

1 Corinthians 4:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

Analysis

Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. The verb *ephyiōthēsan* (ἐφυσιώθησαν, "became puffed up") appears again (cf. v. 6), marking Corinthian arrogance. *Hōs mē erchomenou mou* (ὥς μὴ ἐρχομένου μου, "as if I were not coming") reveals their presumption: assuming Paul wouldn't return, they felt emboldened to challenge his authority. Distance had bred contempt—his letters seemed weighty, but in-person presence weak (2 Cor 10:10).

This sets up the contrast in verses 19-21. The troublemakers assumed Paul's absence meant impunity, allowing them to spread dissent. Their arrogance (*physiōsis*) manifested in dismissing Paul's authority, questioning his apostleship, and fostering factionalism. Paul's response combines paternal patience (sending Timothy first) with firm warning—he will come, and will address not just words but spiritual power behind those words.

Historical Context

Ancient correspondence took weeks or months; personal visits were rare and expensive. Paul's apostolic itinerary depended on missionary circumstances, travel conditions, and divine guidance. The Corinthians' geographical distance (Corinth in Greece, Paul in Ephesus in Asia Minor) and time lag since his founding visit (Acts 18:1-18) may have emboldened opponents to challenge his authority, assuming he wouldn't or couldn't return to confront them personally.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. In what ways does physical or emotional distance from spiritual authority tempt you toward arrogance or rebellion?
2. How do you respond when leaders you respect can't immediately address your situation—with patient trust or with dismissive independence?
3. What 'puffed up' attitudes or behaviors might you hide when authority figures are present but indulge when they're absent?

Interlinear Text

ὥς	μὴ	ἐρχομένου	δέ	μου	πρὸς	ὑμᾶς	ἐφυσιώθησάν
as though	not	come	Now	I	to	you	are puffed up
G5613	G3361	G2064	G1161	G3450	G4314	G5209	G5448

τινὲς·
some
G5100

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 5:2 (Parallel theme): And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.