

2 Corinthians Chapter 10

1. Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.

A. Now I,

B. Paul,

1. This is authentication of this being a Pauline letter.
2. Hopefully, this coming from Paul himself would bear weight with them.

C. myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ

1. **pleading**- Gr. *parakaleo*

- a. The New Covenant is not based upon harsh and strict commands but on loving exhortation and entreaty.
- b. There is both goodness and severity with God. He wants to treat people with His goodness if possible.
- c. As ministers we want to treat people with goodness and gentleness before having to be sharp with people. There are times you must be this way however. [2 Cor. 13:10](#)

2. **meekness**- Gr. *praotes*- *gentleness, mildness, meekness*

3. **gentleness**- Gr. *epieikeia*- *the virtue that rectifies and redresses the severity of a sentence, clemency*

- a. This virtue is seen by God sending Jesus to take the severity of our sentence and punishment so He could offer clemency to us.

D. who in presence am lowly among you,

1. **presence**- Gr. *prosopon*

- a. He had been with them twice before and planned on coming a third time.

2. **lowly**- Gr. *tapeinos*

- a. This is the nature of Jesus. [Matt. 11:29](#)
- b. As believers we share the same nature as Jesus. We just need to cultivate this virtue by abiding in Christ.

E. but being absent am bold toward you

1. **being absent**- Gr. *apeimi*

2. **bold**- Gr. *tharreo*

- a. No doubt some at Corinth were saying this about Paul.

2. But I beg *you* that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

A. But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some,

1. **beg**- Gr. *deomai*- *to request, ask*

a. Here Paul is requesting that he not have to be sharp with them when he comes. This would not pleasant for them or himself and he wanted them both spared this.

2. **present**- Gr. *pareimi*- *to be present beside*

a. This is when he would come to them a third time. [2Co 12:14](#)

3. **bold**- Gr. *tolmao*- *to have courage, boldness, confidence to do something, to venture, dare*

4. **confidence**- Gr. *pepoithesis*- *to have a settled trust, confidence, reliance*

a. Our confidence comes when we know we are representing the Lord with His authority doing what He wants done.

5. **intend**- Gr. *logizomai*- *to reckon, estimate, calculate*

a. Paul realized that he probably would have to bring discipline to some hard-hearted individuals that were at Corinth when he visited again.

B. who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

1. **think**- Gr. *logizomai*

a. People will always have their own opinions and thoughts about you. The only person's opinion and thoughts that matter at the end of the day and at the end of time is the Lord's.

2. **walked**- Gr. *peripateo*

3. **flesh**- Gr. *sark*

a. *As if we were governed by the weak and corrupt principles of human nature. As if we had no higher motive than carnal and worldly policy. As if we were seeking our own advantage and not the welfare of the world. The charge was, probably, that he was not governed by high and holy principles, but by the principles of mere worldly policy; that he was guided by personal interests, and by worldly views - by ambition, or the love of dominion, wealth, or popularity, and that he was*

destitute of every supernatural endowment and every evidence of a divine commission. -Barnes Commentary

3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

A. For though we walk in the flesh,

1. **walk-** Gr. **peripeteo**

2. **flesh-** Gr. **sark**

a. This refers to their human bodies.

B. we do not war according to the flesh

1. **war-** Gr. **strateuomai**- *to wage strategic warfare, strategize*

a. Paul did not use the weapons of intimidation, manipulation, or physical force. He used the weapons of the Word of God and His authority given him by Jesus Christ.

b. Some individuals Paul handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. He dealt with things from a spiritual level, not a mere natural one.

2. **according to the flesh**

a. Utilizing intimidation, manipulation, or physical force for selfish interests is warring according to the flesh.

4. For the weapons of our warfare *are not carnal but mighty* in God for pulling down strongholds,

A. weapons- Gr. **hoplon**

1. In Ephesians, we see we have been given God's armor. [Eph. 6:13-17](#) One of the pieces mentioned there is a weapon, which is the Sword of the Spirit- the Word of God.

