

“Putting Sin to Death”

Part 2
Colossians 3:5–11

Brad Klassen



COLOSSIANS 3:5–11

“Therefore **consider** the members of your earthly body **as dead** to I
immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to
idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come
upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when
you were living in them. But now you also, **put** them all **aside**; II
anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. **Do not lie** to one III
another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put
on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the
image of the One who created him — *a renewal* in which there is no
distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.”

II. Discard Your Hateful Expressions (3:8)

“**But now** you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

A. The Basis of the Command

- “**But now**” – the words emphasize a sharp contrast to a former reality.
 - **Colossians 3:7** – “and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.” See also **Colossians 1:21–22**.
 - Again, Paul emphasizes the new status of the believers; his current exhortation comes to those who have been freed from the domain of darkness—and are *able* to fight sin successfully.

The Mortification of Sin

John Owen

Abridged and Made Easy to Read
by Richard Rushing



PURITAN  PAPERBACKS

“Unless a man be a believer, that is, one that is truly ingrafted into Christ, he can never mortify any one sin.”

—John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*, 69

“But now you also, **put them all aside**; anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

B. The Substance of the Command

- “Put them all aside” – literally, “take off” or “lay aside”; the verb was used to describe *taking off clothes* (Acts 7:58), but used here to refer to *separation from* certain behaviors.

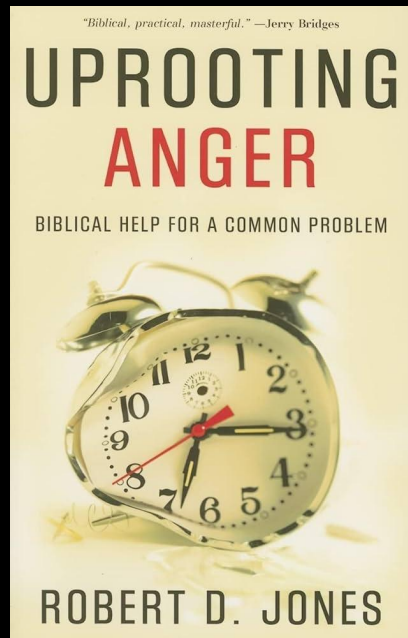


- The vices Paul now lists in v. 8 have to be *put off* like clothing which is inappropriate to your identity.
- **Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22, 25; Hebrews 12:1; etc.**

“But now you also, put them all aside: **anger**, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

C. The Focus of the Command

- Paul lists five *dispositional sins* that affect relationships; these are sins of *displeasure*, committed when *we don't get what we want*.



- 1) **“Anger”** – literally, “wrath,” “indignation”—the same word used in v. 6 to refer to “the *wrath* of God”; here, the term speaks of *sinful anger* (e.g., Matthew 5:21–22).
 - ***an-ger***: “our whole-personed active response of negative moral judgment against perceived evil” (Robert Jones, *Uprooting Anger*, 15).

THE TWO FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS OF SINFUL ANGER



#1 – *The diminishment of God* by challenging—implicitly or explicitly—His wisdom and sovereignty (rebellion).

#2 – *The magnification of self* by demanding the protection and promotion of one's honor (pride).

“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, **wrath**, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

- 2) “**Wrath**” – describes “a state of intense displeasure”; the term is used to describe God’s “indignation” (e.g., Rev 14:10) but is always treated as sinful when expressed by man.
- **Galatians 5:19–20** – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”



“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.”

3) “Malice” - “a mean-spirited or vicious attitude or disposition”; describes one who is judgmental/critical, who wishes suffering on others, and delights when they experience loss.

- Malice is a typical trait of the unsaved (Rom 1:29; Titus 3:3).

4) “Slander” – literally, *blasphemy*—but directed toward other human beings; “speech that denigrates or defames,” whether in secret or in public.



“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.”

