

## Thoughts - Lesson Outline

Do you think about what you're thinking about?

Or, do you just assume the thoughts in your head are true and right and go with them?

Part of being a Christian is knowing the truth - about God, others, situations, and ourselves.

[Colossians 3:9-10](#) says:

*"9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."*

In other words - now that we are Christians we are not supposed to lie.

-Lying was a part of our old selves, not our Christian selves.

-This includes lying to ourselves.

Now that we are Christians we are supposed to deal only in the truth.

Now look at [Romans 12:1-3](#):

*12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

How can we be transformed by the renewing of our mind?

How can that change us?

Why should we be transformed/changed?

Turn to [2 Corinthians 10](#)

Peter is talking to the Christians at Corinth.

He's reminding them we don't live by the standards of the world so our way of fighting is not the same as theirs.

-Remember, [Ephesians 6](#) tells us we don't wrestle against flesh and blood. It's a spiritual battle

Listen to [2 Corinthians 10, verses 3-5](#):

*3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

The [KJV](#) says it this way:

*3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 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;*

This is not about a war in the flesh.

It's a spiritual battle.

In this battle we are supposed to take every thought we have captive to the obedience of Christ.

We demolish arguments and every pretentious thing that sets itself up against the knowledge of God,

We cast down imaginations,

We take hold of every thought and make it obedient to Christ.

What are these pretentious things? These imaginations?

- Pride - overestimating our importance to ourselves. The world, others.

- This includes giving our opinion, trying to run the show, being bossy, manipulative, telling others how to live.

- Thinking we know more than God does (which is exactly how we are acting when we rebel or think we can do things our way, even though/if it conflicts with what God says or might say if we bother to ask Him.)

- Assuming we are smarter or have it more figured out than we do, thinking we know the right way without bothering to ask God what the right way is.

So, what does it mean to make your thoughts obedient to Christ?

- It means to make them obey and agree with God's word.

- They don't go against or conflict with God's word.

[Ephesians 4:22-24](#) says :

*22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Like it or not, we have to set aside our way of doing things, our way of thinking.

- We have to acknowledge that God is the boss and He is supposed to be the one in control.

- We have to realize we need to change our attitudes, change our selves, taking on this new self

- The Godly one that obeys and trusts God,

- Doing things His way simply because we know He's God and we're not

- Follow after righteousness and holiness.

A big part of that is bringing your thoughts into captivity to the obedience to Christ.

Our minds and where we let them wander can really make or break us.

We have to choose to be careful what we think and what we think about.

There's another verse that speaks to this:

[Philippians 4:8](#) -

*8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

So, we are supposed to think on these things:

- True things, right things, pure things, admirable things,
- Things that are excellent or praiseworthy

Okay, so how do you do it?

How do you think only on the good things? Only on the praiseworthy things?

Start by praying and asking God to help you.

-Submit to His authority

-Give Him your thought life and ask Him to bring it in line with what He would have it be

-Ask Him to show you where your thoughts are prideful, misguided, deceived, or you are acting on preconceived notions .

(A preconceived notion is something you assume is true, but either isn't or isn't quite like you think it is.)

-Ask Him to point out any tendencies you have to rationalize (also called explaining it away) or making excuses about why you're right, why you're doing it the way you are, or why you aren't doing what you should.

-Ask Him to point out any fibs or white lies you are attached to, including those we tell ourselves.

Read more scripture, more often

-A big part of this is filtering your thoughts through what scripture says and comparing them.

-If the thoughts don't agree, you adjust them so they do agree with the word.

-Sometimes this means we change our beliefs, ideas, or opinions

-Sometimes we have to admit to God, ourselves, and others we were wrong

Edit what you take into your mind -

The tv and movies you watch, conversations you have, material you read, music you listen to, social media you follow must be carefully monitored. Avoid anything with unclean content.

Remember - you do not have to accept every thought that comes into your head.

-You can choose what you accept and what you allow in there.

These are just a few of the things you can do to begin to call your thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

If you will follow these steps you will begin to see an improvement in your thought life as you and God, the Father, work together to improve your thoughts.

With time, you will begin to think more pure thoughts, focused more on Scripture and doing right.

The old, ugly thoughts won't be as often and when they do come you will more easily recognize them, making it easier to catch them and bring them into captivity to the obedience of Christ!

This week's homework:

Pray and ask the Lord to show you where you've fallen short and ask Him to help you get your thinking on track.

This week's memory verse is [Ephesians 5:18-20](#):

*18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*