2. Use of our authority in conjunction with the Word of God will pull down the enemies' strongholds.

B. warfare- Gr. **strateia**

1. Human strategy uses natural weapons. God's strategy uses spiritual weapons.

C. carnal- Gr. **sarkikos**

1. These weapons would be intimidation, manipulation, or physical force.

D. mighty- Gr. **dunatos**- *is able, has ability*

E. pulling down- Gr. **kathairesis**

a. The Word and Spirit can pull down in a moment what the enemy

has spent decades building up.

F. strongholds- Gr. ochuroma

1. *In its use here there may lie a reminiscence of the rock-forts on the coast of Paul's native Cilicia, which were pulled down by the Romans in their attacks on the Cilician pirates. Pompey inflicted a crushing defeat upon their navy off the rocky stronghold of Coracesium on the confines of Cilicia and Pisidia.* -Vincent Word Studies

a. The Word breaks strongholds of rock. [Jer 23:29](#)

5. casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

A. casting down arguments and every hight thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,

1. casting down- Gr. kathaireo

a. God does not want us to circumvent people's strongholds or live with our own. He wants us to cast them down.

2. arguments- Gr. logismos- A reckoning, calculation, consideration, reflection. In the Class. Gr. writers, used of the consideration and reflection preceding and determining conduct,

a. Notice that the enemy's strongholds are reasonings and thoughts. They are not found in the heavenlies. Some have gotten on airplanes so they could bring down Satan's strongholds in the heavenlies. No, these strongholds are in people's minds and hearts.

3. high thing- Gr. hupsoma- thing elevated, height, elevated structure, i.e. barrier, rampart, bulwark

a. These reasonings and thoughts are rooted in pride.

4. exalts- Gr. epairo- to lift up, raise up, raise on high, metaphorically to be lifted up with pride, to exalt one's self

a. Satan exalted himself up to God's throne and was cast down by God's Word.

5. knowledge- Gr. gnosis

a. This is the knowledge of God's Word.

B. bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

1. thought- Gr. noema- a conception of the mind, thought, purpose, device

a. The battlefield where the enemy is fought is the six inches between your ears.

2. **captivity**- Gr. **aichmalotizo**- *to lead away captive*

- a. People are taken captive by lies. People are set free by the truth.
- b. False thoughts are taken captive by the truth.

3. **obedience**- Gr. **hupakoe**

- a. Believing the truth of the Word of God sets people free from lies.
- b. This is obedience to the faith in Christ.

6. and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

A. **ready**- Gr. **hetoimos**- *prepared*

B. **punish**- Gr. **ekdikeo**- *to execute right and justice; to punish*

1. Paul would not stand idly by while enemies of the faith assaulted a church under his care. He was ready to purge them (as he did at Ephesus; [1Ti 1:19-20](#)) as soon as the Corinthian church was complete in its obedience. When that happened, the lines would be clearly drawn between the repentant, obedient majority and the recalcitrant, disobedient minority. -MacArthur commentary

C. **disobedience**- Gr. **parakoe**- *to hear amiss, to go astray from what is heard*

1. This is seen in [2Co 12:20-21](#)

D. **obedience**- Gr. **hupakoe**- *to hearken under what is heard, to abide under what is heard*

1. This shows that a minister can't destroy strongholds in others without their cooperation. They must receive and believe the truth the minister is speaking. This is NT obedience.

E. **fulfilled**- Gr. **pleroo**- *to carry into effect, bring to realization, realize*

7. Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he *is* Christ's, even so we *are* Christ's.

A. **Do you look at things according to the outward appearance?**

1. **look**- Gr. **blepo**- *to look upon with the natural eyes*

2. **outward appearance**- Gr. **prosopon**

a. *This is addressed evidently to the members of the church,*

and with reference to the claims which had been set up by the false teachers. There can be no doubt that they valued themselves on their external advantages, and laid claim to special honor in the work of the ministry, because they were superior in personal appearance, in rank, manners, or eloquence to Paul. Paul reproves them for thus judging, and assures them that this was not a proper criterion by which to determine on qualifications for the apostolic office. Such things were highly valued among the Greeks, and a considerable part of the effort of Paul in these letters is to show that these things constitute no evidence that those who possessed them were sent from God. -Barnes Commentary

b. [1Sa 16:7, Joh 7:24](#)