5) “Abusive speech” – refers to “morally unacceptable or socially disgraceful language”; includes *complaining, gossiping, cursing, snark, insults, and malicious sarcasm and ridicule.*

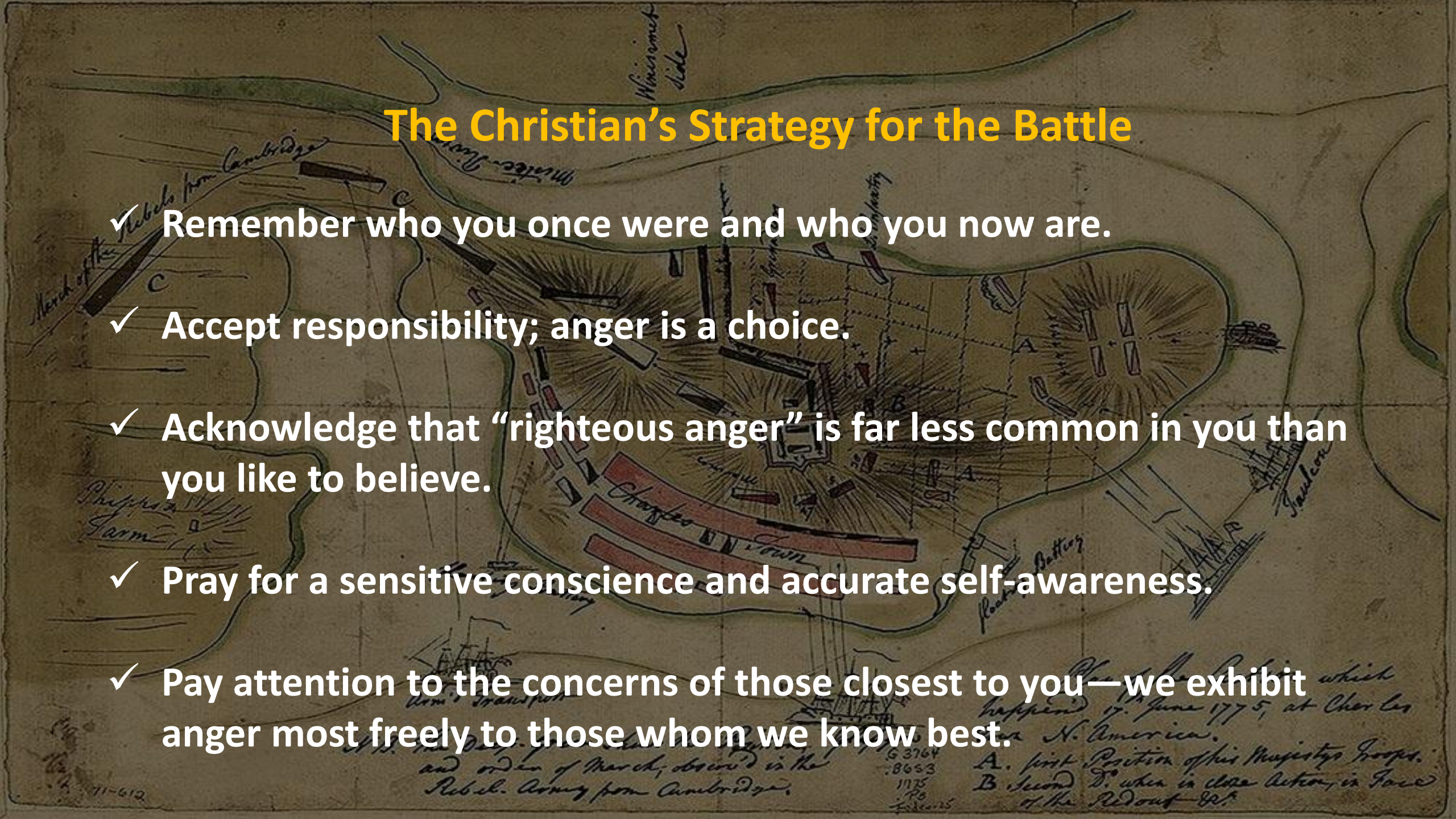
“From your mouth” – the tongue is a special tool for the sinful flesh (Prov 18:21; Matt 5:21–22; Eph 4:29; James 3:8–10); but extends beyond actual speech to *written text* as well (social media, etc.).

