

Renewal of the Mind

by Richard Siple

Richard Siple's sermon emphasizes the importance of renewing the mind to experience true freedom and transformation in Christ.

Duration: 1:03:43

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 8:36, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Galatians 5:1, Philippians 4:8

Topics: "Renewing The Mind"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a man who was convicted of a serious crime and sentenced to 40 years in prison. The man decides to conduct an experiment on what it feels like to be free after being in bondage for so long. He collects pieces of wire and fills a bottle with them, symbolizing the entanglement and confinement he experienced in prison. Eventually, the man is released on parole, but when asked what it feels like to be free, he realizes he doesn't know yet. The story serves as a metaphor for how our lives can become shaped by the bondage and limitations we experience, and the need to truly understand and embrace freedom.

Transcript

Romans 12, verses 1 and 2. I'm sure that many of you memorized this passage of Scripture many years ago. I have no idea when I memorized it. I have known it for many, many years, and yet, until God revealed to me the truths that are here that I want to share with you tonight, I hadn't any idea of the impact of this passage and what it could do for my life and what it could do for many others.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Now, most of us know that verse, but many do not know the next one. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

I believe that everyone who has met God in revival or in any deep sense, desires with all of his heart to live and walk in the perfect will of God. Now, I say he desires it because I believe that's true, but many times, even though we desire it, we do not attain to it. Why? I have been working with the revival movement now since 1974, very closely, and have been a part of it and serve on the board of Canadian Revival Fellowship, and I have been involved in many movings of God where I have seen his power.

I've seen God's people meet him at a very deep level and seen their hearts desire to give everything to Christ and be filled with the Spirit and live and walk in the perfect will of God. And yet I have seen much disappointment in the hearts and lives of many very precious, sincere children of God. Why? Well, there are a number of reasons, but I believe that one of the principal reasons is because they do not have a clear understanding of what God means when he talks about the renewing of the mind.

And that's our subject tonight. Many years ago there was a man who had been convicted of a very serious crime and he was put in prison for 40 years. At the age he was when he was put in prison, it was not likely that he would get out until he was a very, very old man if he in fact lived out his term.

But after he'd been in there a long time, his behavior was such that it came time for his parole to be considered, and when the board considered the possibility of parole for him and considered his record, they decided that his record was quite good and he had already served many years of the 40-year sentence, and they decided they would let him out. And so the day came when he was to come out of prison and everything had been prepared for him and there were friends and there were state officials who were going to try to help him to get established in a new life. And so they had set up a program for him, they had found a job for him, they had found advisors who could help him, he had a rooming house with a room and some things to get him started in life, and now he was to leave the prison and he was to go to his rooming house and then to his job the next day and begin his new life.

And the afternoon came that he walked out of the prison and there were the high walls and the guards walking on the walls and the towers where they watched and where the great searchlights were and he'd been behind these walls many, many years, never been outside. And his whole life had become totally wrapped up in that prison and everything that it signified and his entire schedule was totally occupied with what took place in the program and schedule of that prison. And he walked out the door and those huge iron doors clanged behind him and he was out on the street free.

And as he began to walk down the street there was a guard walking on the wall that had gotten to know him over the years and had even become good friends. And so the guard saw him walking and knew of course that he was going out on parole and he called down and he said, hey Jack! And the ex-convict stopped and he looked up and he said, yes John? He said, Jack, listen, he said, I want to ask you a question. He said, what is it? He said, Jack, tell me, what is it like to be free? Well, John, Jack stood there and he thought for a moment and turned that over in his mind and finally looked up and he said, John, it's too soon.

I don't know. I can't tell you. I'll tell you later.

But that stirred something in his mind. As he walked down the street he said to himself, I must come to grips with this and understand what it's like to be free. I have been, I have been absolutely enslaved and in bondage for all these years.

I have been a prisoner and my whole life has become totally shaped by this prison. Now I have to see if it's possible for me to be free. And so as he walked along an idea came to his mind.

And he went home and he went into the boarding house and went down the basement. He looked all around. He found a bottle.

It had been a whiskey bottle. It was one of these tall bottles that had, you know, a narrow top. And then it, it broadened out like that and then came down that way.

So he set this bottle up on a shelf and then every day as he went to work and came home and wherever he went, he looked for little pieces of wire of all kinds. He said, I'm going to do an experiment about what it's like to be free when you have been in bondage for many years. And so he would pick up little pieces of wire and he would come home and get out in the basement and drop them down in this bottle.

Now, some pieces of wire were thin and some were thick and some were long and some were short, some were stiff and some were soft. Some were curled and full of spring and some were very straight. And he kept dropping them down to the bottle until it began to get full.

And then he would push the pieces of wire in and many months went by and he kept pushing it in and pushing it in. And then he had to just force the wire down the bottle and he kept jamming it in and jamming it in. You know how it did.

It got all intertwined and tangled until it was just a mass of wire in that bottle. And he kept forcing it in until he could not get one more piece of wire in and about six months had gone by. And then one afternoon after he had finished work he said, now I'm going to see what it's like to be free.

And so he took the bottle and he laid it out on the concrete floor of the basement and he took a hammer and with one blow he shattered the glass. And it flew in every direction and the wire was free! Ah, but he discovered something very interesting. In fact, it was something he had sort of suspected would be true.

He found that some pieces of wire immediately sprang loose from the mass and laid out completely free and independent on the floor. He found that some pieces of wire were half free sticking out from the mass, but he found that the great mass of the wire was totally intertwined and was in the shape of its imprisonment. For it had been in that bottle imprisoned so long and so tightly that it had taken on the shape of its imprisonment.

