

June 12, 2022
II Corinthians 11:16-33
“In My Weakness”

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Toleration takes root when believers lack strong convictions. Scripture teaches that the road of life the believer is traveling is the “narrow way.” Not all roads lead to heaven.

The ability to discern true spiritual leaders from false is vital to the health of the church. Failure to exercise discernment opens the door to the enemy allowing Satan’s savage wolves to ravage God’s flock. See **Acts 20:25-31**. This is exactly what had happened to the church in Corinth. It can happen in any church that drops its guard.

Humility is not very popular these days. It is seen as weakness. In the life of a believer the quality of being humble is a desirable one. Someone wrote, “In fact you might say that humility follows God like a shadow.” Read **Micah 6:8**. This dovetails with the teaching of **Psalm 91**, check it out. Where do you abide?

We know what coveting, lust, and anger produce; a self-centered person who has no place for God in his/her life. They promote evil and end in dishonor.

So, what can being humble produce? God hears them when they pray, they are the objects of His affection. Pretty good, wouldn’t you say? C. S. Lewis described humility like this, it is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less!

Paul’s only boast was in his weakness. The once bold Saul was now the weak Paul. He went out to demolish the “Way” and along the way was converted. By his conversion he went from being the hunter to the hunted. He had come boldly with human credentials, he would slip away under the cover of darkness soon after. His credentials now were that of a “fisher of men” who walked in his humility in the power of God.

PAUL’S FOOLISH BRAGGING EXAMINED

First, Paul went after their Jewish credentials with these words, “so am I.” **Vv 21-22**

Second, Paul illuminates specific hardships. Paul lists not accomplishments but apparent defeats, not power, weakness, sustained only by God. **Vv 23-25**

Third, Paul speaks of dangers he had faced. It would seem that EVERYONE was after him! **Vv 26-27**

Fourth, Paul speaks of the daily pressure he experienced as he shepherded the churches. This burden was oppressive. **Vv 28-29**

Fifth, Paul pauses to reflect on his words so far. His opponents focused on their power, not Paul, he had focused on his weaknesses. **Vv 30-31**

Finally, Why does Paul end this pericope with this thought? Perhaps it was because he was reflecting on how he had marched off to Damascus with credentials in hand and feeling his

oats; only to later be found escaping under the cover of darkness in a basket, let down over the wall. What a contrast! A new “creation.” He came in raging and “slipped” away through his enemies hands. **Vv 32-33**

Application:

“When I came to you, brothers and sisters, announcing the mystery of God to you, I did not come with brilliance of speech or wisdom. I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. My speech and preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not be based on human wisdom but on God’s power.”

I Corinthians 2:1-5 CSB.