B. If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's,

1. **convinced**- Gr. *peitho*- *to be persuaded*

a. *This refers to the false teachers who laid claims to be the followers of Christ by way of eminence. Whoever these teachers were, it is evident that they claimed to be on the side of Christ, and to be appointed by him. -Barnes Commentary*

2. **Christ**- Gr. *Christos*

C. let him again consider this in himself,

1. **consider**- Gr. *logizomai*- *infer, conclude, presume*

D. that just as he is Christ's,

1. We know we are of Christ because we have the Spirit of Christ. If someone does not have the Spirit of Christ, that person does not belong to Christ. [Rom. 8:9](#)

E. even so we are Christ's

1. *That I have given as much evidence that I am commissioned by Christ as they can produce. It may be of a different kind. It is not in eloquence. and rank, and the gift of a rapid and ready elocution, but it may be superior to what they are able to produce. Probably Paul refers here to the fact that he had seen the Lord Jesus, and that he had been directly commissioned by him. The sense is, that no one could produce more proofs of being called to the ministry than he could. -Barnes Commentary*

2. [2Co 11:23](#)

8. For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed—

A. For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority,

1. boast- Gr. kauchomai

a. It is not wrong to boast in what the Lord has done for you and in you, as long as you don't put yourself above others.

2. authority-Gr. exousia- *the right to use might*

a. With greater authority comes a greater responsibility to represent the Lord accurately. A leader is just using the authority given to Him by God for the good of others. Keeping a servant mindset will be a safeguard against abuse of authority.

B. which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction,

1. gave- Gr. didomi

a. All authority comes from God and is given by God by grace. It is not earned or deserved by intrinsic worth.

2. edification- Gr. oikodome- *to build up, to erect an edifice*

a. A Christian leader is given the responsibility to build the church by the anointing and Word of God. Jesus said He would build His church. He does this through His delegated leaders He calls by His grace.

b. A leader that seeks to represent and glorify Christ will build up the church even though they may make some mistakes.

3. destruction- Gr. kathairesis

a. A carnal self-centered leader will end up tearing down the church, instead of building it.

b. False teachers bring destruction to the church. They will in turn be destroyed.

C. I shall not be ashamed

1. ashamed- Gr. aischunomai

a. There is no shame in the truth.

9. lest I seem to terrify you by letters.

A. seem- Gr. dokeo

B. terrify- Gr. ekphobeo- *to frighten away, to terrify*

1. A good modern translation of this word is to "freak out".

2. No doubt this was what some in Corinth said about Paul. They said he would try to scare them by his letters, but he really was a softy in person.
3. Paul adds a bit of sarcasm at points in this letter. He was a human, and I believe at some degree he was hurt by what some of the Corinthians were believing and saying about him, but not the point of unforgiveness or sinful bitterness.

C. **letters**- Gr. **epistole**

1. This was the second letter we have still in existence today. He probably had written another one that we don't have today and was not counted among scripture.

10. "For **his** letters," they say, "**are** weighty and powerful, but **his** bodily presence **is** weak, and **his** speech contemptible."

A. **For his letters,**

1. **letters**- Gr. **epistole**

B. **they say,**

1. **say**- Gr. **lego**

- a. Paul had heard probably from Titus what people said about him and his letters. I don't think Titus offered up this information of his own accord, but Paul asked him to tell him what they were saying.

C. **are weighty and powerful,**

1. **weighty**- Gr. **barus**- *weighty, important, momentous, authoritative*

- a. The letters of Paul carried the authority of scripture. What makes the lion the king of the beasts? Its roar! Paul's letters roar!

2. **powerful**- Gr. **ischuros**- *strong, mighty, powerful*

- a. This is an understatement! The letters we have from Paul are scripture and are full of life and power. We still use them today and are greatly benefited by them.

D. **but his bodily presence is weak,**

1. **bodily**- Gr. **soma**

2. **presence**- Gr. **parousia**- *arrival and subsequent presence*

- a. When Paul would come to a place he did not arrive with great fanfare or make himself appear great while he stayed.

3. **weak**- Gr. **asthenes**

a. Church history tells us that Paul was a small man among those of his day. It is interesting to note that his name, Paul, means *little*.

