

RENEWING THE MIND

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2).

The many references in Scripture to terms such as *think, mind, knowledge*, and similar terms indicate the priority of proper thinking. As we tear down strongholds, there is a need for a positive replacement. The Holy Spirit guides us into proper thought patterns when we allow Him to renew our minds.

The word *renewing* could be defined as a “renovation” or a “complete change for the better.” The renewing process is a gradual conforming of the mental processes to the new spiritual world into which the believer has been introduced. This process is not passive on our part. It is a joint effort between the indwelling Holy Spirit and the faculties of the yielded saint. The Holy Spirit initiates, illumines, enlightens, and quickens the mind. The believer integrates truth by reception, meditation, and obedience.

Believing a Lie

Believers can accept and believe lies. Remember how Jacob mourned for years believing Joseph was dead. The truth was Joseph was very much alive, but Jacob had been deceived. Needless suffering and grief takes place when we are duped into accepting falsehoods as truth. When we accept a lie as reality our perspective is distorted. We must reject wrong thoughts immediately and not allow them entrance into our minds. We cannot keep the thoughts from floating by, but we can choose to refuse them entrance!

We are What We Think

“As he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Gaining a biblical perspective is imperative. The thinking apparatus sets the course for a man’s life. The mind is like an incubator where thoughts develop into decisions. Wrong thinking leads to wrong decisions. Right thinking produces right choices.

The Bible gives clear directions for mind-renewal. *“Whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...of good report; if there be any virtue [admirable], and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8).* Negative thinking is characteristic of unbelief, which is sin. Devastating effects

occur when the mind dwells on problems instead of praising the goodness of God. Our mental and emotional dispositions have a direct bearing on our physical well-being. Happiness is a choice. You can choose to meditate on positive things.

It is healthy and helpful to occasionally go into a voluntary quarantine for prayer. Go three days without *asking* God for a single thing. Instead, give the time to *thanking*. When prayer is self-centered instead of God-centered, we can pray ourselves into despair. If all we do is tell God how bad things are, we can get up off our knees feeling worse than when we started. Of course, God does want us to cast our burdens on Him, but we dare not stop there. We must follow our requests with praise and thanksgiving. An occasional concentration of thanksgiving refreshes and enhances a stance of faith rather than an attitude of defeat. Consider spending the next three days thanking God in order to get a proper perspective. This is one way to *“be renewed in the spirit of your mind”* (Ephesians 4:23).

Day by Day

Believers must receive spiritual nourishment if they are to be healthy. *“The inward man is renewed day by day”* (2 Corinthians 4:16). What a need there is to get alone with God every day to feed the inner man. The outer man or physical body needs food, exercise, and rest. The spiritual man has needs also. Since we are engaged in spiritual warfare, we must not slight the importance of attaining and maintaining spiritual stamina through prayer and feasting on the Word in a daily quiet time with God.

The Bible states we, *“have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge”* (Colossians 3:10). True spirituality is vitally connected to the mind. The believer must cooperate with the Holy Spirit in daily renewal. Growth in grace includes an expanding knowledge of God’s Word and His ways, both in precept and experience. This is the believer’s daily renewal.

Renewal of mind and heart produces a sharp sensitivity to spiritual dangers. Spiritual sharpness aids the believer in recognizing the approach of the Enemy and his wiles.

Summary Statements / Discussion Topics

- The Holy Spirit guides us into proper thought patterns when we allow Him to renew our minds.
- The word renewing could be defined as a “renovation” or a “complete change for the better.” The renewing process is a gradual conforming of the mental processes to the new spiritual world into which the believer has been introduced.
- Believers can accept and believe lies.
- Needless suffering and grief takes place when we are duped into accepting falsehoods as truth. When we accept a lie as reality our perspective is distorted.
- We cannot keep the thoughts from floating by, but we can choose to refuse them entrance!
- Devastating effects occur when the mind dwells on problems instead of praising the goodness of God.
- Our mental and emotional dispositions have a direct bearing on our physical well-being.
- Happiness is a choice.
- If all we do is tell God how bad things are, we can get up off our knees feeling worse than when we started.
- Renewal of mind and heart produces a sharp sensitivity to spiritual dangers.

From ***Lord, Help Me Not To Have These Evil Thoughts!*** By Harold Vaughan