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2 Corinthians

...while *you are* enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. 2 Corinthians 9:11

These words are connected in thought to the previous verse. Taken together, they read -

"Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have *sown* and increase the fruits of your righteousness,¹¹ while *you are* enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God."

Paul noted the multiplication of the seed in order to "increase the fruits of your righteousness." This meant that what they earned would be sufficient to be spread out to others in the doing of good deeds. In addition to that, he now adds in that not only should others prosper from their sowing, but that they should likewise be "enriched in everything." It is looking to an increase for them as well.

However, the increase to them again has the purpose of "all liberality." As they increase, they should become all the more charitable in their giving. The idea is that it is God who blesses and the blessings that we are given are not to be secreted away with no useful purpose in mind. Rather, they are to be shared so that others may be blessed as well.

Paul certainly has the recipients of the intended gift in mind. The saints in Jerusalem were in need and in the Corinthian's abundance there was a chance to

help that need. In this, it would cause "thanksgiving through us to God." God is glorified through the thanks of those who receive such assistance. In the end, it all came from Him and so praise and thanks should always be directed to Him for what He does for His people.

These verses obviously have to be considered in light of the human condition. There are those who have come on hard times. When this occurs, we should be willing to tend to them and help them out. This is the case with the saints in Jerusalem. There are also those who are simply unwilling to get up and help themselves.

It would be contradictory to think that someone who is unwilling to work should constantly receive what others have worked for. The premise here is that God blesses us to bless others. If God blesses someone through our efforts, then that person should realize where their blessing has come from and endeavor to follow in the same path. However, if they are lazy and unwilling to put forth their own effort, then they cannot be who the Lord is speaking of here.

These verses simply cannot be used to justify wealth redistribution to the indolent and worthless. They need to change their lifestyle, or they need to continue to wallow in the mud which they are unwilling to leave.

Life application: Today, think of someone who has fallen on hard times and think about how you can bless them in their need. Let them know that they are not alone in their trials, but that you are there with them. Such encouragement may be just what they need during their moment of darkness.

For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, 2 Corinthians 9:12

Paul, in describing the gift which is being gathered, had just mentioned that it is one "which causes thanksgiving through us to God." To explain this further, he

says, "For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints." In this, he uses the word *leitourgia* which is translated as "service." It is the basis for our word "liturgy."

In this sense, the giving of the gift is not just to be considered a beneficent act of humanity, but one of religious significance. This is evident from the second half of the verse. In supplying the desperate needs of the saints, the gift "also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God." Thus this verse is a fuller explanation of the words of the previous verse.

Another word to consider is translated as "supplies." Vincent's Word Studies explains the meaning of the word *prosanapléroó* -

"Lit., fills up by adding to. ... Supplementing what the saints lack. Through many thanksgivings. The need of the poor is filled, like an empty vessel, to the brim, and the supply overflows in the thanksgiving which it calls out. Thus Christian beneficence does a double work, in giving relief and in generating thankfulness."

The "double work" of Christian giving here is 1) taking care of the desperate needs of the saints in Jerusalem, while 2) producing many thanksgivings to God. As can be seen from this, there is a marked difference between the giving of believers and that of non-believers. God is glorified through such giving when it is done by His faithful people.

Life application: God is deserving of all praise and glory for the wonderful blessings He provides among His people. James says that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." As this is so, let us remember to give Him the thanks that He is due. It is right and proper to do so.

...while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal sharing with them and all *men*, 2 Corinthians 9:13

This verse is widely translated and debated over. Charles Ellicott notes that its construction is that "of a participle which has no direct grammatical connection with what precedes." It is a stand-alone thought. The words "through the proof of this ministry" are not clear concerning what is being referred to. Is it the service that is being provided or is it referring to the people who render the service?

Either way, the result is that the Jewish believers who will receive the gift will "glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ." They will see that the message of Christ has led to the Gentiles faith in Christ. In turn, they will understand that the message didn't just go into the ears and out again, but it sank down into their hearts, resulting in obedience to the teachings of the Lord.

This obedience is evidenced, as noted above, either in the gift which is made or in the willing hearts of those who gave the gift. In the end, they together form into a whole ministry which results in their "liberal sharing with them and all *men*."

Paul is making it clear that what is being evidenced is a willingness to be obedient to the precepts that come along with receiving the gospel. Further, their status as Gentiles does not affect their ability to truly commune with the Jewish believers they are ministering to. Instead, "...there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him" (Romans 10:12).