And he found that he had to take each strand of that wire and disentangle it and pull it loose one strand at a time to get it free. Technically it was free, but in experience it was still in bondage. That is something like what happens to the human mind when a person surrenders to Jesus Christ.

A person has been living in bondage to sin and they don't have to have been an unbeliever all this time because, my friends, I became a Christian when I was seven years old and you can't get in a lot of trouble by the time you're seven, especially if you're brought up in a Christian home like I was and you had a mom and dad like I had. And my father would have board meetings with me and he knew how to apply some pressure to the seat of my knowledge, or some other seat. It somehow got from here up to here.

And he was very strict but he was very godly and I did not want to displease my dad. And I want to tell you that by the time I was seven I hadn't gotten in too much trouble. And so I became a Christian when I was seven but I had a number of years to live and to grow up and to be a teenager before God really got a hold of my life completely.

And during that time I developed many sinful habits in my life. And then came the day when I was a teenager when I wanted to surrender fully to God and I wanted him to set me free. And I was very serious about it.

And you know that the Word of God says that whomsoever the Son shall free he shall be free indeed. Do you believe that? Well it's true. It's absolutely true.

God says it's true and it's true. It's true in fact in God's heart and mind and it's true in fact of what he's done for us and what he will do for us and what he is doing within us. But in our personal experience we may find that over the years we have formed various kinds of sinful bondage until our life has taken on the shape of our sins.

And this is especially true with the mind. For the mind is a kind of an instrument that forms thought patterns that are very strong and very powerful and very difficult to change. And I want to tell you that by the time I became a young man even though I had been saved when I was seven and I had wanted to be a Christian and live a Christian life all those years and I knew Jesus was in my heart.

By the time I became a young adult and really was wanting God to fill me and bless my life in my mind I had developed many many sinful thought patterns and my thought life had taken on the shape of the sinful bondage into which I had put myself over the years. And of course there are many who weren't saved when they were seven like I was saved. And I deal with many people who didn't come to Christ until they were adults or until they were 18 or 19 or 20 or up in their young adulthood or even in the middle of life and married and had children and family and were going on with life and then they came to Jesus Christ and they have many many years many years of filling their minds with the things of this world and with sinful thought patterns.

And those sinful thought patterns have become very powerful and very strong and their whole thinking processes have taken on the shape of their sinful life. And then they come to the Lord Jesus Christ and they repent of their sin and they hate what they have done and they despise what they have been and God has convicted them for all the sinful thinking they have done all through the years. And they want to be free from it and they confess it at the foot of the cross.

And I want you to know the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses away every sin, every sin. Amen. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us, to cleanse us, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Hallelujah. And no matter how there's no sin too deep, the Calvary isn't higher.

Is that what you're saying? Amen. It's like putting it on the bottom of the sea and the whole ocean covers it. And God forgives us and he takes it away as far as he's concerned.

It's forgiven, it's cleansed, it's gone forever. Do you believe that? Yeah, but what about your experience? Ah, now I'm speaking to your condition. Because even though you're very sincere in wanting your life totally changed and you know God has forgiven you and you hate the past and you don't want your mind to be in bondage to the sinful thought patterns of the past and you're trying to live the Christian life and you're reading your Bible and you're praying and you're going to church and you're listening to the sermons and you're getting involved in Christian service and you're trying to live like Christ would have you live on the job.

But you find that your mind, like the wire in that bottle, has taken on the shape of bondage in which it was formed. And you find yourself in many ways unable to control your thought life. And I have traveled in

many countries of the world and I have preached to pastors and missionaries and Christian workers of all kinds and in different denominations and theological backgrounds, God's dear children.

And I want you to know that everywhere I go I find that there is this problem that is defeating Christians and it's there after revival. It's there after people have dealt with the self-life at the cross and they have been filled with the Spirit and many of them still have this problem. And the devil uses it to drag them right back down into defeat and to lie to them and tell them that all that God did for them God didn't do for them.

Because they still have a problem with their mind. Now, what should we do about it? Well, I want you to look at this scripture with me tonight that we have. The verse in Romans 12, the second verse.

And be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now first I want to take the word transformed. Transformed.

I wonder if you'd be willing to help me with that word tonight. How many of you be willing to help me with it? Just just shake your head if you're willing to help me with the word transformed. You say, I'm not gonna shake my head until you tell me what I have to do.

All right, I'll tell you what I want you to do. I want you to get the word transformed up here by both ends with your hands. Will you do that? Oh, you're too proud to do that.

Pride is a sin, okay? You got it up there? All right, now what we're gonna do is pull it in half when I say go. Are you ready? Go. Pull it out.

Great. You can put your hands down. Thank you.

Your word came apart right where mine did. You see the first half of the word trans and the second half formed. That's where it came apart.

Transformed. Now trans means to be changed. And formed means shape.

So this word means to be changed in shape. Oh yes, that's great. I'd like to be changed in shape.

Well, we had some ladies in our church join the skinny class. They wanted to be changed in shape. No, that's not what I'm preaching about.

No, I'm not preaching on gluttony tonight. I'll do that another time on Thanksgiving Day. No, I'm not talking about that kind of shape.

What I'm talking about is the shape of our life and especially the shape of our minds. You see, when we're out there in the world, our life is conformed to the world, is shaped like the world, it's patterned after the world. Isn't that right? And then we come to Jesus Christ and God wants to change the shape of my life.

You want to change? Do you want to change? God wants to change the shape of my life. And what he wants to do is he wants to take my life and change it in shape so that it's shaped after the image of who? Of Jesus Christ. See, that's what it says in Colossians 3:10.

