



THE BATTLE FOR YOUR MIND

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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The Battle for Your Mind

SERMON REFERENCE: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2145

Whether we realize it or not, there is a battle raging in our minds at every moment: spiritual warfare between light and darkness, good and evil, Jesus Christ and Satan. We cannot afford to be ignorant, and we cannot possibly be neutral.

2 Corinthians 10 shares encouragement for us in this battle for our minds.

First, this passage warns us of the warfare of our foe.

There is a deadly array of demons dedicated to the destruction of our thought lives. They are under the authority of the prince of darkness—the devil. He wants our minds, because it is through the mind that God communicates, changes, and controls us. When we're saved, we receive the mind of Christ, and use our minds in different capacities than we once did. The devil wants to corrupt our minds so we fall out of fellowship with Christ.

Second, this passage addresses the weakness of our flesh.

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

The spiritual battle is not in the flesh, but our flesh can be a point of weakness in our fight. We do not have what it takes to overcome on our own.

This passage also reminds us of the weapons of our fight.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 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..." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

One of our weapons is the sovereignty of God, who is our Commander-in-Chief in this fight.

We also have the authority of our commission, as 2 Corinthians 10:8 says: "For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed..."

Finally, remember, we have our certain courage.

Jesus Christ has already won the war. We win the battle each and every day by guarding our minds with all diligence (see Proverbs 4:23).

LIFE APPLICATION

Adrian Rogers says, "Center your mind upon Jesus. Don't let the devil take away your pure-hearted devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Stay in love with Him and there won't be any room for those filthy, wicked, lustful, prideful thoughts that bombard us all."



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- 1) INTRODUCTION
 - a) There is a deadly and sinister war going on, and the battleground is your mind and soul.
 - i) Those of us who are Christians are caught up in this battle.
 - b) When we were born again, we were born to win.
 - i) God did not save us for us to live a defeated life.
 - c) God's plan for us is victory.

- 2) WARFARE OF OUR FOE
 - a) There is a war, and our enemy is not flesh and blood.
 - i) The devil wars against us.
 - (1) According to Ephesians 6:12, there is a deadly array of demonic hosts.
 - (a) They are invisible and dedicated to the destruction of your thought life.
 - (b) They are under the authority of the devil himself.
 - b) The battlegrounds are: imaginations, knowledge, thought.
 - i) There is a war, Satan is behind it, and our mind is the battleground.
 - c) Satan's desire is to conquer and control your thought life and to make it a citadel from which he can war against God.
 - d) There is a difference between your mind and your brain.
 - i) Your mind does the thinking; your brain is what you think with.
 - (1) This is similar to the relationship between a piano and the pianist.
 - (a) The pianist uses the piano to express the music.
 - e) When we get saved, we have the mind of Christ.
 - i) Not a higher IQ, but a different capacity for thinking.
 - f) The fact that we have been saved does not mean that the war is over for us.
 - i) Paul is writing to Corinthian Christians.
 - ii) "Simplicity" in 2 Corinthians 11:3 means "purity," "sincerity."
 - (1) Single-minded devotion.
 - iii) Satan wants to corrupt your mind.
 - iv) "Godly jealousy" is a good jealousy that wants to protect those whom we love.
 - (1) Parents have a right to be jealous over their children that they might be protected.
 - v) Paul uses the analogy in this verse to say that the people in Corinth were his spiritual children.
 - (1) They were the bride of Christ, and Paul did not want them to be corrupted or sullied.
 - g) Satan knows if he can get your mind, then he can corrupt you and pull you away from the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - h) In Genesis 6:5, God destroyed an entire civilization because of their thought life.
 - i) We need to guard our minds.



