

2 Corinthians 1:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

Analysis

When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? (μήτι τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ ἐχρησάμην;)—elaphria (ἐλαφρία, "lightness/fickleness") connotes frivolous instability. Rhetorical question expects "No!"

Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?—kata sarka (κατὰ σάρκα, "according to flesh") means worldly, self-serving motives. Doubled **yea yea...nay nay** depicts double-minded contradiction—like the double-tongued person (Sirach 5:9, 28:13).

Historical Context

Written around AD 55-56 from Macedonia after Paul's 'painful visit' to Corinth (2:1). The Corinthian church faced challenges to Paul's apostolic authority from 'super-apostles' (11:5) who valued eloquence over cruciform ministry. Paul writes to defend his ministry, explain his changed travel plans, and restore relationship with this fractious congregation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. When my plans change, do I defensively justify or humbly explain how God redirected me?
2. How can I distinguish Spirit-led flexibility from 'according to flesh' people-pleasing?
3. What accusations of inconsistency do I need to address directly rather than letting them fester?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο οὖν βουλεύομαι μή τι ἄρα τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ
thus **therefore** **I** G3361 G5100 G686 G3588 **lightness**
G5124 G3767 G1011 G1644

ἐχρησάμην; ἢ ἃ βουλεύομαι κατὰ σάρκα
G5530 **or** **When** **I** **according** **to the flesh**
G2228 G3739 G1011 G2596 G4561

βουλεύομαι ἵνα ἥ παρ' ἐμοὶ τὸ ναὶ ναὶ καὶ
I **that** **there should be** **with** **me** G3588 **yea** **yea** **and**
G1011 G2443 G5600 G3844 G1698 G3483 G3483 G2532

τὸ οὐ; οὐ;
G3588 **nay** **nay**
G3756 G3756

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:37 (Parallel theme): But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

James 5:12 (Parallel theme): But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Jeremiah 23:32 (Light): Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

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