

Loving God in the Real World
Loving God with All Your Mind
2 Corinthians 10:3-5
GCF – October 11, 2009

II. Introduction

Last week's scripture: Philippians 4:7-8

This week's: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. 4 We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. 5 We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:3-5, NLT)

Last week, I introduced some thoughts concerning what it means to love God with all your mind.

While we could consider the mind from a number of different perspectives, I used the following definition: "The mind is what gives us the capacity to think – these thoughts consist of all the ways we are conscious of things, and includes our memories, perceptions, and beliefs about ourselves and the world around us."

The problem with our minds is that we do not always draw the proper conclusions about ourselves, others, God, etc.

For an infinite number of reasons our ideas, perceptions, and beliefs about life can be wrong.

This wrong thinking creates strongholds in our minds that are then acted out in life, leading us into bondage.

But God wants to change the way we think!

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." (Romans 12:2, NLT)

Wrong thinking leads us towards death and destruction, but right thinking leads us to life.

"...letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace." (Romans 8:6, NLT)

How do we get to thinking right? By humbly submitting to the Holy Spirit and by diligently studying, meditating and memorizing the Scriptures.

Again, humility is critically important. We must begin by being open to the fact that our thinking, even as Christians, does not line up with the Word of God. Even some of our religious ideas and long held traditions may be out of sync with the Scriptures.

The Pharisees were so convinced they were right about how to serve God. Their own pride kept them from seeing Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

“God opposes the proud but favors the humble.” (James 4:6, NLT)

With humility of heart we submit to the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth (John 14:17) as we look to the Scriptures for a proper understanding of God, ourselves and the world around us.

One final thought before we look at the various ways we think that may be contrary to the Scriptures:

We need to be careful about our feelings. How do feelings express themselves? As thoughts.

We feel good about something or bad about something, but these feelings are processed into thoughts.

We may have strong feelings towards someone and be convinced that God would have us marry that person. “I love him or her,” we say and because of how we feel we go against the Scriptures that speak of being unequally yoked and proceed to marry them anyway.

[Give other examples]

Our feelings must be submitted to the Word of God. In fact, this is a huge cultural stronghold in our culture today – “If it feels good, do it,” but what does God’s Word say?

*“Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? 2 Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. 3 Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. 4 Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the Lord, **and keep their promises even when it hurts.**”* (Psalm 15:1-4, NLT)

Let’s take a look at the ideas you gave to me last week.

II. Tearing Down Strongholds

[Break into groups of three to five – look at verses and how they counteract the stronghold.]

a. Self-righteousness, self-superiority, spiritual pride

Matthew 12:10-14; Philippians 2:1-5

b. Self-pity

Jonah 4:1-11; Job 42:1-6

c. Self-hatred

Genesis 1:27, 31; Psalm 139:12-18

d. Too busy, not enough time for reading scripture and prayer

Psalm 27:4; Acts 2:42-47

e. Playing games linked to the occult is OK for Christians – it is just a game

Isaiah 47:12-15; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

f. It is OK to be Lazy

Proverbs 12:24; Ezekiel 16:49-50; 2 Thessalonians 3:10

g. Sin no big deal – increasing cultural acceptance of sin facilitated by education, news media, movies, TV, and work

Isaiah 5:20; Proverbs 30:20; Isaiah 3:8-11; James 1:15

h. Not always wanting to do what I should or what I need to do

1 Samuel 15:23; Romans 7:17-8:2

i. Not submitting to authority

Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 1:19-23; 2 Peter 2:9-10

III. Conclusion

There are many others that you submitted that I think would be important to look at – we will do so in the future.

Remember, the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit – it is by putting our trust in the Word, more than our feelings or circumstances, that we will be able to demolish the strongholds.

Let us continue to press in to the Lord and learn to love him with all our minds!