

The Doctrine of Boasting

- I. Preliminary Considerations:
- A) Definition – the glorification or pride resulting from someone or thing, often oneself, usually verbalized but sometimes mental.
- B) Hebrew Vocabulary:
- 1) בַּד – *BaD* n : “empty, idle chatter”, when used of bragging it indicates the worthlessness of the boasts. Isa 16:6
 - 2) בָּרַךְ – *BaRaK* : normally “to bless”, when used in the Hithpael stem (intensive reflexive) it means “to bless oneself”, hence “to boast”. Dt 29:19.
 - 3) דִּבֶּר – *DiBeR* vb : “to speak” combined with גָּדַל or רָבַד “to magnify or make great” – cp our expression “big words”. 1Sam 2:3
 - 4) הִלָּל – *HaLaL* vb : “to boast/ praise”, it can be used of legitimate boasting in the Lord, or boasting in oneself. Ps 49:6 This is the primary word used for “boasting”, context dictating whether it is good or bad.
 - 5) פָּאֵר – *Pa’aR* vb : “to glorify”, used in the Hithpael “to glorify oneself”, hence to boast in one’s ability. Jdg 7:2
- C) Greek Vocabulary
- 1) ἀλαζών – *aladzōn* n : lit – “a vagabond”, hence an imposter, hence “a swaggering braggart”. Rom 1:30
 - 2) ἀλαζονεία – *aladzoneia* n : “empty talk of a braggart”, insolent and empty assurance, based on one’s own abilities and despising God. 1Jn 2:16
 - 3) αὐχέω – *aucheō* vb : “to declare loudly; to confidently boast” (1x) Js 3:5
 - 4) κατακαυχάομαι – *katakauchaomai* vb : “to be arrogant”, an intensive form of #6; to boast beyond reality. Rom 11:18
 - 5) καυχάομαι – *kauchaomai* vb : “to glory in a thing”, with or without cause. Rom 5:2 (good); 1Cor 1:29 (bad)
 - 6) καύχημα – *kauchēma* n : “the subject of boasting”, the reason for the boast itself. 1Cor 5:6
 - 7) καύχησις – *kauchēsis* n : “the act of boasting”, whether towards God or self. Rom 3:27
 - 8) κενόδοξος – *kenodoxos* adj : “empty glorying/ boasting”, boasting for no legitimate reason. (1x) Gal 5:26
- D) The various words for boasting do not always have the connotation of empty boasting, or bragging.
- E) Boasting may be either bad (STA boasting/ bragging), or good (sanctified boasting), depending on the context and the subject of boasting.
- 1) Hebrew:
 - a) bad – Jer 9:23
 - b) good – Jer 9:24
 - 2) Greek:
 - a) bad – 1Cor 1:26-29
 - b) good – 1Cor 1:31

- II. God is Against Boasting Sponsored by the STA
- A) All arrogant boasting will be overruled and silenced by the Sovereign King – He alone has reason to boast in Himself. Isa 44:24-25
 - B) Such boasting is characteristic of the evil of the Last Days. 2Tim 3:2 *“For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,”*
 - 1) the arrogance of man in his rejection of God sets the stage for glorification of self, but cp Pro 25:14 *“Like clouds and wind without rain Is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely.”*
 - 2) STA boasting is not sponsored by God – 1Jn2:16 *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”*
 - 3) nor should it be a part of the Christian Way of Life – Gal 5:26 *“Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.”*
 - C) Sinful boasting is sponsored by the sin of pride. Isa 16:6 *“We have heard of the pride of Moab, an excessive pride; Even of his arrogance, pride, and fury; His idle boasts are false.”*
 - D) Empty boasting is a sin of the tongue. Js 3:2-10
 - E) Some areas of sinful boasting:
 - 1) Power, individual or national – Jdg 7:2 *“And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, ‘My own power has delivered me.’”*
 - 2) The lusts of the flesh – Ps 10:3 *“For the wicked boasts of his heart’s desire, And the greedy man curses and spurns the LORD.”*
 - 3) Possessions – Ps 20:7 *“Some boast in chariots and some in horses, But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.”*
 - 4) Wealth – Ps 49:6 *“Even those who trust in their wealth And boast in the abundance of their riches?”*
 - 5) Evil – Ps 52:1 *“...Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The lovingkindness of God endures all day long.”*
 - 6) Deceitful business practices – Pro 20:14 *“Bad, bad,” says the buyer, But when he goes his way, then he boasts.”*
 - 7) Control over the future – Pro 27:1 *“Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.”* also cp Js 4:13f
 - 8) Religion without Truth – Rom 2:17-23
 - 9) anti-Semitism – Rom 11:17-24, esp 18
 - 10) Human viewpoint wisdom/ status – 1Cor 1:26-29
 - 11) The accomplishments of others – 1Cor 3:18-21
 - 12) A distorted sense of how one got what one has – 1Cor 4:7 *“...And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”*
 - 13) Toleration of evil or immorality (abuse of grace) – 1Cor 5:1-6
 - 14) Those things not allotted to us by God – 2Cor 10:13 *“But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you.”*

