

Sunday, September 8, 2013—The Battlefield of the Mind—Every Thought Captive

Introduction/Review

- During our last two studies in this series on the Battlefield of the Mind we talked about the first half of II Corinthians 10:5. In doing so we considered what it means to cast “down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.”
- Imaginations—the thoughts of your own heart. What does on between your ears in your own head (Gen. 6:5, Rom. 1:21).
- High Thing— a “high thing” is any religion, philosophy, tradition, theology, or viewpoint that seeks to exalt itself against and supplant the knowledge of God. This would include any religion, theology, denominational, or tradition of men that does not acknowledge, believe, or proclaim the wisdom of God in a mystery.
- Both of these things (imaginations and high things) need to be cast down and destroyed because if they aren’t they will erect and fortify strong-holds in your thinking. How many strong-holds must an enemy possess before he controls an entire country, region, or territory?
- People often say that if you are trying to get rid of or break a bad habit you need to try and replace it with a different one. If we are going to set the charges and TNT to cast down imaginations and pull down the strongholds in our thinking that thinking needs to be replaced with good and proper thinking.

II Corinthians 10:5

- After focusing on getting rid of negative thinking (imaginations and high things) that create strongholds in our minds, in the second half of the verse Paul directs his attention to what should replace these things in our thought lives.
- Paul instructs the saints in Corinth to “bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”
- The phrase translated “bringing into captivity” comes from a Greek word that appears 3 times in the New Testament. According to *Strong’s Concordance* the Greek word means: 1) to lead away captive 2) metaph. to capture one’s mind, captivate.
 - Romans 7:23—“bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members”
 - Luke 21:24—“shall be lead away captive”
- *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines a “captive” as 1) A prisoner taken by force or stratagem in war, by an enemy; followed by to; as a captive to the victor. 2) One who is charmed or subdued by beauty or excellence; one whose affections are seized, or who is held by strong ties of love.

- Have you ever heard a movie critic describe a movie as “captivating?” What do they mean when they say that? The movie will take you as its prisoner and engage your emotions to the degree that you lose touch with reality.
- II Corinthians 10:5—we are instructed to be “bringing (active and ongoing process) into captivity” our every thought.
- Captivity—1)The state of being a prisoner, or of being in the power of an enemy by force or the fate of war. 3. Subjection; a state of being under control. Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. 10.
- What Paul is saying is that as believers we need to bring our under control. We need to police and regulate the space between our own ears. Remember that we are locked in a battle for the control of our minds. The enemy is seeking to establish strongholds in your thinking and thereby render you of none effect for the battle i.e., to spoil you or take you prisoner.
- Deuteronomy 28:41—God tells Israel in advance what will befall the nation if they will not harken unto the word of God. They will be led away into captivity.
- Jeremiah 20:4-6—because of their unbelief and unwillingness to change her heart Jeremiah predicts the Babylonian captivity.
- Isaiah 49:24—Satan held Israel as his lawful captive. By attacking Israel according to the terms and conditions of the law Israel has been rendered useless and unable to help themselves.
- II Timothy 2:26—Satan seeks to duplicate the Israel effect within every member of the body of Christ by erecting strongholds in our thinking from which he can influence our lives. That is why we first need to cast down imaginations and every high thing so we might be able to pull down the strongholds. Once the strongholds are down we need to gain control over our thought lives by bringing our thinking captive to Christ.
- II Corinthians 10:5—what are we supposed to bring into captivity? Our every thought. How are we going to do that?
- Romans 12:1-2—we need to renew our minds in God’s word rightly divided. As I said a few weeks back we need to be letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly (Col. 3:16).
- Every thought that passes through our minds needs to be judged based upon the standard of God’s word to us through the pen of the Apostle Paul. As believers we need to bring our thoughts into captivity in the sense that we have control over our own thought lives.
- II Corinthians 10:5—according to this verse our thoughts need to be brought captive to the obedience of Christ. Christ is the standard for our thought life. If Christ were having this thought what would he do? How would he react or respond?

- I Corinthians 2:16—we know the mind of Christ through his word.
- We cannot control what thoughts pop into our heads but we can control what we do with those thoughts once we have had them. If the thought, attitude, or action is not in line with the mind of Christ it needs to be given no place and cast down immediately lest it grow into a stronghold.
- Either we will bring our thought life captive to the obedience of Christ or our thought life will take us captive. The battle is in and for your mind.