It says that we should be renewed in knowledge. See, that's the mind, the renewing of the mind after the image of him that created him. You see, we are to be changed.

The shape of our life is to be changed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. So God wants us to be transformed or wants our life changed in shape to make it like Jesus Christ. And I believe that one of the greatest obstacles to that in the Christian life is the mind.

That's one of the greatest obstacles. Now you say, well, pastor, simply why do you think the mind is so important? Well, the mind is important because everybody thinks. Oh, you say, I know some people that don't think.

Well, that's not true. Everybody really thinks. They just think differently than you do.

That's all. I've done quite a bit of counseling in mental hospitals and they all think. Now you think that they think wrong and they think that you think wrong.

And I pastored in Tuscaloosa, Alabama once for a while, and they have one of the biggest mental institutions in the world there. And one day there was a man who was driving into town. The mental hospital was just outside of town.

He was driving into town and he had a flat tire. And there was a bunch of these folks working out in the field. And so he had a flat tire and he got out and he jacked up the car and he took the wheel off and, and he was, uh, he was putting on the new wheel.

And when he did, he kicked his hubcap and he knocked all of his lugs, the nuts, the lugs, he knocked them all down a sewer drain that was right there. And he stood there and he cursed and he threw down his iron and he was mad and he got right in the face and he didn't know what to do. And one of the men who was working in the field come over and said, say, said, if you want to get that wheel out and get in town, what you ought to do is take one lug off from each one of the other wheels and put it on that one.

You can put it on that'll get you into town. Which one needed to be out and which one needed to be in? You see, people think, everyone thinks, and people think all the time. Oh, no.

You say people don't think all the time because something happened to me because I wasn't thinking. Oh, no, no. Something happened to you because you were thinking about what you shouldn't have been thinking about.

And you weren't thinking about what you should have been thinking about. See, there's a, there's a, a really not, you know, most television ads make me sick to my stomach. I don't know about you, but there's one that I like.

This is one I like, and it shows a man driving a car. He's got a business suit on. He's driving a car and says, Mr. Jones is driving toward the corner of 25th Avenue and 5th Street.

And then it switches and shows another man driving his car in a business suit. And it says, uh, also Mr. Brown is driving toward the corner of 25th Avenue and 5th Street. And Mr. Brown is thinking about his business instead of thinking about his driving.

And when they both get to the intersection, Mr. Brown is going to give Mr. Jones the business. I like that. It's an insurance advertisement.

Sunday you'll get that with a laugh right in the middle of the pastor's sermon. Okay. That's the only good ad on television.

People think even when they're asleep. How many of you ever dream? You dream? Yeah. I almost never dream anymore.

I'm too tired to dream. When I go to bed, I just go to bed and I'm gone. I don't dream because I'm too tired.

But I used to when I was a kid. Man, I used to have the best dreams. They were, they were thrillers in Technicolor and widescreen.

They were something else. People chased me and stabbed me in the back and I jumped out of windows. Just, you say, you must have had a terrible childhood.

No, I didn't. I had wonderful parents. Don't analyze me.

That's just the way it was. See, you just, you think all the time. And let me tell you, with your mind, you can go anywhere and do anything.

Like I can stand right here and in one second, I can see myself in the home of Tom and Mary Kyle in Curitiba, Brazil. I can just see it. Or I can see myself standing in the pulpit of the Pueblo Libre Church in Lima, Peru that seats 2,000 people.

See, I mean, that's simple, isn't it? Your mind just does it. See, there are things that some of you have done with your mind today that you hope to God you will never really do. Is that right? In fact, suppose I should tell you that I had one of these new electronic surveillance machines that the FBI has made and they were going to put the screen here in a moment and that this thing has a cone and I'm going to point the cone at somebody in this audience and you don't know who and it's going to play on the screen everything you've thought today.

And I put this thing up here and started to swing the cone. How long would it take to empty this place? See, I know because I'm human like you and I also know because there are thousands of people that tell me what they think. See, I am totally conscious that there are thousands of God's Christians.

I mean, born again people that with all their hearts wish that they had victory and power and blessing and they have been defeated for years with their mind. And you're here tonight and maybe even heard about the title of this sermon. You're saying, oh, my God, I hope that man will say something tonight to deliver me in this area of my life.

It's wrecking marriages, it's destroying lives, it's ruining ministries. I preached a sermon on the mission field and I had one of our finest missionaries. I wouldn't even think of mentioning his name would be known all over the Christian Missionary Alliance and outside of it.

And he came to me and he said, Pastor, I'm so glad you preached that sermon. I've got to talk to you. And we talked alone.

And he said, Pastor, if you hadn't preached that sermon today when I went home on furlough, I was never coming back to the field because I could not stand to go on trying to serve Christ for this problem. So the mind is very important. God says, as a man thinketh.

What? So is he. Well, you say now, wait a minute, wait a minute, now, wait a minute. You see, my problem is the way I was brought up.

You see, my problem is that I was brought up by ungodly people and I have had my mind exposed to things that preach. If I were to tell you, you'd make you blush and shame. My friend, you couldn't tell me anything that would make me blush.

Because I've heard it all. And my heart breaks in agony for the things that have been done to the minds of human beings when they were growing up. And I had a couple flown all the way from the West.

Somebody called me on the phone, said, listen, there's a couple. And the woman tried to stab her husband to death. And she just missed his heart about that much.

And she stabbed him a number of times. Then she stabbed herself a number of times thinking he was dead and trying to kill herself. Neither one of them died.

And they were both in the hospital together. And the police will not release them unless they can be counseled by somebody. And we want to know if you'll see them.

