

## 2 Corinthians 10

Title ideas:  
Confidence in Christ!  
Be You in Christ!  
Stay in your circle!

## 2 Corinthians 10:1-18 - Confidence in Christ!

### Scriptures:

Matthew 11:28-30 - Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Ephesians 4:11-16 - And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

<sup>1</sup>Now **I, Paul, myself** am pleading with **you** by the

3870 -

**meekness and gentleness of Christ**—who in

4236 – ‘Acting in a manner that is gentle, mild, and even-tempered.’

1932 – gracious  
forebearance

presence **am** lowly among **you**, but being absent

5011 – humble,  
unpretentious

**am bold toward you.**

2292 – have  
courage, have  
confidence

### Notes:

Paul was humble and meek while he was with the Corinthians and then had written a strong letter of correction and his detractors were accusing him of being double-minded or hypocritical.

“Paul, by identifying himself with Christ, demolishes the accusation that his own meekness and gentleness are signs of weakness or a lack of power or authority.” (Hughes, 2006) page 181

“As Christians, we live in both the now and the not yet.” (Hughes, 2006) page 179

We have eternal life, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the promises of heaven, forgiveness of sins, fellowship in the body of Christ, and the blessed hope of Christ’s return. At the same time, we live in the presence of sin and experience its pain and suffering and death. A balanced Christian life is walks faithfully with Christ through the stuff of this life while at the same time clings to the hope of Return and all that entails.

The Corinthian church was prosperous. As is often the case in prosperity, some assumed prosperity was an indication of God’s favor, which then causes people to see people who are not prosperous as out of God’s favor. Paul’s detractors were suggesting that his trials and difficulties were an evidence that wasn’t really an apostle of Christ and therefore shouldn’t be listened to.

Chapters 10 to 13 are Paul’s attempt to correct his detractors. Paul is claiming to have authority in the Corinthian church because of his relationship to them – Paul started the work in Corinth that resulted in a church. Every Christian needs someone in spiritual authority over them. This is one of the purposes of the church (Eph. 4:11-16). It is difficult to achieve spiritual maturity without being under spiritual authority.

All criticism should be handled in the ‘meekness and gentleness of Christ’. That means we should respond to criticism just as Jesus did.

“Being meek doesn’t imply that we never feel impatience or anger but rather that those feelings are controlled.” (Chafin, 1985) page 268

Scriptures:  
Galatians 6:7-8 - Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

<sup>2</sup> But **I** beg *you* that when **I** am present **I** may not

Notes:  
Paul knew he was going to have to confront the people who were causing trouble in the Corinthians church and he was hoping that the majority would accept his God-given authority so that he could be his normal humble self with them. This is a call to separate themselves from the trouble-makers.

be bold with that confidence by which **I** intend to

4006 -

There have always been some who view humility as weakness. It has been said, 'Meekness is power under control!' That was certainly true on Jesus' part and also with Paul.

'walking according to the flesh' = living to satisfy your carnal desires. It is usually those who are walking according to the flesh who accuse others of walking according to the flesh.

be bold against some, who think of **us** as if **we**

"To leave the attack upon himself and his authority unanswered would allow the troublesome but persistent minority to undo all the good that had been done in the church." (Chafin, 1985) page 267

walked according to the flesh.

Paul had spent a year and a half in Corinth. He worked to provide for himself and his friends while sharing the gospel and teaching. Many came to faith and Paul helped them to grow in their faith. When Paul left there was a thriving church in Corinth, where previously there had been none.

Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 - And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

<sup>3</sup> For though **we** walk in the flesh, **we** do not war

4754 -

according to the flesh.

Notes:

'war according to the flesh' – Paul addressed what that looks like in his first letter (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

'walk in the flesh' – we are flesh and bone and cannot be otherwise.

Scriptures:  
Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal

4752 - fight

4559 - 'finitely human'

Notes:  
Paul's detractors were using 'ingenuity, showmanship, splashiness, spiritual pretension, personal charisma' (Hughes) to influence people. Paul had chosen not to use those 'under-handed ways' (1 Cor. 4:2-6) and his detractors claimed that was a sign of weakness.

but mighty in God <sup>Δ</sup> for pulling down strongholds,

1415 -

2506 -  
demolishment

3794 -

'strongholds' the impregnable fortresses of his detractors arguments.

