

# 2 Corinthians 10:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

## Analysis

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**Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ** (παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς διὰ τῆς πραύτητος καὶ ἐπεικειᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ)—Paul begins this defense of his apostleship by grounding his appeal in Christ's character, not his own authority. Prautēs (πραύτης, "meekness") denotes strength under control, while epieikeia (ἐπείκεια, "gentleness") suggests forbearance and reasonableness. These qualities characterized Christ's earthly ministry (Matthew 11:29) and must mark authentic apostolic leadership.

**Who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you**—Paul quotes his critics' accusation ironically. They claimed he was tapeinos (ταπεινός, "humble/lowly") in person but bold at a distance. Paul will turn this perceived weakness into proof of Christlike ministry. The "super-apostles" (11:5) valued impressive rhetoric and commanding presence; Paul embodied cruciform leadership—power perfected in weakness (12:9).

## Historical Context

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Written from Macedonia (AD 55-56), this letter addresses ongoing opposition to Paul's authority in Corinth. His opponents—likely Judaizing teachers claiming superior apostolic credentials—contrasted Paul's unimpressive physical presence with their own eloquence. In Greco-Roman culture, rhetorical skill and

commanding presence signaled authority; Paul's weakness appeared to discredit his message.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does Paul's appeal to Christ's 'meekness and gentleness' challenge worldly models of leadership that value forcefulness over humility?
2. When have you mistaken someone's gentleness for weakness, or conversely, confused harshness with strength?
3. What would change in church leadership if we measured authority by Christlike meekness rather than commanding presence?

## Interlinear Text

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Αὐτὸς	δὲ	ἐγὼ	Παῦλος	παρακαλῶ	ὕμᾱς·	διὰ	τῆς
myself	Now	I	Paul	beseech	you	by	G3588
G846	G1161	G1473	G3972	G3870	G5209	G1223	
πραότης	καὶ	ἐπιεικείας	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ	ὃς	κατὰ	
the meekness	and	gentleness	G3588	of Christ	who	in	
G4236	G2532	G1932		G5547	G3739	G2596	
πρόσωπον	μὲν	ταπεινὸς	ἐν	ὕμῖν	ἀπὼν	δὲ	
presence	am base	G5011	among	you	being absent	Now	
G4383	G3303		G1722	G5213	G548	G1161	
θάρρῳ	εἰς	ὕμᾱς·					
am bold	toward	you					
G2292	G1519	G5209					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 11:29** (Parallel theme): Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

**2 Corinthians 10:10** (Parallel theme): For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

**Galatians 5:2** (References Christ): Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

**Romans 12:1** (Parallel theme): I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

**1 Corinthians 2:3** (Parallel theme): And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

**2 Corinthians 11:30** (Parallel theme): If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.