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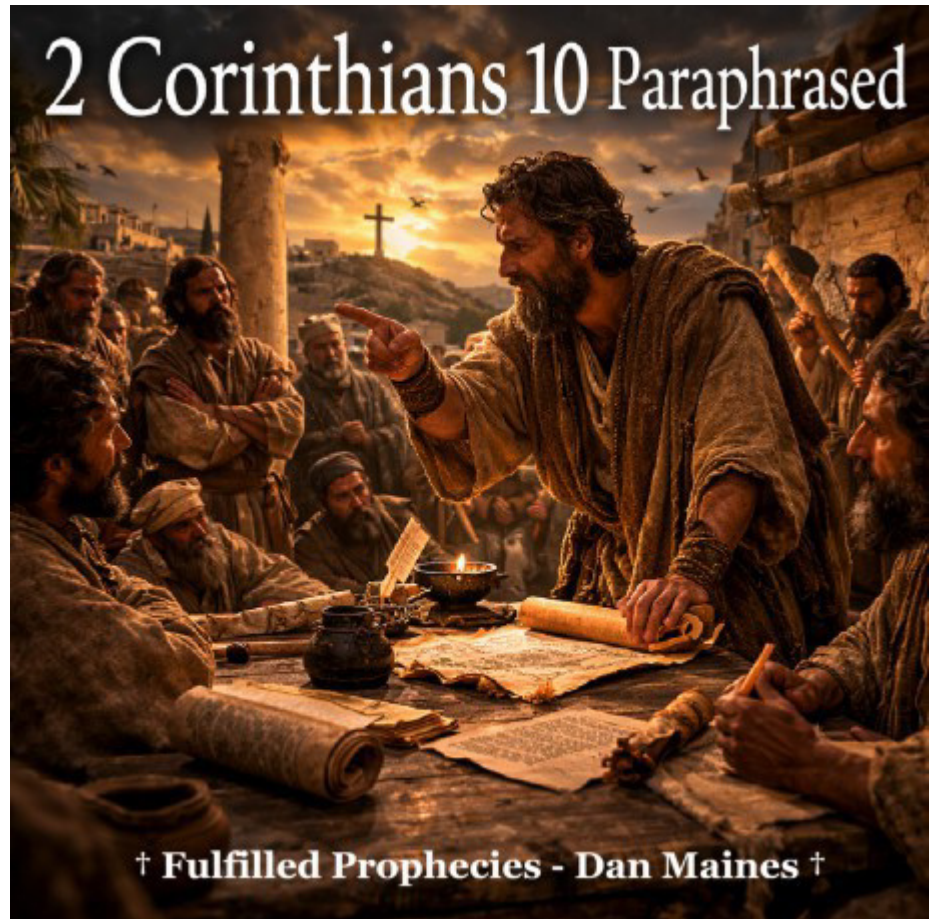
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## 2 Corinthians 10 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## 2 Corinthians 10 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† In this chapter Paul addresses accusations against him and explains how spiritual authority works in the kingdom of Christ.

† His opponents claimed he was weak in person but bold in letters, yet Paul shows that the real battle is not fought with human methods but with God's power.

† This chapter teaches how spiritual warfare, authority, humility, and true boasting are understood in the body of Christ.

## **2 Corinthians 10:1**

I, Paul, appeal to you with the gentleness and kindness that Christ showed. Some people say I act humble when I am with you but bold when I write from far away.

† Paul begins by pointing to the character of Christ. True authority doesn't come through intimidation but through Christlike humility (Matthew 11:29).

† His critics misinterpreted humility as weakness, something leaders are often accused of when they refuse worldly power.

† Clement of Alexandria explained that the apostles ruled by persuasion and truth rather than force, showing the spirit of Christ.

## **2 Corinthians 10:2**

I beg you that when I come I won't have to be bold toward those who think we live according to worldly motives.

† Paul prefers correction through gentleness rather than discipline through confrontation.

† The accusation was that Paul was acting with fleshly motives, something he strongly rejects.

† Irenaeus wrote that the apostles walked according to the Spirit and not according to the desires of the flesh.

## **2 Corinthians 10:3**

Even though we live in this world, we don't fight our battles using the world's weapons.

† Paul's point is that the Christian struggle isn't physical or political.

† The early church understood this clearly as persecution increased under Roman rule.

† Tertullian wrote that Christians conquered not by violence but by faith and endurance.

## **2 Corinthians 10:4**

The weapons we use aren't human weapons. Instead they come from God and are powerful enough to destroy strongholds.

† Spiritual warfare is fought with truth, prayer, and obedience to Christ (Ephesians 6:10-17).

† Strongholds refer to false ideas, pride, and deception that oppose God's truth.

† Eusebius recorded that the gospel overturned pagan philosophy throughout the Roman world.

## **2 Corinthians 10:5**

We tear down arguments and every proud idea that rises up against the knowledge of God, and we bring every thought into obedience to Christ.

† The battlefield is the mind, where truth confronts deception.

† Paul's ministry confronted false teachers who twisted the gospel.

† Barnabas wrote that believers must guard their hearts so false ideas cannot take root.

