

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Boasting in Grace

Speaker:

Doug Plank

Date:

August 9th, 2026

Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 12:1–10

Theme: When we must boast, boast in the power of God's grace.

Introduction: No one likes the cockiness of a boastful man, and yet boastful men were taking control and doing harm in the Corinthian church. Paul addresses the bragging super-apostles by engaging in boasting himself. Left with no other choice, Paul resorts to boasting in the grace of God to expose the folly of the boasting of the super-apostles.

Second Corinthians 12:1–10 can be taken in three parts:

1. The emptiness of boasting (1–6)

- Paul insists he "must go on boasting" because boasting was the language the Corinthians understood.
- Paul is uncomfortable with boasting, but he points to his apostolic title much like a Doctor must occasionally refer to his credentials.
- Paul detests human boasting because it easily becomes dislocated from the glory of God.
- Being a true disciple of the Lord means suffering in weakness, not boasting in strength.

2. The thorny "set up" of weakness (7–9a)

- Paul sees a miraculous vision from God, but is given a "thorn" to keep from becoming conceited.
- It is the Lord who is the source of this affliction—God prescribes the painful thorn in his flesh.
- Paul does not share what the thorn is, but it is true that for all who follow Christ, thorns must come our way.
- God's purpose for thorns in the believer's life is that the all-sufficient grace of God would become more manifest in our lives.

3. Boasting in grace alone (9b–10)

- Paul's thorn (and our thorns) are a means to a far greater end—they lead to the grace of God in Christ.
- Grace is the purchased favor of God that comes through Jesus Christ.
- Grace produces supernatural endurance to obey Christ in everything God ordains, and it is entirely sufficient.

Questions:

1. Where do you find yourself boasting in your strength rather than your weakness?
2. How does the truth that God is sovereign over all things strike you? What does it mean for your current trial, affliction, suffering, etc?
3. What "thorns" has God sent your way? How is God using them to manifest his grace in your life?