

Come Follow Me podcast  
Elo Viz production  
Week 39  
2 Corinthians 8-13

Today I like to talk about a topic that is very important: You are at war whether you admit it or not. Yes, it is true that the Devil is our enemy and wants to destroy us.

However, our most dangerous opponent, our most cunning opponent can sometimes be ourselves. We are capable of creating just as many problems for ourselves as anyone else. Sometimes we blame the devil when it was 100% us.

In a lot of ways we are more dangerous to ourselves than the devil is. Satan needs to ask permission to give us trials. Remember Job when He had to ask God if he could affect Job with all those afflictions? Remember when Jesus told Peter that the devil had asked for Him? He has limitations on what it is that he can do. But, we don't. We don't have to ask permission from God to make a mess of our own lives. And we are all extremely capable of doing that all on our own. This is what we call the war within.

Do you ever get home at night and realize that you were just in a bad mood all day? Levi Lusko in his book describes a bad mood as being held hostage by the version of you that you don't want to be. It really does take a conscious effort to not let the natural man take over our lives and control who it is we end up becoming. We can make the decision to change that. As we come home from work, or we spend time with our children, or at any social event we need to make sure we are the best versions of ourselves. We need to say out loud that today we are going to be the version of ourselves that God would be proud of. I'm going to be the version of me that is saved, forgiven, healed, whole, filled with God spirit. I don't want to be the triggered, self absorbed, impatient, angry, version of myself that creates all these problems not only for myself but for all those around me. Those trails that make me feel so awful after the fact. Remember that when we wear the mask that so many of us put on, God can not bless us for who we are pretending to be but only who we actually are. Our authentic, vulnerable, humbles selves. But we have tolerated the dysfunctional behaviors so long that we have become blind to it. We are blind to the things that are creating so much hurt and pain and that are keeping us from knowing the one and only true God who has so much for us to enjoy in this life.

So we have this internal war that we fight every day. Paul also struggled with these things. And in 2 Corinthians he gives us some war strategies that can help us in these conflicts. I'm going to quote this from the NIRV translation of this passage, now before you scream apostasy.

Remember that if Laurel C Day can do it, then so can I. But I love how this version gives us a better picture of what Paul is trying to tell us. It says:

**“ 3** I do live in the world. But I don't fight my battles the way the people of the world do. **4** The weapons I fight with are not the weapons the world uses. In fact, it is just the opposite. My weapons have the power of God to destroy the camps of the enemy. **5** I destroy every claim and every reason that keeps people from knowing God. I keep every

thought under control in order to make it obey Christ. **6** Until you have obeyed completely”  
( NIRV 2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

That's powerful, isn't it? “My weapons have the power to destroy the camps of the enemy”. Well, what weapons? The weapons he is talking about are his thoughts. “I keep every thought under control in order to obey Christ”. There is so much to discover about this. In ancient and even in modern times there is a fundamental and basic war strategy that all great military leaders must understand in order to win the war. And that is to “Control the high ground”. Most battle victories are won or lost based on this one principle alone. Control the high ground. In battle if you can see from a higher point than the enemy then you have an advantage over them to be able to control the situation. Well, in life the high ground is our head. It is the highest point of our body and it is also the most important real estate to control. If the enemy can control your thought life then he can control your whole life.

Proverbs tells us: “As a man thinketh, so is he.” (proverbs 23:7)  
That is to say: you can't live right unless you can think right.

So what is the dominating thought in our life? Do we constantly go to that dark side of our mind that takes over with negative thoughts? An easy way to know your mind's polarity is to focus on your thoughts as your driving. What do you say? How do you react to others on the road? You would probably shock yourself with how negative we actually are. And I'm the same way. I have to put a reminder in my phone that says. “Remember to be happy when you get home.” Because if we don't make a conscious effort to stay positive to stay happy and enjoyable, the alternative is the natural man taking over and that guy is negative and cursed and lonely. And I'm not talking about positive thinking as some new age power of positive thinking. No, I'm not suggesting positivity as a replacement to God. I'm talking about positive thinking as a response to God. That, because you believe that God is good, because you believe that God is gracious and loving and generous, that we in response can live a life like He intended us to live. Jesus tells us that our cup will be overflowing. That right there should teach us a ton. The cup isn't half empty or half full, according to God the cup is overflowing. That's how God thinks, and in response to His blessings, so should we.