- j) Your mind is to be fastened upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - k) Not only does the devil want your mind, God wants your mind.
 - i) It is through your mind that God reaches you.
 - l) God communicates to you through your mind.
 - i) “The vanity of their mind” in Ephesians 4:17 means “the emptiness of their mind.”
 - ii) “Heart” in Ephesians 4:18 refers to the mind.
 - m) God does not communicate to you through your emotions.
 - i) Emotions are the shallowest part of your nature.
 - ii) Salvation is the deepest work of God.
 - n) God communicating through your mind does not mean rationalism or intellectualism.
 - i) This is God revealing Himself to your mind.
 - o) God changes you by changing your mind.
 - i) God renews us in the spirit of our mind.
 - ii) You can change the way you live by changing the way you think.
 - p) God controls you through your mind.
- 3) WEAKNESS OF OUR FLESH
- a) In our own flesh, we are weak.
 - b) Our flesh (our natural state) does not have what it takes to have the right thought process.
 - c) We live in the flesh, and so we all experience problems, disappointments, sicknesses and perplexities.
 - i) When we become Christians, we do not become immune to these things.
 - ii) The warfare is not after the flesh.
 - (1) There is no way that the flesh can overcome this.
 - (2) We do not fight with flesh and blood because we do not fight against flesh and blood.
 - d) Our battle for the mind is against the devil himself, and we cannot outwit, outwork or out-war the devil.
 - i) The battle for the mind cannot be won with education.
 - ii) The battle for the mind cannot be won with legislation.
 - (1) The weapons of our warfare are not carnal.
 - (2) We cannot control men’s thought processes by laws.
 - iii) The battle for the mind cannot be won with environment.
 - (1) Education, legislation and environment are carnal methods.
 - (a) These are things that people can do without the Lord Jesus.
 - (2) Getting in a better environment will not change your thought life.
 - (a) Adam and Eve got in trouble in the Garden of Eden.
 - (b) Satan messed with their minds.
 - e) Our flesh is weak, and we do not have what it takes to overcome and win this battle.
- 4) WEAPONS OF OUR FIGHT
- a) A stronghold is a fortress.
 - i) Walls of resistance are going to come down.



- ii) Corinthian Christians had in their hearts arrogance, ignorance and despair.
 - (1) These are all strongholds.
- iii) Inside the strongholds are demonic thoughts.
- b) “Casting down high things” does not refer to intelligence but to intellectualism, high-minded attitudes, sophistication.
 - i) Paul said that he was going to take into captivity every thought.
 - (1) Thoughts that are being held hostage are going to be set free from habits, fears, obsessions and lusts.
 - ii) Paul states that he is going to war, but not in his own flesh.
- c) What were Paul’s weapons and what are the weapons of our fight?
 - i) The sovereignty of our Commander.
 - (1) We belong to Christ, who is our Commander-in-Chief.
 - (2) The devil has been trying all that he can do to win this war.
 - (a) But when Jesus died on Calvary, He decimated the enemy.
 - (b) Satan’s kingdom has come down.
 - (3) Jesus is our sovereign Commander in this battle.
 - ii) The authority of our commission.
 - (1) Authority is the legal right to act on behalf of another.
 - (2) Jesus, who has won the war, has given us the power of attorney.
 - (3) “Power” in Luke 10:19 literally means “authority.”
 - (a) We are not to rejoice in the fact that we have been given this authority.
 - (i) We are to rejoice that our name is written in Heaven.
 - (ii) It is not the knowledge of the devil that sets us free, it is the knowledge of Jesus that sets us free.
 - (4) We are to resist the devil, not chase him.
 - iii) The certainty of our courage.
 - (1) Paul says that he has courage because he belongs to Jesus, and He won the battle for him, and because Jesus has given him authority.
 - (2) And he is going to win this battle.
- 5) CONCLUSION
 - a) As you think, that is what you are going to be.
 - b) Once you take back the fortress of your mind, then you will need to set a guard on your mind.
 - i) Do not let sin get into the fortress.
 - ii) God made us to where we cannot think two thoughts at one time.
 - (1) If you are thinking what is right, then you cannot think what is wrong.



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Would you take God's precious Word and be finding please Second Corinthians chapter 10. We're going to be talking about your mind, the battle for your mind. Some of our battles are maybe just a little silly. I heard of a man who was on a diet, trying to lose weight, but on his way to work he passed a doughnut shop. And he got to thinking just how good a doughnut and a cup of coffee would be. And he said to himself, "I will only stop if there is a parking place right in the front." And sure enough, after seven times around the block, there was a parking place right there in the front.

