II Corinthians Lesson 10

II Cor. Chapter 10

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies
Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net
Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Memory verses for this week: 2 Pet 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Introduction: Last week in Chapter 9, we saw the Corinthians gather their gift to send to Jerusalem for the poor saints. We were taught that if we want to reap bountifully, we must sow bountifully. This is true in our giving, and also in our witnessing for the Lord. This week, in Chapter 10, we see Paul explain about his apostleship, and warn us of some of the things we will face in our Christian walk. In the third and final section of this epistle, he also returns to defending himself against the stubborn minority of Judaizers at Corinth who questioned his integrity.

I. The Vindication of Paul's Apostleship

2 Corinthians 10:1 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: 2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Some of Paul's antagonists at Corinth had alleged that he was gentle in person, but sharp in absence when writing. Implied was a lack of courage to confront them face to face. Now Paul confronts his critics with their own criticism and shifts from the first person plural which he has used to this point to the singular.

He began by noting the meekness and gentleness of Christ. The word translated as meekness (praothy praotes) has to do with the control of emotion which leads to an even temperament.

He implores them by the character of Jesus who is even-natured, gentle of spirit, and fair. A unique insight into our Lord's character is thus noted. Paul described himself as base meaning he was humble or lowly in spirit. Paul readily admitted he was gentle with them in person, but bold in absence. He more or less threw back onto his critics their own criticism.

Paul issues some rather sharp rebukes in this chapter, but he begins by beseeching those there in Corinth to remember the meekness and gentleness of Jesus Christ. Christ's example is what Paul tried to follow, and it is the ultimate example for all of us. While the world has jumped on the WWJD (what would Jesus do) bandwagon, for the true Christian, this is something that we ought to ask ourselves each day. Would Jesus go to the places we go, would he read the books we read, would he speak the things we speak? If not, we should repent and come back to God's way.

I heard a preacher say a few months that your life may be the only bible some of your friends ever read. And the closer our lives align with scripture and the example of Jesus Christ, the more we will draw others to the Lord. In verse 2, it appears that someone at Corinth had made some strong accusations towards Paul. He was accused of walking after the flesh. Paul was a man that lived a life that was pleasing in Gods sight.

This is proven by the way God blessed this man and the work that was accomplished in Paul winning souls and establishing churches. Be sure if you are trying to seriously do something for the Lord, someone will be against you. Satan will provide that person or circumstance to try and defeat you. But, like Paul, we need to be able to defend our position and never give up.

Romans 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Phil 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Phil 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Phil 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In verse 2, Paul's intent was not to be sharp when he arrived. Nevertheless, he would do so as necessary toward those who were undermining his ministry. He requested (beseech) that he need not be sharp when he arrived. However, if need be, he would be sharp against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Some critics had accused him of walking in the flesh. He hoped he could rectify this problem by letter. However, if not, when he arrived he would confront the critics boldly.

2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling

down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

The Apostle touches upon a truth of the Christian life. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. Though he (and we) live in our fleshly bodies, that is not how we fight the battle of the Christian life. We have to go through life in the flesh, but the real battle is not on that level.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Therefore, our weaponry is not carnal (fleshly). However, it in fact is powerful through God for the pulling down of spiritual fortresses.

Sometimes we view these men and women of the bible as some great saint that was transformed to a great person of service to the Lord and were almost angelic in their existence. This is totally false. Paul was just as much flesh and blood as you and I, and faced those daily trials. We are in a war, and one of our natures, either the spiritual man or the physical man, wins the battle. Being weak, we must seek God's help in this battle.

Paul said his weapons were not fleshly (carnal as he called them), but were rather spiritual weapons. Without God's help, we will not win this battle. And Satan knows our every weakness and can destroy us if we just give him a small foothold in our life.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

God's weapons are able and powerful... they can pull down strongholds of falsehood. When you hear a false prophet speaking, they can not trick us when we know God's true word. When listening to preachers and teachers, I always listen to which scriptures they quote and whether they take things out of context. Also, which bible do they use. While many preachers have been effective using watered down versions of the bible, I still believe we have the complete and inerrant version of God's Word in the King James Version of the Bible. I was

saved from hearing it preached, and do not believe it is hard nor difficult for someone who is truly saved to understand. The key point is that a person must know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to ever understand and comprehend it.