- **Matthew 12:36–37** – “But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”



The Christian's Strategy for the Battle

- ✓ Remember who you once were and who you now are.
- ✓ Accept responsibility; anger is a choice.
- ✓ Acknowledge that "righteous anger" is far less common in you than you like to believe.
- ✓ Pray for a sensitive conscience and accurate self-awareness.
- ✓ Pay attention to the concerns of those closest to you—we exhibit anger most freely to those whom we know best.





✓ Dig down to the root of what causes the anger.

✓ Believe that forgiveness and cleansing are freely available in Christ.

✓ Fill your mind with Scripture to be reminded of the grace and mercy of God with respect to your sinfulness and guilt, and His sovereignty in orchestrating your every circumstance.

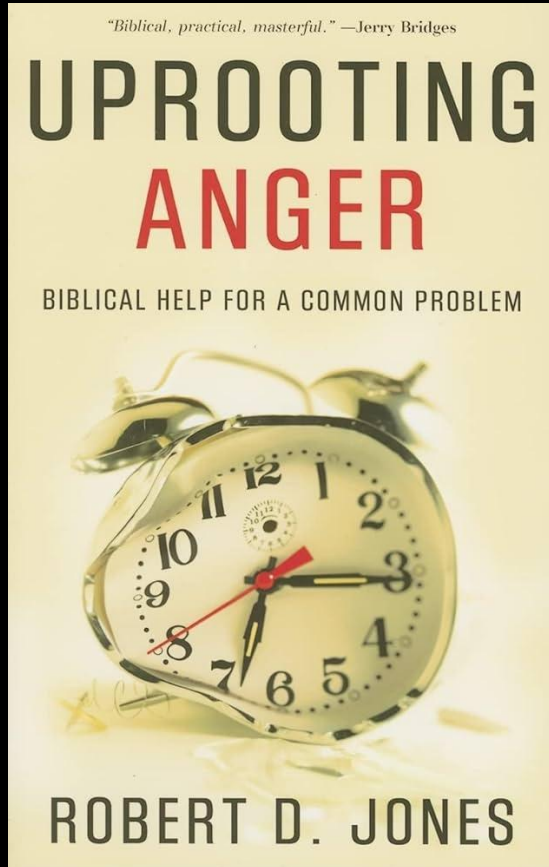
✓ Pay special attention to your speech—both to the words themselves, as well as the tone.

✓ Cultivate the virtues of humility, patience, and quickness to forgive.

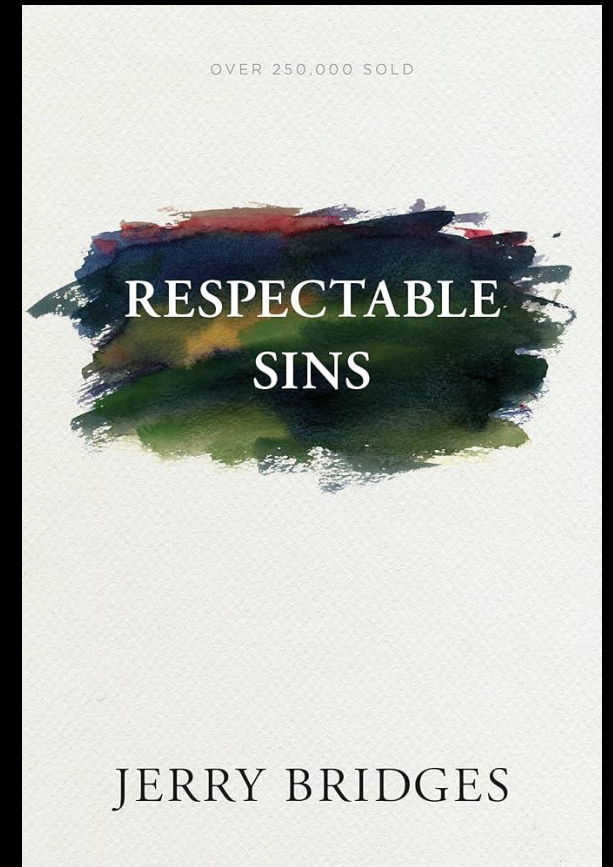
N.B. The Deep-green shows the Position, Glasgow
and order of March; observed in the
Rebel Army from Cambridge.

