

Taking Your Thoughts Captive

•**II Corinthians 10:3-5** ".....the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (merely human), but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; **casting down imaginations**, and **every high thing (thoughts, lies from Satan)** that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity EVERY THOUGHT** to the OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST."

First of all, realize that you are in a battle, a war with Satan, and a war with your own sinful flesh. The mind, if not renewed with the word of God, will align itself with the body, and these two together are referred to as "the flesh." The flesh still wants to do some of the old sinful behaviors, and then **Satan comes along and tries to DECEIVE you**, saying that you can't help yourself, or you have no control over a particular situation. Satan will make it seem like his suggestions are your own thoughts, but you must not believe his lies! **The battle begins in the mind, in your thought life.** With your FREE WILL, make a DECISION and **CHOOSE to believe God's word** and obey His commands. **Decide ahead of time**, BEFORE you get in the middle of some crisis, **to BELIEVE GOD instead of believing your emotions** and going with your feelings. **You MUST learn to CONTROL your THOUGHTS** and NOT accept or believe Satan's lies. **"Don't Listen to the Wrong Voices"** - this could be advice from other people, actual demonic voices, or just "old tapes" from the past that you allow to run in your head. You can't afford to be **MENTALLY LAZY** and **PASSIVE**, and **ALLOW** these wrong thoughts to control you. You must hold up that "shield of faith" and **REJECT any wrong thoughts or VOICES in the name of Jesus. Then fill your mind with the word of God!** HOW will you know what are wrong thoughts, either from your "flesh" or from the evil one? It's very simple, if they don't line up with what God's word says, you need to "cast them out" and not accept them. When it says **"casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God"** it means ANY thoughts, suggestions, temptations or teachings from ANYONE that are contrary to what God's word says.

Okay, but HOW do you cast out wrong thoughts and take them captive to the obedience of Christ? I believe Jesus Himself gives us an example in Matthew 16:21-23. Peter had tried to tell Jesus that He wouldn't have to go to the cross and die (the same temptation that Satan gave in the wilderness, Matt. 4:8-10). Jesus immediately RECOGNIZED that suggestion was AGAINST the will of God for Him, and He said, "**Get behind Me, Satan!** You are an offense to Me, for **you are not mindful of the THINGS of GOD**, but the things of men." When wrong thoughts come into your mind, you could say something like this, "I command these thoughts to get out of my mind, in the name of Jesus! These thoughts (suggestions, temptations, negative thoughts) are AGAINST God's will, and I WILL NOT entertain these thoughts." Then, immediately **replace those thoughts with the TRUTH from God's word** regarding that particular temptation or doubt, by saying those scriptures out loud! If you don't have Scriptures memorized or on hand, start praising God, praying, or singing praise and worship songs. Whatever you do, don't leave your mind empty.

IN SUMMARY:

- 1.) Recognize that the thought or thoughts are against what God's word says;
- 2.) Speak directly to the thoughts and cast them out in the name of Jesus.
Example: "In the name of Jesus, I command these thoughts to leave my mind. I cast you out in the name of Jesus!"
- 3.) If you feel Satan is involved in the attack, go ahead and bind him and cast him out, too (Matt. 18:18, James 4:7).
- 4.) Immediately replace those thoughts with God's word, either reading it or reciting it from memory, or begin to pray and praise God, or sing praise and worship songs.