

# Weapons Part II

## 2 Corinthians 10:5-7

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#### I. Destroy (v. 5)

##### a. Destroy— to destroy by tearing down

##### i. Speculation the product of a cognitive process, *calculation, reasoning, reflection, thought*

1. Related to such usage is the metaphorical sense of “arrogant attitude” “towering conceit” (Isaacs), “presumptuous notion” “proud obstacle
2. fallacious and deceptive reasoning and, by implication, based on evil intentions, false reasoning, false arguments. God’s powerful weapons, with which to destroy strongholds, that is, to destroy false arguments’ 2 Cor 10:4

##### ii. **Lofty that which postures arrogantly, *arrogance*, everything that rises up**, prob. = *all pride* neutral “lofty thing”; it is set up or sets itself up “against” or “in defiance of” (κατά) the authentic knowledge of God.

- a. which oppose or corrupt the truth to which he here declares hostility
- b. Every high thing that is lifting itself up.’ In 11:20 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.
2. an exaggerated evaluation of what one is or of what one has done—‘conceit, pride, arrogance. and all arrogance that raises itself up against the knowledge of God’ 2 Cor 10:5
3. refer to every type (πᾶν) of idea or argument that is capable of preventing people from arriving at true and emancipating knowledge, the knowledge of God
4. **Against the Knowledge of God**
  - a. **Knowledge** The noun γνῶσις occurs in the same OT sense as γινώσκειν. γνῶσις (τοῦ θεοῦ) is obedient acknowledgment of the will of God
  - b. that true knowledge of Him which comes through acquaintance with One who was the image of God (4:4). St Paul is sure that he possesses this. Cf. τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (Rom. 1:19),

- c. shows that the opponents were Gnostics; so, too, does the tendency towards asceticism (1 C. 7) and the denial of the resurrection of the body (1 C. 15). Paul for his part maintains the uniqueness of genuine Christian knowledge, but in so doing he appropriates to some extent the vocabulary and approach of the Gnostics
- d. Similarly it might be shown that in the struggle against Gnostic pneumatics in 2 C. Paul adopts the Gnostic approach and describes his own calling in terms of the dissemination of γνῶσις. But the objective genitives used with γνῶσις show that it is primarily acknowledgment (2:14; 4:6; 10:5). In the passage Phil. 3:8 f.), which also contains Gnostic expressions, Paul undoubtedly borrows from the Gnostics in describing the γνῶσις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ as a distinctive mark of the Christian. But this γνῶσις corresponds to the resolve to renounce πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί (v.4ff.) and consists in the knowledge of Christ as the Lord.
- e. Hence γνῶναι (v. 10) is not withdrawal from existence in earthly history but experience of the δύναμις τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ and the κοινωνία τῶν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ within historical life (cf. 2 C. 4:7 ff), which for the Christian is changed by the event of salvation and behind which stands the ἐξανάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν (v.11). That all this is very different from Gnosticism is finally illustrated by the fact that Paul is not describing individual experiences but the character of Christian existence in general

## II. Captive (v. 5)

### a. Captive to cause someone to become a prisoner of war

1. . In this context of military terminology αἰχμαλωτίζω means “take captive,” “lead into captivity,” although in another context it may mean “carry off into error” = “deceive” or “ensnare” (as in 2 Tim. 3:6)
  - a. Paul envisages every rebellious thought or scheme as not only being captured but also being reduced to servitude to Christ or being forced to render allegiance to Christ, the victorious and reigning Lord.
  - b. Christ’s prisoners who have been snatched from Satan’s clutches can take the offensive and capture others for the gospel. Paul intends to take them prisoner, which, paradoxically, is the only way to be set free from Satan.