Now we, all of us fight the battle of the bulge, and those kind of battles, and they're with us always, but there is a battle more deadly, more sinister. It is a battle for the mind, a deadly war that is between God and Satan, and the battleground is, believe it or not, your mind and your soul. And those of us who are Christians are caught up in this battle. Second Corinthians 10 verses 3 through 5, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." So right away we know we're talking about a war, we're talking about a battle. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought," underscore that, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Now there's a war, and this message is a warning and it is a call to arms. But I pray God it will be an encouragement, because when you were born again, you were born to win. God did not save you for a defeated life. For the Bible says in Second Corinthians 2:14, "Thanks be unto God, who causes us always, always, always to triumph in Christ Jesus." I hope you believe that. God's plan for you, precious friend, is victory, and He has a plan for you for victory in your thought life.

Three things I want to lay on your heart this morning. The very first thing is a warfare of our foe. Look if you will again in Second Corinthians 10 verse 4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." There is a war. And who are the participants in this war? Who has declared war against your thought life, against the citadel of your soul? Well, I want to say that your enemy is not clothed in flesh. Put in your margin Ephesians 6 verse 12. There the apostle Paul told the Ephesian Christians, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers," listen to this phrase, "of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." That is, the devil has ensconced himself in high places to war against you. You are at war, and there is a war against you. There is a deadly array, according to this verse, of demonic hosts. They are invisible and they are dedicated to the destruction of your thought life, and they are under the authority of the prince of darkness, the god of wickedness, the devil.

Now what is the prize in this warfare? What is the battle ground? Look if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verse 5, "Casting down imaginations," underscore the word imaginations, "and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God," underscore the word knowledge, "and



bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” There do you have it? Imaginations, knowledge, thought. It’s obvious that there is a war. Satan is behind it, and your mind is the battleground. Satan’s desire is to conquer and to control your thought life and then to make your thought life a citadel from which he can war against God. Because look if you will here. It says here, “Every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.” Satan wants your mind.

Now, there is a difference between your mind and your brain. Now, the behavioral psychologist doesn’t recognize that difference, but the Bible makes that difference very clear and very plain. Your mind does the thinking; your brain is what you think with. The relationship of the mind and the brain is very much like the relationship of a piano and a pianist. The pianist uses the piano to express that music. So there’s a difference between your mind and your gray matter, there’s a difference between the two. Your brain and your mind are separate. Now I will admit that some people have a better piano than others. Some of us have a spinet and some have a grand piano. But you see, still there is a decided difference between your mind and your brain.

Now, when you get saved, you have the mind of Christ. That doesn’t mean you have a higher IQ. But you have the mind of Christ. You have a different capacity for thinking to use that brain that you have. Now again, the devil wants your mind, and the fact that you do have the mind of Christ, the fact that you have been saved, does not mean, listen to me, it does not mean, therefore, because you’ve been born again that the war is over for you. Paul is writing here to the Christians, he’s writing to the Corinthian Christians. You’re in chapter 10, go over and look in chapter 11 and verse 3, it’ll make it even plainer. Look if you will in Second Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 3. Paul says here, “For I fear, lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety,” that is, he’s a snake in the grass, he’s a wily old devil, “so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” Now when he says, “The simplicity that is in Christ,” he doesn’t mean that it is just you’re saying your ABC’s spiritually. No, no. The word simplicity actually means purity, sincerity. Now what he’s saying is here that the devil wants; it means single-minded devotion. So, “I fear,” he says, “as though the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the pure single-minded devotion that is in Christ.” Now, the devil therefore is working against your mind. He wants to somehow corrupt your mind.

