

PREPARE TO DEFEND YOURSELF...AND THOSE YOU LOVE.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Colossians 2:6-8

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

Heads up...

- Beware of sugar-coated sayings – 2:4 *I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.*

Q: How do I live this out?

What does the new normal look like?

- Receive Christ – 2:6 *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord,*
- Walk in grace – 2:6 *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,*
- Walk in strength – 2:7a *rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught,*

N.T. Wright: “Being a Christian is like riding a bicycle; unless you go forward, you’ll fall off.”¹

- Walk in thanksgiving – 2:7b *abounding in thanksgiving.*

Colossians 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

- Prepare to defend yourself against Hostage-seekers – 2:8 *See to it that no one takes you captive...*

What are the weapons of Hostage-seekers?

- Empty thinking that undercuts your intellect – 2:8 *by philosophy and empty deceit,*
- Unexamined motivations where Jesus is absent – 2:8 *according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*
 - Confirm our prejudice.
 - Rationalize and excuse our depravity.
 - Feed our pride.

How should I prepare myself?

- 1) Wake up: Realize there's a war for your mind and heart.
- 2) Think through: Look past the sugar-coating to the substance.
- 3) Lean in: Love your friends and family by loving God with your mind...not just your heart, soul, and strength (Luke 10:27).

Resources for growing in the firmness of your faith:

- Toddlers & Preschool: *A Child's First Bible* (illustrated by Kenneth Taylor).
- Toddlers & Preschool: *The Bible App for Kids* (free download).
- Elementary: *The Attributes of God for Children* (William Lane Craig & Marli Renee).
- Elementary: *The Case for Christ for Kids.*
- Elementary: *The Case for a Creator for Kids.*
- Elementary: *The Case for Faith for Kids.*
- Middle school & High school: *Gotquestions.org.*
- Middle school & High school: *The Bible Project* (YouTube).
- College & above: *On Guard* (William Lane Craig).
- College & above: *Reasonablefaith.org*, *Reasonable Faith Podcast* (William Lane Craig), or search "*William Lane Craig debates*" on YouTube for a fair exchange of ideas.
- Christianity 101: Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in WCC taught by Dr. Larry Starkey.
- *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem.
- *Christian Theology* by Millard J. Erickson.

¹ N.T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 164.