**MAKE EVERY THOUGHT OBEDIENT TO CHRIST**

2 Corinthians 10:1-18

Key Verse 5

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

**Introduction**



In this passage apostle Paul continues to defend his ministry and apostleship mentioning. He points out that he has the divine power, through which he can demolish all arguments and pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. Also he said that he is the one who has true authority that build up the believers. He would take bold action to those who accused him falsely. We can learn how to deal with arguments and thoughts of this world that are against the knowledge of God and take captive them and make them obedient to Christ.

1. Read verses 1-6. What did Paul earnestly ask of the Corinthians? (1-2) How are

our weapons different from the weapons of the world? (3-4) What should we

demolish in order to retain the knowledge of God? (5a) How can we make our

thoughts and actions obedient to Christ? (5b-6)

1-1. Read verses 1-6.

By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away! **2** I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. **3** For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. **4** The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. **5** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. **6** And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

1-2. What did Paul earnestly ask of the Corinthians? (1-2)

***By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away!***

· Paul urged them to follow right way by the humility and gentleness. Even though he was in the position to tell them with authority he guided them with humility and gentleness.

· ‘who am “timid” when face to face with you’ but “bold” toward you when away!

- Some people criticized that Paul was timid and weak when he met with people face to face in dealing with certain issue or problem but bold when he wrote letters to deal with the issues or problem while staying away.

* In other words they said that Paul’s words were strong in his letters but weak and timid when he talked face to face.

2Co 10:10 reads,

For some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing.”

- They didn’t know that Paul looked timid not because he was really timid or was afraid of them but he was encouraging them by humility and gentleness. They totally misunderstood his humility and gentleness.

***2 I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world.***

- Paul expressed that he would rebuke and challenge boldly and strongly those who didn’t repent considering Paul as a weak leader.

- They attacked Paul that he lived by the standards of this world which are worldly values, motive and selfish desire.

- Paul decided to treat those who attacked him boldly and challenge them. But Paul hoped that he might not treat Corinthians in that way.

- Paul hoped that they might repent before he would challenge them boldly when he would meet them face to face through his visiting.

1-3. How are our weapons different from the weapons of the world? (3-4)

***3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.***

- Even though believers live in the world, they don’t fight as the world does. People in this world use the weapons that belong to this world such as the knowledge of this world, human influence, or fluent speech.

- Believers’ weapons are different from the weapons of the world. Their weapon is the divine power, the power of God. Our fighting is not against flesh and blood. It is spiritual warfare. To win this spiritual war, we need God’s divine power that comes to us through word of God, our faith, prayer, obedience and Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 6:10-12 reads,

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- Demolish strongholds – Strongholds refers to all evil forces that are against God and pride with knowledge of this world. We can demolish any kind stronghold with the divine power. None of the strongholds can stand against the divine power.

- The problem is not the strongholds in this world. The real problem is that we don’t have the power that can demolish the strongholds. So instead of being discouraged seeing the strongholds, we need to pray to get the divine power.

- God wants us to demolish all the strongholds in this world that are against God. We have to demolish all the strongholds and expand God’s kingdom on earth. This is believers’ duty.

1-4. What should we demolish in order to retain the knowledge of God? (5a)

***We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God,***

· Arguments and every pretension – all arguments, thoughts, ideas, knowledge and claim of the people in the world who are separated from God.

- The thoughts and knowledge of this world are against the knowledge of God. They deny the true living God and teach wrong things about God and prevent people from believing in God.

- This world is filled with arguments and every pretension that are against the knowledge of God. We can’t demolish them with our own strength and power and knowledge. Only with the divine power we can demolish power.

- Once we have the divine power we can demolish any kind arguments and pretensions. In the world that is filled with arguments and pretension against God, what we really need is God’s divine power than any other things. We need to pray earnestly for the divine power.

1-5. How can we make our thoughts and actions obedient to Christ? (5b-6)

***we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.***

· Take captive every thought to make it obedience to Christ – Defeat every thought with divine power and let them obey to Christ just as defeating enemies and making them captives to obey as slaves.

- We have to make our thoughts obedient to Christ first

- We can’t take captive the thoughts of this world with our own knowledge, skills and or knowledge. We need God’s divine power which can prevail any thoughts in this world.

- Paul was ready to make every thought silent and obedient to Jesus with the power of Holy Spirit.

· we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete- Paul planed to punish those who would be still disobedient once Corinthian believers would have completed their obedience.

- Paul wanted Corinthians to obey him fully instead of being punished together with those who were disobedient.

- God gives us many chances to obey with long patience, but we are still disobedient to Him, he punishes us. We’d better obey God without any hint of disobedience, for God will punish every act of disobedience.

2. Read verses 7-11. Why did some look down on the apostle Paul? (7) What was

Paul’s boasting in regards to the authority the Lord had given him? (8) For what

was Paul criticized? (9-10) How did Paul correct their misunderstanding? (11)

2-2. Read verses 7-11.

**7** You are judging by appearances.If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do. 8So even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it. **9** I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. **10** For some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing.” **11** Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.