happened 17th June 1775, at Charles
Town N. America.
A. first Position of his Majesty's Troops.
B. second " when in close Action, in Face
of the Redoubt &c.

Recommended Resources



Robert Jones, *Uprooting Anger: Biblical Help for a Common Problem.*



Jerry Bridges, *Respectable Sins* (especially chapters 14–19).

III. Forsake Your Deceitful Speech (3:9–11)

“Do not lie” to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

A. The Substance of the Command (v. 9a)

- **“Do not lie”** – “stop telling untruths and be sure never to start.”
- Like the previous vices (vv. 5–8), the Colossians practiced lying because it was the *natural thing to do* in their former state.

“A lie consists in speaking a falsehood with the intention of deceiving.”

— Augustine

“Do not lie **to one another**, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

- “**To one another**” – to fellow believers; not that lying is permissible to those *outside* the church, but that *lying* has a particularly devastating impact on the church.
 - It is directly contrary to the character of God.
 - It is directly contrary to the example of Jesus.
 - It aligns with Satan, the enemy of the church.
 - It breaks trust and creates suspicions among believers.
 - It diminishes opportunities for one-another ministry.
 - It hardens the heart to truth.

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil practices*, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

B. The Basis of the Command (vv. 9b–10)

- **“Since”** – Paul introduces a *two-part cause* for this command: the first is found in v. 9b; the second in v. 10 (two sides of the same coin).
- **“You laid aside”** – “to take/strip off”; the same verb is used in 2:15 to refer to Christ’s “disarming” of our spiritual enemies; the noun (“removal”) is used in 2:11 to refer to spiritual circumcision.
- **“The old self with its practices”** – the connection to Adam and his kind of humanity, that which identified us as belonging to Adam: *the Adamic, sin nature* (see 2:11).

“For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.”

—Romans 6:5–7

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is a new creature*; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

—2 Corinthians 5:17

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and **have put on** **the new self** who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

B. The Basis of the Command (vv. 9b–10) – cont’d

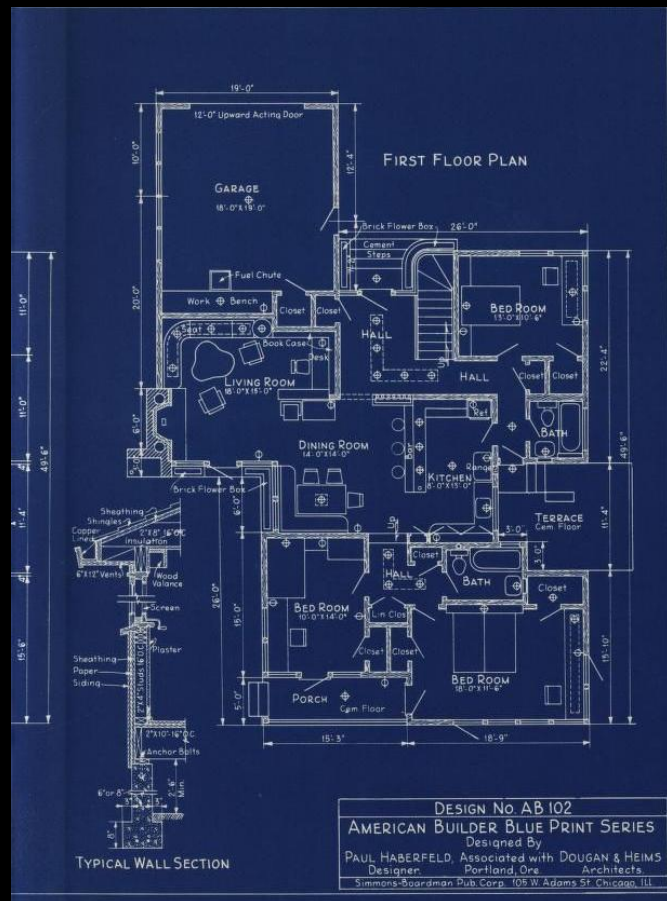
- “**Have put on**” – “put on/clothe”; the exact opposite of “laid aside” (v. 9b); the *laying aside* and the *putting on* both speak of completed, decisive acts.
- “**The new self**” – the connection to Christ and His kind of humanity, that which identifies us as belonging to Christ: *the new nature*.
- Believers do not have *two natures* or *two identities*—the old man and the new man existing together; rather, we have *one nature, one identity*—the one defined by Christ.

