

Becoming Spiritually Minded

Many of you grew up hearing the phrase :

Romans 8:6 (KJV)

(6) For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace

We have often thought that being carnally minded was sinful thinking

But a better rendering of the scripture is:

Romans 8:5-8

(5) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

(6) For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

(7) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

(8) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

The scripture actually says that it is a series of thought patterns that are:

- a) based on the flesh
- b) hostile to God and his law
- c) resulting in death

And as a result the person who thinks this way cannot please God and the fruit of such thought patterns is death.

Fleshly thoughts are just not the usual suspects we would keep together.

They are things like negative thinking; doubt; defeated thinking; bitterness and envy, smallness of mind

Fleshly thoughts are those thought processes that we are not just bombarded with but those that we actively engage in.

Because of our sin state human beings are negative by nature.

Because of our fallen world we are surrounded with things that cater to & capitalize of our now 'natural' negativity.

Even well meaning people can operate out of a negative basis, come from a negative place.

We need to cultivate within ourselves the ability and tendency towards creativity and Godliness towards spiritual thinking.

The scripture very clearly tells us that life and peace come from a spiritual mind, where as death comes from a mind set on fleshly things.

Paul in Corinthians tells us to take every thought captive that comes against God.

The writer of Hebrews warns us *Without faith (without a conviction of truth, without trust and confidence), it is impossible to please God.* (Heb 11:6). We underestimate the power of our thought life.

The power of thoughts

Every thought has power.
Every thought has impact.

Now lets get this out of the way before we move on... can you take EVERY thought captive EVERY day? No. Perfection this side of heaven is not possible, but what a great life time goal.

But think how much further along you would be if you tried.

It is not only the thoughts we have but the impact and influences of other voices. The media telling you the end is near. The politicians telling you the country is doomed. Your "well meaning" friends & family telling you it is impossible or you cant do it, or you should not do it.

All of these voices contributing to a positive, fruitful thought life or a negative, hindering thought life.

1 Corinthians 2:9

(9) But as it is written, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard," nor has it entered into the heart of man, "the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

If you allow someone else to make your world, they will always make it to small.

Now listen to this:

Joshua 6:1-2

(1) And Jericho was completely shut up because of the sons of Israel. None went out and none came in.

(2) And Jehovah said to Joshua, See, I have given Jericho into your hand, and its king, and the mighty men of war.

There is a city and storage filled with an army of warriors.

Archeologists have found at the site of Jericho discoveries of large amount of grain. When Joshua approached this city they were prepared and provisioned for long siege, maybe even years. They had water, food, they felt very secure and there was nothing to say that they would ever surrender.

In 1957 Kathleen Kenyon published a work entitled "Digging Up Jericho". In it she describes the walls.

The mound, or 'tell' of Jericho was surrounded by a great earthen rampart, or embankment, with a stone retaining wall at its base. The retaining wall was some (12–15 feet) high. On top of that was a mudbrick wall (six feet) thick and about (20–26 feet) high.⁴ At the crest of the embankment was a similar mudbrick wall whose base was roughly (46 feet) above the ground level outside the retaining wall

It would of naturally held thousands of people, and everyone from the surrounding areas would have flooded in.

And God says to Joshua “see I have given you the city”

In the natural, there was nothing to indicate that the city would ever be Joshua’s, in fact to the fleshly mind, the natural way of thinking, it was exactly the opposite.

Everything was screaming this is not going to work, this is not possible.

Napoleon Hill coined the phrase “*what the mind can see & believe, it can achieve*”

Your mind and your thoughts are the only things in your life that you have complete and utter control of.

All success begins with a clear picture in your mind of precisely what you want.

“See I have given you the city...”

This statement was not subject to the environment ,circumstance, or upon on the agreement and participation of the Canninites.

God decreed it. It was a revelatory Statement of fact.

*Joshua do not be moved by carnal thinking, by fleshly thoughts,
by be moved by my Words d see the world how I see it.
I have given you this city.*

So lets look at the enemies to spiritual thinking.

Enemies to being spiritually minded:

1. Fearful thinking

Fear is not a reality, it is a state of mind that exist because of lack of preparation or experience.

Nothing has happened till it has happened.

Thinking about it, dwelling on it doesn't change anything.

Planning and preparing does.

How do you overcome a fear of flying...learn

Flying is scarry.

2. Selfish thinking

Great achievements don't come from great selfishness, but great sacrifice.

If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way.

Everyday that you do not give yourself to your passion and desire is another day you will have lost.

Proverbs teaches that there is no perfect time to start...except for now.

If you spend your time looking out the window waiting for rain, you will never sow.

3. Defeated thinking

You can't buy a kit for life from Home Depot, it is a do-it-yourself project.

Opportunity often comes disguised in the form of misfortune or temporary set back.

Winners are not those that never fail, but those that never quit.

So many people are defeated in their mind before they ever start.

