–Save This Page as a PDF–

The Exercise of Apostolic Authority
10: 1-11

The Corinthians' regard for **Paul** had been steadily undermined both by actions on **his** part that **they** had misinterpreted, and by the invasion of **rivals** (**to see link click Af – The Problem of the False Apostles**) who made inroads by mockingly comparing **Paul** to **themselves**. Because those **mischief makers** had met with an embarrassing measure of success, **Paul** found **himself** in the uncomfortable position of having to defend **himself** against **their** annoying smear campaign and to explain **his** behavior as **an apostle**.[203]

Paul's opponents had leveled the accusation against **him** that **he** lacked integrity since **he** presented **himself** as a ferocious lion who would only roar when **he** was far off in the woods, but was a timid lamb and would turn tail whenever **he** was confronted **face-to-face (10:1-2, 9-11)**. **Paul** points out that **his enemies**, who judge **him** on the basis of human standards **(10:2-3)**, have misread **him** and **his** ministry, seeing as "weakness" what should have been understood as **Messiah's** powerful "meekness." Evidently, some of **the Corinthians themselves** had joined in this misstep by judging **him** according to outward appearances **(10:7a)**. Yet, using warfare language, **Paul** assures them that the boldness with which **he** writes will match the power of **God**, displayed in action when **he** sees **the Corinthians**

face-to-face **(10:2** and **11)**. Those who stand against **him** will be punished **(10:6)**. But **he** is not trying to intimidate **the church**; rather, **his** boldness is meant for **their** spiritual good **(10:8-9)**. Nevertheless, **they** will only be built up as **they** submit **themselves** in full obedience to **his** leadership **(10:6)**.[204]