

Does Your Mind Need to Be Renewed?

The human mind is a complex organ which controls all of your bodily functions. It is designed by the Creator to be the central source of all that we do and feel and should be cherished. Every minute of every day we see, hear, smell and taste things that are not only deciphered, but analyzed and stored in our brains. For this reason we must be careful as to what we allow ourselves to be exposed to.

The Bible has much to say about loving God with all our minds and warns of being conformed to this world – The Bible also tells us *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God"* (Romans 12:2). *God wants our minds to be renewed that we might perform His will.*

But there is another profound reason to be transformed...*"for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Romans 8:6).* Many of us do not give much thought to the fact that to remain carnal, or earthly, will bring death. This not only means dead from the life and peace that God wants to give to us today, but unavailable to experience eternal life to come.

Your mind is very important in determining where you stand spiritually. There really is no middle ground with regard to whether you are on the side of heaven or on the side of the world. Being carnally minded places you in the camp of the prince of this world.

You must understand that you are left alone to your own devices when it comes to protecting your mind. Jesus told us that we should love God with all our minds (Matthew 22:37). But He knew that it would be different to fight temptation **without** a renewed mind. It is difficult enough to live in this world of temptation with a clear mind, let alone trying to resist when the mind is weakened.

I. Why Do We Need to Renew and Protect Our Mind?

The renewal of our minds is one of the requirements to a fruitful Christian walk. An unfaithful mind will give the enemy an inroad into your life. Whether it is **lust, bad attitudes, unbelief, prayerlessness**, satan will use anything that he can do to control our minds and hence rob us of the victory and freedom that Christ's death has given us.

A. Life or Death Is Determined By Your Thought Life

(Matthew 12:33; Luke 6:43-45; John 6:62-64)

Thoughts are words sown into our hearts. They affect our life physically and spiritually. Out of the abundance of the heart come the words and actions of a person. The enemy spends so much effort into putting bad thoughts into our minds because he knows they **open the door to our heart**. This should give you a desire to set your will in line with God's will and resist ungodly thoughts.

We need to renew our minds because an unrenewed mind will result in an ungodly action. Our minds are the breeding ground of future action.

B. Lay Hold to God's Will For Your Life

Renewal of your mind is vital to understanding the will of God. Ignorance and a mind not renewed by the Word of God leaves us void of the power of God. You can speak in tongues all day long and give 90% of your income to the Lord, **but without knowing the will of God you will never be fruitful in serving Him.**

So, this is what we need to do:

1. We need to protect our minds from the onslaught of the enemy.
2. We need to bring our thoughts in line with God's thoughts in order to understand His will.
3. A mind renewed by God's Word is essential if our lives are to be full of His power.

II. Understanding Your Thought Life

Thoughts are very powerful. They seem to just drop into our minds or arise from within us. Our minds receive thoughts and ideals from three sources: **God, man, and Satan.**

A. Our Own Imagination (Genesis 6:5; II Chronicles 28:9)

These can be good or bad. What you hear, see and do affects your thought life. Meditating on God's Word produces godly thoughts.

B. From God

The Bible is full of accounts of God speaking people. What they heard were godly thoughts. We were all made in the image of God and have the ability to receive thoughts that come from God. Many times we do not recognize the thoughts and ideas that God drops in our hearts.

C. From Satan

Cain, Saul, and Judas are examples of men who were influenced by Satan. The devil still pulls these tricks today.

III. What Jesus Said About Our Thought Life

A. Evil Thoughts Defile Us

Matthew 15:19-20 states – "for out of the heart *proceed evil thoughts...these are the things which defile a man.*"

B. Thoughts and Word are Seeds

Thoughts are seeds. Seeds bear fruit. Our actions and attitudes are influenced by the thoughts we entertain. The things we see have a great hold on us. We think about what we see. Your heart is influenced by what you see. Allow only good things to entertain your heart then good will come out.

Words are also seeds. Good seed can bear fruit in our life just like bad seed. The parable of the sower teaches us a lot:

- Does not understand the word (ie, does not receive it) – Matthew 13:18
- The Word has no root (there is no root developing period) – Matthew 13:21)
- Seed on good ground bears fruit – 100, 60, and 30 fold

IV. Evil Thoughts in Action – How to Identify Them

A. Worry (Matthew 6:19-34) – Worry is meditating on the negative. If you can meditate on the negative you can also meditate on the positive.

B. Fear (II Timothy 1:17) - When we are fearful and experience fear in our lives this gives room for Satan.

C. Always Expecting the Worst

D. The "Merry Go Round" Mind – This person has a mind that allows Satan to feed you thoughts like a person feeding crumbs to birds.

E. The "Everybody Dislikes Me" Attitude

F. I Cannot Pray and I Can't Read the Word Attitude – This is a Stronghold.

G. Double-minded (I James 1:26) – This hinders your prayer life and walking in faith.

H. Words That Sow the Seeds of Death (Ephesians 4:25-31) – always giving bad reports.

I. Broken Relationships, Homes, Churches, and Society (for example – backbiting, gossiping, complaining).

J. Lustful Thoughts – these are often the product of viewing or reading the wrong material. This is a **BIG** problem. Yet there is a way to break its hold.

