

Second Corinthians IX Bring Every Thought Into Captivity #1

(2-Cor. 10:1-6)

Bringing down the strongholds of the mind with the Word of God and the Spirit of God

Fred R. Coulter—July 14, 2018

I want to take the sermon series: *The Washing of the Water by the Word* and this one here: *Bring Every Thought into Captivity*—that’s what this is all about—and another one: *The Heart/Mind Connection*—right now Bonnie Orswell is starting to work on *The Heart/Mind Connection*—we will put those together and have a study pack on ***how to cope with the world today***.

There were still some places like this at the turn of the century between 1800s and 1900s:

- no phones

As a matter of fact when I was a kid living on the farm in the 1940s we still had the crank phone!

- no cars
- no television
- no Facebook
- no Internet
- no computers

Your biggest problem was putting up with that cantankerous horse!

- no electricity
- no natural gas
- no thermometers
- no refrigerators

You were lucky if you had an ‘icebox’ where in the winter you would get your ice and store it up, insulate it. When it gets warm in the summer, you put it in your icebox. I remember an icebox.

Think about it, what distractions did they have? In the schools they had the *McGuffey Readers* and they learned about God. At home they had the Bible to read.

Wouldn’t it be interesting if you could project the Apostle John into this age and say, ‘We want to show you all the prophecies that you gave and how they have been fulfilled up to this point.’ *He would be astonished!*

With all the things that we have, remember that there’s good and evil, right and wrong. So all of these things can be used for good. A horse would be a good thing. You could have two kinds of horses, one that would run fast and the big ones that would plow and do the heavy work. But could you take a horse and go rob a bank? *Yes, you could! Wrong use of a horse!*

Same way with everything we have. Right here we have three who follow along with the Bible on their smart phones. At home we have dumb phones, land line.

I was talking to someone the other day and he said—I forget how old he was, but pretty close to my age—he doesn’t have a television or anything like that. I said, ‘I still use clay tablets,’ because that’s how they started writing, with clay tablets. I said, ‘We’ve progressed all the way to today. We still have clay tablets, called silicone chips. Let’s look at what we need to overcome, the four S_s:

1. Satan
2. society
3. self
4. sin

Regardless in the age that people have lived, those are the four things they’ve had to overcome. Today we have too many things coming in on us and at us that automatically happens.

When they would ride their horses down the trail, were there any billboards? *No!* Today you can get in your car, you can turn on the radio and turn on the air conditioning. You’re driving down the road and if there aren’t too many cars, you’re having a very good time. If it’s a song you like, you can sing along with it, and everything will be great. You feel good and the car is kind of bouncing up and down the road with you. You can have your phone hooked up. Someone call you, ‘Hello, where are you? Don’t forget to go the store and don’t forget to do this.’ *All automatic!*

They had none of those to overcome, but with all of those things today, they come right in through the tube, right into our eyes in the society around us. They had to fight that if they lived in one of the cities. They still had a lot of pornography in those cities, carved in stone. So you see, the mind of men and women still run the same as they were back then. *We have a lot to overcome!*

Someone was telling me about a movie the other day, where this man wanted to hook up the brain to a computer —and I need to get some more information from the Singularity is Near University—to find out what it was like. What happened, it got so bad that he killed himself. The

person said it's because people do not understand the evil that the mind can come up with.

Human nature is a combination of good and evil. How many people are called *good* in the New Testament? Even Jesus said, 'Don't call Me good.' What did He say of Nathaniel? *Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile!* How many other people did you hear that of? *None!* I'm convinced that those who have the most guile belong in politics.

Let's read what we have to do. It's a real challenge, because for us it is more of a full-time job because of the outside interference, but also because of the things that we have *to learn, to change, to grow and to overcome*. We have the tools to do it, which they didn't have back then.

How many people in the New Testament Church in the first century had the complete Bible in their homes? *Not many!* Where did those in Berea have to go to check out whether these things were so or not? *They had to go down to the synagogue where the scrolls were and check it out there!*

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh."

With everything that we have mentioned so far, we haven't mentioned that ***Satan is out there producing a lot of this!*** "...we do not war according to the flesh." How do we overcome? What it is, *spiritual growth is also a warfare* against the four S's.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the overthrowing of strongholds."