## **2 Corinthians 10:6**

We are ready to punish every act of disobedience once your obedience is complete.

† Paul is describing church discipline and the responsibility of leadership to correct error.

† The goal isn't punishment but restoration and protection of the church.

† Early Christian communities practiced discipline to preserve the purity of the faith.

## **2 Corinthians 10:7**

Look at what is right in front of you. If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should remember that we belong to Christ just as much as they do.

† Paul's opponents tried to claim exclusive authority, but Paul reminds them that his calling came from Christ Himself.

† Apostolic authority wasn't self-appointed but confirmed by Christ's commission.

† Irenaeus wrote that the apostles carried authority given

directly by the Lord.

### **2 Corinthians 10:8**

Even if I boast a little more about the authority the Lord gave us to build you up and not tear you down, I won't be ashamed.

† Authority in the church exists for strengthening believers, not dominating them.

† Paul contrasts true leadership with the destructive leadership of false teachers.

† Clement wrote that leaders must build the church rather than seek personal honor.

### **2 Corinthians 10:9**

I'm saying this so it won't look like I'm trying to frighten you with my letters.

† Paul's purpose in writing strongly was correction, not intimidation.

† His letters were pastoral guidance meant to protect the church.

† Early church fathers often emphasized pastoral correction over harsh authority.

### **2 Corinthians 10:10**

Some people say his letters are strong and powerful, but when he is present he is weak and his speech is unimpressive.

† This was one of the main accusations against Paul.

† The world judged leadership by appearance and eloquence.

† Yet the gospel spreads through truth, not performance (1 Corinthians 1:27).

### **2 Corinthians 10:11**

Those people should understand that what we say in letters when we are away is exactly what we will do when we are present.

† Paul's authority wasn't empty words.

† His actions would match his teaching.

† Eusebius noted that apostolic discipline was firm when

necessary.

## **2 Corinthians 10:12**

We don't dare compare ourselves with those who praise themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves, they show how foolish they are.

† Self-promotion is a mark of false teachers.

† True ministry isn't measured by self-appointed standards.

† Irenaeus warned against teachers who created their own authority structures.

## **2 Corinthians 10:13**

But we won't boast beyond the limits God assigned to us, which includes reaching you.

† Paul recognizes the boundaries of his ministry given by God.

† Apostolic mission had defined areas of responsibility.

† This shows Paul's humility and obedience to God's calling.

## **2 Corinthians 10:14**

We aren't going too far in our authority as if we had never come to you, because we were the first to bring you the good news about Christ.

† Paul founded the Corinthian church through the preaching of the gospel.

† His authority there was legitimate and historically established.

† Early writers confirmed that apostolic churches were planted by the apostles themselves.

## **2 Corinthians 10:15**

We don't boast about work someone else has done, but we hope that as your faith grows our field of ministry among you will expand.

† Paul refuses to claim credit for another person's work.

† His hope is that their spiritual maturity will open doors for further ministry.

† True ministry multiplies as believers grow in faith.

## **2 Corinthians 10:16**

Then we will be able to preach the good news in regions beyond you without boasting about work already done by someone else.

† Paul's focus was spreading the gospel into new areas.

† The early church expanded rapidly through missionary work like this.

† Eusebius recorded the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire during the apostolic age.

## **2 Corinthians 10:17**

But the one who boasts must boast in the Lord.

† Paul quotes the principle found in Jeremiah 9:23-24.

† True glory belongs to God, not human leaders.

† The apostles consistently directed attention away from themselves and toward Christ.

## **2 Corinthians 10:18**

It's not the person who praises himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord praises.

† God's approval matters more than human recognition.

† False teachers chase public praise while true servants seek God's approval.

† Tertullian wrote that the faithful servant seeks the judgment of God rather than the applause of men.

## **Historical References**

† Clement of Alexandria taught that apostolic authority was exercised through humility and truth rather than force.

† Irenaeus explained that the apostles received their authority directly from Christ and protected the church from false teaching.

† Eusebius recorded how the preaching of the apostles overturned pagan philosophies across the Roman Empire.

† Tertullian emphasized that Christians conquered the world through faith rather than violence.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Spiritual battles are still fought in the realm of truth, not through worldly power.

† We must guard our thoughts and bring them into obedience to Christ.

† Leadership in the church should always build people up rather than control them.

† Our confidence must come from God's calling, not from human approval.

† Everything we accomplish should point back to the glory of God.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** What are the weapons Paul says believers use in spiritual warfare?

**A** They are spiritual weapons given by God that destroy false ideas and strongholds (Ephesians 6:10-17).

**Q** What strongholds does Paul say must be torn down?

**A** Arguments and proud ideas that oppose the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:5).

**Q** What kind of authority did Paul say he had?

**A** Authority given by the Lord to build up the church, not to destroy it (2 Corinthians 10:8).

**Q** What does Paul say about boasting?

**A** Anyone who boasts must boast in the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

**Q** Who receives true approval according to Paul?

**A** The one whom the Lord commends, not the one who praises himself (2 Corinthians 10:18).

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## Source Index

- † 2 Corinthians 10
- † Clement of Alexandria, Stromata
- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies
- † Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History
- † Tertullian, Apology

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