

"Transforming the Mind"

(Romans 12:1-2)

INTRODUCTION

1. Worldliness is a challenge for the Christian.

I John 2:15-17 - "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

James 4:4 - "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

2. Our text identifies the battleground of worldliness: the mind.

Romans 12:1-2 - "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

3. Thus, to overcome worldliness, we must win the battle for the mind.

DISCUSSION: HOW CAN WE TRANSFORM THE MIND?

1. REDISCOVER THE MIND.

A. We need to understand the power of our minds. Our thoughts will determine our actions. "What's in the well of the heart will come out in the bucket of life."

Matt. 12:35 - "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

Prov. 4:23 - "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Prov. 23:7a - "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."

B. We see the importance of the mind in the work of Satan.

II Cor. 11:3,4 - "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."

C. We see the value of our thoughts in the Lord's appeal to us.

Matt. 22:35-37 - "Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Prov. 23:26 - "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

2. REDIRECT THE MIND.

A. Our hearts must be turned toward heaven.

Col. 3:1,2 - "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

Repentance is "a change of mind, brought about by Godly sorrow, resulting in a reformation of life." (see II Cor. 7:10).

B. Our priorities must be brought in line with God's values.

Matt. 6:33 - "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

3. REEDUCATE THE MIND.

A. When a computer program is not producing the desired output, a technician is brought in to reprogram the system. With the new program, the computer can render the desired output. Our minds need to be "reprogrammed."

B. What you feed your mind will determine your spiritual well-being.

Prov. 15:14 - "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness."

C. Feeding the mind properly is as important as feeding the body properly. Therefore, we ought to be careful about the books we read, music we listen to, etc. We must fill our minds with thoughts of God.

"Vacant lots and vacant minds usually become dumping grounds for rubbish."

Matt. 12:43-45 - "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

D. Our hearts should be comfortable with thoughts of God and His ways.

Phil. 4:8 - "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, 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."

II Cor. 3:18 - "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

E. Just as Jesus defeated each of the temptations we read about in Matthew 4 with Scripture, we must use the Word as our weapon. God's word must become our daily bread:

1. Memorize the Word (Psa. 119:11).
2. Meditate on the Word (Psa. 1:3).
3. Minister the Word (I Pet. 3:15).

4. RENEW THE MIND.

A. This is where we continue to educate the mind. Unfortunately some fail here.

B. Some feel that because they studied, learned the Lord's way in past that they have no further need for study or learning. Not so!

I Cor. 10:6-12 - "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Bible is replete with examples of knowledgeable people who fell through lust of flesh, lust of eyes, pride of life: David fell through passion. Peter stumbled through pressure of peers.

C. Scripture teaches an on-going process of learning, growth.

Eph. 4:20-24 – "But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

One older preacher in days gone by said he had been preaching for over thirty years but every time he studied God's word he learned something new.

Col. 3:9-10 – "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

II Pet. 3:18 – "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

CONCLUSION

1. The way to defeat worldiness is to fill our hearts with heaven.

2. We can be Christians IN the world, but not OF the world.

"All the water in the world, However hard it tried,

Could never sink a ship, Unless it got inside.

All the evil in the world, The wickedness and sin,

Can never sink your soul's fair craft, Unless you let it in."