

WIN the
BATTLE for
YOUR MIND

RICHARD L. STRAUSS

ECS 
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The Word to the World

Win the Battle for Your Mind

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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS



Although the material in this book can be appreciated in its own right, it will yield even greater benefit if read and studied with the intention of taking the exams provided. See the enclosed exam booklet for instructions on how to earn credits with Emmaus Correspondence School by completing this course of study.

USING THIS BOOK AS A STUDY COURSE

COURSE COMPONENTS

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

HOW TO STUDY

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read each chapter through at least twice, once to get the general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

EXAMS

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions.

HOW YOUR EXAMS ARE GRADED

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

INTRODUCTION



“You don’t have a brain in your head!” Has anyone ever said that of you? It’s no compliment, that’s for sure! But of course, it can’t ever be true. If a person is alive and functioning, you can be sure he has a brain in his head.

And what an organ it is—an amazing complex electrical-chemical marvel, weighing only about three pounds but containing billions of cells capable of performing an incredibly enormous work load—generating, receiving, recording, and transmitting energy. Scientists have estimated that after seventy years of activity, a brain may contain nearly fifteen trillion separate pieces of information. Thousands upon thousands of thoughts can pass through it every day, but the brain never gets tired. It’s a truly magnificent machine!

The problem is we never use our brains to their full potential. Most of us hardly use more than 10% of our brain’s capacity. That is unfortunate, because the more we use our brains, the more effective they become. Many people testify that the more material they memorize, the easier it is for them to memorize. And obviously, the more we use the brain, the more information it stores up. The brain is a true treasure house of memories more vast than we can ever imagine.

But man is more than a machine, and the part of him we call *the mind* is more than that lump of gray protein with the consistency of soft cheese located under the skull. The functions of the mind depend to a large degree on the memory storehouse of the brain, and the thinking processes of the mind are obviously centered in the brain, but the concept of “mind” seems to reach in a broader sense to something beyond those processes. Somehow it relates to the entire immaterial part of man’s being.

The term *mind* is used to refer to that whole complex of elements in us that feels, perceives, thinks, wills, and reasons. What goes on there determines what we are and what we shall become. The information received there, the experiences met there, and the conditioning that takes place there, all affect the decisions we make and the course of action we take. Three thousand years ago Solomon wrote, “For as he thinks within himself, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7).

We can understand, then, why the mind becomes a battleground. Everybody who wants us to agree with him about anything, or wants to get something out of us, or wants us to act in a particular way, will try to manipulate us by feeding his own slanted information into our minds. Advertisers, politicians, advocates of varied philosophies and lifestyles, and even religious organizations, are all trying to get a foot in the door of our minds so they can mold our thinking. Is it any wonder we often simply do not know whom to believe?

There is an answer to our problem. It is to tune our minds to the right channel and get our information from the only completely accurate and authoritative source—the inspired Word of God. Listening to what God has to say will clear up our confusion and help us get our heads on straight. Let’s see what God says about our minds.

THE CONDITION OF THE NATURAL MIND

God created Adam with a mind. Adam had the ability to think, reason, and understand, as well as perceive, feel, and choose. He named every species of beast and fowl on the earth of his day (Genesis 2:19-20). That took some mammoth mental powers! Adam’s

descendants showed advanced mental development as well. Some of Cain's descendants demonstrated unusual musical talent, and others had the ability to forge all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron (Genesis 4:21-22). The major reason God created people with minds was so that they could get to know Him. God would receive great glory from created beings with vast mental capacities choosing to know and worship Him.

But something happened very early in man's history. Rather than seeking to glorify his Creator, the first man chose to defy Him. He ate of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and something happened to his mind. He now knew evil. His mind became familiar with and affected by sin. And since the immaterial part of Adam's being was passed on to his children, their minds were also affected by sin from the very day of their birth. From Adam's time to this, the mind of every person born into the world has been influenced by sin. Scripture has quite a bit to say about the condition of the natural mind, the mind with which we are born.

1. The mind is darkened

“This I say therefore, . . . that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding” (Ephesians 4:17-18). That word “understanding” is another term for the mind. The unbeliever lives with his mind fixed on things that don't last and have no eternal value. He is in the dark about spiritual matters. He may understand some very intricate things in this world, like science and technology; he may think nice thoughts, write great music or poetry, and otherwise make a constructive contribution to mankind. But he is in a fog about God.

The god of this age is Satan, and he is battling to maintain control of men's minds. He will use every “weapon” he can to keep a person's mind shaded from spiritual truth. As the apostle Paul put it, “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is in the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4, NIV). Man's will can only choose what his mind has first grasped. His freedom of choice is restricted to the information

he has in his mind. So if Satan can keep man's mind shielded from the truth of the gospel, he effectively keeps man from getting to know God and from fulfilling God's purpose for creating him. Satan keeps man in spiritual darkness.

