

2 Corinthians 13:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

Analysis

Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me—The Greek *dokimēn* (δοκιμήν, "proof/testing") is the crucial term: the Corinthians demand credentials demonstrating apostolic authority. Paul responds that **Christ speaking in me** is validated not by rhetorical polish but by power: **which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you**. The paradox: they doubt Paul while their own existence as Christians proves Christ's power through him.

This echoes 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 where Paul rejected "wisdom of words" in favor of "demonstration of the Spirit and power." The Corinthians' demand for *dokimē* (proof) will boomerang into self-examination (v. 5)—those questioning Paul's authority must first examine their own standing. Christ's "mighty" (*dynatei*, δυνατεῖ) power among them constitutes the very proof they seek.

Historical Context

Greek rhetoric prized eloquence and philosophical sophistication. Paul's deliberate rejection of such methods (1 Cor 2:1-4) led some Corinthians to question his authority, especially when compared to more polished "super-apostles" (2 Cor 11:5). This cultural collision between Greco-Roman honor values and the cruciform power Paul embodied created ongoing tension.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do we wrongly demand 'proof' of spiritual authority based on worldly credentials rather than spiritual fruit?
2. What does it mean that the Corinthians' own conversion was proof of Christ's power through Paul?
3. How does Christ's power manifest 'not in word but in power' in church leadership today?

Interlinear Text

ἐπεὶ	δοκιμὴν	ζητεῖτε	τοῦ	ἐν	ἐμοὶ	λαλοῦντος	Χριστοῦ
Since	a proof	ye seek	G3588	in	me	speaking	of Christ
G1893	G1382	G2212		G1722	G1698	G2980	G5547
ὅς	εἰς	ὑμᾶς	οὐκ	ἀσθενεῖ	ἀλλὰ	δυνατεῖ	ἐν
which	to	you-ward	not	is	but	is mighty	in
G3739	G1519	G5209	G3756	G770	G235	G1414	G1722
							G5213

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 10:20 (Parallel theme): For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

2 Corinthians 12:12 (Parallel theme): Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Luke 21:15 (Parallel theme): For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

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