

Think!

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[0 : 00] Let's stand, shall we, as we read God's Word, Isaiah 55, verses 6-9.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith 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.

Please be seated. Talking about the mind. The Bible has much to say about the mind of man, about wisdom, about understanding, about knowledge. And it says in this verse that we just read, God says, my thoughts are higher than your thoughts.

My ways are higher than your ways. And it says that, let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. So it's got a message to our minds, to our thinking.

[1 : 18] And God has created our minds. Our minds are very powerful. They're made by his design. And as much as the Bible says about the mind, about understanding, about knowledge, it says, for one thing, that we're not to be double-minded.

To be double-minded. To be, I guess you could put it by the colloquialism of sitting on the fence. When it comes to Christian truth, we should be single-minded in our faith.

And friends today, some people, they waste that brain space. That brain space, that grey matter that's up there in their skulls. They waste it, and they fill it with all kinds of useless things.

Don't waste your brain space. Apply your mind for that which matters. And we see in Romans 1.28, it says of the lost, that they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

This is Romans 1.28. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. God gave them over to a reprobate mind. A mind that was godless.

[2 : 20] A mind that was hateful towards him. Consider what the world's people think of, speak of, talk of, and dwell upon. Now, for any of you here that know about Facebook, for example, I know some of the youngsters here have got Facebook accounts.

And sometimes it's intriguing to see what people put on their Facebook pages. For most of us who don't know what I'm talking about, it's that kind of social networking.

It's how people describe their lives and what they're interested in and what they're obsessed about half the time. And you see sometimes what some people put, sometimes there's swearing there.

Sometimes there's things about recreation that it's not a good thing for Christians to be involved with. There's very few Facebook mentions that I've seen that really glorify God.

And it shows where we're coming from. It shows where we're at in terms of what we're obsessed about, what we rave on about, what we think of, what we talk of, what we dwell upon. Young people, older people here today, think about what is the message that I'm communicating to other people when I'm doing such things as that.

[3 : 29] As much as that is, you know, sometimes just recreation of sorts. But think about what you're talking about. And for us that don't have Facebook, think about what it is that you dwell upon, what you talk about, what you think about.

It shows where you're at. It shows what's in your mind. It reminds me of that advert that you see of smoking. People would have seen that.

Pay attention there, young people. Think of that advert. It shows a sponge. It shows someone's, a picture of what someone's lungs are like.

There's a heavy smoker. And they wrench that sponge and out drips this goo and muck and filth.

That's what is in people's lungs. But more than that, think of your brain today.

Your brain, as someone has said, it's a bit like a sponge. Your brain, that grave matter, that sponge in your head is soaking things up all the time.

[4 : 31] It's soaking things up. And Titus 1.15, it says, Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

There's people whose minds are defiled. Their brains are filled with all of that yuck and muck. Depraved and defiled. Have you got a soiled mind or a sound mind?

That's the question for all of us tonight. Is your mind soiled by the world and its muck and grossness? Or is it filled with that which is sound? Soundness of mind.

Philippians 4.8, we can think about how can we think God's thoughts? He says, my thoughts are not your thoughts. How can our thoughts become more like his thoughts? How can our mind become more in tune to what God would have us to think about and for our brains to be filled with, for our understanding, for our thinking to be filled with that which is profitable and useful to us and not that which will soil us and defile us and deprave the mind?

Philippians 4.8, we read, it says, In the context, let the peace of God fill your hearts and minds. Keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[5 : 48] And Paul writes in Philippians 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, if there be any praise, think on these things.

Think on these things. Friends, is our mind thinking on those things, which are going to be profitable and useful to us, are those things pure, lovely, just? It's like someone said about gossip.

You know, is it true? For a start. Is it true? Is it needful? Is it kind? There's many questions we could think. What are we talking about? And friends, think about it before.

I know our brother shared on the bus. I've got lots of wisdom on the bus. That we should be slow to speak, as the Word says, shouldn't we? Be careful what you say. Because out of the mind, shows what's in the heart.