2. *The natural mind is defiled*

“To those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient, and worthless for any good deed” (Titus 1:15-16). Here are people who say they know God, but their lives don't match their words. Paul says their minds are defiled. The word *defiled* originally meant to dye with another color, but it came also to refer to staining, soiling, or polluting. Evidence of such mental pollution is all around us in the way we are swamped by immorality. One of our primary concerns as Christians ought to be mind pollution—the effects of unbelievers' defiled minds on our lives, the impact of their obscenities, blasphemies, impurities, and unbiblical concepts on us and our children through all the forms of media. And the danger is not only from immorality and profanity; every natural mind is polluted with misinformation about God, soiled with false doctrines and erroneous ideas that affect aims, attitudes, and actions.

3. *The natural mind is depraved*

Paul spoke about “men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain” (1 Timothy 6:5). The word *depraved* means basically corrupted, destroyed, ruined, spoiled, or debased. Those perverted men of Paul's day were characterized by strife and controversies over “words” and were only interested in getting rich at other people's expense. Instead of selflessly spending their lives to serve God's people (as Paul was doing), they only thought of themselves, and they were leading God's people astray (1 Timothy 6:8-10). These teachers were actively opposing the truth and were “rejected as regards the faith” (2 Timothy 3:6-9).

4. *The natural mind is dead*

“For the mind set on the flesh is death . . . [it] is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so” (Romans 8:6-7). This mind set on the flesh is the natural mind, with all its sinful inclinations. It is spiritually dead, separated from the life of God. It is unable to function toward God, to know God, or to have fellowship with God. Consequently, it is unable to fulfill the purpose for which it was made. It may function adequately in other spheres. It may invent spectacular new gadgets to make a better life on earth; it may initiate philanthropic and humanitarian plans to help underprivileged people. Certainly, Satan would like to convince us that man’s mind is all-sufficient and supreme in itself, that it can solve all of our problems by its own sheer genius, and that it has no need for God.

There is no question that man’s mind is great! There has never been a computer built that can match its capabilities. But the mind is also darkened, defiled, depraved, and spiritually dead. We need to recognize this if we want our minds to be delivered from their natural, sinful condition and to fulfill God’s purpose for their creation.

THE CURE FOR THE NATURAL MIND

In the Bible we find the remedy for our mental malady, and it doesn’t involve “leaving our brains at the door”; in fact, the very opposite is true. In order to salvage our minds for His eternal enjoyment and usefulness, God actually works through our minds. Jesus said we would *know* the truth, and the truth would make us free (John 8:32). He was telling us that there are some things we need to know in order to be released from our sin-sickness and Satan-induced blindness. The only way we will ever be free to turn to God is to get that information into our minds. Since the mind is the control center of the life, and since it is so dreadfully sick, God through His Spirit puts particular emphasis on it as He applies His divine medication. He does this basically in three ways:

1. *He convinces us of our need*

Shortly before He left the earth, Jesus said to His disciples, “It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment” (John 16:7-8). The word *convict* means to bring something to light, to point it out and demonstrate it to be true; to convince someone. It is an action that relates unmistakably to the mind. God the Holy Spirit works on the minds of unbelievers to convince them of three things: sin, righteousness, and judgment. Each one is explained in the verses that follow.

He convinces them concerning *sin*; Jesus said, “Because they do not believe in Me” (John 16:9). Sinners need to be convinced that they have sinned and that their sin is an affront to a holy God. But notice why it is an affront—because they do not believe in Christ. A sinner does not need to be convinced of sin merely because he cheated on his income tax, or lied to his boss, or committed adultery, or got drunk. He needs to be convinced of his sin because he has not done the one thing that can deliver him from his darkness, defilement, depravity, and spiritual death. He has not placed his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as the one who paid the penalty for his sins.

Therefore our problem is not just that we have sinned, but that we have sinned and have not availed ourselves of God’s provision for that sin: the death of His Son. We have not trusted Him for forgiveness. And it is that one sin, our failure to place our confidence and trust in Christ’s shed blood, that condemns us to eternal separation from God (John 3:18). We need to understand that and accept it, and the Holy Spirit is the one who convinces us.

