

December 4 Answers

- 1) Paul now addressed the issue of the “**super**-apostles” that had infiltrated the congregation. Paul’s reaction has much to teach us about spiritual maturity. First, Paul recognized that although he walked in the flesh, he waged war by the **Spirit** (2 Cor 10:3–4). Second, Paul did not evaluate himself or his ministry by **comparing** himself with others. Instead, he based his sense of self-worth and success on whether or not he had **obeyed** God. Third, Paul was more concerned about the spiritual welfare of the Corinthians than he was about his own **image**. He had deliberately shared the gospel with them free of charge so he could avoid being a **burden** to the church. Fourth, Paul did not hesitate to **expose** the so-called apostles as a threat to the Corinthians. Paul was **bold** in his confrontation of such men, and we must be quick to do the same. Fifth, Paul played the “**fool**” by telling the Corinthians of his religious heritage, his toils and hardships, and his many visions and revelations. He did this, not to exalt himself, but to show the Corinthians that he was indeed a true **apostle** of Jesus Christ. Sixth, Paul recognized his own tendency to become **conceited**, and he accepted God’s “thorn in the flesh” as necessary for his soul (2 Cor 12:9). This teaches us to see our weaknesses as opportunities for God to display His power, “for when I am weak, then I am **strong**” (2 Cor 12:10).