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2 Corinthians 10
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By Dan Maines

2 Corinthians 10

2 Corinthians 10:1-2

Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent! 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.

- † Paul appeals to Christ's meekness, not worldly force.
- † Some accused Paul of weakness in person but boldness in letters.
- † He warns he may need to be bold if rebellion persists.
- † Chrysostom (Homilies on 2 Corinthians 21) highlighted Paul's balance of meekness and authority.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage battle according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

- † Paul's warfare is spiritual, not carnal.
- † Divine power demolishes strongholds of false teaching and unbelief.
- † Dead Sea Scrolls (1QM War Scroll) described physical battle, but Paul redefines the true battle as spiritual.

2 Corinthians 10:5-6

We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

- † Paul's mission is to destroy false arguments and bring minds captive to Christ.
- † Christ's authority subdues disobedience.
- † Origen (Against Celsus 7.4) explained that Christianity conquers through truth, not arms.

2 Corinthians 10:7

You are looking at things as they are outwardly. If anyone is confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so too are we.

- † Paul rejects shallow judgments based on appearance.
- † His apostleship is as genuine as anyone's.

2 Corinthians 10:8-9

For even if I boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be put to shame, for I do not want to seem as if I would terrify you by my letters.

† Paul's authority is for edification, not destruction.

† His bold letters aim to strengthen, not crush.

2 Corinthians 10:10-11

For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible." Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when absent, such persons we are also in deed when present.

† Critics mocked Paul's appearance and speech.

† He assures them his actions match his letters.

† Lucian of Samosata (On the Ignorant Book Collector 3) mocked Christian leaders as poor speakers, showing such criticisms were common.

2 Corinthians 10:12

For we do not presume to rank or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves, but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they have no understanding.

† Paul condemns self-commendation and false comparisons.

† True approval comes from the Lord, not self-measurement.

2 Corinthians 10:13-14

But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the domain which God assigned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you. For we are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach you, for we

were the first to come even as far as you in the gospel of Christ.

† Paul boasts only in the work God gave him.

† He reminds them that he was the first to bring the gospel to them.

2 Corinthians 10:15-16

Not boasting beyond our measure, that is, in other people's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows, we will be, within our domain, enlarged even more by you, so as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, and not to boast in what has been accomplished in the domain of another.

† Paul's desire is to expand the gospel, not steal credit.

† His focus is on pioneering, not exploiting others' labor.

2 Corinthians 10:17-18

But the one who boasts is to boast in the Lord. For it is not the one who commends himself that is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

† True commendation comes from the Lord.

† Paul's boast is only in Christ.

† Jeremiah 9:24 affirms boasting only in the Lord.

How it applies to us today

† 2 Corinthians 10 reminds us that spiritual battles are fought with truth, prayer, and obedience, not worldly weapons.

† The church must tear down false arguments and exalt Christ.

† Authority in Christ is for building up, not tearing down.

† Our boast is never in ourselves, but in the Lord who commends His servants.

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

Source Index

- † Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Corinthians 21 - Paul's meekness and authority
- † Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QM War Scroll - physical battle contrasted with Paul's spiritual battle
- † Origen, Against Celsus 7.4 - Christianity conquers through truth
- † Lucian of Samosata, On the Ignorant Book Collector 3 - mockery of Christian leaders' speech
- † Jeremiah 9:24 - boasting only in the Lord

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