

Casting Down Imaginations: Unlearning Worldly Wisdom

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

God has provided us spiritual weapons to tear down all the imaginations, opinions, and arguments that the world and the flesh raise up against Christ. We are called to bring every thought captive to Christ—that is, to His written word.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Paul speaks of the sufficiency of Scripture. It is sufficient for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness so that the man of God may be complete, “thoroughly furnished to all good works.”

Genesis 3:1-5

From the beginning, Satan has set forth a philosophy that is diametrically opposed to God’s word:

- There is and can be no such being as the Creator God of Scripture.
- Reality is self-existent and self-sustaining, but ultimately impersonal and silent.
- There can be no reliable word from God.
- Any changes we perceive in reality arise naturally from within reality itself (cosmic evolution).
- The forces (gods) that arise within reality are limited and temporary expressions of reality: they are neither omniscient nor omnipotent.
- Man may become such a god, either individually or collectively.
- “Good” and “evil” are what man says they are. (“Love” is what makes me feel good.)
- There is and can be no such thing as “sin”: man’s problems arise from his inability to control his internal and external environment. (Evil is in things, not in our hearts.)
- “Salvation” requires power, magical or technological, to force society and the environment to conform to man’s purposes.
- The past is irrelevant, since godhood and salvation lie in the future.
- My godhood trumps yours every time.

These are the “imagination” we must cast down in our own thinking.

Some Traps to Avoid

- Doing “devotional” Bible reading, rather than intelligent Bible reading. If the Bible contradicts our beliefs, we need to alter our beliefs. If we don’t see the contradiction, we’re not reading properly.
- Ignoring the theology we profess, or refusing to apply it to the matter at hand. (“Our theology ought to be our reality.”)
- Receiving old heresies as new wisdom because we are unfamiliar with Scripture, the creeds, and Church history.
- Rejecting biblical wisdom for the sugarcoated humanism of pop psychology, trendy environmentalism, and neo-Marxian economics.
- Assuming that our elders are stupid, ignorant, or ill informed simply because they are old or slow to change.
- Assuming that new books are more accurate than old books on matters of unchanging wisdom.
- Insisting on an “ought” or “should,” an ethical absolute, where God has not spoken. Consider the following booklets:
Vos, Johannes G. *The Biblical Doctrine of the Separated Life, A Study of Basic Principles*. Philadelphia: Committee on Education, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, n.d.
Williamson, G. I. *Wine in the Bible and the Church*. Phillipsburg, VA: Pilgrim Publishing Company, 1976.

Some Strategies for Growth

- Go to worship, Sunday school, catechism class, and Bible study with a desire and intention to learn—to replace unbiblical thinking with godly thinking. (Don’t assume you know everything.)
- Read the Bible every day with the same desire and intent.
- Memorize Scripture that touches on every day conflicts with the world’s “wisdom.”
- Pray for better understanding of God’s revelation in Scripture, of His interpretation of the universe.
- Read, study, and memorize the creeds of the Church with an eye on contemporary applications.
- Read, study, and memorize the Heidelberg Catechism or the other confessions of the Reformed churches.
- Listen to what older saints are talking about. Ask intelligent questions.
- Keep company with those who value the wisdom of the past over the trendy, the modern, the “what’s happening now.”
- Read older books that take the authority, infallibility, and sufficiency of Scripture for granted.

The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, **and the books, but especially the parchments** (2 Tim. 4:13).