

Dr. J. Ayodeji Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11, 2 Corinthians 10 – Paul’s Apostolic Defense Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11, 2 Corinthians 10 – Paul’s Apostolic Defense, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Ayo Adewuya's session on 2 Corinthians 10 focuses on Paul's defense of his apostolic authority against detractors in Corinth. These opponents, likely false teachers, misrepresented Paul, criticizing his humble demeanor and contrasting it with the perceived strength they expected from an apostle. **Adewuya highlights Paul's strategic response in this section of the letter, where he shifts his tone to directly address these accusations.** The session examines Paul's use of spiritual warfare imagery to describe his ministry and his insistence that his authority, given by the Lord, is for building up the Corinthians, not tearing them down. **The lecture also explores Paul's refusal to engage in self-commendation like his rivals and his emphasis that true boasting should only be in the Lord.** Ultimately, Adewuya presents 2 Corinthians 10 as a crucial passage where Paul confronts challenges to his apostleship and clarifies the nature of true Christian ministry.

**2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11 – Double click icon to
play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → 2 Corinthians).**



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3. Briefing Document: Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11, 2 Corinthians 10 – Paul’s Apostolic Defense

Briefing Document: 2 Corinthians 10 - Paul's Apostolic Defense

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Ayo Adewuya in his session on 2 Corinthians 10, focusing on Paul's defense of his apostolic authority. Dr. Adewuya highlights the shift in tone in chapters 10-13 and analyzes Paul's responses to the challenges and misrepresentations brought forth by false teachers in Corinth.

Main Themes:

1. **Defense of Apostolic Authority:** Chapters 10-13 mark a significant shift in 2 Corinthians, moving from explanations and appeals to a direct and vigorous defense of Paul's apostleship against those who sought to undermine it.
 - "These chapters go together as they discuss the vindication of Paul's apostolic authority." (Page 1)
 - "Here in these chapters, Paul takes up the theme of the legitimacy of his apostleship with renewed vigor." (Page 2)
1. **Addressing Misrepresentations and Caricatures:** False teachers in Corinth had actively vilified Paul's authority and misrepresented his character and ministry. They portrayed him as weak in person but bold in letters, and questioned his legitimacy as an apostle due to his working-class background.
 - "His opponents in Corinth pictured him as so milk and mild, gentle and timid, with no spine, he's a weakling when he's with others, and he's only bold when he's far off, and he's able to fire letters to them. He barks more than he bites." (Page 1)
 - "The false teachers at Corinth have caricatured Paul in this manner." (Page 1)
1. **Spiritual Warfare and Weapons:** Paul counters these attacks by emphasizing the spiritual nature of his ministry and the power of his "weapons," which are not "of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." (Page 3) He defines these weapons as his Christ-like life and the gospel he proclaims.
 - "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." (Page 3)

- "Paul's weapons are those Christ-like, the Christ-like life he lives, and the gospel of Christ he proclaims." (Page 11)
- 1. **Meekness and Boldness:** Paul addresses the accusation of being meek in person and bold in letters. He argues that his meekness, aligned with the "meekness and gentleness of Christ," is not incompatible with firmness and the ability to be bold when necessary for the spiritual well-being of the Corinthians.
 - "As Paul writes, his meekness was not incompatible with the firmness and reality with which he must deal with his enemies and his readers." (Page 2)
 - "He flatly denies that accusation by urging his readers to conduct themselves in such a way that when he comes, he will not have to show his enemies to be liars, which he will do." (Page 7)
- 1. **Legitimate Boasting in the Lord:** Paul distinguishes between inappropriate self-commendation and boasting "in the Lord." He critiques the false teachers for measuring themselves by themselves and boasting in the accomplishments of others. Paul asserts that true boasting should be grounded in what God has done through his ministry.
 - "But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God appointed to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you." (Page 4)
 - "But he who boasts is to boast in the Lord, for it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends." (Page 4)
 - "All boasting must be done in the Lord." (Page 18)

Most Important Ideas and Facts:

- **Sudden Shift in Tone:** The transition from the conciliatory tone of chapters 1-9 to the confrontational tone of chapters 10-13 is abrupt and significant, driven by the need to address the challenges to Paul's authority.
- "As Ben Witherington comments, what has been simmering on a back burner in chapters 1 to 9 is brought to a roaring boil in chapters 10 to 13." (Page 2)
- **Literary Unity:** Despite theories suggesting a partition of 2 Corinthians, Dr. Adewuya emphasizes the literary unity of the book, arguing that the issues in chapters 1-9 are also present in 10-13.
- "But we must say, look, we hold together the literary unity of 2nd Corinthians. Let that be clear, let that be clear." (Page 2)