Scriptures:  
Proverbs 9:10 -  
The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,  
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

<sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing

2507 - tear down

3053 - reasoning

Notes:  
'every high thing' - All people have citadels of sin in their lives that form a barrier to between them and God and are very difficult to tear down. The gospel has the power to do what nothing else can.

that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, <sup>Δ</sup>

1108 -

"...every high thing, every haughty thought, every action that forms a barrier to the knowledge of God." (Hughes, 2006) page 183 (Prov. 9:10)

'every thought' - The problem for most people is not their circumstances, but their attitudes toward those circumstances. It is a problem of 'stinking thinking'.

bringing every thought into captivity to the

163 - get control of

Nothing could be better for our lives than to have every thought in captive obedience to Christ. We would then be living as close to perfection as is humanly possible and experience the peace, joy, hope, and love of God in ways most people never will.

obedience of Christ, <sup>✚</sup>

"The minister of Christ is not sent to preach eloquent sermons with beautiful resounding platitudes, but to give men the truth of God." (Ironside, 1938) page 431

All human thoughts and reasoning should be in subjection to the revealed will of God.

Scriptures:

<sup>6</sup> and being ready to punish all disobedience when

**your** obedience is fulfilled.

Notes:

Paul is calling the Corinthians to distance themselves from the troublemakers and to prepare themselves to join him as he deals with them when he comes to Corinth. The church was in danger of losing its gospel power by allowing these carnally minded troublemakers a voice in the church. Paul may have even been hoping that they would respond to this letter and deal with the troublemakers before he got there.

Church discipline is not just for the leaders of the church, but something the whole church should participate in.

Paul was not lacking in strength, confidence, or authority, and, if necessary he would prove that to them on his next visit.

Scriptures:

Galatians 3:26-28 - For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:7-11 - But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>7</sup> Do you look at things according to the outward

appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself

3982 -

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.

Notes:

Paul was not very impressive in appearance and wasn't very eloquent in speech.

We belong to Christ just as much as the finely dressed and charismatic preacher.

There is a false teaching that existed in the time Paul is writing that had crept into the church and persists to this day in many churches – "...the false teaching that the future benefits promised to us at Christ's return are realized now in the present." (Hughes, 2006) page 185

Joel Osteen's book 'Your Best Life Now' is based on that false idea. Some in the church in Corinth looked at Paul's life and presumed that his faith couldn't be real because his 'best life' looked pretty miserable.

This happens when we allow our culture to define Christianity and the church rather than God and His Word.

Paul's detractors viewed their Christianity with an elitist mindset. They saw themselves as better than the average Christian and certainly better than Paul. Paul reminds them and us that we all come to Christ in the same way and that we are all equal at the foot of the cross (Gal. 3:26-28). If anyone had a claim on an elitist attitude it was Paul – he had had a personal encounter with the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). All the grace Paul experienced only caused him to be more humble (Phil. 3:7-11).

Scriptures:  
 Acts 9:10-16 -  
 Now there was a certain  
 disciple at Damascus named  
 Ananias; and to him the  
 Lord said in a vision,  
 "Ananias."  
 And he said, "Here I am,  
 Lord."  
 11 So the Lord said to him,  
 "Arise and go to the street  
 called Straight, and inquire  
 at the house of Judas for  
 one called Saul of Tarsus,  
 for behold, he is praying.  
 12 And in a vision he has  
 seen a man named Ananias  
 coming in and putting his  
 hand on him, so that he  
 might receive his sight."  
 13 Then Ananias answered,  
 "Lord, I have heard from  
 many about this man, how  
 much harm he has done to  
 Your saints in Jerusalem.  
 14 And here he has  
 authority from the chief  
 priests to bind all who call  
 on Your name."  
 15 But the Lord said to him,  
 "Go, for he is a chosen  
 vessel of Mine to bear My  
 name before Gentiles,  
 kings, and the children of  
 Israel. 16 For I will show  
 him how many things he  
 must suffer for My name's  
 sake."

<sup>8</sup> For even if **I** should boast somewhat more about

Notes:  
 Paul was not boasting in himself but  
 in the New Covenant ministry he had  
 been given by Christ and the  
 authority that included (Acts 9:15).

