

2 Cor. 10:3-5 “Taking Every Thought Captive”

For the Children: Children (especially boys) like to knock things down. Someone builds a tower, the child comes along and knocks it over. When we hear the foolish ideas people use in an effort to prove that the Bible is wrong, these ideas also have to be knocked over. But not because we enjoy knocking things over. We do it to honour God and, if the Lord wills, so that sinners may come to know the Truth. A child can knock over a tower of blocks in his own strength. But we cannot knock over these ideas against God’s Word, without His help. For Satan helps sinners build their arguments against God. He is too powerful for us. We need to rely on the Lord, His Word and Spirit. **Questions:** What are some examples of the “fortresses” sinners build to keep God out of their lives? What are some of the wrong ways God’s people have tried to destroy ungodly ideas? Do we need to destroy any of our own false ideas?

Introduction:

First Point: Different Weapons

- 1) Not According to the Flesh: We still walk in this fallen world, with sin-weakened bodies. But we are not to wage war in a worldly way or in human strength. For this battle is against Satan and his evil, spirit-forces (Eph. 6:12). We cannot defeat him with ordinary weapons.
- 2) A Long Campaign: The language used here is about a campaign that is ongoing – rather than an individual struggle. It involves a kingdom with fortresses that must be pulled down.
- 3) Divinely Powerful Weapons: The weapons we need to resist Satan and pull down these fortresses are those that are divinely powerful – God’s Word, with His Spirit and prayer, grounded in His Son. The work of Christ guarantees us the ultimate victory. When we use the wrong weapons, such as human reason, philosophy, politics etc. we do ourselves harm.

Second Point: Different Targets

- 1) Destroying Fortresses: The target of our warfare is not people, as in ordinary warfare, but “fortresses” – devices people use to barricade themselves against the truth of the Gospel. Sinners “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18).
- 2) Destroying False Reasoning: The focus of this destruction is upon false ideas (“devices”) – from human reason and imagination (v. 5). That is not to deny that we suffer from ungodly desires, appetites and emotions. But the focus here is on the false justification sinners dream up to excuse their sin and unbelief. That can include errors such as works-righteousness, the view that grace allows us to sin as much as we want, atheism, evolutionistic teaching, false religion and philosophy.
- 3) Starting with Self: We also entertain some of false ideas at times. Therefore we not only need to witness to the truth before others; we also need to pull down our own “fortresses.” Otherwise we weaken our own witness.

Third Point: Different Prisoners

- 1) Every Thought: The “captives” in view here are false ideas/devices used against the Gospel. This is different than an ordinary war, where captives are imprisoned or killed. Here, the “captives” are replaced with truth, when the sinner is converted. This frees the sinner.
- 2) Captive to Christ: Such a person is then subject to Christ. His thinking changes, being brought into obedience to Christ. This is an ongoing process. It involves “every thought.” That is also why we must include ourselves in this process, so that our own mind is more and more renewed.

Conclusion:

