

Thinking Differently I – Dr. James McDonald Study Notes

04-03-16

Prov. 23:7 Thinking determines outcome more than anything else.

Real change means thinking differently. Some people change, but it's only temporary in order to please or impress, but given time they go right back to what they were before.

Nothing will be different until I think differently. **II Tim. 3:6-7.**

Perception is reality. What I think reality is as opposed to what it actually is! (reality *isn't* reality) the way I see it or you see it, is reality for us. We can't change reality but we can change perceived reality by changing our thinking.

Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:22-24; Rom. 8:5-8

No one is really changing until their thinking changes.

1. If the thinking change is the real change; the lasting change; why aren't more people doing it? It is terrifically difficult to change your thinking!!

II Cor. 10:3-7a –the most concentrated teaching on our thinking in the entire New Testament.

1. Why is it so hard to change my thinking? Because **My battles are primarily not physical.** **V. 3** Walk is used 32 times by Paul referring to our daily living – this is where the problem is—not in eternity, not in my standing with God, *but in my walk.*
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Your mind is in the soul part of you from the 3 choices: body, soul, and spirit.

All seems so physical, but we are not primarily fighting a physical battle.

There are physical problems but the **top 100 problems** in our area, in your family, and in your life are not physical.

Most problems are non-medical/non-physical=financial, marital, relational, lying, stealing, cheating, drugs, teen pregnancy, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, abuse; these are all non-medical/non physical problems.

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“Waging war according to the flesh” – quite often we apply a physical solution to a thinking problem, and it just makes more problems.

The real battles are not physical ones; they are spiritual, mental, and thinking wars.

2. Five mental/thinking wars

1. Behavioral wars; behavior flows from thinking; looks and feels physical, but it's all coming from your mind.
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Mk. 7:20-23 Bad behavior comes from your heart/mind; change them and you change your behavior.

2. Relational wars; 1,000 reasons why it's the other person's problem, but have you considered that it could be things that you are doing that are flowing from how you think that is keeping others at arm's length?
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3. Financial wars; we think that things will increase our happiness, so we buy and then regret it. Nothing is going to change until our thinking changes.
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4. Ideological wars; your ideology is your filter through which you interpret reality, and every person has one and it's a mix of a lot of different things.
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Examples of ideologies we may have: Christian, southern, northern, city, country, rational, realist, evolutionist, racist, both parents, single parent, Anarchism, Communism, Conservatism, Environmentalism, Gender equality, Liberalism, Nationalism, Individualism.

Same thing happens to 10 different people, and some will come through better and some will come through worse and some will never come through it at all. ***The difference is in how they handle it, which is directly determined by their thinking.***

Are you trying to make your life miserable?, Are you trying to make your life unhappy? Are you trying to wreck your future or that of those you love? Are you trying to ruin relationships and cause problems with people?

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Of course not! You are working on the opposite aren't you? So how's it working? Not so well?

We all need to come to grips with the fact that we are where our best thinking has gotten us! If that is not in a good place, then we are going to need some better thinking.

What are these non-physical/non-fleshly weapons that Paul speaks of?

These weapons are described in other scriptures. **Eph. 6:11-18** The Word of God is your only offensive weapon. **Rom. 12:2** Renew with the Word. **Eph. 5:26** You have to be immersed in the Word to think right.

II Cor. 6:7 Sword of righteousness, Jesus' righteousness, declared righteous by God because of Jesus. God sees me as righteous; I am righteous; this weapon is who I really am in Christ. A forgiven, righteous person!

Faith. **I Jn. 5:4** Faith overcomes; rejecting what seems or looks true and embracing what God declares to be true.
