

Pulling Down Strongholds

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon focuses on the importance of engaging in spiritual warfare by addressing the battle for our minds. It emphasizes the need to take every thought captive, cast down high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, and demolish strongholds that hinder our walk with Christ. The victory we can achieve in this warfare is highlighted through the powerful weapons of our warfare that are capable and able to bring down every obstacle in our minds, ultimately leading to a transformed and Christ-centered thinking.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:3, Ephesians 6:17, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:3

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Transforming the Mind"

Description

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Transcript

Just welcome you again just to our morning service as we gather around the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to turn this morning to 2 Corinthians chapter 10, 2 Corinthians chapter 10. Here as we go to the word of God and just as you find your place there, I do want to just mention something is that it was today, seven years ago, we received our first copy of Christian Foundations through the post.

This was taken from a series of messages that we recorded that we taught here in Limerick and it was Candice, it was a burden on our heart to actually transcribe the messages and then to put them in a big format and this is our church manual. If you're in this church and you don't have it, please do make sure you let us know and we'll make sure that you get a copy. This is just vital reading because it expounds the word of God so it is a very helpful manual.

It is our church manual. It's not that there's not other important truths but it's it is very vital and in it we deal with the six foundational truths that are found in Hebrews chapter 6 concerning repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. So just to so you can remember it's good to remember what the Lord has done and this is its seventh anniversary so praise God.

Turning to 2 Corinthians chapter 10 here this morning as we come to the word of God and my message this morning it's the fifth part of our series Spiritual Warfare and I felt the past couple of weeks that I was just to go back and take a message from one year ago and I don't apologize for preaching again a message I only preached one year ago. I feel it is very important and I can't emphasize that strongly enough. My message this morning part five of Spiritual Warfare is pulling down strongholds.

We're going to read from 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and this message was actually part six of seven messages we preached this time last year and if you remember we were actually teaching this series on our Wednesday nights just before the lockdown. I only got to part seven and then the lockdown came and we haven't resumed this series but we are gonna those first seven parts are very essential and yet I had hardly started on that series but I want to take you back to last year to a year ago and to preach this message again because I believe it has such value. It is timeless and I don't often do this.

I don't often go back and just preach a sermon but I believe it's absolutely essential and you will remember as we go to this you'll remember what we dealt with and it will be refreshed in your mind but reading from 2 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 1 to verse 6. Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and the gentleness of Christ who in presence and base among you but being absent and bold toward you 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 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 strongholds 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 and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled and then just one verse chapter 11 verse 3 but I fear less by any means as the serpent beguiled eve through his subtlety so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ can we pray together here this morning father I do pray for the word of God it is living it is alive it is powerful it is dynamic it is a sword that divides between soul and spirit it is a discerner a revealer a scrutinizer of the thoughts and intents the intentions the motives the dialogues of our own heart Lord God thank you for the word of God this morning that it reveals everything that it has the power to pull down strongholds imaginations every high thing Lord God your word has power to expose to diagnose and to scrutinize every single individual thought and father this morning I pray that you would stir up faith that faith would come through the preaching of the word you said faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God we want faith to come to believe that we can take thoughts captive and pull down totally demolish any stronghold in our minds our families or our church Lord God I pray that you stir up faith and where there's been unbelief that you would bring faith into our hearts as we preach the word of God this morning that Christ might be glorified that we might be conformed to him that we might continue in the simplicity in a single mind towards Jesus Christ we ask this that your name would be glorified this morning as we gather unto Jesus Christ in Jesus name amen my message here this morning is pulling down strongholds pulling down strongholds and we're dealing with spiritual warfare in dealing with spiritual warfare a vital part of it is pulling down strongholds in your own mind you see if you only think that spiritual warfare has to do with binding rebuking resisting the devil if you only think that spiritual warfare has to do with a apparition of the devil some dark atmosphere and around you or the enemy advancing towards you you would be very mistaken I want to tell you that the front line of this battle is your own mind it's not outside of you it's inside of you that's where this battle gets very hot it comes in close it's not demons in you but it is thoughts in your mind that become the front line of the battle that's why this morning I believe it is so vital for us to hear this don't just think that you're fighting demons out there in spiritual warfare you are actually fighting thoughts in here you don't get any closer than that

than the very thoughts of your mind and we are actually called to spiritual warfare with your own thoughts of your own mind I've got three points here my first and third points are going to be brief but the second one is the most vital one if you want to hear the full message go back and listen and again but I want to cut to the chase and really deal with the heart of this message point two is going to be so vital and that's where I'm going to spend my time but point one here this morning the warfare we encounter the warfare we encounter reading in verse 3 it says sorry chapter 11 verse 3 it says but I fear this is Paul speaking to the church at Corinth but I fear lest by any means as the serpent or just as the serpent the guildies through his subtlety so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ look what Paul is saying here the front line of the battle was Satan was the mind in the garden of Eden it was Eve's mind that was under attack it was Satan approaching her he is subtle he is cunning he is very shrewd and he uses arguments words suggestions lies accusations he is using verbalized words and arguments what is he aiming at he is aiming at Eve's mind that is the front line of the battle that is where the fight was waged in the garden of Eden it wasn't just an outward battle it was actually a battle with the mind of Eve that's where Satan came to he came right to her mind he was going to try and use her thoughts he was going to bring suggestions onto her and what does Paul say here he says that is the example of the warfare in the local church where is the warfare in the local church it's the realm of the mind that is the front line do you know where Satan's attacking we think it's through some wolf walking in the door we think it's through some attack by the government or some other thing or the worldliness of the pubs or the drugs in our city that is not the front line of the battle for the church here in Limerick do you know where it is the mind of this church it is the individual mind of every person here in my voice this morning and so look how Paul he holds up Eve in the garden of Eden as an example and he said it's the exact same fight going on for the mind of the church in Corinth the individual mind of believers it's exactly the same battle and why did he fear for the church I fear for you that your mind should be corrupted notice Satan's attack is on the mind to corrupt the mind do you know what that word corrupt means it means to shrivel to weather to waste away to spoil to ruin or to defile Satan as a serpent comes against the mind and he is seeking to corrupt the mind to weather the mind to actually bring it down to nothing from the simplicity that is in Christ so he's trying to move you from the simplicity that is in Christ to a corrupted mind what does it mean the simplicity that is in Christ it's talking about your mind here because he's trying to corrupt your mind he's trying to move you away from the simplicity that is in Christ the word simplicity there means single-heartedness the word means to be single or to have your mind folded together and unified as one in other words you've got a single mind your mind is clear it is directed it is set towards Jesus Christ and you know what to have this simplicity that is in Christ is to have your mind folded every area of your mind folded together that is focused on the person of the Lord Jesus Christ that is the desire and look at Paul saying to the church and to the individual believer I don't want Satan what he done to Eve in corrupting her mind through the thoughts of her mind she was moved away from the simplicity of Christ of having a very simple clear view of Christ you know there's a warfare going on to get you away from simplicity in Christ do you realize the attack is on your mind Satan will attack your mind with thoughts suggestions arguments do you know what he wants to do move you away from simplicity in Christ the word also means sincerity honesty generosity it is the opposite of being double or hypocritical or filled with guile so it's having this pure simple mind that is set on Christ a mind filled with thoughts that are consumed with Christ since that's what Paul is dealing with in 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 and chapter 11 it all flows together here when we read in 11 about this warfare for the mind he has taken us right back to the beginning of chapter 10 you see Satan can be the father of wrong thoughts but it's our mind that becomes the mother the incubator I'm not so worried about Satan throwing thoughts or attacking the mind but I am concerned about what you allow to be conceived in your mind you see Paul feared for the church I fear for you as individuals I fear for this church I fear for

the body of Christ across nations and our world I have a sincere fear some say oh you don't need a fear about real believers I do I have a godly fear I have a jealousy I have a deep concern in these days when I see the condition of the church do you realize our world is under attack from Satan we have never had an hour of propaganda like this we have never had an hour where the media worldwide has been united behind one mind why do you think the worldwide media has become so united why do you think the same thing is being said in a remarkable hour don't you realize there's a spiritual force that is actually infiltrating the worldwide media and is unified and it's targeted at the minds haven't we seen entire nations be engulfed with this propaganda with this brainwashing sitting daily and nightly watching the news media whoever gains the power of that influence of that voice is going to affect the mind of this generation and you know what Satan suggests the thoughts but he wants the mind of individuals to bear the child birth the child and to rear it to maturity in verse 3 of chapter 10 Paul says for though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh notice Paul is saying here we do live as men we live a normal life we have normal things to go about I actually walk in this world in my natural life we do walk in the flesh in natural things but Paul says but I do not war after the flesh the word war there is a military term it means to serve in a military campaign to be encamped with an army you're not out in civvy street you're on the battlefield it means to be on active duty in the field doing your military service serving your country you're on the battlefield you're ready to engage the enemy since Paul is saying here although I walk in the flesh yet my battle is not a natural battle I am not fighting according to this natural lifestyle I do not war according to the natural life my warfare and campaign is a spiritual one for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they're not natural we're not fighting a human physical battle here our weapons are spiritual and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds what mighty weapons we have you are in a warfare it says over in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 and verse 3 that we are to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ and in verse 4 that we have been chosen by him to be a soldier you did not choose to be embroiled in a fight or to face Satan or to be in a battle for your mind you didn't choose that Jesus Christ chose you he saved you by his grace you believed on him you repented of your sins and then you get saved isn't this glorious I've been forgiven I'm washed I'm made clean I'm a part of the body of Christ and suddenly you find yourself in a battle and you go oh what's going on here I didn't ask for this I wanted to be forgiven I wanted to love everybody I wanted to be in the church and yet we find ourselves in a battle don't you know that God has chosen you to be a soldier to fight a military campaign and it's never gonna end until you breathe your last breath to be saved means to be a soldier you cannot be saved and not a soldier and if you're a soldier of Christ you are most certainly saved at the conflict the battle for your mind is all part of being saved it's no wonder that you have fights battles in your mind doubts coming against you thoughts arising it's not surprising to me that you have found yourself since being saved at times in horrendous mental battles it is no surprise at all in fact I would doubt that you're saved if you haven't had to fight for your mind if you're an individual and you've never had darkness engulf your mind at some point just you wait just you wait John Bunyan that old uh evangelical author of England he describes in his books mind battles in his own testimony that you never want to experience as a believer he faced the devil and the battle of darkness that engulfed his mind was terrible saints welcome to the battlefield we are good soldiers of Jesus Christ this is the warfare we encounter we actually encounter this warfare and 90 percent of true spiritual warfare is in the realm of the mind it is a real battle for the mind you see we we are in an intensive battle and I show you the weapons of our warfare are not carnal God has given you certain weapons what are the weapons one of the weapons is found in Ephesians 6 and verse 10 it is called the sword of the spirit what does it say there and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God the word of God the scriptures the spoken word the word alive do you know what it is a sword it is an actual sword we always think we're fighting the devil but not always it's thoughts in your own mind that the word of God actually is used against listen on this first point in

Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 12 concerning the word of God for the word of God is quick meaning it's alive it is powerful meaning it has energy and power it is sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit do you realize the word of God separates between what is spiritual what is perfect in you what is regenerate and born of God and what is of your soul realm your thoughts your emotions your feelings all of the things that can be moved about the word of God separates and says no this is your spirit and this is of your soul this is coming from God and this is just you Keith Malcolmson you say only the word of God can separate out and show you what is spiritual and what is soulish only the word of God can do that and you've got to know this in the battle when you're dealing with strongholds in your mind the word of God actually reveals what you're dealing with is it of God or is it of you is it the devil or is it just natural it also says in Hebrews 4 and 12 that the word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart notice it discerns thoughts how do you discern thoughts it's the word of God you cannot do it by your own self for you to figure out what thoughts are of the devil what are of me what are from other people and what is from God you cannot discern that yourself you don't have the innate ability the word of God is a discerner of thoughts if you have a strong thought come to your mind you know it's only the word of God can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart you realize the word of God is a discerner that word discerner means a judge or it sits in judgment of individual thoughts it actually scrutinizes your thoughts it distinguishes or separates out your thoughts have you ever had a confused mind where you didn't know what is what what is up what is down what is back to front you're you can have a confused attack from satan do you realize that the word of God is a discerner it sits in judgment of every thought it distinguishes and it makes a decision the word of God says this is of God this is of the devil this is of you that's what the word of God does it makes everything clear you see the word of God gives light for darkness truth for deception it reveals holiness in opposition to sin it shows you what humility is compared to pride the word of God does all of this and we know that darkness are lies wrong thoughts are built out of lies deception have truce and air that's how the devil attacks your thoughts but here this morning we're going to think about thoughts we are involved in a battle and it's a battle in your mind it is not a natural battle it is a spiritual battle it's not against flesh and blood it's against powers of darkness a real devil and a real enemy you're already involved in it you don't engage in it you're a part of it if you're a christian but we're gonna look at this and a bit closer here in verse 4 as we go to my second point it says in verse 4 and pulling down strongholds verse 5 casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ my second point here is the warfare we wage not only the warfare we encounter and have have no choice over but the second one we do have a choice it is our responsibility the warfare we wage all of us are involved in the warfare but not all of us wage war in this warfare in this verse 4 and verse 5 we have four things i'm going to deal with here concerning the minds listen paul listen strongholds imaginations high things and thoughts all four of these things are in your mind and paul is talking in these two chapters about a manner of thinking like he was corrupted and are thinking they these four steps are the process how you're moved from the simplicity of christ to having a corrupted mind from having a folded over simple pure honest mind towards christ and your mind is corrupted or wasted or it begins to weather do you realize there's steps the devil uses to move you on this path or you can move the other way to the simplicity of christ if you think your mind's corrupted if you feel you've lost ground in the battle then here this morning we can reverse that process and begin to make the journey back then verse four and five paul starts with the strongest and goes down to the weakest he begins with strongholds enlisting these four things i want to turn them in reverse verse this morning and i want to look at the warfare that we wage in our mind against satan concerning our thoughts i want to begin with thoughts number one then i want to move to high things then third of all imaginations and fourth of all strongholds you see these are four steps

