

UNREPEATABLE REVELATIONS AND AMAZING OUTCOMES

2 Corinthians 12

Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ²I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows—⁴was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. ⁵On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to *my* weaknesses.

2 Corinthians 12:1-5 NASB

- Paul had visions and revelations of the Lord.
 - He was caught up or ‘snatched away’ to the third heaven.
 - What he saw and heard was inexpressible...things too holy to be repeated and no permission from God to share it.

¹⁷Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. ¹⁸For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, ¹⁹in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. ²⁰And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, so that I would not build on another man’s foundation; **Romans 15:17-20 NASB**

⁶Should I desire to boast, I shall not be a witless braggart, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I abstain [from it] so that no one may form a higher estimate of me than [is justified by] what he sees in me or hears from me. ⁷And to keep me from being puffed up *and* too much elated by the exceeding greatness (preeminence) of these revelations, there was given me a thorn (a splinter) in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to rack *and* buffet *and* harass me, to keep me from being excessively exalted. ⁸Three times I called upon the Lord *and* besought [Him] about this *and* begged that it might depart from me; ⁹But He said to me, My grace (My favor and loving-kindness and mercy) is enough for you [sufficient against any danger and enables you to bear the trouble manfully]; for *My* strength *and* power are made perfect (fulfilled and completed) *and show themselves most effective* in [your] weakness. Therefore, I will all the more gladly glory in my weaknesses *and* infirmities, that the strength *and* power of Christ (the Messiah) may rest (yes, may pitch a tent over and dwell) upon me! ¹⁰So for the sake of

Christ, I am well pleased *and* take pleasure in infirmities, insults, hardships, persecutions, perplexities *and* distresses; for when I am weak [in human strength], then am I [truly] strong (able, powerful in divine strength).

2 Corinthians 12:6-10 AMPC

- Due to the surpassing greatness, the exceeding greatness of the revelations, Paul was given a thorn in the flesh...
 - He got this ‘thorn’ to keep him from exalting himself...he got this ‘splinter’...a hindrance from the enemy.
 - This splinter is an answer to Paul’s praying...this weakness helped him keep from putting the wrong level of value on his accomplishments.
 - He asked the Lord three times and it would not leave...
 - “God answer that His grace is sufficient for Paul. “My grace is sufficient for you...for power is perfected in weakness” (v9)... “That the strength and power of Christ may pitch a tent over and dwell upon me!”
 - Paul was a tent maker!

¹¹ Now I have been [speaking like] a fool! But you forced me to it, for I ought to have been [saved the necessity and] commended by you. For I have not fallen short one bit *or* proved myself at all inferior to those superlative [false] apostles [of yours], even if I am nothing (a nobody). ¹² Indeed, the signs that indicate a [genuine] apostle were performed among you fully *and* most patiently in miracles and wonders and mighty works. ¹³ For in what respect were you put to a disadvantage in comparison with the rest of the churches, unless [it was for the fact] that I myself did not burden you [with my financial support]? Pardon me [for doing you] this injustice!

2 Corinthians 12:11-13 AMPC

- Paul tells them that he should not have to ‘recommend’ himself...rather they should be commending him...as he is a genuine apostle.
 - He loves them and he is ‘the real deal’ and not less than the self-proclaimed apostles they are dealing with...
 - And you didn’t have to support me financially...sorry!
- The signs of a genuine apostle performed among them, miracles, wonders, and mighty works.

God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. **Hebrews 2:4 NASB**

It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. ²He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they *said* to him, “No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” ³And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they *began* speaking with tongues and prophesying. ⁷There were in all about twelve men.

⁸And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading *them* about the kingdom of God. ⁹But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Miracles at Ephesus

¹¹God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹²so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. ¹³But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, “I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.” ¹⁴Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵And the evil spirit answered and said to them, “I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” ¹⁶And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Acts 19:1-16 NASB

- Paul’s life proved his authority and power.

¹⁴Here for this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for children are not responsible to save up for *their* parents, but parents for *their* children. ¹⁵I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? ¹⁶But be that as it may, I did not burden you myself; nevertheless, crafty fellow that I am, I took you in by deceit. ¹⁷*Certainly* I have not taken advantage of you through any of those whom I have sent to you, have I? ¹⁸I urged Titus *to go*, and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take any advantage of you, did he? Did we

not conduct ourselves in the same spirit *and walk* in the same steps? ¹⁹ All this time you have been thinking that we are defending ourselves to you. *Actually*, it is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ; and all for your upbuilding, beloved.

2 Corinthians 12:14-19 NASB

- Paul's whole purpose has been to grow them up spiritually...for the sake of their edification and up building. Now he is returning for the third time.

²⁰ For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps *there will be* strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances; ²¹ I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced. **2 Corinthians**

12:20-21 NASB

- This is some list! Strife, jealousy, anger, tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances. (v20)
- Those who have sinned in the past and not repented...impurity, immorality and sexuality which they have practiced.
 - See **1 Corinthians 5:1-8**