

Capturing Your Thoughts

I. You Are What You Think

A very key issue in life is *what you think*. You are what you think.

Proverbs 23:7

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.

The real key to the Christian life is the renewing of the mind, the way we think. We often talk about being controlled out of our spirit. That's not quite true. You're controlled out of what you think, but who controls your thinking? Does your spirit-man control your thinking or does your flesh control your thinking? Our mental attitude can either make us or break us.

How we think determines our success in the Christian life. Many people say, "You are what you eat." No, you're more than that. Food affects you a lot, but the main thing that controls you is your attitude.

Isaiah 55:7

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

We have two different types of people here. The wicked man is the sinner and the unrighteous man is the carnal believer. The carnal believer might have actions that look good, but his thoughts are wrong. Carnality doesn't begin with your actions; carnality begins with your thoughts. You can go to church and give large amounts of money and look spiritual, but you can be just as carnal as ever.

The unrighteous man is the believer who is living in unrighteousness, but notice where his unrighteousness begins — in his *thoughts*. The way that a carnal believer returns to the Lord is in his thoughts first because his thoughts have not been in line with the things of God. God will abundantly

pardon the wicked — the sinner. He will abundantly pardon the unrighteous man — the carnal believer.

II. Live by God's Spirit Instead of by Your Flesh

Isaiah 55:8-9

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

People often read this and say, "Well, we could never live God's ways, and we could never think God's thoughts." This verse isn't saying you can't; it's just saying God's ways and God's thoughts are so much higher than yours. However, we know through the Holy Spirit we can live God's ways and think God's thoughts.

First, you have to understand what God's thoughts are. It's right here in your hand. The Bible calls this the mind of Christ. This is the thinking of God. When your mind gets renewed with the Word of God, you start to think like God. Then, from your thoughts come your actions. You start to act like God, but the key is God's Word. The Word of God helps you think like God and in thinking like God, you can start to act like God.

Often people will say, "Well, I'm just living right out of my spirit." That's true, but really you're living out of your thoughts. Your thoughts control you, but who or what controls your thoughts? It is important for our thoughts to be in line with our spirit and not in line with our flesh.

Romans 8:5-7

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Carnal mindedness produces death, but living spiritually minded is life and peace. The carnal mind is the enemy of God.

As a believer, you have a choice to think in line with your flesh or to think in line with your spirit. You can choose to think in line with your five senses or think in line with the Word of God. If you think in line with your five senses, you are carnally minded. We're not to ignore the five senses, but how when it comes to a walk with God, we don't live by the five senses. Hebrews tells us our senses can be trained to recognize both good and evil. In other words, we quit looking with our eyes only; we look with our eyes through the Word of God. We don't just hear with our ears; we hear with our ears through the Word of God. In other words, the Word becomes like a pair of glasses we put on, or hearing aids we put in our ears, and it helps us to hear the voice of God, see the things of God, and sense the things of God. We don't ignore our five senses, but on the other hand, we don't live by what they dictate to us.

Whichever way the mind swings is critical. If it swings towards the flesh, you're going to be carnal. If it swings towards the spirit, you're going to be spiritual. The choice is yours — to live carnally or to live spiritually. Verse 7 says the carnal mind is the enemy of God because the carnal mind is in league with the flesh, which is the body — the lust of the body and the thoughts of the body. Because of that, this verse is telling us that it is possible to become the enemy of God.

James 4:4 tells us that you can become the enemy of God by becoming a friend with the world. How do you become a friend with the world? You begin to live by your flesh. I would rather be a friend of God than an enemy of God!

III. Present Your Body by Renewing Your Mind

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

As I was growing up in church I would go to Youth for Christ on Saturday night. This verse was very popular and they would preach on this verse. Missionaries, evangelists, and campus ministers would all preach on this verse of scripture from the standpoint that we always needed to present our bodies unto the Lord. At the altar call we'd all come to the front and present our bodies unto the Lord to be missionaries. Then at the next service, we'd come to present our bodies unto the Lord for evangelism. And we just dedicated and dedicated and rededicated and rededicated. Verse 1 tells you *what* to do; it doesn't tell you *how* to do it.