Evil thoughts bring "mindsets" that have to be broken spiritually.

V. Breaking the Stronghold of Lust

Lust manifests itself in many ways. Many church leaders have stated that lust is one of the greatest hindrances facing the church today.

A. How to Break the Stronghold of Lust

1. Observe yourself

The first step in breaking the stronghold of lust is acknowledging that you have a problem. You can actually stand back, as it were, and observe your own thoughts, words, and actions.

Look at yourself in the mirror of the Word. What do you see? Take time to observe your thoughts, actions, and speech, be honest with yourself, judge yourself.

2. Ask for the anointing of God

Only the power of God can break the hold of lust. Once you have honestly observed yourself, ask God to show you the right and wrong thoughts in your life.

The natural mind may see nothing wrong with lustful thoughts. But the spirit of God supported with the Word of God will tell you better. Sincerely ask God to break the power of evil thoughts. The stronghold behind lust is your **thought life**. Ask God to give you a deeper love for His will. Let the love of God dictate your thought life and not the **fleeting pleasures of lust**.

3. Meditation and Imagination

Bad habits (evil thoughts, etc.) are beamed into our minds by outside forces. They become ours when we entertain them, meditate on them, and imagine the things they suggest. Start feeding your self on **godly things**. Imagine yourself living free from the lustful thoughts and actions presently in your life.

4. God has given you a will, so use it!

Romans 12:1-3 asks us to renew our minds. This is possible when we bring our will in line with the will of God. But, remember, the renewal of the mind is not done in a day. If the world and Satan have been playing with your mind for years they are not about to leave without a fight.

Put your hands on the plough and determine not to turn back. Human beings have been known to accomplish tremendous things just with their will power. How much more do you think you can accomplish with the Holy Spirit living inside you? Your will must agree with God's will if you are to succeed.

Remember these:

- Don't lapse back into old ways. Remember you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you (Phil 4:13);
- Make a regular habit of reading the Word;
- Flee all appearance of evil;
- Ask for a deeper love of God;
- Never underestimate the enemy. Keep your guard up;
- Watch your thoughts. Wandering thoughts are normally darts from the enemy. Give no room to the enemy;
- Lust is never satisfied. Do not be deceived. It will sneak up on you and say – this will be the last time. The purpose of this is to destroy you. Do not entertain it for **one minute**. **LUST IS NEVER SATISFIED!;**
- Understand the purpose of all temptations – They are to take you away from the love of God;
- Develop a prayer life

VI. The Law of Sowing and Reaping

The mind is like a farmers field. If a farmer plants corn he will get corn. If he plants wheat he will get wheat. If you sow to the flesh you will reap corruption. It is impossible for any person to sow to the flesh and get a spiritual harvest. God has given you the ability to control what you sow and thereby control what you harvest. If you are experiencing defeat over sin, you lack power, and never really walk in all the fullness of God.

A. Garbage In – Garbage Out

Garbage In – Garbage Out. This is the law of the mind. What you put in your mind is what you get out. It is impossible to put worldly things in your mind and get spiritual results out. You sow every day, but **YOU** determine what you sow, not God. Take time to examine what you are sowing. What do you think about? Do you day-dream and have fantasies? How do you spend your time? Is your mind full of **worldly, fleshly, lustful, unclean, carnal or any ungodly thoughts**? If so, you must change your mind (repent) and start thinking godly thoughts.

B. Who's Fault?

Whose fault is it if we only harvest the things of the flesh? God has made each of us fully responsible for what we sow. If you are reaping the wrong crop it is **NOT GOD'S FAULT!**

C. Power vs. Powerlessness

It is easy to see why many Christians remain powerless. No person's mind can be renewed on a "junk-food diet" (trashy movies, tv shows, novels, worldly music). The reason why so many Christians do not experience transformation is they become what they **THINK**, and much of what they think is not good. **Your attitude** and behavior are only but a reflection of what goes on in your mind.

VII. Conclusion

Renewing your mind is the key to growing as a Christian. It is the difference between being **CONFORMED** to the world or being **TRANSFORMED** into a new creation because the mind controls life and behavior. Without the renewal of your mind you will simply stay **CONFORMED** to this world – you will be no different from the unsaved, your witness for Christ will fail to have credibility. You will be salt that has lost its savor.

This goal of transformation is to become like Christ and to live like Christ. The process of transformation continues as we renew the mind. Unless there is a renewing of the mind, any change in our lives will be superficial. Renewing the mind is made possible by where we set our minds. We are to feed our minds with the Word of God, prayer, fellowship, etc. With our minds "renewed" we can experience a true transformation. We do this by putting off the old man and putting on the new man, and by living according to the Spirit.

The devil can influence us by the thoughts he drops into our minds. Thoughts are very powerful. When we accept the thoughts of the devil we open ourselves to the influence of the devil.

Take heed to your thought life. Stop entertaining evil thoughts. They are destructive. When you cast out the evil desires and evil beliefs you are putting off the old man. Planting the Word of God to produce new desires and beliefs is the putting on of the new man.