

Renewing a Thought

By Wendy Wood



When the bible refers to “the heart” it is referring to the control center, the soul, of the person. The heart includes our thoughts, emotions, and desires. Our thoughts drive our desires and our emotions reveal what those desires are. Because our thoughts drive our desires and our desires drive our actions and words, our thoughts matter greatly! God does not leave us without instruction regarding our thoughts. In fact, God's word is clear that we are to change our thoughts! Our thoughts are to reflect the truth of who God is and reflect a trust that He is faithful to keep every precious promise He has made. Change in our lives begins in our thoughts. In order to be transformed from one degree of glory to the next to be like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18), we must transform our thoughts.

1. Slowly and prayerfully read through the following scriptures. After each one, write in your own words what God says about thoughts.

Romans 12:1-2 *“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 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.”*

Ephesians 4:22-24 “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Philippians 4:4-11 “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to

destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ

2. Consider your own thoughts. What circumstance or relationship are you thinking about the most right now? When you are driving, doing laundry or dishes, when your house is quiet and you have time to think, what are you turning over and over in your mind?

Quote your thoughts below. Really try to quote your thoughts, not just get the idea down. We all tend to have phrases or sentences that repeat and grow in our thoughts. For example: "I have to have a husband who treats me well." "I shouldn't have to keep repeating myself." "Why can't he just be kind." "I can't keep doing this."

3. Look up the following scriptures and write them out.

Job 42:2

Ephesians 1:11

Romans 11:33-36

Psalms 119:68

James 1:17

Psalm 84:11

Romans 8:31-39

Joshua 23:14

Hebrews 7:25

1 Corinthians 10:13

Matthew 28:20

Romans 8:28-30

4. Look back at those thoughts you quoted above. Second Corinthians 10:3-5 warns us that our thoughts are “lofty opinions raised against the knowledge of God”. How are those thoughts in opposition to the knowledge of God?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s sovereignty?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s wisdom?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s goodness?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s provision?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s love for you?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in God’s promises?

How do these thoughts reflect a lack of trust in Christ's provision on the cross? Christ endured every type of temptation, yet did not sin. As He perfectly fulfilled the law of His Father, He was the perfect sacrifice to take your sin on Himself to the cross and be the atoning sacrifice. He removed God's wrath from you! Christ now lives to intercede for you! He left His Holy Spirit to dwell inside you and enable you to honor the Father! How do your thoughts reflect that you doubt this truth?

5. As you examine your thoughts in light of who God is, what is your response? What specifically do you need to ask God to forgive you for?

6. As you look at the scriptures you wrote out above, what do you want to thank God for? (We are to bring our thanksgiving to God according to Philippians 4, see above.)

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7. Write out new thoughts. In light of who God is and what He has done for you in Christ, what new thoughts do you need to focus on to transform your mind? Again, use quotes that you will think over and over. Include scripture verses or phrases from scripture. God's word is powerful! For example "It would be nice if my husband treated me well, but nothing can separate me from the love of God, including an angry husband." "This relationship is hurtful, but it is one of the ALL THINGS God is using for my good to make me more like Christ." "God is not withholding good from me. He does good so my definition of good needs to change."

8. Put these things into practice (Philippians 4:9-10). As soon as you catch yourself in "old thinking", STOP! Repent of raising a lofty opinion against the knowledge of God. Repent of thinking things that are untrue, unlovely, impure, dishonorable, and not worthy of praise. Thank God for His goodness, wisdom, the gift of Christ. Then think your new thoughts over and over.
9. Our thoughts are habits. It takes time and effort to change them. But you do not do it alone! God works the change in your heart and enables you to pursue righteous thoughts. Commit to trust Him in this process.