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

- Paul proceeds to describe this “new self” in two ways (vv. 10b–11).
- **“Who is being renewed”** – the first characteristic; an on-going process in the Christian life; even though this *new nature* has been once-for-all *put on*, there remains the need to *fit it into place*; there is a needed inward-to-outward transformation; God is the assumed agent of this renewal.
- **“To a true knowledge”** – the goal of the renewal: *real, true knowledge of God revealed in Christ* (which is why lying is so antithetical to the Christian).

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”

- **“According to the image”** – the *standard* or *archetype* according to which the “renewal,” “outworking,” or “fitting into place” is directed.
- **“The One who created him”** – God, the One who created this *new nature*.
- **“The image of the One”** – Christ, who is explicitly “the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15; also 2 Cor 4:4), and whose image Christians increasingly reflect.



“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.”

—**Romans 8:29**

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”

—**2 Corinthians 3:18**

“When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

—**Colossians 3:4**

“... **in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all**” (v. 11).

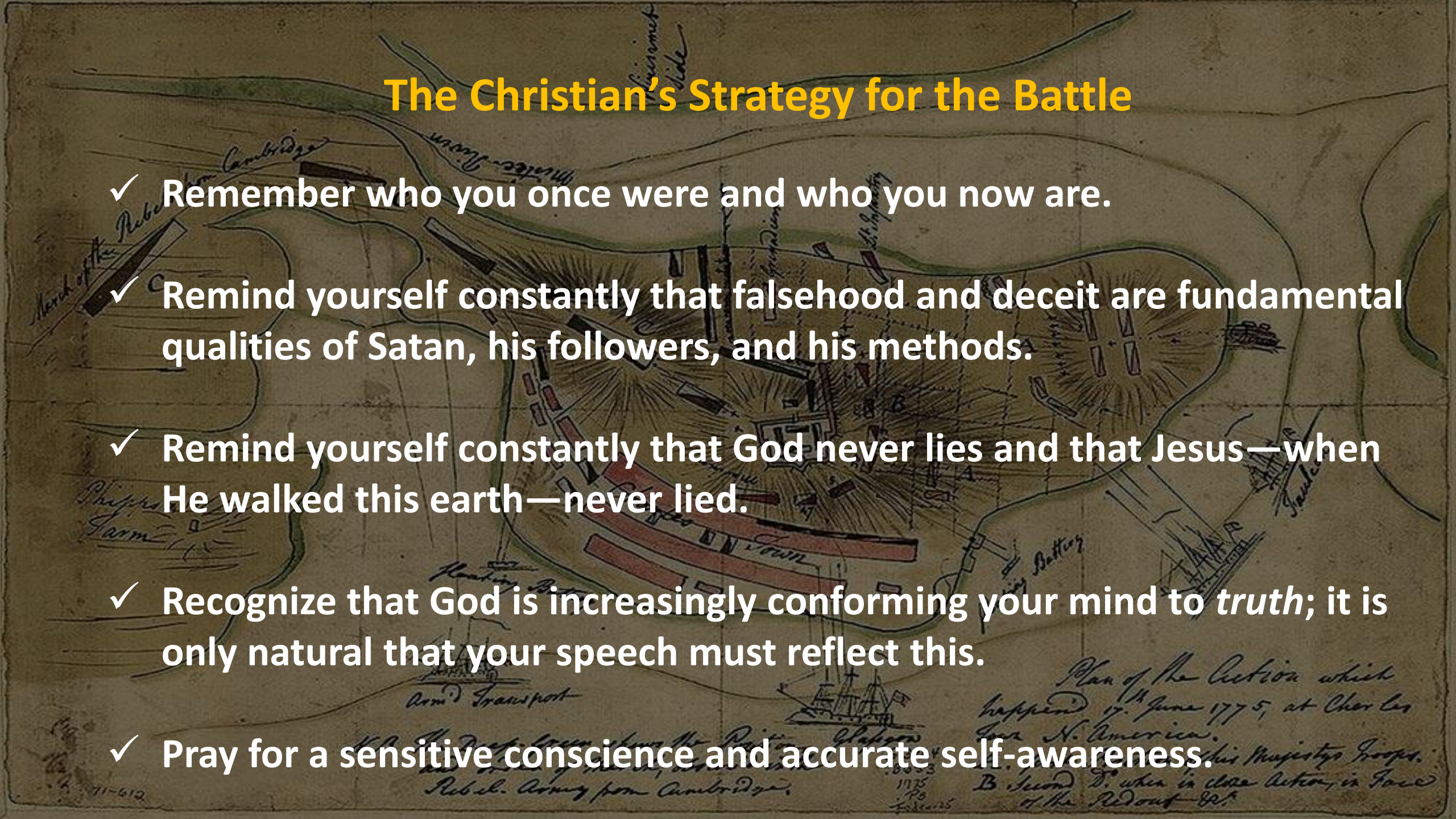
- “**In which there is no**” – the second characteristic of this “new man”; it does not contain certain *distinctions*.
- “**Greek and Jew**” – a difference of *ethnicities* (see Eph 2:11–22).
- “**Circumcised and uncircumcised**” – a difference of *religious rites*.
- “**Barbarian, Scythian**” – non-Greek speakers, uncivilized.
- “**Slave and freeman**” – a difference in *socio-economic status*.

