

Urge to Sin - the Mental Factor

by Richard Siple

God wants to reshape our lives into the image of Christ through the renewing of our minds.

Duration: 54:29

Scripture: Psalm 1, Matthew 6:33, Acts 19:17-20, Philippians 4:8

Topics: "Temptation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about a man who had wire packed tightly in a jar and wanted to see what it was like to be free. He smashed the jar and set the wire free, and some of the wire pieces immediately sprang back into their original shape. The speaker then relates this to the concept of being transformed by the renewing of the mind, as mentioned in Romans 12:2. The speaker goes on to discuss Jesus' temptation by the devil and provides Jesus' formula for defeating the devil in one's thought life.

Transcript

Romans 12, verses 1 and 2. I want to thank you for all your hospitality, both times that I've been here, well I've been here three times now, this will be the third time, and we have received such tremendous hospitality and love and kindness from you, and there's just no way to express it. Anything negative I haven't heard, so good, but we just appreciate your wonderful warmth and love, and we're expecting to have a wonderful time of working together. We want to be just one big family in the Lord, and all part of each other and work together for his glory and his kingdom.

And you'll soon find out that I don't believe in this principle of clergy and laity, I don't think that's biblical at all, we're just brethren, aren't we? We're brethren in Christ, and one is not above another, we're simply brethren working together, doing the things God has called us to do. You have your gifts in ministry, and I have my gifts in ministry, and we work side-by-side as brethren in the work of God. So that's what we look forward to, and trust that God will make it real.

Romans 12, verses 1 and 2. Let us bow for prayer. Now Father, we bow in your presence, and we realize that unless you speak to our hearts, nothing will be said worth hearing. Father, unless you work in us and make clear to us the truth, we will not understand, and our lives will not be changed.

So we simply pray that your will be done in these moments together, and your name will be glorified. In Jesus' name, amen. Romans 12, verses 1 and 2. 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.

And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. The perfect will of God.

When God begins to move with power in our lives, one of the things that he does in us is that he makes us desire to have the perfect will of God brought out in our lives. Now I say God makes us desire that, because even though we desire it, many times we do not attain to it. And one of the things that's a great burden to my heart as a Christian is to know that so many of my Christian brothers and sisters have a tremendous desire in their heart and life to live for Christ.

They have this tremendous hunger to know God and to walk with him, to be filled with his Spirit, to please him. And yet they don't attain to it. And secretly in their hearts they know that they're not living in victory, they know that their life is not blessed, they know that they're not winning souls, they know that there isn't fruit, but really they long to be blessed and filled and perfected in the will of God.

And there'll be special meetings and they come to the altar or go to the prayer room and they weep before God and they yield everything to God. They cry out to God to be filled with the Holy Spirit and they have the assurance that God hears them and they sense his fullness. And then in a few months they realize that they're almost back where they were before.

I know all about that routine and going in service after service and finally beginning to wonder if what the preacher was saying was true and if there really was a different kind of Christian life that was full of power and blessing and still being defeated in so many ways. Now why is this so? Well there are many reasons, at least a number of important ones, but I'm convinced that one of the main reasons that Christians do not attain the victory that they desire is because they do not understand this matter of the renewing of the mind. They do not see the tremendous importance of the total change of all their thinking processes when they become a Christian and when they desire to walk in complete victory with the Lord.

Now the mind is a very interesting thing and I think what happens to Christians is much like the convict who had been in prison for many many years and finally one morning he walked out a free man. And as he went out the gates he went walking down by the wall and one of the guards on the wall that had known him for many years saw him walking down the street and knew that he was free and he called out and he said, hey Frank! The man stopped and he said, how does it feel to be completely free? And Frank stopped for a few moments and he thought that over and he said, Joe I tell you I don't really know yet. I'm going to have to find out and I'll tell you later.

And all the way to the rooming house where preparations had been made for him to have a place to live. He was thinking about that and as he walked along he noticed some pieces of wire laying on the ground so he picked them up and put them in his pocket and when he got home he went down in the basement and found a jar. It was one of those jars you know that's large at the bottom and then curves in and comes up small at the top.

He had a very definite shape and he put these wires down in the jar. Then as he went to work day by day and went about his life wherever he'd see a piece of wire whether it was stiff or soft or big around or fine or whatever he'd pick it up take it home and he would push it down to the jar. And he kept pushing these pieces of wire into the jar until the jar was just packed with wire.

