

What Is A Fool To You?

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Okay, we're going to go to second Corinthians, and we're going to attempt to look at a small section of two Corinthians, chapter twelve, verse eleven through 13.

We learned in Sunday school this morning that walking in the spirit is walking with Jesus, not how well you walk. And when you take, having had children, there's the age when they're two years old and you're walking with them by the hand, right? And they seem to always trip, but you have them by the hand, and when they fall, what do you do? Do you kick them on the ground when they fall, start criticizing them, make them feel ugly or bad? No, walking in the spirit is not how well you walk, it's who you're walking with.

If you're walking with Jesus, you're walking in the spirit. You're not walking in the spirit dependent on how well you're walking. Just as a child walking with their father, it's not dependent on how well they walk, but who they're walking with. Okay, we're going to be in chapter twelve of Colossians or second Corinthians. Excuse me.

And this is a section I need a lot of help with. I feel it's important. It's something that's a lot of times, at least in my reading, has been skipped over, and I hope to do a decent job looking at it. So I'm just asking for your prayers in it with me, that it would be a fruitful time together. Okay?

So let's go ahead and read it, and then we'll pray. So, two Corinthians, chapter twelve, verse eleven through 13. I have become a fool in boasting. You have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended by you, friend. Nothing was I behind the most

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eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong. So would you just pray with me? Oh, Father, first of all, I would like to confess my own weakness, o Lord.

Lord, but walking in this way, Lord, it is walking with you. So we just give you this time, or we'd like to just ask for understanding in your word, Lord, for the benefit, Lord, of our relationships with our children, with our wives and husbands, with our employers and employees, father, with our government, with our church, Lord, we just ask that we gain the full benefit of walking in your plan. I just ask in Jesus name. Amen. So we here see, starting off that Paul has driven, has been driven or been compelled to act like a fool.

So I'd just like to open it up to you. What is a foolish person like? No names. We're not asking for names. We're just character.

Character. What is a fool to you? We have different examples, lots of scriptures in proverbs talking about fools. But to you, what is a fool? A foolish person.

Say it again. Okay. No judgment. Okay. All right.

Destructive, Lawrence.

Okay. Don't listen. Right. Okay. The fool said in their heart, right.

No one else. Stupid. Stupid. Okay. All right.

What's that? I still hear you. Oblivious, right? Hitting their head on something over and over again and not knowing what it was. Oblivious.

Well, Paul has been driven to a point of foolishness, but it's for a purpose. He has gone into an area in which he is boasting. A fool is recognized in his boast. They boast about

things. There are things that foolish, foolish people boast about that they should not.

Fools boast about their own strength. That's not a smart thing to boast about. Fools boast about their own resources, their own intelligence, their own looks, the money they have stored up. They boast in certain things that are foolish. Paul is driven to boast about himself.

He would not normally be talking about himself or lifting up certain qualifications that he has, but he's been driven to do it because there are other people who are claiming to be apostles who are coming into a church that he started and attempting to draw people away from the truth that is in Christ after a different gospel. And so Paul is trying to show these individuals, these Corinthians, that there is a difference between them and the way I acted. There is a difference between following Jesus Christ in the way that I have said and where they are trying to talk to you. So in one sense, he was trying to point out to them the depravity of this kind of teacher. But the second thing, he was lifting himself as an example to show what a biblical authority is like.

So he has become foolish in a sense, boasting of his own qualifications in the hope that they would recognize that they were following people without qualifications. Okay? So he has been driven to this point of talking about his own life. Normally, we don't see Paul talking about himself, but he's been driven to this point for that reason.

I have become a fool in boasting. It says, but you have compelled me. There's a reason. In the next part of the verse, it says, for I ought to have been commended by you. For in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

I'm going to use this to talk about biblical authority. There are biblical. Different biblical authorities that exist in the Bible. What are the different sources or kinds of biblical authority that we have mentioned in the Bible? Anyone can answer that.

What are the different kinds of authority that we have?

