

# Carnal Mind or Mind of Christ

by R. Edward Miller

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of renewing the mind and developing the mind of Christ in order to live a victorious Christian life.*

**Duration:** 28:50

**Scripture:** Proverbs 23:7, Isaiah 55:8, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Philippians 4:8

**Topics:** "Carnality"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of renewing the mind and bringing every thought into obedience to Jesus Christ. He highlights how a single negative thought can lead to a cascade of damaging thoughts that can hinder our faith and distance us from God's presence. The speaker encourages believers to discipline their minds and transform their thought patterns through the power of the Holy Spirit. He references the apostle Paul's exhortation to think on things that are true, honest, pure, just, lovely, and of good report, emphasizing the importance of focusing on positive and uplifting thoughts.

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## Transcript

Breakings of the emotions, breakings of the will, breakings of the heart, now the breakings of the mind. Romans 12 and verse 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. Breaking the resistance, breaking the rebellion, breaking it until it becomes submissive and obedient to the divine will, to the will of God, until no longer do our thought patterns follow after the thought patterns of the world.

To the philosophy of the world is not our philosophy that we live by. To the ways of thought, the ways of thinking, God speaking in Isaiah, says, your thoughts are not my thoughts. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

We're greatly blessed or limited just by our own thinking. One man has written a book, Positive Thinking. There is a power in positive thinking.

God's pattern of what the thought life of his people should be following after. Finally, brethren, verse 8, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, what are just, lovely, whatever things are of good report, praise, praise, think on these things. Think on them.

Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Sometimes we think that if it's true, that makes it legitimate. But I see there's some other things.

A lot of things are true, but they're not lovely. A lot of things are true, but they're not pure. It's got to go through all seven of the siftings, as it were.

The great battleground is the mind. That's where the enemy does his best to get in. That's where he wants to work.

That's where he wants to tear down our faith, our relationship with God. We're told in Philippians 2, just turn across the page, this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. And in 1 Corinthians, and in the second chapter, 16th verse, for who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

We're either going to have the mind that's conformed to this world. We're going to think and worry and stew and fuss. We're going to fill our minds with all the fleshly things that the world consists of, or we're going to develop the mind of Christ that's in us.

When a baby is born, all the powers of thought are there, but the thought isn't developed. It all has to be developed. So if we're born in Christ, the powers of the mind of Christ are there, but it has to be developed.

There has to be that transforming work. There has to be a turning away from the ways of the world, until we're not looking at things or thinking of things the way the world looks at it. We have a completely, totally different viewpoint of things.

In Romans 8, 7, because the kernel mind is in enmity against God, was not subject to the law of God, neither can be. There is that kernel mind, there is that natural mind, there is that worldly mind, and there is the mind of Christ. The brain is a vehicle to which that mind will express itself.

It's a machine, if it were, it's a computer. The mind is deeper within us. As we're converted, just as a child is born, we're converted and given, at that moment, the mind of Christ.

But that doesn't mean it's working. It has to be developed. We have to get converted in our minds, as it were.

We have to be transformed, is the word that the Scripture used. There must be developed that mind. And the battleground is right there.

Turn with me to 2 Corinthians, 10th chapter, and start with verse 4. For weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imagination, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. If you'll notice, the weapons are formed to do this job. The weapons are not carnal, but mighty through Christ.

But if you'll notice, all three things mentioned are areas of the mind. First, imagination. That's in the mind, isn't it? And what troubles that gets people into? Imagination.

That can create trouble where there isn't any trouble, can't it? That can create trouble in churches, can't it? That can create trouble in a home, can't it? You imagine something. It doesn't have to even be true.

Imagination isn't necessarily true, but what trouble it can cause.

Then, every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. There is a high-mindedness that would question God, that would come and bring in unbelief. God says this, but I know more than that.

That high-mindedness. And that's in the mind. And then bring into captive every thought to the obedience of Christ.

And again, it's in the mind, isn't it? That's the battleground. That's what makes a difference between a truly overcoming Christian and one that's going to be overcome time after time, even though they may have the breakings of emotion, even though their will might be set. You'll find that will can get pretty weak sometimes if the mind isn't brought into obedience, as the thought life isn't brought in.

