

## *The Battlefield Of The Mind III*

*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,  
2nd Corinthians 10:4-5*

The previous studies have given us a knowledge of our position in Christ, and our authority in Christ. We should no longer be ignorant of the truth that we are now/presently the children of God through Jesus Christ, able to do all the work the Father has prepared for us to do, and has given us the authority and ability to accomplish every task God assigns to us.

We also declared in previous studies that there are forces that are opposed us. These forces that are in opposition to us have been identified in; ***Ephesians 6:12*** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

In the Preachers Outline Sermon Bible Vol 2 it says "The war is ***not*** waged against flesh and blood, against physical and material beings, but against spiritual forces. Spiritual forces lie behind man's evil and lustful behavior, unbelief and arguments against God. These spiritual forces attack and prey upon the imaginations and thoughts of man. They inject selfish and devilish ideas against God and against other men. And from the energy of these come the evil acts of men." (this is what we're going to talk about)

In addition to our foes that were exposed in Ephesians, we also battle against other enemies namely, the flesh (that old sinful nature that opposes the will of God, and desires to live its life in a self sufficient manner), and the world (the world system of that's governed by Satan and his hierarchy of demons which seeks to influence and deceive all the nations). All of our enemies are fighting for the control and influence over our minds and thoughts and actions.

The very nature of this spiritual conflict that we're engaged in is found in our text for today which is ***2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:4-5***. There is one objective for every participant in this spiritual warfare, and that is to gain control over the mind. The enemies ambition, and our objectives are one and the same. We're all trying to capture the same thing. The following verses highlight the importance for

believers to understand the necessity of having knowledge of the enemies schemes.

**Hosea 4:6** My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge....

**Isaiah 5:13** ...my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge...

Why is it so very important for us to obtain knowledge regarding the schemes and tactics of our adversary?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11** so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes. (NASB) (if we are ignorant he can take advantage)

One of the greatest fears that the Apostle Paul had regarding the Corinthian church, and should be one the greatest fears of any pastor today is stated in;

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:3** ...I am afraid that, *as the serpent deceived* Eve by his craftiness, *your minds will be led astray* from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Satan's number one ambition is to lead the believer astray "*from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ*".

Watchman Nee in his book *The Secrets To Spiritual Power* writes "Our wrestling is not against *flesh and blood*, therefore, we should be inwardly exercised and have spiritual insight so that we gain a knowledge of the spiritual realm and can observe much of Satan's hidden work".

Much of Satan's work is constructing strongholds in our lives. As a result, the mighty weapons God has provided for are specifically designed for;

**v.4c For pulling down strongholds;** What are we to do with all this authority that has been given to us by Jesus? Surely, Christ had a plan in place when gave us authority "*over all the power of the enemy*". That purpose is establish for us when Paul stated that our weapons that's mighty in God are for "*pulling down strongholds*".

If our weapons are to be used for pulling down strongholds, then an understanding of what a stronghold is should be essential. In essence, a stronghold in this context is defined as; **a)** arguments and reasoning's by which one who disputes endeavors to fortify his opinion and defend it against his opponent. **b)** any argument, reasoning, logic, rational, etc, on which one relies to defend his position.

Clearly, a stronghold represents thoughts or patterns of thought that are used as defense mechanisms, thus creating a mental blockage used to obstruct the knowledge of God from entering in man's heart. They are likened to a fortress of the mind that have high and mighty walls of protection, that defend those patterns of thought, so that they will remain safe and secure, and keep the believer within its bondage and service.

These fortified thoughts are constructed from the lies and deception of Satan. Individuals are basically imprisoned by his false doctrines and deceit, and their actions are fueled and justified by this scheme of the god of this world, Satan.

**Luke 11:21-22** When a strong man, *fully armed*, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. 22 But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, *he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted...*

**Colossians 2:15** Having *disarmed* principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Strongholds also known as fortresses is a mind-set that holds you hostage. It makes you believe that you are locked in a situation, that you are powerless to change. At this point, a person utters the words, I can't, I'm not good enough, no way, I wish I could, etc.

Believers who've allowed the enemy to constructed strongholds in their minds, must no longer remain spiritual POW's in this battle. There are so many believers walking around supposedly free as a bird, but in reality they are in the maximum security prison of their minds.

As believers, we must no longer be "*conformed to this world, but be Transformed by the renewing of our minds*".

Think about this for a moment, if Satan is able to inject thoughts into your mind (which he can and does), he is certainly able to make you believe that those same thoughts originates from you. This is not the same scenario of the devil made me do it taken from the old Flip Wilson TV show. The Devil does not MAKE us do anything. He can however, strategically place thought in our minds to influence our actions.

