

“EVALUATING OUR MINISTRY”
2 Corinthians 10:7-18

INTRODUCTION

The Corinthians were impressed with great oratory and credentials. In this regard, Paul's ministry seemed small and invalid. The most important thing is the spiritual authority that he had, **v.8**. We should evaluate ourselves in many ways, financially, physically, spiritually, etc. We must look at the Scriptures, however, for the most important analysis of how we are doing in our lives.

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

In **verse 7** it seems that the Corinthians, unfortunately, looked at style over substance. (Did they look at the evidence?) It would seem that their argument was that Paul was not called or appointed as an apostle. It's hard to believe they would not think that he is saved!

As part of the Roman culture that affected Corinth, they were impressed by authority, thinking that power and position implied spiritual authority. Even we look at the credentials of the experts. The Corinthian church was not mature enough to perceive the authority that Paul really had, because of his meekness, **1 Corinthians 10:1**.

Spiritual authority is a gift, **verse 8**. It comes from the Lord! If we forget that, we run into trouble. Many now have trouble with authority. It has been undermined in our own homes by society. Children have been given legal right to not inform their parents about serious issues. In Scripture, children are under the authority of the parents because they are a heritage of the Lord.

BUILDING

The authority that was given to Paul was to build up, not tear down. Unfortunately, this doesn't always happen in the home. There can be great tearing down and tearing apart by husbands, wives and children.

Paul was a builder, **1 Corinthians 3**; and Jesus was a carpenter, **“I will build My church”, Matt. 16:18**. We need to be constructive in our words and demeanor. They thought Paul was destructive with his letters, however. Paul did write some intense things, such as turning someone over to Satan because he wanted the church to take care of it. Authority tells the truth with love. Authority is the same, whether public or private. It needs to be consistent. The power of authority is consistency in walk and talk. Paul's ministry was church planting. Corinth took up much of Paul's time to the neglect of other towns and churches. (Sometimes churches have so much internal complaining that they can't get out of their own way to reach out!)

We must recognize that we should not measure ourselves by ourselves, **v. 12**. Social media can be one of the worst places to do that. Some want to appear greater than they really are, and others become discouraged as if their lives are not as fulfilling as others that they read about.

The true measure of a life is, “Am I where God wants me to be?”, **v. 13-16**. (In racing terms, “stay in your lane”, so to speak!) Paul came to Corinth with care that the Judaizers never expressed, **v.14**. Unfortunately, some are involved in people's lives, but only to meddle as self-appointed helpers.

CONSIDER

There is so much self-promotion today. Is God glorified in what we do? Are we bragging about Jesus? The biggest issue is, “Am I in the right lane, or am I looking at other lanes?” “Am I even born again?” We must remember that ultimately, when we stand before Him, *He will evaluate us!*

PRAY.....

- * That the Lord would unite us in prayer for a spiritual awakening in New York State!
- * That our evening of Thanksgiving in November would be a true time of worship for our body.