The first thing we know, it will undermine all that God did when we last met with him, and he set us up right, set our will right, broke us down before him, and then we start thinking again. And then we start thinking the thoughts that we've always had our thought patterns into, whether they're fear patterns, whether they're anger patterns, rebellion patterns, regardless of what the patterns are. We develop patterns of thought, areas that we just are always thinking in.

The imaginations of the mind, the things even that we fantasize in, in all kinds of areas. Those have to be brought in. That's what the enemy likes to get into, because he knows that if he can get into the mind, if he can get into the thought life, it will not be long, as the saying is, sow a thought and reap a deed.

It will not be long until things are beginning to manifest. One of the hardest things in the world to do is think sweet thoughts and manifest anger. It won't do it, will it? It won't do it at all.

We're going to be manifesting the areas that we're thinking in. Now I find in Philippians it says, think on these things. That's speaking to my will.

That's saying I have a choice. It is true, I cannot stop my mind from working, but I can tell it where to work. That's a command.

It's telling me where to direct the thoughts of my life. I have found so often, as I've talked with people and you see where they're coming, you see where their thoughts are coming from, you realize it's the biggest area of their problem, it's just where they're thinking. Just the areas of where they're thinking.

In that thought, they're going to be manifesting what the person's like. They're going to be coming out, for out of the abundance of the heart to vouchspeak it. They're going to be showing what's inside.

Now the broken mind is a mind that's been brought into submission and will yield to the Holy Spirit. He will yield to what God is desiring. He will attempt under the power of the Spirit and the power of grace to completely transform, to reconstruct his whole way of thought.

I presume most of you have already come through many areas of that. There's perhaps a time in your life when anything that had to do with God, you wanted nothing to do with. And then you were converted.

Right there started a whole new pattern of thought, didn't it? Of the reality that there was in Jesus Christ. And so there you had to get your first lesson in transforming. And as you went on, you were also brought into more and more the ways.

Now one of the ways to change our thought is what we feed on. Feed on the Word of God, or feed on the right conversation. And it's much easier to bring that mind under the power of the Holy Spirit.

We read that we're to put on the helmet of salvation. In other words, that's the area, that's our thinking area, isn't it? That's where our thoughts are. To put a helmet on.

Why a helmet? Because there's a lot of arrows that the enemy likes to shoot at you. A good helmet will keep it all away. Helmet of salvation, or in Thessalonians, it's a hope of salvation.

Hope is a good thing to keep in our mind. Despair and hopelessness and such thoughts would like to sweep in on you if they could. One of the laws of the mind is we cannot think two things at once.

We cannot concentrate. We cannot meditate on two things at once. God's thoughts are higher than ours.

We're going to pick up God's thought and work with them, or we're going to work with our own. We're going to entertain ourselves with all kinds of thoughts. We can entertain ourselves with thoughts of revenge because someone's done this to me.

Maybe you'll never do it, but you just enjoy thinking the things you'd like to do if you dared to. And we can get into a lot of areas of thought like that. Entertainment, just in our own mind.

Into areas of uncleanness. Into areas of self-pity. Oh my, you could even have yourself a beautiful funeral and everybody weeping and say, oh, I wish I'd treated them better.

I'd only realized they'd been with us such a short time. I wouldn't have done all that. I wouldn't have said all those terrible things.

And you can just enjoy listening to all those conversations as you're laying there in your little coffin. You can have yourself a good little time of fantasizing about some revenge or another. Getting even.

We can go into any area such as that. We can escape from the real world into the world of fiction, as if the world wants, likes to do. All the, so much entertainment.

In fact, it's called amusement. And the word amuse means to stop thinking. It means to go into a realm where you don't have to think.

Sit in front of a television set and it's all done for you. Don't have to think, just sit and watch it. And get dumber as the days go by.

You see, it's an amusement. It occupies my mind where I can sit there as at work and enjoy my thoughts. Novels will do the same thing.

As somebody else, I don't have to even go to work of imagining. I don't have to go to the work of fantasizing. I can pick up a book and someone already has already done it for me.

And I can travel and go and do and get into all kinds of situations. But it certainly doesn't follow the demarcation that God has set up whatsoever is true. As one of the scriptures, God cut out a lot of my fiction reading when I was younger.

It just wasn't true, and I had no way of persuading God that it was. Tried several times, but it was very useless. Whatsoever is true.

That fits a lot of world of entertainment, doesn't it? If it's not true. We will never have victorious lives until there's that transforming of the mind, until we accept the fact that my mind isn't my own, just to wander in the realms of the flesh and the world and the things down here. I've got to work at it.

My thoughts don't like to be corralled. My thoughts like to run and do all kinds of things. The devil likes our little brain.

It's such a helter-skelter thing. He likes to come and sow thoughts in an even more sacred time, even a more spiritual time. It seems like there's no time that your brain is off limits to the devil.

Whether you're asleep, or whether you're awake, whether you're in prayer, or whether you're working, whether you're at church, or whether you're at home. Oh my. Wouldn't it be a scandal if all the thoughts that had crossed your mind from the beginning of this service to now were made public? Oh my.

That would be entertainment for somebody. Not for us, perhaps, but for somebody. Sometimes we accuse ourselves, but really it's the enemy getting at it.

Trying to inject the thought and then get you side-tracked onto it. Until all of a sudden you wake up, hey, what am I doing over here? And you reject it and come back. It's a discipline of the mind.

Man is born lazy. One of the areas of laziness is the mind. That's why we have so many dropouts in school.

It's work. It's a lot of work to educate the mind, to discipline the mind, to make this wonderful machine we have become obedient to us, and become proficient and become useful. For some people it's harder than for others.

Nevertheless, it's a discipline. The same is true in the spiritual. To discipline the mind and make it come in, and make it become obedient, and bring every thought into the obedience of Jesus Christ.

Because out of that mind is where comes not only our deeds, but our attitudes in life. Out of the thoughts that are thrown at us and we pick up and begin to mull and meditate and muse on, will come our discouragement, will come our questioning, will come our fears, will come a host of problems that we bring into our lives. And those problems are brought in simply because the thoughts are not brought into obedience to Jesus Christ.

Because we've gone into the areas of thinking that are negative, are destructive, are discouraging. They'll take us down instead of up. Our mind is very rebellious.

Of all the parts of us that does not like to be corralled and to be harnessed, it's the mind. We want that to be free. We want it to go where it wants and do what it wants.

We want it to be free to soar and go anyplace and enjoy anything. In fact, of all the things we think of ours, that's what we think is most ours. That area of thinking inside of us.

It's my business. After all, you don't have to know about it. You haven't got the power of mind reading.

I can think anything I want to. I think anything I want to about you. I can think all kinds of bad thoughts about you.

Put a smile on my face and you won't know a thing about it. Except I can't keep attitudes from seeping through. I can't keep attitudes out.

They're going to manifest whether I like it or not. But I like to think it's my business. I like to think this is mine.

God said no. There's got to be a transformation. That's a very strong word.

A whole work of God done. Be transformed. There's nothing that will transform a life like the renewing of the mind.

There's nothing that will take a person out of a, at best, a weak Christian or even a carnal Christian state into that place of living in the victory of Christ as there is when the mind is brought into discipline. We use the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through Christ. And when we pick up that scripture, we sing that song for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

We like the song and we think of the devil out there to fight against. We think of the enemies that come at us and forget that that scripture is written specifically for the mind. That's where those weapons are supposed to be used of all things against yourself.

Against that rebellious runabout trashy mind. To bring it into subjection. To bring it into submission.

To bring it in until it's brought to that place where it's seeking that which is lovely and good report and pure. That which is true. Thy word is truth.

Until that mind of ours. What a difference it will make. Haven't you discovered already? It doesn't take very many negative thoughts to toss your faith into a wastebasket.

To bring discouragement flooding into your heart. It doesn't take many negative thoughts to put you completely out. You can leave you can leave the service in God's glory.

Breathe upon your life and lift it up your faith and your courage and set things right in the right frame of mind. You go home and halfway home you can start thinking about something. And then one thought, strange enough, it isn't like it isn't like anything else.

Just one thought can breed another one. Doesn't even take two. And then two can breed a whole host of thoughts.

And by the time you've gone ten miles you've got the thing this big and this long. And you come in the house and anyone's there say, well you have a good service? Yeah I guess so. What happened? Oh it was all right.

The service was all right. That's what happened on the way home. You got to thinking.

Got to thinking. What damage it could do. How it can throw us down.

How it can cut off our faith. How it can remove us from the presence of God. How it can destroy us.

No wonder Paul writes, be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Get your weapons out. Put your helmet on.

Stop fighting. Start fighting back at those arrows that come whizzing in. Those negative thoughts.

Whatever area they could, they will come in on. How they will destroy. You can, you can start with just a thought of a supposition is all it takes.

What if? What if something happened? What if I hadn't acted on the way home? And before you're home you're already in the hospital dying. Just, just a what if thought. Oh but it can build up.

Mentioned before, years ago I was traveling across the continent. Half bored anyway. And I glanced in my mirror and there was a patrol car back up.

I looked at my speedometer. It's out in Texas, just a long local station. I was just right on the beat.

I wasn't one mile over and I wasn't one mile under. So I kept it there. And then what if started? What if he pulled me over anyway? You're going too fast.

Now say I wasn't. You say you are. I say my needle was right where it belongs.

You say I clocked you five miles over. I'd say your clock is wrong because I clocked my speedometer, which I had. Well we got into quite an argument by then.

He stopped me and we ended up in the courthouse. I wasn't going to admit guilt, so it meant a lawyer trial. Cost me all kinds of money.

Now mind you by then he'd passed me and gone way out of sight beyond me. The time I was through I was angry with the state, with the police, with the courts, with everything. And someplace along there, I still hadn't left Texas yet, I got to walking the world from my shoes.

And where in the world am I going? What utter inane stupidity. And all started out was what if he stopped me? What troubles you can get into? We need some weapons. There's no doubt about it.

We need a lot of weapons that can get us and so we can realize this isn't free just to run out and do all this little crazy thing. It too, not only my hands and my feet, not only even my mouth, and that's a biggie, but even this up here has got to be brought into obedience to Jesus Christ. Till the thoughts are brought in.

Until we begin to develop the mind of Christ. And the mind of Christ isn't what if, it's sure. His word is true and amen, isn't it? Until we fill our mind with that which comes from above and our whole life will change.

Not because you're trying to live a Christian life, just because it'll be an automatic outflow and reflex of the thought life. And whether we like it or not, our lives reflect our thinking. Whether we like it or not, our life is joyful or sad, triumphant or despairing.

And it goes back to am I developing the life of the mind of Christ or am I giving over to the carnal mind which has nothing to do with the things of God. It is not enough that my emotions are broken. It is not enough that even my will is broken because it has a way of getting mended quite easily.

But the mind as well as the heart must be broken into submission and into the acceptance that I do not have the rights nor the freedom to walk in the power of the carnal mind and the carnal thought. That's the area that the devil has of entry. That's where he can come in.

He can wreck your day one minute after you wake in morning with one thought that will start as your day's gone. And if you'll get wise, you'll recognize that a lot of those thoughts don't even come from you. Sometimes we blame ourselves.

Sometimes we say, well it's just me, I'm just thinking that. Maybe if you go on with it, it's you. But that doesn't mean you started it.

Because the enemy has access, is able to sow thoughts in our mind. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Be not conformed to this world.

That will be the transforming work of your life. The more that Philippians 4 is, well turn with me and read it once more. The controlling factor of your thoughts.

Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true. Whatsoever things are honest. Whatsoever things are just.

Whatsoever things are pure. Whatsoever things are lovely. Whatsoever things are of good report.

If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. Father, I ask in Jesus' name, work in our hearts. Let us pick up the weapons of our warfare, and go to work, and fight.

But not, the fight isn't outside near as much as it is within. Divide those wayward imaginations, those discouraging, those despairing, those unbelieving, those untrue, those imaginations. Lord come, put within our hearts realization, that we have the mind of Christ.

We do not have to live in a carnal mind. You've given us another mind, for it to be developed and to live in it. Help us, I pray Father, in Jesus' name.

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