Until it was so full of wire that you couldn't put one more piece in. And as the wire went into the jar it took the shape of the jar. You can picture that in your mind can't you? As the wire was packed in there it took the form of the jar.

And then finally one day when he couldn't get one more piece of wire in he said now I want to see what it's like to be free. This wire has been imprisoned in this jar for many months. Let's see what happens when a man is free.

And so he took the jar down the basement and he took something heavy and smashed the jar and broke it completely and set the wire free. Now a very interesting thing happened. As soon as the wire was free some of the pieces of wire just sprang right back into their original shape completely straight.

They were that kind of wire. And as soon as they had their freedom, boing! They were right back in their original shape. But he noticed that a great mass of the wire had taken on the shape of the jar.

And now even though the wire was completely free, many of the strands still held the old shape and form. That's the way it is with the mind. Someone says well when God sets us free, when Christ comes in and he washes us in the blood and we're born of the Spirit and we yield our lives to God, we're completely free.

That's true. And whomsoever the Son shall free, he shall be free indeed. We are free.

But isn't it true that many of the strands in our lives still hold the old shape? Not that they have to. Not that they are still bound. Not that we must retain that old shape.

But we still do in many strands in our lives. And we find that even as he had to take that wire strand by strand and straighten many of those strands out laboriously and disentangle them from one another. So in the Christian's thought processes there are many strands that are entangled and confused that still hold their old form.

And though they are free in Christ, they must be untangled and straightened out strand by strand. And that's what I want to talk to you about tonight because I know what it means to struggle this problem. And I know what it means to have victory.

And sometimes I look back on those days and I can hardly believe what it used to be like. I know how God can set the mind free and give it complete and total liberty in Jesus Christ. Now look at the text, will you please? Romans 12 verse 2. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye... What? What's the next word? Come on, everybody answer me.

What's... Wonderful. Transformed. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Now take that word transformed and I want you to get a hold of both ends of it and pull it in half tonight. Just take it in your mind's eye and pull that word transformed, you know, right where it divides, pull it apart. Here's... Wait a minute, I'm backwards.

Here's trans and here's formed. Put a dash between. Do you see it? Trans-formed.

Now the word transformed means to be shaped, right? The word trans means again or to be reshaped. Now God is speaking about being changed. To be trans is to be changed in shape.

Now I'm sure there are folks that would like to be changed in shape. And they do all kinds of things about it. Like some of the ladies in our church attended a skinny class and I don't know how successful they were, but they were trying to be changed in shape.

But that's not what I'm talking about. Though that might be in order too, but that's not what... That's not what we're considering. We're talking about changing the shape of our lives.

God wants a Christian's life to be completely changed in its shape. The whole form of a Christian's life is to be changed, is to be transformed, reshaped. God wants to change the shape of our lives.

And that life should be changed in its shape so that it is conformed to the image of Christ. In Colossians 3, in verse 10, we read that God wants to renew us in knowledge or in the mind after the image of him that created us. Who is that? Christ.

Christ is the creator. For in him were all things created that are in heaven, that are on earth, visible and invisible, principalities, powers, they were all created by him and for him. He is the creator and God says he wants to take my life and yours and change it and shape it like Christ.

Oh, we talked about that a little bit this morning. Conformed to his image. That's his priority in our lives.

So God wants to reshape our lives into the image of Christ and how is it done? God says be transformed or reshaped by the renewing of your mind. By the renewing of your mind. Now why is the mind so important? Well, the mind is important because everyone thinks.

Oh, you say, I know some people that don't think. Well, they do think. They may be thinking about the wrong things, but they think.

And not only does everyone, you know, you're thinking all kinds of things tonight. It's very interesting to be a public speaker. Do you know that? I really enjoy watching people's faces and sometimes they sit there and they look at you like, I don't believe a word you're saying.

Or they look at you, you know, with this look like, I hope he isn't too long tonight or all kinds of things you're thinking. Everyone thinks. Some people sit there and think about what they're going to do tomorrow.

They don't hear a thing you're saying. Right? You believe some people do that? They sure do. Then some people have sweet dreams because they sleep through the sermon, but I figure if they're that tired, they might as well sleep.

