

# Your Thoughts Can Destroy You

## Introduction:

1. We recently had a testimony at our men's meeting about the debilitating nature of negative thinking.
2. We know from personal experience that our thoughts can run amok about others and their actions.
3. We encounter those who allow their thoughts to turn against God and His providence for bad events.
4. It is impossible to fully please Jesus Christ and enjoy the abundant life without ruling your thoughts, for (1) He discerns your thoughts and intents and (b) all thoughts of foolishness lead to outward sins.
5. Loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength condemns negative thinking (Mark 12:30).
6. Your usefulness as a Christian in serving God and His kingdom depends on keeping your thoughts.
7. The issue here is not thoughts against God's law like mental adultery or plans for revenge, but rather the debilitating thoughts about oneself, others, or God that cause depression, bitterness, or despair.
8. The devil roams around like a lion to devour the weak – by sending destructive thoughts into your mind, which the Bible calls his fiery darts and prescribes the shield of faith (I Peter 5:8; Eph 6:16).
9. Your thoughts originate from your old man, new man, conscience, Holy Spirit, the devil, and others.
10. You cannot blame others for your evil thoughts, for they are your own (Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:21).
11. You – your soul/spirit/mind/heart – are separate from thought-originating sources, but attempting to define these things is metaphysical nonsense or infringing on the territory of Jesus Christ (Heb 4:12).
12. Ministers must capture thoughts, which include heresy and self-destructive thinking (II Cor 10:4-6).
13. Even the thought of foolishness is sin – you do not have to commit the sin (Prov 24:9; Job 31:1); but the thought of sin will lead to actual sin, given sufficient opportunity (II Sam 13:2; James 1:13-16).
14. Your thoughts are known by God, so do not think for even a second that your thoughts are your own (I Chron 28:9; Job 42:2; Ps 94:11; 139:2; Amos 4:13; Luke 5:22; 6:8; 11:17; 24:38; Heb 4:12).
15. God is right to judge you for your thoughts, and He will (Is 55:7; 59:7; 65:2; 66:18; Jer 4:14; 6:19).
16. The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord (Genesis 6:5; Prov 12:15; 21:2; 15:26).
17. Righteous men think right thoughts, because they rule the heart and thoughts (Pr 4:23; 12:5; Phil 4:8).
18. You think all the time – just try to stop thinking! You are thinking pro or con about this very sermon!
19. We learned this morning about the cause of Jesus Christ – destructive thoughts are not allowed: your thoughts are equal to David's Goliath, but you can slay them by faith and zeal in Jesus Christ!
20. Can thoughts destroy you? Consider the line that Paul drew short of destruction (II Cor 4:8-10).
21. Can thoughts destroy you? Consider countenance, feasting, and health (Pr 15:13,15; 17:22; 18:14).
22. Can thoughts destroy you? Consider the confusion and evil works from bitterness (Jas 3:14-16; 1:8).

## THOUGHTS ABOUT YOURSELF

- A. Thoughts about yourself are part of the passions common to all men (Acts 14:15; Jas 5:17).
- B. Elijah was afraid and depressed after one of the greatest revivals in history (I Kings 19:1-4).
- C. Some men are introverted thinkers more than others: they are at great risk for destruction; we may call them melancholy, moody, immature, or meditative; but they must rule thoughts.
- D. These persons know this internal monster and master of negative thinking chases them 24/7.
- E. Any haughty thought about your thoughts or wisdom is utter folly before God (I Cor 3:20), and such thoughts will lead to complete frustration with others who do not love you as much.
- F. Think soberly about yourself, without exalting yourself for temptation (Rom 12:3; Gal 6:3).
- G. God has no room for your puffed up thoughts, which are truly ignorant thoughts (I Cor 8:2).
- H. It is through your haughty and proud thoughts that you destroy your relationships (Pr 13:10).
- I. Are you fearful or worried about tomorrow? Stop faithless or fretful thinking (Matt 6:25,34)!
- J. The heart is incredibly deceitful and lies – the worst thing you can do is believe it (Jer 17:9)!
- K. If you confess your sins and do not feel forgiven, whose fault is it? Why do you not believe? His many plain promises are throughout the Bible! Why do you believe yourself over Him?

