

The Battlefield Of The Mind IV

*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 10:5*

Last week we had a pretty good discussion (in my opinion) regarding strongholds and the fortresses of the mind, that keep many believers in the bondage of their thoughts. We discussed what are the speculations and arguments that are to be torn down and destroy completely, by using our spiritual weapons that are mighty in God and used for this very purpose.

In addition, we talked about the enemy being able to inject thoughts into our minds, and influence us to act upon them, often times against the will of God and against our fellow believer, and our brothers and sisters alike. When these thoughts of Satan's are injected into our thinking, we tend to receive them as our own and nurture them and cultivate them and defend them as if we were defending something precious to us and treasured by us, because we have no clue that the thought was originated by the enemy.

These strongholds, arguments, reasoning's, patterns of thought, etc, are designed for one purpose. The nature of Satan's strategies, the reasons for his lies and deception is to achieve the following;

v.5 Casting down arguments and every high thing that *exalts itself against the knowledge of God*; This is a focal point of our enemies strategy, to "exalt itself against the knowledge of God".

The Greek word for high or lofty thing is hupsoma. The word refers to a sphere above the earth. The ideal here is that the thoughts of man are higher than the knowledge of God rendering the Word of God irrelevant, insignificant, and non-applicable to any situation which God's Word contradicts our desires, beliefs, and passions.

In other words, if Gods Word is contrary to an activity that we desire (SIN), then we will devise reasons for ourselves, that allows our continued participation in

whatever pleased us and displeased God, this is a roundabout way of saying disobedient.

The word is used in this context to represent a proud adversary who has constructed a lofty tower or fortress of thought that's opposed to the knowledge of God, and exalts itself above the knowledge of God. There's a fundamental problem however, with this logic;

Isaiah 55:8-9 For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 ***For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.***

Man's thought cannot, nor will ever be elevated above God's thoughts. It's a preposterous proposition, to ever consider for one moment that it's remotely possible to do so. Yet, Satan has convinced many, through the construction of strongholds, and by the arrangement of arguments, that not only is it possible, but it's their reality.

This represents the enemies lies and deception, but the truth that will abolish this lie is "***as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts***" says the Lord!!!

It may appear at first glance, that those who exalt themselves above God are getting away with it. But little do they know, their elevated thoughts that produces barriers of arrogance against the knowledge of God, will only be allowed to exist only for a little while.

Job 24:24 For a little while they are ***exalted***, and then they are gone; they are brought low and gathered up like all others; they are cut off like heads of grain.

Only for a brief moment in time will they be allowed to exalt their own meager logic, and their woeful self-righteousness against the knowledge of God. After their appointed time, the judgment will occur and they will have to give an account for their actions before the God whom they diminished by their thoughts.

v.5c Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; This is the measure of our victory.

The Apostle Paul uses the word for thought (noema) in this text to describe Satan's activities. The word is used only six times in Scripture and five times (in the book of 2nd Corinthians 2:11/3:14/4:4/10:5/11:3) out of the six the word is referring to the activities of Satan.

The theme here is that Satan's strategy is to introduce his thoughts and ideas into your mind and deceive you into believing they are your thoughts. Paul is telling us that we have to capture these thoughts of Satan's that are injected into our thoughts and bring them to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...

We have a problem here that persist amongst believers when we teach and preach the Gospel, and that problem is;

Ezekiel 33:30-33 ...the children of your people are talking about you beside the walls and in the doors of the houses; and they speak to one another, everyone saying to his brother, 'Please come and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD. 31 So they come to you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and **they hear your words, but they do not do them**; for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain 32 Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for **they hear your words, but they do not do them**. 33 And when this comes to pass--surely it will come--then they will know that a prophet has been among them.

James 1:22-25 ...don't just listen to God's word. **You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.** 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 **But if you look carefully** into the perfect law that sets you free, **and if you do what it says and don't forget** what you heard, **then God will bless you for doing it.** (NLT) (*this one will be blessed in what he does. NKJV*)

Therein is the insidious nature of the deception and lies of the enemy. He can't stop you from hearing God's Word, so all his efforts are geared towards getting you from applying God's Word and being obedient to His Word. The enemy knows and understands the high stakes that are involved regarding this matter. Conversely, most believers are ignorant of the necessity for obedience, thus they becomes easy prey to the roaring lion who prowls around seeking whom he may devour.

