

STUDYING THE BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS
IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 15 - Paul's Defense of His Ministry - 2 Corinthians 10:1-18

Read the following verses in the New International Version or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold

2CO 10:1 By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you--I, Paul, who am "timid" when face to face with you, but "bold" when away! [2] I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. [3] For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. [4] The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. [5] We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. [6] And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

2CO 10:7 You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he. [8] For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it. [9] I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. [10] For some say, "His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing." [11] Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

2CO 10:12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. [13] We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the field God has assigned to us, a field that reaches even to you. [14] We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. [15] Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, [16] so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in another man's territory. [17] But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." [18] For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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176. What was the source of Paul's authority and influence over others? (10:1)
177. Of what did Paul's opponents accuse him? (10:2)
178. How did the spiritual warfare that Paul fought, and the spiritual weapons that he used, differ from ordinary warfare and weapons? (10:3-4)
179. What did Paul want to demolish? How? (10:4-6)
180. What did Paul take captive? (10:5)
181. How were Paul's opponents generating their misguided ideas? (10:7)
182. Why was Paul not ashamed of boasting about the Corinthians? (10:8)
183. Why would Paul's opponents try to convince the Corinthians that Paul was unimpressive in person? (10:10)
184. How did Paul respond to the accusations against him? (10:11)
185. Why was Paul justified in boasting, whereas his opponents were not? (10:13-16)
186. What would enable Paul to expand the area in which he could preach the gospel? (10:16)
187. In what did Paul's opponents pride themselves? (10:16)
188. Why did Paul endorse boasting in the Lord, but condemn all other forms of boasting? (10:18)