



Daily Devotionals: Mind | October 24, 2021

Welcome to Week 3 of our All series!

As a church, we've taken nine weeks to look carefully at the character of God. And for the past two weeks, we've been looking carefully at how we might be able to love God with all our heart and soul.

This week, we'll be focusing on how to love God with all our *minds*.

The mind is one of the most important spiritual warfare battle grounds there is. We often think of spiritual warfare occurring in some other-worldly, heavenly realm where the army of the devil rages against the Kingdom of God. But when we look at the Scriptures, we see deceptive ideologies, lies, vain philosophies, misinformation, and deceitful ideas are the weapons that Satan likes to arm himself with. All of these are tactics used against our minds.

For example, in **John 8:44**, Jesus says of Satan that, "He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for *there is no truth in him*. When he *lies*, he speaks his native language, for he is a *liar* and the father of *lies*". And similarly, the Apostle Paul warns us to win the battle of our mind when he exhorts us in **Colossians 2:8** to, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ" and then later commands that we, "Set our minds on things above, not on things that are on earth" (**Colossians 3:2**).

Loving God with our minds means we supplant lies with the truth. And not just the blatant lies that are easy to identify. We must willfully attend to the conspicuous lies that Satan tries to sow in our thought-life via our experience, what we watch, what we read, and what we see.

If we're not careful, we might end up believing things about God, ourselves, and the nature of reality that are not true and good. Remember it was Jesus who said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (**John 8:31-32**). Lies (falsehoods) lead to us slavery. Jesus' teachings (truth) lead us to freedom.

So, if "how we think determines how we live", as one sage used to say, what do we do? Well, Paul tells us in **Romans 12** to not conform to the pattern of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of your *mind*.



How does that work? It happens through consciously choosing what to allow our minds to dwell on (**Psalm 16:8**). It's why Paul exhorts us to think on "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable..." (**Philippians 4:8**). That's how we transform our minds.

To put this into practice, here are three exercises for you to do this week to help you engage with the Spirit of God in transforming your mind (remember: these are not items to add to your task lists, these are disciplines to help shape us into the image of Jesus!):

1. Identify the lies

First, begin with listening prayer. Find a comfy space to sit in, perhaps with a notebook and pen in hand. Then, pray to invite the Holy Spirit. After a few moments of quiet, spend time with the "Exposing the Devil's Strategy & Encountering Truth" sheet from practictheway.org to identify what lies you might be susceptible to and how you might be able to supplant those falsehoods with the truth of God. Be sure to check out the second page example of this to gain an understanding of what to do.

You'll find the exercise on the next two pages. Jot down your thoughts there or use your journal to write out your reflections.

I'd also encourage you to go back to some of your thoughts and reflections from the week on loving God with your "heart" and meditate on the falsehoods that reside there and how you can replace them with truths.

Exposing the Devil's Strategy & Encountering Truth

1. What's the lie that I'm believing (about God, myself, or the good life)?	2. What's the truth Jesus is calling me to believe (about God, myself, or the good life)?
3. What's the disordered desire of my flesh behind that lie?	4. What's the re-ordered desire of the Spirit for my life?
5. How is this lie normalized in our sinful society?	6. What's Jesus's Kingdom vision of a new normal?

Exposing the Devil's Strategy & Encountering Truth

<p>1. What's the lie that I'm believing (about God, myself, or the good life)?</p> <p>I would be happier if I was married to a different person.</p>	<p>2. What's the truth Jesus is calling me to believe (about God, myself, or the good life)?</p> <p>At some level, all marriages are a bad match. They are opportunities to love someone sacrificially, the way Jesus does, and to grow more like Jesus in all areas of my life.</p>
<p>3. What's the disordered desire of my flesh behind that lie?</p> <p>To have sex with whoever I want, to feel the spark of having chemistry with someone.</p>	<p>4. What's the re-ordered desire of the Spirit for my life?</p> <p>To be faithful and true to the commitment I made and to be formed to Jesus's image for my life.</p>
<p>5. How is this lie normalized in our sinful society?</p> <p>Divorce is normal, there is no fallout, and the most important thing is to be authentic to myself.</p>	<p>6. What's Jesus's Kingdom vision of a new normal?</p> <p>That people who are called to or choose marriage would commit themselves to one person for life, offering health and healing to our society as we reflect Christ-like love to everyone around us.</p>



2. Meditate on the truth of God

Make it a point to begin each day over the next week by reading a portion of Colossians. Dwell on the Word before looking at your phone, checking the news, catching up on email, and before the day's demands infiltrate your quiet time.

- Day 1 – Colossians 1:1-14**
- Day 2 – Colossians 1:15-29**
- Day 3 – Colossians 2:1-7**
- Day 4 – Colossians 2:8-23**
- Day 5 – Colossians 3:1-17**
- Day 6 – Colossians 3:18-4:1**
- Day 7 – Colossians 4:2-18**

I like to read the passage and then ask myself, “What truths are present in each section of Scripture?” I then jot those down and pray them back to God, thanking Him for those truths. Spend a few moments and dwell on those that you see in these portions of Scripture.

3. Memorize Scripture

Another important way we can transform our minds is by memorizing Scripture. If you notice how thoughts work, you'll realize that many times thoughts just appear out of nowhere. Good thoughts (help this person, say that encouraging word, etc.) and unhealthy thoughts (doubting God's love, temptations, etc.) all seem to come out of nowhere sometimes.

Often, however, those thoughts stem from where we allow our minds to dwell (or not dwell). Thus, memorizing Scripture is a great tool to combat negative and false thoughts. Instead of new Netflix specials or cable news taking up mental space, we're planting seeds of Scripture that will (if cultivated with humility and love) grow into gospel fruit.

As a place to begin, take some time this week to memorize one (or all three) of these passages:

- **Mark 12:28-31**
- **Colossians 1:15-20**
- **John 8:31**