2. *He convinces us of righteousness*

“... because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me” (John 16:10). What does it mean, to convince us of righteousness? If we were truly righteous, we would hardly

need to be convinced of it. Our problem is that we have the wrong kind of righteousness. We have tried to offer God our own righteousness and have not received the perfect righteousness which He offers us in response to our faith (see Romans 10:3). Our righteousness is not sufficient to gain us entrance into heaven. God says our righteous deeds are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Our minds can never be delivered from the natural condition until we become convinced of our unrighteousness and the need for Christ's righteousness to be credited to us by faith.

Why does *the Holy Spirit* need to convince us about true righteousness? Because Christ has gone to the Father. When Christ was on earth, His perfect righteousness was obvious for all to see, if they looked at Him with open minds. And His righteousness exposed their unrighteousness. But now He has gone back to the Father. We cannot see Him. And since He is not physically present, it is easy for some to say that He is an imposter, a liar, a sinful man who can hardly help any of us obtain the necessary righteousness. But the Holy Spirit gives testimony to His sinlessness, His infinite righteousness. He convinces us that Christ is the perfect Son of God who offers to transfer (credit, impute) His righteousness to our account when we put our trust in Him. We need to acknowledge that there is no other way to be fit for God's presence, and the Holy Spirit is trying to persuade us of that.

3. *He convinces us of judgment*

Jesus said, "... because the ruler of this world has been judged" (John 16:11). The whole concept of judgment for sin is the laughingstock of the unbelieving world. "Look how much I've gotten away with!" some boast. "Besides, if there is a God, He's a God of love. He wouldn't condemn anyone to hell." God *is* loving! But He is also holy and just, and those attributes require Him to judge sin. We know He will do it too, because He has already judged Satan.

Satan judged? That confuses some people. How can he give us so much trouble if he has already been judged? Shortly

before He died, Jesus said, “Now the ruler of this world shall be cast out” (John 12:31). When Christ died on that cross, Satan’s doom was assured. His sentence was pronounced and his days are numbered. Those who reject Jesus Christ will share Satan’s doom. Their judgment is just as certain as Satan’s is. Someday Christ will say to them, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41, NIV). That is not a pleasant thought, but it makes sense. A perfectly holy God could not leave sin and rebellion unpunished. He will judge! We need to understand that and believe it, and the Holy Spirit is the one who convinces us.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit uses people. He used the apostle Paul, for example, when he arrived in Thessalonica on his second missionary journey. “As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he *reasoned* with them from the Scriptures, *explaining* and *proving* that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead” (Acts 17:2-3, NIV). That was obviously an appeal to the mind. And God used it mightily. “Some of the Jews were *persuaded* and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women” (Acts 17:4, NIV). The Spirit of God can use a believer whom He controls to give a clear, intelligent, and logical presentation of the gospel which will capture the minds of unbelievers and convince them of their need for Christ.

There is something else which the Spirit of God does to our minds in order to deliver them from their natural condition. After He convinces us of our need, *He challenges us to repent*. Paul summed this up in his famous sermon on Mars Hill in Athens. “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30, NIV). The word translated “repent” means literally “to think afterward” or “to change the mind.”

What is it about which we are to change our minds? The word “repentance” is linked to several key issues in Scripture. For one thing, there is repentance toward God (Acts 20:21). I do not know what you think about God, but if it is anything other than what He reveals about Himself in His Word, then you need to change your

mind. The Bible portrays Him as a holy Being who hates sin, but also as a loving Being who Himself has provided for the sinner's forgiveness in the death of His Son. Is that the way you view Him? If not, He wants you to change your mind.

Several passages link repentance to sin (see Acts 8:22). Some people will insist, "But my sins aren't so bad. They're no worse than anyone else's. Besides, everyone is entitled to a few, aren't they?" That is exactly what we need to change our minds about. We need to admit that every sin, no matter how small, is contrary to everything God is. It is an offense to His holiness, a challenge to His authority, and a just cause for our eternal condemnation.

"But I've done a lot of good deeds in my life. They count for something, don't they?" That is another thing about which we must change our minds. Repentance from dead works (Hebrews 6:1) is a reference to religious rituals and ceremonies. There is nothing wrong with religious observances unless they become empty, meaningless routines, or unless we think we are buying some special privileges from God by performing them. All the good deeds of a lifetime cannot erase the consequences of one sin or move us one inch closer to heaven (see Titus 3:5). If we do not believe that, God challenges us to change our minds.