Life application: Though there are many cultures on the earth with many different traditions and ways of worshipping the Lord, if they are Christians, they are a part of the body and on an equal footing with all others. It is unrealistic to think that our personal form of worship is the only way to honor the Lord. Instead, He has called people out from all places in order to worship Him in spirit and in truth. The externals are far less important than what is going on inside the heart.

...and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. 2 Corinthians 9:14

The actual intent of Paul's words here is debated over, but what is certain is that the Greek is confusing. Albert Barnes gives the following analysis -

"On the grammatical construction of this difficult verse, Doddridge and Bloomfield may be consulted. It is probably to be taken in connection with 2 Corinthians 9:12, and 2 Corinthians 9:13 is a parenthesis. Thus interpreted, the sense will be, 'The administration of this service [2 Corinthians 9:12] will produce abundant thanks to God. It will also [2 Corinthians 9:14] produce another effect. It will tend to excite the prayers of the saints for you, and thus produce important benefits to yourselves. They will earnestly desire your welfare, they will anxiously pray to be united in Christian friendship with those who have been so signally endowed with the grace of God.'"

Because of the difficult nature of the Greek, this seems to be in line with what Paul was trying to say. He was taking these other verses and tying them together with the words of this verse. One way or another, an effect would be produced in the hearts of the people in Jerusalem towards the Gentile churches who had given the gift. They would come to understand that the Gentiles, like them, had received God's exceeding grace. With this knowledge, they would then glorify God. This is actually what occurred as well, as is documented in Acts at the time that the gift was presented to them -

"And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸ On the following *day* Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord." Acts 21:17-20

Life application: There are portions of Scripture which are complicated, but understanding or misunderstanding them is because of our limitations, not God's. We need to take the Bible as a whole and allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. In

doing so, there will always be a satisfactory explanation for that which is at first difficult to understand.

Thanks *be* to God for His indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15

To end the chapter, and also the topic of the collection of the gift, Paul breaks into a sudden and emotional proclamation of thanksgiving. This is not at all unique to his writings as he elsewhere suddenly breaks forth in praise and thanks to God. It is as if Paul contemplated the words which he had penned and couldn't restrain himself at certain points. And not only was it an internal expression, but one which he simply had to share with others as well.

The word for "thanks" is the same as the word elsewhere translated as "grace." Even in the previous verse it is used this way. There it said, "...and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you." Scholars debate what this "grace" is intended to be. Is it the Holy Spirit? Is it Christ Jesus? The answer seems likely to be the same "grace" which he just mentioned. He turned the thought around from "the exceeding grace of God in you" into "thanks."

If this is so, then it refers to the entire process of salvation which was initiated through their "confession to the gospel of Christ" which was mentioned in verse 13. Because of their salvation which came from this confession, and because of their obedience to it, all things were working out for a good and common goal among the saints. In other words, it all comes back to the work of Jesus Christ in them. He is the gift of God through which all other things find their right and proper place.

And this seems certain by the use of the word "indescribable." The Greek word from which this is translated is used only here in the New Testament. It comes from two separate words. The first is a negative prefix and the second is a word which means "to declare." In other words, there are simply no words which could fully express this gift. This is certainly the case concerning the Person and work of

Christ. He is the indescribable Gift which is the basis of every other good thing which comes down from the Father of heavenly lights.

Life application: If you are in the mood to break out in praise or thanks to God, don't hold it in. You might explode. Let it out!

Now I, Paul, myself *am* pleading with *you* by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. 2 Corinthians 10:1

In beginning a new subject, we read an emphatic expression, "Now I Paul." It is an expression he uses several times elsewhere in his epistles to indicate particularly strong emotions. After this emphatic introduction, he says to the Corinthians that he is "pleading with *you* by the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

The intent is that in his plea he desires not to be thought of as an authoritarian ruler, but to rather be an emulation of the Lord. Those in Corinth, like all people who are saved, were granted gentle mercy. Instead of a rod of iron, they received meekness and tenderness. Paul's plea to them is in hopes of emulating that example rather than requiring him to be harsh towards them.

To show that he can be either, he says while still speaking about himself, "...who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you." This will be further explained in verse 10, but the intent is that the impression of those in Corinth is that Paul's attitude when present with them was not one of a strong leader. Rather, they looked at him as timid and not capable of enforcing discipline.

However, when he was absent from them he was bold toward them. Though not stated yet, this implies that his letters represented him in his absence as to who he would be when present. And so the thought this verse is conveying is as follows

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- 1) He is pleading with the Corinthians in the spirit of Christ, which is one of "meekness and gentleness." This is in hopes of the Corinthians responding to his appeal without him requiring him to be bold and harsh.
- 2) He has demonstrated a lowly, humble attitude among them in the past and so they would expect him to be the same when he returns.
- 3) Even if his letters are bold, it is just a letter and his actions won't match his words.
- 4) Therefore, they have nothing to fear concerning him being bold and harsh.

