

## The Benefits of Inadequacy

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

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### I. Christianity Has Marvelous Features

**A. Though boasting does not do any good, Paul had a solid ground for his boasting. “*It is not expedient* for me doubtless to glory. *I will come to visions and revelations* of the Lord.” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:1)**

**B. Christianity is rooted in truth and simultaneously surrounded by thoughtful consideration. “*All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.* all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” (1 CORINTHIANS 6:12)**

**C. While God dealt with Paul supernaturally, Paul never treated these revelations or experiences casually or presumptively. “And *I went up by revelation*, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, *but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.*” (GALATIANS 2:2)**

**D. Just because something is supernatural does not guarantee it is right or appropriate. “But *though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*” (GALATIANS 1:8)**

**E. Paul then recounts a believer’s experience with heaven. “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (*whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell.* God knoweth;) such an one *caught up to the third heaven.* And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) *How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:2-4)**

**F. The only thing which actually matters in Christianity is faith. “For *in Jesus* Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but *faith which worketh by love.*” (GALATIANS 5:6)**

### II. If He Wanted To Boast. Paul Would Boast Another Way

**A. Paul did not mind giving credit; accepting credit was another matter entirely. “*Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not* glory, but in mine infirmities.” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:5)**

**B. Avoiding false expectations and distractions is important for serious Christians. “For *though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool*; for I will say the truth: but *now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.*” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:6)**

**C. Even though experience with the supernatural is wonderful, it does not rank with Scripture. “For *we have not followed cunningly devised fables*, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.* For he received from God the Father honour and glory, *when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.*” (2 PETER 1:16-19)**

D. Any deviation from the Biblical gospel originates with antichrist. “And **every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God**; and this is **that spirit of antichrist**, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” (1 JOHN 4:3)

### III. God Helped Paul Practice Humility

A. God protected Paul from getting a big head. “And **lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations**, there was given to me **a thorn in the flesh**, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, **lest I should be exalted above measure.**” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:7)

B. Paul earnestly tried to free himself from the pain without success. “For this thing **I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart** from me. And **he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness**. Most gladly therefore will **I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:8-9)

C. Paul came to cherish the doctrine that a believer’s weakness displays God’s grace and power. “Therefore **I take pleasure in infirmities**, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, **in distresses for Christ’s sake**: for **when I am weak, then am I strong.**” (2 CORINTHIANS 12:10)

D. Christians grow into the joy of PROVIDENCE; God is a better provider than believers can be. “Not that I speak in respect of want: for **I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content**. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. **I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**” (PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13)