

Something to Boast About **Jeremiah 9:20-24**

You can know a lot about someone, but never *know* them. The good news of Christianity is that you can know God at a deep, personal level.

The Stuff of Boasts

Boasting is not a quality many of us admire. But rather than God saying we should never boast, he tells the people of Jerusalem they are boasting in the wrong thing.

Jerusalem was facing attack by the Babylonians, and the leaders were putting their trust in their wisdom, power and wealth. And these are still qualities we admire. The wise, powerful and wealthy are still the movers and shakers. But you don't have to be in the elite for these things to be where you put your trust. If we get our sense of worth or confidence from our intelligence, or wise life choices, or question the word of God, we may be boasting in our wisdom. The same may be true for power, if we feel good about ourselves because of our position of leadership, or how physically sporty we are. And riches can have the same effect – if we feel confident in ourselves because we have made it financially.

The Need Beneath the Boast

We boast when we are so pleased with ourselves that we speak it out. At the root of boasting is insecurity. We want others to think well of us and to approve of us. We need to feel significant, and feel like we matter. We boast about the stuff that sets us apart. We boast because we need to feel confident about ourselves.

The problem is that the stuff we boast in was never designed to bear that weight: if you meet someone cleverer than you, or you lose your position, or your money runs out, your life can crumble: you have nothing to boast in anymore. This is what happened when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem.

But it is not that God does not want us to boast. He does. But we must glory and find our confidence in the things that matter.

The Never-Ending Boast

The Lord says we are to boast in knowing and understanding him. If we pursue a theological knowledge for its own sake it will make us proud. But if we pursue God for himself, and grow in the knowledge of his character then it will not make us proud: it will profoundly humble us. It will result in awe-filled praise and worship.

Knowing God will also give us a true and deep security and confidence. You will know that Jesus knows you as you really are, but loves you enough to die for you. You will know that you are united with Christ, so God accepts you and loves you as his child. This gives you a strong confidence. When we don't know God life can seem confusing. When you do, you understand that even in trials he is weaving his story in your life. But that can only come by growing in your knowledge of God and Christ.

When you do, you will have something to brag about, but it won't be about you, but about how great, glorious and gracious God is.