It comes out in the talk. And friends, firstly, how can we think God's thoughts? The first thing I put to you tonight is the Bible speaks of having a sound mind.

[7 : 01] A sound mind. Having soundness of mind. It's likewise referred to the same word that the word soundness of mind comes from. It refers to the rightness of mind, of soberness of mind.

And we read of the sound mind, for example, in 2 Timothy 1 verse 7, where Paul's speaking to young Timothy. And he says, For God has not given to us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind.

God's given to us a sound mind. As a Christian, we can have a mind that is sound, that is right with him. In Titus 2, Paul exhorts, likewise, the young men to be sober.

It's again, of the same context, the same understanding of that word, soundness of mind. Sober. It takes the young women to be sober. And verse 6, Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded. The Bible wants us to be sober-minded, to be sound-minded, because our thinking affects our living. Sober thinking leads to sober living. Our lives are meant to be lived out soberly.

[8 : 09] As we read likewise in Titus 2 verse 12, the word says that we should, as God teaches us, the grace that teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly.

There's that word again, soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world. God says much about soberness. Now what is the characteristic of those that are godless?

A lack of soberness, isn't it? It's very often the case, you see, people who don't want a bar of God, and it's not necessarily always the case, because there's some upstanding, wonderful citizens of the world, who are total abstainers, who will still go to hell.

But it's often the case that the worldlings, the godless, tend to just want to go blotto, paralytic, and just want to drink away their sorrows and booze themselves to death.

But the Bible says, rather, we should live soberly. We should have a sober mind. We should have a clear mind, a sensible, a straight-thinking mind, a clear-thinking mind, that we can take in and absorb God's truth.

[9 : 17] And sober thinking comes from God's truth. God's word itself, it's sobering truth. In Acts 26, verse 25, Paul's witnessing to an official, he's in prison, and Acts 26, verse 25, he's speaking to Felix, who's one of the authorities by whom he's been in prison, and he's witnessing to this man, and it says there, in Acts 26, verse 25, that Felix trembled when he heard the message.

Paul's message was righteousness, judgment, temperance. And he says, go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. And, I'm getting mixed up, in fact, I'm referring

to the wrong chapter.

Acts 26, verse 25, when he spoke to Festus, another man, Acts 26, verse 25, Paul again, he witnessed to this man, and it says, that Festus, he also reacted to the word of God, and he said, Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning doth make thee mad.

And verse 25, but Paul said, I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth, and soberness. These are words of truth, and soberness. It tells us how to live, in truth, in honesty, in righteousness, in integrity, as well as in soberness, in soundness.

And it's a solid message, for our soul, as well as our mind. Words of truth, and soberness. Friends, there's a battle raging, and it's within our mind. It's often played out, in our mind.

[11:02] As we know, our minds are constantly bombarded, with the world's messages. Young people, you especially see that. Especially as the internet, is just so prevalent, and much of it, of some of it, is not wholesome, it's not helpful to us.

And more than ever, we need words of truth, and soberness. We need that, in this day, when the world's muck, would fill that sponge, of your brain, full of muck, and filth, and yuck, and corruption. There's a battle raging, for control of your mind. And, we can sometimes struggle, as Christians, I know, speaking for myself, we can struggle, with what goes into our mind, with keeping our mind, pure, with keeping those thoughts, on those things, that are lovely, and godly.

We can struggle, with our anxieties, we can struggle, with our cares, we can struggle, with our thoughts, with our fears, with our attitudes, and it all, is part of our mind, of our thinking.

There's a battle, on because the enemy, wants to attack you, in that battleground, of the mind. And our minds, they can be clouded, by doubt, by disobedience, by sin. Paul writes, in Romans 12, that we should think soberly, think soberly, according as God, hath dealt to every man, the measure of faith.

[12:19] We can develop, that mind, that is sound. And friends, how do we do that? How can I develop, a mind like that? How can I find, a soundness of mind? Soak that sponge, as it were, in the word.

