

# Studies in

# 2 Corinthians



Lesson XVII

**Text:** 2 Corinthians 10:1-11 (NKJV)

**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.

## Discussion Questions

1. When Paul wanted to get his point across, what approach did he use? (vs. 1a) What approach did Paul prefer not to use when engaging in difficult conversations? (vs. 2)
2. What were Paul's critics saying about him? (vs. 1b) Why was it important for Paul to set the record straight? (vs. 2)

3. The New Living Translation renders verses 3-5 this way: “We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.” What does this mean to us, practically speaking? How would you apply this principle to a really tough situation (i.e. a boss who is constantly finding fault, a neighbor who is being difficult, a wayward family member)?
  
4. What could verse 6 be referring to? (cf. 1 Cor. 5:4-5, 11-12) Are there situations that require the same response from the church today?
  
5. Verse 7a asks, “Do you look at things according to the outward appearance?” Take a moment to silently answer that question for yourself. What do you think Paul had in mind when he asked this? (vs. 7b). In what ways are people judged by appearance in our contemporary culture? (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7)
  
6. In verses 8-11, Paul addresses issues related to his own authority in the church. What can we learn from this passage to bring us to a balanced perspective on the use of authority in the church, in the home, and in the workplace?