Life application: We should remember Paul's careful explanation of himself here and realize that just because an individual displays an easygoing character, it may be that there is a point where that will change. Moses was noted as the most humble man ever, but he also demonstrated boldness when needed. The lesson is that we should never "push the buttons" of another and assume that their gentle demeanor is all we will see of them.

But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 2 Corinthians 10:2

Paul just noted that his attitude and demeanor is considered "lowly" when he is present, but "bold" when he is not. In this, the assumption was made that when he came again, he wouldn't be bold when it was necessary. Now, to correct that deficient assumption, he shows that he can be bold when necessary. The implication is that he has restrained from being so in the past, but the future may be different. This is evidenced by the word "but."

Contrary to their perceptions, Paul begs for them to consider his authority and his ability to exercise that authority. He does this by saying, "...that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some." There is an obvious tension between Paul and some in the congregation. He has restrained from calling them out, but should they continue with their negative attitude towards him, he fully intends to highlight it and bring his authority against it.

And the cause for the tension is that those he is referring to "think of us as if we walked according to the flesh." Albert Barnes notes that -

"They suppose this; or, they accuse me of it. By the word "us" here Paul means himself, though it is possible also that he speaks in the name of his fellow apostles and laborers who were associated with him, and the objections may have referred to all who acted with him."

Whether this is only Paul who is being accused of this, or whether it is he and his associates, some were saying that he or they "walk" according to the flesh. The word "walk" is an idiom for one's way of life and conduct. Therefore, they are saying that Paul (and others possibly) were not walking appropriately, but were living their lives in one way while speaking and teaching in another.

Paul will show them in the coming verses that "walking in the flesh," which we all do while living in this fallen human body, is not the same as "warring in the flesh." There is a distinction to be made and it will correct these troublemaker's faulted accusations against him.

Life application: Unfortunately, even the most humble elder or pastor must at times take off the gloves and speak firmly and forcefully in order to silence those who would disturb the fellowship. Paul's example here, along with many others in Scripture, shows that when a heavier hand is necessary, it is to be brought out and used.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

2 Corinthians 10:3

It is of note that Paul says, "For though we walk in the flesh..." Walking in the flesh is a term used several times to indicate living in a worldly way. For examples, see 2 Corinthians 1:17, Romans 8:12-13, 1 Corinthians 1:26. And yet, the same term is also used to show that we are simply temporal beings with limited human

capabilities and with all of the associated frailties. A few such verses are Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:22-24, and even 1Timothy 3:16 which is speaking of Christ.

Therefore, unlike the previous verse, here he is not equating a "walk in the flesh" with sin and worldliness, but with the frailties we possess which can lead to sin and worldliness. In this body of infirmity, "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh."

The Greek word from which the idea of waging war comes from speaks of a soldier executing his duties in battle. This is a common theme that Paul uses in his writings. He will continue with this line of thought and explain it in the verses ahead. There is a real battle going on, and it is a battle in which we are engaged. However, it is not a battle that is waged on a worldly, fleshly level. Rather it is one that is waged in the Spirit.

This battle is spoken of by Paul in Romans 8 -

"So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. ¹⁰ And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness." Romans 8:8-10

Life application: We cannot deny that we are in fallen bodies and those bodies have frustrating limitations, some of which cause us to stumble. But God gives us more grace. We have been saved by the blood of Christ and are already seated with Him in the heavenly places. When we stumble, let us get up, brush ourselves off, and get back into the battle. We are in a war until we are called home. Therefore, as soldiers under authority, we need to conduct ourselves according to the word of our Leader.

For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 2 Corinthians 10:4

The words of this verse show us that along with our war noted in the previous verse which is "not in the flesh," the weapons that we use are not material (or carnal) weapons. Rather they are spiritual. They are described by Paul in several places of the New Testament such as -

"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation." 1 Thessalonians 5:8

An even fuller description is found in Ephesians 6:11-16. In these verses, he uses real, tangible things and equates them to spiritual concepts. It is with these spiritual things that we do indeed battle against the forces of evil. Starting in this verse, and for the next couple of verses, he will explain how these weapons are focused, beginning with, "for pulling down strongholds."