We're talking about some and we meet on Thursday and we're talking about some of them. What are the different kinds of authority that there are? Okay. The authority of

scripture. Absolutely.

The authority of government over. Over us. Absolutely. Parents have authority over children. Any other ones?

Spiritual leaders. We have apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. Right. And yeah, husbands and wives. A different level of authority.

Right. And within all of these levels of authority, they exist for a reason. Right. Authority does not exist to make certain people feel good. It's not.

So they get to put a star on their chest and a hat on their heads and stripes on their shoulders and strut around and have other people, Jesus talks about this kind of authority that dress up in certain kind of clothes. They love the greetings in the marketplace to be called by others, teacher and rabbi. This is the kind of people. But this is not the reason for the structure of biblical authority. There is a different reason that biblical authority exists.

Rather than just giving someone an ego trip, there is an actual reason for biblical authority. It doesn't take long in a business, in a home, in a family, in a workplace, in a military organization, in a government to recognize that without authority not only does not much good happens, but you see a lot of bad happen quickly. Authority exists for a reason. Biblical authority is there in the Bible because there is a reason for it. Some people call Christianity this machoistic thing where in some sort that somehow men are exalted and giving some sort of title, but there is an actual reason for biblical authority that exists.

And we're going to touch on that today. And some of the foundation for that authority, why it's there, where does it come from? It says, for I ought to have been commended by you. This does not mean that he should have been puffed up, but there was an actual reason that, that they should have recognized his biblical authority. That is this because that is where the most forward momentum comes from, is when biblical authority is in the correct proportions, in the right environment.

No further forward momentum happens than in a situation where biblical authority is correctly understood and practiced in your relationship with your children. If we started off at the very lowest point, the fastest that organization of parents to children, the furthest and fastest and most focused that relationship can go is when biblical authority is put in practice. It says to your children, it shall be well with you and you shall have a long life. I don't think there's any individuals who start off with a newborn and think, you know, my best plan for you is to leave you with the curse destroyed and dying early. I think all of us have some sort of hope that the children that we bore, those people that we know are going to go far, last long and do lots.

It is our position as parents to be the individuals who bless them with a structure of authority in which they honor their parents. In the same way it is the biblical standard, but authority in which a husband recognizes that by the washing of the water of the word, by love, he trains his wife to respect him. It is the duty of a wife in order to train a husband to love her, to respect him. These are the kind of authority, and by doing so, that structure moves the farthest, the fastest, and accomplishes the most. It is a place of blessing.

But here we see that Paul is talking to these individuals in the structure of a church authority. He is saying that as an apostle, there should have been a level of respect and that you showed me that would have caused the church to move forward faster. Everyone understands that there is a degree of going out and learning by hard knocks that you're going to learn eventually you're going to learn. You trip enough, you hit your head enough, you have enough pain, you're going to learn. But everyone understands that that's not the best way to learn.

Everyone understand that God puts the solitary in a family. He puts them in a structure where there are elders and individuals with different gifts for the benefit of those people who are under that structure in order that they may attain a level that would never have been possible on their own. He puts us around people who care about us for the purpose of us moving further and faster than we ever could have by ourselves. And without recognizing that biblical authority over us. We are the ones who lose out.

We are the ones that lose out in every type of relationship, from children to their parents, from husbands to wives, within the church, within businesses and within the government. The goal is for us to succeed and be blessed and to move forward. When we move outside that biblical authority, you and I come out from the underneath of an umbrella of protection and fall under the pain that this world sends on those who are not under God's protection. I've said it a lot of times, but when Moses was leading the children out of Egypt, he said, there's going to be a hailstorm. Jer was in Texas, and he said there was hail the size of quarters.

I was like, man, that's a big hail. He said, you did not want to go out into it. It hurt, right? But Moses said, there's going to be a hailstorm. It said, all of those who feared the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses took their servants and their animals and brought them undercover.

