

DEALING WITH A VAIN MIND

This is a companion lesson to the lessons, "Saved by Obedience" and "The Obedience of Christ", so please read those first! Now that we are on the same page, I want to look at what we are to do after we have dealt with evil thoughts the way God tells us to. In the previous devotion we saw that we are told to bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ. This is how to deal with the pirates of the enemy that want to pillage your life. We do this by faith. **This is seen as obedience to God!**

2Co 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;**

2Co 10:6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, **when your obedience is fulfilled.**

There are two different types of obedience in these verses. One is the **obedience of Christ** and the other is **our obedience**. One has been fulfilled, but the other must be. Jesus Christ **HAS FULFILLED HIS OBEDIENCE** to God already in His earthly life and death for us. However, we still must fulfill our obedience! As we saw in our last study that God sees our faith as obedience. For many verses that prove this please review my lesson on "True Obedience" under the sermon section of this website. Paul said that once we fulfill our obedience then every disobedience and the results of that disobedience in our past can begin to be reversed and avenged! What is Paul referring to when he says, "When **your obedience** is fulfilled"? He is referring to our obedience of faith in taking captive evil thoughts and bringing them to the obedience of Christ Himself! When we are obedient by faith in doing what God says to do with evil thoughts, which is to bring them captive unto the obedience of Christ, then all the havoc and things stolen through our disobedience [unbelief] of our past will start to be avenged and reversed.

Once we have become obedient to God in dealing with the evil thoughts that come to us, we must also do what God tells us to do **AFTERWARDS** in order to protect ourselves from future attacks.

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Php 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* right, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Here Paul is talking about dealing with thoughts of worry, anxiety, and care. We are to bring them to God and cast them upon Christ and His obedience. [1 Peter 5:7, 2 Cor. 10:5] If we will do this then God will give us peace to our heart and mind. However, if we do not do what verse eight says, then we will be visited again by the pirates. In the ancient world pirates attacked ships primarily that were not armed or protected well. This is the same with our enemy! If he sees that our mind and heart are unprotected then he will surely attack us over and over again! Paul knew that if our mind is not filled with something good, then the enemy will attempt to fill it with evil. Paul gave God's prescription for keeping our mind and heart full and guarded so the enemy has fewer inroads into our mind. Paul said to actively think on godly things- what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, and praiseworthy. If we fill our mind with **TRUTH** then pirate **LIES** will find a much harder time entering in to start with!

Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Here Paul is admonishing believers not to walk in the vanity of their mind. The Greek word for vanity here means empty or futile. We are not to live with an empty mind! Anything that is empty begs to be filled with something. A vacuum sucks in anything to fill it. When we fail to fill our mind with God's truth and Word, then the enemy pirates will be sent on raiding expeditions against us! The more truth that fills your heart and mind, the less the pirates of evil thoughts will have inroads into you. No right thinking pirate today would attack a naval air-craft carrier! Why? Because it is so well protected! So it is with us. If our mind and heart is filled with the Word and the message of Christ and His finished work, then the mental warfare will not be as intense. A new believer with little

knowledge of the Word often experiences constant and intense thought battles. We will never get to a place where we will not be attacked by evil thoughts but we can experience great peace of mind if we actively think on the Word of God.

1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?
But we have the mind of Christ.

We have the mind of Christ through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. God's Word is His mind. When we fill our minds with God's Word, especially about the New Covenant, then we have put on the mind of Christ. When we put on the mind of Christ by filling our mind with God's truth, then it will protect us!

1Pe 4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves likewise with the same mind**: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

We are armed and protected when we fill our mind with the message of Christ and His sufferings for us. His sufferings and death have freed us from the control of sin. Jesus suffered in the flesh by dying to sin. When we keep in mind our identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection then this will protect us from the enemy! Keeping in mind what the obedience of Christ has accomplished for us in His finished work will cause us to be armed against the enemy's thoughts! This is putting on the helmet of salvation. [**Eph. 6:17**] A helmet protects our head. Keeping in mind the finished work of Jesus and His obedience for us, will protect our mind like a helmet does a head.

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be **spiritually minded is life and peace.**

Being carnally minded comes from allowing thought pirates to run free in our head and heart! To be spiritually minded is to focus upon Christ and our identification with His obedience. When we think on Christ and His finished work then the Holy Spirit will fill our heart and mind with life and peace! No pirates are allowed! One of the benefits of staying in the Word of God is that we will know the truth and when lies come to us we can easily recognize them! [**John 8:32**] Some lies dress up quite deceptively and some look very appealing. If we do not

recognize a thought as a lie we will not take it captive to the obedience of Christ and that thought will continue to do damage to us. We must deal with a vain mind. Too many Christians think on whatever floats by their mind. We are to **actively think** on the Word of God , the message of Christ, and the New Covenant. When we do we will be filled with life and peace, and every disobedience from our past will be avenged and our life will turn for the better!