

2 Corinthians 6:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

Analysis

By the word of truth, by the power of God (ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ, en logō alētheias, en dynamei theou)—Logos alētheias refers to the gospel message itself, the true word as opposed to false teaching (cf. Eph 1:13; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 2:15). Paul's ministry rests not on eloquent rhetoric or philosophical speculation but on faithful proclamation of revealed truth. Dynamis theou (God's power) contrasts human weakness; this power manifests in conversion, perseverance, and miracles (Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18; 2:4-5).

By the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left (διὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, dia tōn hoplōn tēs dikaiosynēs tōn dexiōn kai aristerōn)—Hoplā means weapons or armor (cf. Rom 13:12; Eph 6:11-17). 'Right hand and left' likely refers to offensive weapons (sword in right hand) and defensive armor (shield in left), indicating comprehensive spiritual equipment. Dikaiosynē (righteousness) is both imputed (justification) and imparted (sanctification)—the righteousness of Christ as both legal standing and practical holiness.

Paul militarizes his metaphors: ministry is spiritual warfare requiring divine weaponry. The armor of righteousness protects against accusations (having clean hands) and enables bold offense (wielding truth as a sword). This anticipates the fuller development in Ephesians 6:10-18.

Historical Context

Roman soldiers were visible throughout the empire, providing a familiar metaphor for Paul's audience. The emphasis on God's power rather than human eloquence directly addresses Corinthian fascination with Greek rhetoric and philosophy. Paul's apostolic authority rests not on cultural sophistication but on divine truth and power manifested through weakness.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How are you wielding 'the word of truth' and 'the power of God' rather than relying on human eloquence, manipulation, or worldly strategies?
2. In what areas of spiritual warfare do you need to better equip yourself with 'the armour of righteousness'—both offensive (proclamation) and defensive (integrity)?
3. How does Paul's model of ministry challenge pragmatic approaches that prioritize results over faithfulness to God's truth and methods?

Interlinear Text

ἐν	λόγῳ	ἀληθείας	ἐν	δυνάμει	θεοῦ·	διὰ	τῶν	ὅπλων
By	the word	of truth	By	the power	of God	by	G3588	the armour
G1722	G3056	G225	G1722	G1411	G2316	G1223		G3696
τῆς	δικαιοσύνης	τῶν	δεξιῶν	καὶ	ἀριστερῶν			
G3588	of righteousness	G3588	on the right hand	and	on the left			
	G1343		G1188	G2532	G710			

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 4:2 (Word): But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2 Timothy 2:15 (Word): Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Ephesians 3:20 (Parallel theme): Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

2 Corinthians 13:4 (References God): For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (Parallel theme): But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

James 1:18 (Word): Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

2 Timothy 4:7 (Parallel theme): I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Psalms 119:43 (Word): And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

Ephesians 1:13 (Word): In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,