



October 3, 2021

Destroying the Citadel of Satan

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4–5)

To know the enemy and his strategy is half the battle. Satan is our chief enemy, and his primary target is our knowledge of and trust in God. Satan's constant assault is aimed at our belief in God's goodness and power, that God will supply all our needs, and that we can trust God to be sufficient in all ways. When our minds are on God, and our thoughts are formed by our knowledge of God, such sufficiency will flow to us. Thus Satan's main task is to keep our minds elsewhere, anywhere but on God.

Sadly, and tragically, we make this task relatively easy for him. Unknowingly we are the devil's playground. He takes our thoughts, he takes our feelings, he manipulates us through the ideas that dominate our society. As Paul put it, people generally live their lives "in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:17–18).

When Paul was dealing with a struggling group of believers in Corinth in the passage above, he knew what their main problem was, and how it needed to be addressed. Strongholds. Arguments. High things exalting themselves against the knowledge of God. This is the citadel of Satan. We are to bring the clear and full teaching of the gospel against this demonic stronghold, as Paul's says to Timothy, his apprentice:

And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. (2 Tim. 2:24–26)

So we occupy a world in "the snare of the devil." It is the world of ideas, images, feelings, and beliefs that allow people to be manipulated through their desires, through their feelings about what is wise and what looks good. It is also the world that, nevertheless, God loves, and to which he sent Jesus. Only the gospel of Christ can take back what Satan controls and can reclaim the mind and heart of every human being held captive by his deceit. It is, indeed, a battle of hearts and minds, and you cannot overcome the citadel of false beliefs and images and feelings except by the power of God.

Reflect: *This power comes to those who have been trained to keep their mind on God. This involves coming to think about God as Jesus thought about him, and to trust God as Jesus trusted him—moving from having faith in Jesus to having the faith of Jesus. To do so is to know the life without lack.*

(Q) *How are you being invited, in Paul's words, to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5)." [Take a few moments to read and pray the words on this linked document.](#)*