

Empowered Part III

2 Corinthians 10:5-6

Dr. Paul Cannings

A. Tear Down (v. 5):

1. Destroying speculations - Paul says we are continuously 'conquering and overpowering' and taking down imaginations (they argue with words that are not true and based on their own logical processes) that have evil intent or false reasoning.
2. Destroying speculations - Speculations when practiced can become driven by satan and his demons (1 Timothy 1:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:23, 26; James 3:13-16).
 - a) "Arguments" ([NIV, NRSV, TEV](#)) or "[speculations](#)" ([NASB](#)) is a technical term for rhetorical or philosophical reasonings; the prisoners of war in this extended metaphor are human thoughts. Cf. [Proverbs 21:22](#).
 - b) Destroying speculations and capturing every thought; 2 Timothy 3:23-26.
 - c) The word is probably used here in the sense of *device*, and refers to all the plans of a wicked world. [\[1\]](#)
3. Every lofty thing - Every thought that by itself is full of pride (maybe because they are well educated or are in powerful positions) that causes a person to raise those thoughts up above the knowledge of God (Romans 12:16).

4. Every lofty thing - They had money and felt privileged so that instead of giving to God they hoarded their money and gave begrudgingly to God (2 Cor. 8-9).

5. Every lofty thing - A lofty thought is incredibly prideful when we seek to use the Word of God out of context to support our personal convictions.

a) The metaphor is from walls and towers standing defiantly, rather than barriers hastily thrown up to check progress; but the pass, is possible, that is 'erected,' 'set up,' as a towering obstacle.

6. Raised up against the knowledge – When thoughts continuously driven by own convictions that may be based on past experiences or our education take precedence against the clear and thorough understanding of God's Word, we must take them captive.

7. Raised up against the knowledge – We must aggressively address the thought processes we are using that violate the Word of God. This is because they can become demonic (James 3:13-18).

a) Such were the *high towers* of Judaic self-righteousness, philosophic speculations, and rhetorical sophistries, the "knowledge" so much prized by many (opposed to "the knowledge of God"), which endangered a section of the Corinthian Church.

8. Raised up against the knowledge – We must aggressively address these thoughts that were raised up against God's Word because we had become possessive about what we think since they may have been reinforced by past experiences or influential people.

9. Taking every thought - Taking every way of thinking, every speech or philosophy and displacing it with the knowledge, understanding and practice of God's Word is

critical to defeating the influences of the flesh. This is a weapon of the flesh that must be destroyed.

a) In 4:4 Paul says that the minds of unbelievers have been blinded by the God of this world to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. [\[2\]](#)

b) In 11:3 he candidly says that satan has ensnared the Corinthians "thoughts" in the same way he deceived Eve. Satan holds their minds hostage, and Paul is prepared to fight a pitched battle to liberate them. [\[3\]](#)

10. Captive – The subjugating of our thoughts to the obedience of Christ, to gain complete control over it so that the believer is mentally focused to completely participate in the will of God.

11. Captive – We also 'refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.' (2 Timothy 2:22) If we don't we can experience the influence of demons on our lives (2 Timothy 2:22-26).

12. Obedience of Christ - As His children we must learn to listen with a mind to submit to His will and positively respond to doing what God says. (John 15:1-11) An obedience that is dominated by faith in Christ alone.

13. Obedience of Christ - Others take it to indicate the Christian's struggle to bring every purpose into harmony with Christ's will and ways, so that He might be victorious through us.

B. Gear up (v. 6):

1. Are ready to punish – Paul moves from destroying strongholds, taking them captive to a more drastic military approach. A believer has to continually with much determination commit to obey Christ because this empowers them (Romans 12:2; Hebrews 5:14) to experience the Holy Spirit’s work in them, strengthening them to destroy strongholds, and make thoughts and speculations captive.

a) The word “punish” (ekdikēsai) could more forcefully be translated “avenge” (cf. 1 Cor. 3:17). In other contexts it describes the wrath of God directed against the enemies of His people (Num. 31:2; Deut. 32:43; Rev. 19:2).^[4]

2. Are ready to punish – When a believer chooses to be a doer of the Word, they end up living by faith and not by sight (James 1:22-25; 2:14-26). The Lord rewards faith (Hebrews 11:6) and moves the mountains that are fortresses in a believer's mind.

a) His approach to this particular confrontation in Corinth was twofold. First, it was necessary that the Corinthian church express their subjection to Christ by demonstrating loyalty to His representative Paul (5:20; cf. 7:15). In this way their obedience would be complete. Second, when Paul was sure they had repudiated his opponents (cf. 6:14-18), he could then deal directly with the false apostles, knowing that the church supported him. He was ready to punish their acts of disobedience to Christ. The word “punish” (ekdikēsai) could more forcefully be translated “avenge” (cf. 1 Cor. 3:17). In other contexts it describes the wrath of God directed against the enemies of His people (Num. 31:2; Deut. 32:43; Rev. 19:2).^[5]

3. Disobedience – Paul is ready to destroy all refusals to hear God or to live with a careless attitude towards the Word of God (Luke 21:34; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Titus 3:8; Proverbs 13:13).

4. Obedience – Not disobeying God takes place when there is the fullest degree of commitment to willingly and actively submit oneself to the saving will of God as we live by faith and not by sight (Hebrews 11:6).

5. Complete – When our obedience has developed our spiritual life so that the flesh does not have the same kind of influence, we are then more influenced by the Spirit than the flesh (Ephesians 5:15-18). This means we now can totally respond in obedience to the Word destroying, punishing, and imprisoning evil thoughts.

6. Complete – Once we live in the Spirit of God, the following takes place:

a) The Word of God is brought back to our remembrance (John 14:26)

b) The Spirit of God convicts when we sin (John 16:7-11).

c) The Spirit illuminates the Word of God (1 Cor. 2:10-15).

d) We are able to walk in ‘the light as He is in the light’ so that we do not fulfill the lust of the flesh (1 John 1:5-7).

e) We are empowered because God is at work in us, ‘both to will and to work for His good pleasure.’ (Phil. 2:13).

f) When we pray God answers our prayers (John 15:7-10).

7. Complete – To be complete in Christ should be the goal of all believers; “*We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that*

we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.” (Colossians 1:28-29; NASU)

8. **Complete** – To experience completeness in Christ is not perfection (1 John 1:8-9). It is to be more influenced by the Spirit than the flesh as explained in Romans 8:12-14.

[NIV New International Version](#)

[NRSV New Revised Standard Version](#)

[TEV Today’s English Version](#)

[NASB New American Standard Bible](#)

rhetoical ***Rhetoric**. The art or study of proper forms and methods of public speaking, highly emphasized in antiquity. Although only the well-to-do had much training in it, the rhetorical forms and ideas they used filtered down to the rest of urban society through public speeches, in a manner similar to that in which television permeates modern Western society.

[1] Barnes, A. (1884–1885). [Notes on the New Testament: II Corinthians & Galatians](#) (R. Frew, Ed.; pp. 208–209).

Blackie & Son.

[2] Garland, D. E. (1999). [2 Corinthians](#) (Vol. 29, p. 437). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

[3] Garland, D. E. (1999). [2 Corinthians](#) (Vol. 29, p. 437). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

[4] Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:576). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

[5] Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:576). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.