1 Cor 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

1 Cor 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

Psa 119:89 LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Psa 119:90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

Psa 119:91 They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.

Psa 119:92 Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

Psa 119:93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

Psa 119:94 I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

We need to always remember that the truth of God is able to overthrow all the proud systems of human philosophy. At the close of Paul's life, he was able to look back and remember the battle he had fought, and knew it had been a good fight. How about you and I? Can we honestly say we have fought a good fight, or have we even been in the battle.

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

In verse 5, Paul continues his description of the Christian warfare by utilizing the analogy of Roman siege machines used to break down the fortifications of an opponent. Inasmuch as we do not walk after the flesh, we rather have access to the powerful arsenal of God. We have the power to break down philosophies hostile to the faith as well as every spiritual error which rises against the knowledge of God. In so doing, we capture every unrighteous thought and force it into submission to Christ.

Though employing the analogy of Roman war machines, the Apostle clearly is using it as an illustration of assaulting and capturing all apostasy and philosophy

hostile to the truth of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the application can surely be brought down to the day-to-day battle of one's private thought life. There surely are battles on a daily basis as Satan dials our number with impure and evil thoughts. Praise God for the powerful spiritual weapons at our disposal. A while back, my brother in law sent me a little document about us being in the army of the Lord. I sent it out to some of you who have email capability. We won't take time to read it all, but I do want to cover the four categories of those in the army of the Lord at the bottom.

I am a soldier in God's Army

I am a soldier in the army of my God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my commanding officer. The Holy Bible is my code of conduct. Faith, prayer, and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience, tried by adversity and tested by fire. I am a volunteer in this army, and I am enlisted for eternity. I will either retire in this army at the Rapture or die in this army; but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable and dependable. If my God needs me, I am there. If He needs me in the Sunday school, to teach the children, work with the youth, help adults or just sit and learn, He can use me because I am there! I am a soldier. I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up or pepped up. I am a soldier. No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me, or lure me. I am a soldier.

I am not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His kingdom! No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, candy or give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or catered to. I am committed. I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around. I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit. When Jesus called me into this army, I had nothing. If I end up with nothing, I will still come out ahead. I will win. My God has and will continue to supply all of my needs. I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph.

I can do all things through Christ. Devils cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Money cannot buy me. Governments cannot silence me and hell cannot handle me. I am a soldier. Even death cannot destroy me. For when my commander calls me from this battlefield, He will promote me to Captain and then allow me to rule with Him. I am a soldier in the army, and I'm marching claiming victory. I will not give up. I will not turn around. I am a soldier, marching heaven bound. Here I stand! Will you stand with me?

Guess what? If you've accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior you're already enlisted!

Question is, which part of the service are you in:

- 1. Active Duty: Serving the Lord faithfully, daily, and on duty 24-7?
- 2. Reserve status: Serving only when called upon or twice a year, Christmas and Easter?

- 3. Guard status: Backing up the Active Duty group? or
- 4. AWOL! Absent without the Lord?

THINK ABOUT IT.

J. Vernon McGee in his commentary had some excellent points about what our spiritual weapons are: three in particular are the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and Prayer.

We are told that we have some weapons and they are mighty. They are effective. Are you able to identify those spiritual weapons which we need today?

Our first weapon is the *Word of God*. We need to have confidence in the Word of God. It is the sword of the Spirit. Paul could come to Corinth, that citadel of philosophy and religion, with the weapon of the Word of God. That is exactly the weapon that he used. Paul writes in Ephesians, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Paul drew his trusty sword, and he depended upon the naked blade of it. He wrote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

We, too, need to have confidence in the Word of God. We need to have a firm confidence in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. This must be more than just a creed. I listened to a preacher who said he believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. He quoted poetry and some cute clichés and some pert epigrams. He had every form of philosophical argument but no exposition of the Word of God. May I say to you, *that* is not confidence in the Word of God, nor is it using the Word as a weapon.

