

# 2 Corinthians 10:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

## Analysis

**Casting down imaginations** (καθαιροῦντες λογισμοὺς)—Logismous (λογισμοὺς, "reasonings/arguments") denotes sophisticated intellectual constructs, philosophical systems, or rationalistic arguments. Paul targets not ignorance but educated rebellion—the mind's pretensions to autonomous authority apart from divine revelation. The verb kathaireō (καθαιρέω, "cast down/destroy") is violent, suggesting thorough demolition, not gentle correction.

**And every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God** (καὶ πᾶν ὕψωμα ἐπαιρόμενον κατὰ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ)—Hypsōma (ὕψωμα, "high thing/barrier") denotes anything elevated in opposition to God. Gnōsis tou theou (γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ) is not mere information but covenantal relationship and revealed truth. Paul targets intellectual pride that positions human reason above God's self-disclosure.

**Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ** (αἱχμαλωτίζοντες πᾶν νόημα εἰς τὴν ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ)—Aichmalōtizontes (αἱχμαλωτίζοντες, "taking captive") extends the warfare metaphor: thoughts are prisoners of war, forcibly subjugated to Christ's lordship. Hypakoē (ὑπακοή, "obedience") demands complete submission—not neutral investigation but worshipful surrender of the mind to Christ's authority.

## Historical Context

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Greek philosophy valued autonomous reason as humanity's highest faculty. Corinth celebrated intellectual sophistication and rhetorical brilliance. Paul's demand that every thought submit to Christ scandalized both Jewish legalists (who trusted Torah observance) and Greek philosophers (who trusted human reason). The gospel assaults human pride at its core—the mind's claim to self-sufficient authority.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What 'high things'—ideologies, philosophies, or cultural assumptions—currently 'exalt themselves against the knowledge of God' in your thinking?
2. How do you practice taking 'every thought captive to Christ's obedience' when your mind rebels against biblical truth?
3. Why does Paul use warfare language (demolishing, casting down, taking captive) rather than educational language (informing, persuading, teaching)?

## Interlinear Text

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λογισμούς καθαιροῦντες καὶ πᾶν ὕψωμα ἐπαιρόμενον  
imaginations Casting down and every high thing that exalteth itself  
G3053 G2507 G2532 G3956 G5313 G1869

κατὰ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντες πᾶν  
against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every  
G2596 G1108 G2316 G2532 G163 G3956

νόημα εἰς τὴν ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ  
thought to the obedience of Christ  
G3540 G1519 G5218 G3588 G5547

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hebrews 4:12** (References God): For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**Isaiah 55:7** (References God): Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

**Romans 7:23** (Parallel theme): But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

**Matthew 15:19** (Parallel theme): For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

**1 Corinthians 3:19** (References God): For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

**Jeremiah 4:14** (Parallel theme): O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

**Romans 1:21** (References God): Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

**1 Corinthians 1:19** (Parallel theme): For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

**Psalms 139:2** (Parallel theme): Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

**Proverbs 15:26** (Parallel theme): The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

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