Because if they try to stay, you ever see someone trying to stay awake in church? Oh, it's agony. I get tickled at them because, you know, I'm looking at them and they're sitting there, you know, and they don't, they wouldn't want to be embarrassed by going to sleep and they, and they're going like this, you know, and they go. I feel so sorry for them because they can't get anything out of the sermon and they can't get anything out of their nap.

Terrible. They might as well just go to sleep. Forget it.

But anyway, people think and they think all the time. Absolutely all the time. Oh, I know somebody that wasn't thinking.

He ran right through a stoplight and had an accident, almost got killed. Sure he was thinking. He just wasn't thinking about driving.

He was like, they have a television ad in the States about this fellow who's driving down the highway and he's thinking about his business and not about his driving. And at the next intersection where Mr. Brown is also going to be coming through the intersection, he's going to give Mr. Brown the business. And, you know, it's one of these insurance ads and this kind of thing.

But, you know, we think it, we think all the time. Absolutely. 24 hours a day.

Even when you're asleep, you think. Any of you dream? How many of you dream? Oh, come on. I don't dream much anymore.

I used to dream a lot when I was a kid. Now I'm too, I guess I'm too tired to dream. I don't know.

Or my mind is too full of clutter. But anyway, I don't dream too much anymore. I used to have some really wild dreams when I was a kid.

You ever have wild dreams? Now, if you're a psychiatrist, please analyze me tonight while I... But I had a recurring dream that was a dilly. We had a two-story house and I would be running through this house and there was someone after me. And, you know, you can never run fast in a dream.

It's terrible. You know, you're straining and you're not getting anywhere. And I'd run up these stairs and this man after me and I'd run down the hall and there would be my bedroom.

And I'd run into the bedroom and there was a roof right outside the window of my bedroom. And just as I got ready to jump out of this window, he would always throw a knife and stick me right in the back. Terrible.

So you see, you say, what happened? I don't know. I never did find out what happened. I lived through it some way.

I'm here. But we just, our minds are going all the time. And then, you know, not only do we think all the time, but the mind is a marvelous thing because you can think anything you wish.

Anything. I mean, you can do anything in your thoughts. Right? See, that's one of our problems because some of the things we don't think we would ever do in our life, we do in our thoughts.

And then to our horror, we end up doing it in our lives. Right? Because you can do anything with your mind. You can make a trip to the moon.

You can go in your bedroom and get down on your knees. You know, I can still picture perfectly in my house, in my, in my mind, the house of Tom Kyle in Curitiba, Brazil, South America. I can picture it perfectly.

I was there. I can see what it looks like. I can see Tom, chairman of the field there.

I can go into my bedroom, get down before God. And in one second, I can be in Brazil. Isn't that fabulous? I can see him.

I can see his wife and his kids. I can see the churches where I preached and I can pray. And in one second, through the mind, through the fabulous power of the mind, I can be standing there right beside him.

That's tremendous. The mind is, is almost totally unlimited in what it can do. And the mind is terribly important because everyone thinks, everyone thinks all the time, and the mind is almost without limits, time, space, whatever.

You can do anything with it. But the most important thing about the mind is this, because what we think shapes our lives. Do you believe that? Be ye transformed, have your life reshaped in the image of Christ by the renewing of your mind.

What we think absolutely shapes our lives. There is no way to avoid it. God's word in Proverbs 23, seven says, as he thinketh, what? So is he.

As he thinketh, so is he. Galatians six, be not deceived. God is not mocked.

For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh, where is your thought life, Christian? Where is your thought life? He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life. We have a man in our church who's the head of our evangelism department.

He has a little statement for this concerning the mind. He says, garbage in, garbage out. What you put in is what you get out.

The mind is not exactly like a computer because the mind has the power to be original. The mind has the power to make choices. But the brain part, at least the physical part of the mind, is like a vast, complicated computer.

And what you put in, you will get out. Oh, I wish Christians could believe this. What I put in my mind is what I'm going to get back out.

You take one of those big electric brains and you put in that brain that two and two is five, and I don't care how many times you ask that brain what, I sanctify you wholly, and you can make every commitment in the world. But if you still program the wrong thought patterns into your thought life, you will get back out what you put in. And there is no spiritual shortcut to get around it.