E. and his speech contemptible

1. **speech**- Gr. *logos*- *word, message, speech, language, talk*
2. **contemptible**- Gr. *exoutheneo*- *to make light of, set at naught, despise, treat with contempt and scorn, to reject, despise, look down on, ridicule.*
 - a. Apparently, Paul was not a very good speaker. He had great revelation, but did not have great oratory skills, such as Apollos had. [2 Cor. 11:6](#), [Act. 18:24](#)

11. Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such we will also be in deed when we are present.

A. Let such a person consider this,

1. **person**- Gr. *toioutos*- *such a one*
 - a. Such a one that said that Paul was powerful in letters but weak in person.
2. **consider**- Gr. *logizomai*- *to reason*
 - a. Some of the Corinthians were given over to false reasonings. Paul is asking them to reconsider and reason differently.

B. that what we are in word by letters when we are absent,

1. **word**- Gr. *logos*
2. **letters**- Gr. *epistole*
3. **absent**- Gr. *apeimi*

C. such we will also be in deed when we are present

1. **deed**- Gr. *ergon*
 - a. They will act upon the authority they have in Christ.
2. **present**- Gr. *pareimi*

12. For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

A. For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves.

1. **dare**- Gr. *tolmao*- *to be bold, daring*
2. **class ourselves**- Gr. *egkrino*- *to judge or reckon among, consider as*

belonging to, adjudge to the number of; class with, place in the same rank

3. **compare**- Gr. **sugkrino**- *to combine, compound; to compare, to estimate by comparing with something else, or, to match*

4. **commend**- Gr. **sunistao**- *to recommend to favorable attention*

a. Paul said he would not be of the number who were self-promoters.

b. I am always wary of those who are self-promoters and ask to speak or be platformed.

B. But they,

1. In specific he is talking about the teachers that had come among the Corinthians who tried to spoil them against Paul.

C. measuring themselves by themselves,

1. **measuring**- Gr. **metreo**- *to measure out or off, to judge according to any rule or standard, to estimate*

a. Legalism is about measuring yourself against others. Grace is most readily received when you measure yourself against God!

D. are comparing themselves among themselves,

1. **comparing**- Gr. **sugkrino**

a. Comparing yourself to others will lead to either pride or envy. Comparing yourself to God leads to humility. Rom 12:3, Gal 6:3, Php 2:3

E. are not wise

1. **wise**- Gr. **suniemi**- *to comprehend, understand, perceive*

a. When you compare yourself to others and either exalt yourself in pride or cower in depression and envy, this shows you really do not understand the gospel of grace.

13. We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you.

A. We,

B. however,

C. will not boast beyond measure,

1. **boast**- Gr. **kauchaomi**

a. The false teachers were boasting over a work that was not theirs. They were intruding into the field of another that God had already assigned.

2. **beyond measure**- Gr. *ametros*- *without measure, no measure*

D. but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us

1. **limits of the sphere**- Gr. *metron kanon*- *the measure of the rule, range of action or duty*

2. **appointed**- Gr. *merizo*- *to divide, apportion*

a. No one but Jesus is allowed to be over all of God's people and kingdom. We all have a small portion assigned to us to represent Jesus.

b. The largest church in the world has 800,000 members. There is over 7 billion people on the earth. The pastor of the largest church in the world oversees only 0.0001% of the world's population!

E. a sphere which especially includes you

1. **sphere**- Gr. *phtano*- *to come to, arrive at*

a. Paul founded the church at Corinth. It was therefore in his sphere of authority.

b. *The idea of the limits of the sphere may be the lanes that were allotted for runners in a race. The Corinthian Christians would recognize this because they loved races and held the famous Isthmian Games in Corinth. Paul is saying, "I'm running in my own lane and not in someone else's."* - Guzik

Commentary

14. For we are not overextending ourselves (as though *our authority* did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ;

A. For we are not overextending ourselves

1. **overextending**- Gr. *huperekteino*- *to extend beyond the prescribed bounds, stretch out beyond measure, stretch out overmuch*

a. The false teachers that came to Corinth after Paul were overextending themselves into an area they did not belong.