Paul here is talking to the Corinthian Christians as though they were his children. And he says that he has espoused them to Christ. He’s like a father looking over his daughter and trying to keep her pure. Notice he says in verse 2, “For I am jealous over you,” this is Second Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 2, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” Now what does he mean by godly jealousy? Now jealousy can be bad or it can be good. There’s an insane jealousy that’s not good, but there’s a godly jealousy that wants to protect those that we love. And so husbands have a right to be jealous that they have the pure devotion of their wives. Wives have a right to be jealous that they have the pure devotion of their husbands Parents have a right to be jealous over their children, that they might be protected. A loving father wants to present his daughter, bring his daughter to the marriage altar a virgin. And the problem today is that we have so many drop-out dads who don’t understand that



their job is to raise up a godly girl and present her at marriage a virgin girl to a virgin boy. That's the purpose of a godly father. Now Paul is using that analogy to say that those people at Corinth were his spiritual children, they are the bride of Christ, and he is saying, "I don't want you to be corrupted. I don't want you to be sullied. When I present you to Christ at the marriage supper of the lamb, I want you to be a pure, chaste virgin for the Lord Jesus Christ." You know, we don't have enough purity in the church today. The bride has forgotten how to blush, I believe. And what we need today is a pure church.

Sometimes teenagers sell out so cheaply. I was reading an incredible story, years ago in London there was a man named Mr. Betts, B-E-T-T-S, who had a music store. And a shabbily dressed man came in there carrying a dusty old violin, and he said, "I need food. Would you buy my violin?" Mr. Betts said, "I have plenty of violins." The man said, "I am in desperate need, please buy my violin." Mr. Betts bought the old man's violin for the equivalency of \$5, only you wouldn't call it \$5 in London, but the equivalency of five dollars. And the old man went out, crammed the money in his pocket, his shabby old clothes, and went out. Betts, being a musician, tucked the violin under his chin and began to play. And he heard rich, resonant tones coming from that violin. He got a candle, lighted the candle and held it up, and looked inside that violin and he saw those immortal words: Antonio Stradivarius. He realized he had a treasure. The old man had sold him a Stradivarius violin for five dollars! Betts was an honest man, a good man. He went out to try to find the old man to say, "Hey, you made a mistake," but he was gone. And he never found him again. Mr. Betts sold the violin for \$5,000 many, many years ago. Today it's worth a king's ransom. Think of the old man, selling a violin like that for \$5. I tell you, some of you young people are selling out more cheaply than that when you make your bodies a dirty plaything of somebody rather than saving yourself for the one that you're going to marry.

Now, what Paul is saying is this; as a father wants to protect his daughter and present her a pure virgin to Jesus Christ, Paul said, "I want to protect the church, I want you to have that pure, simple-minded, sincere love, single-mindedness for Jesus Christ." And he said, "There's a battle for your mind, the devil wants to get your mind because the devil knows if he can get your mind, he can corrupt you, he can pull you away from the Lord Jesus Christ."

We live in a world, friend, that has gone wild concerning the thought life. I remind you, if you'll read Genesis chapter 6 verse 5, that God destroyed an entire civilization because of their thought life. "God saw that the wickedness of the imaginations of men's heart was only evil continually." And God destroyed them, the Bible says in Genesis 11:6, "Because of the things that they imagined in their minds."

I have an article of U.S. News and World Report, an alarming story. On the front of U.S. News and World Report is a picture of a teenager. He's in his jeans, he has his pullover shirt on, he has earphones, and the caption says this, "Do you know what your children are listening to?" It's a picture of the average teenager, you'd see him anywhere. And then the article inside; deeply disturbing. Let me just quote a little from it. "Day and night America's youth are enticed by electronic visions of a world so violent, sensual and narcotic, that childhood itself appears to be under siege. The pleasures



produced to the young today, television, video, and films, are so provocative that parents are in an uproar. Psychologists are warning of dire consequences. Entertainment producers are fearful of threats to free speech. And politicians are pondering solutions that question First Amendment rights." The article goes on to say, and I'm skipping, "Violence, the occult, sadomasochism, rebellion, drug abuse, promiscuity, and homosexuality are constant themes."