How do you present your body? Verse 2 says, *By the renewing of your mind*. By turning away from the world and turning toward the Lord, you can begin to accomplish the will of God and move from the good will of God to the more acceptable will of God, and finally to the perfect will of God as your mind is renewed day by day by day. What controls your life is your thinking. What controls your dedication is your thinking. That's why to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded continually produces life and peace.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

What do we do on these things? *Think on them*. Let your mind be surrounded by them. In other words, if there are things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of a good report, then you're to think on those things.

But if you say, "Well, I don't know if it's any of those," then it goes on to ask, *Is there any virtue in it? Is there any praise to God in it?* Then it's got to be okay to think on these things. God is simply saying that to be spiritually minded is life and peace and it produces such a joy and happiness in your heart.

James 1:26

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

If you seem to be spiritual, but can't control your own tongue, then you lie to yourself and your religion or spirituality is in vain.

James 3:8-10

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

No man can tame the tongue, but the Spirit can tame the tongue. The only way you're going to tame your tongue is having your mind and thoughts be dominated by the Holy Spirit. Listen to your inward man because you can tame the tongue through the Holy Spirit. You can tame the tongue through the Word of God and these verses are telling us, one after another, that our actions can be tamed, our words can be tamed, our tongue can be tamed, and what tames them is a mind that has been renewed with the Word of God and is stayed on God.

As we present our minds to the Lord and our mind becomes renewed, then our bodies are presented to Him, which also includes the tongue in our mouth. Of all the things that you have to tame, the tongue can be the most difficult of all; but we know there's nothing impossible with God and nothing impossible with the Holy Spirit. The key to those verses is no *man* can tame them, but the Holy Spirit can.

IV. Paul's Response to the Corinthian Critics

In 2 Corinthians 10, verses 1 through 4 is an overview of spiritual conflict. In verses 5 through 12, we discover our attitude and spiritual conflict.

Then in verses 13 through 18, we're going to have the divine viewpoint of life and how powerful it is when we have God's viewpoint inside us.

Until now, Paul has been defending his apostleship and in chapter 10 Paul's going to defend himself.

2 Corinthians 10:1, 3-5

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

There has been much teaching today about demonic strongholds in the earth, but the greatest stronghold you have is between your ears. That's what he's talking about in this passage of Scripture.

Verses 1 and 2 really are the introduction to what verses 3, 4, 5, and 6 mean to us. Paul says in verse 1, *I Paul myself*. No longer is Paul defending his apostleship. Paul has gone into self-defense because a number of people were accusing his ministry, but now people have been leveling accusations at Paul himself, and some of the Corinthians believe it and say the same thing. That's why Paul says *I myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*. The Greek word for *beseech* means *to encourage*. Paul says I encourage you by the meekness and the gentleness of Christ.

Paul confronts the accusation against him and he says, "I don't want to argue with you, but I am going to present to you what is being said about me." He says, "I want to present this in meekness and gentleness from the Lord Jesus Christ and let you know I'm not stupid. I didn't just come out from under a rock somewhere. I know what's being said about me, but I didn't come here to argue about it." Later on in chapter 11, Paul's

going to really let them have it, but in chapter 10 he's going to approach them in meekness and gentleness.

He knows what the rumors are about him. Some talked about his ministry and said earlier in this book that he wasn't even a real apostle. He said, "You know what? I don't even need to even defend myself. I wasn't chosen by some group and some apostle before me didn't choose me, but that doesn't matter. Jesus chose me and that's the most important thing."

When Jesus chooses you, who cares what people think? Paul knew some people were attacking him personally, believing that he was manipulating the Scriptures and his ministry. They believed Paul catered his sermon to the audience, that he determined ahead of time what the audience is like and then slants his sermon toward that particular group. In other words, when Paul is around certain groups he's loud and boisterous, but when he's with the Corinthians, he's pretends to be meek and mild, and they think they have Paul all figured out.

