

2 Corinthians 10:1-18 Defense against accusations by opponents

Personal appearance compared to impact of written letters

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. 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. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 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, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

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. 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-- ⁹ lest I seem to terrify you by letters. ¹⁰ For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." 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.

Comparing self with others

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. 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. 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; 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, ¹⁶ to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment. ¹⁷ But "he who glories, let him glory in the LORD." ¹⁸ For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

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Facts Revealed:

Personal appearance compared to impact of written letters [2 Corinthians 10:1-11]

- † Paul prefers to present himself personally in the meekness and gentleness of Christ.
 - ✧ There are those in Corinth who say that Paul is walking in the flesh (pride), and not in Christ.
 - ✧ Paul's answer to them is:

- ☒ I beg you that when I am present I may not need to 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.
- ☒ Though we live in the flesh, we do not war in the flesh.
- ☒ The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.
- ☒ We bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.
- ☒ We are ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.
- ✧ There are those in Corinth who say, "His letters, are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."
- ✧ Paul's answer to them is:
 - ☒ 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.
 - ☒ I will not be ashamed, even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave to us, it is for your edification, not for your destruction.
 - ☒ Let those who say such things consider, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent from you, we will also be in deed when we are present with you.

Comparing self with others [2 Corinthians 10:12-18]

- † We dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves.
- ✧ They who esteem themselves by comparing themselves among themselves are not wise.
- ✧ We will not boast beyond the limits of the sphere to which God appointed us, and that sphere especially includes you.
- ✧ We are not overextending our authority, for it was to you that we came with the Gospel of Christ.
- ✧ We will not boast in other men's labors or sphere of accomplishment.
- ✧ Having hope that your faith is increased, and we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, to preach the Gospel in regions beyond you.
- ✧ He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.
- ✧ He who commends himself is not approved.
- ✧ He is approved whom the Lord commends.