

2 Corinthians 10:1-6 “Winning At Spiritual Warfare”

- Paul spends the last three chapters of 2 Corinthians to defend his Apostleship and his credentials to preach by the Holy Ghost.
- Warfare is a part of Christian’s life
 - We constantly fight against:
Galatians 5:16-17 (NLT)
16 So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves.
17 The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. **These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict.**
 - **The Course of this World**
 - **Satan – the prince of the power of the air – the spirit of disobedience**
 - **Lusts of our Flesh**
Ephesians 2:1-3
1 And **you He made alive, who were dead** in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.
- Paul calls it “our warfare” (v4)
 - No Christian is immune to Spiritual warfare
 - Jesus told us it wouldn’t be easy.
Matthew 5:10-12
10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
11 “Blessed are you when **they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely** for My sake.
12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
Matthew 10:16 “Behold, I send you out as **sheep in the midst of wolves.** Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.
Matthew 10:22 And **you will be hated by all** for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.
John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore **the world hates you.**

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you will have tribulation**; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ— who in presence *am* lowly among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you.
2 But I beg *you* that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

- Paul dealt with fairly constant criticism – mostly from other Christians!
 - Bold enough to identify the source of these conflicts

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

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.**

- Our greatest battles are not with human-kind but more often than not with the demonic realm that lies behind so much of human action and reaction.
- **Our Battles:**
 - **Not according to the flesh**
 - Primarily a Spiritual war against spiritual forces
 - **Not against flesh and blood**
 - Against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness.

4 For the weapons of **our warfare** are not carnal but **mighty in God** for pulling down strongholds,

- **Not with carnal weapons**
 - Man’s first reaction is typically a fleshly one
 - Built to protect and provide – “might makes right”
 - Spiritual weapons
 - Mighty in God
 - Worthless in Man
- **What are those weapons?**

Ephesians 6:10-20

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

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*.

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery

darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

- **Alan Redpath said:**

“Let a man neglect putting on this armor and he will soon reveal carnality to everybody else in his conduct and behavior.”

- **Mighty enough to:**

- Pull down strongholds

- Καθαιρεσις [*Kathairesis*] is old word from καθαιρεω [*kathaireō*], to take down, to tear down walls and buildings. Carries on the military metaphor. ¹

5 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,

- Casting down arguments (*imaginings*)

- The same military figure (καθαιρεσις [*kathairesis*]) and the present active participle agreeing with στρατενομεθα [*strateuometha*] in verse 3 (verse 4 a parenthesis). The **reasonings or imaginings** (λογισμους [*logismous*], old word from λογιζομαι [*logizomai*], to reckon, only here in N.T. and Rom. 2:15) **are treated as forts or citadels to be conquered.** ²

- Casting down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God

- To cast down in victory the high flag of ownership of the enemy.
- **Paul aims to pull down the top-most perch of audacity in their reasonings against the knowledge of God.** We need Paul's skill and courage today. ³

- Bring every thought into captivity

- **captive in war** (αιχμη [*aichmē*], spear, αλωτος [*halōtos*] verbal of αλισκομαι [*haliskomai*], to be taken). See on Luke 21:24. Paul is the

¹Robertson, A. (1997). *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (2 Co 10:4). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.

²Robertson, A. (1997). *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (2 Co 10:5). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.

³Robertson, A. (1997). *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (2 Co 10:5). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.

most daring of thinkers, but he lays all his thoughts at the feet of Jesus.⁴

- All to the obedience of Christ
 - That is Paul's conception of intellectual liberty, freedom in Christ. Deissmann (*St. Paul*, p. 141) calls this "the mystic genitive."⁵

6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

- Being in readiness
 - Prepared for constant war
 - Like a fireman's boots beside his bed
 - Like the fighter pilots ready to scramble to war

⁴Robertson, A. (1997). *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (2 Co 10:5). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.

⁵Robertson, A. (1997). *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (2 Co 10:5). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.