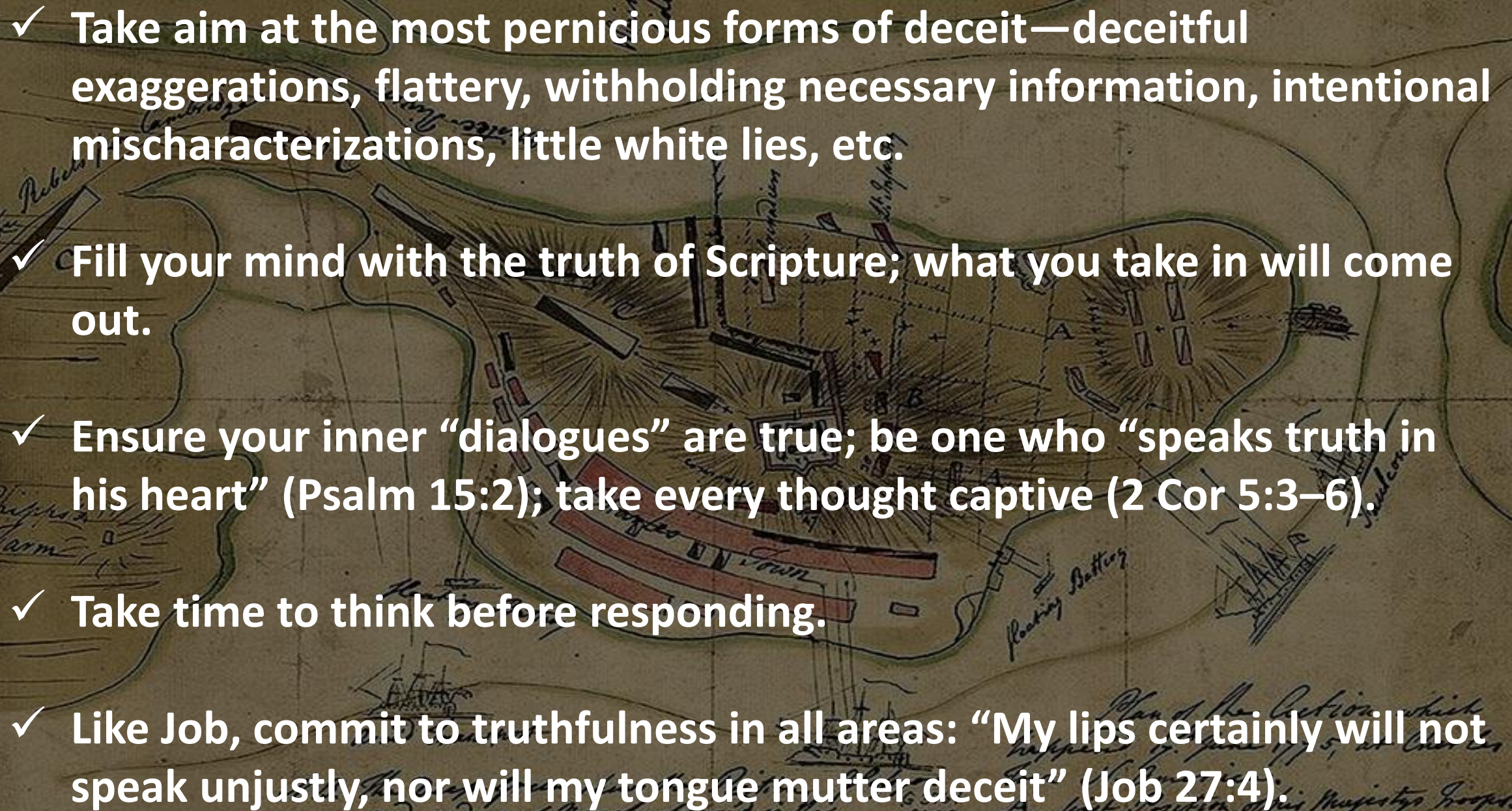
“. . . in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, **but Christ is all, and in all**” (v. 11).

- Literally, “**But all and in all is Christ.**”
- The removal of all the distinctions, the factions, the tribalism, the condescension, and partiality becomes real only in the “new humanity” united with Christ who is *supreme over all and indwells all His people.*

The Christian's Strategy for the Battle

- ✓ Remember who you once were and who you now are.
- ✓ Remind yourself constantly that falsehood and deceit are fundamental qualities of Satan, his followers, and his methods.
- ✓ Remind yourself constantly that God never lies and that Jesus—when He walked this earth—never lied.
- ✓ Recognize that God is increasingly conforming your mind to *truth*; it is only natural that your speech must reflect this.
- ✓ Pray for a sensitive conscience and accurate self-awareness.



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- ✓ Take aim at the most pernicious forms of deceit—deceitful exaggerations, flattery, withholding necessary information, intentional mischaracterizations, little white lies, etc.
 - ✓ Fill your mind with the truth of Scripture; what you take in will come out.
 - ✓ Ensure your inner “dialogues” are true; be one who “speaks truth in his heart” (Psalm 15:2); take every thought captive (2 Cor 5:3–6).
 - ✓ Take time to think before responding.
 - ✓ Like Job, commit to truthfulness in all areas: “My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, nor will my tongue mutter deceit” (Job 27:4).