And then I want you to listen to what this article said. Now this is not a Baptist preacher, this is U.S. News and World Report. "Studies estimate that teenagers listen to 10,500 hours of rock music between the seventh and twelfth grades alone." 10,500 hours. Well, how much is that? All right, that's between the seventh and twelfth grades. Now listen to this, "This is just 500 hours less than the total time they spend in school over twelve years." Only 500 hours less. Can you imagine 10,500 hours of rock music coming into the heads of these young people, and it is filled with garbage?

And the National Education Association estimates that many of the 5,000 teenage suicides a year, many of them are rooted to the depression that comes through this fatalistic music that these kids are listening to. Well, the Bible teaches that. Romans 8 verse 6, the Bible says, "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." The Bible says in Proverbs chapter 23 verse 7, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." That means that we need to guard our minds.

And incidentally, let me say to some of you who are into transcendental meditation. That's dangerous, that's dangerous. Do you know what transcendental meditation does? It opens you up to demonic spirits. People say, "Well, put yourself into some sort of a meditative mood, you may make contact." Yes, you may! That'd be like going to bed at night and unlocking all the doors, pulling open all the windows and then going to sleep at night to see what might come in. You know, you just go to sleep and you say, "Well tonight I might make contact." Yes, you might, you might. Oh, no. Your mind is to be fastened upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Now folks, I'm telling you that there is a battle here for your mind. The devil wants your mind. The devil wants to corrupt your mind from the simplicity, the single-minded devotion that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And not only does the devil want your mind, God wants your mind, because it is through your mind that God reaches you.

Now I'm going to give you some Scriptures and I don't want you to turn to them because we don't have time, I want you to listen in fast speed, but I want you to jot these Scriptures down and use them later on.

First of all, I want to remind you that when God communicates to you, God communicates through your mind. Ephesians 4:17 and 18, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk." Now he's talking to Christians. He says, "Stop living like pagans." "In the vanity of their mind," that means the emptiness, the vapidness of their mind. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." And the word heart here also refers to the mind.

Now God, when He communicates, He communicates to you through the mind. We have people today who want to go to services that put the emphasis upon emotionalism. God does not



communicate to you through your emotions. Your emotions are the shallowest part of your nature. Salvation is the deepest work of God. People get in services and the rhythmic music and everything and they get goose bumps and liver shivers and all that, and they think they've had an experience with God, all they've had is an emotional hiccup. I'm telling you truth.

God communicates through your mind. Now when I say your mind, I'm not talking about rationalism and intellectualism, either. I'm talking about God revealing himself to your mind. God communicates through your mind, and God changes us by changing our mind. Ephesians 4 verse 23, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind." How does God renew you? In the spirit of your mind. You can change the way you live by changing the way you think. I hope that comes in. You can change the way you live by changing the way that you think. What do you think Romans 12 verse 2 says? Listen to it, "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." "Transformed by the renewing of your mind."

God communicates to you through the mind, God changes you through the mind, God controls you through the mind. Remember the Scripture that I gave you before, Romans 8 verse 6, "To be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace." I clipped this out; this is something that Charles Swindoll, Chuck Swindoll wrote. It's one of the finest things he wrote, in my estimation. He says this, "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me is more important than facts, it is more important than the past, than education." Now, he's not saying that attitude is more important than truth, he's not talking about truth, as we know it, he's talking about facts, two and two is four. He says, "Attitude to me is more important than facts, it is more important than the past, more than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, a home. The remarkable thing is that we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past, we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing that we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you. We are in charge of our attitudes."

Well, who's in charge of you? I hope the Holy Spirit is, because, friend, God communicates through the mind. God changes us by changing the mind. God controls us by controlling the mind. God wants your mind. The devil wants your mind. And so there is a battle for your mind.

Now, that's the first point here. What we've talked about here is this, the warfare of our foe. Now here's the second point; the weakness of our flesh. You must understand this. If you think I'm just telling you to buck up and think better thoughts, no, that would be futile. Notice that in your own flesh, you are weak. Now go back to our text, Second Corinthians 10. Look if you will in verse 3, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." Your flesh, your natural state, does not have what it takes to have the right thought process. Now, we live in the flesh, folks. We might as well admit it. All of us have problems, all of us have disappointments, all of us have sicknesses, all of



us have perplexities, all of us have the mundane things of life. Don't get the idea that when you get saved you move into another planet somewhere.

