



## PART 2

# PAUL IN CORINTH: LEADERSHIP UNDER FIRE

## Chapter Nine

# THE LEADER'S WARFARE

### **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #20** **A LEADER IS PASSIONATE**

## HIS BOLDNESS

Then his attention was turned to the fence-sitters, those who had shown sympathies with the false apostles and who were, perhaps, still undecided about how to respond to Paul.

If they believed the false teachers' lies and mistook Paul for a coward, they were about to receive a rude awakening. He was not weak. If all his compassionate overtures were rejected, he was prepared to show them how bold he could be in person:

**2 Corinthians 10:2 (NASB)**

**<sup>2</sup>“I ask that when I am present I *need* not be bold with the confidence with which I propose to be courageous against some, who regard us as if we walked according to the flesh.”**

**The New International Version** translates that verse like this: **“I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world.”**

When Paul's efforts at patience were exhausted, he would do whatever was necessary to defend the truth against these unrepentant, unrelenting rebels. If *only* confrontation would preserve the truth, Paul would not back down from it. Indeed, he said he *expected* that would be the case with some. If they wanted severity, they would get it.

By the way, Paul was *not* always meek in face-to-face situations. Remember, on one occasion, he even rebuked *Peter*. He did it publicly, and “**to his face, because he was to be blamed**” ([Galatians 2:11](#)).

[Galatians 2:11 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>11</sup>“**But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.**”

The record of Paul’s personal courage fills the book of [Acts](#), starting with [chapter 13](#). He boldly stood against courts, councils, religious leaders, mobs, governors, kings, and especially false teachers. He was by no means weak or cowardly.

That would have violated one of the cardinal principles of leadership: *A leader is courageous.*

## **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #21**

### **A LEADER IS COURAGEOUS**

No one who lacks the courage of basic convictions can possibly be an effective leader. People don’t follow cowards. At times, the leader’s courage is expressed in confrontation. That is the case here.

We have seen Paul’s courage in action throughout our study. Now it comes into the center of our focus, as he replied to this ridiculous false allegation that he was too timid to be firm in face-to-face situations.

As we saw in the previous chapter, Paul’s enemies had also complained that he had physical weaknesses and no oratorical elegance. Paul had simply acknowledged the truth of *those* charges. But *this* claim that he lacked courage was a flat-out lie. Paul exemplified fearlessness. Not once in the biblical record does he ever show an ounce of cowardice. No wonder he became indignant as he pondered how to answer this foolish accusation.

[2 Timothy 1:7 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>7</sup>“**For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.**”

*Timothy* evidently struggled with a lack of bravery, because Paul frequently admonished him to be strong and not to be ashamed or timid ([2 Timothy 1:8](#); [2 Timothy 2:1, 3](#); [1 Timothy 1:18](#); [1 Timothy 6:12](#)).

[2 Timothy 1:8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>8</sup>“**Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.**”

[2 Timothy 2:1 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>1</sup>“**You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**”

[2 Timothy 2:3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>3</sup>“**Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.**”



**1 Timothy 1:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup>“This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my son*, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight.”

**1 Timothy 6:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup>“Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

But Paul himself never showed any sign of fear or shyness. In fact, his courage moved dramatically to the forefront here in [2 Corinthians 10:2](#) as he answered his critics.

**2 Corinthians 10:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup>“I ask that when I am present I *need not be bold* with the confidence with which I propose to be courageous against some, who regard us as if we walked according to the flesh.”

He warned them that he fully “**intend[ed] to be bold against some.**” The Greek word translated “**bold**” is *tolmao*, which means “**to be courageous, daring, dauntless.**” It speaks of acting without fear of the consequences.

If they really wanted to see Paul’s courage, he would show it. And he would do so “**with...confidence.**” That expression translates the Greek word *tharrheo*, which is a close synonym for *courage*.

There was a clear crescendo in his tone as he wrote. He was becoming more aggressive. If the false teachers or their followers wanted a fight, he would give them a fight. “**If I come again I will not spare**” ([2 Corinthians 13:2](#)).

**2 Corinthians 13:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup>“I have previously said when present the second time, and though now absent I say in advance to those who have sinned in the past and to all the rest as well, that if I come again I will not spare anyone.”