

# **The Battlefield of the Mind**

## **Phase One: Attack the Message**

# Introduction/Review

- II Corinthians 10:4 (1237)—last Sunday we began studying about the weapons of our warfare not being carnal. The weapons of our warfare and not carnal because “we do not war after the flesh” (II Cor. 10:3) and because “we wrestle with flesh and blood” (Eph. 6:12). You cannot fight a spiritual enemy with a fleshly weapon.
- Ephesians 6:11 (1255)—we need to put on the whole armor of God so that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. A wile is a cleverly designed trick or device by which someone deceives another. It is cunningly produced with the goal of fooling someone in accepting something as true, when in reality it is false. It is important to understand that the nature of Satan’s warfare against us is designed to deceive, beguile, trick, or fool use into accepting for the truth something that is false.

# Introduction/Review

- Ephesians 6:11—it is important to notice that the whole armor of God is what allows us to stand against the wiles of the devil. According to *Strong's Concordance* there are multiple meanings of the Greek word translated “stand” in this passage. One of them means to make firm to fix or establish. Therefore, the wiles of the devil are designed to dislodge us, knock us off our fixed position, and cause us to not hold the line.
  - Ephesians 6:13—because we are in a spiritual struggle in verse 12 the only way we can withstand is to take up and put on the whole armor of God.
- Strategically, Satan's battleplan calls for three major lines of attack designed to dislodge the believer from his/her fixed position and cause them not to withstand and hold the line.
  - Phase One (first line of attack): Attack the Message.
  - Phase Two (second line of attack): Attack the Messenger.
  - Phase Three (third line of attack): Discredit or Discourage the Messenger.



# Phase One: Attack the Message

- Seeing that the war Satan has waged in this ‘mystery dispensation’ is founded upon his hatred for the “revelation of the mystery of Christ,” it is only natural that his first line of attack would be directed against that message itself. By attacking it, obscuring it, hiding it, or even denying it by the means of misleading and unsound teaching from God’s Word Satan is able to keep Christians ignorant or mistake about the very thing they need to know.
- Ephesians 4:14—Satan’s attacks upon the message of God’s grace and the believer’s proper edification come in the form of contrary doctrines. Through the winds of doctrines believers are tossed about on the open sea and beguiled into believing something else from the Bible to be God’s program and order for today.
- Colossians 2:4 (1263)—this beguiling is going to come in the form of enticing words that sound good and may have some truth in them.

# Phase One: Attack the Message

- Colossians 2:8—the enticing words that Paul warns about in verse 4 are designed to “spoil” the believer. Notice that Paul mentions three specific areas that are designed to spoil believers.
  - Philosophy and vain deceit
  - The traditions of men
  - The rudiments of the world
- Colossians 2:18-19—Paul warns against the beguiling nature of those who would claim special extra-Biblical messages from God or angles.
- These four issues—“philosophy and vain deceit,” “tradition of men,” “the rudiments of the world,” and extra-Biblical revelations are the major devices employed by Satan in his attack upon the message. Each device serves to obscure the truth of the “mystery of Christ,” if not deny it. They work to make it so that Christians end up living not according to God’s mystery program for today, but especially according to God’s program with the nation of Israel.



# Phase One: Attack the Message

- *Philosophy and vain deceit*—exalts human opinion and judgment above the word of God, and makes the meaning of God's word and what God is doing subject to one's own way of thinking and/or the thinking of others. With philosophy the word of God is not the final absolute authority.
  - I Corinthians 1:18-31 (1212)
- *Traditions of men*—saddle believers with man-made ordinances, customs, regulations, practices, rituals, rites, and ceremonies of long-standing tradition that are not after Christ. This is talking about being religious.
  - Matthew 15:1-6 (1019)—the word of God is made of no effect through there tradition. Walking according to the traditions of men fixes the believers attention in earthly things rather than upon our heavenly conversation (Phil. 3:20).

# Phase One: Attack the Message

- *Rudiments of the world*—refer to the physical and fleshly ordinances of the Law that God employed in His program and dealings with Israel. Physical circumcision, water baptism, dietary commands, holy days, and Sabbaths, and the like. These “rudiments” were employed by God in “time past” in His program with Israel and will yet be employed in the future when God resumes His dealings with Israel. Through the rudiments of the world Satan attempts to entice believers to think and live as though they are Israel.
  - Colossians 2:10-23 (1264)—we are complete in Jesus Christ who fulfilled the spiritual realities foreshadowed in circumcision and water baptism we have no more need for the rudiments of the world.
  - Romans 6:14-15 (1198)—we are not under the law but under grace. Grace is the operative principle of God today in this dispensation not the rudiments of the world.
  - I Timothy 1:3-11 (1274)



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- *Extra-Biblical Revelation*—through ones “vainly puffed up” in their fleshly minds, who promote themselves as the messengers of God bearing message for Gods’ people, Satan works some of his most beguiling wiles and successful attacks upon the message of God for today. When a Christian can be convinced through the personal experience of some phenomenon that God is communicating to him, then that personal experience will become for that Christ the criterion for judging what is truth. As such the written word of God will no longer be the final absolute authority in that Christian’s life. Instead, what the Bible says from now on will be evaluated on the basis of personal experience.



# Paul's Warnings

- Acts 20:28-32 (1178)
- Romans 16:17-20 (1210)—Paul knew what was going to happen people were going to arise teaching contrary doctrines.
- II Corinthians 11:1-4 (1237)
- Galatians 1:6-9 (1241), 3:1, 5:7-10
- I Timothy 1:19 (1274), 4:1-3, 6:20-21
- II Timothy 2:15-18 (1280)
- Titus 1:9-14 (1283)

# Conclusion

- Ephesians 6:11, 13—the weapons of our warfare and the armor of God are designed to allow us to hold our ground in the face of the enemy.
- Satan's first line of attack is to attack the message thereby making it impossible for you to stand in the truth. If phase one works and the truth is obscured in the mind of the individual believer phase two and three are not necessary.
- If phase one is unsuccessful and the believer comes to understand and rejoice in what God is now doing phases two and three will be deployed in successive order.