

2 Corinthians 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

Analysis

For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience (ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν, τὸ μαρτύριον τῆς συνειδήσεως)—kauchēsis (καύχησις, "boasting") is Pauline terminology; martyrion (μαρτύριον, "testimony") and syneidēseōs (συνειδήσεως, "conscience") indicate inner conviction bearing witness. Paul's confidence rests on internal integrity, not external success.

That in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation—haplotēti (ἀπλότητι, "simplicity/sincerity") and eilikrineia (εἰλικρινεΐα, "purity," lit. "tested by sunlight") contrast with sophia sarkikē (σοφία σαρκικῇ, "fleshly wisdom").

Historical Context

Written around AD 55-56 from Macedonia after Paul's 'painful visit' to Corinth (2:1). The Corinthian church faced challenges to Paul's apostolic authority from 'super-apostles' (11:5) who valued eloquence over cruciform ministry. Paul writes to defend his ministry, explain his changed travel plans, and restore relationship with this fractious congregation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. Can I claim 'testimony of conscience' as my boast, or does conscience accuse me of duplicity?
2. How does conducting myself 'by grace of God' versus 'fleshly wisdom' look different practically?
3. What relationships require me to demonstrate 'more abundantly' the sincerity I show others?

Interlinear Text

Ἡ γὰρ καύχησις ἡμῶν αὕτη ἐστίν τὸ μαρτύριον τῆς
G3588 **For** **rejoicing** **of our** **this** **is** G3588 **the testimony** G3588
G1063 G2746 G2257 G3778 G2076 G3142

συνειδήσεως ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐν ἀπλότητι καὶ εἰλικρινείᾳ
conscience **of our** **that** **by** **simplicity** **and** **sincerity**
G4893 G2257 G3754 G1722 G572 G2532 G1505

θεοῦ οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ σαρκικῇ ἀλλ' ἐν χάριτι θεοῦ
godly **not** **by** **wisdom** **fleshly** **but** **by** **the grace** **godly**
G2316 G3756 G1722 G4678 G4559 G235 G1722 G5485 G2316

ἀνεστράφημεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ περισσοτέρως δὲ
we have had our conversation **by** G3588 **the world** **more abundantly** **and**
G390 G1722 G2889 G4056 G1161

πρὸς ὑμᾶς
to **you-ward**
G4314 G5209

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 2:13 (Parallel theme): Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

2 Corinthians 2:17 (Sin): For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:10 (Witness): Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

Hebrews 13:18 (Parallel theme): Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

Acts 23:1 (References God): And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

Acts 24:16 (References God): And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

Job 13:15 (Parallel theme): Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

1 Corinthians 15:10 (Grace): But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

2 Corinthians 8:8 (Sin): I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

2 Corinthians 4:2 (References God): But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.