



October 13, 2014.

Insidious Enemy Within the Church

Passage: *2 Corinthians 10:1-6*

Key Verse: *"We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5*

The location of Corinth made it a crucial center point for the cultures of the East and West in Paul's days. Located between the Gulf of Corinth (Adriatic Sea) and the Saronic Gulf (Aegean Sea), Corinth became an important commercial and military center for the Roman Empire. It was also a major cultural center of the Greco-Roman world, hosting the bi-annual Isthmian Games, which began in 581 B.C. at the Temple of Poseidon. Then in 146 B.C., after a revolt against Rome, Corinth was destroyed and later rebuilt to become a Roman Colony where Roman soldiers retired. During the Greek reign in Corinth, the temple to Aphrodite rose imperially more than 1880 feet above the plain. Before it was destroyed by an earthquake that assailed the city around 150 years before Paul arrived there, more than 1,000 prostitutes were part of daily fertility cults in this temple.

A place filled with spiritual darkness.

A mesh of two ungodly cultures tangled the city where one of the first gentile churches began. In the center of it all, one of the largest synagogues outside of Jerusalem hosted a large number of Jews. Many of them, new believers. Of all the cities where Paul planted the first churches across the Roman Empire, Corinth was the place where he met the strongest opposition. The Corinthian church was factitious, prideful and rebellious, highly influenced by Jewish false teachers and by the sensuality surrounding the pagan city.

An affluent, ungodly society.

Christians struggling to remain faithful to God's Word while living in the midst of much darkness.

Leaders compromising the doctrines of Christ to fit their lust and pride.

Does that picture look familiar?

Although Corinth is no longer the prominent city of old, its spirit is alive and well today. And unfortunately, just as it did in the ancient empire, it continually spills its lies into the modern church.

Indeed, many teachers and preachers nowadays are compromising the truth of God's Word, by either omitting important doctrines from their teaching, or emphasizing self-help principles instead of Truth.



It saddens me to realize that many Christians follow them, blindly accepting their half-truths and compromise. Worse yet, their compromise and feel-good theology are leading many “truth seekers” straight into hell.

Their teaching soothes the wounds, but does not heal.

It pleases the crowds, but not the Father.

It’s dangerous and it’s spreading like fire.

“A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” Galatians 5:9

Compromising God’s Word is one of the worse threats for a Christian. Once we start interpreting it to fit out personal views, we allow Satan room to twist the entire truth of the Gospel. We can easily see that happening as certain teachers or preachers start by twisting the truth just a bit, only to end up completely disregarding critical doctrines such as salvation through faith in Christ alone.

The church in Corinth was facing that same peril. Thus Paul, in his candid, prophetic way of speaking Truth, reminded them of who is behind every compromise and how to fight it:

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” (Vs:3-5)

The first realization is that the war against the church is spiritual.

Satan has declared war against mankind in the Garden of Eden and there he pledged to stop redemption’s plan. He failed. Jesus fulfilled God’s plan on the cross. Ever since then, the message of salvation has redeemed people throughout the centuries. Satan cannot stop it.

If Satan cannot defeat the message of the cross, he’ll distort it. If he can’t stop us from proclaiming the gospel, he’ll help us proclaim just enough truth to pacify men’s hunger for God, mixed with a whole lot of lies to keep them from actually receiving salvation. Or, to the believer, he’ll feed us just enough lies to keep us from receiving God’s best.

The second realization is that we possess the weapon to fight his lies.

We have the weapon that can *“destroy any speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.”*



That weapon is God's Word. We must read it. Study it. Digest it.

We must take everything we hear into the light that shines from it.

We must push every thought and action through the grid – Does it contradict scripture... or support it?

Does it glorify God? Or men?

The skies are getting darker, friend.

Satan is pushing hard in his last attempt to condemn the world to eternal death. And render the church of Christ powerless and ineffective.

Everything around us is changing.

As the salt of the earth and light of the world, we cannot allow him to change **US**.

Therefore, pick up your Weapon of war and handle it daily. Before you listen to me... or to the most eloquent evangelists out there.... Listen to the Word.

Listen to *ho Logos*. *The Word* that became flesh to redeem you. The Word that is alive and speaking to you with the same power that it did almost 2,000 years ago when the Corinthians opened their second letter from their beloved leader.

Listen to The Word.

Because the battle for your mind and for the lost souls is raging.

And you must take every thought captive in order to win it.

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