

The Battle for Your Heart & Mind



Paul had his battles in ministry.

- Paul faced external opposition from the religious establishment in the cities where he evangelized and planted churches.
- He also experienced internal opposition within the churches where false teachers had infiltrated or immature self-centered church members resisted his ministry.
- His apostolic authority was challenged.
- He was criticized as not being an interesting and dynamic speaker (cf. 11:6), plus more.

Paul had an amazing devotion to Christ. Any other individual would not endure the disrespect and hardship Paul experienced (see 11:22-28).

Central Lesson:
Changing hearts start with changing minds.

1. The Church is in **WARFARE** with the evil in the world, like it or not. (10:3)

*"We are human, but we don't **wage** war as humans do."*

Warren Wiersbe:

"Many believers today do not realize that the church is involved in warfare, and those who do not understand the seriousness of the Christian battle do not always know how to fight the battle. They try to use human methods to defeat demonic forces, and these methods are doomed to fail. When Joshua and his army marched around Jericho for a week, the spectators thought they were mad. When the Jews trusted God and obeyed orders, they brought down the high walls and conquered the enemy (Josh. 6:1–20)."

2. The battleground is the hearts, **MINDS** of people.

*"... strongholds of human **reasoning** and to destroy false **arguments**." (10:4).
"We destroy every **proud** obstacle..." (10:5). "... rebellious **thoughts**..." (10:5).*

The Bible says that Satan is a liar (John 8:44) and he deceived the nations (Rev. 20).

The Bible says that God wants to transform our minds (Romans 12:2).

3. God has His mighty **WEAPONS** that are different from the world's weapons (10:4).

*"We use God's mighty **weapons**, not worldly weapons..."*

God's weapons...

- (1) Include His TRUTH (true truth). *"Your word, which is Truth."* (John 17:17).
- (2) Include **transforming** the mind and thoughts of people (Romans 12:2).
*"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God **transform** you into a new person by **changing the way you think**..."*
- (3) Include the **enlightenment** and **conviction** of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:8).
- (4) Appeals to both the witness of God and law of God **written** in the **hearts** of every person. (Romans 1:19 & 2:15).

The world's weapons are:

- (1) Humanistic thinking that rejects acknowledgement of God.
- (2) Error, deception, hate, and intimidation.

Warren Wiersbe:

"Paul used spiritual weapons to tear down the opposition—prayer, the word of God, love, the power of the Spirit at work in his life. He did not depend on personality, human abilities, or even the authority he had as an apostle."

4. Intellectual "**STRONGHOLDS**" (enslavement, imprisonment, entrapment) are our greatest obstacle (10:4).

*"... to knock down the **strongholds** of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments."*

If Satan can enslave your thinking, he can control your life.

Warren Wiersbe:

"There are walls of resistance in the minds of people, and these walls (like the walls of Jericho) must be pulled down. What are these 'mental walls'? Reasonings that are opposed to the truth of God's Word."

5. **PRIDE** is the first obstacle to people experiencing God's Grace and favor (10:5).

*"We destroy every **proud** obstacle that keeps people from knowing God..."*

Warren Wiersbe: "Paul's attitude of humility was actually one of his strongest weapons, for pride plays right into the hands of Satan."

6. We must seek to communicate God's truth in a way that is **CAPTIVATING**, interesting, and attention getting.

*"...We **capture** their rebellious thoughts..." (10:5).*

7. Our ultimate weapon is to **TEACH** obedience from God's word (10:5).

*"...and **teach** them to **obey** Christ." (10:5).*

Central Lesson: Changing hearts start with changing minds.

► Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.