

The Battle of the Mind - 4

by Anton Bosch

The sermon emphasizes the importance of renewing our minds and bringing every thought into captivity to live in the victory Christ has provided.

Scripture: Romans 12:2

Topics: "Mind Renewal", "Spiritual Freedom"

Description

Anton Bosch emphasizes the importance of renewing our minds by replacing wrong thoughts and ideas with Godly values, as mentioned in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and Romans 12:2. He highlights the ongoing process of mind renewal through abiding in the Word and obeying Christ, comparing it to the continual renewal of cells in our bodies. By bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, we can prevent enemy influences from sabotaging our spiritual growth and experience true freedom in Christ.

Transcript

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

Wrong thoughts, ideas and arguments shape us, and the way we act. These are strongholds that need to be broken down and replaced with Godly and Biblical values. Paul refers to this process as "the renewing of mind" and in Romans 12 refers to the pressure of the world to conform us into its image, whereas we should, in fact, be "transformed through the renewing of the mind" (Romans 12:2). This process does not only liberate us from bondage, but it changes us from the inside out.

We have a mind which has been tainted and perverted through the influence of our former lives and the continuing propaganda campaign of the world and the devil. Now that mind needs to be renewed. Partly, this happens when we are born again, but much of the work has to happen after the initial new-birth experience. This work is never complete and is an ongoing process as we abide in the Word and follow the Master in simple and complete obedience. We know that all the cells in our bodies are continually renewed as we expel the old cells and through healthy nourishment build new ones. The problem with the body, however, is that in spite of it being renewed all the time, it also grows old and is slowly dying. In the same way the mind is also renewed as the old thoughts and ideas are expelled and a constant stream of biblical ideas are fed into it. Unlike the body, the mind does not need to become more limited over time,

but can become more spiritual and closer to the Lord as we get older.

Just as what we feed our bodies will determine its health, so what we feed the mind will determine our spiritual health. In Philippians 4:8 Paul says: "whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things." So, as we fill our minds with the Word and with heavenly things, our minds will be changed and renewed, more and more into the Mind of Christ.

There is yet another step in this process which Paul refers to it as "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ". In a military battle not a single member of the enemy can be allowed into our camp, let alone hundreds and thousands of enemy soldiers infiltrating our side of the line. Yet in the spiritual battle we will tolerate thousands of enemy agents in the shape of thoughts and ideas working inside our minds and hearts! NO! Every thought needs to be brought into captivity. Just one wrong thought can sabotage the entire work of God in our lives, just as a few Islamic insurgents allowed on home ground killed thousands on 9/11. Have you ever wondered why God was so angry that Saul did not wipe out every single Amalekite? It is because of this exact principle. You may remember that it was the very thing that Saul had spared that came to finish him off and that killed him when he was at the lowest point of his life! Do not spare or show mercy to any of the Devil's agents in your mind.

Every thought needs to be brought into captivity. This means it needs to be captured and brought under control. When an enemy soldier is found on the wrong side of the line, he is immediately apprehended and restrained and eventually either imprisoned or deported. The whole object is to render him incapable of inflicting any kind of hurt or damage on the friendly forces. In the same way these thoughts need to be apprehended and restrained and either expelled from our minds or brought under control. It is just here where most of us are defeated. Our minds are filled with thoughts and ideas that run about, unrestrained, gathering momentum and support and undermining us from within. Why do we allow that to continue? I really don't know, but we do. Every thought needs to be controlled. Don't let your mind run away with you down the road of lust, bitterness, pride, anger, worry and unbelief. Bring those thoughts into submission to the obedience of Christ.

Peter puts it this way: "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober..." (1 Peter 1:13). He is using an analogy of a soldier who would place a belt around his waist so that his loose clothing will not get in the way and trip him up when he is in battle. That is what all these uncontrolled thoughts do. They trip us and ensnare us as they flap about inside our heads. They must be brought under control and tied down. Paul speaking about the same things says "having girded your waist with truth" (Ephesians 6:14). Is that not what we said last time? - The truth will set you free! So, just as the truth makes us free from the domination of bad thought patterns, so the truth will stop our thoughts running away with us. There is nothing like a dose of reality and truth to dispel the ghosts that lurk about in our deepest thoughts. Those who have a problem with stress and worries during the night will know how the light of day (truth) brings all those doubts and fears down to nothing.

So, let us bring every thought under control and let's be transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. And let's heed Peter's call:

" Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh

for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles" (1Peter 4:1-3)

There is victory! But the victory only comes after we have won the battle and battles are hard. For this reason some choose to remain under the tyranny of strongholds and bondage all their life. Jesus won the victory for us at the Cross so we do not need to be defeated. Is it not time to bring down those strongholds and experience the victory and freedom that cost Him so much?

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