This is a military concept where someone who is in a defensive position has their fortress pulled down from around them so that they can be easily attacked and overcome. A beautiful example of this concept is found in 2 Samuel 17 -

"Therefore I advise that all Israel be fully gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, like the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. ¹² So we will come upon him in some place where he may be found, and we will fall on him as the dew falls on the ground. And of him and all the men who *are* with him there shall not be left so much as one. ¹³ Moreover, if he has withdrawn into a city, then all Israel shall bring ropes to that city; and we will pull it into the river, until there is not one small stone found there." 2 Samuel 17:11-13

It should be noted now that just because Paul is speaking of a spiritual battle which uses spiritual implements to obtain its purposes, this does not exclude Christians from entering true battles with real weapons. This type of sleight of

hand use of a verse to mean something not intended is common and it is inappropriate. Just because Christians are in a spiritual war does not mean that they are limited only to spiritual battle.

Life application: There is a spiritual battle which rages around us. It is as real as any other type of warfare, but it involves matters of the highest importance. We must be ready at all times with the weapons of our battle and employ them in faith against the unseen enemies that come against us. Take time to read Ephesians 6:11-17 and think on Paul's use of terminology concerning our spiritual warfare.

...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:5

Scholars assign the "casting down arguments" to the "we" of verse 3 and not the "weapons" of verse 4. This is based on the agreement of the participle between the two thoughts. In other words, "...we war casting down arguments." One use of our spiritual warfare is that we are to have enough knowledge of the source of our faith to challenge those who reason against it.

There are many who deny the Christian faith entirely, there are those who defend their own misguided religions, and there are heretics within the faith - all of these are opponents who need to be challenged. Their arguments need to be cast down and crushed by the superior knowledge and revelation which comes from the Christian faith.

Likewise, we are to cast down "every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." Charles Ellicott notes that, "The noun probably belongs, like 'stronghold,' to the language of military writers, and indicates one of the rock fortresses ... which were so conspicuous in all ancient systems of defence."

The opponents of Christianity set themselves up as if in a mountain fortress that cannot be reached by their enemies. They shoot their weapons, intending to destroy the argument of Christianity, but we have the true "knowledge of God" on our side and therefore our attacks can and will prevail when they are properly engaged in the battle. The enemy feels exalted, but by standing on the truth of God, his arguments will be cast down. The sentiment is found in Job -

"They are exalted for a little while,
Then they are gone.
They are brought low;
They are taken out of the way like all *others*;
They dry out like the heads of grain." Job 24:24

Finally, the waging of our warfare is essential for "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Paul continues with military terms. After pulling down the strongholds and storming the high things which attempt to exalt themselves, captives are taken. Jesus referred to exactly this when He presented Himself in the synagogue in Nazareth -

"The Spirit of the LORD *is* upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives
And recovery of sight to *the* blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." Luke 4:18, 19

However, the intent is not the literal, physical destruction of the enemy, but to bring them into a new stronghold, one which is "to the obedience of Christ." If their arguments fail, it means that they were ineffective. Anyone who would cling onto an ineffective argument (and there are many) are perverse and will face God without Christ. But for those who are captured by obedience to Christ, they will

face God in a completely different way. They will be free from the destruction that the enemies of Christ will face.

Life application: There is only one proper way of waging the war which Paul writes of. It is to know Jesus Christ and to be able to defend our faith in Him. And the only way to do that is to read, study, and comprehend the truths which are found in the Bible. When we do this, we will be fully prepared to engage in the battle with those who oppose His message.

...and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

2 Corinthians 10:6

Paul finishes this thought with the continued use of a military metaphor. When an enemy is subdued and the military has gained control over their foe, there are inevitably rebels who still want to continue the fight by attacking the conquerors. They may sneak in and kill one at a time, or they may disrupt supply lines, or even attack directly against the headquarters of the victor.

Though there is little chance of success, they remain disobedient to the terms of surrender in hopes of reigniting the battle and somehow overcoming those who vanquished them. This is the case in the world today. Satan has been vanquished, and yet he continues to send his minions out in hopes of somehow thwarting Christ's victory.

This spiritual warfare is what Paul is referring to and there is a time when the obedience of the saints is fulfilled and the church age will come to a close. At that point, all disobedience will be punished. Those who have attempted to overthrow the victory of Christ will themselves be overthrown. This is what is coming in the book of Revelation and just prior to His return to dwell among His people during the millennium.

Life application: Though the victory is already accomplished in Christ, there are those who harass and attack His people. This will continue, but all such harassment will end in futility, and all of it will be punished at the right time. Until then, we should pray for those who are our enemies and do our best to witness to them of the truth of Jesus Christ.

Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he *is* Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ's, even so we *are* Christ's. 2 Corinthians 10:7

It should be noted that this sentence, like other clauses in this section of Paul's writing, could be taken in one of three ways.

