

Taking Every Thought Captive

2 Corinthians 10:1-11

"Taking Every Thought Captive" – 2 Corinthians 10:5

During troubling times, it can be easy:

- To become distracted. (**Psalms 55:1-2**)
- To focus on the temporal rather than the spiritual. (**Matthew 6:16-34**)
- To question our faith. (**Matthew 11:2-6**)

We also know that during such times, Satan is busy at work fighting against us!

- The father of lies and continual accuser. (**John 8:44; Revelation 12:10; 1 Peter 5:8**)

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Understanding the context:

- Authority and apostleship challenged: (10:8; 11:3-5; 12:11)
- Opposition by deceptive false teachers: (11:3-4, 13-15)
- Being judged according to the flesh: (10:1-2; 7, 10-11; 13:10)
- Paul's humility: (10:13-18)
- Paul's fight for the truth – not with carnal weapons: (10:3-5)

Our spiritual battle – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

"We walk" – we live in fleshly bodies (4:7; 12:9-10) but not according to the flesh. "Signifying the whole round of the activities of the individual life." (Vine)

"We do war" – fight in a military campaign. Refers to a military expedition in leading soldiers to war or battle. (1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:4; 1 Peter 2:11, "*fleshly lusts wage war against the soul*"; James 4:1)

"The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" – refers to any tool or implement or instrument designed for a specific use. (6:7; cf. Romans 6:13; 1 Timothy 1:18)

Our spiritual battle – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

"Divinely powerful" – having power and able to succeed. (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Isaiah 55:10-11)

"For the destruction of fortresses ..." – Satan builds what he would have us to believe are unconquerable challenges or arguments. Not his opponents. (10:8; Proverbs 21:22)

Are we equipped to defend our hope (1 Peter 3:15) and "*contend earnestly for the faith*" (Jude 3)?

Are we able to correct those in opposition? (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

Our spiritual battle – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

"Destroying speculations ..." – we're putting to death anything that's not based on the truth of God's word. (1 Corinthians 1:20ff)

"... and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God" – Against those thinking they know more than God! Weapons bringing the arrogant and prideful low. (Isaiah 2:11-12; Luke 14:11; Romans 12:16; James 4:10)

"Taking every thought captive ..."

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How do we bring down strongholds and overcome evil, error, and falsehood?

"Taking ... captive" – "to subjugate, to bring under control." (Vine)

"Every" emphasizes the scope of this command to include **"any and every"** (Vine) thought we have.

"To the obedience of Christ" – (Colossians 3:17) "Attentive hearkening" (Strong)

Thoughts of:

Superiority, arrogance, pride, and animosity must be taken captive and replaced with ...

Humility, love, patience, and long-suffering.

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Another type of battle: The battle within! "... afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within." (7:5)

Peter described the internal battle against *"fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."* (1 Peter 2:11; cf. James 4:1-2)

To Christians scattered abroad and *"distressed by various trials"*, (1:1) Peter exhorted:

"Therefore prepare your minds for action ('gird up the loins of your mind', NKJV), keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:13)

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Thoughts to be taken captive:

- **Hate** – Matthew 5:21-27, 43-48
- **Lust** – Matthew 5:27-30
- **Revenge** – Matthew 5:38-42
- **Envy** – Mark 7:22; Galatians 5:26
- **Pride** – Mark 7:22; James 4:6
- **Greed** – Luke 12:15; Colossians 3:5
- **Doubt** – Matthew 14:31; James 1:6
- **Worry** – Matthew 6:31-34; Mark 4:19
- **Apathy** – Romans 12:11

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Proverbs 4:23, **"Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."**

What about?

- Our entertainment?
- What we read?
- Our recreational activities?

We are able to choose what we allow into our minds!

"Taking every thought captive ..."

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Do we believe we can take every thought captive?

- Can we exercise self-control?
- Satan would have you to believe you can't!
- We must take responsibility of our thoughts.

"Taking every thought captive ..."

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

These battles within must be fought the same way: by *"taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."*

"Taking every thought captive ..."

2 Corinthians 10:5

"To the obedience of Christ ..."

- Romans 12:1-2 – as a living sacrifice.
- Galatians 2:20 – is Christ living in us?
- Ephesians 4:12-15 – is our standard *"the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ"*?
- Will you heed His voice and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ?