

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2024**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
SECOND CORINTHIANS**

Message Twelve

**Apostolic Authority, the Weapons of Our Warfare,
and the Measure of God's Rule**

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 10:3-18; 13:10

- I. "I write these things...according to the authority which the Lord has given me"—2 Cor. 13:10:**
- A. The condition of the church of God in Corinth made it necessary for the apostle Paul to vindicate his apostolic authority—v. 10; 10:3-18.
 - B. This was needed because of the vague and clouded situation caused by the false apostles (11:11-15), whose teaching and assertion of what they were had distracted the Corinthian believers from the fundamental teachings of the authentic apostles (10:1).
 - C. God is the supreme authority; He has all authority—Rom. 9:21-22:
 - 1. God's authority is actually God Himself; authority issues from God's own being—Rev. 22:1.
 - 2. All authority—spiritual, positional, and governmental—derives from God—2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; John 19:10-11; Gen. 9:6.
 - 3. Only God is the direct authority to man; all other authorities are indirect authorities—delegated authorities, deputy authorities, appointed by God—Dan. 4:32, 34-37:
 - a. Only when we meet God's authority can we submit to the delegated authority whom God appoints—Matt. 28:18; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:6.
 - b. God requires that we submit not only to Him but to all delegated authorities—Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; Heb. 13:17.
 - 4. Knowing authority is an inward revelation rather than an outward teaching—Acts 22:6-16.
 - 5. We all must meet authority, be restricted by God, and be led by His delegated authority—Isa. 37:16; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 13:17.
- II. "The weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, as we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ"—2 Cor. 10:4-5:**
- A. The first principle of spiritual warfare is to forsake all fleshly, carnal weapons.
 - B. Since spiritual warfare is not against flesh but against spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12), the weapons should not be fleshly but spiritual; such weapons are powerful to overthrow the strongholds of the enemy (2 Cor. 10:4).
 - C. Reasonings and thoughts are in the mind and of the mind—v. 5:
 - 1. These are the strongholds of Satan, God's adversary, within the minds of those who are disobedient to God.
 - 2. Through the spiritual warfare, reasonings must be overthrown and every thought must be taken captive to obey Christ—vv. 4-5.

- D. The high things in 2 Corinthians 10:5 refer to the haughty things within the reprobate mentality that are against the knowledge of God; these must be overthrown by the spiritual weapons so that they might no longer rise up against the knowledge of God.
- E. The goal of this spiritual fighting is to tear down Satan's strongholds in the reprobate human mind:
 - 1. These strongholds are the proud thoughts and imaginations in the human mind:
 - a. The haughty imaginations and proud thoughts are strongholds built up by Satan in the human mind.
 - b. They stand against the knowledge of God.
 - 2. The goal of our fighting is to tear down these strongholds, the high reasonings and haughty thoughts.
 - 3. We must fight against these things so that every thought may be taken captive unto the obedience of Christ—v. 5.

III. **“We will not boast beyond our measure but according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure has apportioned to us, to reach even as far as you”—v. 13:**

- A. The apostle Paul was bold, but he was not bold within himself; this shows that he was under the restriction of the Lord:
 - 1. Paul's boasting was according to the measure of the rule which the God of measure, the ruling God, had apportioned to him.
 - 2. His ministry to the Gentile world, including Corinth, was according to the measure of God (Eph. 3:1-3, 8; Gal. 2:8); hence, his boast was within this limit.
- B. The word *rule* in 2 Corinthians 10:13 literally means “a measuring rod,” like the rule of a carpenter:
 - 1. The word *measure* in verse 13 indicates being ruled by God; God has allotted us just so much for our work and experience.
 - 2. There is One who is ruling and measuring—the God of measure, the God who rules; therefore, we must stay within the limits of God's rule, of God's measuring.
- C. From 2 Corinthians 10:13-15 we can see that although we expect the Lord's work to spread, we must learn how to be under God's restriction:
 - 1. We should not expect a spread that is without measure; that kind of spread would certainly not be within the limit of a walk according to the Spirit—Rom. 8:4-5, 14.
 - 2. From experience we can testify that if we spread the work according to the Spirit, there will always be a certain limit:
 - a. Inwardly, we do not have the peace to spread the work beyond a certain point.
 - b. Outwardly, the environment does not allow us to go beyond a boundary line.
- D. Paul had to learn to take the Lord's restriction:
 - 1. Paul wanted to go to Rome, but he did not expect to go there in bonds—Acts 26:29.
 - 2. Paul told the believers at Rome that he expected to go to Spain by way of them (Rom. 15:24), but he never went to Spain.
 - 3. Paul was willing to be subject to God's measuring; his bonds and imprisonment were God's sovereign restriction.
- E. Based on the principle of God's measuring, Paul told the Corinthians that whatever he did and spoke was not beyond his measure; Paul always acted and behaved within his measure—1 Cor. 2:1-5, 12-13.
- F. The apostles always moved according to God's ruling; whatever God measured out to them became their jurisdiction.
- G. In the church service we need to realize that God has measured out only a certain amount to us, and we should not extend ourselves beyond God's measure; we need to know our limitations—2 Cor. 10:12, 14.
- H. Like Paul, we should move and act according to how much God has measured to us—v. 13.