That's why we need the Spirit of God. That's the first thing, because all overcoming, and all of the battle to develop character *is in the mind!* Everything else with the body is to support the life so that the brain can work and function. Everything that we do *we choose*, even some things that are seemingly involuntary. Some things you can't control.

How long can you hold your breath? Just take a deep breath some time when the second hand on the clock reaches twelve-up, and hold it. Don't breathe! Don't move! If you do a minute you're pretty good. I don't know how many could do a minute and a half, two minutes, three minutes. There are some who have learned, diving deep to go after sponges and things like that, they could hold their breath for about a minute and half to two minutes. But that's it.

God put it in us automatically to breathe, same way with the processes of the body. All of

those are to support the body, *to support the mind, because that's where all the overcoming takes place, right in the mind!*

The things in the mind are *strongholds*. Addictions are strongholds! This is why Paul said, 'All lawful things I can do, but all lawful things are not expedient.' We have to be able to control that.

Fighting against Satan the devil, because he can put thoughts in people's minds. We saw how ***we have to put on the whole armor of God!*** Our basic battle is with:

- wicked spirits
- principalities
- powers
- the darkness of this age
- the spiritual power of wickedness in high places

What happens when the leaders of the nation give themselves over to sin? *America is a good example! It affects everybody!* When you have righteous leaders, it says in the Proverbs that *righteous judgment establishes the land*. Now that a lot of the evil has been purged out of the government, don't a lot of people feel better? *Yes, indeed!* So that's a good example of it.

- we have to take the whole armor
- we have to resist
- we have to work out all things to stand

In this age, there are so many things against us. I don't think Paul would consider that what he wrote here was a prophecy. He was writing to the Ephesians, and they had their own problems there. What was at Ephesus? *The big temple of Diana!* Don't you suppose there were a lot of demons around there?

You find that Paul was so effective that thousands and thousands brought their occult books and their idols and were burning them (Acts 19). So much so that the idol makers, Alexander the silversmith stirred up a rebellion against Paul and to take him and kill him because they had a great depression in idol making, because no one was buying the idols of Diana anymore. They had their problems there.

We have to stand! Here's how we do it. This ties in with bringing every thought into captivity to Christ. This stands in bringing down the strongholds.

Ephesians 6:14: "Stand, therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet

shod with *the* preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith...” (vs 14-16).

This is why there’s prayer and study every day This is why you pray even during the day when you’re going along and just doing different things and you know you need God to help and intervene and help you to be able to think correctly. All of us have experienced that.

Verse 16: “Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith, with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”

That becomes the important thing. *Satan can project what he wants to put in people’s minds*, and much more today. Because he has:

- television
- all of the social networks on the phone
- all the pornography
- all the sin
- all the gambling

We’re all going to have peace because we can smoke ‘pot.’ If you want to know what happens to a nation when it goes to pot, all you have to do is look at Holland or the Netherlands. Frans Peeters, who runs our office over there, says it’s given over to gangsters and crooks.

We’re going to have to really be on top of it now with this new president in Mexico. He’s going to declare war on the United States by sending thousands and thousands, plus he’s going to legalize all the drug cartels. It’s so bad there he doesn’t know how to stop all of the killing. Did you know that 25,000 people were murdered in Mexico last year? Most of those connected with the government and law enforcement, or anyone who was against the cartels.

If there is not resistance against sin, on an individual level, with the people everywhere, then sin grows; Satan moves in and multiplies it, and he can project it.

Here’s what we need to do, v 17: “And put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” *You must have the Word of God in your mind, in your heart, and you must use it to think with and live by!*

I was watching TBN the other night. Hardly anything about Christ, but claim all the promises of God. Then toward the end, get in there and raise your arms and do all your chants and all of the hallelujahs and all the Jesuses. All of that is a satanic

deception. I was amazed the number of people who just go into that. Satan likes to make it appear that his way is good.

This is quite a section here in Ephesians 2:1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins.”

If you don’t have the Spirit of God, if you don’t have the Truth of God, you’re “...dead in trespasses and sins,” even though you might not be malicious in your sins overtly in the actions that you do. What goes on in the mind? Where did we start this?