Their thoughts need to come under the Lordship of Christ and to be liberated from the captivity of Satan.

ii. **Thought** - the content of thinking and reasoning—‘thought, what is thought, opinion.’ ἐνθύμησις **that which one has in mind as product of intellectual process**

1. thought” (*noēma*) is rendered elsewhere as “mind” and “design.” It is connected in this letter to the activities of Satan, either as part of Satan’s designs to outwit us (2:11), or as the object of Satan’s assault. In 3:14 the minds of the Israelites were hardened, necessitating Moses’ veil. 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. 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.
2. Paul was not merely acquainted with the popular philosophical idea of thought. He expressed it exactly in his use of λογισμός. This reference is meaningful, however, only because it belongs to the nature of these thoughts to judge according to the law, to be dependent on it.
3. There is open conflict against the λογισμοί, which are again to be taken in the very special sense, i.e., in the first instance the unfavourable judgments of Paul's opponents mentioned in v. 2. Since this λογίζεσθαι is not only hostile to Paul (an echo of the LXX) but also presupposes an overestimation of the rational mind
4. These thoughts are not destroyed by carnal weapons. The ground of reason has to be abandoned. The apostle’s weapons are δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ. To reason he opposes the reality of God as this is manifested at the cross. That λογίζεσθαι grounded in reason will fall when confronted by this reality is stated in Lk. 22:37
5. But if λογισμοί are hurled from their high keep, Paul takes them prisoner εἰς τὴν ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2 C. 10:5. Far from repudiating λογίζεσθαι altogether, he demands its renewal, 1 C. 4:1; 2 C. 10:7, 11; 12:6. But now it must be oriented to the facts established by the reality of God. Thus λογίζεσθαι becomes the term for the “judgment of faith” (R. 3:28; 6:11; 8:18; 14:14; Phil. 3:13).
6. The norm of λογίζεσθαι is outside and above it. As a saving event, it can be grasped only by faith. It is a fact, not a principle, and the act of thought must be oriented to this fact. Then λογίζεσθαι is obedient.
7. A mark of the judgment of faith is its unconditional validity. When Paul judges concerning the state of his perfection (Phil. 3:13) or

his position as an apostle (2 C. 11:5), no objections can be raised by the community.

iii. **To the Obedience of Christ**

1. **Obedience- a state of being in compliance, *obedience*** (one listens and follows instructions) obedience to God and God's commands

### III. Punish (v. 6)

- a. **Punish – to inflict appropriate penalty for wrong done** (of special significance in an honor/shame-oriented society) ***punish, take vengeance for*** the apostles are ready to punish all disobedience in the campaign against the fortified strongholds of the enemy.
  - i. Paul's campaign strategy was not to ignore, dismiss, or ridicule his opponents' ideas and arguments, but to "demolish" (καθαιρέω) them by exposing their fallacies. For him such demolition was indistinguishable from God's "thwarting" of "the cleverness of the clever" (1 Cor. 1:19, citing Isa. 29:14). In speaking of his καθαίρεσις of λογισμοί and πᾶν ὕψωμα, Paul is certainly not denigrating rational thought and logical argumentation.
  - ii. From these opening verses of Paul's defense, we can glean several insights about Paul's views on how to exercise spiritual leadership. First, we see that his aim is not to destroy people who oppose him but to destroy their specious argument
  - iii. His goal is to make them obedient to God (see 2:9; 7:15; 12:21; and 13:2). As Furnish puts it so well: "Paul does not wish to use his authority to strengthen his hold over the Corinthians, but only to strengthen their grip on the gospel, their faith.
- b. **Disobedience refusal to listen and so be disobedient, *unwillingness to hear, disobedience***
  - i. παρακοή in the NT always means "bad hearing" in consequence of unwillingness to hear (c.), and therefore in the guilty sense of disobedience which does not and will not proceed to the action by which hearing becomes genuine hearing
- c. **Obedience a state of being in compliance, *obedience*** (one listens and follows instructions)
  - i. **Complete - to bring to completion that which was already begun, *complete, finish***
  - ii. He hopes, positively, that the Corinthians' obedience will be brought to completion. Obedience to Christ must be meant, in view of v. 5, and what is required will be their detachment from the influence of the rival missionaries whom Paul later castigates as intermediaries of Satan (11:14–15), the opponents of Christ and the gospel. At the same time it is

likely that renewed obedience to Paul himself is also included, since he saw himself as Christ's representative, at least as far as the Corinthians were concerned

- iii. It is only the rival missionaries, therefore, who are to be the object of punishment for disobedience. If they are delegates of Satan, they are clearly disobedient to Christ.