Many times, the longer you're around a ministry, your carnal mind starts to think you have this all figured out. I had a member of our congregation come by the church one day and say, "I've been going here for a number of years, and I just wondered what all these cars are doing here all week long. What do you guys do here? We only have services on Sunday and Wednesday, so what do people do on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday?"

He couldn't believe anyone did anything around here during the week. Why don't we just open the building a couple of days a week and put everybody on a part-time salary? Then he asked, "What do you do, Pastor? I mean, all week long, you only have two or three sermons a week to put together. That's all you have to do. What do you do? Play racquetball and go to lunch with different people all week long?" People began to look at that and say, "Wow! What a great thing to be in the ministry."

Someone once asked how I put sermons together when I'm traveling. I said, "Well, I have some sermons, but I really don't think about until I'm on the road." I pray. Many times I don't even know what I'm going to speak on until I get into the service. A lot of times I don't know exactly what I'm going to speak on until I get into the pulpit. That may seem disconcerting to some, but I just want to be led by the Holy Spirit. I know what I *could*

speaking on, but I don't want to think about it much ahead of time because there's a real tendency from the flesh to preach my best sermon. However, what I think is my best sermon may not be what the people need at that moment.

People were convinced Paul had his preaching down to a game and that they had figured out his game. In other words, they were saying Paul wasn't really preaching from the Spirit; he was preaching from the flesh. They accused Paul of pre-determining what to say to certain people. Paul confronted their accusations and said, "I'm not here in anger. I'm approaching you in gentleness and meekness before God and I know what you're saying about me. When I'm in your presence you think I grovel before you and am apologetic, but when I'm not in your presence, I am bold toward you or I talk about you.

Later the Corinthians accuse Paul saying, "When Paul writes his books he's powerful, but when he preaches here, he's not very powerful." They're equating powerful preaching with being anointed. If you yell and scream, you must be powerful and anointed. Think about some of the best sermons you ever heard. Most likely, no one screamed. There are times when I get really excited while I'm teaching the Word of God, and people come a bit later and say, "Whew! You really started preaching!" Well, I don't know what you call preaching, maybe more excitement and a little more spitting. I was raised in a church that if somebody was really good, they started running and screaming. They started pounding on the pulpit and jumping up and down. You didn't understand what the content was, but you realized it must be really powerful because they were so loud and boisterous.

Jesus sat on a rock and taught the Sermon on the Mount. Some of the most incredible things Jesus ever said came out in Matthew 5, 6, and 7. It said he sat with his disciples and he taught. The Greek says he taught and taught. He said many of those things over and over again. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. (*Matthew 5:5*) "Peter, wake up! Did you hear what I just said? The meek shall inherit the earth. Did you hear that?"

"Yes, I heard that."

Jesus went on to talk about prayers. He told them how to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread. Did you understand that, John? John, when you pray, you ask, 'Give us this day.'" (*Matthew 6:11*)

“Yes, I understand.”

There were also times when Jesus got very upset and drove the moneychangers out of the temple. I’m sure that sermon was very powerful. I’m sure the sermon He had toward the religious Pharisees was so strong in Matthew 23 when he called the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites. I’m sure He raised His voice and let them have it, but that’s not necessary for the anointing of God to be present.

Paul has been accused of being bold in his letters while he is absent from the Corinthians, but apologetic, groveling, and filled with false humility when he was with the Corinthians. Paul was forceful and angry with them before in his first epistle. Now he wants to instruct them and not have to correct them.

If they’re saying, “Paul, you aren’t powerful in front of us.” All Paul has to say is, “Remember my first epistle? Remember when I came to you and corrected? Many of those passages in 1 Corinthians were brought one correction one after another, but when the dust settled after the first letter, you guys repented. There was a massive repentance so 2 Corinthians is more instructional. I really don’t want to come and chew you out again.” However, in chapter 11 Paul became upset and again brought correction to the Corinthians.

The Corinthians perceive themselves as spiritual and Paul as unspiritual. Nothing could be further from the truth!

