

Thinking Differently 6 — Dr James McDonald Study Notes 2016 - 09-18-16

Prov. 23:7 Thinking determines outcome more than anything else. When I get to a fork in the road, why is it that I give into temptation? How do I say no to temptation and yes to God?

- Behavioral level here — deeper level= thinking level.
- Real change means thinking differently; some change but it's only temporary in order to please or impress, but given time they are right back to what they were before.
- Nothing will be different until I think differently. **II Tim. 3:6-7** "who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning, but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." Nothing will be different until we think differently.
- Perception is reality (What I think reality is as opposed to what it actually is!) Reality isn't reality; instead, the way I see it or you see it is reality. We can't change reality, but we can change our 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.**
- If thinking is the real change, why aren't more people doing it? It is terrifically difficult to change your thinking!!

1. II Cor. 10:1-2 — What follows is the most concentrated teaching on our thinking in the entire New Testament. II Cor. 10:3-7a

1. It's hard to change our thinking because: **My battles are primarily not physical. V. 3**

- The **top 100 problems** in our area, in your family, in your life are not physical.
 - Most problems are non-medical/non-physical such as financial, marital, relational, lying, stealing, cheating, drugs, teen pregnancy, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, abuse,...
 - Waging war according to the flesh — quite often we apply a physical solution to a thinking problem and it just makes more problems.
 - It's not where you live, not who you are with, not what you do, not what you make, *it is what you think*, that is the largest battle of my life.
 - Can you not honestly say, "My behavior is falling behind what I believe to be true."

2. Why is it so hard to change my thinking? Because **my weapons are not readily accessible**. What is readily accessible? Flesh weapons which accomplish how much of what I really need done? Very little! When our first thought in a battle is to reach for our flesh weapons, the war is already lost by and large.

- Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% what you do with what you do with what happens to you.
- 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 their thinking**.
- *You are* where your best thinking has gotten you!!!! You are going to need some better thinking.
- **"Having divine power"** — Paul doesn't tell us what these weapons are, but instead focuses us on their effectiveness only.
- The weapons are listed in other scriptures. **Eph. 6:11** The word of God is your only offensive armor.
- **Rom. 12:2** Renew with the Word. **Eph. 5:26** You have got to have this in spades to think right.
- **II Cor. 6:7** Swords of righteousness, Jesus' righteousness; declared righteous by God because

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of Jesus; sees me as righteous; I am righteous; weapon is who I really am in Christ. Forgiven person!

- Faith **I Jn. 5:4** overcomes; rejecting what seems or looks true and embracing what God declares to be true.
 1. Divine power — mighty to God, He's the source of them.
 2. Powerful — Dynamite (my problem is that I don't think that powerful and would rather take matters into my own hands because of the way I think, and I wind up ruining things)
 3. Destroy strongholds; strongholds or fortresses; you have ways of thinking that are walled off, fortresses, strongholds that you have been relying on that need to be destroyed.
- God doesn't want to curtail them; He wants to destroy them. The ways that we are thinking that are keeping us from progress need to be destroyed.
 1. Because my old argument made sense to me, I liked their reasons and reasoning **V. 5** (arguments).
 2. My old opinions felt good — "every lofty opinion" **V. 5**
Since they are my opinions, I like for them to be true and even if they aren't, I still would prefer that they be so that I can keep this high opinion of myself that I prefer.
Everybody wants to lay their head down on their pillow at night and say, "I was right"; nobody wants to say "I was wrong".
 3. Because my own mind is opposed to God, destroy arguments and lofty opinions opposed to God. **"The mind set on the flesh is opposed to God."** This is the mind we are born with and need to have changed out.
 4. My old pattern came natural to me. Take every thought captive. The natural me is a bad me; all thoughts must be filtered; no unfiltered thoughts.
Every thought has to be reviewed until we start naturally thinking correctly.
- **II Cor. 10:3-5** Strongholds are fortified places in our thinking made of arguments and loftopinions.
- Strongholds: Fortified patterns of thinking that are stubbornly resistant to God's Word and God's will for us.

Strongholds of disposition. Jacob. Gen. 25:19

- **Everyone is born with a disposition** given to you by God; given for good and for uniqueness, mixed with sin and our disposition gets bent.
- **Disposition.** Your natural mental outlook; your predominant tendency or leaning; your prevailing point of view!
- Affects every relationship, every decision. It is the filter installed on your thinking and is how you process reality.
- These make you think that the way you view reality is **not just a way** or your way but the **only right way to see things**.
- We can see it in our kids and in other people, but can we see it in ourselves?
- Can we see that we were born like we are with a way of thinking that you have battled your entire life. How easily you slip into "this isn't a way or just my way, but the way to think and see life."
- Hypocrites gave them 4 names and we are going to use them; locate yourself in these (You lean toward one of these major temperaments). Choleric, Sanguine, Phlegmatic, Melancholy.

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Choleric - Main focus - driver

- Their need: win "what are you in it for? To win "what are you doing over there" Apostle Paul.
- Downside: too aggressive, can run over people. These are often your CEOs, leaders, risk takers.

Sanguine - Main focus - expressive - don't need to ask these people what they think because they will already be half way into telling you.

- Their need: fun, these are the comedians, clowns, life of the party people.
- Downside: impulsive, good entrepreneurs, good entertainers.

Phlegmatic - Main focus - very amiable - get along well with others, don't want to impose their ideas on anyone, don't judge (someone who is quick to judge is not phlegmatic).

- Need: to be safe, no conflict, calm.
- Downside: often too passive.

Melancholy — Main focus - analytic - analyze everything

- Need: precision
 - Their clothing is organized by color, alphabetized, by monthly rotation. (**Cholerics** have nothing but black suits and red ties because they mean business. **Sanguine** doesn't know where all their clothes are but will wear whatever makes the biggest impression. **Phlegmatic** will wear whatever they think everyone else wants them to wear.)
- Downside: negative, common career is accountant, artist, music (Mozart, Van Gogh), scientists, research analysts.

Find yourself?

- **Choleric** "This was a waste; I don't need anybody to tell me who I am."
- **Sanguine** "This is so fun; can't we just keep going on this all night?"
- **Phlegmatic** "I'm just going to study this myself; I'm not sure, so I will just reserve judgment until later; "I'm really not sure who I am." You are a phlegmatic!
- **Melancholy** "Is it really right to be laughing about this? These are people who we are talking about here."

Fire example: Building catches on fire; reactions based on temperament.

- **Choleric.** "You get the hose; you call the fire department; you run for help; you pray."
- **Sanguine.** "Let's get some marshmallows!"
- **Phlegmatic.** "Are we the ones to put this fire out or should we be waiting for the proper authorities?"
- **Melancholy.** "It's going down."
 - If you laughed, you aren't melancholy and those of you who are, are sad that no one takes this seriously.