

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL
12 - SUNDAY – September 13, 2026

Spiritual War

Read 2 Corinthians 10:1–11. Paul’s meekness in his dealings with the Corinthians was sometimes confused with weakness.

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.”

What words or phrases in this passage reveal Paul’s courage to deal with the problem of false teachers in Corinth?

Paul begins 2 Corinthians 10 very personally: “Now I, Paul, make a personal appeal to you” (2 Cor. 10:1, HCSB). This shows how concerned Paul was about false teachings infiltrating the church.

His words in **2 Corinthians 10:1** ironically refer to his opponents’ accusation that he was a frightening bully when writing letters from a distance but a pitiful coward when dealing with people face to face (2 Cor. 10:10, 11). **He responds that what seemed to be weakness should be seen as powerful meekness and Christlike gentleness.**

1. Confront Error With Boldness—But With Christlike Gentleness

Bible:

- **2 Corinthians 10:1-2 (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.”**
- **Matthew 11:29 (NKJV) “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”**

Truth:

- We must stand firm against error
- But do it with:
 - Meekness
 - Humility

Balance: Bold truth + Gentle spirit

2. Follow Jesus' Example: Gentle Yet Fearless

Bible:

- **Matthew 21:12-13 (NKJV)** “(12) Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. (13) And He said to them, “It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”
- **Matthew 23:23-27 (NKJV)** “(23) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. (24) Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! (25) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. (26) Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. (27) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”

Truth: Jesus was:

- Gentle with the broken
- Bold with hypocrisy

Lesson: Love does not avoid confrontation—it **guides it**

3. Recognize That We Are in a Spiritual War

Bible:

- **Ephesians 6:12-17 (NKJV)** “(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;”
- **2 Corinthians 10:3 (NKJV)** “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.”

Truth: We are not in a human conflict — It is a **spiritual battle**

Insight:

The enemy is not people — The enemy is **spiritual deception**

Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV) “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.”

4. Fight With Spiritual Weapons—Not Human Methods

Bible: 2 Corinthians 10:4 (NKJV) “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,”

Truth:

- God’s weapons are:
 - Powerful
 - Divinely effective
- Not manipulation — Not force — But **truth and the Spirit**

5. Tear Down False Arguments With the Word of God

Bible: 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) “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,”

Truth:

- We must:
 - Confront false ideas
 - Reject worldly thinking

Bring every thought into: **Obedience to Christ**

Insight: The battlefield is the **mind and against the mind.**

We live in a:

- **Body controls the mind society.**
- **Not mind controls the body society.**

Philippians 2:5 (NKJV) “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,”

Romans 12:2 (NKJV) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

6. Use Authority to Build Up—Not Tear Down

Bible: 2 Corinthians 10:8 (NKJV) “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—”

Truth:

- Spiritual authority is:
 - Given by Christ
 - Meant for **edification**

Insight:

- True leadership strengthens people
- It does not destroy them

Luke 22:32 (KJV) “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”

7. Guard Loyalty to Christ Above All**Bible:**

- **2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) “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,”**
- Context: protecting believers from false influence)

Truth:

- **False teachers:** Shift loyalty away from Christ
- **True leaders:** Lead people **closer to Christ**

Final Insight:

- Paul’s concern was not personal reputation
- It was **faithfulness to Christ**

Final Summary

- Be bold—but gentle
- Fight—but spiritually
- Lead—but humbly
- Correct—but lovingly
- Build—but not destroy

Power Statement: “In spiritual warfare, we don’t win by force—we win by truth, humility, and the power of Christ.”