4. Victim thinking

The school of hard knocks is open to all applicants, the education is free, but not cheap however, the lessons will last a lifetime. Because every broken promise, every disappointment, every struggle holds within it the seed for potential greatness.

Listen, there is not a group of people sitting around conspiring against you.

There is no government database with your name on it.

Think this through with me.

Sharon thinks Fred is a jerk,
Bob knows Fred is a jerk,
The last 3 bosses had a problem with Fred,
Who is the common denominator?

Your not a victim Fred, you're a jerk!

And that revelation should bring you great comfort.

Being a jerk is not a disease.
It is not genetic.

It is a decision.

Do I stay a jerk, or learn not to be one?

You have no right to blame others for that which is in your power to change.

You could change your attitude and your thought life.

5. Entitlement thinking

The reality is that there are very few jobs with big salaries and little responsibilities.

You are only entitled to the fruit from the price you paid, not the harvest from another life

Another may choose to give to you fruit from their life, but you are not entitled to it.

Most people don't achieve their full potential because they are lazy and lack discipline.

Not because God has left them
Or the economy is bad
Or because they lost their job
But because they are lazy

You may have been retrenched from your current position but that doesn't mean you sit around and wait for the next 6 figure job to become available.

It means you go flip burgers.

Your biggest opportunities are right where you are now. The person who does more than what they are paid to do, will end up being paid more. The best thing that ever happened to me was that my boss refused to give me a raise I was entitled to.

6. Undisciplined thinking

Taking every thought captive means that you use everything that you have at your disposal to accomplish the goals that you deem most important.

If you believe that living a petty small life is the most important thing you are called to do, then you will think petty, small bitter thoughts.

If you want to change the world, then you will discipline your mind.

7. Safe thinking

The person who has just succeed has either just failed or is about to fail. That's negative. No.

The person who has never made a mistake, will never do anything. I promise you, I will fail. Why, because I will do stuff I have never done before, things I have yet to learn.

How do you rate yourself on the can-do-omitter?

Are you a can't do person or a can and will do person.

Already thinking up reasons why something won't work will guarantee its failure.

So how do you change the way you think?

Romans 12:2

2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

To transform means to:

- to convert one form of energy to another

To be transformed means to be converted or transfigured

Paul here tells us that this is a daily process that happens as your mind is renewed from carnal or fleshly thinking to spiritual thinking. And the outcome is that we will fulfill the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

So how do you do that? How do you transform your mind?

1. Start with a dream and work backwards

Always start with the end in mind.

If you could give yourself to something whole heartedly what would it be? What is your life worth?

2. Allow your imagination to be your only limiter

Remember, eye has not seen nor ear heard...

Don't try and invent the process, but allow God to reveal the process

Don't try and make up the plan, discover the plan

God can turn all things together for the good of those that love Him

Remember God invented the imagination, the devil did not.

God gave us the power of visualization – Tony Robbins and Napoleon Hill didn't invent them. So let God and your imagination set the limit of your dreams.

3. Make sure you are getting the right input

Now I DID NOT say only positive input, anyone can hire 'yes-men'

You can decide you don't believe in gravity, but me telling you not to jump off a building isn't me being negative, it is just me being aware of something you may not be aware of.

You not listening to the advice of someone who loves you is just stupidity. Get good input.

4. Be kind to yourself.

When people get a revelation of what they could be, they often slip back into 'what could have been' if they only knew this earlier.

Don't cultivate the victim mentality. Don't give it room.

You are exactly where you need to be, doing what you need to be doing, hearing what you need to be hearing...now is your time to change your tomorrow and now is the time to stop dwelling in your past.

5. Build margins and thinking time into your life

Faucets are designed to work properly under pressure – we are not not.

Creative ideas often come to people when they are asleep – why?

Because the brain has an opportunity to get through to them. The world has happened. Always keep a pad and a pencil beside your bed.

What if you intentionally built margins into your life for creative thinking time?

What if you got up 30 minutes earlier with the express purpose of reading your bible first and then doing nothing but thinking and allowing God to speak to you.

6. Read

"I don't like to read"

“I can’t read”

“I don’t have time to read”

What you are really saying is:

“I don’t like to grow

I don’t want to grow

I will not make time to grow

If you don’t feed your mind with good, you will only flood it with bad.

There are no excuses

Audio books, MP3 sermons, seminars you can attend.

Invest in your mind. Sermons, books, tapes.

Creating a better life is a prime example

“I cant afford \$20” Rewrite that as “My family and I are not worth a \$20 investment”

I don’t want to spend a Saturday listening to people who are successful...that’s why you are where you are

I don’t have the time – you never will

I know everything I need to know.....spell idiot for me

“I have heard all that stuff before”

After 20 years of reading leadership books I have yet to read a sigle idea that I have not read at least in part somewhere else.

The fact that people keep repeating it means that it has to have some sort of substance!

Your thoughts are the only thing you have 100% control of in your life. Invest in renewing your mind and changing your life.