2 Corinthians 10:2

But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

Paul says, “You’re saying I’m bold over there and then I’m meek when I’m over here, and you think you have figured out that I walk according to the flesh.” Paul doesn’t want to be angry and forceful in their presence, but the Corinthians have mistaken forceful teaching with anointing and spiritual power. Confidence does not mean greater volume or fervor. Paul is *not* being led by his flesh.

It's interesting that those who are being led by the flesh are accusing Paul of being led by the flesh, when Paul is actually the one being led by the Spirit. There have been times when I preached a sermon and I know I was led by the Spirit, but someone would say, "Where did you get that sermon? Did you hear So-and-So preach that sermon?"

"Well, no." Sometimes I might have, but I trust when I preach it comes out different than when Brother So-and-So preached it.

It's the Corinthians, not Paul, who are walking by the flesh. Again, they think Paul is walking by the flesh and they think they are being led by the Spirit.

V. Do Not War According to the Flesh

2 Corinthians 10:3

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

Paul is talking about ministers. Verses 3, 4, and 5 are talking about the ministry, and yes, it applies to you. But Paul is defending himself. He says in verse 1, "I, Paul, beseech you," and then he brought out the accusation that's being leveled at him. "You say when I am among others that I am very bold, but when I'm around you I am not bold but very meek. You say that I'm walking according to the flesh." Then in verse 3 he says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh." Paul is talking about himself and other ministers. Paul is actually taking the brunt of something that other ministers are also suffering and he simply says that literally he walks around in a human body, but when it comes to the warfare, he fights in the spirit. He doesn't fight a war according to his flesh.

Paul lives in a natural body like all humans do. To some extent, he does walk in the flesh. Paul gets hungry and tired like everybody else. He needs food and shelter just like everybody else. He walks with his physical, natural feet, but the Corinthians were literally saying he was walking in sin because he was directing his spiritual life. You live your daily life on this earth in a fleshly body, but your ministry is not sustained or fulfilled by your natural body. Your ministry is fulfilled by the inward man on the inside of you.

Some people think ministers are above natural things. I went to the grocery store one time in a t-shirt, cutoff shorts, and tennis shoes, and as I turned down an aisle, a lady stood there and said, "Pastor Bob! I didn't know you wore shorts!"

Yes, I'm human. I walk in the flesh. This is the same thing Paul's talking about. He said, "You think I'm so spiritual and somehow out of contact with my natural body. I float right through life and everything comes to me so easy." It doesn't happen that way.

I've had people say to me, "Pastor, if you could just follow me all week long and make sure I'm living the Word." What you don't know is I have to follow myself all the time and make sure I'm living the Word.

When it comes to the daily warfare, the moment you decide to follow after the Spirit is when the enemy will attack. Satan doesn't come against the food or the clothes you're buying, but when you make a step for Jesus Christ to spread the Gospel and fulfill the Great Commission, walk in divine health and prosperity, and let God be your source and your supply is when all hell begins to break loose. That's when the warfare comes, and you can't fight spiritual warfare with your natural wisdom. You have to be filled with the Word of God. Paul is saying that when it comes to fighting the daily fight in the ministry, he has to be led by the Holy Spirit and not by his flesh. Yes, I walk in a natural human body just like everybody else, but that's the only thing I do in this human body. Everything else beyond that, he says, is according to the Holy Spirit within him.

Paul got hungry and tired and needed food and shelter just like anybody else, but he separated his simple existence from his calling. Separate the life of the flesh that you live in from the life of the Spirit. We walk in two worlds, but don't let the two get mixed up. Don't let the senses that tell you not to step in the street begin to tell you when to follow God. Don't let your natural senses dictate how you should serve the Lord.

At various times, people have told me, "Pastor, you ought to preach on this or that." Unless I'm led by the Spirit, I don't preach my sermons on what people tell me. I know ministers who get all their sermon ideas from the latest magazines that come across their desk because they want to know what the latest whims are across the body of Christ. Who cares what the whims are across the body of Christ? What does your congregation need? The needs of Grace Church may not exactly be the

needs of the congregations in Los Angeles, New York, or Florida at the present moment. I want to follow the Lord and preach on what He has to say to me. Yes, I walk into this place in a human body, but when it comes to the warfare of the ministry, Paul says, I do not do it by the natural things around me; I do not war according to the flesh.