Do you believe me? I know this is true. Many times we as Christians are caught up in the blaming game. Did you husbands ever say to your wife, honey, when you do that, you make me so mad? You wife, did your husband ever say that to you? Come on, shake your head.

He's afraid he'll poke me. Isn't it interesting how we blame everyone else for our sins? You know, one of the greatest games today in the world of the human mind is the blaming game and the complete forgetting of all personal responsibility. And we like to say, well, I'm not to blame for what I think and I'm not to blame for the shape of my life.

When I was a child, I had certain thought patterns put into my mind and I was treated certain ways and I do certain things because other people did it to me. Well, there's truth there. There is influence there that's brought to bear in our lives.

We're often taught completely wrong. We're taught false concepts. We're taught by example, ungodly things that our minds are filled with.

But what I want to say to you tonight is that God is saying to us that by his grace, we can renew our minds. We don't have to be the victims of our minds. We don't have to be the victims of what we've been taught or the examples we've had or the harm that's been done to us or the way we've been treated in our past life.

God doesn't want us to be victims. He wants us to be delivered. Amen.

You can say amen when I preach. That's just like saying sikkim. It's dangerous though.

I might preach all night. Any time that I am defeated, it's never God's fault. You believe that? If there's anything God wants, it's to give me victory.

That's what he wants. Oh, let's stop blaming others and let us face the fact that we can be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we are not bound to our old way of life, that God has a way of deliverance. Now, what is it? Let me give it to you quickly.

First, God says, be not conformed. Now, I want you to take another word and tear it apart. You took that word transform, you pulled it apart.

So let's take the word conformed in verse 2, Romans 12, verse 2. He says, and be not, of course, I'm pronouncing it wrong, should be conformed, but I want to emphasize the other syllable, be not conformed. Let's pull it apart right there. C-O-N dash.

Now, the word con or the prefix con means to be like, and we have the word formed again, which means to be shaped. Do not be shaped like what? What does it say? The world. Do not be shaped like the world, but be completely changed in your shape by the renewing of your mind.

I wonder how it is that we are shaped like the world. Well, it's the same way that we're shaped like Christ. The reason that Christians have so much problem being shaped like the world in their daily walk and their daily talk and their daily thought life is because they are too completely taken up with thinking the thoughts of the world after them.

You know, I didn't used to realize this. I like to read and I used to think that I could read just anything. And I'm ashamed to say to you that after I was a Christian and had yielded my life to God for full-time ministry, that I still thought that.

And I did it. I read almost anything. I remember when I was going to junior high school, that I read almost every book in the library.

And I mean, fiction, not all the other books, fiction. And I constantly had all kinds. Oh, I read Christian literature.

I read my Bible, but I thought that it didn't make any difference. But God's word says, be not conformed to this world. Don't be shaped like this world.

And I want to tell you tonight that the reason men are shaped like this world, Christian or not, the reason that Christians are caught in the same sins that non-Christians are caught in, is basically because there are thought patterns in their lives that are established upon thinking the thoughts of the world after them.

And my Christian brother and sister, if you insist on filling your mind with the philosophies of the world, with the attitudes of the world, with the thinking of the world, with the music of the world, with the entertainment of the world, if you insist on filling your mind with all the thought patterns of the world, I solemnly charge you that there is no power in heaven or in earth, be it God or any other power, that can transform your life into the image of Christ. There are inevitable laws that God has built into the human system that he will not violate because he's an honest God.

And we cannot think the thoughts of the world after them consistently and fill our minds with their thinking and expect to be able to have the victory of Jesus Christ and to be conformed to his image. It doesn't happen. And it will not happen.

How many of you when you were children, or maybe since then, have learned at least a part of Psalm 1? Have you learned some of Psalm 1? Why don't you quote it with me, just not much of it, just the beginning of it. Let's start right at the beginning, verse 1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. Did you ever read that before? Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.

When we were bringing up our children, Dr. Spock was, I mean, Spock, was making great headway in the United States. I don't know if his poison seeped into Canada or not, but he had written a book in which he was telling all the women how to raise their children. And the only problem with him is that he was not a man of God.

And it's sad to think that so many of us who were Christians had this book in our hands. Where God has told us how to raise our children. And so many of those very same dear Christians were following the philosophy of Dr. Spock in raising their children, instead of following the philosophy of this book.