And they flew them from one of the coasts of Canada to see me. And they are members of an evangelical church and have been Christians for many years. And they sat in front of me and wept and wept and wept.

And finally, I talked to this lady alone. And she said, when I was eight years old, my stepfather began to use me sexually and he abused me and used me sexually from the time I was eight years old until I was 18. And I got married to get out of that house.

And she said and told me three different times in her life after that, when she had been abused sexually by men that were not her husband. And she told me a tale of woe. And finally, she reached a certain point in her tale when she stopped and she just she just got the most awful look on her face and both of her fish clenched and she trembled from head to foot.

And she said, I just want to hurt somebody. I just want to hurt. There's been some awful things done to people's minds.

And you say, yes, so it's not my fault. No, no, my beloved friend, man or woman or whoever you are here tonight, it's not your fault what's been done to you. Very likely it's not.

But I'll tell you something. It's your fault after tonight if you don't do something about it, because by God's help, if you'll sit here tonight, I'm going to tell you what to do about it. And I tell you, God will deliver you if you let him.

Because I have seen people whose minds have had the worst possible things done to them, and they have been totally cleansed and totally delivered, and they are people filled with the spirit and on fire for God and filled with his joy. And they have been free from their mental bondage for 20 or 30 years. And God can do it for you tonight.

I pray God that he will see we're always blaming somebody else to say, well, it's not my fault. You know, it's really the way I think is really the fault of my husband or the way I think is really the fault of my wife or it's my neighbor or it's somebody else. Or even do you know where the blaming game started in the Garden of Eden? Absolutely.

And God said, Adam, what have you done? And Adam said it was her. In fact, what he said was it was the woman you gave me. Oh, we like to blame God.

See, I know because I did this, I went into prayer rooms and I wept and I prayed. Listen, I struggled and I agonized and I said, oh, God, deliver my mind. See, I'm an artist by nature and a poet, and I'm that kind of a person, that's the way I'm made.

I love to read, man, I love to read. I went to a little country school and then I my folks moved to the city and I went to a junior high school and I walked in that library and I went berserk. I couldn't I didn't know there was anything like that.

I couldn't believe it. That library was full of thousands of books. I went crazy.

And I just went down one shelf and up the other. And I read everything. Good.

Bad and in between. And by the time I got into the ministry and I started out under the call of Almighty God to preach the gospel, I had a bondage of the mind that I could not handle. And I wept and I prayed and I cried out to God to deliver me, and I almost got to the place where I I don't think I ever quite said it's your fault, God, but I know some people who have talked to me who have made it mighty clear that they thought it was God's fault.

They've said, God, I've asked him to deliver me and he hasn't delivered me. I want you to know it's not his fault and it's not the fault of anybody who has had any effect upon your mind. Because God has a way to deliver, I want to read you a poem I came across because I think it expresses something that's going on today.

We need to get our thinking totally changed because we've been brainwashed. Let me read this to you. I went to my psychiatrist to see what he could find.

And this is what he dredged up from my poor subconscious mind. When I was two, my mommy hid my dolly in the trunk. And so it follows naturally that I am always drunk.

When I was three, I had a bad relation with my brothers, and that is why now that I'm grown, I poison all my lovers. When I was six, I saw my father kiss the maid one day, and that is why I suffer now from kleptomania. But I am glad to find at last the lesson this is taught, that everything I do that's wrong is someone else's fault.

It won't do. It won't do. There's a little boy who's going to help his mother one day and so and she was busy.

So he said, Mother, I'll sweep out the basement for you. She said, That's good, Johnny. You go sweep out the basement.

So he went down. He is sweeping out the basement, sweeping away, you know, and all at once a mouse ran out from under the sofa. He said a mouse and he took off after the mouse with a broom, you know, and the mouse ran the wrong way.

And so he caught up with it and he smacked it with a broom and knocked it up against the wall. But it didn't hurt it too much. And it started running again and he smacked it again and knocked it up against the other wall.

And now it couldn't run. So he ran over and it was crawling across the floor. And he took that broom and he beat that mouse and he beat that mouse and he killed it about 10 times.

And when he got through, it was awful. It was smashed and bloody and horrible looking. And he was really excited over what he had done.

And so he grabbed up the mouse by the tail and it was awful and dripping. And he ran up the stairs as hard as he could go, shouting, Mother, mother, mother, mother. And he went in the kitchen and ran straight through into the living room.

And the only problem is he didn't know the pastor had come to call on his mother and the pastor was sitting right around behind the door in one of the best chairs, but he couldn't see him. And he ran straight into the living room where he saw his mother sitting on the other side of the room. So, mother, mother, mother, he said, I was down in the basement that this mouse ran out from under the sofa.

And he said, so I took after him with a broom and I hit him once and he wasn't dead. So he said, I hit him again and then he stopped running. And he said, and he wasn't still dead.

So he said, and then and then and then he saw the preacher. And he was horrified, he did a double take and he looked at the pastor and he said, and then and then and then the Lord called him home. Yes.

Oh, boy, it's not my fault. Isn't it awful? The reason you're laughing so much is because you're so guilty. Oh, my goodness, the years that I was involved in that, you say, what am I going to do? Well, now, listen very carefully, things I'm going to say in these next few minutes can really change your life, I tell you, because it changed my life.

I wouldn't be standing here. I tell you, I wouldn't be standing here. I wouldn't be in the ministry.

I don't know if I'd be married to my wife or what. I don't know what would have happened to me. If God had met me, you say you couldn't have been.