There are so many scientific studies that have been done that show that the average American has over 500 negative thoughts per day. Lasting on average 14 seconds each. If you add that up, that is nearly 2 straight hours of negativity that we let conquer our mental high ground. 2 hours that we give over to fear, to worry, to selfishness, to thoughts that are not productive at all. But, here is the truth: you do not have to give in to every feeling or thought you have. When a jealous thought creeps in you can as Paul says: hold that thought captive, keep that thought in control. When a jealous thought shows up, “Oh, I'm sorry, jealous thoughts are not allowed in here today, it's Tuesday. Jealous thoughts are not allowed on Tuesday. Come back on the 4th of Never-ary. That is the kind of power we need to exercise over our minds. Freedom comes when we can have a thought pop into our minds and we can go: not today devil, Jesus is in charge of this mind, you are no longer welcome here.

Remember the 13th article of faith: “If there is anything **virtuous**, **lovely**, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.” (13 article of Faith)

Now, I know that some listening are saying: “Check” I got that handled. No negative thoughts around here. A good way to know if you are in need of adjustment is to pay attention to your words. Your words are the outward manifestation of your inward thoughts, and faith.

James teaches us that if we can learn to tame our tongues then we can learn to control our whole body. But it all starts with the tongue.

And, I think it's important to understand that our words don't just have an impact on people around us, they also have a huge impact on ourselves.

Nephi tells us:

“But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 32:9).

I interpret this to mean that every word we speak has a creation type of effect. The scriptures teach us that “By the **word** of the LORD were the **heavens** made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he **spake**, and it was *done*” (Psalms 33:6,9)

When God speaks things are created. Do you think that He would need to be careful about what He talks about and what He says?

And don't the scriptures also teach us that we were created in the image of God and it is by Him that we are sustained in life every day?

I like to think that everytime we speak the Heavens are saying back to us “If that is what you want... As you wish!”

So when we speak negative things like: of course, traffic again. There is always traffic when on the road. Or, I always get passed up for promotions. Or, Things never work out in my life. And the Heavens respond with: “If that is what you want... as you wish.

Or, If we continue in gratitude for all that God has blessed us with. Starting your day with: I see God's hand in my life. and I will be God's hand in someone's life today. We pray about how grateful we are for the blessings of Heaven, and how gracious God has been to us in our lives.

"If that is what you want... As you wish.

Our words are powerful, Proverbs tells us that they can give life or death. And we get to choose. We get to choose whose side we will stand on in this eternal battle for life.

I pray that we can choose to use our words to create those things that God intends us to create. That as we speak or think, we can see those things for the impact they have in our lives. That we may choose to win the battle within and conquer the enemy of our souls. I pray we will work on the side of Heaven to better our lives and the lives of those around us. That we will once and for all leave the ranks of the adversary in his quest to make us miserable like he is. Might we control the mental high ground that is so important in this battle for freedom. And that we might as Paul admonishes: To control every thought in order to make it obey Christ, until we have obeyed completely.

In the sacred name of Him who is the word, even Jesus Christ, Amen.

Quotes and ideas were taken from Levi Lesko's book called "I Declare war"

Link to purchase his book:

[Levi Lusko- I declare War](https://www.amazon.com/Declare-War-Winning-Battle-Yourself/dp/0785220860/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=levi+lusko+i+declare+war&qid=1693766555&srefix=Levi+Lusko+i+de%252Caps%252C192&sr=8-1&_encoding=UTF8&tag=cfmpodcast-20&linkCode=ur2&linkId=daa78267fe96e5e1f0e182df1c0aa2f8&camp=1789&creative=9325)