Huh? They really were. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. You see, someone who is following their philosophies, their attitudes toward life.

Now you say, well, preacher, you think it's wrong to have a television? Oh, no, no, it's fine. We have one. I just want to know, do you have push button grace? You know, you know what I mean? Do you have the power to turn it off? If you don't, you better do something about it.

In the book of Acts chapter 19, let's turn to it. It's so good of a passage. Acts 19 verse 17 to 20.

I want you to see what happened there in a great revival. You know, Paul was always in a revival or a riot, sometimes both. At Acts 19, there was a great revival in Ephesus under Paul's ministry verses 17 through 20.

And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus. And fear fell on them all. And the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

And many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds. It sounds like the kind of revival that some of us have experienced. And many of them also, which used curious arts, brought their books together.

And burned them before all men. And they counted the price of them and found it 50,000 pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Now that's a revival when you have a book burning and get rid of \$50,000 worth of books. I keep needling the Suterases telling them that I still am waiting to hear about one of their crusades where they have a book burning. That would be interesting, wouldn't it? Some Sunday to come to church, everybody bring all the books and magazines and all of that kind of thing in their house that they don't think Jesus would be pleased with.

And after the service of a big bonfire out here and burn it. Some of you are looking positively frightened. It's interesting to visit in people's homes.

You know, you go in and sit down in the living room and they have a bookcase. And, you know, you just glance at the bookcase. Magazine rack.

And the word of God is running through your mind that says, blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. And what do you put into it, Christian? Garbage in? What's the other half? Garbage out.

But be transformed by the renewing of your mind. What does God want us to put into our minds? Well, why don't we go on with Psalm 1? Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is what? In the law of the Lord. And in his law doth he meditate.

How much? Day and night. In his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in the season.

His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so. They are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in 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. I'm going to ask you two or three questions, but don't answer me or raise your hands.

Just answer them in your own heart. Do you have a system of scripture memorization and scripture meditation and scripture application in your life? Not only does God want you to cut off some of the old input and clean it up, and you may have to sit down with a piece of paper and make a list prayerfully before God and go through your house and go through your life and go through your habits and your practices and your entertainment and your relaxation, and just clean a whole bunch of junk out of the temple. Trash.

Clean out the input, but you may have to begin a totally new process of input. Scripture memorization, scripture meditation, where you take time to think on the word of God carefully and prayerfully, and scripture application where you ask God how to apply it to your life and go out that day to apply it. How we need to put the word of God into our hearts and minds.

If we're going to be shaped like Christ, and I want you to get this now very carefully. Are you listening? If our lives are going to be shaped like Christ, we must think His thoughts after Him. In Philippians chapter 2 it says, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

Oh, that's tremendous. First Corinthians, the second chapter, the last verse, we have the mind of Christ. Colossians chapter 3, verse 1, if we then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where

Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affections on things above, and the word is not affections as in your King James, but set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. God wants us to set our minds on things above, not on things on the earth.

And there needs to be a complete revamping of our thought life as to what we put in, in order that God may transform us by what we think. Two more things I ought to deal with quickly. One is this matter of deeply ingrained thought patterns that are already there.

Now I want to tell you something about temptation and sin tonight that is very, very important. Temptation and sin are not the same thing. You realize that? Temptation and sin are not the same thing.

Many, many Christians are defeated because they can't distinguish between temptation and sin. Now you see, the problem is that many of us have developed thought patterns that are dishonoring to God, and when we first started developing those thought patterns, we chose to do so. A man never sins till he makes a choice of the will.

All sin is in the will of man. And you never sin till you make a choice of the will. So originally we made choices to think certain kinds of thought patterns, and that was sin.

But you see, we develop those thought patterns till they are very deeply ingrained thought patterns. They are habits. And I know all about that kind of thing.

It can sure be a problem. And you say, I have confessed them to God, I've asked him to forgive me and to take them out of my life, and then I'm going along just minding my own business, trying to live the Christian life, and something triggers that thought pattern, and clickety-clickety-clickety-click, there it is again. The whole nasty mess.

Either impure thoughts, or worry, or bitterness, or whatever it is. And then I confess it to God again as sin, and I ask him to deliver me, and then the next day something happens, and there it is again. The whole train of thought, there it comes, clickety-click, right into my mind.

