

“The Weapons Of Our Warfare”
2 Corinthians 10:1-6

Introduction:

1. This Morning - We Will Start:
 - A New Chapter - In Our Study Through 2 Corinthians:
 - And With It - An Entirely New Section:
 - As Well!
 - In The First 7 Chapters:
 - Paul Spent Some Time:
 - Assuring The Corinthian Christians Of Their Reconciliation & Restoration:
 - Since They Had Repented Of Their Offenses Against Him & Their Sins Against The Lord!
 - Then - In Chapters 8-9:
 - Paul Moved On To Encourage:
 - The Corinthians To Continue To Bear:
 - Spiritual Fruit - Especially Through Their Giving & Serving!
 - But Now - Beginning In Chapter 10 Until The End Of His Letter:
 - Paul Will Use His Final Words:
 - To Address Those False Leaders & False Teachers:
 - Who Had Infiltrated The Church In His Absence:
 - And Who Were Trying To Undermine His Ministry & His Authority As An Apostle Of Jesus Christ!
2. So - Lets Turn In Our Bibles To 2 Corinthians 10:
 - Where We Read In 10:1-6:
 - “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: / But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. / For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: / (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) / Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; / And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled!”
 - Paul Knew That The Opposition:
 - He Faced From Those False Leaders & False Teachers:
 - Was Not Just Interpersonal Conflict!
 - It Was Not Just Based On The Personalities Of Those Involved!
 - **IE:** Like So Much Of Our Conflict Is! No:
 - It Was Nothing Less Than:
 - A Spiritual Battle & A Spiritual Conflict!
 - And So - To Help The Church Deal With This Conflict:
 - While He Was Still Away:
 - He Explained To Them - As Well As To Us This Morning:
 - Just How To “Fight The Good Fight Of Faith!” (1 Timothy 6:12)
3. He Wants Us To Be:
 - Well-Armed For This Conflict – This Fight!
 - And This Is Not An Unfamiliar Theme:
 - For Us! In Ephesians 6:11:
 - We Are Told To “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil!”
 - And Then Paul Lists The Spiritual Components Of That Armor!
 - Well - Paul Was Not Just One:
 - To **Explain** How To “Fight The Good Fight Of Faith!”
 - He Also Served As:
 - An **Example** Of How To “Fight The Good Fight Of Faith!”
 - And The Verses We Just Read Reveal To Us The “Weapons Of Our Warfare” That Paul Himself Used!
 - And It Is These Weapons:
 - That We Will Look At This Morning!

- Because - We Are Still Involved:
 - In Spiritual Battles & Spiritual Conflicts!
 - Peter Reminds Us Of This Reality In 1 Peter 5:8 - "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour!"
- Sometimes We Forget:
 - That We Do Still Have An Enemy:
 - Who Is Waging A War Against Our Souls!
 - Your Own Soul!
 - The Souls Of Your Family Members!
 - The Souls Of Our Church!
- So - We Need To Not Only Learn About:
 - The "Weapons Of Our Warfare!"
 - We Need To Use Them As Well!
 - And The First Weapon Paul Uses Is:

1. *The Way Of Christ!*

- Which We See In 10:1:
 - "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you!"
 - Now - If Is Paul Trying To "Fight The Good Fight Of Faith" - These Words Don't Sound At All Like:
 - **"Fightin' Words!"**
 - Well - They're Not!
 - Because Spiritual Battles:
 - Are Not To Be Fought According The Way Of The World:
 - But The Way Of Christ!
 - **IE:** Even In Politics - The Rhetoric Has Gotten Way Out Of Hand! Some Of Our Own Political Leaders Have Said - If Your Opponents Bring A Knife, You Bring A Gun! Or If Your Opponents Go Low, You Kick Them!
 - But All Throughout History:
 - This Is The Way The World Fights Its Battles!
 - But Not So The Church!
 - Instead - Paul Makes A Personal Appeal:
 - To The Allegations & Accusations:
 - Against Him:
 - With The Attitude Of Jesus Christ!
 - "By The Meekness And Gentleness Of Christ!"
 - And So:
- The Way Of Christ Is Meekness!
 - This Is One Of The Primary Attributes:
 - Of Jesus Christ!
 - In Matthew 11:29 - Jesus Himself Said - "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls!"
 - Now - Meekness Is Not Weakness!
 - But This Was One Of The Accusations:
 - The False Leaders Were Bringing Against Paul! Which We See At The End Of This Verse: "Who In Presence Am Base Among You, But Being Absent Am Bold Toward You!"
 - In Other Words - They Accused Paul Of Saying Things In A Letter - What He Would Not Dare Say In Person!
 - But - Meekness Is Not Weakness!
 - Instead, Paul Was Demonstrating A Christ-Like Attitude:
 - Of Pastoral Tenderness & Love!
 - But Even More:
- The Way Of Christ Is Gentleness!
 - No Matter What - Paul Was Going To:
 - "Speak The Truth In Love!"
 - And Extend The Grace Of Christ:

