh" (also described as a "messenger of Satan") was given to buffet him (that is, to keep him humble). When he asked the Lord on three separate occasions to remove it, the Lord's reply was that His grace was sufficient and His strength was made complete in times of weakness. This prompted Paul to take pleasure in his "infirmities" endured for Christ's sake (which I believe to have been the "thorn in the flesh"). For when he was weak, the power of Christ in him made him strong (7-10).

Paul's "foolish boasting" concludes with a mild rebuke for their compelling him to do it, for it is they who should have commended him. Indeed, while with them he demonstrated the "signs of an apostle" (signs, wonders, mighty deeds) that clearly showed he was not in anyway behind "the most eminent apostles". The only charge that could be brought against him? He had not accepted support from them like he had from other churches (11-13).

The remaining part of this chapter is filled with an expression of love and concern for them. He explains again why he will not accept support from them: like parents for their children, Paul will gladly spend and be spent for their souls. Neither he nor those he sent to them had taken advantage of them in any way, and have sought to do all things for their edification (14-19). Finally, he expresses his fear that when he comes the conditions will not be what he and they wish. He is fearful that there will be all sorts of strife, and that many of those who have sinned will not have repented (20-21).

Questions:

- 1) In spite of all of Paul's sufferings for the cause of Christ what is not expedient for him to do? (II Corinthians 12:1)
- 2) From whom did Paul receive visions and revelations? (II Corinthians 12:1)
- 3) To what place was the man Paul knew above 14 years ago? Give both names for this place. (II Corinthians 12:2-4)

4) Only who knows whether the man who was snatched up into the 3rd heaven (Paradise) actually happened or if it were a vision? (II Corinthians 12:2-3)

5) What was unlawful or impossible about these unspeakable words the man heard while in Paradise? (II Corinthians 12:4)

6) Give Paul's reason for restricting his glorying. Lest any man should what? (II Corinthians 12:6)

7) What was given Paul lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations? (II Corinthians 12:7)

8) This thorn in the flesh that Paul had acted as the messenger of whom? (II Corinthians 12:7)

9) This thorn in the flesh that Paul had buffeted him and kept him from being exalted how? (II Corinthians 12:7)

10) Tell what Paul thrice prayed for? (II Corinthians 12:8)

11) Quote God's answer to Paul's prayers for removal of the thorn in the flesh. (II Corinthians 12:9)

12) What sufficiency was assured Paul when he prayed for the removal of the thorn in the flesh? (II Corinthians 12:9)

13) In what is God's strength perfected? (II Corinthians 12:9)

- 14) Give the reason Paul most gladly would glory in his infirmities. (II Corinthians 12:9)

- 15) When does Paul say he is strong? (II Corinthians 12:10)

- 16) Who had caused Paul to become foolish in glorying? (II Corinthians 12:11)

- 17) In what was Paul behind the every chiefest apostles? (II Corinthians 12:11)

- 18) Which apostle was Paul behind? (II Corinthians 12:11)

- 19) The following list is signs of what which was wrought at Corinth. In patience, in signs, wonders and mighty deeds? (II Corinthians 12:12)

- 20) In what sense were the Corinthians inferior to other churches? (II Corinthians 12:13)

- 21) When Paul wrote the Corinthians he was ready to come to them the third time he was not seeking their possessions, but what was he seeking? (II Corinthians 12:14)

- 22) When Paul wrote the Corinthians on his third visit he would not “seek yours but you” in what relation does he illustrate himself? (II Corinthians 12:14)

- 23) Tell what Paul would gladly do for the Corinthians on his third visit with them? (II Corinthians 12:15)

- 24) It seems the more Paul loved someone the less they loved him. How was it? (II Corinthians 12:15)

25) Paul wrote the Corinthians he was crafty when he did not burden them (for wages) how had he caught them? (II Corinthians 12:16)

26) Give two individuals, besides Paul who walked before the Corinthians in the same spirit and steps. (II Corinthians 12:18)

27) Give 3 things Paul fears he will find in Corinth on his third visit that some have failed to repent of? (II Corinthians 12:21)

1) What are the main points of this chapter?

2) As Paul continues his "foolish boasting", what does he now come to? (1)

3) Where was the "man in Christ" taken? What did he hear? (2-4)

4) Of himself, in what would Paul boast? About what was he concerned? (5-6)

5) Why was Paul given "a thorn in the flesh"? (7)

6) How many times did Paul plead with the Lord to remove the "thorn"? What did the Lord respond? (8-9)

7) In what, then, did Paul choose to boast? Why? (9-10)

8) What were the "signs of an apostle" that Paul had done among the Corinthians? (12)

9) What did Paul do that some charged made the Corinthians inferior to other churches? (13)

10) Why would Paul continue not to be a burden to them? (15)

11) What was the motive behind all that Paul did for the Corinthians? (19)

12) What was Paul afraid might occur when he got to Corinth? (20)

13) What was Paul afraid of finding when he got to Corinth? (21)