I am conservative in my theology. I believe in the inspiration of the Word of God, which includes the Book of Genesis and especially the account of creation. I believe in hell. In fact, I believe the Bible from the beginning to the end. It is the sword of the Spirit, my friend. It is one of our weapons.

The second weapon is the presence of the *Holy Spirit*. Paul recognized his own human weakness. He knew that he was sealed by the Holy Spirit and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Another weapon of our warfare is *prayer*. Now it is true that there is very little about prayer in either of the Corinthian epistles. However, Paul certainly believed in prayer. In the Book of Ephesians he lists this as one of the offensive weapons. "... and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:17–18).

2 Cor 10:6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

2 Cor 10:7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

Paul turns the discussion from allegorical to personal. And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. His thought is that he will be ready to deal with spiritual disobedience at Corinth until their obedience is complete. Paul continues in noting they need to look deeper than just the outer appearance and urges them to listen to their own testimony of Christ and realize their position in Christ isn't exclusive.

He tells those in the Corinthian church that he is ready to bring to justice any who are disobedient to God's Word. If we are truly walking by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, no one will ever have to come and bring us back into line. We won't be outside of that circle where God would have us to be, but we'll be right in the center of God's will.

1 Cor 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 1 Cor 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Paul warns them to not look on their outward appearance. God judges by the heart. Anyone can dress up and look like a good Christian, but it takes a real man, woman, boy, or girl to walk the way that God would desire his children to walk. So we that are Christ's need to control our flesh, and glorify God by walking a pure and perfect walk before others. If you remember, the Pharisees appeared very righteous, but yet they were full of hypocrisy.

Matthew 23:28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Sometimes they would make their appearance disguised to appear that they were fasting, but it was all show. God knew who was and was not truly fasting.

Matthew 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Matthew 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

1 Samuel 16:1-7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons. 2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD. 3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint

unto me him whom I name unto thee. 4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably? 5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. 7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

God told Samuel that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.

2 Cor 10:8 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: 9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. 10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

Paul continues further by invoking His God given authority. "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." The authority of which he spoke was his apostolic authority. It had been given to him directly from the Lord for their edification and not for their destruction.

His apostolic authority was to build them up and not tear them down. Therefore, if he needed to 'pull rank' on them by invoking his apostolic authority, he would not thus be ashamed to do so. Notwithstanding, it was his desire "that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters".

Paul tells the people that if someone claims to have a special relation to Christ that gives them extra authority, they needed to think again and reason our whether or not Paul was a true servant of the Lord. Paul says that if he had boasted more of his authority than he had already, that he would not have been ashamed. God gave him this authority not to destroy the church, but rather to edify and build them up. True teachers and preachers build up Christians, while the false teachers seek to tear down and destroy that which is accomplished. Some claimed Paul wrote mighty letters, but in person he was weak in presence and his speech was contemptible. All that really says is that Paul was accomplishing things BY GOD rather than by Paul. Not many mighty are called into God's service.

1 Cor 1:21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that

believe.

- 1 Cor 1:22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:
- 1 Cor 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;
- 1 Cor 1:24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
- 1 Cor 1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.
- 1 Cor 1:26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:
- 1 Cor 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;
- 1 Cor 1:28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:
- 1 Cor 1:29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

In verse 10, Paul shows he was well aware that his critics at Corinth accused him of being heavy-handed in writing, but was not so in person. Paul had been sharply critical, particularly in I Corinthians. However, when there in person, he had been somewhat sick. Moreover, they snidely undermined him by claiming his speech was contemptible.

They basically accused Paul of being a weakling when in person, but wrote big letters when absent. They not only were adversaries to his ministry, but now were attacking him personally. A corollary lesson is that truth is independent of the messenger bringing it. Paul may have been weak from physical ailments when present, but that was without regard to the truth which he spoke.

The dynamic of the delivery or the charisma of the messenger is independent of the truth of the message. To the contrary, a dynamic delivery by a charismatic speaker can mask error. That was the opposite of Paul.

