



Spiritual Warfare: Pulling Down Strongholds

2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-6

LESSON 7 – TAKING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE

CALVIN'S INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION
JOHN GILL'S EXPOSITION OF THE BIBLE

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ALL SCRIPTURE TAKEN FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION. COPYRIGHT © 1982 BY THOMAS NELSON, INC. USED BY PERMISSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Wrestling with Errors

- ▶ 2 Cor. 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
- ▶ Pulling down strongholds – indicates bondage and captivity being demolished or destroyed.
- ▶ Casting down arguments – tearing down, dismantling of reasoning or thought
- ▶ Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ – arresting the inventions of men that exalt themselves over and above the Word of God.

Calvin's Institutes

- ▶ John Calvin wrote, “What is this but to reject all inventions of the human mind (from whatever brain they have issued) in order that God’s pure Word may be taught and learned in the believers’ church? What is it but to remove the ordinances, or rather inventions of all men (whatever their rank), in order that the decrees of God alone may remain in force? These are those spiritual “weapons ... with power from God to demolish strongholds”; by them God’s faithful soldiers “destroy stratagems and every height that rises up against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ”

Calvin's Institutes

- ▶ Here, then, is the sovereign power with which the pastors of the church, by whatever name they be called, ought to be endowed. That is that they may dare boldly to do all things by God's Word; may compel all worldly power, glory, wisdom, and exaltation to yield to and obey his majesty; supported by his power, may command all from the highest even to the last; may build up Christ's household and cast down Satan's; may feed the sheep and drive away the wolves; may instruct and exhort the teachable; may accuse, rebuke, and subdue the rebellious and stubborn: may bind and loose; finally, if need be, may launch thunderbolts and lightnings; but do all things in God's Word.

Knowledge

- ▶ The thoughts we do battle against are thoughts that are contrary to the Word of God. To be contrary to the Word of God is to be contrary to God Himself.
- ▶ The Bible is the absolute authority for man because it is the Word of God. So the answer to the questions about what we need to know are provided in the Word of God. This is the Christian's source of knowledge about God and the world He created.
- ▶ Any knowledge, in any field of thought, that violates a Biblical worldview or states anything that is clearly contrary to Scripture is wrong. When it comes to knowledge there is still such a thing as right and wrong.

Knowledge

- ▶ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Prov. 1:7
- ▶ Having a right view of God is necessary to know and appreciate the truth about Who He is and what He has done.
- ▶ For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding. – Prov. 2:6
- ▶ Wise people store up knowledge – Prov. 10:14
- ▶ The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly – Prov. 15:2

In Obedience to Christ

- ▶ We take these thoughts captive “to the obedience of Christ” – meaning in obedience to what Christ tells us. Paul was arguing against the false teaching of the Judaizers and false apostles in Corinth. Upholding the Word is not done in order to fight with the false teachers, but it is done in order to be obedient to Christ!
- ▶ 2 Cor. 10:12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Boasting about What We Know?

- ▶ 2 Cor. 10:13 13 We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you. 14 For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ; 15 not boasting of things beyond measure, that is, in other men's labors, but having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere, 16 to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's sphere of accomplishment. 17 But "he who glories, let him glory in the Lord." 18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.

Preaching Another Jesus

- ▶ 2 Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!
- ▶ The thoughts we are to take into captivity are doctrines that present to us another Jesus! Jesus the brother of Lucifer. Jesus, not born of a virgin. Jesus, the archangel Michael. Jesus, not fully God, or not fully man. Any other Jesus than the Jesus who is God!

Preaching Another Jesus

- ▶ Matthew 24:23 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand.
- ▶ The truth about Who Jesus is matters.
- ▶ Pretend Messiah’s and the cultists’ creations always strike at the Person and Work of Christ. We have KNOWLEDGE of Who He is and what He has done from His Word. We must be diligent to study what the Bible tells us about Jesus so that we know when a false christ is being preached.

We Preach Christ Crucified

- ▶ We preach Christ – the Jesus of the Bible
- ▶ We preach Christ crucified – the Jesus who saves
- ▶ We do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord
- ▶ (1 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 4:5)
- ▶ John 5:23 He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.
- ▶ Any thought that presents itself and is contrary to Christ and His Word must be stopped, arrested, taken into captivity!