beginning at the lowest the weakest the easiest battle and increased in and then moving on to the strongest all of these four things are in your mind they're all in your thoughts it's not out there fighting the devil you are fighting this daily in your mind it's a very real thing first of all every thought look at this first every thought at the end of verse five bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of christ number one every thought not action it doesn't say bring every action into captivity it says every thought it doesn't say every word it doesn't say every action it doesn't say every work do you know why because out of every thought comes words out of every thought comes a decision out of every thought it all it takes is a thought that will lead to an action a relationship a decision you have made decisions in the past you never made it without a thought you have embarked on doing things you've never done that without thoughts you see everything comes out of a thought a single individual thought and so it says here to begin the war that we wage i am going to wage war on individual thoughts in my mind if you let all of those thoughts go you're going to be in trouble if you just allow the devil to do anything with your thoughts you you are going to be treated like a slave and a certain um servant you will be taken captive what is every thought the word thought here means perception exercising the mind it is a deliberate action of the mind where you are thinking you're actually thinking you're constantly thinking but this is concerning thoughts that are deliberate actions not your subconscious mind not your unconscious mind this is talking about deliberate thoughts every single thought you might say oh but nobody can take all their thoughts captive the bible doesn't say that it says take every deliberate thought captive it's talking about that realm of where you begin to think you're consciously doing it you are actually involved in this you can take it captive you actually can do that it's a deliberate act i'm not talking about just floating thoughts i'm not just talking about arrows fired by the devil but i'm talking about thoughts that you are playing with thoughts that you are entertaining thoughts that you are conscious of do you remember in our series on the mind the battle for the mind that we said the word mind are the thought realm that the greek and the hebrew word for mind actually means the gatekeeper in other words your mind is the gatekeeper to your heart that's what the word mind means depending on what happens with your mind with thoughts will eventually affect your heart it all begins with the mind what is the mind it is a gatekeeper it is a gatekeeper in other words it stands there the actual greek word means you can open and close that's what the mind is and you're to take every thought captive in other words you can stop thoughts or you can allow thoughts in once you allow those thoughts in and you decide to allow them in they then begin going down into your heart but you know what i don't have control over thoughts going through my mind neither do you if you're all frustrated because you go i get thoughts coming and they're horrendous that is not that does not mean that you don't have victory over thoughts you see once when i was preaching in scotland i only had this once in my life i know it was demonic as i was preaching blasphemy started to come into my mind the only time in my whole life and i almost felt like covering my mouth i was scared the blasphemies i'm in blaspheme in the name of god it wasn't natural it wasn't normal the whole way through preaching i was scared that one of those words would slip out of my mouth do you know what i couldn't stop the thoughts coming i can't stop the fiery darts my mom when i was just a young boy my mom used to teach me she said son listen to me you can't stop the birds flying over your head they're gonna do it and sometimes they leave a message but you can't stop them building a nest in your hair i've never seen anyone with a nest in their hair and you know what as a christian that sometimes those thoughts are a great burden to me they hurt me they grieve my spirit they torment my mind but since that doesn't mean that you've lost the battle what it says here wage a good warfare it's not those thoughts passing through i'm talking about those thoughts those suggestions ideas information that you allow into your thought your mind is the gatekeeper take every thought captive you're commanded to do that do you realize this is where strongholds begin it begins with one thought maybe you find you've got a stronghold somewhere in your mind it's in your mind

it paralyzes you it cripples you it hinders you it stops you do you know where it began it began with just one thought you could actually trace back in your life to one thought one singular thought you tolerated it you accepted it you embraced it as your own the devil dropped it in your mind the devil promoted it and offered it but you know what you took it in and become its mother you begin to incubate it you begin to raise it you began to nurture it it didn't happen in one day or in one week or in one month i'm talking about years of this you begin to cultivate it suddenly it becomes a stronghold but you know what it began here with just one simple thought how does the devil build a stronghold piece by piece brick by brick thought by thought you see that's how the devil wages a war against you it's not everything all in a wonder he just drops a thought it comes again it comes again it comes again are you going to accept that individual thought are you just going to learn to begin building something that eventually paralyzes you in your christian life i'm not talking about demonized christians i'm not talking about can a christian have demons i don't believe that but i assure you you can be crippled in your christian life through a manner of thinking that leads to a stronghold just building process by process with the purpose of keeping you locked in as a prisoner maybe it's through fear and perceptions which are not real it's all in your mind i told you before about how i got stuck in a wasp's nest when i was just young eight nine years old i'm not sure and as i walked up the bank i walked into a wasp nest i mean there are hundreds of them around me i was watching it straight in front hundreds of them going in hundreds coming out and i froze in the spot i mean i was shaken with fear i was paralyzed i began to weep i was scared away lest they sting me my cousin my very helpful cousin stood at the top of the bank and laughed at me he was much older than me he said just step out of it and i went i can't i can't he said just step out of it they laughed more and he said they won't sting you step out of it i went i can't they're gonna sting me do you know i stood there he laughed so much he had to come and help me he grabbed to hold me pulled me out did i get stung no do you know what kept me it wasn't the wasps keeping me there it really wasn't it was that mind it was one thought that said they'll sting me if i dare to move i cannot get out of this i was paralyzed while my cousin laughed at me he had to come and rescue me thank god i'd still be there um this morning if he hadn't pulled me out of that do you see how fears can grip you do you see how dogs can do that they're not built overnight but it takes time years of you accepting them was it say every thought we're to bring into captivity every single thought you might think they're innocent they're not that big a deal it's a sinful thought it's a thought of doubt but it doesn't matter i assure you it does you're to lead every thought bringing it into captivity what does that mean you're to lead it into captivity it's your responsibility there's no point praying about god will you remove these thoughts no point doing that you are to bring them into captivity every individual thought you are to bring it you're to watch over it you're to scrutinize it you're to make sure do you know what the greek word for to bring into captivity means it means to lead it into captivity to take it personally into captivity at the point of a spear it's another military term in other words in ancient days you'd have your spear you've got it in the back of the individual thought and the parallel thought says but i'm only one little thought don't worry about me no i am taking you into captivity at the point of a spear you're commanded to do that you're to make a captive of that thought you're to make a prisoner of war out of it when i was in the army the first thing you done when you set up a camp was to put out guards nobody got into that camp without coming through the guard there was always a guard who said halt who goes there every person got checked you could be a five-star general you could be the most important person of that generation you will not get into that camp without coming through that guard we would shout halt who goes there you need the right password doesn't matter what rank and army you have you can't pull rank on me if you don't have the right password you're not getting in you can't threaten me you can't intimidate me i wouldn't get court-martialed i i'll just say if you don't have the password sorry sir i'm giving you respect you are not getting in here we need to be like that with the thoughts we need to cage them like a little bird i at times