Soak that sponge, that is that brain, that mind of yours. Let those thoughts, think on that, which is pure, and lovely, and wholesome. Let it meditate, on the word. As the psalmist said, it's my meditation, all the day.

The sponge, and as was referred to, early today, that cleansing, of the word, that washing, of the mind, that washing, of the word, that cleansing, of the mind, happens, as we cultivate, the word of God, let it cultivate, our mind.

And our Lord, can give us, that soundness, in our thinking, in our thought patterns, in our attitude. Paul writes, in Colossians 3, verse 2, where we should set, our thinking.

Colossians 3, verse 2, it reads there, set your affection, on things above, not on things, on the earth. Our world, is so obsessed, by all of these things, you see, not that I dwell, on such things, but even just, the accounts, of the media, telling us, about Shane Warne, and Liz Hurley.

[13:35] Gross. Sin. Sin. It's vile. They're both married, to another person, or were. And you wonder, this is what the world, is obsessed with. Obsessed with this trash, this gossip, this, this violence, and filth, and sin.

That these are the heroes, of our generation. These are the men, and women, that our young people, that our future generation, look up to, and admire, and worship, as it were.

And yet, of these individuals, this is sin. It's not an affair, it's not a romance, it's not something, oh, what a wonderful romance, is happening in Australia. It's sin.

It's like men. And our minds, should not be, feeding on that, filth, on that, muck. Friends, no wonder, the world's in such a mess, when that is what, the world feeds itself on.

And it goes into, a feeding frenzy, the media, with such trash. Set your things, on things above. Set your affection, on things above. I know, in my notes, I know Gene's got the same Bible, it says, focus your mind.

[14:39] It's got the sense of the word here. Focus your mind, on things above. Set your affection, on things above. Let that be your focus. Let that be, what you want to, dwell upon.

And spend time with, him. Spend time, thinking about heaven. Thinking of your Lord, and Saviour, your Master. This world will pass away, in an instant, in a moment, in a blink of an eye.

It'll all be over, Red Rover. All of this life, that we live in, we know, time is short. Make it count. Make it count. Young people here tonight, you've got more time, likely on this planet, than I will have.

Make it count. Make today, a day of decision. Friends tonight, set your affection, on things above. And then we can have, a soundness of mind. In Mark 5, our Lord gives the, the account of, there was a demon possessed man.

A demon possessed man, he was in chains, he was frothing at the mouth, he was tearing things up, living in caves, in a cemetery. He was in a desperate case.

[15:38] And, the Lord touched him, he reached out and touched him, in Mark 5, and the Lord gave him, a sound mind. A sound mind. Christ delivered him, from the unclean spirit, that held his way over him.

A sound mind was given. Friends, to think God's thoughts, we need to have a sound mind.

Secondly, we need to have a renewed mind, a renewed mind, to think God's thoughts. This doesn't happen, by just, turning over the page, turning over a new leaf, as it were.

Some people think, oh I can, meditate, and for some it's going, om, or doing all kinds of crazy, wacko things, that somehow, they can make their mind, purer, and by thinking, by making a blank, or saying some kind of magic words, or what they call them, mantras.

You know, these are the, the wacko things, the world would, would try to say, or positive thinking.

And, we need positive thinking, but, but for some it's just, a mantra, it's just a, a slogan, it's just, a false hope for them, because they're not thinking, God's thoughts.

He says, my ways, are higher than your ways, my thoughts, are higher than your thoughts. And so, we especially need, a renewed mind, a renewed mind. And Ephesians 4, 22, in context, it talks of such a thing, as it talks of putting off, of the former conversation, the former conduct, and way of life, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lust, and Paul says, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your mind.

[17:11] Paul says, that we can be, renewed, renewed, in the spirit, of our mind. And he says, that you put on the new man, which after God is created, in righteousness, and true holiness. How does that happen?

How can I get that? How can I get that new mind? Right, there's a total brainwashing, as it were, in a good sense, that there's a newness, of our mind, there's a newness, of life, there's a newness, of the man, there's a newness, of the heart.