Yes, I was a Christian and I was I was a Christian business and I had had the call of God and I had trained for the ministry and I was pastoring and I was very serious about the whole business. But I had a mind problem and I couldn't get victory. Now, he says, be not conformed to this world.

Now, I want you to help me with this word is last time. I'll ask you to help me tonight. So take the word conformed.

It's pronounced conformed. Take it like this. Are you all ready? When I say go, pull it apart.

Are you ready? Go. You're good at that. Thank you.

So you came apart the same place the other one did. Here's the first part con and then formed. You already found out the form means shape, but con means like.

See, the other word means. To be changed in shape, transformed, changed in shape, but conformed means to be shaped like and he says, do not be shaped like the world. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Do you know how people are shaped like the world in their lives? Listen carefully. We are shaped like the world by thinking the thoughts of the world after them. You better believe it.

The reason that people struggle with Christian victory, one of the greatest reasons is because their minds are so full of the thoughts of the world and the thought patterns of the sinful life that their life keeps on being shaped like the world, and they can't get their life into shape like Jesus Christ because their mind, their thought patterns are such. That they are conformed to the world, they are shaped like the world in their life and in their experience because their thoughts are the thoughts of the world. And that's the reason.

Can any of you quote the first sound? Anybody quote the first song? Does anybody memorize scripture? OK, some of you can. Now, I'm not going to get it all at once, but I am going to get the first verse now. Listen very carefully to this first verse.

Will you listen to it? Someone here. Don't even look it up. Just listen.

Blessed is the man that walketh not, not, not underline it in the counsel of who? Of the ungodly. See, one of the problems with God's dear people is they are filling their minds with the counsel and the thoughts of the ungodly. And I'm going to tell you, my brother and sister, if you insist on filling your mind with the thoughts and the advice and the teachings and the programs and the philosophies and the ways of thinking of the ungodly, if you insist on doing it, you're going to live like the ungodly and there isn't any Christian experience that will change it because the mind is that powerful.

That's the way God has made it. Let me give you that sound. Listen, oh, it's a gorgeous sound.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight, his delight is where is in the law of the Lord. And in his law, does he meditate? He thinks about it.

He turns it over in his mind. He memorized it. He fills his mind with it.

How often, how much day and night? And he should be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bring forth this fruit in his season and his leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he do is shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but they're like the chaff, which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly should not stand the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous.

But the way of the ungodly shall perish. And Christians are making every excuse in the world for filling their minds with the thoughts of the world. There are Christians that listen to to their TVs.

By the hour, you say, I've been enjoying the whole sermon up to now. Now you're starting to meddle. And you know what I do sometimes when I call on people, especially people I don't know.

There's a lot of people in my church. I've never been in their home. I'm sorry.

That's true. But there are a lot of people and I haven't been in all their homes. But sometimes when I get into a new home and I want to find out something about them and I sit down in their living room, you know where I look.

I look at their books and their magazines. All I do is just sit there and look. There's a bookcase, there's a magazine rack.

You tell me what you put in your mind and I will tell you the kind of struggles you're having in your life. And God got this truth across to me. I tell you, I had a house cleaning to do when God finally got through to me that what I put into my mind would shape my life and that I had to change what was in my mind.

I had to begin first with the input. Now, I will tell you a minute how to take care of what's already in there. But I had to do something about the present input.

And I went right through my life with a fine comb, brother. And I tell you, I went through my library and I went through my magazines and I went through my TV viewing and the whole business. And I went from one end to the other and cleaned it up.

In fact, there was a big steel barrel out in the backyard and I took a bunch of books and stuff out there and poured gasoline on them. And I had me a New Testament book of Acts experience. You say, man, it sounds like witchcraft.

No, no, no, no. That's in the book of Acts. Don't you know that in the book of Acts, where a great revival came and God met a lot of people and set them free, that they had a fifty thousand dollar book burning? That's New Testament.

And I cleaned up the input into my mind. That's step number one. See, if you don't want to do that, then what I've got to say, the rest of the sermon won't help you one bit.

You say, well, that'd be very difficult for me and very painful. We're preaching about the cross, aren't we? Huh? Are you willing to go to the cross and die? You say, man, you don't you don't know how much I like that stuff. You don't know how how much those those television programs are my very life.

You don't know how much I love to read that stuff. You don't know how much I like those novels and all that. That's listen.

You don't know how much I liked it. I write poetry. Now I write it for Jesus.

I paint pictures. That's one of my hobbies or painting. I'm that kind of person.

I love it. I love to read. I love to think.

And I had to go to the cross and say, Lord Jesus Christ, I'm willing for that part of my life to die. I'm willing for it to be crucified. I'm willing for it to go down to death and never rise again.

And you have to go through and make a complete cleanup of all the input into your mind. You may have to change some friends because the way they talk all the time is bad input into your mind. You know, evil companions, corrupt good manners, that scripture.

So you've got to clean up the input into your mind now, you say, yes, OK, that's fine. And I came to the Lord and I recognized all that rotten stuff and I got rid of it and I repented. I did everything you've said, preacher, but I want you to still have a problem.

Yes, I understand that. Because those mental thought patterns have been developed over many, many years, and even though you change all the input and get rid of it. Still, the old habits are there, aren't they? The old habits are there.

Do you know that habits can be wonderful or terrible? See, if you couldn't develop habits, your life would be miserable. Have you ever watched a baby trying to learn to eat? It's a marvelous experience, and I got tickled a dear little blondie sitting at a table. Luke is his name.

He was sitting at the table here at the conference over there, and I was getting a kick out of watching him learn to eat. And, you know, he's a little bit past the stage I'm talking about. Remember when they first start to learn to eat and they set some of that gook down there, they call baby food, you know, awful looking stuff.

