

MENTAL ATTITUDE

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The Real Battle in Life Takes Place in the Soul of the Believer for their Thinking. The Real Battle in the Unbeliever's Life is for their Very Soul.

Recognition, Affirmation, Approbation

Recognition and the need for *approval* are deep seated in the soul of man. *Affirmation* is a necessary ingredient of all of us. *Approbation*, however, is a manifestation of the lust pattern of the soul. It has been a dominating force in our human nature since the fall.

In James 4:17 we read: “*Therefore, to one who **knows** the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*” When we know the right thing to do, but don't do it – why didn't we do it? Why did we choose to sin when we knew to do right? Why do we do what we do and think what we think?

In Romans 7:15-8:11 even the great Apostle Paul struggled between his flesh and his spirit. His struggles were daily in the soul – his soul thinking. His struggles were spiritual warfare between good (the spirit) and evil (the flesh). Let's read together from the NASB. “*For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the law is good. So, now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*” The answer is in the first sentence of the next verse which reads: “*Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*” Now comes Paul's conclusion in the next part of verse 25 which reads: “*So then, on the one hand I myself with*

my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin” Romans 7:15-25). Paul continues his conclusion in chapter 8:1-11. Please turn in your Bible to Romans 8 and read for yourself. Stay with it! Read it several times very slowly and think about Paul’s conclusions. Remember too, that the great apostle is second only to Christ as our teacher since most of the New Testament is written by Paul. He went from persecuting Christians to converting unbelievers. We too, will struggle like the Great Apostle but, we can have ultimate victory in Christ through Christ. How? Stay in the Word.

If you are a born again believer you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and you have the power source to overcome the flesh – the same Power Source as Paul and the same Power Source that provided for Christ during the Incarnation. Yes! The very same power source! To live in the realm of God’s Power Source we (believers only) simply name our sins on a consistent basis (1 John 1:9). When we do the Holy Spirit restores us to fellowship. During fellowship with the Lord we will learn to enjoy a personal relationship. Why? We are under the control of the Holy Spirit when we are in fellowship. As we study God’s Word we are able to think with Divine Viewpoint (Bible Doctrine resident in our soul). This is our strength our armor; our sword against the *world, flesh* and *Satan*. It is while we are in fellowship that our relationship with God is intimate. Our thinking and actions become like Christ. We learn first hand to appreciate the Savior on a grand scale and God is glorified. Every moment we log in the filling of the spirit, we are under the indwelling control of the Holy Spirit and God is glorified. Our relationship is intimate. Our thinking is reflecting Christ. We are being transformed by the renewing of our minds and we are able to understand His peace which He gives abundantly. We are able to see things as God sees them. In addition: the Holy Spirit convicts us of right and wrong and strengthens us against our sin weaknesses. The Holy Spirit guides us in every circumstance of life when we are yielded. Yielding is the exercise of 1 John 1:9. It is not something meritorious that you do, it is a non-meritorious action of admission of sin. The result is submission. Confession requires admitting sin – admitting we have done wrong to the God of the universe. Humility is a pre-requisite to admission. Many people have a real problem admitting they are wrong about anything - a pride thing. What a shame. They will never be close to God because they are hiding from the truth about self. Only problem is they need truth in their thinking and truth begins with God then self.

We all have certain sins that cause us more problems than others. But, the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead also dwells in us (believers only). The H. S. will give us Strength, courage and help in time of need. We can overcome the flesh by consistently studying Bible Doctrine and naming our sins. It's that simple. We cannot become a victorious Christian until we learn to consistently name your sins daily (1 John 1:9; and study God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15).

We will know when we are out of fellowship by our thinking and actions. The Holy Spirit will convict us. We will not feel as close to the Lord. So, it is extremely important that you learn to recognize the conviction of sin and estrangement from God. When you don't feel quite right with God, sin is in the way.

SOUL THINKING

In the privacy of your soul, hidden away from the view of others are your thoughts. God will judge the secrets in your soul (Romans 2:16) your thinking. Since all action and all words require thinking *first*, the real reasons behind what we say or do become the battleground for spiritual warfare.

