

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 *astheneiais* (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

Psalms 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	καυχῆσομαι	ὑπὲρ	δὲ	ἑαυτοῦ	οὐ
Of	G3588	such an one	I will	Of	yet	myself	not
G5228		G5108	G2744	G5228	G1161	G1683	G3756
καυχῆσομαι	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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