Those who didn't fear Moses word, the Lord's word, at the hand of Moses, left their servants and their animals out in the field, and a hailstorm came, such as never has been, and killed whoever was not undercover. So biblical authority is that cover for us, that protects us from the danger that is there. It propels us forward.

There needs to be. We're going to skip this a second. There needs to be some reasonable basis for this authority. It is not right for an individual to come in and just say they are an authority. Correct?

Anyone and lots of people are saying, I am a certain kind of authority and are drawing people away after them. But Paul says, no, there was a basis for the authority that I had. In verse twelve, it says, truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance. These are the signs of an apostle. It's interesting that in scripture that the only individuals from my recollection we see having the ability to perform these kinds of signs were the apostles accomplished among you with all perseverance in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Paul's saying, look, these are the kind of things that demonstrated that I had a level of spiritual authority. It also would be the case for an evangelist or a pastor or a teacher.

They would need to have some sort of basis for saying that they had that level of authority under you. There needs to be some way in which they have actually acted with perseverance in that role before they could have that biblical authority over a person. So we see that there is signs that accomplished what he claimed to be, and we're going to go into the next time I share this kind of authority and how it acts.

But back to what gives a right to a person to have biblical authority. We live in a culture right now that is not just trying to change the rules. They are trying to change the standard on which the rules rest upon. There is a fundamental, a foundational shift and how we think. And so I'm going to try to bring us back to what I see Paul saying here back in verse eleven, it says, for I ought to have been commended by you, friend.

Nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

Just to read that again. For in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. There is a. Let's see. There is a background or a foundation upon which biblical authority rests, and there is also one on which it does not rest.

We are in a culture in where we are seeing authority, biblical authority, being undermined in every avenue, from marriage to the home with children to government to church, is being eroded partly because, or maybe fully because the foundation itself has been eroded. There is a claim that individuals are based on authority because of their value.

I'm going to turn to a scripture in Colossians, Philippians. Excuse me.

We're trying to find out on what kind of individual does biblical authority, authority rest on what type of a platform is there that needs to be built in order for biblical authority to have the most security, the most forward reaching momentum? Is there a foundation that is dangerous for biblical authority to rest on? Is there a foundation where it's more secure and more stable and leads to greater results? In chapter two of Philippians, verse five, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God. That is his title.

That is authority equal with God. He didn't think it robbery. It wasn't a stretch of imagination for him to say that I have the same authority with God. I just like to let you know that in Christianity, God sits on his throne alone. No one's there with him.

In front of him, everything is on his knees in front of God. But Jesus shares that throne with God, shares the same resources of God, shares the same power of God, and is therefore God himself, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God. That was his title put in verse seven, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of man, of men, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Here we're going to look at biblical authority. What is the foundation it rests on?

If you, as an individual, and we all are, have some sort of biblical authority in your own life, where does it come from? Excuse me?

We live in a culture in which we say that we're all equal, that everyone has the same rights, that we all have the same worth, and as a result should have the same authority. But this is saying that our authority. I would turn the wrong scripture. Just a second. Let me go back to second.

Corinthians is not based, say, for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing, though I am nothing. Here we see that Paul's calling to be an authority, an apostle, a leader in the church, was not based on some worth that he had that value that he has here. He claims to be nothing. You and I, or in our culture, tend to believe that the authority that we are called to demonstrate is based on some sort of performance or something given to us.

Everyone just be. Just be patient with just me for a second. I want to try to clarify this in just a little way.

There is a difference to feeling that what you do or how you've acted is the basis for your authority versus having no basis for authority.

If you claim or think that your authority comes from a certain thing you possess, it's going to lead you to a different place than if you have no basis for that authority. Paul didn't claim, even though he could have claimed his education, he could have claimed the difficulties that he's been through. He could have claimed all these things. He didn't. He said by authority is not based on anything he said on anything of his own nature.

This is saying that the authority itself is over the individual. It is a gift given to individuals rather than based on merit that some people have that earned them that authority.

