

Thinking Differently III – Dr. James McDonald
04-17-16

Prov. 23:7 --Thinking determines outcome more than anything else. Nothing is different until I think differently. God forgive us for the way that we take ourselves and look down on everyone else's differences.

1. Diversity is very biblical: **I Cor. 12:20-22** – the stronghold of thinking that one is better than the other, and all of my reasons are valid as to why I'm right is satanic/worldly and must come down.
2. So, we are choosing our thoughts and controlling them, because if we can't control them we will not be able to control our lives.
3. Behavior is an output problem (what I'm putting out isn't good), but I try to control my behavior by fleshly means (mad at myself, restrict myself) fighting an ever losing battle.
4. Any programmer will tell you that if you have output problem it is because you have an input problem!
5. Change the input and you will change the output.
6. Take control of the input and you will take control of the output.
7. Nothing will be different until I think differently: my marriage won't change, relationships, my spending habits, my parenting.

Destroying the Strongholds of our Family of Origin I:

If we are going to think differently, we have to talk about the strongholds of family dysfunction.

1a. Generational sin strongholds – Jacob **Gen. 26:1-9** – Isaac did what his dad, Abraham, had done in **Gen. 20**. Abraham—phlegmatic; downside=fear and trust; people pleasers; Isaac – is like his dad! Struggles with the same sins as his father; when the pressure's on he does what many see as unthinkable.

- a. Have you ever found yourself doing what your parents did even though you swore you wouldn't?? Now you know how Isaac felt...
- b. Out of fear – Isaac deceives...so **where did Jacob get his lying** skills from? Abraham lied; Isaac lied, tough for Jacob to break thinking that is inherited

--Classic case of generational sin --

Deut. 24:16 – God will not punish you for your dad or your kids do...good news!

Deut. 5:6-9 – No consequences for your parents' sins but you do inherit their tendencies (temptations, susceptibilities and vulnerabilities in these areas).

c. If are going to think differently than our parents did, we have to take a hard look at the fact that our inclinations are to be just like them! Hard? Selfish? Lustful? Fearful? Arrogant? Lying? Covetous? (Some have parents who didn't know the Lord).

d. Our parent's inclinations, temptations, susceptibilities, and vulnerabilities will visit themselves upon your lives – If we are to think differently we need to start by realizing that we will think the same as them.

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e. You can get off this Merry-go-round and take your kids and grandkids with you—but you need to know that if it was easy to get off of it everybody would be doing it—mostly, people stay on it and add more to it by their own bad decisions.

f. With God, you can get off!! But there is a huge fear-factor in getting off and you can't do this unless you are willing to acknowledge that you are a wrong thinker "I don't think right in these areas". "My parents were depressed, so I don't think right in this area"; "my parents were cheaters (IRS), so I don't think right in this area"; "My parents were brawlers and angry people, so I don't think right in this area." "My parents were adulterers, so I don't think right in this area." "My parents were substance abusers, so I don't think right in this area."

2a. Conflict resolution strongholds-Gen. 26:12-23

a. In our temperaments there two that are extroverted and two that are more introverted: Choleric and Sanguine are extroverted and the Phlegmatic and Melancholic are introverted.

b. Extroverts tend toward fight; introverts tend toward flight in conflict resolution situations.

c. So did you grow up in a fight home or a flight home? Did you grow up in a home of one of each?

d. How conflict was dealt with can become a massive stronghold for **us**.

e. VV. 12-23 - So his dad dug all these wells, and he's the dominant one in this relationship but he retreats every time?

f. Sometimes its better to let a thing go and sometimes its better to confront an issue—His wrongness is that he has only one way of handling conflict—it's a stronghold for him.

g. V. 24 - "fear not" because that was what was making his decisions for him up until now—fear.

h. The stronghold is the one size fits all approach to conflict resolution—always wanting to handle it the way that comes naturally to you.

3a. Bad decision-making strongholds - "We just didn't make good decisions in our family" not really generational sin or conflict resolution that was the issue; just making bad decisions was our deal.

a. VV. 34-35 --Hittites were a bad group of people in general - bad decisions here.

1. Why does he have multiple wives? - wrong but it is what Abraham had so we see some generational issues here.

2. Grieved Isaac and Rebekah - Questions for Esau "why'd you marry outside your faith?"; "Why did you marry without your families support?"; "Why did you do this without any counsel?";

3. Esau might have replied, "making bad decisions is what we do in this family" look at chapter 27 and deceiving Isaac and favoritism and plotting murder, etc.

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b. **VV. 27:46** - She doesn't like Esau's choices of wives, but is she healthy in her outlook toward her daughter-in-laws?? So, he made some bad decisions, but you hate your entire life and all that it stands for because of those decisions??

1. All the good that is in your life and you are saying that life isn't worth living if your other son makes a bad decision??
2. You're going to be miserable because some thing is not perfect?
3. "I can't be happy until my kids are all doing right?" I thought God was the source of our joy not our kids and their decisions.
4. Be careful of putting anything in the place of the Lord, "I won't be happy until . ." "I'm going to hate my life if happens."

That's a serious stronghold!