Now, anything that is a thought habit, that is a habit of thinking, was a sin when it was originated. But any thought pattern that jumps into your mind automatically without your welcoming or bidding it to do so is not sin. Oh, listen carefully now tonight.

I know, you know, I've been speaking a long while, but don't go to sleep on me right here, you have to get this. When that old thought pattern jumps back into your mind, that pattern that you don't want, that you've committed to God, that you've had cleansed in the blood, and it just comes automatically, and you're way down the road with it before you're even conscious of it, and all at once the Holy Spirit says, uh-uh-uh, you're doing it, again, at that point you have not sinned. I do not care how bad the thought pattern is, I don't care how vile it is, or how wretched it is, or how unbelieving it is, or how hateful it is, or bitter it is, if it is automatic, you have not sinned until the point where you're conscious of what you're doing.

And as soon as you're conscious of what's happening, at that point, you make a choice. Are you following me? At the point where you're conscious of what's happening, and the Spirit of God says, uh-uh-uh, at that point, you make a choice. You either choose to stop thinking that, you either stop there and say, thank you, Lord, I refuse to think that, in Jesus' name, I reject it, and you go on your way praising God for victory,

or you make the choice to continue thinking that pattern of thought.

If you choose to continue from that point on, you're sinning. Did I make that clear? If I made it clear, nod your head. I want to make it clear so bad.

There is no sin committed in a habitual thought pattern until you have received it by a choice of your will. At that point, you begin to sin. But my friend, at that point, you can say, thank you, Lord, for speaking to me, thank you for the victory, in Jesus' name, I reject that pattern of thought, it's been put under the blood, hallelujah, I refuse to have it, praise the Lord, I have victory, and you can go on your way in victory.

Now, you say, well, what will happen? Do I have to have that problem the rest of my life? No, you don't. That's the first step to breaking those thought patterns, because the best place to break a habit is in the middle. Will you write that down? Go ahead, write it down.

The best place to break a habit is in the middle, and when you're right in the middle of that thought pattern, and the Holy Spirit speaks to you, that's the best place to defeat it. I'm going to tell you what happens. The first time after you've committed it to God and had his forgiveness, the first time that thought pattern comes back to your mind, you know, you'll go way into it before you're conscious of it, and then all at once you're conscious of it, and you stop, and you cut it off right there in Jesus' name, and praise God for victory.

I'll tell you what will happen. The next time you won't go so far before you'll be conscious of it, and then in Jesus' name you reject it and you cut it off, and the next time you won't go quite as far, and in Jesus' name you reject it and you cut it off, and the next time you don't go quite as far. And I'll tell you, inch by inch, you will break that habit right in the process of it until the day will come when you'll say, praise the Lord, I never have that problem anymore.

That whole thought pattern that was such a burden to me is gone. I never have a problem with it anymore. But don't let the devil tell you you're sinning unless you make a choice, because if you do believe him, you're defeated, and you'll never defeat it.

You'll never get the victory. If he tells you you're sinning and you admit it and confess it as sin, you'll never get victory over it. You'll do it continually.

But if you stop the moment you know that you're thinking it and you reject it in Jesus' name and take your stand in the power of Christ, that will be cut off shorter and shorter until that thought pattern will completely disappear out of your life and you will have total beautiful freedom. And I know what I'm talking about. I know.

And I know what a blessed thing it is to be free in the Lord. You say, well, now, wait a minute. I have one more problem.

I told you I had two more things to say. This is the last. You say, there are times when I have tried that, and as those thought patterns came, I said, I will not think that.

In Jesus' name, I reject it, and it came right back. And I have said, I reject that, and I turned away from it. It came right back with tremendous force.

Just one more thing. If you reject that thought pattern and you cannot seem to get away from it, it comes right back with renewed strength and you turn away from it in Jesus' name, it comes right back again. Now you're dealing with the devil.

In that case, you're dealing with satanic power. And I want to give you Christ's own formula for dealing with that kind of thing. Will you turn please to Matthew chapter 4, verse 10.

Matthew 4, 10. You will remember that in Matthew 4, we have the tremendous temptation of Jesus by Satan personally. And now Jesus comes down to the last temptation.

