

# 2 Corinthians 11:16-33

Boasting in the weakness of the flesh



# Preparing for the foolishness of fleshly comparisons (11:16-21)

- ❑ Paul is not promoting the foolishness of fleshly comparisons that have become commonplace in the Corinthians church.
  - ❑ Fleshly standards are the standards of fools.
  - ❑ A good number (“*many*” – verse 18) are embracing the fleshly standards of the false apostles.
    - ❑ 2 Corinthians 10:12b
- ❑ Verse 19 – Many place themselves above the Apostle Paul feeling that adhering to the standards of the super apostles puts them on a higher plain.
- ❑ Verse 20 describes the way the super apostles treated their underlings in the church.
- ❑ Verse 21a – Paul sarcastically contrasts his conduct with the super apostles.

# The Areas of Comparison (11:21b-33)

## Comparing similarities (11:21b-22)

- ❑ These false apostles made much of their Jewishness.
- ❑ As a Christian Apostle, Paul never claimed his Jewishness gave him any superiority.
- ❑ Romans 9:4–5
- ❑ Philippians 3:4b–8
  - ❑ Christians don't make much of fleshly qualities.
  - ❑ Followers of Jesus take joy in making much of Jesus.

# The Areas of Comparison (11:21b-33)

## **Comparing trials and suffer (11:23-27)**

- ❑ The appeal of Paul's opponents to be servants of Christ is viewed by them as a mark of superiority.
- ❑ Paul acknowledges he is privileged to be a servant of Jesus, making much of the One he serves and suffering various forms of hardship as a result.
  - ❑ The false teachers in Corinth claim they deserve special treatment and if anyone suffers it should be the Corinthians in order to keep their leaders comfortable.
  - ❑ The false apostles know the way of ease and Paul knows the way of the cross.

# The Areas of Comparison (11:21b-33)

## Comparing distinctions (11:28-29)

Verses 28

- ▣ Being far from self-absorbed, Paul is passionate in his others-oriented gospel concern.

Verse 29

- ▣ Paul does not see the weak as those more exploitable or deplorable.
  - ▣ Romans 15:1-2

# The Areas of Comparison (11:21b-33)

## **Comparing a heart of humility with a heart of pride (11:30-33)**

- ▣ Paul will speak of the weaknesses of his life that give an opportunity for gospel grace to shine.
- ▣ Paul headed to Damascus an arrogant Pharisee with much power and authority.
- ▣ Paul's escape from Damascus was nothing spectacular.

# Questions of Examination for Communion

- ❑ How does the reality of the others-oriented humility of Jesus Christ strike you?
- ❑ How does His humility compare to the others-oriented humility of your life?
- ❑ When you share stories of your life and walk with Jesus, is it a communication of impressive accomplishments or humble dependence?
- ❑ Are the difficulties of life bringing you to place of desperation?
- ❑ Are you bearing with the failings of the weak and looking for ways to build them up?

# 2 Corinthians 11:16-33

Boasting in the weakness of the flesh