- L. There are childish thought patterns, which can be identified by their effect on your life and fulfilling your responsibilities, and it is your duty to outgrow them (I Cor 13:11)!
- M. What is the source of these: “I can’t do it,” “It doesn’t really matter,” “I will just fail again,” “Hold back to avoid failing again,” “It didn’t work before,” “I’ll wait till I’m stronger,” “I’m not very important,” “My efforts are not needed,” or “Someone else will do it”?
- N. You cannot hide by shirking duties or going to bed – your whole life is going to get much worse, and you will have to pay for these foolish and rebellious choices, both now and later.
- O. Any thoughts leading to withdrawal, depression, or inactivity are lying thoughts of the devil.
- P. These are not from God, a pure conscience, or wise mind. They are devilish and destructive!
- Q. It is common to be perplexed or cast down, but do you stop thoughts there (II Cor 4:8-10)?
- R. David followed a logical and intimate process of addressing depression (Ps 42:1-11; 43:1-5).
- S. If you want your thoughts established, then commit your works unto the Lord (Prov 16:3).
- T. If you are going to think about your life, then do self-examination for sins (Psalm 119:59).
- U. David encouraged himself in the Lord and acted (I Sam 30:6). Do you know how? Do you?
  1. Do you know to raise the shield of faith by remembering God’s goodness and promises?
  2. Step over the gunwale, and He will strengthen you (Psalm 27:13-14; Matthew 14:28-31)?
  3. Note closely that David immediately went into action after encouraging (I Sam 30:7-20).
- V. You must (1) believe God, (2) examine your thoughts, (3) rule thoughts, (4) think holy thoughts, (5) emphasize thanking over thinking, (6), do your duties, and (7) serve others.
- W. Between the Word of God and serving others, you can push foolish thoughts out of mind.

## **THOUGHTS ABOUT OTHERS**

- A. When you categorize men by criteria other than scripture, you are guilty of evil thoughts (Jas 2:4); therefore, it is your wisdom to think of even the worst believer as a child of God and your brother in the family of God (Matt 10:40-42; 18:5; 25:40; I Cor 12:22-25; Heb 6:10).
  1. God chose the foolish, poor, weak, and base for His elect, especially you (I Cor 1:26-29)!
  2. Any advantage you think you have over others, God gave it to you. Get down (I Cor 4:7)!
  3. God brings together many different souls for His glory and our perfection (I Cor 12:18).
- B. It is your wisdom to think of others and their things more highly than you think of yourself and your things, if you will be wise (Rom 12:3,10; Eph 4:2; 5:21; Phil 2:1-4; I Pet 5:5).
  1. This is the servant’s mentality that will help you think more like the Lord Jesus Christ.
  2. This can help pull you out of selfish and proud thoughts about yourself to love others.
  3. Rather than thinking of what others should do to or for you, you must get busy for them.
  4. Jesus Christ taught the wisdom that it is more blessed to give than receive (Acts 20:35).
  5. These are the only people that have real friends, because they are friendly (Prov 18:24).
- C. The Holy Spirit’s definition of love will save you from destructive thoughts (I Cor 13:4-7).
  1. “Envieth not,” means to rejoice with brothers who are rejoicing under God’s blessings.
  2. “Is not puffed up,” means to keep your own thoughts about yourself humble and subdued.
  3. “Seeketh not her own,” means to have no ambition to be anyone but the very best servant.
  4. “Thinketh no evil,” means to put the best construction on the words or actions of others.
  5. “Rejoiceth not in iniquity,” means to be deeply wounded when others are caught in sin.
  6. “Believeth all things,” means to assume all is well even when actions and words are bad.
  7. “Hopeth all things,” means to still assume the best even when you can no longer believe!
- D. There are only two options for you to pursue, if you imagine that someone has offended you.
  1. The best option is to blow right over it, as a glorious man would do (Pro 19:11; Col 3:13).
  2. The other option is to kindly confront them alone to reconcile (Matt 5:23-25; 18:15-17).

3. Telling others or getting bitter in your heart are both equally wrong and akin to murder.
4. Become a total expert at forgiving, forbearing, and forgetting what others say or do.
- E. Why do some have a great memory for small faults of others, but no memory for their own?
  1. The devil corrupts their operating system to default to errors of others in pride and hatred.
  2. It is wisdom to remember our dear Lord's analogy about beams and motes (Matt 7:3-5).
- F. What others are thinking about you can be very destructive, if it is beyond pursuing charity.
  1. If God is pleased with you, and He plainly gave the criteria, others that count will be fine.
  2. You know if you have a tendency in this direction. Confess it; seek counsel; please God.