Daily ministry, fulfilling God's will is war and must be completed by the Spirit outside the flesh. Fighting spiritual battles in the flesh is like David putting on Saul's armor; it doesn't work.

VI. Identify Your Weapons of Warfare

2 Corinthians 10:4

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

The strongholds are in your mind. Why do you go to church? I trust you go to church to learn, not just to see Sister So-and-So or Brother So-and-So, not just to make a business deal, and not just to find some good-looking single person. We often blame our warfare on demonic forces, but that's not always the case. Sometimes our warfare is a prejudice from our past. One day you got filled with the Holy Spirit and church suddenly didn't have the power and the appeal it used to have. Somebody invited you to Grace Fellowship and you came here and shouted and rejoiced at the praise and worship, but when you heard Pastor Bob speak you got dead quiet because you thought, *I haven't heard that before. That doesn't lineup with my Baptist theology. That doesn't lineup with my Methodist theology.* You are thinking this because these are strongholds of your mind based on your past.

Why do I preach from the Word of God? I fight the warfare of preaching sermons week after week after week so those strongholds in your mind can be torn down. When Paul says the *weapons of our warfare*, he's talking about the ministers of the Gospel. Paul's warfare is his preaching and teaching ministry. Paul does not use fleshly gimmicks as some other ministers do. Some ministers have only three or four sermons, and they preach those sermons everywhere they go. They never study anything new. They hope they're not invited back to the same church again because they don't have a different sermon for that church. Yes, there are

people who come to a church looking for what they can get out of it rather than what they can sow into the people. They're not looking to tear down strongholds in people's minds and they're not looking to change the way people think. They're there to entertain people, to get a good offering, and to go on to the next place. But that wasn't what Paul was all about.

1 Thessalonians 2:3

For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile.

Deceit is literally a term for *false doctrine*. Paul says, "I do not preach false doctrine; I preach the Word of God." *Uncleanness* is talking about *sexual impurity*. Paul says, "I don't come here for sexual reasons." The downfall of many ministers in the past is they had women on the side and that sexual impurity eventually destroyed their ministry.

The word for *guile* means *deceit*. It's an interesting background on this particular word; it's used for a bartender. The bartender would serve wine to somebody and as they got drunker, he would mingle water with it until he was making a bigger profit on it. The drunker they got, the more water he would mingle with it. Paul doesn't say I started out with something good and then watered it down later on. Paul says you get it just as strong today as you did yesterday. You'll get it just as strong tomorrow as you ever had before. Paul says you're going to get it strong every single time and not watered down.

VII. Recognize the Heart of Ministering the Gospel

1 Thessalonians 2:4

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

Literally, we've been *approved by God* to be trusted with the Gospel and so we speak. Paul says it's a great trust to have the Gospel given to you. If you are called to pulpit ministry, He has entrusted you. That's a major obligation and a major responsibility. Paul says, "If I preach to please people, you're not the one who tries me. You're not the one who judges

me. I have to preach to please God. Why? Because God is the one who tries my heart.”

If I preach a good sermon, I know it. If I preach a bad sermon, I also know it. Not because someone tells me whether it's good or bad, but because I know in my heart whether I missed it or not. There have been times I've walked away from the pulpit thinking, *I just didn't get it right*, and the Holy Spirit's the one telling me that. There have also been times I thought, *I should have mentioned other stuff*, and the Holy Spirit reminds me, “You didn't have to. You've got another sermon to preach that. It will come another time.” The Holy Spirit reminds me that He tells me specific things at specific times.

1 Thessalonians 2:5

For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness.

There's a difference between flattery and praise. I can praise you but I don't want to flatter you. Praise puts something into you; flattery takes something out of you. Flattery tries to remove something from your life for my own benefit. A *cloak of covetousness* is *greed*. I can't tell you how many ministers I know who hang around rich people hoping they'll give them something. You don't come to church for that reason.

