

2 Corinthians 10:1-6 Pulling Down Strongholds, Pt 1

As we come to Chapter 10 of 2 Corinthians – the tone of the letter changes a bit here.

A) Up to this point Paul has been in a defensive mode – defending his apostleship against the false accuser

B) Defending his ministry. – His calling.....

C) Overall there has been repentance – but there were still these pockets of resistance

1) False teachers who were trying to undermine Paul's authority so that they could come in and take his place

D) It wasn't Paul's personal reputation he was worried about -

1) It was the message of the gospel that was at stake

D) So he is going to step it up here a bit!

Here in Ch. 10-13 Paul goes on the offensive!

A) He is going to get tough – with these false teachers –

B) In doing so here in the opening of Ch. 10 He says something that is of profound importance to believers living in a fallen world

C) Addresses the issue of Strongholds

Now as Paul starts the Chapter – you need to realize there is a bit of Sarcasm in what he is saying here.

Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.

V.2 I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

See one of the things that Paul's adversaries were saying about him was that in person he was meek and gentle – light weight – coward but then he would go away and write these seething letters – tough

So Paul turns the table a little and sarcastically says, "You say I'm meek when face to face,

and bold when absent, well let me be meek when absent for a moment and urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ."

Because if you don't repent – You will see that I know how to be bold in Person. -

A)I will come exercise my Apostolic authority against those who think – I am walking according to the flesh

V. 3 For though we walk in the flesh,{physically we are human} we do not war according to the flesh.

We do not war ! HEAVY

A)Imagine having an argument with your wife – She says **This is war!** –

B)Paul is saying This is battle! –

1)I think I would get a little worried if I were them

4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal {of the flesh}but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 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, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

C)Now when Paul says the weapons of our warfare are not Carnal –

1)He is revealing that he understands that there is a very real spiritual aspect to the things that holds societies in bondage.

D)The Sin – the corruption – the perversion – the confusion that we see all around us

1)Is a part of a **spiritual conflict** – which is why fleshly methods don't work.

E)I was blessed recently in talking to a Psychologist in our fellowship who told me – **“The answer is not in Psychology – She uses her position as a Psychologist to give them Jesus.”**

Now understand that this different than Ephesians 6 – Ephesians 6 is more about the personal Battles we face as individuals

A)In 2 Corinthians 10 Paul is addressing more the overall Battles that we as believers can face with a world that is hostile to Christ.

B)Strongholds

A stronghold in ancient times was the most fortified of places. Covered by massive stone walls that made them almost impossible to penetrate.

Built within the Stone walls were these high towers they would use as a look out – to see

the on coming enemy!

C)So by using this word Strongholds Paul is identifying the strongest of fortresses in society that are currently holding people captive.

In V. 5 Paul identifies what is behind these Strongholds , 5 casting down arguments and every high thing {high tower} that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,

A)The strongholds are a result of arguments or reasonings – philosophies that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.

B)Please would you notice these fortresses are not demons.

C)We have a lot of people who define spiritual warfare as chasing demons.

D)The Bible does not define it like that. The Bible does not define it like that.

1) It does not define spiritual warfare as getting a group together to go march and find some demons and take authority over demons and send them off someplace.

E)Never is the church instructed to do that.

He is talking about Ideological fortresses, philosophical fortresses s, religious fortresses that directly seek to undermine the Knowledge of God

A)Philosophies and ideologies and false religions that are yes inspired by demons

B)It is these very ideologies that create strongholds that put pp in bondage.

C)What are some of the strongholds that people are in bondage to today?

1)Materialism, Sexual perversion/ Pride / greed / abortion/ Bitterness/ anger.

D)Behind everyone of these strongholds is an ideology or philosophy that has distorted the Biblical view of Man's existence, His origins, the existence of God.

E)People buy into the lie = Bondage!

Some of the ideologies & Philosophies running through the Corinthian Church.

A)A distorted view of the purpose of the Church

Led to Factions – I am Paul etc

B)Wrong view of Intimacy and relationships that led to Sexual immorality and relationships

C)Wrong view of the Churches place in the world that led to compromise – the

infiltration of pagan practices and carnality

To combat these things : Paul didn't pull everybody together to sing kumba ya – big Unity rally

A) Didn't plan a march against – Homosexuality or Pornography

B) Those are examples of Carnal methods of warfare.

1) Human reasoning – ingenuity – demonstrations that make a splash – draw attention

C) But do nothing to pull down strongholds

Our weapons are greater than that!

A) What are our mighty weapons – for pulling down these Strongholds: Truth, Love, Righteousness, Prayer.

B) The truth { Overall truth of God's word – Man's Origin, his purpose – The Gospel – Cross – sets free

C) Truth Project: Each week – ideology

Truth, Love, { Speaking the truth in love –

A) Our goal is not just to win the argument but to win the person – to win the sinner.

B) Righteousness – Gives Credibility to our message

1) Prayer – Power of God in Prayer. Prayer Changes things

C) In the coming weeks I want to come back and illustrate how our weapons function –

Today illustration – Truth in Love - Jesus and the woman at the well John 4

A) Key not to win the argument but to win the person { to save and rescue and win the sinner

B) John 4 Jesus encounter with the woman of Samaria

C) Philosophies in her life: Bigotry: Racial tension – Jews vs Samaritans

C) Then there was an overall twisted view of women in that culture – looked at as inferior objects – degraded women

1) Meant to be seen not heard – Bear Children – Keep house – Mistress – for sex

D) Another Philosophy: God was distant – confusing – how can we know what religion is

right

1) Only the religious leaders really knew God

Affect on her life: Wrong relationship with men looking for Validation from men

A) Result left her married 5 times – slew of kids looking like a different guy

B) Now she has given up on marriage and was simply living with guy #6

C) She is also ashamed – she is shunned by other women – goes to the Well at the hottest part of the day – avoid – contact

D) Her life has been affected by these ideologies – wrong decisions that has left her in bondage

Watch How Jesus comes to her with the weapons of truth and love!

John 4:1-4 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John 2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), 3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. 4 But He needed to go through Samaria.

That last phrase is key: We see his love – He needed to go thru Samaria – Oxymoron – No Jew ever needed

A) Jesus purposes to go thru that city – break thru the stronghold of racial prejudice

B) Divine appointment with the Samaritan woman

C) Your Samaritan?: Homosexual co worker –

1) Guy committing adultery at work

D) Who is the person in your life – you have the natural tendency to shun or avoid – makes you sick

E) Jesus went out of His way to reach out to her – LOVE

5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink

from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Not only is she surprised that He would talk to her because she was a Samaritan – but also a woman

A) Jesus again showing love – equality – tearing down that stronghold that degraded women

B) In fact this is the first person that Jesus would reveal himself to as Messiah Big one Who is God and His heart for her.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

He hits on her felt need: Thirsty – inside Vaccum – that is why she has had 5 husbands – and is now living with guy #6

A) Longing for love and intimacy – that is only found in a relationship with God

B) Made for fellowship

C) But her idea of God is distant – no one really knows how we are supposed to worship or where

**Jesus is going to expose her – Truth exposes
John 4:16-20**

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you have had five

husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

Jesus will tell her – not where that matters – but how and who?

John 4:21-26

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."