

**THE DISCIPLINES OF GODLY PEOPLE–PART 4
THE DISCIPLINE OF OUR HEART AND MIND
PROVERBS 4:23; PSALM 19:14; PHILIPPIANS 4:6-8**

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Introduction

We have been looking at some **DISCIPLINES** that ought to be in each of our lives in order that we might live godly lives that are pleasing to the LORD!

To the extent that these **DISCIPLINES** that we are dealing with are in our lives, there will be **godliness** in our lives. To the extent that these **DISCIPLINES** are missing from our lives, there will also be something missing from our spiritual lives that ought to be there!

We have looked at **four DISCIPLINES** we need in our first **three** messages:

WE NEED THE DISCIPLINE OF THE GOSPEL!

This is the very foundation of living a godly life! One CANNOT live a godly life without the indwelling Holy Spirit! It is impossible!

WE NEED THE DISCIPLINE OF SUBMISSION!

*Willingly bringing our lives into SUBMISSION to God's will **in everything** is the key to being a godly person! Finding and doing the will of God is the key to having joy and living the abundant life in Christ! "Not my will, but Thine!"*

WE NEED THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER!

PRAYER is our line of COMMUNICATION WITH GOD whereby we confess our sins to God, offer our thanksgiving to God, verbalize our submission to God, offer our petitions to God, as well as intercede on behalf of others!

WE NEED THE DISCIPLINE OF WORSHIP!

WORSHIP should encompass ALL OF OUR LIFE, not just when we come assemble ourselves together as the LORD's Church Body! In the Bible, WORSHIP is used to describe both SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES and A WAY OF LIFE!

Now let's look at another important **DISCIPLINE**:

WE NEED THE DISCIPLINE OF OUR HEART AND MIND!

"You might say, preacher what are you talking about?" Well it is the principle found in **Proverbs 4:23** where Solomon wrote, **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."**

What I'm talking about is an intentional **PROGRAMMING OF OUR HEART AND MIND** by the things we choose to **THINK ON AND DWELL ON IN OUR HEART!**

We know that our MIND is an amazing gift of God! Amen? Even before we got saved we could understand that what our MIND does is... MIND BOGGLING!

(Think of all the processes in the human body that all are controlled by our MIND, many of those processes which are just automatic!)

But for Believers, we have the extra special blessing of having the MIND OF CHRIST! But THINKING RIGHT THOUGHTS doesn't come to us automatically just because were are saved and indwelt by God's Spirit and have the MIND OF CHRIST! Does it?

Listen, Satan knows that **THE CONTROL OF OUR HEART AND MIND IS KEY TO CONTROL IN OUR LIVES!** That is why **OUR HEART AND MIND IS REGULARLY UNDER ATTACK!**

I used to have a book about this in my library called THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND, by Dr. Tim LaHaye that addressed that very battle!

We **ALL** have **struggled** at one time or another with our **THOUGHT LIFE**, haven't we? In fact, on a daily basis we find ourselves **battling THOUGHTS of worry, doubt, fear, lust, evil thoughts, anger, malice, and bitterness** and the list goes on! And the closer we get to Jesus coming back the greater that battle will get!

When such **THOUGHTS** come, there are times when the Holy Spirit immediately pricks our **HEART** regarding our **THOUGHTS** and we wonder how we could even **THINK** such things!

Then there are times when the Holy Spirit pricks our **HEART** about our **THOUGHTS**, but we try to justify them instead so we continue to **dwell** on them rather confessing them as being wrong and doing something about them!

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And then there are those who don't even give their **THOUGHTS** a second **THOUGHT**. That is an indication that a person may either be lost or severely backslidden to the point that their **HEART** is hardened to the things of God.

The Psalmist here prayed that not only would the words of his mouth be acceptable in the sight of God, but also that the *“meditations”* of his heart, i.e. **His desire was that his THOUGHTS or the things that his HEART and MIND dwelt on, would be acceptable unto God also.**

We are usually so quick to judge others because of what we see of their outward actions and while we may not have done such things ourselves, we may have **THOUGHT** it or even had worse **THOUGHTS** ourselves!

Understand this...before a person does something wrong, they normally **THINK** it! Jesus said in *Matthew 15:19*, *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*

(In *Galatians 5:19-21*, Paul calls these things *the works of the flesh!* They come from a **MIND controlled by the FLESH rather than by the Spirit of God!**)

We need to **keep in MIND that God not only sees and judges our actions, but He also sees and judges our THOUGHTS!**

Hebrews 4:13—“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

I doubt there would be even one of us that would want our every **THOUGHT** of this past week flashed up on a picture screen for all to see. Nevertheless, we need to understand that our **THOUGHTS** are that exposed before God!

So, the question before us is this, **“HOW CAN WE DISCIPLINE OUR HEART AND MIND TO HAVE THE RIGHT THOUGHTS?”**

I. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE SOURCES OF WRONG THINKING AND AVOID THEM!

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There was a saying that came out during the early 1980's just as the personal computer was becoming popular that said this – *“Garbage in, Garbage out!”*

i.e. If you want the good output, you have to have good input!

Scientists tell us that the **human MIND** is the most complex and amazing living mechanism in the world. (e.g. *There is a TV advertisement running right now that is even saying that very thing.*)

Our brain accounts for our ability to **think, remember, love, hate, feel, reason, imagine, and analyze among other things.**

The average brain weighs in at about three pounds. It is estimated to contain some **12 billion cells**, each of which is connected to **10,000 other brain cells**, totaling **120 trillion brain connections.**

In order to have things go well in our **physical lives, we need to have as much of our brain fully functional as possible!** For as our brain goes, so goes our **physical lives.**

Some have compared the human brain to a sophisticated computer, but technology hasn't even come close duplicating its capabilities.