1 Thessalonians 2:6

Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

Glory in its proper term is fine, but glory in this term is talking about *glamour*. Some believe there's a lot of glamour involved in the ministry, traveling and going to different places. However, traveling on an airplane isn't what it used to be. With all of the check-in lines, the security lines, and the hassles associated with just getting on the plane, there's not much glamour attached to it. But we're not in ministry for the glamour.

I know of a minister who started a number of years ago and was invited to minister at a small church in North Carolina. The guest minister was told that the church couldn't promise him much money or a fine hotel. The minister said that was fine because he knew in his heart that he was led to be there. When the hosting pastor went to pick up the guest minister, he found the minister walking down the street, Bible in hand, on his way to the church. The pastor was so impressed that there were no pretenses about this minister. However, over the next two or three years this minister had spoken at a number of big seminars, and when he was invited to come back to the small North Carolina church, the guy said, "I won't come unless you can guarantee me \$20,000. And I only fly first class." He continued with his demands, "That hotel I was in the last time, I have to have a better hotel than that. I want you to know I don't hang around after church services any more and talk to people. After the church service is over, I want to be whisked right out the church." This guy was looking for the glamour of the minister and had lost the heart of the ministry.

I've talked to people about coming to our church before. Some of them put a big price tag on it. There are times I've felt led to bring them in anyway, but when people put a big price tag on coming in, one of the first things I think is, *Lord, you really have to speak to me for me to have this person come to the church.*

Some people who come to your church are more burdensome than they are a blessing. Paul says, "I don't want to be a burden when I come there." Later on Paul says, "No. In fact, when I'm there, I want to work. I want not only to be a blessing to the church, but I want to be a blessing to the minister and help them."

VIII. Make Your Thinking Line Up With the Word of God

2 Corinthians 10:5

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

When Paul preached, he didn't use carnal means or flattering words. He didn't size up the audience ahead of time, but was led by the Spirit. In this

verse, Paul was saying, "While I am preaching, I have to cast down reasonings." It's so easy sometimes to naturally reason Scripture. He said, "I have to cast that down and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." The high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God is *pride*. Pride can enter in and you begin to think, *I can do this because I'm so great*. No one is in the ministry because they are great. Paul was in the ministry because God is great and that's why he says, "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

2 Corinthians 10:6

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Paul is saying, "I've come to preach to you and I'm not going to preach out of my flesh. Although I walked in here in a human body, I do not war after this human body, but I war according to the Holy Spirit. And while I am preaching, I have to cast down reasonings. I do not look at this book by reasonings because this book was written by the Spirit of God, not by a human mind. Therefore, the Holy Spirit has to minister to me, and as I look at a verse of Scripture, I have to even cast down reasonings at that time. Next of all, I have to cast down pride that comes against the knowledge of God, thinking I know more than God. I have to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and while I'm preaching I have to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Then, I have a readiness to revenge all disobedience."

His goal in Corinth is to come against the false teaching of Corinth, but it will not happen until their obedience is fulfilled. They are the first reason why he is there. He wants their life and their thinking to be changed. He wants those strong holds in their life to be brought down by the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. Then, when their obedience is fulfilled he can tackle those other false teachings and bring others into the kingdom of God.

Why do I preach the Word of God? I do not preach the Word of God any more than Paul preached the Word of God because I have arrived. If I had to preach because I've arrived, I would never get to preach. No minister would, but whatever level you arise to you bring people to that level. Then you rise to another level, and you bring people to that level. What is the purpose of coming to church every week? Why do we take

the Word of God and explain it week after week after week? Because I don't want you living by prejudices or doctrines of churches that you've had before. All I want you to do is think in line with the Word of God to where by hearing the Word of God all those prejudices inside of you can be changed. Those high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God can be brought down by understanding the Word of God.

These verses apply to all believers. Renew your mind day by day, walk according to the Spirit and not the flesh, and let God's thoughts be your thoughts. This is what Paul was talking about. When you capture your thoughts and bring them to the obedience of Christ, you change your thinking, and as a result, you change your life.