

Vain Imagination

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Romans 1:21-22 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Psalms 119:113 SAMECH. I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Mark 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

1 Corinthians 3:20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- I. So, we are looking at the strategy of Satan to destroy a soul.
 - A. We are studying the road and the way marks that identify the path to destruction.
 - B. We have already seen that the first step is to simply stop glorifying God as God.
 1. When we turn from God to the world and its philosophers and wise men in search of understanding.
 2. When we are consumed with the world around us without being consumed with the God who created it all.
 3. When we acknowledge God only as we acknowledge any other creature.
 4. When we place our faith and loyalty in a person or a religious organization, or anything else so that it displaces God as our Lord and Sovereign.
 - C. As soon as we move God down and aside from the highest place of honor in our heart, mind, and life, there is a change that takes place in our heart.
 1. We are no longer thankful and gratitude is not a part of our thinking at all.
 2. Because God is removed from our thinking we do not think the same way any more.
 3. We become “vain in our imaginations.”

- II. So the next level we descend into on our way to the bottom is in our mind and thoughts.

The word “vain” means: “Empty; worthless; having no substance, value or importance.”

“Proud of petty things, or of trifling attainments; elated with a high opinion of one's own accomplishments, or with things more showy than valuable; conceited.”

- A. To become vain in our imagination is to cease to think and reason about things that are important or spiritual or based upon facts and truth.
 1. Vain thoughts are centered around temporal, carnal, and earthly things.

2. Vain thoughts are based a lot on what other people think – vain imaginations built upon vain thoughts of others.
- B. A thought in the mind is one thing, but imagination is the stringing together of thoughts.
1. God designed us in his own image and likeness so that the operation of our imagination make us creative, understanding, and wise.
 2. God designed us and gave us the power to imagine in our minds with the intent that our imagination was based upon truth and righteousness.
 3. The entrance of sin into the world brought lies and deceit and opened a new realm for the imagination to work in.
 4. False information can be entered into your mind by others.
 5. Listening to the sinful world and their reasoning without God and their ideas that they are convinced are true facts, will poison your pure mind and your imagination.

IMAGINA'TION, n. *L. imaginatio*. The power or faculty of the mind by which it conceives and forms ideas of things communicated to it by the organs of sense.

- C. Imagination is your mind trying to piece together this giant jigsaw puzzle of what you have heard and seen and felt and rearranging the pieces over and over.
- D. Imagination takes what you have in your memory of things you have seen and heard and felt and modifies them to create a fiction that is more to your liking.
- E. But imagination that is working from false information and lies can turn on you and be your tormentor.
 1. Your imagination is prone to create the worst scenario possible for you and make you afraid and fretful.

Luke 24:36-38 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, **Peace be unto you.** But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, **Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?**

We would define imagination to be the will working on the materials of memory; not satisfied with following the order prescribed by nature, or suggested by accident, it selects the parts of different conceptions, or objects of memory, to form a whole more pleasing, more terrible, or more awful, than has ever been presented in the ordinary course of nature. – Webster's 1828 Dictionary

- III. When we become vain in our imagination our foolish heart is darkened.
- A. When we allow our imagination to turn loose of what we absolutely know to be truth and start to work based upon theories and fiction and hearsay we are opening the door wide open for Satan to enter our mind and set up his stronghold there.
 1. We all know people whose lives are full of drama all the time because of their imagination.
 2. Think for just a moment about how much social media and all the voices of the world are feeding the vain imaginations of people.
 - B. Our imagination becomes our reality and faith and light are gone.
 - C. We enter the darkness of this world without God and without hope.
 - D. Have you ever wondered what people who have rejected God think about in their minds and imaginations?

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

1. They simply only think about the things around them and make plans to fulfill their lusts and desires.
2. Some just pine over the past, trying to figure out what the meaning of their life is, and rehashing all their bad memories and experiences, like looking through old pictures all the time.
3. This is what life is like when God is not in your thoughts and you live with a vain imagination.

Psalm 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

- E. What is it like to be alive in this world but having a mind that is blind and a heart that is darkened?
1. It begins when you turn away from God and stop glorifying him as God.
 2. When God does not satisfy you and you turn elsewhere for information, understanding, and freedom to indulge your selfishness.

2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

3. It results in a mind that does not understand and an imagination that carries you into the darkness of fear and hopelessness.
4. This is the present state of the mind and heart of all people who do not know God.

IV. Our mind was designed to meditate – not imagine.

- A. To imagine is to create images in our mind which are fiction and not truly real.
- B. To meditate is to roll over in our mind things that we know to be true and to see how they fit together to make the whole.
- C. To meditate on the precepts of God, the law of God, the Word of God, is to get understanding and wisdom as they come together in our mind and the Spirit of God gives us light.
- D. We are responsible to gird up the loins of our mind and control what we think about.

Proverbs 16:3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Jeremiah 4:14 O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Psalm 49:3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Psalm 77:12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Psalm 104:34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

Psalm 119:97 MEM. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.