

Series: Victory in Jesus (9/20/17)

Title: Victory in my thought life

Text: (Phil 4:6-8) "***think*** on these things."

(II Cor 10:5) *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.***

Have you ever given much thought as to how your thought life affects your fellowship and walk with God?

The Bible has many references to the believer's thinking. Some of bad thinking and some references to good thinking. The battle ground for the Christian is the mind. The devil works upon the mind. He knows if he controls the mind, he controls that person.

In the book of Proverbs, a father is instructing his son as to his spiritual life and other areas as well.

(Proverbs 23:7) *for as he **thinketh** in his **heart**, so is he...*

The writer makes this statement in the middle of speaking about moral, ethical, and spiritual precepts.

He tells his son in verses 12, 15, and 23, *Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine, Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*

All of this deals with Our thinking.

What is correct thinking?

If I don't think correctly then how am I to think correctly? What kind of thinking does God want me to have?

At salvation we entered a spiritual battle. It involves around how or what we think.

Many times I hear of a Christian wife, who finds out her husband has allowed his thinking to go unrestrained and the results have been devastating.

I head a story of a young lady whose husband was an assistant pastor, just a few years removed from Bible College. She picked up his cell phone & notices there was a text message from someone and she looked at it. Unfortunately, it was an inappropriate text message from a woman to her husband. She then looked at the messages he was sending and her heart was broken.

Here she was, thinking about serving the Lord and the dreams they had of service and a life together for God, but her husband for some time, had been sending messages to other women he had met in chat rooms on the Internet.

She then looked at the computer he used and her heart was even more broken.

When confronted, he made several excuses, told her he loved her, and then proceeded to resign from the ministry and ran off to live with another woman!

Her life was devastated and they had recently had their first child.

All Sin Starts in Our Heart: We Think about it 1st!

We are what we think!

What we are thinking today will be what we are tomorrow!
Our thoughts truly show what our character is.

We may try to hide, disguise, ignore, or justify this kind of thinking, but we are fooling ourselves if we think we may indulge in wicked thinking without it affecting our walk with God.

(Gal 6:7-8) Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of his flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

This kind of thinking is selfish, lustful, and ungodly thinking.

Let's take this a step further.

I am greatly burdened about the children who grow up in Christian homes and do not go on to serve God.
The statistics are staggering that 80 percent do not go on to serve God.

In most instances, they live wicked, vile, and destroyed lives. Most Christian parents have not followed (II Cor 10:5) in their lives and certainly have not taught Junior how to do so.

Much of the thinking today is carnal, worldly, ungodly, and uncontrolled. (Gen 6:5) *and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

Part of the training up of a child in Proverbs 22:6 has to do with teaching them how to have a godly thought life.

How can I do that if my thought life is out of control?
Many lives and homes are destroyed because of the ungodly thought life of the parents, especially the father.

We think no one else knows, but God does!

(Ezek 11:5) And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.

We are out of fellowship with God and do not understand why things are not spiritually happening in their lives.

We go to church, read our bible, pray but have an uncontrolled thought life.

Everything is done mechanically with no spiritual power.

We are so activity oriented that we do not understand it is not activities that make a person spiritual.

Many young people in the church youth group are learning to have impure thought lives and therefore live lustful and ungodly lives right in the ministry of the church.

Our young people are going to every activity under the sun, but learning very little about having a controlled thought life or how to have a real relationship with God.

They are not learning this at home or at church. (Rom 13:14) *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.***

(Matt 5:28) *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

(II Cor 10:5) *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

The big question is:

How do I bring every thought into captivity?

*In the Bible, the heart & the mind are used interchangeably (II Cor 10:5) **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;***

See the word imaginations? It means fantasies.

Every person who is rebellion in their life is because they are living in a fantasy world.

A place where they allow their minds to run off and fantasize about living in another time, another place, with another woman, another man, being immoral with a boy or girl, man or woman, sports, activities etc..

Many people spend hours in their virtual reality world where they think no one else sees. **God sees!**

(Ezek 8:12) *Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.*

(II Corinthians 10:4) *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

Notice the phrase, ***to the pulling down of strongholds.***"

We wrestle not against flesh and blood.

Therefore, our weaponry is not carnal (fleshly).

However, it is in fact powerful through God for the pulling down of strongholds. (Interesting word).

Strongholds where? In the mind.

Strongholds ~ "a heavily fortified containment in which a person seeks "shelter" (a safe place) to escape reality."

(Ephesians 6:13-18) describes some of the spiritual weaponry God has given for us.