## **THOUGHTS ABOUT GOD**

- A. A reprobate never has any positive thoughts about God in any meaningful way (Psalm 10:4).
- B. But weak believers think God has forgotten them, cannot use them, will not forgive them, is still angry at them for past sins, cannot bless them due to past sins, or does not love them.
- C. They lie against the truth and the facts and turn Him into a monster that deals fear and pain.
- D. These thoughts are blasphemous and lying suggestions of the devil to pervert God's reputation, which you can resist and quench with the pure words of scripture about the Lord.
- E. Get one thing straight for sure – God is the LORD, and He can anything He wishes with His creatures, for He is the Potter, and they are the clay (Job 33:12; Is 45:5-10; Rom 9:14-24).
- F. The glorious truth of Scripture is that God is kinder and more merciful than you will ever be.
  1. If it comes to forgiveness, His thoughts and ways are better than yours (Isaiah 55:6-9).
  2. If it comes to mercy, He knows your frame and pities like a good father (Ps 103:8-14).
  3. If it comes to providing the desires of your heart, He is better than a father (Matt 7:9-11).
- G. Any thought that does not measure up to the Bible and vindicate God and the gospel 100% is from your lying heart and/or the devil! Make every thought glorify and praise God as perfect.
- H. If you worship God with conditions or protected sins, He will deceive you for your rebellion against Him and His word (Ezek 14:1-11; Psalm 66:18; Prov 15:8; 28:9).
- I. God remembers those who think upon Him favorably, and He will reward them (Mal 3:16).
- J. Guard your thoughts, and do not think it strange that He allows pain or persecution in your life for noble purposes (Rom 5:3-5; James 1:2-4; II Cor 12:9-11; I Peter 4:12-19).
- K. Rather than blame God for being unfair to a jewel like you, remember the four reasons why bad things happen to Christians, which have been taught before, which truly vindicate Him.
- L. Since He promised to never leave you nor forsake you, then you should be able to be content and happy with any set of circumstances or trouble (Heb 13:5-6; Acts 16:25; Hab 3:17-19).
- M. God is infinitely and perfectly holy, just, and righteous in all His ways. Submit all to Him!
  1. Mrs. Job did not know how to think, but Job corrected her foolish thoughts (Job 2:9-10).
  2. David prayed while there was hope: He worshipped when it was gone (II Sam 12:15-25).
  3. No matter what circumstances come, they are immeasurably less than what you deserve!
  4. No matter what circumstances come, they all work together for your good (Rom 8:28).

### **Conclusion:**

1. You must learn to talk to yourself about the thought inputs that plague you – this is self-examination.
2. You must learn to reject any thought inputs from the devil, your flesh, or the world via reading, television, music, friends, activities, or any other source that sets you up for destructive thinking.
3. You must learn to identify your thoughts as separate from your conscience and call yourself a liar!
4. It is a godly exercise of great men – spiritually great men – to examine their thoughts (Ps 139:23-24).
5. The Lord Jesus Christ – the Founder of our religion – exposes the thoughts of all men (Luke 2:34-35).
6. Do you hate vain thoughts? How much? Just those of others? Or of yourself as well? (Ps 119:113).

7. What do you think about? Forget about Hollywood's worldview! Examine your own thoughts! Are they God-oriented thinking patterns? Self-exalting? Self-destroying? Other-despising? Other-loving?
8. It is justifiable and proper for you to pray for God to direct your thoughts (I Chron 29:18; Ps 119:36).
9. Thoughts must be conformed to God and His sanctuary – you cannot survive without it (Ps 73:16).
10. If you have had a bad thought, then shut up, confess it immediately, and forget it (Proverbs 30:32).
11. Conversion will correct your thinking, just as it did our beloved brother Paul's thoughts (Acts 26:9).
12. Paul gave an inspired and outstanding recipe for good and right thinking for wise men (Phil 4:8).
13. It is our duty as a result of God's mercy to conform our thinking to the will of God (Rom 12:1-2).
14. Instead of thinking, meditate and muse on God and His works (Ps 1:2; 63:6; 77:12; 119:148; 143:5).
15. Instead of thinking, focus on thanking, because all destructive thinking is the opposite of thanking!
16. Instead of thinking, get active and do something that is on your plate that God and men expect of you.

**For further study:**

1. The sermon outline, "[Why Bad Things Happen to Christians](#)," gives sound explanations for the troubles of life.
2. The sermon outline, "[The Heart of David](#)," documents the nature and methods of David's exemplary heart.
3. The sermon outline, "[A Pure Heart](#)," details the nature of the heart, God's dealings with it, and your duties.
4. The sermon outline, "[When Things Seem Hopeless](#)," reviews the case and cure for David at Ziklag (I Sa 30:6).
5. The sermon outline, "[Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?](#)" answers this question for building your faith in God.
6. The sermon outline, "[The Definition of Love](#)," exalts charity as the cure for most offences generated by others.
7. The sermon outline, "[Thou God Seest Me](#)," uses God's tender care of Hagar to build the faith of honest saints.
8. The sermon outline, "[The Life of Faith – I](#)," uses Romans 4:17-21 to build the faith of saints against questions.
9. The sermon outline, "[The Life of Faith – II](#)," uses Hebrews 11 to illustrate faith by the lives of great saints.
10. The sermon outline, "[Enduring Affliction](#)," gives the means and role of faith and patience in victorious living.
11. The sermon outline, "[Faith or Feelings](#)," provides guidance for learning to avoid the latter to follow the former!
12. The sermon outline, "[No Fine Line](#)," deals with the assurance of eternal life and handling a doubting heart.
13. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 15:13](#)," explains the importance and means to a cheerful heart.
14. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 15:15](#)," explains how to have a continual feast in spite of circumstances.
15. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 17:22](#)," explains how your heart and spirit affect the rest of your life.
16. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 18:14](#)," explains the importance of keeping your spirit right with God.
17. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 24:9](#)," explains and illustrates that foolish thinking is sin in God's sight.
18. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 16:3](#)," explains the importance of submission to God to end confusion.
19. The proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 13:10](#)," explains how pride leads to strife and destroys relationships.