Mark 7:21: “For from within, out of the hearts of men go forth evil thoughts...”

A lot of people will say, ‘That’s not me, I’m a nice person.’ A lot of things that they do are sin, but they don’t know it’s sin, because they’ve never been taught the difference. So, they are dead in their sins and trespasses.

That’s why Jesus said, when the young man came to Him after Jesus said, ‘Follow Me.’ The young man said, ‘I will, Lord, but I have to go bury my dad first.’ He said, ‘Let the dead bury the dead.’

Today, can you imagine what they would write up in the newspaper if Donald Trump said to someone, ‘Let the dead bury their dead,’ to some poor person that just lost his father. They would consider that a great insult.

Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past...” The way we lived is called *walk*. Today we are to walk in the way of the Lord; *that’s living God’s way!*

“...according to the course of this world...” (v 2). Whatever the world said was good and you thought it was good, and it looked good and was pleasant to you. Sounds like Gen. 3.

“...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience” (v 2).

Satan is the cause of all sin. What has happened to our mind, beginning with Adam and Eve because they sinned? Our mind is what are called carnal. That means that it does not have the Spirit of God, and it lacks the understanding to know how to live.

Look at the generation today that hasn’t been taught anything. They had a segment on Hannity and went out and said, ‘Are you proud of America?’ *No!* Or asked them a question about the history of America—they don’t know. They don’t know anything.

When we're born into the world, we don't know anything, except we've sucked our thumb in the womb so we know how to nurse. That's about it. Everything must be taught to us.

A lot of things we can learn ourselves as we get a little older. The course of the world, the world is set in our time when we are born. Look at the kids growing up today. If you ask them when was the cell phone invented, they couldn't tell you, because everybody has one.

We've got a Verizon shop down here and mom and dad bring their little kids in and I'll look at them and they're about 10 or 12, or maybe 8. They come in to get their phones. Everybody's going to have giant thumbs after a while working those phones.

But it's natural. That's the society. The society we grew up in—yellow pencils and then the ballpoint pen. I remember I had a real fine ink pen. It was really a slick one. It had a little rubber container on the inside and you could pump the air out with a little lever on the side, and you could put in the ink. You would let go the lever and it would pull the ink up in there and you could write. What a handy thing! Then out came ballpoint pens. They still have them. I think in our house we must have 200 ballpoint pens.

We grow up in the world and that's the way it is. Today we have electricity; you walk in, turn the switch and there it is. You want to eat, you have a refrigerator, or two or three or four. You want to preserve some food; you have a freezer or two. All of those you just think of. I'm thirsty—go to the refrigerator—would you get that lime bubble fizz drink for me? There it is! You want to get some food, you go to the store.

All of those things—let's add this up. How, then, do you get people dependent on you and corrupt? *By giving them everything they need!* Then Satan knows because of sin, one day it is all going to be gone.

How nice and loving is your neighbor going to be when his stomach is grinding for food and he thinks you have some? Or you may become his food. That's happened over and over again. It's going to happen again, because Satan is 'the prince of the power of the air.'

Verse 3: "Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world."

In all of those things we thought we were pretty good. You can take all the classes you want, and how to be the best person, the best salesman, the number one this or that. If you're not keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days, you're still living in sin. After a while then you learn how to cheat. That always happens. That is the human mind by Satan the devil.

If you want an interesting word study sometime, look up *way*: ***way of Truth, way of life,*** and so forth.

Proverbs 12:15: "The **way of a fool** is right in his own eyes, but he who listens to advice is wise."

Let's see about our thoughts, see what we need to do, look at what was written. Believe it or not, I just got a paper yesterday written by someone, I have to figure out who it is. The name is there, but I haven't heard of them. Guess what they wrote concerning the binding of Satan the devil? We've had two things come up. This is the year of all the wrong doctrine being repeated again.

The two goats we have already covered. But the truth of the matter is, they could not really understand the purpose of the second goat being let go in the wilderness alive until Rev. 20 had been written, which says that 'a strong angel comes down, takes Satan the devil and throws him into the abyss, puts a chain around him and locks him up.'

