The Weapons Of Our Warfare - A Battle For The Minds Of Men

Intro:

A. We Are At War:
   1. A **Spiritual** war – A battle that is waged in the minds of men! -
   2. Internally – the war with sin, self deception, pride, selfishness, etc., is won or lost in ones mind.
   3. Externally – we are at war with false doctrine, false religion, ungodliness and immorality – the minds of men must be changed -

B. When we look at the changes that have been made in just the role of Television shows and Movies:
   1. Ozzie and Harriet vrs The Ozzy Osbourne Family
   2. My Three Sons vrs Will & Grace is a popular American television sitcom that was originally broadcast on NBC from 1998 to 2006. The show takes place in New York City and focuses on Will Truman, a gay lawyer, and his best friend Grace Adler, a straight Jewish woman who runs her own interior design firm. Also featured are their friends Karen Walker, a very rich socialite, and Jack McFarland, a struggling gay actor.
   3. The Andy Griffith vrs the Simpsons
   4. John Wayne - True Grit vrs Broke back Mountain

C. We Are At War:
   1. Many view Christians as NUTS –
   2. We are thought of as being DUMB – UNEDUCATED
   3. We are accused of being NARROW MINDED –
   4. We are ridiculed – mocked – laughed at & persecuted -
   5. What Are We To Do?????????
      a. “We will either speak up or submit in silence” – (James Dobson)

II. The Weapons of Our Warefare

A. **2 Corinthians 10:1** (NKJV) ---- 1 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.

   1. **2 Corinthians 10:2-3** (NKJV) ---- 2 But 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. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

   2. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5a** (NKJV) ---- 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,

   3. **2 Corinthians 10:5b-6** (NKJV) ---- . . . bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

B. A Battle for the Minds of Men - **10:3**

   1. There is a difference between walking “in the flesh” – and walking “according to the flesh” –
   2. We are in the flesh – but we do not war according to the flesh – (This battle is fought in the minds of men - Note - Arguments; Knowledge; Thoughts - **vs. 5**) 

C. We should not use carnal – worldly tactics - (deceit – threats – persecution – force – bribery – trickery . . .)

   1. Every time we try to teach someone the truth or we defend the truth – we are engaged in battle for Christ – Not to destroy – but to save!!

D. The Battle Ground:

   1. What is the mind? - **(Mat 15:18,19)**
      a. **Matthew 15:18** (NKJV) ---- 18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.
Matthew 15:19 (NKJV) ---- 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

2. We are what we think (Prov. 23:7)
   a. Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) ---- 7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, But his heart is not with you.

3. Our minds can be blinded – (2 Cor. 4:3,4)
   a. 2 Corinthians 4:3 (NKJV) ---- 3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.
      (1) 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV) ---- 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

4. Our minds can become debased – (Rom 1:28)
   a. Romans 1:28 (NKJV) ---- 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

5. Our Minds Can Bring Destruction - (Gen 6:5)
   a. Genesis 6:5 (NKJV) ---- 5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6. We control our mind - (Rom 8:5-8; Col 3:1,2)
   a. Romans 8:5-8 (NKJV) ---- 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
   b. Colossians 3:1 (NKJV) ---- 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
      (1) Colossians 3:2 (NKJV) ---- 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

E. Our Weapons Are Not
2. NOT Psychology –
3. NOT Secular Education –
4. NOT Human Wisdom -
5. NOT Positive Thinking -
   a. A little boy tells his father - - - “Dad – I am afraid I am going to fail my math test’’ - - Dad says to his son - - “Son – you don’t need to think like that - - you should think positively”’ - - “Ok dad” said the son – “I am positive that I am going to fail my math test”
   b. Not those of the flesh. Not such as the men of the world use. They are not such as are employed by conquerors; nor are they such as men in general rely on to advance their cause. We do not depend on eloquence, or talent, or learning, or wealth, or beauty, or any of the external aids on which the men of this world rely. They are not such as derive advantage from any power inherent in themselves. Their strength is derived from God alone. —Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament

III. The Armor of God - 10:4
A. Truth
1. Righteousness
2. Gospel of peace
3. Shield of faith
4. Helmet of salvation
5. Sword of the Spirit – (The word of GOD)
6. Prayer – (Line of communications)