- 1) As an interrogative - "Do you look at things?"
- 2) As an imperative - "Look on things...", or
- 3) As an indicative - "You look on things..."

Scholars disagree on what his intent is, and so translations vary. No matter which structure Paul intended, the idea of the "outward appearance" would be fully understood by his audience. It was an idiom then as it is now. Jesus uses it in John 7:24 -

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

Paul wants them to know that the outward appearance is not always reflective of the inward man. There were those who claimed to be "of Christ" noted in 1 Corinthians 1:12. They claimed to be His followers and that their allegiance was to Him alone. However, the word of God and the instruction for the people who had not seen Christ came through the teachings of the apostles. Therefore, if they rejected what the apostles said, then how could they be "of Christ?"

Likewise, there were those who may have seen Christ and heard his ministry and yet were not commissioned by Him. They may have been of the same area that He came from, of the same tribe as Him, etc. Thus they could claim a special affiliation with Him. It would be enticing to follow such a person. This happens today when people follow the teachings of a Jewish person because they are Jewish, regardless as to whether they actually teach the Bible correctly or not. "Oh they can speak Hebrew. They must be super religious and all-knowing." It is an incorrect and dangerous way of pursuing one's religion.

The list could go on and on - fine orators, seemingly Spirit-given gifts of healings, tongues, or miracles, etc. could lead people to say, "I am of Christ." The Christian world is besieged by such people today and many of them are charlatans. To counter this, Paul says, "If anyone is convinced in himself that he *is* Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ's, even so we *are* Christ's."

How is one to tell? It all must go back to the commission of the individual by Christ. If they were commissioned by Him, then the others who were also commissioned could testify to their apostleship. Paul received such a testimony on several occasions. Now, with the apostolic era ended, there is one and only one way to determine the truth of the matter - the Bible. It is our sole inspired witness to the Person and work of Jesus Christ. It is also the source which reveals the apostolic teachings on Him.

Our consideration as to whether we are Christ's or not must come from this word. Have we trusted the God of the Bible who is revealed in the Person of Jesus in the Bible? There is a logical way to know. God has not left our faith up to emotion and He has not left it up to any teaching of man. Instead, He has given us the Bible for us to know that our faith is properly directed.

Life application: Paul, who is the apostle to the Gentiles, has his apostleship substantiated in writing in the Bible's pages. We don't need to guess whether his words are inspired or not. Instead, we can know with absolute assurance that they are. When he says that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus who is

revealed in the Bible, we should take that at face value. Don't be led astray by those who would add in works to what Christ has already done. Have faith that His work is sufficient to save.

For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed—
2 Corinthians 10:8

Paul uses the word for "boast" 36 times in his letters, but 20 of them are in 2 Corinthians. It appears that he almost has an insecurity complex which has built up in him concerning his dealings with the Corinthians and he is working through that by the use of this word.

It is as if they questioned his authority when he was the one who established the church among them. Time and time again, he returns to this word to show that that he and the other apostles do have the authority necessary to conduct themselves as the Lord's representatives.

Again, he turns to the idea of boasting - "For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority." In the previous verse he wanted them to consider his and his associates' position "in Christ." Now, he brings in not just that they are "in Christ" but that they have "authority" within the body to exercise discipline, establish doctrine, etc. In 1 Corinthians 5, he directed the church to take certain actions concerning a person who was engaged in sexual immorality. It wasn't a request, but rather a directive.

Elsewhere he writes of both commands and exhortations. And the reason for this is that the authority is that "which the Lord gave us." It was granted by the Head of the church and therefore the church was to understand this. But in a gentle note, he relays that the authority is "for edification and not for your destruction."

What is obvious is that if the Lord is building a church, He will assign people to positions of authority to build it up, not destroy it. If a person starts a company, his goal is to make it successful. He wouldn't hire someone to tear apart the company, but to direct it so that it will grow and flourish. Anything less would be contrary to the end-goal of the company. The same is true with the church.

Because of this, in his boasting Paul says, "I shall not be ashamed." If he has been granted authority, and if he uses that authority to edify - just as would be expected - then he would have a right to boast in the authority he possessed. And this wouldn't be a haughty, self-directed boasting, but one which was in satisfaction for having proved faithful to the One who established him in the position in the first place.

Life application: In our walk with Christ, we all have opportunities to lead. Every Christian has the chance, for example, to lead someone else to Christ. That is an authority which has been granted to any saved believer. If we use that authority, then is it wrong to boast in it? The answer is, "No." If it is proper boasting, then it is acceptable. Later in this chapter, Paul will show us that when we glory, it should be in the Lord. If our boasting is directed to Him, then it cannot be wrong.