This person said, 'No, that's not correct. The chain is 'symbolic' because Satan is spiritual. The prison is 'symbolic' because everybody's righteous.' Amazing! If that's the case, how did Satan get a third of the angels to go with him? Think about why lax teaching and false doctrine can cause people to believe false doctrine when they come around, because they've never been grounded in the Bible the way that they should.

2-Corinthians 10:5: "**Casting down vain imaginations...**" That's what you have to do. Get rid of the thought in your mind. How do you do that? *You have to pray about it!* That's how you do it.

"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..." (v 5). Think about that.

There are a lot of things that appear really good. Look at everything that people do from Friday night to Saturday night, that they think is good and fun, whether it be entertainment. There are those who want to go out and get drugs and all of that. That's the more evil side of it.

But then you have activities and sports, sales and shopping, visiting, and all this sort of thing on the Sabbath. These people would look at these things and say this is good:

- it's good to talk with a family
- it's good to visit with your relatives
- it's good to do this
- it's nice to have a sale on Saturday

We can all go down there and we can get these things a whole lot cheaper, *because they have no knowledge of God, no knowledge of the Sabbath!* That which appears to be good is actually evil because of sinning against God.

The same thing applies with false doctrine. You come along, here's this vain imagination. Can't help but think about the hearings with Strzok the other day? Did he not have a lot of vain imaginations, haughty face, uplifting, vanity, and all of that. Incredible! Lying through his teeth. He thinks that he is so good that he can't do any wrong. That he even had the greatest brain to figure out how to stop Trump from becoming President.

"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..." (v 5).

I've been working on doing some Greek for the Interlinear we're going to put out. I've been in communication with Maurice Robinson. He and Dr. Pierpont put out a book called *Byzantine Textform*. I'm not going to get into the details of that.

In my second e-mail to him, I commended him for doing such a good job, in doing what he's doing, to bring out the Greek, and all of that sort of thing. I asked him, 'Could you please explain to me how it is that a man can tell God what to do and that God must accept it? For example, Sunday-keeping,' because I knew he was a Baptist.

Then I referred him to Cardinal Gibbons, *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*. He wrote back and he said, 'I don't mix theology with the Greek.' That's fine, you shouldn't. But from the Greek you should get your theology, don't you think?

He said, 'Cardinal Gibbons was explaining Rome's stance, and he dismissed it entirely. In his dismissal, he actually put himself above God, because God says to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy. But there is a vain imagination that because he puts it in framework of doing good, and 'the other person is not good, it's all right with me. And I don't like to mix my theology with it.'

I thought to myself, WOW! Rome tells him what to do, and then they say Rome is not telling us what to do. There you go!

"...that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity..." (v 5). This takes work. This means you have to know what's going on in your mind and when thoughts come up that ought not be there—because that's where the true self and sin really are, right in the mind.

- we can all smile
- we will all be nice
- we can all shake hands

The truth is, every human being is who he or she is when you get into a room alone and you shut the door, and there you are. *That's you before God!* That's what it is.

What is one of Satan's great deceptions? The Word of God is in the Bible! The Word of God is Truth. So, for the Jews Satan tells them, 'You don't need the New Testament. That guy Jesus was a real renegade. You're right.' So, they cut themselves off from God, while they think they're right.

For the Catholics and Protestants, they say that 'everything in the Old Testament has been fulfilled and that's the old Law and you don't need to do it.'

So, both of them read from parts of the Bible. What happens, because they accept those premises, they're sinning though they may understand certain parts of the Bible. That's an incredible thing. Remember when Jesus was tempted, did not Satan quote Scripture? Reading Scripture doesn't necessarily prove that you are bringing all the Truth of God. It means, if you read it correctly, you're bringing some of it.

- What becomes the question?
- What do you do with it when you hear it? *You have to obey it!*
- Where does obedience start? *You must choose!*

Doesn't every minister, every priest, know that the seventh-day Sabbath is of God? *The Jews know it and they know the Holy Days! **But half the Truth will never fulfill all the Truth!*** Remember that. You must have all the Truth. All of these difficulties come because we do not police our minds with the Spirit of God and the Word of God. That is called *self-control*.

Today we live in all lawlessness. If you don't like the law, you just rebel against it. They're not bringing anything into to captivity. They're just

out there with all their wild emotions and everything like this. They have no control over their minds. Satan the devil is completely controlling them. He's happy as can be.

I can see virtually no difference between and rock concert, with the lights flashing and going on, everything that they're doing and watching some of these things on TBN in the name of God, supposedly praising God with the lights going on and then rocking back and forth, and all of this. And a minister coming along, pushing on their forehead and knocking them down. What he's doing? *He's putting a demon in their brain!*

(go to the next track)

Casting down vain imaginations are all of our thoughts. Look at the vain imaginations of all of those who say they are wise but believe in evolution. They have to imagine billions of billions. Is that a vain imagination? *Yes, it is!* Do they think it's good? Yes, 'because we thought of it.'

What is the point that every person has to come to in order to be able to begin understanding the Bible and these verses that go directly against the thinking of human beings? That's where we started: *out of the heart of men come evil thoughts!*

For all of us as Christians, there are two things we come to. Let's start out with the Apostle Paul in Rom. 7, one of the most difficult chapters in the entire Bible. I won't get into all the difficulties in it, but we want to come to one verse.

Romans 7:14: "For we know that the Law is spiritual... [you have to come to that] ...but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin."

You have to understand that you're under sin. Even all the goodness that we may do *can never be the goodness of God*, because God has no sin.

Verse 15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know...."

- Who knows what they're doing and where they're going?
- How do you run your life?
- What do you do?
- What do you know?

You come against a problem, and it just bowls you over and you have no idea what's happening!

"...for what I do not desire to do, this I do..."
(v 15).

- Why do you do things you don't desire to do?

- Why do you do things that come along that you know you shouldn't do, but you do them?

People do horrible things and they say, 'Why did you do it?' *I don't know!*

"...moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do" (v 15). *Paul was showing the inner battle of overcoming sin!* All are under sin; that means we all have sin within. It is called *the law of sin and death!*

- Do we all die? *Yes, indeed!*
- Do we all sin? *Yes, indeed!*

That's why David wrote, 'I was conceived in sin' (Ps 51), because *the law of sin and death* is inherited in us. Those societies, which are generally good in their behavior and so forth, are those who more closely follow the things of God, whether they have the Law of God or not.

You go watch on churchathome.org, *Come Out of Her My People #5*. How would you like to live in a town where everybody kept the Ten Commandments? I won't go into detail, but I called it 'Perfectville.' Why can that never be without God?

1. because of Satan the devil
2. because in order for you to begin making progress to overcome, you have to realize how the human mind works
 - there is the way of man that seems good, but the end thereof is the way of death
 - every thought of a man is good in his own eyes

Even those who murder: 'I killed him because he deserved to be killed.' Are you God?

Until you come to the point in your life and in your thoughts against evil, and overcoming the things that you do that you don't want to do that you really hate, you've got to understand this verse right here:

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

Can anyone really truly know his own heart and mind? *No, you can't!* That's why when all of these good pleasures that we have at our fingertips today are gone, which keep us from acting on our most evil impulses, then you will see the truth of human nature revealed; neighbors will kill neighbor for food.

Jeremiah 17:1—when you give yourself over to evil: "The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron..." You etched your conscience so

deeply that it's like it's etched in stone. This is pretty well describing *the unpardonable sin*. You can't change.

You see some of these documentaries in prisons and they talk to some of these killers. They've been there long enough to face the fact that they're really killers. The one who interviews them will hear this from some of them: 'If you let me out, I'll do it again.'

"...with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars" (v 1). In other words, their very inner most beings, plus what they consider their religion, it is engraved right in it there.

Until people come to the point of understanding how desperate and evil the human mind can be, you can't start bringing into captivity those thoughts that are contrary to God! You just don't have the power to do it, because you don't have the Holy Spirit of God.

Let's see what God says; Jeremiah 16:10: "And it shall come to pass, when you declare to this people all these words... [that everything's going to take place, all the evil is going to come] ...and they shall say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us?... [because of Jer. 17:1] ...Or what *is* our iniquity, or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'"—*because every way of a man is right in his own eyes.*

'What am I doing that's wrong?' Look at Job, one of the oldest books in the Bible and one of the first lessons to learn. Even if you do everything that God says to do, you're not greater than God.

Verse 11: "'Then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the LORD, 'and have walked after other gods, and have served them...'"

That's why the first commandment is '***I*** am the Lord your God that brought you out of the land of Egypt.' In other words, '***I'm the only one that can get you out of sin.***' (paraphrased it for a modern spiritual equivalent). '***You shall have no other gods before Me.***' Look at how many gods of how many things we have today. All the gadgets and devises and things like that.

"...and have worshiped them, and have forsaken Me, and have not kept My Law. And you have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, you walk each one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, ***without hearkening to Me***" (vs 11-12).

They got to the point of having no conscience. Everyone has to come to the point that

they acknowledge that the heart that they have, deep within, can produce every evil under the sun. The only way to stop that is with God's Spirit so you can overcome.

Jeremiah 17:5: "Thus says the LORD, 'Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man...'"

What was the greatest error of the church we've been in? *You looked to the man instead of God!* The man told you to look to him instead of God. ***We're not to look to any man!*** Even Jesus said to the rich man who came and said, 'Good, Master.' Jesus said, 'Don't call me good; there's none good but God.' Why? *Because Jesus had to carry the law of sin and death in Him and not sin and not be overcome by sin Himself!* He had to do the impossible to make it possible to save mankind.

"...and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD" (v 5). *This happens!* So look at the contrast. Look at how God looks at people here.

Verse 6: "For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited."

This is going to get some people mad, but all those people who live in the worst and most hideous places in the world, examine what your forefathers did and you'll have the answers as to why you're living there.

Verse 7: "Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD." Even in the letter of the Law, that is good.

Verse 8: "'For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... [if you read Psa. 1 carefully and think about it, there's the whole plan of God] ...*it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit."

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings."

Let's see how Job expressed this very same thing, after he learned his lesson. Remember the moral of the story of Job is *you better be careful what you wish for*, especially if you're arrogant, which he was. He got so arrogant, he says, 'I'm just as righteous as God, maybe even a little more than God. Look at all the good that I've done.'

Job said, 'I want God to talk to me.' God said, 'All right, I'm going to talk to you.' He

appeared in a whirlwind. After God got done with him, let's go over this here. *Sometimes it takes some very deep experiences for people to understand the evil that's in their hearts*, even if their actions appear good. And even if they do a lot of the things that God says to do, but do not give God the credit.

What did Paul write about every man, woman, and child in the world? ***In God we live and move and have our being!*** Everything comes from God! If we acknowledge God, use His Spirit, love Him and keep His commandments, then we will be productive spiritually and God will bless us. Sometimes we need trials so that we understand how we need to stay close to God.

God answered Job, Job 40:1: "And the LORD answered Job and said, 'Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?....'" (vs 1-2).

Think about Sunday-keeping, holiday-keeping, all of the things of the religions of this world. We are all instructing God, because we know better than Him. That's why Job is one of the oldest books in the Bible, so that men would get the point.

"...He who reproves God, let him answer it" (vs 2). *That's what Job was doing!*

Remember this one point he said, 'This is so terrible. I'm suffering so much. I wish there was an umpire between me and God, to put his hand on His shoulder and on my shoulder, and declare to Him what I have done.'

Job didn't thank God that he could do these things. He didn't recognize that he lives and breathes and moves within God! Everything that there is, anything that he did, ***it all came from God!*** Whether he fed the poor or took care of the cattle, took care of his servants, or whether his own children. ***It all came from God!***

Then for him to stand up and say, 'My righteousness is more than God.' That's why God said, 'Where were you when I created the heavens and the earth? Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?'

Really when you think about it: you can examine a drop of water and there is more understanding in that drop of water to see what's in it, than you could possibly imagine, especially if you dip it out of a creek and then look at it under a microscope. You might even decide not to drink it because you see some parasites in it that you can't see. ***All comes from God!***

Verse 3: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'Behold, I am vile!....'" (vs 3-4). That's the

first start of repentance. You see the evil within, even though you may have done some good things.