And and they put a spoon in the baby's hand and he's hungry. So he sticks the spoon in and he makes a pass at his mouth and he dumps it in his hair. And then he he gets a little agitated because he's hungry, so he sticks it again, he makes another pass at his mouth, he dumps it down the front of him and now he's starting to fuss.

And so his mother takes his hand and helps him and sticks it in and he gets half of it in his mouth. But, you know, after a while. He develops a habit of eating so that he doesn't have any problem at all.

I know that because I've been eating with some of you over at the O'Kills. It's marvelous. I tell you, I mean, you don't even think about it.

You just sit there and just shovel it in with both hands. Just, you know, just talk and laugh. Look all around, just poking it.

No problem. That's great, isn't it? That's because you develop habits. See, I mean, that's great.

If you couldn't develop habits, you'd be still trying to get dressed this morning. See, I mean, you don't even think about it, but you'd have to sit there and figure it out. You ever watch a kid try to put on a pair of shoes backward? I got so tickled at a little kid the other day he came out.

He was so proud. He showed his daddy he had his boots on. They were on backwards.

It really was funny. He's just proud as he could be. But you see.

It takes a lot of effort until you develop habits, and because God has made us like that, he has made us that way, so our life would be smooth and easy and natural, we'd enjoy life. But because that's true, we can also develop bad habits. Right.

And our mental habits are the strongest ones we have. And when we develop habits of sinful thinking, they are powerful, they are enslaving. Now, listen to my next word and they are automatic.

Now, it's very important, I'm coming to a pivot in this sermon and you've got to get the next few things I'm going to say. When you develop a habit, it happens automatically, isn't it so? Isn't that right? Like if somebody, if something comes toward your eye, do you say, oh, there's something coming toward my eye. Let's see, what should I do? Oh, I've got a hand here.

I think if I would put my arm up, it might help me. Let's see. How do I put my arm up? I mean, it's too late.

But when you were a little guy, that's the way it happened and you got socked right in the eye, you know, but after a while you learn and you go like that. I mean, you just do it. You don't think about it.

It's automatic to everything I'm doing up here in this public tonight. I mean, talking. I don't think about that.

It's automatic. You see, but at one time it wasn't. So I've developed those habits and they become automatic.

Now, listen, when you develop sinful thought patterns or just like the wire in that bottle, they become automatic. And when you're trying to live the Christian life and you're going along, minding your own business, trying to keep your mind and heart pure and live for God. And all at once, something triggers one of those old thought patterns.

And it's just like a computer. What has been put in comes back out. And before you know it, your mind is going clickety clack right down the track.

Am I speaking to your condition and you say, oh, my God, I'm doing it again. I confess that to the Lord, I ask him to forgive me, I ask him to cleanse me, and I believe he did. And I ask him to take it away out of my life.

And here I am thinking those thought patterns again. And the devil jumps on your shoulder and he says, what good are you? You are a good for nothing Christian. And God really doesn't care much about you or he would have delivered you.

And why do you even try? Why don't you just give up the whole thing? You're never going to have any victory anyway. He is a liar. Now, listen to this.

When you have confessed a way of thinking as sinful. And you have sincerely wanted to put it away out of your life and you've asked God to deliver you. God takes you at your word.

And when that sinful thought pattern begins to function automatically by habit, it is not sin. Now, if you don't get that point, you will not get victory. If you have already confessed it as sin, whether it's a pattern of fear or pattern of bitterness or a pattern of worry or a pattern of lustful thinking or whatever it is, if you have confessed it as sin and you hate it and you don't want it and you put it out of your life as far as you're concerned, you've asked God to deliver you.

God takes you at your word and he makes it as if it were done in his heart and mind. And when it happens to you automatically by habit, you see, it's just like a computer. You put something into a computer and it's programmed and then you push the button and back out it comes.

Garbage in, garbage out, right? And some of us put a lot of garbage in there. And so when it happens to you automatically, you are not sinning until you are conscious of what you're doing and then you have a choice to make. You never sin without making a choice, like when you first thought those kind of thoughts, you made the choice to think them back years ago, you made the choice to think them and that was sinning.

But now you've confessed it and put it away and you don't want it. And it's happening to you automatically by habit. And it is not sinful unless you make a choice for it.

But you see, here you go. You're going along minding your own business and suddenly you see something. Now, I'm going to speak to a man.

You're going along and you've developed a lot of impure thought patterns over the years of lustful sexual thinking. You say, pastor, being awful blunt, certainly I am, because the world is twice as blunt. All right, shall I be blunt? I want to help you.

And so you're going along and you have these thought patterns and you hate them. You've confessed them and put them away. But you're going along and all of a sudden you see something and it triggers one of those old thought patterns and your mind goes running down that track and it gets quite a ways down the track and all at once a little voice says, ah, you're doing it again.

And you say, oh. Now, right up to that point, Christian, you have not sinned. But right then you have a choice to make.

If you choose to go on thinking those lustful thought patterns at that point, you start sinning and you have to confess it and be forgiven. You hear me? But if you have if you choose against it at that point, if you say, thank you, Lord, for speaking to me, thank you for reminding me and thank you, Jesus, for the victory. Hallelujah.

I refuse to think those thoughts in Jesus name. I put them away. And you turn your mind to the things of God.

You can say, praise the Lord. I was tempted, but God gave me victory. And if you handle it that way, I'm going to tell you what's going to happen the next time that that sinful thought pattern begins to run down the track, it won't go as far before you catch it.

