

2 Corinthians 10:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

Analysis

For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction (έάν τε γὰρ περισσότερόν τι καυχήσωμαι περὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἡμῶν, ἵς ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν ὑμῶν)—Exousia (ἐξουσία, "authority") denotes delegated power from Christ. Paul's authority is not self-assumed but edōken ho kyrios (ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος, "given by the Lord"). Critically, its purpose is oikodomēn (οἰκοδομήν, "building up/edification"), not kathairesin (καθαίρεσιν, "tearing down/destruction")—though the same authority that builds can also demolish when necessary (13:10).

I should not be ashamed—Paul's boasting in divinely-given authority brings no shame because it's exercised for the congregation's benefit, not self-promotion. Legitimate boasting glories in the Lord's work (v. 17), not personal achievement. Paul will extensively "boast" in chapters 11-12, but always to expose the folly of self-commendation and demonstrate Christ's power perfected in weakness.

Historical Context

Greco-Roman patronage systems centered on honor and shame. Patrons boasted of benefactions; clients praised their benefactors. Paul subverts this—his authority serves, not dominates. His "boasting" isn't self-promotion but defense of gospel

ministry against false teachers who wielded authority destructively, burdening consciences and enslaving believers (11:20).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How can Christian leaders distinguish between godly confidence in their Spirit-given authority and ungodly pride in personal achievements?
2. What does it reveal when church authority is exercised for leaders' benefit (control, honor, comfort) rather than believers' edification?
3. How should Paul's model of authority-for-building-up shape church discipline, teaching, and leadership structures today?

Interlinear Text

ἐάν	τε	γὰρ	καὶ	περισσότερόν	τι	καυχήσωμαι
though	G5037	For	and	G4053	somewhat	I should boast
G1437		G1063	G2532		G5100	G2744
περὶ	τῆς	ἐξουσίας	ἡμῶν	ἥς	ἔδωκεν	ὁ
of	G3588	authority	our	which	hath given	G3588
G4012		G1849	G2257	G3739	G1325	G2962
εἰς	οἰκοδομὴν	καὶ	οὐκ	εἰς	καθαίρεσιν	ὑμῶν
for	edification	and	not	for	destruction	your
G1519	G3619	G2532	G3756	G1519	G2506	G5216
αἰσχυνθήσομαι						G3756
	I should					
	G153					

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 13:10 (References Lord): Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

2 Corinthians 1:24 (Parallel theme): Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

2 Corinthians 12:6 (Parallel theme): For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

2 Corinthians 13:8 (Parallel theme): For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

Galatians 1:1 (Parallel theme): Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2 Timothy 1:12 (Parallel theme): For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.