'edification' = building up. Paul saw  
 his role as building up the church,  
 not himself.

our authority, which the Lord gave **us** for

1849 -

edification and not for **your** destruction, **I** shall not

3619 – build up,  
 make more able

2506 – tearing  
 down

be ashamed—

Scriptures:

<sup>9</sup> lest **I** seem to terrify **you** by letters.

Notes:



Scriptures:

<sup>10</sup> “For *his* letters,” they say, “*are* weighty and

Notes:

It is believed that Paul was short and not very impressive to look at. He was not as eloquent as Apollos and Eutychus fell asleep during one of sermons and fell out a window and died.

powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his*

Calling them to look past the superficial and into the spiritual and see that Paul had been used by God to bring them to Christ and build them up in their faith.

speech contemptible.”

Scriptures:

<sup>11</sup> Let such a person consider this, that what *we*

Notes:

‘such a person’ = focused on the superficial outward appearance.

are in word by letters when *we* are absent, such

*we will* also *be* in deed when *we* are present.

Scriptures:

<sup>12</sup> For we dare not class ourselves or compare

1469 – classify,  
categorize

4793 -

ourselves with those who commend themselves.

4921 -  
recommend

But they, measuring themselves by themselves,

3354 -

and comparing themselves among themselves, are

4793 -

not wise.

Notes:

Paul is accusing his detractors of setting up their own standards for excellence and superiority. Of course, they were able to meet and excel at the standards they set up. They were set up so they could excel. For example, I could set up a standard of physical excellence: be able to do 100 pushups in under a month, eat a Ben & Jerry's ice cream in under 10 minutes, and binge watch four of my favorites shows without going to the bathroom. I might feel good about myself but I am but I am not physically excellent.

Paul's standard was allegiance to the gospel, conformity to Christ's character, and participation in Christ's sufferings.

Compared to me, I am the greatest preacher to ever occupy a pulpit.

"To invent and use a private standard has the effect of having no standard at all." (Chafin, 1985) page 269

The work of God is hard to measure using worldly standards. How do you measure faith? Or spiritual growth? Or the impact of prayer? The effects of a sermon or act of service? The temptation is to develop way to measure ourselves using the externals. That was what Paul detractors were doing.

We don't compare ourselves to others because God sovereignly determines our abilities and our work. It is not the best person for the job, but the person God has chosen who is best for the job.

Someone else may be more gifted or qualified than you, but if God has given the work to you that doesn't matter. God chose you, not them. He may choose someone seemingly less qualified because He will get more glory through the work they do in faith.

Scriptures:

13 **We**, however, will not boast beyond measure,

Notes:

but within the limits of the sphere which God

2583 - area

appointed **us**—a sphere which especially includes

3307 – give to a  
particular task

**you.**

Scriptures:

<sup>14</sup> For **we** are not overextending **ourselves** (as

Notes:

though *our authority* did not extend to **you**), for it

was to **you** that **we** came with the <sup>o</sup>gospel of

<sup>+</sup>Christ;

Scriptures:

<sup>15</sup> not boasting of things beyond measure, *that is,*

Notes:

in other men's labors, but having hope, *that* as

*your* faith is increased, *we* shall be greatly

837 -

4050 -

enlarged by *you* in *our* sphere,

3170 -

Scriptures:

<sup>16</sup> to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond *you*,

Notes:

*and* not to boast in another man's sphere of

accomplishment.

Scriptures:

<sup>17</sup> But "*he who glories, let him glory in the LORD.*"

Jeremiah 9:23-24 - Thus says the LORD:  
"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,  
let not the mighty man glory in his might,  
nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24  
but let him who glories glory in this, that he  
understands and knows Me, that I am the  
LORD, exercising lovingkindness,  
judgment, and righteousness in the earth.  
For in these I delight," says the LORD.

Notes:

All our focus ought to be bringing  
glory to God!

Don't take credit for the things the  
Lord has done! Make sure to give  
God the credit for what He has done  
through you.

Scriptures:

<sup>18</sup> For not he who commends himself is approved,

1384 – judged  
worthy

Notes:

Leave the evaluation of your  
ministry, or others, to God. Simply  
seek to glorify God in all you do and  
let Him do the measuring. That takes  
faith because we can't see the results  
of God's measurements.

but whom the Lord commends.

4921 -