You'll catch it earlier the next time. And you say, thank you, Lord, for speaking to me in Jesus name. You go away.

I'll have nothing to do with those thought patterns. You turn your mind to the things of God and you thank God for the victory. And the next time you'll catch it sooner and the next time you'll catch it sooner and the next time you'll catch it sooner and pretty soon, I'm going to tell you as I stand here tonight, pretty soon it will be gone.

And I know because I've had victory in this area of my life for almost 30 years. You see, man, you must be old. I tell you what, I'm going to live forever.

But, you know, it's wonderful to be free. Hey, man, it's wonderful to be free. I know where you're at.

Boy, I know what it's like. It's wonderful to be free. Hey, lady, worrying all the time.

It's wonderful to be free. You say, now, wait a minute, Pastor. You say, wait a minute.

I've got one more thing I want to ask you, because sometimes when I stop right in the middle of that thought pattern and I thank God for the victory and I try to turn away from it, it comes right back. And then I try to turn away from it, it comes right back. Now, listen carefully.

If that's what happens, you're not just dealing with a habit. Now you're also dealing with the devil. There's a name for the devil in the Bible, Apollyon.

You know what Apollyon means? Lord of the flies. Did you ever have a fly bother you in the hot weather? You know, he comes around like that and you say, go away. And he comes and you say, go away.

And he comes. Yeah, that's exactly what God means. And if you try to turn away from a sinful thought pattern, whatever kind it is, and you can't turn away from it, it comes right back.

And no matter how hard you try to turn away from it, it keeps coming right back. Then you're not only dealing with a habit in your mind, but you're also dealing with the pressure of satanic attack. So what do you do? Go with me to my last scripture tonight.

Go over to the book of Matthew, chapter four. And I'm not going to read a long passage, it's nine o'clock, I'm supposed to quit, and so I'm going to quit just very quickly, two or three minutes. Can you hold with me just two or three minutes? OK.

Very important. Matthew four, 10. Jesus is being tempted by the devil, and after Jesus had fasted 40 days and 40 nights afterwards, he was in hunger and the devil came unto him and said, If thou be the son of God, command these stones be made bread.

And Jesus said, It is written, Man should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live. And then the devil took him up to the pinnacle of the temple and he said, Cast thyself down for it is written his angels show, you know, he's given his angels charge over thee and they shall hold thee up and bear thee up in their hands. Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

And he said, It is written again, Thou shall not put the Lord thy God to the test. Then the devil take him up into an exceeding high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And he said, All this will I give you if you will fall down and worship me.

And then Jesus said something we've got to get into our vocabulary. Now, not not the way he said it, but I'm going to help you with it. He said, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shall worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.

And when he said that, the devil left him. Oh, hallelujah, I am so glad that prayer or that command has delivered me from the paw of the lion. That is marvelous.

I was teaching this, you know, and I was teaching folks. I said, Now, what you need to do is you need to to get this thing. And whatever your thought pattern is, it's a problem.

You need to get a scripture. Now, see, we don't need to use the scripture Jesus used because we're not having that kind of temptation. But we need we need to use he used a scripture that applied to his temptation.

Thou shall worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve because the devil said, Fall down and worship me. See, so he got a scripture that would apply to his temptation. Now, what you need to do is get a scripture that will apply exactly to your sinful thought pattern problem.

For instance, suppose you have impure, lustful thoughts. I have got a good one for you. Philippians four, eight, just one little piece of it.

And it goes like this. Whatsoever things are pure, think on these things. Hey, that's great.

So what do you do? Well, the devil attacks you and you try to turn away from those sinful thought patterns and those lustful thoughts come just sailing right back and you turn away and they come right back. Now you're dealing with the devil. What do you do? You do exactly what Jesus did.

Only you must do it in his name because you don't have the authority except in Christ. So you turn to the devil. Now, I wouldn't do it out loud unless you're alone.

You know, I'm a little careful about that. I do it out loud in the automobile sometime by myself or, you know, other places. But normally I do it silently because he can hear you when you do it silently.

Believe me, I've cast demons out of people silently without ever saying a word out loud. So don't don't get fooled by the dumb things people say about that. And so, listen, there is Satan and you turn to him and you say, Satan, in Jesus name.

And I was saying, get thee hence. And after the service, my wife said, honey, people today don't say get thee hence. So they don't know what you're talking about.

So I said, oh, yeah, that's that's all right. So then I said, be gone. And she said after, honey, people don't say be gone.

I finally she got me straight. Here's what you do. We're going to translate it down to modern language.

You turn to Satan, you say, Satan, in Jesus name, you go away. That's good plain English and modern translation. Satan, in Jesus name, you go away, for it is written whatsoever.

Things are pure. Think on these things. Therefore, Satan, in Jesus name, you go away.

You say, oh, come on. Are you going to tell me that little formula will work? Hey, what I'm going to tell you is that the almighty power of Jesus Christ will work. And that his word, which is powerful, the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword.

It is the mighty word of God, and he has exalted it above his name. And when you use the word and the name and the authority of Jesus, he will go. And if he doesn't go immediately, you do it two or three times.

But I tell you, I hardly ever have to do it more than once. But you stick to your guns. You say, well, I don't have impure thought patterns.

I have worry thought patterns. And I'll give you another one of Philippians four. Satan, in Jesus name, you go away, for it is written, be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Let your request be made known unto God and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall build a garrison around your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Therefore, Satan, in Jesus name, you go away. And he'll go.

