

As we begin (C10), there is a notable transition from (C8-9); it's almost as if Paul started another letter.

I don't think that's the case, but there is a definite change in his tone... from teaching to authority, discipline, even warning toward "some" in the church. 2 Corinthians 10:1-6

Why did Paul write this? What was happening in the church @ Corinth that moved him to be bold with his pen? Answer (V2B). Paul and his fellow ministers were being accused BY SOME IN THE CHURCH of walking (being motivated and governed) by the flesh in their ministry.

We don't see Satan's name in the text, but he was clearly behind these "accusers" who were trying to ruin Paul's ministry. Matthew 16:18

Beloved, Satan will not rest in his quest to ruin the church of Christ. He WILL NOT prevail, but HE WILL DO HIS WORST in trying to destroy local churches like this one!

What was happening in the church @ Corinth is one of Satan's preferred methods of destroying a local church...by infecting it from within by attacking Paul the servant of Christ! If Satan can ruin the preacher, Satan can ruin the local church! Acts 20:28-31

Paul began by being wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove...

Paul didn't play into Satan's hand, he pleaded with the church by the meekness and gentleness of Christ! Satan wanted to destroy the church @ Corinth, and the most effective way for him to do that was to ruin Paul's reputation by getting him to REACT IN THE FLESH!

Beloved, we need to be wise enough to realize when the devil is actively afoot among us! Paul's reaction to his accusers was NOT a typical carnal reaction...

When we react carnally and sinfully to Satan's lies and accusations, he's taken the high ground... Paul was not ignorant of his devices, but he was sober and vigilant, resisting Satan's attack by dealing with this conflict by the wisdom and Spirit of Christ!

Beloved, YOU NEED TO KNOW your enemy, his methods! Paul knew who the real enemy was... That's why he thought it very important to begin this portion of his letter in a humble tone of meekness and gentleness.

Paul refused Satan's bait, deflected his fiery dart; and in doing so, he was able to take the spiritual high ground, and deal rightly with this conflict...

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after (or according to, or in) the flesh"...next time, spiritual weaponry...

Simply stated, we are still in these earthly tabernacles, but we are not controlled or motivated by the flesh or by carnal passions!

So here is Christlike Conflict Resolution 101...it must begin by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...

Paul began by (purposely) writing about himself in the same way that he was being accused and spoken against by "SOME" in the church, agreeing with his enemies and those who were slandering him and challenging his authority. What did they say about Paul? 2 Corinthians 10:8-11

You're right said Paul! I am base and lowly in person & bold behind my pen! He agreed with his adversaries! G. Breed comment!

Even though Paul was given apostolic authority from Christ to establish the churches doctrinally and practically... he didn't arrogantly advertise his authority like a tyrant... but in the Spirit of meekness, humility, and in the gentleness of Christ... here pleading with them in (V1), and then (V2) he said..

"BUT I beg you to HEAR ME" in what I am writing, so that WHEN I DO COME TO YOU..... "That I may NOT be bold with that confidence wherewith I THINK to be bold AGAINST SOME, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh"

That is an overview of what Paul was dealing with as he wrote this section of this letter. He was dealing with what we might call "the carnal resistance"; factions and groups of people in the church WHO WERE walking according to the flesh, following Satan's lead and not Christ's!

So, Paul began WHERE we should begin to resolve any conflict or disagreement, (in the church) whether doctrinally or practically: I plead with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ:

Paul knew that this was bigger than his reputation...the Name of Christ and the spiritual health of this church was a stake. So, Paul wrote, "I BESEECH YOU" twice, (V1-2), which means, I plead with you, I ask you, I beg you, please listen to what I have to say.

This was "A soft answer turning away wrath: (rather than) grievous words stirring up anger" ...SO OFTEN resolving conflicts begins the wrong way, in arrogance and anger, (the devil's will), rather than in meekness and gentleness, (Christ's will)!

Paul addressed those in the church that were against him IN THE SAME WAY that the Lord Jesus addressed those that were against Him, with authority, but also, in meekness and gentleness. 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

"Meekness and Gentleness" from Christ is often despised by the world and looked upon by many as weaknesses, but as with every grace given to us by God, they are far from weaknesses...they are STRENGTHS from God!

If you're IN CHRIST, born-again by the Spirit of God, these (2) "fruit" of the Spirit MUST BE IN YOU, MUST BE CULTIVATED in your spirit by prayer and obedience to the Word! As you grow and mature in Christ, so meekness and gentleness should be more apparent and obvious in your spirits.

Paul began reasoning with them, not as one motivated by the flesh, (as he was accused), but as one motivated by the Holy Spirit!

James 3:13-18, Colossians 3:12, Titus 3:1-2

The Lord Jesus NEVER reacted sinfully or in unrighteous anger toward those that hated Him...toward the scribes and Pharisees who questioned, slandered, and despised Him, even accused Him of being a devil, THESE MEN OPPOSED their promised Messiah, and in so doing OPPOSED THEMSELVES! 2 Timothy 2:22-26

Paul followed Christ's example toward those who accused him and questioned his ministry/motives, KNOWING that "A BAD REACTION" from him would HURT the name of Christ and the gospel! 1 Timothy 1:12-16

My life, saith Paul, is to be a "pattern and an example" to the lost, of what a Christian must be...even when I am under attack! I don't want to mess that up and end up causing sinners to turn away from Christ!

Satan was behind this entire conflict in the church...

2 Corinthians 11:3

As children of God, we need to know our adversary and his methods. Even if the devil doesn't start the conflict, he's sure going to try and perpetuate it...his desired result is the end of this church!

1 Peter 5:8-10, Ephesians 6:10-12, 2 Corinthians 2:11

Next: Don't let Satan use you to be his mouthpiece...by slander, backbiting, anger, not forgiving, speaking against a brother, sister, the pastor! Satan's quiver is full of fiery darts, DON'T ASSIST HIM... RESIST HIM!

KNOW that if you're born again, by the Spirit of God, MEEKNESS and GENTLENESS from Christ should be IN YOU...as you grow in grace and in knowledge and in the wisdom of Christ... the more these (2) fruit of the Holy Spirit (along with the other fruit) should be IN YOU! Agree with thine adversary quickly...never forget, if you go to resolve a conflict by fighting for yourself or your reputation... you're hurting the Name of Christ and the gospel!