

Proverbs 27:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

Analysis

Let another praise you, not your own mouth; 'a stranger, and not thine own lips.' The Hebrew 'halal' (praise) should come from others, not self. Self-praise is prideful and lacks credibility. Reformed theology condemns pride and self-promotion, valuing humility instead. Proverbs 27:21 notes that we're tested by praise—handling it rightly requires grace. Jesus exemplified this, not promoting Himself but being exalted by the Father (Philippians 2:9). Our works should speak for themselves; self-commendation undermines credibility and reveals pride.

Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures valued reputation established by others. Self-promotion was seen as shameful, while praise from respected community members carried weight. This cultural norm reflected godly wisdom.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Do you seek opportunities for self-promotion, or do you let your work speak for itself?
2. How do you respond when others praise you—with humility or pride?
3. What does it mean to seek glory from God rather than self-promotion?

Interlinear Text

מְהַלֵּלִים	וְרַ	אֵלָא	פִּי יְכֹ	וְכָרִי	אֵל
man praise	Let another	H3808	thee and not thine own mouth	a stranger	H408
H1984	H2114		H6310	H5237	

שִׁפְתָיו:
and not thine own lips
H8193

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 10:18 (Parallel theme): For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Proverbs 25:27 (Parallel theme): It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.

2 Corinthians 10:12 (Parallel theme): For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

2 Corinthians 12:11 (Parallel theme): I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.