B. God’s Word

1. **Living & Powerful** – Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ---- 12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

2. **Produces Faith** – Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ---- 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

3. **Saves Souls** – James 1:21 (NKJV) ---- 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

4. **Regenerates** – 1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV) ---- 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,
   a. 1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV) ---- 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

5. **Spoken in love** – Ephesians 4:15 (NKJV) ---- 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

6. **Taught with patience and humility** – 2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NKJV) ---- 24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

C. Casting down arguments & every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,

1. Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
2. Paul's weapons are effective in doing two things.
   a. They can, in the first place, demolish strongholds (v. 4). Ochyrwma is a military term for a "fortified place" (Heidland 1967b:590; Malherbe 1983:147). The picture is of an army attacking and tearing down the fortified defenses of the enemy. In the ancient world a prosperous city would build not only a stout wall for its security but also, somewhere inside the wall, a fortified tower that could be defended by relatively few soldiers if the walls of the city were breached by an enemy. Once the stronghold was taken, the battle was over (Carson 1984:47). In ancient times this was commonly accomplished through a variety of siege machines, the most common being battering rams, mobile towers, catapults for throwing darts and the ballistae for throwing stones (Stern 1976).
   b. The strongholds that Paul's weapons lay siege to are arguments and every pretension (v. 5). Logismous are reasonings that take shape in the mind and are then worked out in life as action (Heidland 1967a:286; Malherbe 1983:147). Hypsoma epaïromenon ("raised ramparts") are human "pretensions" (NIV) or "arrogances" (JB, TEV, REB, NEB, RSV, NRSV) that have built fortresses with high towers aimed at repelling attacks by the knowledge of God (v. 5; Malherbe 1983:147).

IV. As we examine ourselves:

A. Ourselves

1. **Receive the truth** – (John 8:32)(NKJV) ---- 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
2. **Obey the truth** – (1 Peter 1:22,23) (NKJV) ---- 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,
a. 1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV) ---- 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

3. Transforming ourselves – “by the renewing of” our minds – (Rom 12:1,2) (NKJV) ---- 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
   a. Romans 12:2 (NKJV) ---- 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

4. Become spiritually minded – “Setting our minds on things above . . .“– (Col 3:1,2; Mat 6:33; Gal 5:22,23; 2 Pet 1:5-10)
   a. Colossians 3:1 (NKJV) ---- 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
       (1) Colossians 3:2 (NKJV) ---- 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.
   b. Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ---- 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
   c. Galatians 5:22 (NKJV) ---- 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
       (1) Galatians 5:23 (NKJV) ---- 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.
   d. 2 Peter 1:5-10 (NKJV) ---- 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

B. Our Children
   1. Teach them the truth & train them up – (Eph 6:4) (NKJV) ---- 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
      a. If we don’t – Who will? –
      b. The world? – Their companions ?-
      c. Hollywood – (MTV; Sitcoms; Reality TV; Movies; Music)?
      d. Ungodly teachers ?-

C. Our Brethren
   1. Edifying one another – (Eph 4:11-16; Heb 10:24,25)
      a. Ephesians 4:11-16 (NKJV) ---- 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
      b. Hebrews 10:24 (NKJV) ---- 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,
         (1) Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV) ---- 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as
is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

2. Too many Christians are surrendering the faith instead of contending earnestly for the faith – (Jude 1:3) (NKJV) ---- 3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

3. Turning back to the world – Yielding to denominational error -

D. The Lost; Those in Error
1. Atheist
2. Pagans – (Buddhist; Hindus, etc)
3. Muslims – (Sunni’s; Shiites)
4. Catholics –
5. Protestant Denominationalist
6. Evangelicals in error –
7. Erring brethren -

V. Conclusion:
A. We Are At War:
1. A Spiritual war – A battle that is waged in the minds of men! -
2. Internally – the war with sin, self deception, pride, selfishness, etc., is won or lost in ones mind.
3. Externally – we are at war with false doctrine, false religion, ungodliness and immorality – the minds of men must be changed -

B. We must put on the whole armor of God - Eph 6:11 (NKJV) ---- 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

\footnote{The New King James Version. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1982}