

Winning the Battle of the Mind Part 2

Romans, Chapter 12.

We started a series last week called, "Winning the Battle of the Mind." I said last week, I can't think of a more important subject that the body of Christ needs teaching on than on the subject of guarding our thought life, guarding our mind. You can never underestimate the important role that your mind plays in your walk of faith. Everything starts with a thought.

Your mind is the leader; it's the forerunner of everything you do. Try and grasp this part I think it is very important to us. You must understand that the only entrance that the enemy has into your personality, the only entrance that the enemy has into your emotions, into your thoughts is through your mind. And once you really understand that and once you really comprehend that and once you get a

revelation of that, you'll realize that all you really have to do is close one doorway to the enemy. But it's a very important doorway. It's the doorway to your mind.

See your mind is the bull's eye of Satan's target. That's what he's shooting for. He knows that by affecting the way we think he can hold us captive, he can hold in bondage, in prison for a month, for a year, or for a lifetime.

And see it is Satan's goal to set up strongholds in our minds. A stronghold is an erroneous thinking pattern, a thinking pattern that is flawed, incorrect, untrue that goes against what God's Word says... and consequentially it holds you back from being all God wants you to be. Last week we saw in God's word, the Bible in the book of Ephesians that we're in this battle; we're in this warfare. It says, "*For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the*

unseen world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms" Ephesians 6:12 NLT. And the devil and demon forces are our **enemy**. And the main weapon that he uses is lying, deceiving us.

There's a tremendous battle taking place in our mind. And Ephesians 4:27 says, "*give no place to the devil.*" Don't give him any place in your mind. 2 Corinthians 2:11 says, "*we should not be ignorant of the devil's devices.*" One version says, "*Don't be ignorant of the devil's schemes, strategies, and methods.*"

In other words, if you know how he works, you'll be able to combat him better. So we need to have knowledge of this battle and who's the enemy and what are his weapons. You may ask why because in Hosea 4:6 it says, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*"

So I want us to grasp and hold on to these truth. I don't want you to lack the knowledge. It's the truth that'll make us free. And we must understand how the enemy works. He works on our mind.

And I was thinking about I know people and I'm sure you know people too, good Christian people. They go to church. They do their best to live a godly life. But they seem always defeated. They seem always, you know, always living a miserable life. And what I think some of it is... They haven't been taught what God has done for them. They haven't been taught their authority in the name of Jesus. Some of them don't even know that we're in a battle and we talked about that last week that's like being in a boxing match and not thinking you are. When the bell rings you're your in the match whether you think you are

or not. Some of them don't even know that we have an enemy.

And folks, as I said last time, even if you don't know it, if you ignore it, it doesn't go away. You're still in a battle.

God's word says we are in a battle and you've got to put on the armor of God. There's something that we all have to do.

I have talked to many people who gave their life to the Lord and 2nd Corinthians 5:17, "*If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. Old become new.*" But they struggle in their mind... And that's what I want to stress to you today.

Just being born again is not enough. You've got to know the Word of God. Your lack of knowledge will destroy you. You will have no victory in your life. You will have no power in your Christian life, why, because you lack the knowledge of God's Word. Romans 12: 1- 2 says and read

this with me "*I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God which is your reasonable service; but be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" There's something there in that scripture that we just read that says we have to do something; to be transformed. But first I want to talk about a couple other things that Paul says here, three basic things. He said, "*I beseech you.*" One version says, "*I beg you, I urge you, I strongly urge you to live a holy, godly consecrated life.*"

Let me say this. You will never win this warfare with the enemy if you are not consecrated; another way of saying that, You will never win this warfare with the enemy if you're not set apart to God or you could say it this way

You will never win this warfare with the enemy if it is not your heart desire to do His will for your life. Now gang I am not talking about being a good person here.

Paul urges us to live a holy, consistent godly life and He says your attitude of trying to live a holy, consistent godly life is a well-pleasing sacrifice to God when that is our attitude.

So, I can't say enough. I beseech you brothers and sisters, I beg you, I strongly urge. See, you can fool a lot of people. You can fool me. You can fool others. But you can't fool God and you can't fool yourself. We ought to desire to live for Him and not that He is just some add on to my life.

The second thing that Paul said, "*Do not be conformed to this world.*" Do not be conformed to this world. When he says, "*Do not be conformed to this world.*" he's talking about the world system around us. It's this

world system that continually erodes your faith, that pulls down your hope, and it destroys your love. In other words, it's the society around us that goes against the things of God. God's word is saying here do not be conformed to this culture.

If we were to just look back over the last 10, 20, 30, 40 years, you can see how this society has taken a turn away from the things of God. And my question is "What's going on, What is happening?" We'll God's word, made it real clear to us last week. It says, "*Satan, the god of this world.*" 2nd Corinthians 4:4 He is the god of this world system. He's is the god of this culture. So, I think it helps me to understand that behind this society; behind this culture, behind this world system is the evil influence of the prince of darkness himself and the Bible calls him, Satan.

