

EACH THOUGHT AND EACH MOTIVE BENEATH HIS CONTROL

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“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Pet. 1:15).

The English word **conversation** used in this passage is not generally used today. What is the meaning? It comes from the Greek #391—**behavior**. You may like to have a list of the passages that use this word (2 Cor. 1:12; Gal. 1:13; Eph. 2:3 and 4:22; Php. 1:27 and 3:20; 1 Tim. 4:12; Heb. 13:5 & 13:7; James 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:15 & 18; 2:12; 3:1-2, 16; 2 Pet. 2:7 and 2 Peter 3:11).

Again we turn to a definition to find the meaning of **behavior**—actions, speech, thoughts, the way we dress, our choice of companions, etc., which everyone uses to judge morality. The following scripture describes it well:

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also **lusted**. Neither be ye **idolaters**, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to **eat and drink**, and rose up to **play**. Neither let us commit **fornication**, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also **murmured**, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. **There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.** Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say (1 Cor. 10:6-15).

My hope today is to edify you to be holy in **mind**, body, action, **motive**, speech and dress—everything. Remember that older women are commanded to teach the younger (Titus 2:3-5). Before they can teach the younger women, they must maintain certain qualities first:

- Holiness first
- Not false accuser
- Not given to much wine
- Teacher of good things

We can encourage and teach these qualities in others directly and by **EXAMPLE**. Christian women everywhere may also teach an unbelieving husband by **her chaste example [behavior]** (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

As we begin, note particularly the line in vs. 4 of the song, **“TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY”**, which says, **“Each thought and each motive beneath His control.”**

2 Cor. 10:3-5

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

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

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;

The weapons of our warfare are mighty! They are strong enough to take every thought captive for Christ.

Notice too that the weapons spoken about in Ephesians 6:11-18 are mighty.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:11-17).

The "whole armor" is not physical armor; it is spiritual—truth; righteousness; peace; faith; salvation; and the word of God.

And once we decide to use these weapons, doesn't that give us courage to fight sin, knowing that **we can win the fight**, that we are not destined to continually loose, and fail, and fall.

James 1:5-7

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord (James 1:5-7).

Satan has a reason for trying to make us doubt that we can take every thought captive. This passage is specifically applied to getting wisdom, but verse 7 applies to anything. Is it any wonder that so many people have a hard time overcoming sin when they waver at God's promises? "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

We must believe the promises of God!

If we do this, it is going to take some real changing. Today we are seeing a large portion of the church going into apostasy and preaching a social gospel, but back many years ago when the church as a whole taught "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," we were sometimes called a cult by the world.

Why do worldly people label us as a cult? They're too blind to see the difference between brainwashing and what the Lord is doing when He takes captive each thought for Himself.

1 Cor. 1:10

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10).

Not only are we to be of the same mind, but the same judgment! Even in matters of judgment, the Lord wants us to come to unity. What the world sees is a bunch of people that think the same, "therefore they must be brainwashed. They must be a cult."

What they don't see is that we're not following a man; we're of the same mind **because we think like Christ!**

Most people in the world even go so far as to say that if we all have the same judgment, something is wrong! Folks, if God commanded us to be of the same mind and judgment, then:

- 1) there is nothing wrong with it,
- 2) we can do it,
- 3) we should do it,
- 4) We should want to do it!

Would God command us to do something that is evil?

Isaiah 5:20

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isa. 5:20).

We need to make sure that our judgments don't condemn the judgments of God. If we stress "free moral agency" and individuality above God's commands, we just might be guilty of condemning God's judgments!

God's solution to the situation at Corinth is that we all speak the same thing. That's real unity!

How do we get each motive beneath God's control?

1 Corinthians 11:28-32

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.
31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:28-32).

When we take the Lord's Supper, we not only "look to Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith", but we examine ourselves. If we would judge ourselves we would not be judged.

Would you like to avoid a little chastening? Take advantage of the opportunity during the Lord's Supper to examine yourself, your actions and motives, and compare them to Christ's. It is so good to hear the men bring out points about Christ on the cross, to help us examine ourselves.

Psalms 119:57-60

57 Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep thy words.
58 I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.
59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.
60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments (Psa. 119:57-60).

We need to be continually thinking on our ways, making sure we are doing the right things for the right reasons. Are our thoughts important to God?

Matthew 5:28

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 (Matt. 5:28).

We can sin in our hearts without ever committing an action!

Psalms 58:2

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth (Psa. 58:2).

Proverbs 24:1-2

1 Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.
2 For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief (Pro. 24:2).

Proverbs 24:9

“The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men” (Pro. 24:9).

To think on foolishness is sin!

There is a blasphemous movie, *The Last Temptation*, in which Hollywood portrayed Jesus as an adulterer under the guise that it was “just a temptation,” and that He never actually did what He imagined on the cross. Folks, by Jesus’ own words, He could not have given his mind over to the wickedness that was in that movie without sinning. Anyone who falls to that lie does not understand that God wants our thoughts as well as our actions to be pure.

What is so important about our thoughts?

Proverbs 23:7

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee (Pro. 23:7).

Our thoughts are what we are.

Matt. 7:21

Out of our heart we think, and speak and act. That is why every idle word will be brought into judgment. That is why we will be judged by our actions; they show what we are.

Proverbs 12:5

The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit (Pro. 12:5).

He that doeth righteousness is righteous (1 John 3:7). You would think people would be able to figure that out. But now we hear people say things like, “If God looks at me thru the blood of Christ, He sees righteousness....”

Matthew 6:25

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? (Matt. 6:25).

Take no thought for tomorrow.

Romans 12:3

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 (Rom. 12:3)

Think soberly.

1 Corinthians 4:6

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another (1 Cor. 4:6).

Not puffed up.

1 Corinthians 13:5

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil (1 Cor. 13:5).

Love thinketh no evil.

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 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 (Isa. 55:6-7).

Forsake evil thoughts!

Philippians 2:6-8

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Php. 2:6-8).

Just look at the humility and obedience of Christ!

- 1) God wants control of our minds! (Mark 12:30)
- 2) God wants control of our thoughts!
- 3) God wants our whole being as a sacrifice to Him!

Romans 12:1-2 body, mind, heart and soul!

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.** 2 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 (Rom. 12:1-2).

How do we change our thoughts and our way of thinking?

Proverbs 16:3

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established (Pro. 16:3).

What if we commit our works to God?

Psalms 27:8

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek (Psa. 27:8).

Be willing to do it.

Romans 12:1-2

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. 2 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 (Rom. 12:1-2).

Transformed by new mind

Hebrews 4:12

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 (Heb. 4:12).

The Word will discern our thoughts.

Psalms 90:12

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom (Psa. 90:12).

Prayer: We are not immortal. We are going to die, and there will be a judgment. And the sooner we believe that, the sooner we will apply our hearts to wisdom, and not just play with wisdom.

Psalms 19:14

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer (Psa. 19:14).

Prayer: "Let the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight."

Psalms 119:34-36

Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. 35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. 36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness (Psa. 119:34-36).

Prayer: "Give me understanding....Incline my heart...."I wonder how much stronger we would be if we continually prayed this prayer.

Psalms 141:3-4

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. 4 Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties (Psa. 141:3-4).

Prayer: Out of the heart the mouth speaks.

Conclusion:

Philippians 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 (Php. 4:8).

FINALLY...THINK ON THESE THINGS!