I was in the store a while back buying groceries and a lady said to me, "Oh, Brother Rogers, I didn't know you had to buy groceries." "Yeah, we do. And also, I have to take the garbage out in the rain." I do that just like everybody else does. We all live in the flesh! I mean, that's a part of life! That's just where we are. And there's no place that you can take your flesh and get it somewhere and just get out of this rat race that we're in. You just can't do that. The warfare is not after the flesh.

Sometimes people go to a monastery, thinking if they can get off in a monastery, somehow that then they can be holy. I heard about a man, went to a monastery, and this monastery had the discipline of silence. They could only say two words a year. And this man went to monastery and finally he came to his superior after a whole year there in the monastery and he said, "All right, you have two words, what do you want to say?" He said, "Bed hard." "Thank you, go back." He came back the second year; he said, "Well, you get two more words, what do you want to say?" He said, "Food bad." Said, "Go on back." Came back the third year, he said, "You've got two words, what do you want to say?" He said, "I quit." And he said, "Well you might as well quit, all you've done is complain for three years."

There's no way that the flesh can overcome this. "Though we live in the flesh, we don't war in the flesh." He's talking here about our weakness of our flesh. Listen, we do not fight with flesh and blood because we don't fight against flesh and blood. You have to understand that. Remember Ephesians chapter 6 verses 10 through 13, "Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers." That's the reason he says here in Second Corinthians 10 verse 3, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh."

When are we going to learn that our battle is not with the Democrats, not with the Republicans, not with Communism, not with Hollywood, not with the IRS and not with the mother-in-law? That's not where our battle is. Our battle for the mind is against the devil himself and you cannot outwit, outwork, out-war the devil. He mocks at our schemes, he ridicules our organizations. Do you know what most people think the battle for the mind is going to be won with? Is education. Now I'm not against education, but if you take a man who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ and educate him, what have you done? You've just made him more dangerous. He becomes a clever devil.

I had a friend before he met Christ, he was an alcoholic and he went to these various courses for alcohol abuse, and he told me after he'd met the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "Let me tell you what those courses did for me without Jesus." He said, "I went to those courses a dumb drunk." He said, "I came out an educated alcoholic." That's education. No, education is not the answer.

And I'm going to tell you something else. Legislation is not the answer for the mind. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Do you think by laws that you're going to control men's thought processes? We're trying to have laws now against what people think. Now we're going to punish hate crimes. Oh, listen, boy, if a man who kills me kills me, I sure hope he doesn't hate me. I mean, you think about that; all crimes are hate crimes! But we think somehow by law that we can



have laws that make people love one another and laws that keep people from hating one another! Well, you can't do that with legislation. Legislation can only restrain evil, it cannot make people good. Education or legislation is not the answer.

There's an old story about a mother who told her little four-year-old to sit down, he wouldn't sit down. She said, "Son, I said sit down." He wouldn't sit down. She took him by the shoulders and put him in the chair and said, "I said sit down." He sat there for a while and he said, "I'm standing up on the inside."

Legislation is not the answer. And I'm going to tell you something else. Environment is not the answer. How are you going to control your mind? You think you're going to control your thought life by environment? Listen, Paul says in Second Corinthians 10:4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." Education, legislation, environment, all of those are carnal methods. Those are things that people can do without the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you think that if you get in a better environment, that's going to change your thought life? Well I want to remind you of something. Now I want a good environment, I want an education, and I like good laws. But I remind you that Adam and Eve got in trouble in the Garden of Eden. You're not going to have a better environment than that. And how did they get in trouble? They were deceived, the devil messed with their mind. The devil messed with their mind.