"...What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further" (vs 4-5). *It's about time to shut up, Job!*

Everyone who says they have something better than the perfect God could produce, regardless of what it is, all the way from laws and commandment-keeping to things that they may think of or invent or put together.

Verse 6: "And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 'Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment?....'" (vs 6-8).

What was the first judgment against human beings? *The law of sin and death, passed on to all the children!* God has a way to work that out.

"...Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous? And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?" (vs 8-9).

'Okay, Job, We are going to try you right now. Here you are full of puss, blood, maggots, flies all around, dust all over you. You haven't shaved in weeks and your hair is all full of dirt and grime.'

Verse 10: "Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty." What a perfect thing to ask him: If you're so good, Job, change what you are right now immediately.

Verse 11: "Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together... [by eliminating and exterminating them, that would have to be] ...*and* bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you" (vs 11-14).

What was God doing here? He was *trying the reins* of Job, showing him who he really was. God does that to us, when we come to really deep repentance. Repentance comes in various stages, at different times. We see the complete futility of man. ***This is how we begin to really bring those thoughts into captivity!*** We have to understand from whence they come.

- Satan himself
- society
- the sin within

Here's Job's repentance, Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'I know that You can do all things, and *that* no thought can be withheld from You'" (vs 1-2). *All those thoughts!*

Like Abraham Lincoln said, 'You can fool part of the people some of time; you can fool all the people part of the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time.' We'll add onto it: ***you can never fool God at any time concerning anything!***

The Psalms and Proverbs are real good in helping us overcome human nature. When you read some of these Psalms, it makes you wonder how David thought a lot of these things when writing them down.

What he would do in many cases, he would write down the Psalm. He would compose it on his instrument of strings and then he would go before the little tabernacle/tent that was in his house and sing to God. Quite a thing! None of us ever had a relationship with God like that. God exposed him for what he was.

Psalm 44:20: "If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god, shall not God search this out?..." (vs 20-21).

We can be thankful that God gives us lots of space, gives us lots of time, and let some of our mistakes correct us, if we can see that we've done wrong. Know this:

"...For He knows the secrets of the heart" (v 21). God knows that and has exposed it. This is how we bring every thought into captivity to God.

Psalm 94:11: "The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.... [notice the solution] ...Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O LORD to teach him out of Your Law that You may give him rest from the days of trouble until the pit is dug for the wicked" (vs 11-13). That's another summary of the whole plan of God.

How then do we start bringing every thought into captivity to God, ***bringing down strongholds so they don't have a grip on our lives?*** *We just saw it out of the Law of God!* Through the Word of God, coupled with the Spirit of God together. Then this helps us bring every thought into captivity to God, because it's a stronghold and it then is something we can get rid of.

What you do, you get rid of what is in the mind, by replacing it with what needs to be there. Here's the process. We've covered this before, but just like everything else, when you study some things in the Bible in one place, and you come back

and you study again what you've already studied previously, you bring to it the things that you've learned in the meantime and it means so much more.

Proverbs 2:1: "My son... [we're going to be the sons and daughters of God] ...**if** you will receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you... [in your mind] ...so that you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding; yea, **if** you cry after knowledge *and* lift up your voice for understanding; **if** you seek her as silver and search *for* her as for hidden treasures, **then** you shall understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God" (vs 2-5).

That's how you do it. You come to repentance and then the Word of God comes alive to you and you understand it. Can people read the Word of God without understanding? *Yes, of course!* Here's how you do it:

Verse 6: "For the LORD gives wisdom; out of His mouth *comes* knowledge and understanding." *That's what we are to use to overcome!*

We've covered this before, but let's just add it in here. Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart..."

That might be a good study. Look up all the places where there is *your heart, your whole heart, all your heart*, and see how our attitude toward God is to be.

"...and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil" (vs 5-7). *That's what we are to do!*

Proverbs 4:10: "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of your life *shall be* many.... [we're dealing with eternal life forever] ...I have taught you in the way of wisdom... [God does teach us in the way of wisdom] ...I have led you in the right paths. When you go, your steps shall not be hampered, and when you run, you shall not stumble. Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; keep her, for she *is* your life" (vs 10-13)—*and all the instruction of God!*

Our mind is made to learn and re-learn, be renewed and renewed, added to, and develop the character. That's the whole core of what God's wants us to do. ***That's how we bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!***

Verse 14: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil *men*. Avoid it; do not go in it; turn from it, and pass on!" (vs 14-15).