2-3. Why did some look down on the apostle Paul? (7)

***You are judging by appearances. If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do.***

· Some people judged Paul by his appearance such as recommendation letter, fluent speech, authority from the world, and even his physical appearance.

· If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do.

* Some false teachers argued that they belong to the Christ and had authority. But Paul belonged to Jesus too. And they attacked Paul. It clearly showed that they didn’t belong to Jesus.

2-4. What was Paul’s boasting in regards to the authority the Lord had given him? (8)

***So even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it.***

- The true authority is to build up the believers not tearing them down.

- Paul did everything to build up Corinthian believers. He went through all sufferings for them and preached the truth only before God.

- But the false teachers hurt Corinthian church seriously tearing it down through their false teaching arguing that they had authority. In fact, they had no authority at all.

2-5. For what was Paul criticized? (9-10)

***I do not want to seem to be trying to frighten you with my letters. 10 For some say, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing.”***

- Some criticized that Paul threatened people with his letter even though he was not bold and impressive in person when he met people face to face and his speech was not impressive or powerful either. They thought Paul couldn’t do anything even if he would come to Corinth.

2-5. How did Paul correct their misunderstanding? (11)

***Such people should realize that what we are in our letters when we are absent, we will be in our actions when we are present.***

· Paul said that they would realize that Paul was strong as he was in his letter and he would show his power and boldness in action when he would meet them face to face.

- Paul was humble and gentle, but bold, tough and powerful to preach the truth and fight against evil and false teachings. His opponents would know who he really was. Sometimes we need to take bold action to demonstrate the truth. Jesus took action when he saw the temple corrupted by turning over the money changers table and driving out them.

3. Read verses 12-18. In what respect are those who commend themselves not

wise? (12) How did Paul confine his boasting? (13-15a) What was his hope?

(15b-16) Why should we boast only in the Lord? (17-18)

3-1. Read verses 12-18.

**12** We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. **13** We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you. **14** We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. **15** Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others. Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand, **16** so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in someone else’s territory. **17** But, “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28989b)] **18** For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

3-2. In what respect are those who commend themselves not wise? (12)

***We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.***

- The false teachers commended themselves based on worldly standards. Paul didn’t want to classify or compare himself with such people.

- They measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise: They measured themselves according to worldly and human standards and compared each other. Anything great based on human standard is nothing before God.

- Paul had true authority because his authority came from God and his teaching was based on the revelation from God.

- We should measure ourselves by God’s standard and have true authority from God.

3-3. How did Paul confine his boasting? (13-15a)

***We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits, but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you. 14 We are not going too far in our boasting, as would be the case if we had not come to you, for we did get as far as you with the gospel of Christ. 15 Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others***

· We, however, will not boast beyond proper limits - Paul didn’t boast beyond what God gave to him. He never tried to make him bigger than who he really was before God.

· but will confine our boasting to the sphere of service God himself has assigned to us, a sphere that also includes you - Paul served his ministry in the sphere of service that God had assigned him. God assigned him to preach the gospel to the gentiles. And the sphere included the Corinthians.

· Neither do we go beyond our limits by boasting of work done by others – Paul didn’t boast of work that was done by others. Rather he went to the place where the gospel was not preached. Paul pioneered the Corinthian church. So he had right to boast of his work for the church.

- The false teachers went beyond their limits and boasted of the work that they had never done. They commended themselves at Corinthian church as if they had done the work for the church.

3-4. What was his hope? (15b-16)

***Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand,***

- Paul’s hope was that Corinthians may grow continually in their faith and his work for them may be expanded more. Paul wanted to expand his influence and increase his work for them for their spiritual growth.

***So that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you. For we do not want to boast about work already done in someone else’s territory.***

***-*** Paul wished that his gospel preaching ministry may be expanded beyond Corinthian church.

- Paul didn’t want to say at the same place all the time and be satisfied with what he had already done. He continued to pioneer new places so that God’s kingdom may keep expanding. We have to expand the territory of our tent to all campuses first and then the end of the earth. This is God’s vision and mission for us.

3-5. Why should we boast only in the Lord? (17-18)

·  ***But, “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”***

- Instead of boasting of ourselves we should boast of the Lord who blessed us to become who we are now in the Lord.

- The Lord is the only one who should be praised.

- Self -boasting is so foolish before God. but the false teachers were doing that.

***· For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.***

- Only when are approved by God we could truly commend ourselves

- We need to struggle to be approved by God.

**Conclusion**

There are so many arguments and pretensions in this world that are against knowledge of God especially in college and other education systems. Because of that evil and false arguments and thoughts people are living sinful life that is against the true God. We cannot defeat them with our own strength. But when we have divine power we can demolish all the strongholds and take captive them and make them to obedient to Christ. May God help us to have the divine power through our faith, prayer and obedience so that we may demolish all Satan’s strongholds and help campus students and people in this generation to obey Jesus Christ.

**One world:** **MAKE EVERY THOUGHT OBEDIENT TO CHRIST**