

In session # 1 we learned that God set the normal life as true righteousness, holiness and knowledge of the truth.

They were lost in the fall but God is restoring them to the redeemed. Ephesians 4:24.

We looked at Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 16:2 - Self deceit is common in man's heart.

Are we recognizing it?

Are we listening for how it sounds?

We may be realizing it more by now, if we've been paying attention to our thoughts with the intent of guarding them. Proverbs 4:23; Duet 4:9.

We may be starting to see patterns and themes of thinking we need to change and replace with more God honoring thoughts.

Because we learned in session # 2 God commands us to and because there are hefty price tag's for not guarding our hearts.

We learned our emotional state of being is connected to what we do and think as God designed.

I pray the handout - Do right/ Do wrong chart and scripture has been beneficial to you.

Romans 2:9-10 Tells us as a result of what we do

we will feel good or bad as our conscience either excuses or accuses us.

We also learned that when properly heeded our emotions can be like a springboard to bring us back to God in godly sorrow leading to repentance. 2 Cor 7:9-11. Paul says in verse 9 - you felt a godly grief.

In 2 Cor 11:3 John MacArthur commented - Paul had a zeal for their spiritual purity and was deeply concerned to the point of jealousy for the Corinthians. He compared the danger facing the Corinthian church like that of Eve. That they would fall prey to the satanic lies and have their minds corrupted. The tragic result? That they would abandon their single devotion to Christ in favor of the sophisticated error of the false apostles.

We must be vigilant and on guard watching over and keeping our hearts.

Proverbs 4:23.

Countless things vie for- compete for our hearts affection and focus.

If we are not careful we to like Eve and the Corinthians can be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

The old hymn...

" Oh to Grace how great a debtor daily I am constrained to be! Let Thy goodness like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee. Prone to wander Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love- Here's my heart oh take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above! - Isn't this the reality we all long for?

So how do we handle these thoughts in our hearts we've written in our little notebooks? We want to seek diligently to put into practice the spiritual discipline of governing our thoughts. To renew our minds with God's word becoming more aligned with thoughts that please God.

Let's turn to scripture for guidance and clarity as we begin to address one thought at a time...

Isaiah 55:8-9, Ps 94:11,

1 Cor 3:18-20, Proverbs 21:2, Proverbs 3:5-7, Proverbs 28:26, Rom 12:3,16.

Proverbs 12:5a "The thoughts of the righteous are just"

We want to give thought to make this practice our aim until it becomes a habit. 2 Cor 8:21, Rom 12:17. We must get and put wisdom into our hearts. God's word will renew and change our heart's.

I would like to share a resource I've put together. It's from John MacArthur's teaching and out of my own desperate and personal need to learn how to practically renew my wrong sinful thinking. I pray it will be edifying to you as well. Afterwards I will give some practical examples of some thoughts that needed to be taken captive and replaced.

Psalms 118:8 It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 10-

The methods in God for pulling down strongholds are faith, prayer and obedience to the word of God.

These are the effective weapons of every true soldier of Jesus Christ. It is by these that strongholds are destroyed.

- What do we mean by strong holds? verse 4-5

Paul saw himself as a soldier waring against the proud reasoning of man, arguments which oppose the truth.

- What were these arguments opposed to? verse 5

Against the knowledge of God. Reasonings which had no room for God.

Verse 6 The apostle Paul was in no mood to sign a truce with these. Rather he felt committed to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

All man's speculations, opinions and thoughts must be judged in the light of the Lord Jesus.

Paul was warning: we must not follow our own intellects in defiance of the Lord and disobedience to him.

Verse 12 Their only standard of measuring is their own life.

If this is one's standard of measurement - in Himself,

it stands to reason that he or she is always right!

There is no room for improvement. Those who do this or not wise.

Verse 15,16 Paul's hope was that when the Corinthians faith increased he could move on into further regions as God's apostle. Corinth was so occupying his time that he was hindered from fulfilling his mission to the regions beyond.

How does this Thinking and measuring of oneself hinder the usefulness of the believer?

- Read through some of your self talk log...

What arguments and lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God do you see?

Does this thinking leave you more of a radiant Christian or do you see it as hindering your usefulness as a believer?

If your answer is yes to the latter... What now?

This is how I needed personally at that time and as an ongoing practice to respond to Gods word in this matter.

" I must acknowledge I have put my trust in myself before God and seek His forgiveness.

1 Jn 1:9

I must admit that I, myself have never been the standard by which to evaluate life.

The one and only authority is God and His word.

This is how I will seek to began to take every thought captive:

Scripture reading helps-

Ps 118:8-16

1- Daily work on my self talk log by taking note of my thoughts Proverbs 4:23

2- Take each thought and hold it up to the light of God's word: Philippians 4:8

- How does it line up?

- Is it truth speaking or is it deceitful?

- Replace each thought with biblical truth - use scripture.

- Pray for God to reveal thoughts that need to be replaced and help me to exercise my mind towards godliness in what I will and will not allow my mind to dwell on. - Faith - Believe God in this process of helping me to grow and become more like Christ in my obedience to truth thinking and speaking.

Psalm 118:11 "They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the Lord I cut them off!"

At times this is how it seemed my thoughts would come into my mind! Like bees swarming!

Remember we learned that we are talking to ourselves at an incredible rate of speed throughout the day.

I can say today by God's grace

in the name of the Lord He helped me to learn this practice and continues to help me to cut them off...

one thought at a time.