And so we see, the warfare of our foe, the devil wants our minds. We see the weakness of flesh; that we do not have what it takes to overcome. I don't believe this is a true story, but it illustrates what I'm talking about. They say that in a particular mental institution where they tried to ascertain if people are ready to be released they put them in a room, turn the faucet on over a sink until the sink overflows, and then give the people a mop and say, "Clean up this room." Now if they start mopping without turning off the water, they say they're not ready to leave. Now that's what we've been doing in our society, we've been just mopping without turning off the water. The problem, folks, is the mind. Proverbs 23:7, "As a man thinketh, so is he." Out of the heart, out of the mind are the issues of life.

Now, let's move to the third and final thing. What I've talked about is the warfare of our foe. The devil tries to conquer our minds. What I've tried to talk about is the weakness of our flesh. We don't have what it takes to overcome and to win this battle. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." Do you know what the word carnal means? Did you ever order a chili con carne? It means with meat. The Latin word for flesh is carnis. Well, he's saying, "The weapons of our warfare are not fleshly." We live in the flesh, but we don't war after the flesh.

Now here's the third thing. I want you to see, folks, the weapons of our fight. What are they? He mentions them in Second Corinthians 10:4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Now, in Paul's day there was a battle, and in one corner it had Paul. In the other corner you had the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire had been in existence for 700 years, had prestige, power, the iron legions of Rome for an army, the mighty vessels of Rome in the navy, the Roman senate, the Roman law, and all of that evil had entrenched itself in Corinth in the hearts and minds of those people. And over there in the other corner was the apostle



Paul, a little squinty-eyed Jew with a heart full of Jesus, and Paul is declaring war. And Paul said, "I'm coming against all that."

Now, who's going to win this fight? Well, Paul wins this fight. How did Paul win this fight? Not with carnal weapons. How did Paul put the entrenched evil in the Roman Empire and at Corinth down for the count of ten? Paul said, "I'm coming against this citadel, I'm coming against this." Notice if you will here as he talks about what he's coming against. Here says, if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verse 4, he speaks there in verse 4 of strongholds. Do you see that? He says, "Mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." What is a stronghold? It's a fortress. Walls of resistance are going to come down. What kind of resistance are in the hearts and minds of the Corinthians? Well, arrogance, ignorance, despair, these are the strongholds. Inside that stronghold are demonic thoughts, organized, mobilized, the demonized armies of Hell are inside that stronghold. Paul says, "That is coming down."

And then he mentions high things. Do you see that? Look if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verse 5, "Casting down every high thing." Now, here's a citadel and it's got these towers, all around these towers. Paul said, "I'm going to pull down these walls," "I'm going to get at those of you who are on the inside." And Paul says, "I'm going to decimate your towers." What's he talking about there? He's not talking about intelligence, but intellectualism, high-minded attitudes, sophistication. Paul said, "That's coming down." And then he said, "Inside there's some captives." And he said, "I'm going to take those captives captive." He said, "I'm going to bring into captivity every thought. Thoughts that are being held hostage are going to be set free from habits and fears and obsessions and lusts." Paul says, "I'm tearing down those walls. Those towers are coming down and those thoughts they're coming out! I am going to war!" Not in his own flesh because he says in Second Corinthians 10:4 and 5, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the knowledge of God." What a war!

Now what were Paul's weapons? Paul says the weapons of our warfare. First of all, there's the sovereignty of his commander. Look if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verse 7, he says, "Do ye look on outward things, after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's." That is, we belong to Christ. He is our Commander and Chief.

Japan at Potsdam told Britain, told the United States, "We're not going to surrender." The Allies said to Japan, "If you don't surrender, we will decimate you! We will obliterate you! We will come with devastating force on you!" Japan said, "We'll fight on." And we dropped on Hiroshima, Nagasaki, the A-bomb, and Japan surrendered. They surrendered. Friend, the devil has been trying to do all that he can do to win this war, but I tell you, when Jesus Christ died at Calvary, he dropped an A-bomb on the devil. He dropped an A-bomb on the devil. Jesus said in John 12 verse 31, "Now is the prince



of this world cast out!" Satan's kingdom came down and Paul said, "We belong to Jesus, He is our sovereign commander in this battle."

