

LESSON TEN - 2 CORINTHIANS 10: 1 - 18

Most of what has been said to this point in this epistle had been directed to those at Corinth who acknowledged Paul's Apostleship, trusted him, and followed his instructions. However, in the last four chapters, he mostly addresses his opposition in the church, the false teachers and their followers. Paul will now directly answer several charges brought against him by his opponents. He admits that he is a meek and gentle man, as Christ was, and yes even insignificant (for all the glory belongs to Christ). However, he did possess authority given to him by the Lord and they would do well not to make him use it! He cautions them not to rely too much on his forbearance. He had no desire to use this authority that Christ had given to him, but he would, if necessary, in order to bring down all the opposition. He would then give them fair warning and enough time to repent before he came and had to punish their disobedience (vs. 1 - 6). They should not judge by appearances or elevate themselves by comparing themselves to one another; for whatever they had, he had in larger measure (vs. 7-8). He had no intention of frightening them in his letters - which his opponents said were written in a tone he would not dare assume when present - for they would find that, when the occasion called for it, he could be just as bold when present as when he was absent (vs. 9 - 11). They were subject to his apostolic authority. He could in fact exercise the powers of his office over the churches which he had himself founded. He did not interfere with the other apostles where they preached or undertake the special oversight of churches founded by others. Macedonia and Achaia were within the sphere of his operations, and he hoped to preach the gospel far beyond those limits in regions where it had never been heard (vs. 12 - 16). His confidence was not self-confidence, but confidence in God. His self-commendation amounted to nothing, unless the Lord commended him. Paul constantly felt that in himself he could do nothing, but in the Lord he could do all things (vs. 17-18).

KEY PHRASES:

1. "Paul" - means 'little'. Interesting use of his own name to emphasize he is nothing, Christ is everything.
2. "Some" - the false teachers.
3. "We Walk in the Flesh" - We are human, and we walk on this earth.
4. "Strongholds" - Fortresses.
5. "Weapons" - 1 Thess 5:8, Eph 6:11-16, Sound scriptural reasoning, teaching, and proper motives.
 - a. "Weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" - we do not rely on physical strength, or fleshly strategy (deceit, correction, social pressure, flattery (2 Pet. 2:18), excellency of speech (1 Cor 2:1), compromising the truth (2 Cor 2:17), convert activities, lying, etc...)
6. "Mighty in God" - Paul had enough fire power and ammunition to destroy these strongholds.
7. "Arguments" Vs 5 - Imaginations, opinions, speculations, reasonings opposed to God's truth.
8. "Your obedience would be made full" (vs. 6) - When the 'some' repented then they would be complete
9. "Do you look at things according to their outward appearance?" (vs. 7) - Look at what is obvious, do not be carried away by appearances.
10. "Measure" (vs. 13) - measuring rod, a standard.

APPLICATION:

1. Paul lived with Christ as his example; meekness and gentleness.
2. Christ should always get the glory.
3. We are at war (spiritually) and we should not only have our spiritual weapons ready, but also know how to use them.
4. Do not judge someone by their outward appearance.
5. Always use Christ and His word as your standard of comparison.
6. Ask your self three questions to see if your ministry is by the will of God;
 - a. Am I where God wants me to be? (vs 13 -14).
 - b. Is God glorified in my ministry (vs. 15-17).
 - c. Will the Lord commend my work (vs. 18).

QUESTIONS:

1. List some of the weapons that Paul used.
2. What are the “high things” in verse 5? Are there people like this today? Explain.
3. What is it that will cast down these things?
4. How were they judging the qualifications of their teachers (and don't say ‘by appearance’)?
5. What is Paul saying in verse 8?
6. To what should we measure ourselves?
7. What does Paul mean in verse 15b “as your faith increased, that we shall be enlarged”?
8. What is the Lord's rule of boasting (Jer. 9:23-24), and who lived by this rule?
9. Who is approved and how (vs. 17)?