This is not to be confused with salvation by good works. We all know and understand that our salvation is based upon our faith in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. It is a free gift upon our acceptance and repentance.

What I'm referring to in this study, is the natural response to our being indwelt by the Holy Spirit whom we received when we invited Jesus into our lives and became new creations. In other words, we are to be obedient, not to receive the gift of salvation and earn our way into Heaven, but we are to be obedient because we love Jesus and gladly, and cheerfully want to please Him by doing what He ask of us.

James 2:18 ... I will show you my faith by what I do.

Why is it so important to be obedient to Christ; I'm Glad that you ask!

John 15:14 You are My friends *if you do whatever I command you.*

John 14:15 If you love me, *you will obey what I command* (NIV)

John 14:21,23-24 He who has My commandments *and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.* And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." 23 Jesus ... said to him, "*If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word;* and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

Have you ever wondered if you truly know Jesus, if your truly are on the right path? Have ever wondered if you truly love God?

1st John 2:3-5 Now *by this we know that we know Him*, if we keep His commandments. 4 *He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. *By this we know that we are in Him.*

1st John 5:3 *For this is the love of God*, that we keep His commandments. And His *commandments are not burdensome.*

Jesus Himself is defining for us, who are the ones that truly love Him as opposed to the ones who just go through the motions of loving Him. In the book of Matthew, Jesus explains for us the two paths people take while navigating their way through life with the expectation of reaching the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 7:13-27 Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, *and many enter through it.* 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, *and only a few find it.* (how many of us wants to go down the road that leads to destruction)

Jesus further expounds upon what He just said. He's giving us a description of the people who enter through the narrow gate that leads to life, and a description of the people who enter through the wide gate that leads to destruction.

15 Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. *16 By their fruit you will recognize them....* *17* Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. *18* A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. *19* Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. *20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.*

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but *only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.* *22* Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' *23* Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, *you evildoers!*' (by this we know him)

24-25 Therefore *everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man* who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

26-27 But everyone who hears these words of mine *and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man* who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Truth be told, I'm not trying to chastise anyone for not being obedient to God's Word. It's not my intention to shake a finger at you and shame you into being a doer and just a hearer. That's just the symptom or the byproduct of the core issue of whether or not we truly love the Lord. My sole purpose is to get you to LOVE the Lord. If I can get you to love the Lord, then the natural consequence will be that you obey the Lord. Every believer must understand that this is not optional, this is a requirement of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 ...what does the LORD *your God require of you*, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God *with all your heart and with all your soul*, 13 and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today *for your good?*

2nd Corinthians 5:9-11,14 So we make it our goal to please him,... 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 14 For the love of Christ compels us... (NIV)

Galatians 6:4,7-9 ...let each one examine his own work... 7 ***Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*** 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart

This is the truth that the enemy is trying to keep from us. His strategy is to deceive us into thinking that we can take the wide gate that leads to destruction and still enter into the Kingdom of God. The lies of the enemy causes us to believe that the narrow gate is too restricted, and won't allow us to continue to do the things that gave us pleasure in our old life. He gets us to think that the Father will turn a blind eye to our sinful activities because we're special to Him and He will ultimately still welcome us into His Kingdom in spite of our disobedience to His word because of the special relationship we have.

As a result of their thinking, this kind of teaching is no longer appealing to them, and they refuse to be bothered (convicted) by these truths any longer. Satan has constructed strongholds or fortresses of thoughts and reasoning that's exalted above the knowledge of God. They create for themselves their own truth which is uninhibited by the Word of God.

2nd Timothy 4:3-4 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. (NIV)

1st Timothy 4:1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. (NIV)

Remember we talked about this last week!

2nd Corinthians 11:3 ...I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. (which is exactly what the enemy is trying to do)

Is all the above reason enough, for you to Love the Lord that's demonstrated by your obedient to Him, or do you want to be shown when it's too late to change, and discover that the Lord never knew you who were disobedient and continued to be an evildoer.

Ephesians 6:19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.