It's at that moment, of regeneration. At that moment, of regeneration, when you're saved, when you're saved, when you're born again, creates a new heart, a new spirit, a new mind, as it were, a renewed mind.

Everything changes, when you're saved. There's a newness, of life, that happens, to the whole of you. And the Lord, powerfully changes us, he transforms us, from the inside out, in our hearts, and in our minds.

And friends, tonight, some would think, oh, being a Christian, and some, false teachers, say such things, just blank out your mind, and just let it, just let it all, you know, happen.

[18:15] You know, just blank out your mind. And yet, the Bible says, rather, we should use our mind, we should discipline our mind, we should ask the Lord, to transform our mind, to speak into our mind, to lead us, to know him, with our mind.

He speaks through, his spirit to our mind, to guide us, to give us, godly thoughts, and godly thinking. And that is what, he wants us to have. That as he prayed, in Colossians 1, verse 9, that you might be filled, with all the fullness, that you might be filled, with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding.

There's a wisdom, that comes to our mind. There's a knowing of his will, that comes to our mind.

There's a spiritual understanding, that comes to our mind. There's a being fruitful, in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge, of God, that comes to our mind.

God doesn't bypass, our mind. He reasons with us. He reasons with us, through the pages of scripture. In Hebrews 10, he says, I will put my laws, into their hearts, and in their minds, will I write them.

He uses our minds, and we should apply our mind, apply our heart, to know wisdom. To our mind, he renews, that freshness, of relationship with him, that freshness of spirit, that cleansing, and our heart, gets transformed.

[19:31] Friends, tonight, there was a story, of a missionary, David Livingston, who's heard of David Livingston, went to the darkest, of Africa, into the, the most dangerous, of places, and one day, David Livingston, he encountered this, tribesman, and the tribesman, said to him, please, give me some medicine, to change my heart.

It's so proud, uneasy, and often times angry, and this, African chap, he'd seen the missionary, do wonderful things, because, Dr Livingston, obviously, he did, do some, wonderful, physical work, with helping people, with their, physical health, and he saw, how the ones, that were sick in body, were treated, and were made well, and he wanted, the same thing, to happen to his soul, and Livingston, had to explain, to the man, that the Lord Jesus, alone, could bring that, transformation, in his life, and the man, refused to listen, he said, no, no, I want medicine, you know, sometimes, we want a, a cure-all, we want something, that's easy, that's, it's a bit like, Naaman, how he got told, to go seven times, to do something, and when he did, what God told him to do, something happened, that was a wonderful, demonstration, of God, at work, when we do, what God says to do, when we repent, when we turn, from our sins, when we come to him, in faith, when we believe, in our heart, and confess Christ, with our mouth, there's a wonderful, regeneration, there's a recreation, our heart, gets replaced, with a brand new heart, we get a brand new star, and it's not in a bottle, as the African man, thought it was, but it's in the cross, it's in that, regeneration, as we're born again, so friends tonight, how do we think,

God's thoughts, get a sound mind, a sound mind, don't fill it with trash, fill that mind, with that, which is going to be beneficial, a sound mind, a renewed mind, ask God to, cleanse your mind, as a Christian too, we all need to have, a daily washing, a daily cleansing, a daily confessing, and a daily cleansing, and thirdly, to think God's thoughts, we want to have, a Christ like mind, it says, 1 Corinthians 2 16, that we have the mind, of Christ, to think God's thoughts, we need to have, the mind of Christ, what would it look like, think of it friends, this is something, we might say glibly, we want to have, the mind of Christ, what would it really look like, what would it look like, for you to see, a man, a woman, who had the mind, of Christ, what would he or she, look like, how would he or she, behave, they would have a nature, that was different, there'd be a nature, about them, that was different, they'd have his nature, resident, and present, in their life, they'd have Christ, oozing out of them, as it were,

