

Romans 15:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

Analysis

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God (ἔχω οὖν καύχησιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, echō oun kauchēsin en Christō Iēsou ta pros ton theon)—Kauchēsin (boasting, glorying) is a key Pauline term. He emphatically rejects human boasting (3:27, 4:2, Eph 2:9) but affirms boasting en Christō Iēsou (in Christ Jesus)—boasting that acknowledges all achievement as Christ's work through the apostle. Ta pros ton theon (the things pertaining to God) refers to his sacred ministry just described (v. 16). Paul can take legitimate satisfaction in his apostolic work precisely because he recognizes it as Christ's accomplishment, not his own.

This models healthy Christian confidence: neither false humility that denies gifting nor proud boasting that claims credit. Paul simultaneously affirms real ministry effectiveness while attributing all success to Christ working through him. This is gospel-shaped confidence.

Historical Context

Paul's discussion of boasting engages with both Jewish concerns (boasting in Torah observance, cf. Rom 2:17, 23) and Greco-Roman honor culture (boasting in achievements, status, patronage). Against both, Paul insists on boasting exclusively in Christ—a theological revolution that relativized both Jewish and pagan value systems.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between godly 'boasting in Christ' for your ministry effectiveness versus sinful boasting in your own abilities?
2. What ministry accomplishments can you gratefully acknowledge as 'Christ working through you' rather than your own achievement?
3. How does 'boasting in Christ' for spiritual fruit protect against both pride and false humility?

Interlinear Text

ἔχω	οὖν	καύχησιν	ἐν	Χριστῷ	Ἰησοῦ	τὰ
I have	therefore whereof	I may glory	through	Christ	Jesus	G3588
G2192	G3767	G2746	G1722	G5547	G2424	
πρὸς	θεόν·					
in those things which pertain to	God					
G4314	G2316					

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 5:1 (References God): For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

Philippians 3:3 (References Jesus): For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Hebrews 2:17 (References God): Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

2 Corinthians 12:1 (Glory): It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 7:4 (Glory): Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

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