

2 Corinthians: A Defense of Genuine Ministry and Authority

Lesson: A summary of selfless service to God's people

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:11-19

The Outline of 2 Corinthians

- I. An explanation of Paul's genuine ministry in the new covenant (ch. 1-7)
- II. An exhortation for the church's generous ministry (ch. 8-9)
- III. A defense of Paul's apostolic authority (ch. 10-13)

2 Cor 12:11-19 – A summary of selfless service to God's people

■ Introduction

- Paul approaching the end of the letter, primarily addressing those still listening to the false teachers
- Paul completes his “fool’s speech” where he was forced to “boast”
- The visible marks of his service to the church should have governed their actions

Theme: Our service to God’s people should be marked by patiently using our spiritual gifts, sacrificially caring for one another, and trustingly working alongside others, all to build up His people.

I. “My defense should have come from you” (vv. 11-18)

A. I am nothing (v. 11c)

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| 1. I am a sinner | 1 Tim 1:15 |
| 2. I am not more important than other believers | Eph 3:8 |
| 3. I am unfit for service based on my own merits | 1 Cor 15:9 |

B. I patiently used my gifts for you (v. 12)

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst... Acts 2:22

I. “My defense should have come from you” (vv. 11-18)

- A. I am nothing (v. 11b)
- B. I patiently used my gifts for you (vv. 11b-12)
- C. I cared for you (vv. 13-15)
 - 1. I served you practically
 - 2. I loved you sacrificially

Even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice... Php 2:17

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.
2 Tim 4:6-7

I. “My defense should have come from you” (vv. 11-18)

- A. I am nothing (v. 11b)
- B. I patiently used my gifts for you (vv. 11b-12)
- C. I cared for you (vv. 13-15)
- D. I worked with others for your good (vv. 16-18)
 - 1. Same Spirit: internal motives, affections
 - 2. Same Steps: external behaviors, words, actions

I. “My defense should have come from you” (vv. 11-18)

Application:

- Are we using our gifts, with perseverance, for God’s people?
 - Just pick a place, and start serving!
- Are we caring for one another practically and sacrificially?
- Are we working with other qualified believers in our service?
- We should defend those who serve faithfully in the church.

We ought to “be like a candle, which consumes itself to give light to others.” -
Matthew Henry

II. “My defense is before God – for your good” (v. 19)

- A. You are NOT the One who sits as judge
- B. You ARE the ones that are being built up!



II. “My defense is before God – for your good” (v. 19)

Application:

- Are we content that God alone is the judge of our efforts?
- We are to serve for the good of God’s people. Is that our motive?
- We can emulate Paul, but it wasn’t *his* pattern...
 - Jesus used His gifts for our sake – patiently!
 - Jesus cares for us practically and sacrificially!
 - Jesus worked with others for our good – and now uses us for the good of others!