

Sunday, May 5, 2013—The Battlefield of the Mind

Introduction

- This morning I want to begin a new series on the subject of spiritual warfare and the mind. As believers we are locked in struggle for our minds. In this new series I want to consider what the Bible says about the nature of this struggle and how we can have victory.
- II Corinthians 10:3-5—before we begin to study the details of the passage I just want you to notice the military terms that Paul uses in these three verses to describe the situation.
 - Verse 3—war
 - Verse 4—weapons, warfare, strongholds
 - Verse 5—captivity
- Throughout his epistles, Paul uses this type of military terminology to describe the nature of our walk as believers.
 - Ephesians 6:11-17
 - II Timothy 2:2-3
 - II Timothy 4:7
- The goal of this series will be to understand the nature of spiritual warfare and the role the mind plays in the battle.

II Corinthians 10:3

- The word “walk” is used many times in the Pauline Epistles to describe how we are to progress through life. According to *Strong’s Concordance* the underlying Greek word means “to make one’s way, progress, conduct one’s self. The usage of the word is not limited simply to the physical act of walking.
 - Acts 3:6, 8-9, 12—speaking about giving a man the capacity to walk physically
 - Romans 6:4—walk in newness of life
 - II Corinthians 4:2—walking in craftiness
 - II Corinthians 5:7—walk by faith
- In verse 2, Paul is addressing a group within the church at Corinthian that had accused Paul of walking “according to (or in line with) the flesh.” In other words, they accusing Paul of walking as an unsaved person according to the flesh.
 - Ephesians 2:1-3—when the Ephesians were dead in trespasses and sins they “walked” according to the course of this world.
 - Ephesians 4:1, 17-22

- II Corinthians 10:3—Paul is trying to explain the difference between walking “according to the flesh” in verse 2 and walking “in the flesh” in verse 3. Paul along with every other believer on planet Earth is presently residing in a fleshly body fitted for our existence here. Paul is not saying that he was walking in the flesh in terms of following fleshly appetites like in Galatians 5, rather he is speaking about the fact that he presently resides in an earthly or fleshly tabernacle.
 - II Corinthians 5:1-8
- The unsaved live both *in the flesh* and *according to the flesh*. In contrast believers who have trusted in the finished work of Christ live *only in the flesh*, but *not according to the flesh*.
- II Corinthians 10:3—so even though as believers we inhabit and walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh. Paul’s reply to those accusing him of living according to the flesh is that he was not warring after the flesh. Please notice that the expression “we do not war after the flesh,” is in the present tense. Paul views himself as a soldier who was continuously locked in a battle against spiritual forces.
 - I Timothy 1:18
- Ephesians 6:11-12—our struggle is not with flesh and blood but against spiritual wickedness in high places. If we are going to win the battle for the mind we must accurately identify who our enemy is.
 - II Corinthians 2:11—Satan’s devices
 - II Corinthians 11:3—beguiled and subtilty
 - Ephesians 6:11—wiles of the devil
 - Ephesians 6:16—fiery darts of the wicked
 - Read complete list from page 242-243 of *Satan and His Plan of Evil*
- We also need to understand why principalities and powers hate the body of Christ.
- I Corinthians 2:7-8—had Satan and his minions knew about the revelation of the mystery they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
- Colossians 2:15—the best laid plans of Satan and his cohorts were shattered at the cross. By keeping a secret about that the cross meant and accomplished God tricked Satan into committing the act that would lead to his complete undoing.
- Ephesians 3:9-10—as we endeavor to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery we teach the principalities and powers in heavenly places about the manifold wisdom of God.
- II Corinthians 10:3—we live in the flesh but we do not war after the flesh.
- Read from *Satan and his Plan of Evil* page 253.