Not only do we have the sovereignty of our commander, but we have the authority of our commission. Look if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verse 8, look at it, "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority which the Lord hath given us for edification and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed." Notice, our authority. What is authority? Authority is the legal right to act on behalf of another. Jesus, who's won the war, has given to us the power of attorney. David, with a slingshot and God, came against Goliath. And I tell you, I'd rather have a slingshot and God than have the sword of Goliath. We have authority. Jesus has given us that authority. Luke 10 verses 19 through 20. Jesus said, "Behold, I give you power," and the word power is literally authority, "to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Jesus said, "You've got this authority." But notice this, "Notwithstanding in this," rejoice not, "that the spirits are subject under you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven." Jesus said, "You've got power, you've got authority over all of these demonic hosts that are in this citadel. But don't rejoice in that. Don't be devil-minded, be Heaven-minded. "Don't rejoice that I've given you this authority, rejoice that your name is written in Heaven." Listen, it is not the knowledge of the devil that sets you free, it is the knowledge of Jesus that sets you free. You have to understand, we're not called to be evangelical Ghostbusters. The Bible says, we resist the devil, not chase him; James 4 verse 7.

What you have to do, what you have to understand is this, that there is the sovereignty of our commander, there is the authority of our commission. I wish I had time for this, but our time is going, there is the certainty of our courage. Look if you will in Second Corinthians 10 verses 8 through 11 of this same chapter here, and I'm coming to the end. "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible." They said, "Paul, you're always writing these tough letters. Wait till you get here, you little weakling." And Paul says in verse 11, "Let such a one think this, that such as we are in word by letters when we're absent, such will we be also indeed when we are present!" Paul says, "Listen! I belong to Jesus Christ, He's won the battle for me. He has given me authority, and because of that, I have this courage, and I am going to win this battle."

Now, my time is gone. But you listen to me today. As you think, that's what you're going to be. Chuck Swindoll is correct when he says that attitude is everything. Now, once you take back the fortress of your mind, then what you need to do is to set a guard, the Bible says, "Guard your mind with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Proverbs 4:23.

You go to the airport to get on the airplane, you go through a thing, what do they call it, a magnetometer or something like that? You go through that deal. What do you do? You take out your keys, you take out your glasses, you take off your tie clasp, you take off your earrings, not me but others, and you take off this stuff. And you think you're ready to go through, and that thing



says, “MMMM.” “Would you step back, sir? Do you have anything in your pocket?” One more time. “MMMM.” Would you step back again, sir? Would you come over here, sir?” And they frisk you. Boy, I wish we could put some of those at the doors of this sanctuary that would detect sin. After I preach, you try to get out, it’d say, “You go back in there for a while.” Wouldn’t that be great? “Annhht! You ain’t ready yet. You come on back in here. He’s not finished with you yet. You’ve got something else you need to put in the basket.” Amen. Well, friend, also, you need to keep one of those on your mind, and you don’t let those things get into the fortress. I mean, just don’t let those things in.

Listen, read Philippians 4:8, “Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things!” God made you where you can’t think two thoughts at one time. You’re thinking what’s right, you can’t be thinking what’s wrong. And as you think, you will be. You guard your mind! Center your mind upon the Lord Jesus. Don’t let the devil take away your pure-hearted devotion to the love, the Lord Jesus Christ. Stay in love with the Lord Jesus Christ and there won’t be any room for those filthy, dirty, wicked, lascivious, lustful, prideful thoughts that bombard us all.

Let’s bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed, eyes are closed. Oh, precious friend, you must begin by giving your heart to Jesus Christ. You see, the Bible says in Second Corinthians 4:4, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.” You see, your mind without Christ is really blind to spiritual things. Would you let God just remove that blindness today and give your heart to Christ? Would you pray a prayer like this if you’re not saved? “Lord Jesus, I need You and I want You. I need You for this life and I need You for life everlasting. Jesus, You died to save me, and You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Jesus.” Would you tell Him that? “I do trust You, Jesus.” Pray that, “Oh, Lord Jesus, I trust You. Come into my heart right now. Take control of my life right now and make me the person You want me to be.” Pray that. “Lord Jesus, save me, and Jesus help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



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