Philip Neal just completed a book. It's called *Good Sense*, which is Proverbs for teenagers. This is kind of the core of what he's doing. The big Achilles heel of all teens is you're no longer a child and you're glad you're almost an adult, but you probably know more than adults, because you can see a lot of their faults. But you don't see your own. That's why you need the Proverbs.

Here it is with the wicked. How many have watched National Geographic where they show some of these drug dealers and how they sell it, how much money they make. They plan every bit of it. Everything is planned and worked out.

Verse 16: "For they do not sleep except when they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away unless they cause *some* to fall, for they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence" (vs 16-17).

They're always worried: Will they get caught? What's going to happen? They know that if they cross the one from that is the supplier of drugs, they're gone.

Verse 18: "But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day." The perfect day is the day of resurrection, the day of perfection.

Verse 19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble. My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart" (vs 19-21).

That's how you bring every thought into captivity to Christ! That's what it's all about. God's Spirit is there to help you to reinforce and to bring you to these things, the way that God wants it.

Verse 22: "For they *are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.... [v 23 is the big one, which ties right in with 2-Cor. 10:25]: ...**Above all guard the door of your mind...**"

- Why is that important?
- Why does it call your mind a door?

Because you can let things into your mind or you can expel them out of your mind. Some of them are harder to get rid of than others.

I think I mentioned it last week about the advertisement, Kars for Kids. Whenever that comes on I hit that mute because the music is so catchy, if I don't, I spend two or three days trying to get it out of my thoughts.

You think about it. You watch an ad and if there's a catchy tune there, what happens if your mind picks it up?

- guard the door of your mind
- casting down vain imaginations

Verse 23: "Above all guard the door of your mind... [or your heart] ...with diligence, for out of it *are* the issues of life." ***That is really quite a Proverb!***

When I first went to Ambassador College, I said to myself, where do I start? So, I started in the Proverbs. I got these 3 by 5 cards and I would write down by topic: fear of God, obey God, all the different topics. I ended up with a whole slew of those. I didn't realize how much that at the beginning this helped to get my thoughts in order the way that they should be. I'm not saying that to brag on it or anything, but I'm just saying:

- What are you going to do?
- How do you start?
- *You start right there!*

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh... [we are *in* the world, but not *of* the world and we're still flesh] ...we do not war according to *the* flesh. **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty...** [spiritually] **...through God to the overthrowing of strongholds**" (vs 3-4).

Only with the Spirit of God can you overcome those strongholds.

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations... [all those stupid foolish thoughts that come into your brain] ...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [Job] ...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience... [he's saying disobedience is one of the strongholds in the mind] ...whenever your obedience has been fulfilled" (vs 5-6).

That is the whole key of bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ!

This is why this portion of 2-Cor. 10 is one of the most important sections in the Bible. Then combine this with other things. I'll leave the rest of it to you to study, to finish off.

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 10:3-4
- 2) Ephesians 6:14-17
- 3) Ephesians 2:1

- 4) Mark 7:1-3
- 5) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 6) Proverbs 12:15
- 7) 2-Corinthians 10:5
- 8) Romans 7:14-15
- 9) Jeremiah 17:9, 1
- 10) Jeremiah 16:10-12
- 11) Jeremiah 17:5-8, 10
- 12) Job 40:1-14
- 13) Job 42:1-2
- 14) Psalm 44:20-21
- 15) Psalm 94:11-13
- 16) Proverbs 2:1-6
- 17) Proverbs 3:5-7
- 18) Proverbs 4:10-23
- 19) 2-Corinthians 10:3-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 19
- Genesis 3
- Revelation 20
- Psalms 51, 1
- 2-Corinthians 10:25

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *The Heart/Mind Connection* (coming soon)

Books:

- *Byzantine Textform* by Robinson & Pierpont
- *Good Sense* by Phil Neal (coming soon)

Booklet: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

Series: *Come Out of Her My People* (churchathome.org)

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