

# 2 Corinthians 10

## 2 Corinthians 10.1-10

There is a drastic change of tone at this point in the letter

-Possible explanations:

1. Maybe he had received word between *Chs. 9-10* of a deterioration of the conditions at Corinth, and he had to respond immediately
2. Maybe he had laid the letter aside for a few weeks or months
3. Maybe he saved the harsh parts of the letter to the last (after preparing them for it in *Chs. 1-9*)
4. Maybe this section is directed to the false teachers at Corinth, not to the general members (the idea that best explains this section)

**V1** – An affectionate opening to the chapter

-the meekness and gentleness of Christ (as in the crucifixion)

-Paul then quotes his accusers:

**-What were they saying about Paul?** Meek when present, fierce when away

**V2** – How do you explain this verse?

-Paul hopes that when he comes in person, he won't have to be fierce, as he is about to be in this letter

**-Another charge against Paul?** He was walking "according to the flesh"

**-Explain:** Preaching to make money or for his own advantage

**V3** – Paul was a human being, but he didn't wage human warfare

-There are very serious implications here concerning the Christian and carnal warfare

-Christians are not to be involved with physical warfare

-This doesn't mean that we cannot love our country, or even be in the military (chaplain, medic, etc.) – We can be in the diplomatic corps, the Peace Corps, or teaching, or serving the country in some other way

-But we are forbidden to be involved with killing in carnal (fleshly) warfare

**Read Ephesians 6.10-17** – Where are physical weapons of warfare found in that passage? There is no mention of them!

-We can go on mission trips to other parts of the world and serve the Kingdom of God in many ways, but we have no example of any New Testament Christian ever killing someone in warfare

Cornelius: Was he killing anyone in *Acts 9-10*?

**-What did he do after he was baptized?** He brought his life into conformity with the gospel of Christ (as it was being slowly revealed in the First Century)

-Remember the harlot Rahab in *Joshua 2* – **Does the Bible ever tell us that she got out of prostitution when she entered the nation of Israel?** No

**-What is safe to assume?** That as she learned the Law of Moses, she left prostitution

**-On the Day of Pentecost, does the Bible tell us that the Jews with unscriptural marriages left those marriage?** No, but we assume that as the laws of marriage were revealed in the course of the First Century, they brought their lives into conformity with those laws

**-What about homosexuals who heard Peter preach and obeyed the gospel?** We assume (correctly) that they left that sinful lifestyle as they learned the gospel and as the New Testament was put into written form

-We know that as Cornelius learned obeyed the gospel and learned more about the will of God for the lives of Christians, he came to understand the words of Paul here about Christians and physical warfare

-The meaning of these verses in the life of Paul: he would not fight these false teachers in a fleshly way (he wouldn't try to kill them)

**V 4** – **Our warfare today?** It is against Satan

-Being humans, we are sorely tempted to fight Satan with physical weapons and to make the church a secular organization

**-But what is our sword to be?** The Bible (*Eph. 6.14ff*)

**V 5** – Paul is referring to fighting human systems of thought

-Many philosophies today are trying to replace God with a cheap substitute

**-Examples:**

-Transcendental meditation

-Assertiveness training

-The Church of Scientology

-The New Age Movement

-Many other examples (that go by different names in each generation – there is always a new philosophy on the horizon)

-In church work, there is always a new "method" of evangelization

-But only Christianity can capture these systems of thought and liberate the individual

-Real warfare, therefore, is a battle of philosophies and systems of thought

Our answer to Islam and terrorism is Christianity, not in Christians taking up physical arms and waging warfare against our national enemies – **Read Romans 1.16**

**Read Matt. 26.52 and John 18.36**

**V 6** – Remember *2 Cor. 1.23-24*

-Paul will punish the false teachers when he arrives and will arrive as soon as they get their house in order

**-Point?** "You are self-confident because you are Christians, but remember that I too am a Christian"

-They should have remembered that Paul started the church at Corinth

**-The charge?** That they were better Christians than Paul

**V 8** – **What authority?** As an apostle

**-Why was Paul made an apostle?** To build up the Gentiles

**-"Not put to shame"** – They will see his authority as an apostle

**V 9** – Paul did not want to be guilty of the charge in *v 1* – not to terrify them by letters and then make a weak appearance

**V 10** – **Another charge against Paul?** Strong in letters, but still weak in appearance

## **2 Corinthians 10.11-18**

**V 11** – Paul: "I will show you that I can be as strong in person as I am in my letters"

**V 12** – Such an indictment of humanism

-Some sang their own praises (great in their own eyes)

-Paul: I am not going to compare myself with them and stoop to their tactics

-A note of sarcasm here!

**Did Paul have a high opinion of himself?** No – Very low – **Read 1 Tim. 1.15** – chief of all sinners and least of all the apostles

**V 13** – Paul would not exceed his authority, but Corinth was in his authority

**-Where did Paul get the authority to preach in Corinth?** *Acts 16.9* – The Macedonian Call

**V 14** – Paul and others were the first to preach the gospel in Corinth; they had been commissioned to go there

**V 15** – Paul didn't want to offend the other apostles by working where they were working

**-Paul's goal:** To receive aid to preach the gospel in other areas

**V 16** – "regions beyond you" – maybe other parts of Greece

**-Paul's ultimate goal?** Spain (*Romans 15.24*)

-Paul was not bragging about his works thus far

**-Why?** *V 17* – He wanted to give the glory to God

**V 18** – It does not matter if we compliment ourselves; the important thing is be complimented by the Lord

-To have the approval of false teachers meant nothing, and to be criticized by them absolutely meant nothing!

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