

2 Corinthians 10:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

Analysis

But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us (ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος οὗ ἐμέρισεν ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς μέτρου)—Ametra (ἄμετρα, "unmeasured/boundless things") contrasts with metron (μέτρον, "measure") and kanon (κανών, "rule/standard"). Kanōn originally denoted a measuring rod or boundary marker. Paul's "sphere" (the Gentile mission, Gal 2:7-9) was divinely assigned, not self-assumed. He boasts only within God's assigned field of labor.

A measure to reach even unto you (ἐφικέσθαι ἄχρι καὶ ὑμῶν)—Corinth fell within Paul's divinely-appointed sphere. Ephikesthai (ἐφικέσθαι, "to reach/arrive at") proves Paul's legitimate authority over the Corinthian church—he founded it (1 Cor 3:6, 10, 4:15), unlike the false teachers who invaded another's field (v. 15-16).

Historical Context

Roman surveying established clear property boundaries using measuring rods (kanōn). Trespassing violated law and honor. Paul applies this: God assigned spheres of ministry, and invading another's field demonstrates covetousness and lack of divine calling. The Jerusalem council confirmed Paul's Gentile mission (Acts 15, Gal 2:7-9), establishing his legitimate authority over Gentile churches like Corinth.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How can you discern God's specific calling for your life versus attempting ministries outside your gifting or sphere of influence?
2. What does Paul's respect for divinely-assigned boundaries teach about avoiding comparison, competition, or encroachment on others' ministries?
3. When have you been tempted to 'boast of things without measure'—taking credit for work you didn't do or authority you don't possess?

Interlinear Text

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐχὶ εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα
we But not of things without our measure boast
G2249 G1161 G3780 G1519 G3588 G280 G2744

ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος οὗ ἐμέρισεν
but according a measure of the rule which hath distributed
G235 G2596 G3588 G3358 G3588 G2583 G3739 G3307

ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς μέτρου ἐφικέσθαι ἄχρι καὶ ὑμῶν
to us God a measure to reach unto even you
G2254 G3588 G2316 G3358 G2185 G891 G2532 G5216

Additional Cross-References

Romans 12:6 (Parallel theme): Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Romans 15:20 (Parallel theme): Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

Ephesians 4:7 (Parallel theme): But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

1 Peter 4:10 (References God): As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Romans 12:3 (References God): For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

1 Corinthians 12:11 (Parallel theme): But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

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