have had my window open in this office a little bird got in i had fun trying to catch it i dare not leave it there one bird is going to do a lot of damage in this study of mine my books are too precious for that no little sparrow is going to be left in this room i'm going to work and labor chase it i'm going to do everything until i get it out of this room but i'm not letting that little sparrow there we need to do the same with our thoughts bring it under control we need to conquer it bring it into submission force it into subjection oh i don't like doing that this is war we are at war if only you realized how dangerous thoughts are thoughts are not always your friends you better make sure you know what that thought is who it came from is it a carnal christian is it a sinner that is planting thoughts in your mind and you're accepting them and then they're coming out of your mouth is it from satan himself to cripple you and paralyze you you better be very careful or you're going to find yourself either you will take thoughts captive or those thoughts will take you captive it says take them into captive to the obedience of christ to the obedience of christ in other words obedience to christ every thought has to become obedient to the person of jesus christ the word obedience means to be an attentive hearkening to be in submission to obey or to become compliant do you realize obedience to christ is obedience to the word of god that's why the bible is a weapon it's a weapon you know every thought you're detested by this book don't let thoughts run rampant in your mind or you're a terrible fool it'll lead you to a strong in your mind and you'll go i can't get free of this it begins with the thought you'll say it doesn't matter oh yes it does you better take it captive as a prisoner march it to the person of christ and make it bow at the feet of jesus and say you're going to become submissive you're going to listen to him you're going to listen to the word of god you see this doesn't happen overnight it's progressive it's a discipline it doesn't just happen in four days a renewed mind doesn't happen overnight neither does a stronghold in your mind this is the goal of true spiritual warfare in our mind it is a mind submitted to christ renewed by the word of god sanctified thinking the thoughts of god it all begins with one thought you know sanctification begins with one thought from god god plants the thought through the written scriptures then another thought another sermon you begin to study you begin to pray over it do you know what you're doing you're creating a stronghold you can create a godly christ-centered a mind enfolded in the simplicity of christ you know how you do that you start with one simple thought thoughts are not innocent you need to check them out secondly every high thing again in verse five every high thing first of all the thought individual thoughts every thought second of all every high thing it's talking about the mind again the realm of thoughts in the mind but this is the next stage if you don't take thoughts captive then this is the next second stage what is every high thing the greek means exalted place elevated place a high barrier or a defense a rampart a bulwark in other words this is growing out this is going up this is being built up not just one thought anymore now you're dealing with high things you have to look up you're not scrutinize them anymore they're beginning to go above your head listen it means towers of conceit a bulwark is a very strong tower of defense and a warfare this is not just one thought now this is a group of thoughts that are built over a period of time it could be a single thought of pride arrogance selfishness lying you just tell a lie and you excuse it either you're going to say i don't want that in my heart and life or it's going to build it'll actually become a high thing where you go lying is acceptable lust is acceptable being selfish is acceptable you know that's when individual thoughts start grouping together and they build a tower in your mind you know you can have a high thing in your mind where a group of thoughts are beginning to build a barrier up against you so you don't like it you want to move it but you find it's become a stronghold a place of defense a attitude in your heart yes proud thoughts do arise yes sexual lust can come to the mind but i tell you you deal with it in the thought realm when it first comes or else it begins to become a high thing pride is a terribly destructive thing it says here every high thing that exalteth itself in other words they're self-propagating you ladies when you bake the flower begins to expand that's what high things are there is a nature within thoughts from satan they expand they exalt themselves they lift