Christ would be, evident, in how they react, in how they, minister, in how they, touch people, in how they, respond to, challenges and situations, what would it look like, friends, think of it, for yourself tonight, what would it look like, for me to have his nature, what would it look like, for me to have, the mind of Christ, Christ, as 1 Corinthians 2, 16 says, that you do have, the mind of Christ, what would it look like, what difference, would it make, to the way you walk, the way you talk, the way you live, think of it, friends, be challenged tonight, think of how you can, walk more like Christ, how you can be more like Christ, to those you touch, in your lives, to those you rub shoulders with, how can you be more like him, and less like, the old you, less like the old Andrew Craig, you know, less like that selfish one, less like that proud one, less like that, self-righteous one, friends tonight, whatever your state tonight, that you would be more like him, that you would be more like Christ, that is our goal, isn't it, we that love him tonight, press towards the mark, there's an aspiring, you know, we've got someone in our, our congregation, aspiring to be a leader, and he's put his name down, for a leadership course, he's aspiring to, improve himself, that's a good thing, what about aspiring, to be more like Christ, that's a great aspiration, isn't it, we can all want, and I trust we will, be more like that, friends, think of it, just as we, consider, the Christ-like mind, it says in Philippians 2, that, Paul prays that you'd be like-minded, that you have one mind, in lowliness of mind, Acts 20 verse 19, it says that Paul, was serving the Lord, with all humility of mind, with many tears, and temptations, humility of mind, lowliness of mind, this is truly, the mind of Christ, it's what, he would have us think, and when we, ask that question, what would it look like, what would it look like, to have the mind of Christ, would it be, that you would be a servant, would it be, that you would take, the lowest place, would it be, that you would, take the pathway, of the cross, I trust the word, it would affect, how you think, how you act, how you relate, there's a healing, that happens, when we trust him, a healing, a renewing, of our mind, a transformation, the renewing, of the mind, we read about that, as we know, that we should present, our bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our, reasonable service, and there should be, a renewing of the mind, a renewing, of the spirit, we're coming to, a point of decision, a point of decision, now it's always good, to have a challenge, that you'd be transformed, by the renewing, of your mind, that you may prove, what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, it takes a decision, again it's your mind,

[25 : 19] God doesn't bypass, your mind, and rather, he says to you, come now, and let us reason together, though your sins, be as scarlet, they shall be, as white as snow, though they be, red like crimson, they shall be as wool, come now, and let us reason together, he says, reason with me, reason with me, Christianity, is a rational thing, it's a reasonable thing, it's an intelligent thing, we've

got a reason, for why we believe, and we can give an answer, for the reason, for the hope, that is in us, we can, explain to people, that there is a creator, without, that knowledge, I mean, the whole cosmos, doesn't make sense, because how could it possibly, make itself, friends, it's only reasonable, to be Christian, and it comes to the place, where, it has to be a decision point, a decision of the will, and, a deliberate decision, has to happen, and we read, for example, in 2 Corinthians 10, you might like to turn there, of the mind, and what is going on, and this is for all of us,

I believe, that this happens, for every one of us, that there's an ongoing struggle, in the mind, and the more we, soak up, the more we fill that sponge, with that which isn't helpful, for us, the harder it will be, for us to, get victory, have you reached, a decision point, a decision point, have you, come to that place, where the will, will bow, the will needs to bow, we can't just, we can't play games with God, we can't, we might trick some people, we might trick ourselves, for a time, but we need to, bow the will, bow the will, and the mind is, the will power is in the mind, as well, isn't it really, it's a conflict, that constantly, faces us, in 2 Corinthians 10, from verse 3, it says, for though we walk in the flesh, we do not walk, after the flesh, for the weapons of our author, are not carnal, or fleshly, but mighty through God, to the pulling down, of strongholds, 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, there's a lot in that, isn't there, you know, we could spend much time, on just that, just think of that, perhaps read that later, 2 Corinthians 10, 3 to 6, there's a warfare going on, and the weapons of our warfare, they're not a physical thing, a fleshly thing, a carnal thing, but God is mighty, to pull down, the strongholds, to cast down, the imaginations, to pull down, every high thing, that exalteth itself, against the knowledge of God, to bring into captivity, every thought, notice that it doesn't say, to bring into captivity, some of our thoughts, it doesn't say, to bring into captivity, most of our thoughts, but it says, to bring into captivity, every thought, to the obedience of Christ, it takes a willful decision, a deliberate commitment, to be about, the work of demolishing, tearing down, captivating every thought, think of it, through this week ahead, day by day, step by step, think of the thoughts, that you're thinking, my thoughts, are higher than your thoughts, he says to us, my ways, are higher than your ways, what are our thoughts, thinking of, friends,

