

How to be Happy Though Human

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PEOPLE AND PROBLEMS

Part 2 – Our Thoughts as RATIONAL Beings

*As RATIONAL beings, it is essential that our **foolish thinking** is **recognized and corrected**.*

- The Bible places a great deal of emphasis on our **thinking**.
 - **Before** the fall, man's thinking was not **exhaustive**, but at least it was **accurate**.
 - **Since** the fall, we have a natural tendency to **think incorrectly**.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who **suppress the truth** in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became **futile in their speculations**, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Professing to be wise, they became fools

Romans 1:18-22 NASB

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a **depraved mind...**

Romans 1:28 NASB

...Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.

Ephesians 4:17-18 NASB

- Because we are **fallen** and **fallible** we are especially likely to **fall for** two major **fallacies**.

1. We think that the **solution** to our personal problems depends on a **change in our CIRCUMSTANCES**.

“

I'd be happy if only...

- ... I had more money.
- ... I had a good job.
- ... I weren't single/married.
- ... My parents/spouse/kids loved me.
- ... My spouse got right with the Lord.

”

Although these changes may be desirable and legitimate, the belief that my security and significance depends on a change in my circumstances, shifts responsibility for my growth onto events that are beyond my control.

2. We think that the **solution** to our personal problems depends on a **change in our FEELINGS**.

“

I could do what I should if only...

- ... I didn't feel so depressed.
- ... I could get over the hurt.
- ... My craving for it wasn't so great.
- ... He/she wasn't so attractive to me.
- ... He/she wasn't so repulsive to me.

”

The miracle of God's grace is that He can work in our lives in such a way that He can affect our thinking, our choosing and ultimately our feelings.



According to the Bible, the key to significant character growth is not changing our circumstances or changing our feelings, but **changing the CONTENT OF OUR MINDS.**

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2 NASB

Be **renewed** in the spirit of your **mind**.

Ephesians 4:23 NKJV

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:2 NKJV

What we **THINK**

plays a central and largely determining role

in what we **DO** and how we **FEEL**.

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you **will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope**. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NASB

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26:3 ESV

It's not the **events** in our lives that automatically determine our **emotions**

but our **evaluation** of those events that determines our emotions.



Ask Yourself

As I think through this situation...

- Am I thinking in line with God's truth?
- Am I instinctively reacting the way the flesh reacts?
- Am I thinking the way the world thinks?
- Is this the way Satan would want me to think?

Our minds, like a tape player, are always playing something.

We are either playing a Tape 1 or Tape 2.



Comes from below



Comes from above



Whichever tape I'm playing in my mind is the tape I'm going to act on.

Who among you is wise and understanding?

Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart,
do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.
But **the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable,
full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, free of hypocrisy.**

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

James 3:13-18 NASB

- *Whatever the situation may be in our life, there are **three things** that we need to do rationally.*



RECOGNIZE which tape is playing.



REJECT any tape 1's.



REPLACE the tape 1 with a tape 2.

Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him,
And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

“For **My thoughts are not your thoughts**, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways And **My thoughts than your thoughts**.”

Isaiah 55:7-9 NASB



This is *not* the power of *positive* thinking,
this is the power of **BIBLICAL** thinking!