themselves up they begin rising up in your thought realm no longer thoughts flying through but now they're getting lifted up you better deal with that high thing you better deal with that high place now is a time to deal with it you can see it it becomes obvious sometimes thoughts aren't obvious high places are very obvious they stick out they become prominent you cannot avoid them your eye naturally goes to them i'm talking about things in your thinking in your mind the warfare for your mind that have now lifted themselves up it says they exalt themselves against something now you're getting in a problem this is thoughts beginning to build together and they begin to exalt themselves if you don't come against them they will come against something what do they come against they are in opposition opposed that's talking about an intense opposition high things in your mind that are opposed to something they are against something they are in war against something what are they in war against in your mind the knowledge of god look at it read it for yourself every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of god this is a way of thinking what are high things there are things that raise up in your thoughts and they are set against the mind of god they're against the true knowledge of god when you start to get a way of thinking and it's opposed it's not neutral it is actually against it attacks the true knowledge of god what is the knowledge of god it is biblical thinking it is what the bible teaches it is the mind of the lord jesus christ it is true knowledge of god that creates humility that makes you someone who listens that teaches you to become a disciple a learner of the lord jesus christ you know when pride gets in the heart you can't speak to that person they know far better do you know you know now that you're dealing with a high thing in that person's life and you know what it exalts itself above and against the knowledge of god it's pride then attacks humility holiness attacks sorry sinfulness attacks holiness there is a warfare going on here do you realize how important this is that paul is raising up here in the bible first thoughts deal with those thoughts or it becomes high places now you're going to have to fight this thing now you're in an intensive war it's not just a floating thought now it's something that's beginning to grip and beginning to attack the knowledge of god in your thinking is the thing is the knowledge of god dominating your mind or is it this other high place is it this proud arrogant willful opposing system of thinking you know you can have this in the church as well certain teachings arise certain ways of operating in the church they are not according to the true knowledge of god but they actually attack the true knowledge of god i've seen this in the church all my days there's a high place in that local church you dare not touch it it could be the idolatry of worship or it could be a loose thinking into sinful ways well we believe in social drinking there's nothing wrong with a glass of wine then why are you getting tipsy why are you taking two glasses and three glasses why are you sitting in places where you ought not to be do you know what now you have a now you have a high thing in the mind in the thinking of that church and it begins to attack the knowledge of god it is opposed to what is right and yet they think they're spiritual what are we to do with these high things how do we get rid of them it says cast thing down what it is doing to the knowledge of god in your mind you better do that do you hear me this morning do you hear me if this high thing it will attack the knowledge of god in your thinking you say oh but my heart's safe i love jesus christ yes but there's a high thing in that mind and it's opposed to god it hates god it doesn't believe the truth of god you can't leave it there or it will go further i promise you it will go further do you know what you have to do you have to cast it down you need to be in opposition to it you need an intensity what it is against the knowledge of god you need to be against that it's an enemy it's not a friend you say it's not bother me is it opposed to the knowledge of god then it is you're deceived if you think it's not affecting you it's affecting you in your walk with god you know what you're going to have to do you're going to have to use force but why don't like doing that then you're in trouble you're going to have to use force violence you're going to have to treat it like a criminal it's broken into your home it's trying to kill your wife it's going to kill your children it's going to murder everyone else in the house you better get violent against it's not your friend it's not harmless it's very dangerous it is

