

6. Replace

a. Replace sinful thoughts with good thoughts.

- 1) (Psalms 19:14) "*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*"
- 2) (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, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"

b. Replace unkind thoughts with kind thoughts.

- 1) (Matthew 5:44) "*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*"
- 2) (Romans 12:21) "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*"

7. Review

a. Review scripture regularly.

- 1) (Psalms 119:9) "*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*"
- 2) (Psalms 119:11) "*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*"
- 3) Jesus quoted Scripture to defeat Satan, but He also resisted. Quoting Scripture is not a single cure to evil thoughts, but it is God's powerful sword to help us.

b. Review these biblical strategies

- 1) Realise, recognise, repent, rely, resist, replace, and review.
- 2) Place these in your daily prayer journal.

Conclusion: Our thoughts are like our tongues, we will never tame them, but we can control them with God's help. You can conquer evil thoughts by winning one battle at a time. Use these seven biblical strategies to form your battle plan and then put it into action.

Song: Victory in Jesus, 496

Conquering Evil Thoughts

10 November 2019 PM – Genesis 6:5 – Thoughts – Scott Childs

Introduction: There have been many battle strategies used by successful generals down through history. Though they varied in type, they all had one thing in common; they worked to conquer the enemy.

Just before the flood in Genesis 6:5, we read, "*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*" The evil thoughts of man so grieved the Lord that He destroyed the world with a flood. People have struggled to conquer evil thoughts since the day that Adam and Eve sinned.

Transition: This evening, I want us to examine seven biblical strategies we must daily follow in order to conquer bad thoughts.

1. Realise

a. Realise the makeup of evil thoughts.

- 1) Evil thoughts are not just sensual thoughts. Evil thoughts are any thoughts that do not please the Lord. Even thoughts that ignore God's will are evil thoughts.
- 2) They include, lust, bitterness, hate, worry, fear, selfish plans, humanistic plans, etc.
- 3) They come from the heart, (Matthew 15:19) "*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*"

b. Realise that God knows all your thoughts.

- 1) (Genesis 6:5) "*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*"
- 2) (1 Chronicles 28:9) "*And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts ...*"
- 3) (Job 42:2) "*I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.*"
- 4) (Psalms 94:11) "*The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.*" (cf. 1Co 3:20)
- 5) (Psalms 139:2) "*Thou knowest my downsitting and mine*

uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off."

- 6) (Matthew 9:4) "*And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?"*

2. Recognise

a. Recognise when your thoughts are evil.

- 1) Evaluate the thoughts on which you dwell.
- 2) Ask God to help you. (Psalms 139:23) "*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:"*
- 3) Admitting a bad thought is the first step to victory.

b. Recognise why you have a bad thought

- 1) Evil thoughts are the result of yielding to a lust or desire that displeases God. (James 1:14-15) "*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."*
- 2) Thoughts of lust, bitterness, hate, worry, fear, selfishness, or any ungodliness are evil thoughts. Calling them by any other softer name is not helping you.

3. Repent

a. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of action.

b. Express your repentance to the Lord

- 1) (Psalms 51:1-3) "*Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me."*
- 2) (Proverbs 28:13) "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."*
- 3) (1 John 1:9) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

4. Rely

a. Do not rely on your own strength

- 1) (Proverbs 28:26) "*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."*

- 2) (Romans 12:2) "*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."*

b. Rely on the Lord.

- 1) (James 4:7) "*Submit yourselves therefore to God ..."*
Humbly rely on God. Depend on Him.
- 2) (1 Chronicles 16:11) "*Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually."*
- 3) (Matthew 26:41) "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*
- 4) (Philippians 4:6-7) "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*
- 5) (1 Thessalonians 5:17) "*Pray without ceasing."*
- 6) Rely on God's Armour (Eph 6:10-18), Be renewed (Eph 4:22-24)

5. Resist

a. Follow God's Word

- 1) (James 4:7) "*... Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*
- 2) (Job 31:1) "*I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"*
- 3) (Psalms 101:3) "*I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me."*
- 4) (Proverbs 4:23) "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."*

b. Fight the wrong thoughts

- 1) Bounce your eyes. Flee temptations.
- 2) Denounce your bad thoughts.
- 3) Make no provision. (Romans 13:14) "*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."*
- 4) Seek to turn your mind to right thoughts. Listen to godly music. Quote scripture. Pray.