Those lofty opinions, proud reasonings in my heart that exalt themselves above the knowledge of God.

In obedience to take every thought captive and replace it with biblical truth you and I will be learning and developing a new habit of exercising ourselves in renewing our thinking that pleases God and will bring great peace to our soul. Philippians 2:5

Praise God we can have more and more Christlike thoughts... And we will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to Him be glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen

Now for some suggestions to help in this practice and some thoughts that need to be replaced with biblical truth.

A few of the specific thoughts I got from a resource of Martha Peace. The replacements for those thoughts I worked on and I pray will give you some ideas of how you can practically apply to some your own thoughts.

A few of the other examples of thoughts I'll be using are thoughts I have heard women say or write down.

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"I can't do this anymore!"

2 Cor 5:7, James 4:14-15, Proverbs 28:26b

“ I may feel this way right now but God’s objective word tells me how I am to look at this seemingly impossible situation- task at hand, not by my subjective feelings.

I can walk by faith and not by sight. This may be hard, but if God wills for me to continue in this trial if I handle it His way He will help me.

I do not know what tomorrow will bring. I am not promised tomorrow, today is all I am given. I can do this for 24 hours. I will use my mind and energy now to focus on and thank God for His help to sustain me so that I can endure and honor Him in spite of and regardless of how I feel.”

“Why doesn’t God help me? Look at what He does for others?”

Romans 12:1-2,

1 Thessalonians 5:18

“ Even my ability to breath is from God.

He saved me from my sins.

If He never did another thing for me, He has done far more than I deserved.

Just because God has not answered my prayers in the way I wanted Him to doesn’t mean that He is not at work in this situation.

God please forgive me and cleanse me from my sinful wrong thinking and unbelieving heart attitude about You.

Help me to be grateful for what You do for others and to inwardly and outwardly rejoice with others as they share about Your goodness to them.”

“If God we’re good, he wouldn’t let me suffer like this”

1 Peter 4:12-19, 1 Jn 1:9

“God always does good. Quite possibly I’m suffering because of my sinful attitude.

I can repent of my wicked thought in my heart about God and eventually I will feel better. But if I should continue to suffer I can ask God to help me and He will. Perhaps I need to grow perseverance”

“I will never get over being hurt by my friend”

Ephesians 4:29-32

I can get over this hurt. The first way to began is to refuse to listen to these hurtful bitter thoughts that I am having about her. She has never hurt me before, something must be going on with her. I will go to her and see how I can help.”

“I wonder what it would be like if my husband were romantic like my friends husband, her husband is wonderful.”

Proverbs 28:26, 1 Jn 1:9

“ I have exactly the husband I need. God is good.

Many women no longer have their husbands- they have passed away. What they would give to have even their worst day with their husbands back again. It is sinful to think this way. Please forgive me Father Thank you for the husband that You have given me.

Rather than sitting around sinfully daydreaming,

I will get busy making out a list of ways I can show respect and gratefulness for my husband and start practicing some on my list for him this week.”

“I Struggle with trusting the leadership of my husband”

1 Peter 3:1-2, Ephesians 5:1, Romans 8:28-29

Oh Lord God I desperately need You to help me obey and follow Your word and not my my understanding and feelings in this matter.

1 Peter 3:1-2 is to be my guide. I will memorize and speak it to myself often. “Likewise wives be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives when they see your respectful and pure conduct”

Please show me, Oh Lord where I may be falling short -

for no one is without sin. Please grant me godly sorrow over my sins. For my sins are against You first. Psalm 51:4

Regardless of the correctness or lack there of of my husband’s leadership I can by God’s grace put into practice and have a respectful heart attitude.

I will do this by paying careful attention to my heart and taking captive any hard thought or unbelieving thought that might come to my mind. Proverbs 4:23 so that my heart doesn’t become hardened and further complicate this matter. I will earnestly pray for my husband while I am seeking to put on a disposition of trust in the Lord as Ephesians 5:1 instructs me.

Romans 8:28-29 God tells me for those who love God all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose. Verse 29 tells me His good purpose is to conform me to the image of His Son Jesus Christ.

I will work on a plan of action and make a list of practical ways I can show respect to my husband. Romans 12:17.

I Will put into practice two of those this week.

Should I see I may need additional help I can seek biblical counseling at my church.

“I am a failure of a parent”

Psalm 139:23-24, 1 John 2:1, Matthew 5:23, 2 Peter 3:18, Philippians 3:12

Oh God please help me to see this matter honestly.

What have I thought or done that may be causing my conscience to accuse me and to evaluate myself as a failure?

Should God show me I have sinned against Him and my child, I have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 1:9 - I can go to Him now and confess my sin and He will forgive and cleanse me of my unrighteousness.

I can then go to my child and confess specifically how I have sinned against God and my child and ask for their forgiveness.

Should God show me I am wrongly judging and condemning myself because

I have an unrealistic perfectionist standard for how I should and should not parent and when I violate my standard I judge myself guilty, this to can be confessed to God and repented of. God does not expect me to be perfect but He does expect me to be growing. 2 Peter 3:18

Philippians 3:12 It’s not that I have already reached this goal or have become perfect, but I keep pursuing it and I am sure of this, that He

Who started a good work in me will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6

Should I fail to find my soul quieting down after following this plan of action, I can ask for biblical counseling to help me address my specific thoughts and my standard of parenting and praise God He will provide the help I need to solve this problem.