I know for myself, oftentimes, my thoughts, are filled with, with carnal things, you know, with making a living, with the worries of life, with, you know, making, making a life, sometimes we can get obsessed, with that, can't we, that just the day by day, the run of the mill, the everyday, it just consumes, every waking thought, and how much time, do we have, for washing, the water, of the word, how much time, do we have, for the demolishing, the tearing down, of those strongholds, how much time, apply that mind, that God has given to us, apply your mind, to demolish, to tear down, those things, that would raise themselves, up against him, to captivate, every thought, not just some of your thoughts, but that every thought, would be captive, to Christ, that those things, that would, rear up their ugly heads, and take, God's place, would be torn down, that we would have, that warfare, and we would win, through that struggle, we would battle, against those, human reasonings, against those, godless philosophies, that are always around us, trying to sway us, and friends, tonight, just to close, faith, is intelligent, it's rational, it makes sense, it's rational, as well as spiritual, but we've got to come, to that place, where the will bows, the will bows, in Isaiah 45, 9, in part it says, well unto him, that striveth, with his maker, perhaps you're one of those, here tonight, you're striving, against your maker, you're striving, against him, there's that willfulness, in you, that you don't want, his way, you're like those, that we talked about, this morning, where he says, stand ye, and see the good way, and walk therein, and they say, we will not, walk therein, we don't want, God's way, maybe you're saying, that tonight, I don't want, God's way, for my life, friends, don't play, games with him tonight, time is short, we don't know, how long we have, I know, it's, there's a scripture, that says, there is but a step, between me, and death, but a step, we don't know, how much time we have, you young people, here tonight, you might die, tonight, it's possible, it's important, to think about, the things of God, to not to strive, with your maker, but instead, to yield to him, to surrender your will, as he says, come let us reason, together, and to receive his promises, to understand his word, to consider, what is it that captivates, our thoughts, it should be Christ, shouldn't it, it's Christ, who should captivate, our thoughts, not the worries, and fears of life, not the thinking, of, of, of, worldly considerations, in the scheme of things, they're, not really, they shouldn't write a mention, in consider, in comparison, think on these things, he says, those things, that are

good, and godly, and lovely, those things, that are pure, virtuous, or good report, and in Christ, the transformation, can happen,

I just want to, issue a plea tonight, if you're not saved, friends tonight, you face, a Christless eternity, a Christless eternity, you know, that should grip, everyone here tonight, who's not saved, the prospect of that, there's an, ever, everlasting hell, an everlasting hell, everlasting burnings, you know, this is what the word says, I'm not going to argue, with what it says, it says, there's everlasting punishment, and people will be tormented, and yet, every one of us here, can vow the will, I urge you tonight, Christ has suffered for you, to save your soul, Christ has suffered, and bled, and died, and rose again, if you have faith in him, if you can trust him, you can be saved tonight, and he can make your mind sound, he can make your mind renewed, and he can make your mind Christlike, and you can learn to think God's thoughts, as much as we in our human frailty, we fall short, we may never really realise it, down here below, but we can think more, as God would think, think about things, as God would think of them, think about sin, as God would think of it, think about truth, as God would think of it, think about, his word, as he would think of it, treasure it, let it be in meditation, all the day.

[33 : 28] I love to tell your story, of haunting things about,