

# 1 Corinthians 4:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

## Analysis

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**But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.** Paul's resolve is qualified: ean ho Kyrios thelēsē (ἐὰν ὁ Κύριος θελήσῃ, "if the Lord wills")—submitting travel plans to divine sovereignty (cf. James 4:13-15; Acts 18:21). The verb gnōsomai (γνώσομαι, "I will know/ascertain") implies examination—Paul will personally investigate the troublemakers.

The contrast is sharp: ton logon (τὸν λόγον, "the word/speech") versus tēn dynamin (τὴν δύναμιν, "the power"). The arrogant Corinthians had impressive rhetoric but lacked genuine spiritual authority. Paul distinguishes eloquent talk from dynamis—the power of the Spirit that authenticates gospel ministry (1:17-18; 2:4-5; 2 Cor 12:12). His coming will expose whether critics merely talk impressively or manifest the Spirit's reality. Words are cheap; power proves authenticity.

## Historical Context

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Greco-Roman culture prized rhetorical skill—sophists dazzled audiences with eloquence. Corinthian critics likely attacked Paul's speaking ability (2 Cor 10:10; 11:6) while boasting of their own sophistication. Paul consistently subordinates human rhetoric to Spirit-empowered proclamation (1:17; 2:1-5). His impending visit threatens to unmask all pretense—authentic apostolic authority manifests not

in flowery speech but in miracles, transformed lives, and moral courage under persecution.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. Do you evaluate ministries and teachers primarily by rhetorical polish and charisma, or by genuine spiritual fruit and power?
2. In what areas of your life does impressive 'speech' mask a lack of real 'power'—religious talk without spiritual reality?
3. How do you cultivate the habit of submitting your plans to God's will ('if the Lord wills') rather than presuming on the future?

## Interlinear Text

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ἐλεύσομαι δὲ ταχέως πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐὰν ὁ κύριος  
**I will come** **But** **shortly** **to** **you** **if** **G3588** **the Lord**  
G2064 G1161 G5030 G4314 G5209 G1437 G2962

θελήσῃ καὶ γνώσομαι οὐ τὸν λόγον τῶν  
**will** **and** **will know** **not** **G3588** **the speech** **G3588**  
G2309 G2532 G1097 G3756 G3056

πεφυσιωμένων ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν.  
**of them which are puffed up** **but** **G3588** **the power**  
G5448 G235 G1411

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 18:21** (Parallel theme): But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

**Acts 19:21** (Parallel theme): After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

**Hebrews 6:3** (Parallel theme): And this will we do, if God permit.

**Romans 15:32** (Parallel theme): That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

**1 Corinthians 2:6** (Parallel theme): Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

**1 Corinthians 11:34** (Parallel theme): And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

**1 Corinthians 4:18** (Parallel theme): Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

**2 Corinthians 1:23** (Parallel theme): Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

**James 4:15** (References Lord): For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.