

## Let the One who Boasts, Boast in the Lord

### Small Group Follow-up Study for 2 Corinthians 10:12-18

#### ***RE-READ***

12 Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. 13 But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. 14 For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. 15 We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, 16 so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence. 17 "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 18 For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

#### ***RECAP***

Notice how often the root word "boast" appears in our text: six times in seven verses! Add to that the two times we hear about people "commending themselves" and the theme of our text is clear. Paul is in the midst of defending his apostolic authority. There are still a minority of Corinthian believers who have been swayed by the false apostles into doubting the legitimacy of Paul's apostleship. So Paul has to present his resume, as it were, and stack his boasting against that of his opponents; all the while making sure not to sin in the process. Yikes! That's a tall order. But Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, masterfully accomplishes this mission and, in the process, provides us with a helpful lesson in appropriate boasting. He tells us, first, what constitutes bad boasting, namely commending ourselves after measuring and comparing ourselves with one another; second, what the boundaries for appropriate boasting are, namely refusing to boast in the labors of others and boasting only with regard to the area of influence that God has assigned to you; and third, he tells us where appropriate boasting finds its basis, namely "in the Lord."

#### ***RESPOND***

1. What caught your attention from Sunday's sermon? What are you still thinking about/mulling over?
2. Have you ever thought of "humble bragging" before? How might it be different from regular boasting? How might it be the same? Compare and contrast what the world says about boasting with what the Bible says about boasting. Where do you see boasting show up around you? How can you respond to false boasting? Should you move away from it or engage it by modeling the right kind of boasting? How can you do that in a winsome way?
3. How have the Corinthians transgressed the boundaries of boasting? Why has Paul's boasting stayed within the bounds?
4. Boasting in the Lord is worshipfully exulting in the fact that we personally know the worth and the works of the Lord. All speech is an opportunity to do this very thing. How does Jeremiah 9:23-24 help us see this reality? Why is it vital for our spiritual health that we boast well (in the Lord)?
5. Assess your boasting. When, how, and how much do you boast in the Lord? When, how, and how much do you boast in yourself? Given our discussion tonight, what sort of things should we be praying for ourselves and for our church?