



Today's Message

Date: August 18, 2019
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Seeking the Lord's Commendation*

Text: 2 Corinthians 10:12–18 (ESV)

¹² Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding. ¹³ But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you. ¹⁴ For we are not overextending ourselves, as though we did not reach you. For we were the first to come all the way to you with the gospel of Christ. ¹⁵ We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, ¹⁶ so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence. ¹⁷ "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." ¹⁸ For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

Introduction: With biting sarcasm, Paul calls out his opponents in Corinth for their self-promotion. In contrast, Paul's desire for commendation from Christ alone shaped his philosophy of ministry in ways that we will explore in this sermon.

Today's take-home truth: Humble service in the age of celebrity requires us to topple the idol of self-interest.

I. We must carefully assess the ministry using the right standards. 12

- A. Spiritual matters cannot be evaluated by worldly standards.
- B. Those who attempt to do so put spiritual ignorance on display.

II. We must find joy in the ministry God assigns. 13-15a

- A. Joy comes from fulfilling the work God gives . . . 13-14
- B. without taking credit for someone else's work. 15a

III. We must strengthen the ministry through spiritual growth, thus enlarging the mission. 15b-16

- A. The spiritual growth of God's people at home . . . 15b
- B. enables laborers to take the message where the need most is most urgent. 16

IV. We must pursue the ministry solely for the Lord's glory. 17-18

- A. Boast only in the Lord. 17
- B. Seek approval only from the Lord. 18