**Acts 5:3** ...Peter said, "Ananias, *why has Satan filled your heart* to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

**John 13:2** ... *the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him.*

**1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 21:1** Now *Satan* stood up against Israel, and *moved David* to number Israel.

The enemies purpose is to get you to depart the faith, to hinder you from doing the work God has prepared for you, and to deceive you into not being in the will of God. To that end, our enemy has been very successful in these last days;

**1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:1** ...the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will *depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.*

For this reason, it's imperative that we're able to rightly divide God's word of truth, and continue to "express spiritual truths using spiritual words".

**2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:2-4** Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. (why)

3 For the time will come when men *will not put up with sound doctrine*. Instead, *to suit their own desires*, they will gather around them a great number of teachers *to say what their itching ears want to hear*. 4 *They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths*. (their faith will be based on the wisdom of man)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:13-15** For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness...

Our enemy and his ministers have infiltrated the church, and are constructing strongholds in the minds of countless believers without their knowledge or understanding. This is why they have "***turned their ears away from the truth***", and why they "***give heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons***".

This is the desired effect the enemy purposed for his deception and lies. His lies and deceptions blinds the minds of believers and those who are lost a like.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:3-4** ...if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 ***whose minds the god of this age has blinded***, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

**John 12:40** He (the enemy) ***has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts***, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."

Consequently, the purpose of our warfare is to liberate people, that's being held captive by these strongholds of thoughts and remove the veil of blindness. The question is, how do we accomplish this task. The answer is found in the next verse;

**v.5a Casting down arguments; (destroy speculations NASB)** (we get the work logic from this Greek word logismos) This is our battle plan if you will. This is the how, our objective, our focus, our target, our efforts are to be directed at this aim. The thought here is to totally destroy any and all arguments, or reasons, or rational, or logic, etc., that is opposed to God's Word and will. Those thoughts that man has relied on, and has put his confidence in which wasn't susceptible to outside influences.

The Greeks used this word to describe the consideration and thought which preceded and determined one's conduct. In the context of this verse it speaks of reasoning's that are contrary or hostile to the truth of God's Word.

Speculation is a mental view of anything in its various aspects and relations. It is a pattern of thought formed by meditation, which views of the subject may or may not be verified by fact or practice.

The use of speculations in this context refers to theories or opinions arrived at without the complete facts or having firm evidence.

Satan knows if he can get you to believe and act upon his lies and deceptions, he can gain control over your life and guide you out of the will of God into unrighteousness. Every believer must understand Satan's primary weapon is a lie.

***John 8:44*** ...and (he) does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature (his native language), for he is a liar and the father of lies. (NASB)

The best defense against his lies is the truth. Our battles with our enemy is not based upon our power, but based upon the truth we possess. When Satan's lies are exposed to the truth of God's word, his oppression over us is destroyed.

***This is exactly the reason why Jesus said;***

***John 8:32*** And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free

***This is exactly the reason why Jesus prayed to the Father;***

***John 17:17*** Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

***This is exactly why the first piece of the Armor of God is;***

Ephesians 6:14 ...the ***belt of truth buckled around your waist...***

Neil Anderson wrote in his book *Victory over the Darkness* pg 162 "The lies of Satan cannot withstand the truth any more than the darkness of night can withstand the light of the rising sun", (when light appears the darkness must disappear, that's a law of nature).

***The truth is our weapon that destroys the lies of Satan and demolishes his strongholds. If that so, and it is, then we must know the truth in order to detect his lies. If you don't know the truth, you render yourself helpless don't you think***

God absolutely hates lies, and everyone who practices lies will receive their just reward!

Proverbs 6:16-19 There are six things ***the LORD HATES***, seven that are detestable to him: 17 ***haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood***, 18 ***a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil***, 19 ***a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers***.

Two out of the seven things that God hates have to do with lying, and two others are closely associated with lying. God hates lying so much, that the sin of lying is grouped with horrific sins such as murder, and sexual immorality and the like.

***Revelation 21:7-8*** He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, ***and all liars*** shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

***Revelation 21:27*** ...there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or ***a lie***, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

***Revelation 22:15-16*** ...outside (new Jerusalem) are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and ***whoever loves and practices a lie***. 16 I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches...

Our society as a whole views lying as harmless, and often times we tell lies for our benefit and convenience. Most often, we lie about our health in order to escape an obligation such as calling in sick from work.

God however, views lying as something that is despicable to Him because He knows who is the originator of lies. They come from the kingdom of darkness, and when we tell lies, we're doing the work of Satan. God knows that and therefore, he hates lies, and all liars will receive their just reward!!!