- In Both Attitude & Action!
- And So - To Begin Addressing:
 - Those False Leaders & False Teachers:
 - He Does So In The Character Of Christ!
- This Means That:
 - He Extends To Them:
 - A Gentle Heart:
 - And A Gentle Hand!
 - He Wants To **Win** Them:
 - Not **Wreck** Them!
- And This Is The First Weapon Of Our Warfare!
 - The Way Of Christ!
 - Making Our Appeals:
 - “By the Meekness And Gentleness Of Christ!
 - Extending To Those Who Oppose Us & Accuse Us:
 - A Gentle Heart & A Gentle Hand - Like That Of Christ!
- After All - Isn’t This:
 - How Jesus Dealt With Us?
 - 1 Peter 2:21-25 - “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: / Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: / Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: / Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. / For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls!”
 - The Way Of Christ - And His Meekness & Gentleness:
 - Is The First Weapon Of Our Warfare!
 - Are You Conforming Yourself:
 - To The Way Of Christ?

* The Second Weapon That Paul Uses Is:

2. ***The Word Of Christ!***

- 10:2 - “But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh!”
 - Here Paul Strongly Encourages & Asks:
 - The Corinthians As A Whole:
 - To Deal With The False Leaders & False Teachers As A Church:
 - Before He Makes His Next Visit, So That He Will Not Have To Appear “Bold” In Person!
 - But - If He **Did** Arrive:
 - And He **Did** Have To Be “Bold” - It Would Not Be:
 - The Kind Of “Boldness” & Brashness:
 - , That They Were Accusing Him Of In His Letters!
 - Instead - It Would Be The Right Kind Of Boldness:
 - That Is Based On:
 - What Is True & What Is Right!
 - And It Is Only The Word Of God That Can Provide:
 - The Bold Conviction:
 - That We Need To Confront:
 - Sin & Error!
 - When Paul Arrived In Corinth:
 - He Would Come To Them “With That Confidence!”
 - This Means That He Possessed:
 - A Settled Conviction:
 - About What Was True & About What Was Right!
 - And This Can Only Come Through The Word Of God!
 - According To Hebrews 4:12:
 - It Is “The word of God [that] is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a

discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart!”

- But The Word Of God Is What Also Provides:

- The Bold Courage:

- That We Need To Confront:

- Sin & Error!

- If Things Did Not Change - Paul Would Have To Be “Bold Against Some!”

- Not In A Brash & Unloving Way, But In A Direct & Fortright Way!

- Especially Since:

- They Were Attacking His Ministry:

- 10:2 - “Which Think Of Us As If We Walked According To The Flesh!”

- That Is - As An Unbeliever!

- That Serious Accusation:

- Against Paul & His Ministry:

- Required An Answer!

- And A “Bold” One At That!

- But It Was A “Boldness” That Was Based Upon:

- The Word Of God!

- And This Is Why:

- According To Ephesians 6:17:

- We Too Are To “Take . . . The Sword Of The Spirit, Which Is The Word Of God!”

- Without The Sword Of God’s Word:

- We Are Nothing:

- And Are No Match For Those Who Are Warring Against Our Souls!

- But With The Word Of Christ:

- As The Sword In Our Hand:

- That Leads Us To:

* A Third Weapon Of Our Warfare:

3. ***Our Witness For Christ!***

- 10:3-4 - “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: / For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [weapons], but mighty [weapons] through God to the pulling down of strong holds!”

- With These Words:

- Paul Begins To Explain His Own Strategy:

- To Defeat His Spiritual Adversaries!

- And In 10:3:

- He Admits That Even Though:

- “We Walk In The Flesh” - And May Experience Weakness & Temptation:

- As Any Man!

- Yet - “We Do Not War After The Flesh!”

- Because - To Fight Spiritual Battles With Human Effort & Human Might:

- Are Ineffective & Powerless!

- Instead - ***“Spiritual Warfare Demands Spiritual Weapons!”***

- And So - Paul Wants Them To See:

- That Only The Gospel Of Jesus Christ:

- And His Witness For Christ:

- Is Powerful Enough To “Pull Down” & To Destroy Any Spiritual Stronghold Of The Devil!

- And So - In 10:5 - Paul Shows Just How Powerful:

- Our Witness For Christ Can Be:

- “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!”

- Paul Wants You To Picture The “Fight Of Faith” As:

- A Siege!

- But In This Case - You Are On The Offensive, Not On The Defensive!

- You Are On The Outside Of The City:

- Not On The Inside!

- And The “Weapons Of Your Warfare” - Are “Mighty Through God!”

- And Will “Pull Down Strong Holds!”