Mental Attitude or Motivation is what the Judgment Seat of Christ will be all about for the believer. Our *motives*, that is, our true thinking will be judged at the "*Judgment Seat of Christ*" (Psalms 7:8, 9, 14 {*"integrity [thinking] that is in me"*} "*Behold, he travails [labors] with wickedness, and he conceives [thinking] mischief and brings forth falsehood"*). See also Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

Mental attitude is the key to proper motivation. When we are in fellowship our mental attitude will be in line with Divine Viewpoint. Here is the key: the *motivator in your soul* is either doctrine (norms and standards) or the flesh (worldly thinking) as we learned in Romans chapters 7 and 8 above. So, if we are not properly motivated we will think like the world thinks. Therefore, we will know we are out of fellowship and at this point our decisions will probably be wrong. If we are properly motivated, when a decision is necessary we can lose fellowship by making the wrong decision. This is why we need to take time to pray and meditate in God's Word. We may need to counsel with other believers. Making the right choices in life is imperative to living an effective Christian life for the believer. It is the

difference between winning and losing spiritual battles. As we learn to make the right choices, God is glorified. Remember, our thinking is the battleground in the Christian life because we must think before we act. And, likewise, if we are not properly motivated, we will probably make the wrong decision, most of the time.

Definition:

A). **Motivation** is what is in our soul impelling or inciting overt activity.

B). **Motivation** is a mental attitude or incentive.

C). A **motive** is the thought or reason that determines our choice - course of action.

As stated above, proper motivation is based on norms and standards, knowledge and principles. Therefore, **what goes into the soul comes out of the soul**. What goes into the soul determines our Mental Attitude. Our thinking – our mental attitude is the key to what motivates us.

Bible Doctrine is designed by God to: 1). search our soul; 2). speak to and convict our soul; 3). encourage and influence; 4). strengthen and persuade; 6). convict and convince our soul (1 Corinthians 2:10; Titus 1:9; 2:1. So, the real battle is always for victory in our soul. Do you see that? The real battle in life takes place in our soul. What we think is who we are! What we think determines our words and actions and deeds in life. What we think is what we do! Therefore, it does not take a quantum leap into the book of knowledge to see that our thinking is imperative to living in Christ (fellowship). Our thinking will either be “worldly viewpoint” or Divine Viewpoint. God tells us that: *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways*” (Isaiah 55:8). **Listen, the key in this life is the soul thinking of the believer**. If you want to be great in this life and the next, you must humble yourself to do God’s will. How do we know God’s will? Bible Doctrine stored in our soul. So, if you want to be like Christ, you must THINK LIKE He thinks. How? - Read His mind by learning His Mind - Bible Doctrine (1 Corinthians 2:6-16). Prayer and meditation in God’s Word are imperatives. See Hebrews 4:12-16. In Philippians 2:13 we read “*For it is God which works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure.*” And in Ephesians 2:10 “*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*

unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

To maintain a positive mental attitude (PMA) we must be consistently motivated. Therefore, we must consistently confess our sins as they occur and study God’s Word daily. We must feed our human spirit which is designed to feed on God’s Word. God speaks to us, feeds us, and **motivates** us to proper action through His Word, by the Holy Spirit. God does this in two ways: the *printed words in the Bible* and *stored words in our soul*. If we do not study, learn, metabolize and store Bible Doctrine we are not equipped to think with Divine Viewpoint and therefore we become casualties in spiritual warfare.

We must learn to think like Christ. We must learn to be examples. We must be properly *motivated* like Christ each day as we go into the world to work or wherever life takes us as His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20). We have the wisdom of Christ.

Please turn to 1 Corinthians 2:6–3:23. Read it several times until what the Apostle Paul is saying penetrates deep into your soul. God’s Word stored in our memory banks is our guide to spiritual behavior; spiritual momentum and spiritual motivation. We go into spiritual battle everyday wherever our schedule of life takes us (1 Timothy 4:5-6; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 2:17; 4:9-16). Every circumstance, every problem in life has its solution in Christ - who is the Word of God, and the Word existed before anything existed (John 1:1; Hebrews 4:3; 11:3; 12:1-11).

TRUTH vs. UNTRUTH

Hebrews 13: 9 tells us not to be carried away by divers and strange doctrines but be established in grace. **You cannot know untruth if you do not know Truth.** Again in 2 Peter 3:18 we are instructed to *grow in grace and in knowledge* of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 13:20-22 exhorts us to study: *“Now the God of peace (if you want peace in your thinking – think doctrine) that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect (perfect here means consistently studying and **maturing** toward the high calling of Christ for our individual lives) and in every good work (opportunity and circumstance) to do His will, working in you that which is*

*well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen, And I beseech (implore) you brethren **bear with the word of exhortation (motivation)**; for I have written a letter to you in few words.”*

IMPULSE:

Impulse is a motivation. ***More often than not it is a feeling or emotion.***

Definition: *a sudden spontaneous inclination or incitement to unpremeditated action.*

Notice that thinking is defined first then the action and both are spontaneous. Rational thinking is not usually impulsive. However, Bible Doctrine can be instantly launched, (if stored in our soul) but it must be learned and metabolized ready for launching. For example: in conversation with others, especially regarding Christ and Salvation, the believer should think before speaking so that the believer's responses are in line with Doctrine. Furthermore the believer should know exactly where to go in Scripture to show in writing God's Plan of salvation. However, this should be the case when speaking to anyone on any subject, believer or unbeliever, and in virtually any situation in life. Not to sound radically religious, but rather, to bring honor to the Lord in words and actions.