- **Three Parts of Chapters 10-13:** Dr. Adewuya outlines three key sections: Paul directly confronting opponents (Chapter 10), his "foolish" boasting (Chapter 11), and his admonishment for order in preparation for his third visit (Chapters 12-13).
- "These chapters fall into three clear parts. In chapter 10, verses 1 to 18, Paul directly confronts his opponents... In chapter 11, verses 1 to 12 and 13, he feels compelled to play the part of a fool... Finally, in chapter 12:14 to 13:10, Paul admonishes the church..." (Page 3)
- **Nature of Paul's Opponents:** The intruders challenging Paul's authority were likely Jewish individuals advocating for Gentile Christians to adopt Jewish practices and claiming to be true apostles of Christ.
- "You see, these intruders who opposed Paul's authority in Corinth were Jews... they were advocating that Gentile Christians should adopt Jewish practices while claiming to be apostles of Christ." (Page 3)
- **Interpretation of "Meekness and Gentleness of Christ":** Paul's appeal "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" refers to Christ's character throughout his earthly life, including his humility and non-retaliation.
- "Thus, Paul's reference to Christ's meekness and gentleness described the pre-existing Christ, who, in his incarnation, took upon himself the lowliness of humanity." (Page 7)
- **Rejection of Worldly Methods:** Paul emphasizes that his "weapons" are not worldly tactics but spiritual ones, warning against using "theatrics and gimmicks of the world" and asserting that the method is as important as the message.
- "Now, we must learn a lesson when Paul says his weapons are not according to human standards. What does he want us to know? He's telling us that we must be aware in using the theatrics and gimmicks of the world." (Page 13)
- **Purpose of Apostolic Authority:** Paul clarifies that the authority given to him by the Lord is "for building you up and not for destroying you." (Page 4, 15) This contrasts with the destructive nature of the false teachers' influence.
- **Grounds for Boasting:** True Christian boasting should be centered on the Lord and what He accomplishes, not on self-achievements or comparisons with others.
- "Our boasting should be in the Lord, not our human accomplishments, not our talent, not in our giftedness. But the ground of our boasting should be what is accomplished through God and for God as we saw them." (Page 18)

Quotes:

- "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." (2 Corinthians 10:1, quoted on Page 3)
- "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." (2 Corinthians 10:3-4, quoted on Page 3 and 11)
- "For they say his letters are weighty and strong, but his personal presence is unimpressive, and his speech contemptible." (2 Corinthians 10:10, quoted on Page 4 and 16)
- "But he who boasts is to boast in the Lord." (2 Corinthians 10:17, quoting Jeremiah 9:24, on Page 4 and 18)

Conclusion:

Dr. Adewuya's analysis of 2 Corinthians 10 provides a valuable framework for understanding Paul's assertive defense of his apostolic authority. The chapter reveals the challenges Paul faced from false teachers who misrepresented him and his ministry, and highlights his strategic use of spiritual language and arguments rooted in the character of Christ. The discussion underscores the importance of discerning true apostolic ministry, the nature of spiritual warfare, and the appropriate grounds for Christian boasting, all within the context of Paul's impending third visit to Corinth.

4. Study Guide: Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11, 2 Corinthians 10 – Paul’s Apostolic Defense

Study Guide: 2 Corinthians 10, Paul's Apostolic Defense

I. Key Themes and Concepts:

- **Defense of Apostolic Authority:** Paul's primary purpose in 2 Corinthians 10 is to defend his legitimacy as an apostle against the accusations and misrepresentations of false teachers in Corinth.
- **Nature of True Apostleship:** Paul contrasts his own approach to ministry with that of his opponents, highlighting the spiritual nature of his authority and his commitment to building up the church rather than tearing it down.
- **Spiritual Warfare:** Paul employs military imagery to describe his ministry, emphasizing that his weapons are spiritual and divinely powerful, used to dismantle false teachings and lead people to obedience to Christ.
- **Meekness and Boldness:** Paul addresses the accusation that he is meek in person but bold in letters, explaining that his meekness is not incompatible with firmness and that his boldness serves the purpose of correcting and building up the Corinthians.
- **Legitimate Boasting:** Paul discusses the appropriate context for boasting, arguing that true boasting should be in the Lord and grounded in God's work, contrasting this with the self-commendation and comparison of his opponents.
- **Literary Unity of 2 Corinthians:** The session emphasizes that chapters 10-13 should be understood as a continuation of the same letter as chapters 1-9, addressing a new situation that arose after the initial writing.
- **Rhetorical Strategy:** Paul utilizes Greco-Roman rhetorical techniques, particularly forensic rhetoric, to persuade his audience and defend his position.
- **Impact of False Teachers:** The study guide highlights the negative influence of the false apostles on the Corinthian church, who were undermining Paul's authority and promoting Jewish practices among Gentile Christians.
- **Paul's Impending Visit:** Paul's defense is also framed in the context of his upcoming third visit to Corinth, urging the church to set things in order before his arrival to avoid the need for severe action.

- **Distinction Between Human and Divine Standards:** Paul emphasizes that while he lives in the flesh as a human, he does not conduct his ministry or engage in conflict according to mere human standards.

II. Quiz:

1. According to Paul's opponents in Corinth, what were some of the reasons they did not take him seriously as an apostle?
2. What significant shift in tone and rhetoric occurs in 2 Corinthians starting from chapter 10, and what is the primary focus of these chapters?
3. What are the three main sections into which Dr. Adewuya divides chapters 10-13, and what is the central theme of 2 Corinthians 10?
4. How does Paul respond to the accusation that he is meek when present but bold when absent, and what does he say about his intended actions upon his next visit?
5. Explain Paul's use of military imagery in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6. What are the "weapons" he describes, and what are they used to combat?
6. How does Paul address the charge that his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible in comparison to the weight and strength of his letters?
7. What does Paul mean when he says he will not boast beyond his measure, and how does this contrast with the boasting of his opponents?
8. According to Paul, what is the only legitimate basis for boasting, and what Old Testament passage does he quote to support this?
9. What does Dr. Adewuya suggest might be the reason Paul does not explicitly name his opponents in Corinth?
10. How does Paul distinguish between living "in the flesh" and "waging war according to the flesh" in the context of his apostolic ministry?

III. Answer Key to Quiz:

1. Paul's opponents viewed him as a common working man (a leather worker), suggesting he was unqualified to be an apostle. They also perceived him as weak and timid in person, only being bold in his letters from a distance, implying a lack of genuine courage and authority.

2. Starting from chapter 10, there is a sudden shift to a stern and defensive tone. The primary focus of these chapters is Paul's vigorous defense and vindication of his apostolic authority against the challenges from false teachers and dissenting Corinthians.
3. The three main sections are: Chapter 10 (Paul directly confronts his opponents), Chapter 11:1-12:13 (Paul feels compelled to boast like a fool), and Chapter 12:14-13:10 (Paul admonishes the church to set itself in order). The central theme of 2 Corinthians 10 is Paul's direct confrontation of his opponents in defense of his apostolic integrity.
4. Paul denies the accusation, asserting that his meekness is not incompatible with firmness and boldness when necessary. He urges the Corinthians to act in such a way that he will not need to be bold and courageous against those who misjudge him when he arrives for his third visit.
5. Paul uses military imagery to illustrate the spiritual nature of his ministry. His "weapons" are not physical or worldly but divinely powerful for the destruction of "fortresses," which he defines as speculations, lofty things raised against the knowledge of God, and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
6. Paul states that what he is in his letters when absent, he will also be in his actions when present. He warns those who think his presence is unimpressive to consider that his actions upon arrival will match the authority conveyed in his writings.
7. Paul explains that he will only boast within the sphere of ministry God has assigned to him, including his work in Corinth. This contrasts with his opponents who boast beyond their own measure, taking credit for the work of others and using self-comparison, which Paul considers unwise and foolish.
8. According to Paul, the only legitimate basis for boasting is in the Lord, giving God credit for all accomplishments. He quotes Jeremiah 9:24, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord," to emphasize this principle.
9. Dr. Adewuya suggests that Paul might not explicitly name his opponents as a rhetorical technique to diminish their status and avoid exalting them. He names his friends but refrains from naming his enemies.
10. Paul clarifies that while he lives as a human being ("in the flesh" with its limitations), he does not conduct his ministry or engage in conflict ("wage war") using mere human strategies or standards. His methods and power come from God, not from worldly means.

IV. Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the rhetorical strategies employed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 10 to defend his apostolic authority. How does he address the accusations of his opponents, and what persuasive techniques does he utilize?
2. Discuss the significance of Paul's use of military metaphors in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6. What does this imagery reveal about his understanding of spiritual conflict and the nature of his apostolic ministry?
3. Examine the tension between meekness and boldness in Paul's self-defense in 2 Corinthians 10:1-11. How does he reconcile these seemingly contradictory qualities, and what does this reveal about the character of true apostolic leadership?
4. Compare and contrast Paul's approach to boasting with that of his opponents in 2 Corinthians 10:12-18. What are the key differences in their motivations and the foundations of their claims, and what principles regarding boasting does Paul emphasize?
5. Evaluate the arguments for the literary unity of 2 Corinthians, as presented in the source material. How does the abrupt shift in tone in chapters 10-13 fit within the broader message and purpose of the entire letter?

V. Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Apostolic Authority:** The divinely given right and power to lead, teach, and govern the church, claimed by Paul as a foundational figure in early Christianity.
- **False Teachers:** Individuals within the Corinthian church who opposed Paul's teachings and authority, promoting alternative views and practices.
- **Vindication:** The act of clearing someone of blame or suspicion; in this context, Paul's effort to prove the legitimacy of his apostleship.
- **Partition Theory:** The view that 2 Corinthians is not a unified letter but rather a compilation of several separate letters or fragments written at different times.
- **Forensic Rhetoric:** A style of persuasive speaking or writing used in legal settings, focused on defending oneself against accusations and establishing truth or innocence.
- **Spiritual Warfare:** The concept of believers engaging in a battle against spiritual forces of evil, often described using military metaphors.
- **Strongholds:** In the context of spiritual warfare, these represent false beliefs, ideologies, and arguments that resist the knowledge of God.
- **Meekness:** A quality of gentleness, humility, and patience, often associated with a lack of excessive pride or self-importance.
- **Gentleness:** A kind and forbearing attitude and behavior, showing consideration and restraint in dealing with others.
- **Boasting:** The act of talking with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about one's achievements, possessions, or abilities; Paul distinguishes between appropriate boasting in the Lord and inappropriate boasting in oneself.
- **Sphere of Ministry:** The specific geographical or relational area to which God has called and assigned a minister or apostle to work.
- **Edification:** The act of building up, strengthening, or improving someone, especially in a moral or spiritual sense.
- **Pejorative:** Expressing disapproval or a low opinion.
- **Ubiquitous:** Present, appearing, or found everywhere.

5. FAQs on Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 11, 2 Corinthians 10 – Paul's Apostolic Defense, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on 2 Corinthians 10

1. What is the primary focus of 2 Corinthians chapters 10-13? These chapters mark a significant shift in tone as Paul directly addresses and defends his apostolic authority against the criticisms and misrepresentations of false teachers who had infiltrated the Corinthian church. He counters their personal attacks and the negative influence they had on the believers, preparing for his third visit to Corinth.

2. What were some of the accusations made against Paul by his opponents in Corinth? Paul's opponents depicted him as being weak and timid in person but bold only in his letters. They suggested he was a common, working man (a leather worker) unqualified to be an apostle, implying that a true apostle would not work for a living and would possess greater outward dignity and strength. They also viewed his personal presence as unimpressive and his speech as contemptible, contrasting this with the perceived weight and strength of his written correspondence.

3. How does Paul defend his apostleship in 2 Corinthians 10? Paul defends his authority by asserting the spiritual nature of his ministry and the divine power of his "weapons," which are not worldly but capable of "destroying fortresses" of false teachings and taking every thought captive to Christ. He insists that his authority was given for building up the Corinthians, not tearing them down, and that there is consistency between his words in letters and his actions in person. He also clarifies the true nature of boasting, stating that it should be in the Lord, not in human accomplishments or self-commendation.

4. What does Paul mean when he says, "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3)? This statement highlights the spiritual nature of Paul's apostolic warfare. While he lives as a human being with limitations and weaknesses ("in the flesh"), he does not conduct his ministry or confront his opponents using worldly methods, tactics, or standards ("according to the flesh"). Instead, his "weapons" are spiritual and derive their power from God.

5. What are the "weapons of our warfare" that Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 10:4-6?

Paul describes these weapons as "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." He elaborates that these spiritual weapons are used for "destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God" and "taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." These are not physical or manipulative tools but rather the Christ-like life Paul lives and the gospel of Christ he proclaims, empowered by the Spirit.

6. Why does Paul mention the seeming contradiction between his meek personal presence and his strong letters? Paul addresses this apparent contradiction because it was a key criticism leveled against him by his opponents. They used it to undermine his authority, suggesting he was a coward who only dared to be bold from a distance. Paul refutes this by stating that his character and purpose remain consistent whether present or absent, and that their judgment is based on a misunderstanding of the spiritual nature of true apostolic ministry. He implies that his gentleness while present was strategic, hoping they would correct their issues before his arrival necessitated a more forceful approach.

7. What does Paul say about boasting in 2 Corinthians 10:12-18? Paul distinguishes between inappropriate and appropriate boasting. He criticizes his opponents for boasting by comparing themselves to themselves and taking credit for the work of others. He asserts that true boasting should be "in the Lord," giving God credit for all accomplishments. He only boasts within the sphere of ministry God assigned to him, which includes Corinth, and expresses his hope to expand his ministry further with the Corinthians' growing faith, without claiming the labor of others.

8. What does the passage in 2 Corinthians 10 teach about the nature of Christian leadership and spiritual warfare? This passage emphasizes that true Christian leadership operates with spiritual authority and employs spiritual means rather than worldly tactics. It highlights the importance of humility, meekness, and gentleness, even in the face of opposition, while also requiring firmness in defending the truth. Spiritual warfare is portrayed not as a physical battle but as a struggle against false ideas and rebellion against God, using the power of the gospel and a Christ-like life to overcome these strongholds. The passage also warns against self-exaltation and taking credit for God's work, emphasizing that all glory belongs to the Lord.