

¹ Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent!

Paul introduces himself with straightforwardness and dignity; and he urged them by the **meekness and gentleness of the Christ**, which was of a great value in his eyes, as it seemed to **have none** in theirs.

- Let men be careful of despising in the servant what was the fruit of the perfection of Christ.
- Paul was criticized for being meek when face to face and bold when not face to face. In other words two-faced

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Meekness: Quiet strength. Matthew 11:29- 1 Peter 3:4

Gentleness: forbearance

- It was what he had seen in the Lord Jesus Christ he served, and this reproduced by the Holy Spirit in his heart and in his ways.
2 Cor.3:18
- His detractors describe him with a poor appearance when face to face, but very bold when absent, in his letters.
- It would be due to their condition if he came to see them with a rod, or in love and the spirit of meekness.

² I ask that when I am present, I need not be bold with the confidence with which I propose to be courageous against some, who regard us as if we walked according to the flesh.

He says, “I beg” that I don’t have to, when I get there, be bold () with the confidence with which I am thinking, against some that think of us as walking according to flesh.

It was his deepest grief to see saints

- Misled by Satan,
- Forsaking their own grace and mercies,
- Grieving the Spirit, and
- Putting the Lord's name to dishonor.

He would rejoice if no such need came up

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

For, though we are ordering our behavior in the sphere of human experience. Wuest

For though we walk around in our bodies **flesh (sarx)**,

All who live here on earth can say ***we walk in the flesh***

(b) "the human body," **2 Cor. 10:3**; **Gal. 2:20**; **Phil. 1:22**;
Vineø

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

WAR- strateuomai- to *serve* in a military campaign

Not in accordance with mere human considerations are we waging warfare [against evil], Wuest

All who live here on earth can say we walk in the flesh; how few can say *we do not serve as soldiers according to the flesh*, ô at least as Paul could.

Flesh- "the natural attainments of men," [1 Cor. 1:26](#); Vine's

We cannot be involved in this war based upon the flesh.

Merryman

⁴ for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

Weapons- hoplon-weapons of warfare. Weapons of Christian warfare-
Vineø

The weapons of Paul's warfare were not fleshly-Sarx - pertaining to the flesh, carnal "human," with the added idea of weakness, figuratively of the weapons of spiritual warfare, "of the flesh" (AV, "carnal"), Vine's Expository Dictionary

Powerful- dunata- "strong, mighty, powerful, able (to do) Vine's

The reason we cannot conduct war in the flesh is that our weapons are not fleshly. *but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.*

⁴ *for the weapons of our warfare are not human but **mighty in God's sight**, resulting in the **demolition of fortresses**, (Wuest NT)*

The nature of our and his weapons.

- 1. In terms of effectiveness. *divinely powerful*.** This verse does not say we fight fire with fire. We don't use the enemy's tactics or his weapons.
- 2. In terms of purpose. *What are we fighting for? for the destruction of fortresses.*** Fortresses- ochyra ma-Strongholds, of those things in which mere human confidence is imposed. Vine's We are out there to **tear them down** and replace them.
- 3. The nature of our victory:**
The nature of our victory in terms of what is **destroyed**. CM
Jer. 1:9-10

⁵ *We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,*

What Kind Of fortresses?

1. The first fortress is **speculation or reasoning** all in the mind and will. The reasonings of the self-centered old man. Isaiah 2:11
 - a. There are 2 ways to approach the Word of God
 1. The Word of God is something to be added to our life and mind. These are fortresses in our head.
- OR**
2. The Word of God is to **replace our way of thinking.**
 1. First our fleshly thinking must be **destroyed**.
 2. Replaced by Experiential knowledge of God.

demolishing reasonings and every haughty mental elevation which lifts itself up against the experiential knowledge of God, and leading **captive every thought** into the obedience to the Christ,

Wuest

Why does Paul deal with the mind and the will?

Thoughts of the mind + acts of the will = conduct. CM

Positive side.

1. We can't control how thoughts present themselves to us; how we think. What shows up in our minds
2. We are to **bring it into captivity** every thought that presents itself. **Take control of our thoughts by our will and the Word of God as to what enters our mind. We make them captive**

⁵ We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

How do we control them?

1. We are to bring every thought into captivity. We take control by our will, volition, and the Word of God as to what we do with what enters our mind.
2. We are not trying to make every thought pleasing to Christ.
3. Faith is a matter of will. I choose and trust what I believe
4. Our minds are the least protected element of our being.

⁶ *and we are ready to **punish** all **disobedience**, whenever your obedience is complete.*

I'm writing this ahead of time to give you a chance to get your act together.

Punish-ekdike . Paul's readiness to use his apostolic authority in **punishing disobedience** on the part of his readers; Vine's

Disobedient- parako -primarily, "**hearing amiss**" (*para*, "aside," *akouō*, "to hear"), **hence signifies "a refusal to hear;" hence, "an act of disobedience,"** [Rom. 5:19](#); [2 Cor. 10:6](#); [Heb. 2:2](#). Vine's

*If we war not according to flesh, by definition, we must be by **pulling down reasonings and every high thing exalted (or exalting itself thus) and leading captive every thought unto the obedience of the Christ.***