

**“PAUL’S FOOLISH BRAGGING”**  
**2 Corinthians 11:16-33**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The false teachers were egotistical and had an overinflated view of themselves. They were braggarts and filled with pride. They definitely lacked humility! Jesus said, **“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:29.** To confront the bragging of the false teachers, Paul will do a little bragging of his own, not of successes, but of his weakness and defeats! He wants to shame his opponents into silence! In this passage we will see an apology, ancestry, achievements and application.

## **NOT HOW JESUS WOULD DO IT**

At the very beginning of this discourse Paul apologizes for what he must write. He admits that it is not how Jesus would do it, but Paul does it foolishly. While the Corinthians accept the bragging of others, Paul will also do it, too. Paul notes in **v. 20** five things that the Corinthians tolerated from false teachers: 1) They were enslaved to do works. (“Health and Wealth” teachers do the same today); 2) They financially devoured the church; 3) They took joy away from them; 4) They exalted themselves to make the Corinthians feel inferior; and 5) They hit them, either physically or verbally. The Corinthians were insulted and humiliated!

## **HIS WEAKNESS**

Compared to what the false teachers did, Paul noted that he seemed weak in comparison! Paul began his foolish bragging with his ancestry. Paul grew up with the same Hebrew background as they did. He also noted this in **Philippians 3:5-7**. Paul, however, considered this all to be *a loss* in the knowledge of Jesus!

Rather than brag about what he did, such as church planting, healing people or preaching the gospel, Paul listed what he suffered for the body of Christ. Paul labored to exhaustion, was beaten, stoned and shipped wrecked, went without, fasted and suffered discomfort.

Paul’s deep concern was for the churches. This was an emotional weight on him. He was aware of all the issues in Corinth which would keep him up at night. He was a spiritual father to them as to other churches. In doing this, Paul may have seemed weak! What is notable, however, is that Paul’s chief characteristic is endurance or grit which is surely the result of God’s grace in his life!

## **CONSIDER**

Here are some life applications to consider based on this passage:

- 1) Paul loved the Lord through all of his trials. With your trials, will you be mad at God?; 2) Even in a life of faith, life is still full of trouble; 3) You have to admire Paul. He was reluctant to talk about his problems. Let’s not wallow in self-pity! 4) In spiritual leadership we need to identify with others and sympathize with others; 5) Let’s consider Paul’s statement of life. He wanted *Jesus* to be great and remembered for what *He* brought Paul through! *Do you want people to remember what God has done for you?*

*All scripture references are NKJV*

## **PRAY.....**

- \* That the Lord would unite us in prayer for a spiritual awakening in New York State!
- \* That our evening of Thanksgiving in November would be a true time of worship for our body.
- \* That our Christmas Cantata would affect the hearts of all who see and hear the message of the Savior.