B. as though our authority did not extend to you,

1. **authority**- not in Greek- omit

2. **extend**- Gr. *ephikneomai*- *to come to*

C. for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ

1. **came**- Gr. *phtano*- *to come to or as far as*

a. Paul established the church of Corinth on his second missionary journey. Acts 18:1-17

b. An apostle goes and establishes a new work where there is none. [Rom 15:20](#) Some like to come and try to take over where a work already exists. They are too lazy to build something themselves.

2. **gospel**- Gr. **euaggelion**- *the good news*

15. **not boasting of things beyond measure, *that is*, in other men's labors, but having hope, *that* as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere,**

A. **not boasting of things beyond measure,**

1. **boasting**- Gr. **kauchaomai**

a. Boasting is right if it is in God and what He has done.

2. **beyond measure**- Gr. **ametros**

B. **that is,**

C. **in other men's labors,**

1. **other men's**- Gr. **allotrios**- *foreign, strange, not of one's own family, alien*

a. Each minister carries their DNA. If someone else takes over a person's work the DNA will not be the same as the previous minister in most cases.

b. The false teachers had a completely different DNA as Paul did. Paul's DNA was to serve and give, but the false teachers was to dominate and take.

c. Paul made it a matter of close observance not to intrude in the work of another person. [Rom 15:20](#)

2. **labors**- Gr. **kopos**

a. As the false teachers had done in Corinth. They were boasting in what the labors of Paul had produced, but had no right to do so.

D. **but having hope,**

1. **hope**- Gr. **elpis**- *confident expectation*

E. **that as your faith is increased,**

1. **faith**- Gr. **pistis**- *firm persuasion*

2. **increased**- Gr. **auxano**- *to grow*

a. Faith grows by an increased revelation of grace in the person of Jesus Christ.

F. **we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere**

1. **greatly enlarged**- Gr. **megaluno**- *to make great, magnify*
 - a. *As mature Christians, they [the Corinthians] would not only be less dependent on Paul to solve their congregation's problems, but they would also start supporting Paul as he launched evangelistic missions **beyond** them into completely unevangelized areas.* -Life Application Commentary
2. **sphere**- Gr. **kanon**- *reed or cane. Anything straight used in examining other things, as the tongue or needle of a balance, a plumb line in building. In the NT, a rule of conduct or behavior*

16. to preach the gospel in the *regions beyond* you, *and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.*

- A. **to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you,**
 1. **preach the gospel**- Gr. **euaggelizo**- *to preach the good news*
 2. **regions beyond you**- Gr. **huperekeina**- *to lay beyond*
 - a. Paul mentioned in the book of Romans that he desired to preach the gospel in Spain. [Rom 15:24](#), [Rom 15:28](#)
- B. **and not boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment**
 1. **boast**- Gr. **kauchaomai**
 - a. Paul used this word 17 times in this letter. The Corinthians were very proud and given to boasting.
 2. **sphere of accomplishment**- Gr. **kanon**- *reed or cane. Anything straight used in examining other things, as the tongue or needle of a balance, a plumb line in building. In the NT, a rule of conduct or behavior*

17. But "HE WHO GLORIES, LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD."

- A. **But**
- B. **He who glories,**
 1. **glories**- Gr. **kauchaomai**- *to boast*
 - a. The root of boasting is a desire for glory and recognition.
- C. **let him glory in the Lord**
 1. **glory**- Gr. **kauchaomai**
 2. **Lord**- Gr. **kurios**
 - a. This is Jesus
 - b. This verse teaches us that it is right to boast but only in the Lord and what He has done in us and for us. [1Co 1:31](#) This

boasting gives God the glory.

18. For not he who commands himself is approved, but whom the Lord commands.

A. For not he who commands himself is approved,

1. **commands**- Gr. *sunistao*- *to recommend to favorable attention*

- a. Some people have a dislocated shoulder because they always are patting themselves on the back.

2. **approved**- Gr. *dokimos*- *to approve after testing*

- a. This shows that people ought to be approved not based on what they say, but on what they do.

B. but whom the Lord commands

1. **commands**- Gr. *sunistao*

- a. You don't need to try to make your name great. God will make you name great if you trust Him. [Gen 12:2](#)

- b. Promotion does not come from man, but from God.

- c. God desires to praise those who trust Him. [Rom 2:29](#),

[1Co 4:5](#) Religious people have trouble with that concept!