2 Cor 10:11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

Paul warned, Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present. In writing, He had been sharply critical of the error of his adversaries at Corinth.

Now, he warned that when he arrived, he would deal with them in person the same way. They had been served fair warning.

Paul's critics claimed that he was meek and lowly while he was with them, but was bold and condemning towards them when he was out of their presence. This charge was totally false. Paul was a man of consistency, ever striving to serve God.

II. The Governing Rule of Paul's Apostleship

2 Cor 10:12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Judaizers had come to Corinth in his absence and made lofty claims in recommending themselves. These interlopers were the cause of much of the problem there.) However, Paul warned, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves." He dared not number himself or compare himself with those critics who had come recommending themselves. These claimed the standard they held was that by which all others must be measured.

The Judaizing interlopers, setting themselves up as the standard of orthodoxy, measured their degree of correctness by that same standard. They then compared themselves to others of like mind.

This is a dangerous practice. Comparing ourselves with others to get a measurement of their spirituality. Paul had no desire to be measured in this manner. When we set a yard stick to where we ought to be, we need to measure ourselves against Jesus Christ. If you measure up to Christ, you have some true Christianity about you. We need to be realistic and know we can not be perfect as He, but we should so strive as Paul said to be perfect like our Lord was.

Believers need to never glory in other human beings, because all of us are weak creatures, and we can sure be let down when we put our eyes on men and women. Some will build up little cliques where they establish their own standards of success, and praise one another for meeting their standards. It is easy to meet man made goals and feel very self satisfied. But we need to not worry about pleasing man, but look to please the Heavenly Father.

2 Cor 10:13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. 14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: 15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be

enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

Paul would not subjectively and without merit promote himself. Rather, anything on his part would be according to the precise standards which God had imparted to him. That standard would be applied to them as well.

The Judaizers claimed that Paul had overreached his commission at Corinth and had no authority there. Therefore, he replied, "For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ. "The truth is, he had come to Corinth first—before the Judaizers had ever arrived. The greater point at hand is that Paul had not overextended himself in dealing with the problems in the Corinthian church. He in fact had come there with the gospel first—before the Judaizers had showed up.

His coming was not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours. Paul's assertion of himself was not overextended in boasting of other men's labors. Rather, it was Paul's purpose in pressing the issue at Corinth that their faith would grow and Christ would be magnified in their minds through high standards.

Paul was not stretching himself beyond his measure by preaching the Gospel to them. He was doing exactly what God had called him to do. Paul explains that he had no desire to extend himself beyond where God had placed him and try to build on some other man's work in the regions beyond. He says that if their faith had been increased, Paul was pleased. We need to realize that we can only do what God would have us to do and be in His Will. No one can know that will but each person has to look into their own heart for guidance. But if we are going to build, it must be on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

- 1 Cor 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- 1 Cor 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;
- 1 Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
- 1 Cor 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
- 1 Cor 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

2 Cor 10:16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. 17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. 18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but

whom the Lord commendeth.

A person that glories should glory in the Lord. When we see ourselves as the branch out of the true vine, we get the proper perspective as to what it takes to accomplish something to the honor and glory of God. God forbid that Paul should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

The man or woman that is commended of the Lord is one that God has approved of their work and efforts.

In considerable fashion, Paul herein summarized his ministry. It was to preach the gospel (literally, to evangelize) in regions beyond (new places). In contrast, it was not to intrude into someone else's ministry and boast about it. That is precisely what the Judaizers had done. They had come after Paul, taking advantage of the work he had started, perverted it, and then boasted of their great success. The great Apostle made clear his purpose. At the same time, he revealed the cheap and unethical behavior of his opposition.

In verse 17, Paul concluded, "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His point is singular. If one must boast, boast (or glory) in the Lord, not yourself.

Referring back to his self-serving opponents who had been quite willing to advertise their worth, Paul ends the chapter with this obvious proverb.

"For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth".

It is not he that recommends himself that is proven or tried, but rather whom the Lord recommends. I is apparent Paul's adversaries had recommended themselves and the Lord had recommended Paul.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.