

# *For the Love of the Family*

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*Godly Advice for Today's Families*

*Helping People Change Their Lives Biblically*

## *The Thought Life Of The Christian*

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***Philippians 4:6-8, Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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. II Corinthians 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 to how your thought life affects your fellowship and ultimately your walk with God? The Bible has many references to the believer's thinking. Some of the references are to bad thinking and some references to good thinking. The battle ground for the Christian is the mind because the devil works upon the mind. He knows if he controls the mind of the person, he controls that person.

Back in the book of Proverbs, the father is instructing his son as to his spiritual life and other areas as well. The Proverb's writer makes a statement that is a timeless principle of God. 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 this and then notice what he says 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 thinking. What is correct thinking? If I do not think correctly then how am I to think correctly? What kind of thinking does God want me to have? Each Christian has to realize that once we are saved we are in a spiritual battle. Really, for you and me it involves around how or what we think.

Through For the Love of The Family, I receive e-mails from many people all over the world. Many times it is from a devastated Christian wife, who finds out her husband has allowed his thinking to go unrestrained and the results have been devastating. Awhile back, a young lady contacted me whose husband was an assistant pastor. This young couple was just a few years removed from Bible College. She picked up his cell phone one day because her phone was not working. She noticed there was a text message from someone and she looked at it. Unfortunately, what she saw 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. Of course, 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.

**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. Galatians 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.* Folks, the kind of thinking I just described, is selfish, lustful, and ungodly thinking.

Let's take this a step further. I am greatly burdened about the children who grow up in Independent-Fundamental Baptist homes and do not go on to serve God. The statistics are staggering that 80 percent of all children who grow up in an Independent Baptist church do not go on to serve God. In most instances, they live wicked, vile, and destroyed lives. Most Christian parents have not followed II Corinthians 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. **Part of the training up of a child in Proverbs 22:6 has to do with teaching him or her how to have a godly thought life.** How can I do that if my thought life is out of control and not godly? Many lives and homes are destroyed because of the ungodly thought life of the parents, especially the father. Quite frankly, folks, through our counseling ministry, I have spoken to many pastors and Christian workers who have had their lives destroyed because of an ungodly thought life. **You see, they think no one else knows, but God does!** They are out of fellowship with God and do not understand why things are not spiritually happening in their lives. They go to church, read their bible, and pray but have an uncontrolled thought life. Everything is done mechanically with no spiritual power.

The sad part of what is happening today in many Independent Baptist churches is 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. Romans 13:14, *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.***

Men, the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 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 Corinthians 10:5 tells us, *and bringing **into captivity every thought** to the obedience of Christ.* Of course, the big question is how do I bring every thought into captivity?

With wicked thoughts people fantasize about sin that we want never to be caught doing in real life. Really, 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. The Christian does 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. The question comes to mind here, whom are we actually sinning against when we refuse to bring out thoughts into captivity? God! Folks, 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-that no one else knows?

Folks, ungodly, uncontrolled thinking will be a tremendous hindrance to you spiritually, 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. In 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, they 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!**

In counseling a former Independent Baptist 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. Yet he said, 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 others lives 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. II Timothy 2:15, Galatians 5:16-25. We need to understand we need to meditate on God's Word, Psalm 1:1-3. Our thinking has to be **transformed** to God's thinking. When we spend time with God daily in His Word, we need stop and think about what we are reading. We need to meditate on what God is saying to us through His Word. We need to listen to the Holy Spirit when He wants to show us some thing in God's Word.
2. 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. Again, our mind has to be transformed, (changed to God's thinking on the matter). We need to forsake the thought (repent and turn from it). I John 1:9, Luke 13:3.
3. 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 may have to do this more than once.
4. We need to walk in the Spirit, Galatians 5:16-17, 25. A Spirit controlled person is a Word controlled person (**including their thought life**).
5. Remove yourself from temptation, stay away from it! Romans 13:14. Guard yourself from the television, computer (make sure you have a filter on the computer I recommend cleaninternet, <http://www.cleaninter.net/>), and anything that would be a temptation to your thought life.
6. Remember, that God is all you need for your life! You are to glorify Him in your life, **including your thought life**, I Corinthians 6:19-20. You must be content with His presence in your life and home and discontent with your sin, Hebrews 13:4-5.
7. 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.
8. Make it a priority to teach your children and wife 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.

Remember folks, 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.

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