opposed to the knowledge of god it will destroy the true knowledge of god in your mind you've literally got to with violence level it to the ground you've got to pull down the tower pull down the wall you've got to remove it brick by brick by brick you've got to use violence you've got to cast individual stones to the ground until the entire wall has been leveled a lazy christian will never do this a sleeping christian will never do this but i assure you if you don't it goes somewhere this can either go that way or that way this process of four things either you're going from thoughts to strongholds or you're going from strongholds back to thoughts and becoming sanctified you can either have the devil using this and you are god using this you know what you can have a high thing that's of god a high strong tower of thinking in your mind third of all imaginations first of all thoughts then high things third of all imaginations this is the greek word logos amos logos amos where we get the word logic from in other words this third thing it's in your mind and it's a form of logical thinking but it's not logical it's not of god it's taking you from thoughts to high things and it's trying to take you to strongholds what does the word imaginations mean here it means arguments are speculations rational thinking are things that you say i think it makes sense do you realize there's a whole way of thinking in your imagination you're thinking it over you're arguing with yourself you're talking with yourself you're speculating you're saying i'm using rational thought i i i think that evolution could fit with creation you're on very dangerous ground you're destroying your mind you say but it's logical no it's not no it's not it's an utter opposition to the person of christ the cross of calvary the written scriptures it is utterly against everything it's not logical what you what you are is in your you're in a warfare the devil is lying to you you see you're beginning to take on thoughts thoughts high things now they're imaginations now you're actually proud of your thinking you actually think i'm very wise i'm deeper than other christians i'm going very far here or i'm escaping the bondage of christianity this word imaginations means reasonings or literally bottom line reasonings a process of careful study oh but brother i studied i studied this out i know that it is true but have you tested it with the word of god have you gone to the word of god with this it is a process of reasoning arriving at a final conclusion and you go there i have the answer it's the same word for computing you put it through your computer i googled it is not what they do this generation you try to tell them something say ah but i googled oh well you're very smart then well this is the process of imaginations you've been computing figuring out speculating oh i've read a lot of books i've listened to a lot of preachers i've calculated all the arguments i now have a personal opinion it's not a thought it's not something that you want to talk through you're now determined you're settled you've made a decision it's now a conviction of your life it dominates you this is your value system this is your view on that subject these are how you make all of your decisions and all of your judgments this is what you place your weight in your trust in in fact your entire thought process now this is where it goes and it affects your conduct why do you make the decisions you make because your thought life why do you fellowship or have a relationship with the people you do because of where your thoughts have taken you i'm talking about imaginations this is a strong settled place that you have come to and you know what it's very logical very reason it's got ideas ideologies theories beliefs this is your personal conviction and it will dominate your entire life what do you do to imaginations can you be free of imaginations you can go to war scenes with your bible it doesn't matter where you've been affected by the devil whether you've lost ground or as a new christian you want to be sanctified where maybe as a backslider you've been damaged i want to tell you you can pull down these imaginations what does he say casting down it's the same word as the previous word casting down you cast on high things you also cast on imagination they are stronger than high things these are things that have engulfed you now you know what you can cast them down but you've got to use force and violence it is an enemy it is against you it'll destroy you you've got to level it to the ground fourth and finally strongholds in verse four what is a stronghold it begins with a thought it moves to a thing it then moves to an imagination and fourth and finally it becomes strongholds as what

began with one thought finishes with a stronghold what is a stronghold it is an entire fortress it is a castle in fact it is a castle with a deep prison at the heart of it underground a stronghold is where you've got secret places deep within that castle that is almost impossible to reach it is strong fortifications a whole fast it is a place of safety and security and it's impregnable or it seems impregnable to any attack of the enemy you can sit in there like ancient babylon that we looked at in the series of daniel that's why belshazzar said no man will come in this city you know why babylon was a stronghold those walls the moat and around it the height the breadth the depth it was impregnable that's why the kings of babylon they were proud and arrogant they said nobody can break this stronghold you know when a stronghold gets in your mind you start thinking it's impossible to change this if you're here this morning and some area yes you love jesus yes you love him with all of your heart yes you want to serve him but there's some area of your christian life it has become a stronghold you know what you're saying as i preach this morning as i speak here this morning do you know what you're saying that can change it's impossible you don't even believe it can change you you actually think oh yes i'll do all of that yes i'll pray yes i'll go to the word yes i'll quote the scripture yes i'll ask other christians to help me or to pray for me but you actually in your mind believe it's utterly impossible this stronghold this certain something and it's built out of individual thoughts that have now become a massive stronghold our fortress it's a military post and you know what those ancient strongholds of the enemy the enemy would use that stronghold to sabotage the whole area you may not own the entire land but through that stronghold you could be in there as the enemy and you attack from it you can attack in the middle of the night you know what the devil does with the stronghold in your life he wants to sabotage your walk with god your prayer life your faith your security in christ it's a stronghold and you actually can't even go near it you tap on it with with your uh little hammer and you say see i knew nothing would happen you're not violent you don't hate that thing you don't believe what the word of god says you see this stronghold is a dominating thing it controls you your mind your brain controls you do you realize the thoughts of your mind what you allow to build there it will dominate what you say you do what you achieve what you accomplish in your christian life a stronghold can cripple you but a stronghold of the word of god can set you free and become a means of god using you in the days ahead you see thoughts exalted above or beyond the written word of god can lead to strongholds what are we to do with strongholds you're to pull them down notice the two previous things you're to cast them down and with thoughts you're to take them captive at the point of a spear very easy to take one thought captive at the point of a spear it's a bit harder with the next two things to cast down brick by brick to demolish it's harder but this fourth one it's a different word it says pulling down do you know what that means it means a mass demolition or a mass destruction have you ever seen the builders bring an entire building down an old factory a big building i mean that entire thing has got to be demolished this isn't removing brick by brick it's not throwing down bricks in a process of trying to bring down a high thing or imagination or to break up arguments do you know what this is you've got to utterly demolish it the walls of it the buildings the gates you've got to bring the whole thing down you've got to tear it down you've got to be opposed to it you've got to utterly annihilate it you need to dismantle this thing you can't afford for anything to be left remember jesus prophecy about the temple in jerusalem he said not one brick will be left upon another that's what you need to do with strongholds you said oh maybe i'll get rid of a brick maybe i can remove a section of it maybe i can take it back and just make it an imagination and it won't be a stronghold anymore no you've got to destroy it you've got to annihilate it there's got to be no place for it you've got to so set yourself say i am going to destroy it by the grace of god by the power of the holy spirit let me close here with my third and my final point we looked at the warfare that we encounter it was never our choice second of all the warfare we wage you've got to do this and it's in your mind since the devil's number one attack is the mind the mind he comes to attack your mind most warfare spiritual warfare goes