Just don't be so quick to speak. Pause and refresh on doctrine.

We should try not to think or react impulsively. Why? Because, we must take time to think doctrine. To think doctrine we must recall scripture stored in our soul. ***The primary purpose of God's Word is to provide Divine Guidance throughout life.***

Therefore, we must learn to consistently inhale God's Word and apply it to life. We cannot react to life with improper emotion based on worldly influences. Emotion is fine for expressing appreciation, empathy and love. By learning and applying the Word of God and naming our sins consistently, we can become victorious spiritual warriors.

Read as often as you can the very words of Christ {usually in red} found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. *“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor?”* (Romans 11:33-34). *“For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom is glory forever.”*

CHRIST – THE “ARMOR OF LIGHT”

We must learn to walk with a *relaxed mental attitude (peace and joy inside in our soul)* and this takes practice - more for some, less for others depending on our personality traits, our maturity in Christ and the amount of time we log in the *filling of the Spirit*. Notice in Romans 13:12-14, that when we are in Christ (fellowship) we put on the “*armor of light*” – this is the result of confession, called “*the filling of the Holy Spirit*” *When we are in fellowship we love God intimately and we walk in light as He is in light (Exodus 16:4; Leviticus 26:3; 1 King 2:4; Isaiah 2:5; Malachi 2:6; Romans 6:4 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 5:2, 8; 1 John 1:7-9; there is an invisible light that is like a shield of armor surrounding us and it lights our way, illuminating our path.. Christ is the “armor of light. Christ by the Holy Spirit protects us from Satan like a security blanket. When you truly understand your position in Christ, light, peace and joy will fill your soul. When you nourish and feed your spirit with God’s Word your faith continues to build confidence and you will over time have victory in Christ by the Holy Spirit (Romans 10:17; 15:13).*

So, we have the “*Armor of Light*” – Romans 13:12-14; the “*Armor of God*” – *Ephesians 6:11-13*; and the “*Armor of Righteousness*” – *2 Corinthians 6:7*. All three lights refer to the Word of God and the Trinity in particular: Armor of God speaks of the Father. Armor of Light refers to Christ the Son. Armor of Righteousness speaks of the Holy Spirit. All three are in our hearts we cannot lose. We therefore can have victory in life because we have the Godhead working in us and going before us into our daily life of spiritual battle (Exodus 33:14. We just need to learn to “Follow the Colors”, if you will. Follow the Colors is a Military term which means that in battle the flag of America leads the way. The battle gets so loud that the troops cannot hear the Commander’s voice therefore they are to follow the Flag into battle (colors). “*I will be with you*” (Genesis 26:3; 31:3; Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5; 3:7; 1 Kings 11:38; Isaiah 43:2; Hebrews 13:5). At salvation we become “*sons of light*” or “*children of light*” (John 12:36; Ephesians 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:8).

Note: Keep in mind that Christ knew before hand every event that would take place during His lifetime to include the horrible suffering of the Cross. In spite of this knowledge Jesus Christ lived a perfect life and died a perfect sacrifice for your sin and mine on Calvary. In His humanity He was far

superior to any human being who ever lived. But, God wants us to put on the same Armor that Christ used during His earthly ministry – “Scripture and the Holy Spirit.” Christ began learning Scripture at an early age (Luke 2:39-52). See also Proverbs 22:6. Train (teach) your children early and regularly and take them to Church. As *born again* believers we are babes in Christ – we are but little children (Matthew 18:3-5; John 1:12).

The following verses found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-9:

“There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven – 2} A time to give birth and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. 3} A time to kill and a time to heal; A time to tear down and a time to build up. 4} A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance. 5} A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing. 6} A time to search and a time to give up what is lost; A time to keep and a time to throw away. 7} A time to tear apart and a time to sew together; A time to be silent and a time to speak. 8} A time to love and a time to hate; A time for war and a time for peace.” May I recommend that continue on in your own Bible with verse 9 and read through the end of chapter twelve? These chapters are so full of wisdom and understanding.

We end this study with Ecclesiastes 12:9-10: *“In addition to being a wise man the Teacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs. The Teacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of Truth correctly.”*

Happy Studying!