Dr. Gehard Dirks, who holds over 50 patents on the IBM computer, said that he acquired most of his inventive ideas from studying the functions of the human brain.

Our brain supervises everything we do, from the **involuntary beat of our heart** to the conscious decisions of life. It controls **hearing, sight, smell, speech, eating, resting, learning, prejudices, and everything else that makes us behave as we do.**

Our eyes and our ears are the primary avenues that receive the information that programs our **MIND** and thereby influences our lives.

The human **MIND** can be compared in some respects to a file cabinet because it is the principle place of storage that we call our memory.

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From what is on file in our MIND, we make our deductions, judgments and decisions.

The **things that we see and hear influence the THOUGHTS** of our **MIND**. And our **MIND** determines our actions!

Everything that we see, hear, touch, taste and smell is recorded on the lobes of our brain never to be totally forgotten unless an area of the brain becomes damaged. (e.g. *Nursing home patients.*)

Some information remains in our **subconscious files and cannot be recalled at will**, as can those things that are in the **conscious section**.

Sometimes all it takes is **a sight, a smell, or a sound** to draw something back into our **conscious THOUGHT!**

There are some things we need to consider at this point:

1. Because everything we see and hear is indelibly recorded in our **HEART and MIND...and**
2. Because the things that are recorded in our **HEART and MIND** greatly influence how we **THINK...and**
3. Because our **THINKING** influences our behavior or how we act...**then,**
4. It is of utmost importance that we **guard our HEART and MIND as Believers!** (*Proverbs 4:23*)

Examples:

*Some of you may remember Dr. James Dobson's interview with serial killer Ted Bundy regarding the effect pornography had on what he did. That didn't absolve him in any way from his guilt before man or God, but it does tell us we need to **guard our hearts from evil influences!***

James 1:14-15–“14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

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*A lot of the music of the 60's and 70's began filling the minds of young people with perverted sex, rebellion, drugs, and the occult. **Do you think that has anything to do with the mess our society is in today?***

*Or how about all of the violent video games there are today. **Do you think that might have something to do with the violence we are seeing, especially from young people today?***

*Also, when we see the gruesome themes and the violence in movies that pervade our day, **is there any wonder why there is a corresponding increase in savagery in our world?***

Hollywood, Video Game Creators, and others fill the TV, and movie screens and video games **with evil communications**. Many disc jockeys and radio stations fill the airwaves **with evil communications**. Many publishers fill the newsstands and bookstores **with evil communications**. **What does the Bible say in 1 Corinthians 15:33? “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”**

Remember, the mind is a super computer...**garbage in, garbage out**. So, let me ask this question: What are you programming your mind and heart with?

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE SOURCES OF WRONG THINKING AND AVOID THEM!

II. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE SOURCES OF RIGHT THINKING AND EMBRACE THEM!

Remember, if we want good output, then we must have good input!

A. The Word Of God Must Become Our Primary Source Of Programming! (*Psalm 119:9-16, 105*)

God told Joshua in *Joshua 1:8*–“*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; **but thou shalt meditate therein day and night**, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and **then thou shalt have good success.**”*

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Psalm 1:1-3—“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Romans 12:2— “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Romans 10:17—“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Colossians 2:6-7—“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17—“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

However, we can never have a HEART and MIND that please God without reading, studying, and meditating on the Scriptures regularly!

That’s because we cannot be influenced by what we don’t know!

Oh how we desperately need to DISCIPLINE our MIND and our HEART with the Word of God!

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B. We Must Program Our Mind With Those Things That Are True, Honest, Just, Pure, Lovely, Of Good Report, Virtuous, And Praiseworthy! (Philippians 4:6-8)

We must have nothing to do with the sources of wrong thinking.

Ephesians 5:11—“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”

So, what is the right kind of Christian communication that honors God! (*Ephesians 5:15-20*)

Colossians 3:16-17—“16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE SOURCES...OF WRONG THINKING AND AVOID THEM... OF RIGHT THINKING AND EMBRACE THEM!

III. WE MUST RESIST THE TEMPTATION OF CONFIDENT THINKING! (Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13)

Confident thinking has pride at its source! Pride will bring us down!

Conclusion

Now understand that we aren’t going to be able to totally avoid the sources of wrong programming because of the world we live in! Not everything is in our control. We are going to face a spiritual battle as long as we are in this life!

That is why we need to heed the admonition of:

Ephesians 6:10-13—“10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

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13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

Part of that whole armor of God is the offensive weapon God has given to us of His precious Word! The Word of God can help us we battle the World, the Flesh, and the Devil in our lives!

Though a lot of what we are bombarded with in this world is out of our control, we should nevertheless, control the things that are in the realm of our control! (I’m talking about the things we allow into our eye gate and our ear gate as well as the close companions that we keep!)

Are the meditations of your **HEART** acceptable in the sight of the Lord?
What is on your **MIND**? Is it full of God dishonoring garbage?

We need to look at what we are filling our **MIND** with? Can those things be described in the terminology that we saw Paul use in *Philippians 4:8*?
If not, it is time for some serious reprogramming!

Maybe the problem is that you haven’t got God’s nature and divine power in your life that only comes by being born again into His family!

If that’s the problem, Jesus has made a way for you to have His **MIND**!
Repent of your sin and come to Him today!