

2 Cor 10:1-11:33

Corinthians, Session Sixteen

“A dark cloud now descends on 2 Cor 10-13...Intruders have exacerbated tensions within the Church. These outsiders called Paul’s credentials into question, impugned his motives, and undermined his ministry among his converts” (TLSB footnote).

How do you deal with the critics? Surrender, avoid, ignore, engage, persuade or?

How can conflict actually be healthy?

Authority That Is Real (10:1-11)

What’s Paul’s posture? Does this surprise you?

The charge is that Paul was walking “according to the flesh” (v. 2). His admission in v. 3 is not an agreement with the charge, but an acknowledgement of being human. He is not thinking or speaking from a human perspective.

The weapon is the _____. It’s all he needs.

Paul sees the conflict as _____ as he will write two years later, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood...” (Eph. 6:12). The warfare is more than just philosophical, but it is about making sure the gospel of Jesus Christ prevails.

What does it mean to “take every thought captive to Christ”? (v. 5)

V. 6. There are two groups here: the _____ in faith and the trouble-makers. “Paul’s way of dealing with these two groups is instructive for us. It serves as a reminder that when disciplining is called for...we need to deal gently with the weak as we call them to repentance and seek to restore them to the right path. Serner measures, however, are called for when people willfully persist in error. One strategy doesn’t fit all” (Valleskey, 181).

The purpose for the Lord giving authority is for building up, not tearing down! So build up!

Boasting in the Lord (10:12-18)

People who boast and measure themselves by *self-chosen* standards are not wise. But they can sure look good!

How should an apostle be measured?

“One of the reasons why the work of God is so difficult to evaluate is that it’s hard to measure by worldly standards...Spiritual work requires spiritual measurement...Today’s church needs to be very careful with its fascination with standards of success that impress the secular world so that it won’t find itself using self-manufactured standards for measuring itself rather than God’s measurement” (Chafin, 276).

How do we see that Paul's greater concern is for the church and not himself?

The quote in v. 17 is from Jeremiah 9:23-24.

The Parenting Concern (11:1-21)

"Pure virgin" did not apply to anything worldly in Corinth, but it did apply to the church, as the bride of Christ.

A different gospel...see Gal. 1:6-9. "Every generation must deal with its own false prophets, those who come to the historic church with their own version of Christianity" (Chafin, 282).

"Christians should judge those who come with the word by the content of their message. A gifted, persuasive speaker is not necessarily an authentic preach of the gospel" (Valleskey, 199).

Key: "Paul would accept gifts from those who had been brought to faith through his ministry. He would not, however, take anything from those to whom he was bringing the gospel for the first time" (Valleskey, 200). But the super-apostles (first mentioned in v. 5) upend that virtue: "A tentmaker, eh? Just a common laborer then. Not a teacher or a scholar like we are. That is why he doesn't take your money and we do—we have something of value!"

Sheep in wolf's clothing, Satan masquerading as an angel of light.... "In labeling them as false apostles, Paul is setting an either-or situation...They cannot follow both them and Paul. That would be like trying to follow God and Satan at the same time" (Valleskey, 204).

How can you recognize a genuine servant of righteousness?

V. 20 lists five things the super-apostles had done that the "wise" Corinthians had failed to discern. How? "There was undoubtedly an appealing charisma about them. Their message would have had a certain ring to it. In some way they would have promised their followers something better than what Paul was giving them. No different from the tactics of the serpent in the Garden of Eden! And no different from the tactics of seductive cult leaders today. They promise to give. In reality, their purpose is to enslave, exploit and domineer" (Valleskey, 209).

V. 21 is sarcasm. *Obviously.*

Suffering for the Cause (11:22-33)

The point of v. 22 is "if they can boast about pedigree, so can I."

T / F Acts has all of the hardships that Paul mentions here. Why does Paul list his hardships?

"40 lashes minus one" refers to the maximum amount of punishment in Jewish law, Deut. 25:3.

V. 28 Paul feels daily the _____ of _____ for the churches. "This one verse describes the largest burden he carried" (Chafin, 285).

Your Thoughts...