on in the mind it is a fight for your mind the devil knows if he can plant a thought or build a stronghold he'll cripple your christian life we are at war you better fight we engage in this warfare but third and finally the victory we accomplish since hear me as i close and i'm going to be very brief here but hear me it's so important as i deal with this you've got a battle waging in your mind you see paul says although we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the flesh as an apostle a teacher a preacher he knew that his ministry was a warfare for the hearts and the minds of the church for individual christians when he preaching you it's warfare do you know i as a preacher know that i am embarking on spiritual warfare as i preach right now do you realize i was praying into this last night and this morning because i know i'm fighting for your minds here this morning i am not walking in the flesh here this morning i am warring a good warfare i know what i'm doing as a preacher i'm fighting for your mind i'm preaching the word of god i'm showing you a way out of captivity the victory we accomplish and i want to tell you as i close you can accomplish a full victory don't tell me you can't do this and have a the mind of christ a christ-like mind the thinking of the word of god that actually affects your choices your relationships your home your work life your church life every area of your life don't tell me it's all a battle for your mind if you in the battle for your mind you will win a victory in every single area of your life you want victories in your life you're praying for it i'm praying into this i'm praying on this why not when the victory why not accomplish the victory in your thinking and all of this will come to pass verse four as we close for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they're not natural they are spiritual they are divine they are of god the word of god is given to us by god the weapons of our warfare the word of god the sword of the spirit is a weapon it is a mighty weapon look at it but they are mighty through god to the pulling down of strongholds do you realize you have weapons that are mighty the word mighty there is the greek word dunitas a bit similar to dunamis or dynamite but this is dunitas and the word mighty it's saying your weapons are mighty listen to what it means powerful capable able so important you hear this why is this so important because you don't think you're able what i just said here someone listening to me this morning is saying i actually don't think i'm able to do this it's beyond me i know i know but look the weapons that you have it's not you doing it it's the weapons of your warfare are mighty they are capable they are able you can't do this but your weapons you've got to have confidence in the weapons of our warfare the weapons of our warfare are mighty they are capable of doing this they are able to do this in fact listen to what the word actually means power that makes it possible the weapons of our warfare are power that make it possible to take thoughts prisoner to pull down to demolish arguments do you realize there is power in these weapons there's dynamic power to bring about victory since you've got to realize this this morning the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they're not natural they are spiritual they are mighty they are they have ability they have power they bring about the possibility that you can accomplish all of this it's not in you it's in the weapons of your warfare you you can through these weapons pull down strongholds cast down imagination to cast down everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of god and you can bring every thought into captivity they're mighty through god these are mighty enabling weapons but it's through god saints not in yourself how do we accomplish this victory through god have faith in god this morning since let's go to war as we close this meeting make war on the thoughts of your mind say i'm tired of being in my mind it's not the outward things you need to change oh no that's the wrong place to start start with your own thoughts you need to go to war you need to be against these things through the word of god you need to identify them you need to discern them you need a separating of your thoughts you need a revealing of the intents of your heart and as there's a revealing of those thoughts you need to attack them you need to go to war this is spiritual warfare and as you go to war on the thoughts of your mind you'll defeat satan in your life do you want to defeat satan in your life do you want to defeat satan in your home do you want to defeat satan in this church or in this city then begin with the thoughts of your mind that's his front line of attack but that's also our front line of attack say things

when we go to war against satan we're going to attack thoughts that originated in hell manners of thinking ideologies ideas suggestions you can't get free where did that thought come from i don't believe who told you that since you need to begin to test the thoughts that have become dominating and abound you and made you who you are you need to begin to ask did the devil tell me that did god tell me that did my family members tell me that did backflidden christians tell me that or did a man of god tell me that let's pray together here as we close father i thank you for the word of god this morning i thank you the word of god is alive it is living lord god it lays hold of us it speaks to us it listens to us it changes us lord god the word of god has the power to demolish every argument every lie of hell it is a light that shines into the darkness nor god there's a power a dynamic power through god this sword of the spirit is able to renew our minds to change our thinking to give us a victory over the devil to expose every lie of the devil that we have been listening to my god help us again to renew our minds help us to rise up and win the victory the battle for our own minds lord god that we might see hell driven out of our homes out of our churches out of areas of our life lord god give us a victory over thoughts and imaginations over strongholds in our minds this morning lord god we desire a stronghold of the simplicity of the lord jesus christ in this church we want a mind that is built out of thoughts and becomes a stronghold that literally empowers this church to walk in christ likeness this morning in jesus name praise god

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/axv9tLfrgTY.mp4>

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