- 15) The number of converts a teacher has – Gal 6:13 *“...but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.”*
- 16) The pride of life – 1Jn 2:16 *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”*
- F) Antichrist is characterized by this activity – what should our attitude be, therefore? Dan 7:8,11

III. Sanctified Boasting

- A) Some specifics to keep in mind:
 - 1) “Sanctified” boasting is in God and His Plan, never in self. Rom 15:17 *“Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.”*
 - 2) Grace and faith preclude boasting in one’s works or self. Rom 3:27 *“Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.”*
 - 3) Boasting by the Christian is never in relationship to others but only by self-scrutiny compared to the objective standard of the Word of God. 2Cor 10:12-17
 - 4) There is a legitimate self-evaluation before the Lord which provides the basis for sanctified boasting. Gal 6:4 *“But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.”*
- B) Some specific examples and areas in which the believer can legitimately boast (some areas overlap):
 - 1) Knowing Bible Doctrine – Jer 9:24a *“but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me...”*
 - 2) Ph1 salvation – Rom 5:11 *“And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”*
 - 3) The Lord – 1Cor 1:31 *“so that, just as it is written, ‘LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.’”*
 - 4) One’s niche – 2Cor 10:13-16
 - 5) One’s weakness – 2Cor 11:30 *“If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness.”*
 - 6) The Person and work of Christ – Gal 6:14a *“But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...”*
 - 7) SG3 – Heb 3:6 (cp v 14)
- C) The greatest time of sanctified boasting will occur at the Bema seat, but only for those who have complied with the dictates of Doctrine. Phi 2:16 *“holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.”*
- D) Boasting and the ministry:
 - 1) Right Pastor has the right to boast in his congregation and their applications – 2Cor 8:24 *“Therefore openly before the churches show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.”*
 - 2) Right Congregation has the right to boast in their Pastor, as long as he continues to teach the Truth – 2Cor 1:12-14 *(notice it is not in the I.Q. of the Pastor that the congregations boasts – vs 12)*

- 3) The PT who is correctly fulfilling the work of the ministry has grounds to boast – 2Cor 1:12
 - 4) The PT may boast about his authority in the ministry – 2Cor 10:8
“For even if I should boast somewhat further about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I shall not be put to shame”
 - 5) The PT who supports himself in order to provide Bible Doctrine to Positive Volition has grounds to boast. 1Cor 9:14-15 cp Ac 18:1-5
 - 6) While false teachers boast in the number of converts following them (or the size of their buildings, money raised, or other physical “successes”), the adjusted PT boasts in the spiritual growth of his listeners. Gal 6:13 cp 2Th 1:4 *“...we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.”*
- IV. If salvation were by works, not by grace through faith, men could boast of achieving that salvation. Eph 2:8-9 *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.”*
- V. Summary:
- A) Sanctified boasting is boasting in the Lord, His strength, His provision, and His glory.
 - B) Sanctified boasting places no confidence in the flesh as giving anyone an unfair advantage when it comes to the three adjustments. Phi 3:2-12
 - C) Sanctified boasting involves the ability and willingness to apply spiritual realities to your niche. Js 1:9-10

“My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear it and rejoice.” Ps 34:2

“Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.” 1Cor 1:31

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