Let's begin reading with verse 8. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence Satan, or go away Satan, is the way we would put it. For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Now if you have paper and pen or pencil with you tonight, I want to give you Jesus' formula for defeating the devil in your thought life. So I want you to write it down. If you find yourself caught in a situation where you cannot resist a pattern of thought and it comes right back again and again, you know you're dealing with satanic power.

And it won't do you any good to pray and ask God to deliver you because God has given you the authority yourself for deliverance, in Jesus' name. So at that juncture you turn to the devil, and of course if other people are around you can't say it out loud, but I've been alone sometimes driving in my automobile or somewhere else and I have said it out loud. But you can say it silently to him just as if he were standing right there.

And this is the way you begin. Satan, in Jesus' name, go away. Put that down.

Oh you say that's silly. Oh no it isn't. Oh no.

No, I'm talking about infinite power. Oh, I've seen people really deliver. Satan, in Jesus' name, go away, for it is written.

That's the next phrase. You need to memorize this. Satan, in Jesus' name, go away, for it is written.

Now, the next thing that should come in there is a passage of scripture, whatever God will give you, that will apply directly to your problem. Let me give you an example. Suppose that you're having a problem with impure thoughts, sexually impure thoughts.

And many, many people, before they're Christians or even afterwards, develop some very bad thought patterns in this area. And they become just like cast iron. And Satan will certainly play that string just as hard as he can play it.

Now, what about Philippians 4.8? Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are virtuous, whatsoever things are praiseworthy, and so on. Think on these things. So here's the phrase of scripture.

Satan, in Jesus' name, be gone, for it is written, whatsoever things are pure, think on these things. Now, you're saying this right to the devil. Therefore, Satan, in Jesus' name, go away.

You say, does it work? Ha ha, it works. Amen. I tell you, that prayer, I'll remember it through all eternity.

We have counseled with all kinds of people as a biblical counselor. You know, people say there's one class of people you can't help, and that's homosexuals. That isn't true.

They are not born that way. They are simply practicing a learned pattern of sin. That's all.

And it's basically a mental series of patterns. And I have seen these people totally, completely delivered by the renewing of their mind. And you don't think they have a battle with Satan.

I tell you, if they're in it deep, every thought of their life, 24 hours a day, is completely wrapped up in this. All of their whole life is filled with it. I remember the first young man that got deliverance along this line.

He came in for counseling, and he had just received Christ as his Savior. And in one week's time, he came back to me. And I'll never forget, he walked into the office and sat down, and he had a big smile on his face.

And he said, you know what? That prayer really works. Oh, you better believe it. Jesus wouldn't have used that place of authority if it didn't work.

Now, you have to have his name. You can't do it in your own name. But you turn to Satan if he keeps coming back with power.

Some of you ladies have trouble with worry patterns, don't you? Oh, I see smiles. You know what I'm talking about. It's sinful, isn't it, ladies? Come on, ladies, shake your head.

Whatsoever is not of faith is what? Say it out loud. It'll help you to say it out loud. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Now, when those worry patterns that you've developed, maybe you've been developing them for thirty years, you know, you can develop a pretty strong pattern in thirty years of sinful thinking. And those old worry patterns have great power. And you may say to them, I reject that pattern in Jesus' name.

Now, it's not of the devil. You'll victory right there for the time being. And eventually God will break that pattern completely.

But when it comes swarming on you, and I know, ladies, because I've had a lot of you talk to me, and you say, I reject it and it comes right back, and I reject it and it comes right back, and I shake my head and I weep and I can't get rid of it. You're dealing with the devil. And you turn to him, Satan, in Jesus' name, go away, for it is written, be anxious for nothing, but by everything, with prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall garrison your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Therefore, Satan, in Jesus' name, go away. You say that with authority and faith.

If he doesn't give, you say it to him till he does give. And you'll get a victory that will make a Presbyterian shout. Oh, God has victory for our lives.

Be transformed. Be not shaped like this world, but be reshaped in the image of Christ by the renewing of your mind. Let us bow in prayer.

Dear Father, now you know the heart of every person here tonight and you know our minds and the shape of our Christian lives. Lord, we've been talking to Christians, but if there's one here who doesn't know Jesus, this is of little profit to him until he receives Christ as his Savior. The Lord, I pray for my brothers and sisters in Christ.

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