

2 Corinthians 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

Analysis

Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. Paul finally drops pretense—"such an one" is himself—but immediately pivots from the vision to his astheneiai (ἀσθενείαις, "infirmities," "weaknesses"). The contrast is stark: he will boast about the man caught to paradise (because that glorifies God's sovereign grace), but regarding his present self, he boasts only in **infirmities**.

This isn't morbid self-deprecation but theological precision: the Damascus Road Paul who received blinding revelation is dead (Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ"). The resurrection-life Paul now living bears Christ's death in his body (4:10-11). Therefore boasting in present weakness—not past visions—displays gospel power: Christ's strength perfected in human frailty (v. 9).

The grammar matters: of such an one (genitive) versus of myself (genitive)—same construction, opposite content. Paul glories in what God did to him (passive rapture) but not in what he is (weak apostle), except as that weakness showcases divine power.

Historical Context

The Corinthians, influenced by Greco-Roman rhetoric valuing strength, eloquence, and impressive credentials (1 Corinthians 1:22, 2:1-5), struggled with Paul's weakness theology. The "super-apostles" likely boasted in their spiritual

experiences as proof of superiority. Paul's strategic boasting in weakness rather than the paradise vision inverts all worldly and religious values, establishing the cruciform shape of Christian ministry.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Why does Paul distinguish between glorying in the passive revelation ("such an one") versus his present active self ("mine infirmities")?
2. How does boasting in weaknesses rather than spiritual experiences redefine what constitutes valid apostolic credentials?
3. In what ways might contemporary Christians boast in past spiritual highs while avoiding present weaknesses that would display Christ's power?

Interlinear Text

ὑπὲρ τοῦ τοιούτου καυχήσομαι ὑπὲρ δὲ ἐμαυτοῦ οὐ
Of G3588 such an one I will Of G228 yet myself not
G5228 G5108 G2744 G5228 G1161 G1683 G3756

καυχήσομαι εἰ μὴ ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις μου
I will G1487 G3361 in G3588 infirmities mine
G2744 G1722 G769 G3450

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 2:3 (Parallel theme): And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

2 Corinthians 11:30 (Glory): If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

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