With wicked thoughts people fantasize about sin that we want never to be caught doing in real life.

Fantasy thinking is a type of secret, virtual reality that someday will become visible reality for all to see.

Many times people will fantasize about women or men in an impure fashion and secretly wish their life was like that.

However, it is an escape mechanism to a lustful life.

Many Christians do not think it is harmful, but it grieves the Holy Spirit and makes them powerless in their walk with God.

(Galatians 5:16-17) *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other **so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.***

Would you be devastated or humiliated if those closest to you knew everything you were thinking? (**Think about it!**)

If that kind of wicked thinking came out it would crush your family members.

Who are we actually sinning against when we refuse to bring out thoughts into captivity? God!

The Apostle Paul said, **every thought** to the obedience of Christ.

It does not mean we can keep the secret, impure thoughts to ourselves and serve God!

Guys, do you understand how this kind of impure thought life will eventually crush our wives?

Let me ask you this?

What secrets are hidden in your private life?

What do you know about yourself and what does God know about you-which no one else knows?

Ungodly, uncontrolled thinking will be a tremendous hindrance to you spiritually, also to your wife, husband, and your children.

In reality, an uncontrolled thought life is a spiritual heart issue.

(Ephesians 2:3) *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, **fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind**; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

The Christian does not have a real, intimate, personal, passionate relationship with God.

(Romans 12:1-3) the Apostle Paul deals with this:

*I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to **think** of himself more highly than he ought to **think**; but to **think** soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

If a man or woman has a real relationship with God, they will have a mind that is being transformed.

Otherwise, we will think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

It leads to uncontrolled selfish thinking.

He or she thinks of himself and the ungodly desires of the flesh and the mind!

I spoke with a former pastor, he told me that he had been lusting after women since he was a boy.

While in Bible College he lusted after women and then while in the ministry looked at pornography on a regular basis.

His life, ministry, and children have been destroyed. He said, ***Yet, I wanted to serve God.***

His thought life was totally out of control and no one had ever taught him how to not have an uncontrolled thought life.

Certainly, he could not serve God, and he destroyed the lives of his wife, and sons, by his selfish ungodly thinking.

How do I have a controlled mind bringing every thought into captivity?

1 You must have a real, intimate, personal, passionate relationship with God.

(1 Chron 28:9) *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

We need to meditate on God's Word, (Psalm 1:1-3).

We need to meditate on what God is saying to us through His Word.

When we spend time with God daily in His Word, we need ***stop and think about what we are reading.***

We need to listen to the Holy Spirit when He wants to show us something in God's Word.

If we have been thinking dirty, evil thoughts, we need to ask God to forgive us, and then look at God's Word about what He says about that evil thought.

Our thinking has to be **transformed** to God's thinking, (changed to God's thinking on the matter).

We need to forsake these thoughts (repent and turn from it).

(I John 1:9) *Illus: Explain Forsake, Don't Go Back!*

When evil thoughts come up I need to say, *“God, please forgive me for this wicked thought, I want to turn this over to you.”*

You must do that immediately at the point of impact!

You may have to do this more than once.

Ask God: *“What do you want me to thank & praise you for? (Hebrews 13:15) By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

It causes you to think on good things.

It reboots your mind and helps you to think on the things of Philippians 4:8.

(Phil 4:8) *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

2 We need to walk in the Spirit: (Gal 5:16-17, 25).

A Spirit controlled person is a Word controlled person **(including their thought life).**

3 Remove yourself from temptation, stay away from it!

(Rom 13:14) *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Guard yourself from the television, computer (make sure you have a filter on the computer I recommend, <http://www.cleaninter.net/>), [covenanteyes.net](http://www.covenanteyes.net) (Prov 16:3) *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

Stay away from anything that would be a temptation to your thought life.

4 Remember, that God is all you need for your life! You are to glorify Him in your life, **including your thought life**, (I Cor 6:19-20) *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

You must be content with His presence in your life and home and discontent with your sin, (Heb 13:4-6) *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. 5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

5 Read the change chapter of the Bible: Ephesians 4 over several times, and learn how to make Biblical long term change in your life, (Ephesians 4:22-24). You must learn the put off and put on principles with a renewed mind.

6 Make it a priority to teach your Family how to have a controlled thought life. This will make the issue more

sensitive to you each day when it is on the forefront of your teaching in your home.

The one thing that can destroy your home, your relationship with your wife, your husband, your children, and with God? Your uncontrolled thought life!

I am convinced that the lack of spiritual power we see today goes back to this secret life of the Christian. Much of the ruin of our children spiritually lies in this area as well.