**2 Corinthians 12**

*Paul describes his vision of Paradise, and the subsequent* “thorn in the flesh” *given him to keep him humble. He notes his* “boasting” *was necessary due to their questions regarding his authority. He reaffirms his love for them. (Stan Cox)*

1. Paul’s Authority VS False Apostles **(10:1-13:10)**
2. Paul’s Vision and Thorn in the Flesh **(12:1-10)**
	1. The vision of Paradise **(vv. 1-6)**
		1. Though boasting is without profit, Paul sees it necessary to discuss the visions and revelations he had experienced **(v. 1).**
		2. Paul likely speaks in the third person of himself **(vv. 2-4):**
			1. A man caught up to the third heaven – Paradise.
			2. Heard words inexpressible, and not lawful to utter.
		3. Paul would boast of such a one, but not of himself. Except in his infirmities **(v. 5).**
		4. He does not want some to think to highly of him **(v. 6).**
	2. The thorn in the flesh **(vv. 7-10)**
		1. So he would not grow with pride because of the revelations given him, Paul was given a thorn in the flesh **(v. 7).**
		2. He pleaded with the Lord three times that the thorn might depart from him **(v. 8).**
		3. The Lord refused, stating that His grace was sufficient for Paul, and that His strength is perfected in weakness **(v. 9).**
		4. Therefore, Paul boasts in his infirmities that Christ’s power might rest upon him **(v. 10).**
3. Conclusion of Boasting **(12:11-13)**
	1. Paul was compelled by the Corinthians to become a fool in boasting because they did not commend him themselves **(v. 11).**
	2. He showed he was an apostle by the works of the Spirit he performed **(v. 12).**
	3. The only way they were inferior to other churches was that Paul refused support from them unlike others **(v. 13).**
4. Paul’s Imminent Visit, and Expressed Love **(12:14-21)**
	1. His love for them **(vv. 14-19).**
		1. Being ready to come to them a third time, he would not be burdensome to them **(vv. 14-15):**
			1. Concerning his refusal of support, he acts as a parent to them, seeking them, and not their possessions **(v. 14).**
			2. Even though such love is expressed, they do not reciprocate such love **(v. 15).**
		2. Some have taken this to be craftiness and cunning on his part **(vv. 16-19).**
			1. He asks if he had taken advantage of them by the ones he sent **(vv. 16-18).**
			2. He does all things for their edification **(v. 19).**
	2. His concern for them **(vv. 20-21).**
		1. He fears that when he comes, he will them, and they will not find him as one another wishes **(v. 20a).**
		2. He fears there will be strife **(v. 20b).**
		3. He fears he will find many unrepentant of their sins **(v. 21).**

**Questions**

1. What do we learn about miracles from **verse 12**?
2. What does **verse 21** say about the severity of sin? How should we view sin in the lives of brethren?