

# 2 Corinthians 10

## (New International Version)

**By the humility and gentleness** of Christ, I appeal to you - I, Paul, who am 'timid' when face to face with you, but 'bold' toward you when away! **2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. 3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.**

**7 You are judging by appearances.** If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do. **8 So even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us** for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it. **9 I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters.** **10 For some say, 'His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive** and his speaking amounts to nothing.' **11 Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.**

**12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves.** When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. **13 We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us,** a sphere that also includes you. **14 We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you** with the gospel of Christ. **15 Neither do we go beyond our limits** by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand, **16 so that we can preach the gospel** in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in someone else's territory. **17 But, "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.

## STUDY NOTES

### 2 CORINTHIANS 10:1, 2

Paul's opponents questioned his authority. From 7:8-16 we know that the majority of Corinthian believers sided with Paul. However, a minority continued to slander him, saying that he was bold in his letters but had no authority in person. Chapters 10-13 are Paul's response to this charge.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-6

***We, like Paul, are merely weak humans, but we don't need to use human plans and methods to win our battles. God's mighty weapons are available to us as we fight against the Devil's 'strongholds.' The Christian must choose whose methods to use - God's or the world's. Paul assures us that God's mighty weapons - prayer, faith, hope, love, God's Word, the Holy Spirit - are powerful and effective (see Ephesians 6:13-18)! These weapons can break down the proud human arguments against God and the walls that Satan builds to keep people from finding God. When dealing with people's proud arguments that keep them from a relationship with Christ, we may be tempted to use our own methods. But nothing can break down these barriers like God's weapons.***

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 10:5**

***Paul uses military terminology to describe this warfare against sin and Satan. God must be the commander in chief - even our thoughts must be submitted to his control as we live for him.***

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 10:7-10**

***Those who opposed Paul portrayed him as weak and powerless, but Paul reminded the Corinthians that he had been given authority by the Lord. False teachers were encouraging the believers to ignore Paul, but Paul explained that the advice in his letters was to be taken seriously. He had authority because he and his companions were the first to bring the Good News to Corinth (10:14). Everyone knew that because of this service, their faith had been built up.***

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 10:10**

***Some said that Paul's speaking amounted to nothing. Greece was known for its eloquent and persuasive orators. Evidently, some were judging Paul by comparing him to other speakers they had heard, and Paul was perhaps not the most powerful preacher (although he was an excellent debater). But Paul responded obediently to God's call and thus introduced Christianity to the Roman Empire. Moses and Jeremiah also had problems with speaking (see Exodus 4:10-12; Jeremiah 1:6). Preaching ability is not the first prerequisite of a great leader!***

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 10:12, 13**

***Paul criticized the false teachers who were trying to prove their goodness by comparing themselves with others rather than with God's standards. When we compare ourselves with others, we may feel proud because we think we're better. But when we measure ourselves against God's standards, it becomes obvious that we have no basis for pride. Don't worry about other people's***

**accomplishments. Instead, ask yourself: How does my life measure up to what God wants? How does my life compare to that of Jesus Christ?**

**2 CORINTHIANS 10:17, 18**

**When we do something well, we want to tell others and be recognized. But recognition is dangerous - it can lead to inflated pride. How much better it is to seek the praise of God rather than the praise of people. Then, when we receive praise, we will be free to give God the credit. What should you change about the way you live in order to receive God's commendation?**

<b>Paul's Credentials</b>	
One of Paul's biggest problems with the church in Corinth was his concern that they viewed him as no more than a blustering preacher; thus, they were not taking seriously his advice in his letters and on his visits. Paul addressed this attitude in the letter of 2 Corinthians, pointing out his credentials as an apostle of Christ and why the Corinthians should take his advice.	
1:1, 21; 4:1	Commissioned by God
1:18; 4:2	Spoke truthfully
1:12	Acted in holiness, sincerity, and dependence on God alone in his dealings with them
1:13, 14	Was straightforward and sincere in his letters
1:22	Had God's Holy Spirit
2:4; 6:11; 11:11	Loved the Corinthian believers
2:17	Spoke with sincerity and Christ's power
3:2, 3	Worked among them and changed their lives
3:4; 12:6	Lived as an example to the believers
4:1, 16	Did not give up
4:2	Taught the Bible with integrity
4:5	Had Christ as the center of his message
4:8-12; 6:4, 5, 9, 10	Endured persecution as he taught the Good News
5:18-20	Was Christ's ambassador, called to tell the Good News

6:3, 4	Tried to live an exemplary life so others would not be kept from God
6:6	Led a pure life, understood the gospel, and displayed patience with the Corinthians
6:7	Was truthful and filled with God's power
6:8	Stood true to God first and always
7:2; 11:7-9	Never corrupted or exploited anyone
8:20, 21	Handled their offering for the Jerusalem believers in a responsible, blameless manner
10:1-6	Used God's weapons, not his own, for God's work
10:7, 8	Was confident that he belonged to Christ
10:12, 13	Would boast not in himself but in the Lord
10:14, 15	Had authority because he taught them the Good News
11:23-33	Endured pain and danger as he fulfilled his calling