And I'll tell you what this method that I'm giving you tonight, if you will pay the price and be willing to die to your old fleshly desires and you will be willing to let the Holy Spirit strengthen you with might by his power in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith and that you may be rooted in ground in love. I'll tell you, you can be filled with all the fullness of God. And you may have the authority of Jesus Christ and you can stand up to the devil and you can stand up to your awful thought patterns that have defeated you for years.

And you can see those patterns broken one after the other, one after the other, until you've got a mind that's clean and pure and a fit vessel for the Holy Ghost and for the word of God. And then you can start a

new input into your mind and you can start to fill it with the word of God and good Christian books and the thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as you think his thoughts after him, you will be conformed to his image.

Oh, boy, I know what I'm talking about. God has set me free a number of years ago, and I've seen him set thousands of people free with this, all kinds of sinful thought patterns. Do you know the people in the world today who have the biggest problem with thought patterns? I mean, the number one problem with thought patterns, homosexuals.

They have the number one problem with thought patterns because if they're a confirmed homosexual and they've been a practicing homosexual, say, for 10 or 12 years, every single aspect of their life is taken up with that one thing, every place they go, everything they participate, all their friends, all their literature, all their programs, their bars, their dance, everything that they are involved in. It's like alcoholism from morning till night, 24 hours a day. They are totally monopolized with this thing.

And their mind is enslaved, like something you have never seen. You say, do you know about this? Do I know about in the city of Regina? I had the homosexual club invite me over for a Sunday afternoon for three hours to have a rap with them. Man, did we have a good time? Oh, precious, precious people that Jesus loves and died for sitting there with anguish on their faces.

And they had invited two liberals in besides me, and they said, each one of you take six minutes to present your case, and then we'll ask you questions for the rest of the time. And it was to run for three hours. The other two guys took six minutes to present their case, and then they took the rest of three hours to talk to me because those two guys agreed with them.

And believe it or not, they didn't have any more to say to them. And on Monday morning, my phone rang and a female voice said, Pastor simply, can I come and talk with you? I was in the meeting yesterday and I want to be free. Listen, I want to tell you that I have seen homosexuals who were practicing homosexuals for many, many years.

I've seen them receive Jesus Christ as a personal savior, be born of God and go to work on their minds with exactly what I'm giving you. They didn't need a psychiatrist or a psychologist. They didn't need any shock treatments.

They didn't need anything but God's word and God's ways and the power of the Holy Spirit. And they went to work on their thought patterns with exactly the methods I'm giving you tonight. And I have seen them absolutely transformed.

Like the Bible says, their minds were renewed and their lives are transformed. I'll tell you, it's hard for one of those guys to go right through his life and clean up his input. I mean, it's his whole life he's got to change.

And I've seen them cleaned up both men and women since I've been in the city of Regina. And I saw it before I went there. And then I have married them in a heterosexual marriage and their former problems have been shared with their partner.

All was honest and above board. And I have married them into a Christian marriage and I have dedicated their babies and they are ministering in my church in Regina. I'm talking about victory.

Not a little victory. I'm talking about complete victory. Do not be conformed to this world, my brother and sister, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Let's bow in prayer. Our heads bowed and our eyes closed. There are some of you sitting here tonight.

And you're saying, oh, pastor, boy, I tell you what, that is what I needed to hear. I tell you that you saved my life tonight. Well, what you need to do tonight, if God has spoken to you and you are determined to do something about this, and it doesn't mean that you've had some kind of impure, lustful thought patterns, you may have had patterns of worry, patterns of fear, patterns of bitterness.

Oh, there's all kinds of sinful thought patterns that bind people's lives and defeat them. And our heads are bowed and please, no one looking around, we're praying for each other because we love each other so much. If you're here and you say, God has really spoken to me and I want to say to God tonight that I'm going to do everything you said, I'm going to clean up my input and cleanse it from one end of my life to the other.

And I'm going to change my input by filling my mind with the word of God, memorizing it, studying it, memory, memorizing it, meditating on it. I'm going to begin to read Christian literature. I'm going to fill my mind with the thoughts of God.

And I'm also going to do these other steps about breaking these sinful patterns right in the middle, like you were talking about. Best place to break a habits in the middle. So I'm going to do what you said tonight.

And I want to invite you, while we're waiting in quiet prayer, just get out of your seat and go to the prayer room and drive down a stake with God tonight and make a commitment. You say, hey, I just need to confess my sinful thinking to him before I even make that commitment. Fine.

Do that tonight. Just get up, go to the prayer room, pour out the mental problems, the thought patterns that are displeasing to God, have been defeating your life, accept his wonderful cleansing and forgiveness and make a commitment to him. You're saying tonight that by his grace, you're going to follow this practice until God sets your mind free.

We're going to wait. You just go. Our heads bowed and our eyes closed.

Just go quickly. Get down on your knees. Settle this with God tonight.

And if you need help, there will be people there to help you. And we need many Christian workers to help us tonight. You who know how to work in the prayer room.

Please, you go also right now and others. God speaking to you, get up and go quickly, please. See some of you, your entire Christian life is in the balance tonight.

Your ministry, everything's in the balance. Your marriage may even be in the balance. You have to have victory in this area.

We're going to wait just a little bit longer. We're not going to sing any songs. We're not going to over persuade you.

You have to mean business. Where you go while we wait quickly. Tell you what, brother, sister, you can be free.

Want to be free. Deal with God tonight. Just a few moments longer.

Don't go out of here tonight and say, I wish I had done something about that. We're just waiting quietly. We're praying for each other because we love each other so much and we want to help each other.

To have victory in Christ. We really care about each other. We don't condemn each other.

We just really love each other. And we're praying for you. A moment more.

Now I'm going to close like to go. Right to the back, all the way to the back and then to the prayer room.

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