- Just Look At What The Gospel Of Christ Can Do!

- It Can Disarm The Arguments Of Men!
 - 10:5 - "Casting Down Imaginations!"
 - This Describes The Wisdom & The Philosophies Of This World:
 - That Are Used To Attack God & His People!
 - **IE:** Belief Systems Like Atheism & Evolution!
 - And Yet - The Wisdom Of God Through The Gospel Is Greater!
 - In 1 Corinthians 1:20 Paul Asks - "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"
 - And In 1 Corinthians 3:19 - "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness!"
 - When You Witness For Christ:
 - The Gospel Alone Can Disarm:
 - Even The Strongest & Most Stubborn Arguments Of Men!
 - Charles Hodge - "The Success Of The Gospel Depends On Its Being Presented, Not As The Word Of Men, But As The Word Of God; Not As Something To Be Proved, But As Something To Be Believed!"
 - But Also:
 - It Can Destroy The Attitudes Of Men!
 - 10:5 - "Every High Thing That Exalteth Itself Against The Knowledge Of God!"
 - This Describes The Walls & Towers That Surround The Hearts Of Unbelievers!
 - It Refers To "Any Human Act Or Attitude That Forms An Obstacle" To The Gospel And "Keeps Men In Oppressive Bondage To Sin!" (ECB)
 - But When You Witness For Christ:
 - The Gospel Can Destroy / Demolish:
 - "Cast Down" The Highest & Strongest Tower That Seems Impenetrable!
 - But Even More:
 - It Can Detain The Affections Of Men!
 - 10:5 - "Bringing Into Captivity Every Thought To The Obedience Of Christ!"
 - This Describes What Would Happen When:
 - The Siege Of A City Was Over:
 - And The Battle Was Won!
 - Even Those Who Were In The Deepest Part:
 - Of The City - Surrender:
 - And Become The Captives Of The Conquering King!
 - And This Is What Can Happen:
 - When You Witness For Christ!
 - The Gospel Can Penetrate Into the Deepest Part Of The Souls Of Sinful Men:
 - The "Thoughts & Intents Of [Their] Hearts!"
 - And Bring Them Into "The Captivity Of Christ!"
 - This Means That Those Who Once:
 - Were The Enemies Of Christ:
 - Are Now Won To Christ!
 - And They Have Fully Surrendered To Him!
 - There Are No More Excuses!
 - There Are No More Arguments!
 - There Are No More Obstacles!
 - They Are Disarmed & Won By These Weapons Of God's Grace!
 - Has The Gospel Of Jesus Christ
 - Done This To You?
 - Have You Surrendered Your Heart:
 - To The "Obedience Of Christ?"
 - No More Excuses!
 - No More Arguments!
 - No More Obstacles!
 - If Not - You Remain His Enemy!
 - But When You Do Surrender:
 - Through Faith In Jesus Christ:
 - And His Life, His Death, His Resurrection, All To Win You To Himself:
 - You Can Become His Friend!

- And So - The Primary Weapon Of Our Warfare:
- Is The Gospel!

* And Yet - There Are Still Times When We Must Also Wield Another Weapon - And That Is:

4. *The Warning Of Christ!*

- 10:6 - "And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled!"
 - We Must Remember That:
 - The Gospel Still Has A Sharp Edge To It!
 - There Is Still A Judgment:
 - If It Is Ignored & A Person Persists In Rebellion & Sin!
 - But Even Then:
 - God Provides Both Time & Space:
 - For Men To Repent:
 - And Believe In His Gospel!
 - But You Must Not Wait Too Long!
 - "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!" (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Conclusion:

1. But These Are The Weapons Of Our Warfare!
 - As We Remember That:
 - Ephesians 6:12 - "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places!"
 - Though Men Attacked Paul:
 - Paul Did Not Attack Men!
 - He Attacked Their "Strong-Holds!"
 - The Strong-Holds Of:
 - Their Hearts, Their Minds, & Their Wills!
 - And He Did So With The Gospel Of Christ!
 - He Sought To Win Them!
 - **IE:** Isn't That The Best Way To Win A War?
 - For Your Enemies To Become Your Friends, And Even Part Of Your Family?
 - 2. So Let Us Use:
 - The Same Weapons Paul Used:
 - The Way Of Christ!
 - In Meekness & Gentleness:
 - Speaking The Truth In Love!
 - The Word Of Christ!
 - Which Alone Will Give Us:
 - The Conviction & Courage:
 - To Confront Sin & Error!
 - Our Witness For Christ!
 - Because Only The Gospel Can "Bring Into Captivity Every Thought To The Obedience Of Christ!" - And Even:
 - The Warning Of Christ!
 - Of His Judgment Yet To Come!
 - Because The Only Way You Can Win A Spiritual War:
 - Is To Use Spiritual Weapons:
 - Provided To Us By God Himself!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com