That does a couple things. Number one, it calls everyone who doesn't deserve authority to a place of authority. It calls all the broken, downcast, mistake making, angry, and sometimes ugly people to a place in God's church. It is not based on a sort of merit system. God calls people into places and positions according to his own volition, and he lays them out in scripture.

He calls out parents to be the authority over their children, not because of how wise parents are. He doesn't give parents the right to be authority because they're bigger than their children. No, he gives them the right because of his own, his own choice to be the authority. In the husband and wife situation, I know it's an uncomfortable situation. It's uncomfortable for me a lot of times, but I tend to want to submit myself to God's authority because he doesn't give me the right of authority in my home, because of anything regarding myself, but only because of a choice that he has made in the church is the same way.

There are individuals who are very intelligent, who have not been called by God to be an apostle or an evangelist or a pastor or a teacher, and yet other individuals God chooses. It is not based on anything in them, but on a calling of God. If it is not based on anything in ourselves, there is no excuse we can make for rejecting the call of God on our life to be the authority that God has called us to be. And it also frees us from the responsibility that if God has called us and it is not based on a qualification you had prior to being called, then he is the one responsible for the work that he has called

you to do. Paul says in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles.

He recognized that a work was being done through his ministry that compared with other apostles, he saw it actually happening. There are individuals who know that they maybe weren't in a good family, didn't get raised by a good father and mother, and they start to see that, hey, even though I didn't have the experience, God is using me to raise children. There may be individuals in a marriage relationship who didn't have a good marriage relationship, but they can still see the godly fruit happening, even though they didn't come from their own resources in the church the same way in employers, the same way. When it doesn't come for our resources, we have to look to God. If you called me, then I want to be that individual.

I'm just going to close with this, but my encouragement for everyone here, because God has called all of us to some place of biblical authority, is that it's not because of who you are that God's calling you, that God only calls and uses effectively the only pedestal that he can set an individual on that is strong enough to maintain the kind of spiritual work on is when an individual recognizes that there is nothing in themselves that makes them fit for the calling that God places upon them, that it is a gift entirely by God, given by God, strengthened by God, and desires to be used by God. And you as an individual are called to make that a productive gift, to move forward in it, to recognize. And I would just like to say to us all, for I ought to have been commended by you. This is not. I'm not talking about me in any way, but this kind of authority that God has placed us in.

It should have been moving us forward faster than it has.

I would like to say that to myself, that as a young man in my father's house, it should have went better for me. It should have. I should have come out of that home better than I did. I was at a house and the guy working up there in Capelis rocks and he said to me, you know, I don't leave my doors locked, you know, and no one ever breaks into it. And I remember, you know, how many years ago we crossed the Capelis river and we climbed up on the house right next, right below his, broke the window, went inside, made a mess.

I would say it should have been. Well, with me it should have been a more forward momentum. But because I was not under the authority that I should have been, it destroyed areas of my life for a while. In a child raising relationship, in a parent's relationship. It really should be better than what you currently have.

Everyone hear me there? You're all beautiful people. I love you a lot, but I'm a mess. I slept on the couch last night.

Got to be better. There's a kind of authority that is right, but it only stands on a foundation where an individual realizes that the authority doesn't come from them.

It comes from Christ calling on them in the church also. What a beautiful thing to see and hear. People coming together to worship God. Oh, thank God. Guys, this is not as good as it gets.

Amen. In your employee and employer relationships, you know, you're a great employer or employee. You're quite the person. But really, I'm not as honest as I would like to tell you that I am. I'm not sure you are either.

We can be better. And it comes from feeling there's ought to be something better. And I just want to encourage you that though you're nothing in Christ's eyes, it's his calling on you that makes you something. And we can do way better because it's him who is the one calling us and leading us. And ultimately the fruit belongs to him.

Let's pray. Oh, Father. Lord. Lord. Here we are.

Lord, thank you for calling us into that relationship. That is beautiful and good. That is so forward moving. We just ask, Lord, despite of our kicking, Lord, and reluctance at times, Lord, that you would keep calling us. I just ask in Jesus name, amen.