

19 January 2023

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal

Definite change of subject and tone as Paul began 2 Corinthians
10: He would now deal with accusations against he and his co-
laborers from "SOME" in the Church @ Corinth.

What was their accusation? That Paul's ministry was carnal and not spiritual; that he was motivated by the flesh and not by the Spirit of God, and that he sought his own glory rather than the glory of Christ.

Regrettably, in our day, THIS would be an accurate accusation, and an accurate description of MANY preachers, who DO NOT seek God's glory in the church, but instead, they seek to promote their own names and their own glory rather than Christ's!

We know this was not the case with Paul. But WHAT happened to Paul here is one of Satan's preferred methods of destroying a church...by inciting some to rise up from within and attack God's messenger. Here, at the church @ Corinth, "SOME" were attacking Paul by trying to discredit him and his ministry!

If Satan can discredit and ruin the preacher, Satan can ruin the church!

There is no doubt in my mind that Satan was behind these troublemakers in the church... Acts 20:28-30

Brethren, Paul was keenly aware that he was engaged in a spiritual war with an invisible adversary, therefore, he did not fight and resist him in the flesh, with carnal reasonings, or in his own strength, but with spiritual weapons and by faith in God's strength! 2 Timothy 2:4
YOU must know as children of God that YOU are engaged in spiritual warfare every day, you have a persistent and tireless adversary that seeks to ruin you, and everyone else in this church! 1 Peter 5:6-11

Just like the enemy that sowed the bad seeds in the good man's field, Satan will do his worst to shoot fiery darts into your mind. That's where he does his work, by getting you to THINK evil thoughts against your brother or sister in Christ...to sow discord, contention, and hatred in the church.

The devil wanted to drag Paul into THIS fight, HIS way and by HIS methods, but Paul was not ignorant of his devices and "wiles" or his methods, but he was ready to resist him by faith and in God's strength!

Paul's thinking in this conflict was not carnal, but spiritual... beloved when conflict presents itself to you, (and it will), you must be ready to act/and react not in the flesh, but by the Spirit of Christ... you must not take the devil's bait!

Let me show you the fleshly/carnal reasoning of Christ's apostles:

Luke 9:46, Luke 9:49, and then after these (2) things happened, they were going into a village in Samaria. But the Samaritans were rude toward Christ and would not receive Him. Luke 9:54-56

When "SOME" in the church accused Paul, he did not react like James and John, but in the meekness and gentleness of Christ".

Proverbs 15:1, 25:15

Satan wanted a carnal fight, he wanted Paul to against his accusers in the flesh, get angry with them, and lose his testimony, but instead, Paul answered them softly and gently. He did not return railing for railing...

2 Corinthians 10:3: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after (or according to) the flesh"

Walking "IN THE FLESH" here, IS NOT the same as when Paul wrote of about those that walk AFTER or IN the flesh in Romans 8:5-9.

In (V3): "For though we walk in the flesh" simply means, we are mere men, with weak human natures like every other human.

So, although I am in the flesh, (saith Paul), I am not motivated by the lusts of the flesh or by carnal desires in my teaching/preaching ministry, but I am motivated and led by the Spirit of Christ for the glory of Christ.

Now as we move forward in this text, I don't want to give Satan TOO MUCH CREDIT, yes, he is a liar, an instigator, the tempter, and accuser of the brethren; and yes, he wants to ruin you and this church.

BUT KNOW THIS, you and I are regrettably weak and helpless enough in our own nature to ruin ourselves and this church ALL BY OURSELVES... without Satan's help. David: Psalm 139:23-24, Paul: Romans 7:24

EVERY ONE OF US has a tireless adversary in the devil, but we also have an enemy within whom we must constantly mortify and kill.

This is one of the primary fields of battle for you, killing the old man!

What does walking/warring according to the flesh look like? Galatians 5:14 is what it looks like. What are the works of the flesh that will make me behave carnally?

(Verse 16 is paramount): Galatians 5:14-26, Romans 7:22-25

If you would truly KNOW YOURSELF and mature in the faith of Christ, it is NOT enough TO SIMPLY KNOW these truths from God's Word... you must also actively BELIEVE and WALK in them!

Now to the tools and weapons of our warfare? 2 Corinthians 10:4: ("For the weapons of our warfare are NOT CARNAL, but they are MIGHTY THROUGH GOD to the pulling down of strongholds").

What are the weapons of YOUR warfare? How do you engage in this spiritual conflict that you are in? By faith and obedience to Christ and in the truth of God's Word. Just as when we are saved, we are given a righteousness that is not our own, so ALSO, this spiritual conflict that you are in must be fought by faith, and with a strength that is not your own. Zechariah 4:6: "Not by might..."

Ephesians 3:16, 6:10, 1 Corinthians 12:9-10,
Philippians 4:13

Beloved of God, THIS is why it is so important for you to be OFTEN in the spiritual armory of God's Word, strengthening yourself in your faith in Christ, killing and casting off the old man (old thoughts and reasonings), and by cultivating and putting on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. Matthew 4:4

To continually BE being "renewed in the spirit of your mind"!

The tools and weapons of our warfare MUST BE given by God, or else they CANNOT and WILL NOT be "Mighty through God"! IF we would think rightly and withstand assaults that will come from within our own minds, and from enemies without, to include the fiery darts of the devil, you must be seasoned & experienced in the practice and use of this sword! Hebrews 5:12-14

Bottom line...this spiritual warfare is all about "pulling down strong holds", and as we enter (V5), "casting down imaginations (carnal reasonings), and every high thing, (or every arrogant and prideful thought) that exalts itself AGAINST the knowledge of God"

In Christ, the "new you" in Christ, ought to be diminishing the "old you" more and more with each passing day! This spiritual warfare, which all of us are engaged IS a BUILDING UP of the new man, but also a tearing down (or throwing down) the old man; this includes strongholds, sinful fortresses out of our minds. Romans 12:2
You shouldn't think the way you used to think; you should speak the way you used to speak, you shouldn't behave and conduct yourself in this world the way the world does; your attitudes should not be the world's attitudes, you especially shouldn't judge the way the world judges.

Finally, you need to lock down your mind, or maybe it's better to say, lock sinful thoughts OUT of your mind, and then... "Bring every thought "CAPTIVE" to the obedience of Christ"

You might be just now thinking... How would I even begin to do this? To lock down and control my thoughts so that (ALL OF THEM) are good thoughts, thoughts of obedience to Christ?

Not only must I cast sinful thoughts and imaginations OUT of my mind... NOW, I must "bring into captivity EVERY THOUGHT to the obedience of Christ"

HOW? When God commands us to do what seems impossible, we must go to Him by prayer and grace, and for the strength and capability to do what He has commanded us to do.

Philippians 4:13

2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

If you're lost, you might be looking at all of this, and saying to yourself, IF that is what Christianity is, I don't want to be in that fight.

You're in a fight whether you're lost or saved... but if you're lost, you're gonna lose your fight.