And taking that into account now doesn't that change, "*Do not be conformed*," see that takes on a new meaning now. It's because you know there's something evil behind it all. And see when you step across that spiritual line and commit your life to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, you immediately receive God's Spirit, and you have the nature of God on the inside of you, the very nature of God. And you know what? If your heart is to live a holy, godly consecrated life, do you know what fruits your spirit will bear? It will be love, joy, peace, longsuffering. But when you begin to conform to this society, the world system, do you know what you're doing? When you do that, do you know the fruits that'll begin to come out of your spirit? It's going to be lust, envy, jealousy, greed, uncontrollable anger; just the opposite of the things of God.

Have you ever felt the pressure outside trying to squeeze you? That's the force of the enemy trying to squeeze us into its own mold, into the world system. Hoping you will copy the behaviors and customs of this world system." You see there's an outside pressure that affects us all that we need to be aware of. It's the trick of the enemy. It's not just peer pressure. It's the trick of the enemy trying to make us conform to this world. But listen friends the evil of the enemy is behind this... But listen folks, I want to tell you, I have Good News for you... every one of you can overcome this world . You have a choice. The Bible says there's *no temptation that you've taken that comes against you that you can't withstand*. You can overcome. There is a way of escape. But you know, sometimes we think of peer pressure. And we know it's real. It's the trick of the enemy just to get us

to conform and just go with the flow and be non-confrontational to be normal as the world would see you. Here some other trick statements this world system uses, "its okay, everybody's doing it. Let's just fit in." But friends that's not what you're called to be and do. You are to be salt of the earth. You're to be the light of the world. First Peter 2:9 says that *you are God's chosen people*. You should stand tall in the crowd..

Yes you may feel like a round peg in a square hole. But I encourage you to stand strong and stand tall and let your light shine. Don't succumb to these outside pressures. If they know you're born again Christian and they should know that you are and you act and do everything just like the world, they're watching to see how you react in certain situations. And if you fall back and just succumb to mediocrity, they're not going to think you have anything to

offer them. But you do have something to offer them and what you have the world is searching for; and His name is Jesus Christ, the Good News.

Listen friends living the Christian life is the most fulfilled fun life you're ever going to live. You don't have to be an old prune to live your life for Christ. You don't have to be an old fuddy-dud. We have fun. Our Calvary family has fun. We laugh. We play. We do a lot of fun things.

But you don't need and I don't need the drugs and the alcohol and illicit living to have a good time.

Friends if your going to live your life for Christ this world system will think your odd. But friends, we need to realize we are *in* the world; we're not *of* the world. The world's never going to accept us. We need to quit worrying about what other people will think of me living a Christian life

and start being more concerned about what God thinks than what others are going to think of me.

If your life is being transformed you need to realize that this world system, the culture of this world, goes completely against the things of God. When you think about it, the world says, "Get, get, get, get everything you can get."

You know what God says? "It is better to give than to receive. It's better to give than to receive," just the opposite.

The world says you know, "Climb the corporate ladder, step on your friends, win the rat race, crush your enemies, do everything you can do to get to the top." God says, you know, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

The world says, "Make a name for yourself, become famous, do everything you can to become known." God says if you want to be great, you've got to become the least of all. See this world system it's totally against the things of God.

The third thing I want to look at is the word Transform.

Now the word "conformed" it means to assume an outward expression that **doesn't** come from within. The word, "Transform" is exactly the opposite. It means to assume an outward expression that **does** come from within. You know, we get our word transform from the Greek word, "metamorpho." We get our English word "metamorphous" from that. And you all know what a metamorphous is--it's a radical change. You think about when a little tadpole metamorphoses into a frog; there's been a radical change.

God's word, the bible says when God touches our inner man, when we receive the new life, there's a radical change and now a transformation needs to take place in our mind. Remember God leaves the business of the mind up to us. We've got to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. How does that transformation—How does this radical change take place in our minds? Does it come from singing? From fasting? From praying? No. It comes from God's word.

See, it's not enough just to come here and hear this once on Sunday. You need to get it out of the pages of the Bible, get it into your mind. Your mind will start to line up with the Word of God.

I encourage you today – don't be conformed to this world. You feel all these outside pressures, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. How does a radical change take

place? God leaves it up to us. We got to get God's Word in our mind. Study it, Meditate on it. Then it will become real and we will be so renewed there's nothing the enemy can't tell you; He won't have a foothold in your life.

I want to close with a few promises from God to you about renewing your mind. Joshua 1, "God's word, *"shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night. For then you will make your way prosperous"—* God won't, you will— *"you shall deal wisely and you shall have good success."*

It's when you mediate on God's word. Let me read one more I wrote down here.

"Blessed is the man that does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law does he meditate day and night." See, you're meditating, you're thinking about it, you're imagining.

"You shall be like a tree firmly planted by the streams of water which will yield forth your fruit. Your leaf will not wither and everything you do, everything you put your hands to do is going to prosper."

Isn't that good news? Amen.

Let us prayer: