

MEEK & GENTLE DEFENSE 2 CORINTHIANS 10

One of the methods of Satan's attack on the Gospel is to falsely accuse its Ambassadors as well as the Savior Himself. Satan still does this.

IF you have ever been falsely accused of something, you know the ugly taste it can leave behind... It hurts and it can be discouraging too.

It is no wonder that one of Satan's titles in the scripture is "the accuser of the brethren" – Listen:

Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the **accuser** of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

SO... Let none of us become accusers of the Brethren or Sisters in the Lord, lest we join the wrong team, so to speak.

In **Matthew 18:15**, Jesus Himself tells us how to deal with a fellow believer when we think we have been wronged. READ IT! Btw, the first step is NOT to gossip about the person 😊

PAUL GENTLY DEFENDS HIS MINISTRY

2 Corinthians 10:1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ— **(What a beautiful rebuke)** who in presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you.

- **NLT** - though I realize you think I am timid in person and bold only when I write from far away.
- Paul's detractors accused him of being afraid to confront in person... They were implying that he was a coward. It was a lie!
- Paul will tell the Colossian Church: **Colossians 3:21** Parents, don't be hard on your children. If you are, they might give up. **CEV**
- SO... Paul pleads with the Corinthians to let him be gentle...

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.

- IE, Paul had the right to correct his critics... They are the "Some" people in V2...
- And DID Paul have a temper? Well, we ALL do but Paul is keeping his temper under control – Which is really good advice for all of us.
Listen to V3...

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

- **COURSON** - "Because we're human, of course we walk in the flesh, but the battle we wage for you is spiritual—not dependent upon oratorical skill or physical stature," Paul argues.
- **SMITH** – When Satan can get us in a physical battle, a physical argument or a sinful or fleshy argument... HE HAS THE ADVANTAGE! Our flesh, our physical nature is his playground.
 - When, however, we battle in the Spirit, he is defeated because he is powerless in that battle.
 - Listen to Paul talk about the REAL battlefield...

THE REAL BATTLEFIELD

4 For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, (**Opportunities like a ladder by your home**) 5 casting down arguments (**Taking an inventory**) 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.

- **COURSON** - "It is finished," Jesus declared from the Cross (John 19:30). The victory is won. Although the war goes on, we do not fight **for** victory. We fight **from** victory. That is why Paul tells us to pull down, root out, take control of the strongholds our adversary has erected in our minds and hearts. Concerning this Enemy, Paul says

we are not to be ignorant of his devices. And we aren't.

- **SMITH** – Remember Paul's instructions to the Church at Ephesus... **Ephesians 6:10** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; **LISTEN!** 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
- Listen, NOT praying is like an unexploded bomb left behind; like the one that went off in Munich on 12/1/21. Perhaps that bomb might have ended the war even earlier... www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59487910
- Here is the lesson... PRAY more. Pray without ceasing... Pray for guidance and provision. Pray for your loved ones. AND Paul says: Pray for me too!

OUR POINT OF VIEW

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.

- **NLT** - Look at the obvious facts. Those who say they belong to Christ

must recognize that we belong to Christ as much as they do.

- Here again, we assume that the Apostle is having to answer for his appearance. He has told us that he had a thorn in the flesh – some kind of eye disease that made his eyes runny and blurred.
- He had asked to be healed of it... AND... The Lord said to him, “My grace is sufficient” for you.
- MANY of us are dealing with His “Sufficient grace” as well, Amen?
 - We will finish our race with Leukemia, or cancer, or lupus, or in some cases, eye problems just like the Apostle...So, Melody and Martina, you are in good company!

PAUL DROPS A TRUTH BOMB

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."

- Beloved, this world may not like our biblical authority... but that does not change it. The scriptures are our edification, NOT destruction.
- **2 Timothy 3:16** - All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

A WORD TO “THEY SAY”

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. 12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

- V12 **NLT** - Oh, don't worry; we wouldn't dare say that we are as wonderful as these other men who tell you how important they are! But they are only comparing themselves with each other, using themselves as the standard of measurement. How ignorant!

- WHO is our standard? Another man or woman? NOPE!
- At the end of Matthew chapter 5, after giving instructions about how to live, Jesus commands: **Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**
- Don't become frustrated by trying to be better than others - spiritually speaking. We HAVE to rely on the righteousness of Christ to make it to the Father. **JOHN 14:6**
- The really good news is this: The invitation was not given begrudgingly; The Lord is excited about you being saved and spending eternity with Him!

BLAMELESS BOASTING

13 **We, however**, will not boast beyond measure, (**Improperly**) but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you. 14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though *our authority* did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ; **IE, it was Paul's team who first came to Corinth.**

15 not boasting of things beyond measure, **EXAGERATING** *that is*, in other men's labors, but having hope, *that* as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, 16 to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment.

- PAUL wanted to take the Gospel to new places, places with no churches. Like Rome, and to Spain...
- He closes this section by saying "To God be the glory!"

17 But "HE WHO GLORIES, LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD."

18 For **not** he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

SO... Let's do something we know that God wants us to do, Communion.