Finally, repentance is linked to the Person of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:18-19). The Bible presents Him as God the Son, who left the realm of eternity to visit our planet, who lived a sinless life, who died a sacrificial death in our place, and who then arose triumphant over sin and the grave to secure our eternal salvation. And He said that He is the *only* way to the Father (John 14:6). It may require some changes in our thinking to acknowledge that. But when we trust Him as personal Savior from the guilt and condemnation of sin, God promises to save us (Acts 16:31), that is, to deliver us from the penalty which our sins justly deserve. Then He releases our minds from Satan's grasp and from their darkness, defilement, depravity, and death. In place of darkness, He gives light. In place of defilement, He brings cleansing. In place of depravity, He allows eternal usefulness. In place of death, He imparts eternal life. And He opens our minds to whole new realms of spiritual truth.

THE ENEMY OF THE MIND



Wouldn't it be nice if Satan left us alone after we got saved? You might think he would have no more interest in us. We are lost to him for eternity. He can never lay claim to us again. Yet he never seems to get off our case. Why is that? It's because he has discovered that he can do just as much damage to the cause of Christ by influencing a Christian's mind as he can by totally controlling an unbeliever's mind.

When a person trusts Christ as Savior, something happens to his mind. God gives it new capacities. Whereas before, his mind was darkened by sin, God now cleanses and illuminates it with spiritual truth. Whereas before, his mind was spiritually dead, God now gives it the ability to know Him and please Him. He does not give this new Christian a second mind, making him spiritually schizoid; rather, He places within his mind the new capability of serving and pleasing Him. For all practical purposes, we can call it a "new" mind. It is a mind capable of accomplishing the original purpose for its creation—fellowshipping with God and giving Him glory.

THE CONFLICT IN THE BELIEVER'S MIND

Having a new mind creates some problems, however, for while the believing mind has new capacities, it does not lose its old capacity for sin. A struggle is in progress. The apostle Paul described the

conflict as it raged in his own mind: “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. . . . So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Romans 7:23, 25, KJV). On one hand there is the new mind, which Paul called merely “my mind.” It longs to do what is right in God’s sight. But on the other hand there is the flesh, the old sin nature, the old inclinations of the natural mind which longs to do what is contrary to God’s will.

Now Satan knows this doctrine, and he knows how to use it to his own advantage too. He appeals to the flesh (the old man) through the ungodly world system, and by it he tries to lure us away from doing the will of God (see 1 John 2:15-17). If he can succeed, he substantially stifles the work of God in the world, because God has chosen to do His work primarily through us, His people. And there is a distinct possibility that he (Satan) will succeed. Paul expressed that fear regarding the Corinthians: “But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning; your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3, NIV).

So the battle for our minds goes on even after salvation. And what a crucial battle it is! The sad thing is that some Christians don’t even realize they are in a battle. They are slowly, subtly, and systematically saturated with the world’s philosophy and stripped of any effective usefulness to the Savior—and they never even suspect it is happening.

Satan has many approaches, for he is the great deceiver (Revelation 12:9). He uses *wiles*, or tricky schemes (Ephesians 6:11). He employs *devices*, carefully designed plots (2 Corinthians 2:11). And his goal is to *devour* us, that is, to swallow us up in sin and destroy our testimony (1 Peter 5:8).

One of his most successful methods is through the use of the media. He plants thoughts in our minds daily through television, radio, newspapers, magazines, the internet, books, movies, and billboards. He is particularly effective in getting us bogged down in the quagmire of materialism by this means, as we shall see in a later chapter. He

also finds the media useful for slipping his standards of morality into our minds. Most of us know that the Bible teaches sexual purity and marital faithfulness, so when somebody comes out and boldly advocates free love, we recognize it as Satan's work. But when we become involved in an emotional, heartwarming story that touches a responsive chord in us, and we identify with the hero's dreams, hopes, and frustrations, we may suddenly find ourselves cheering him on when he leaves an obnoxious and insensitive wife for a sympathetic and understanding lover. And we may never realize that we have been duped by Satan, softened up to accept the world's values.

Satan is also a master at making us more receptive to false doctrine. "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" (1 Timothy 4:1, NIV). The ardent devotees of false religious systems say some very reasonable and convincing things, but those things are merely Satan's tactics for making their non-biblical views more acceptable. "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 11:13-15, NIV).

Satan knows the powerful effect of hearing a message repeatedly, over a long period of time, and from many different sources, and he uses that tactic to great advantage. We may hear a newsman say something, then a famous athlete, then a movie star, then a leading politician. And when our next-door neighbor, who claims to be a Christian, suggests the same idea, Satan has us hooked.

Our children are being bombarded with lies, not only from the media, but also from their textbooks, their teachers, and their friends; they are in danger of being deluded in matters such as sex, drugs, abortion, marital roles, and divorce. Suddenly we hear our children saying things like, "Sex before marriage is all right if we have a meaningful relationship," or "Homosexuality is fine if that's the way a person wants to live," or "There's really nothing wrong with marijuana." It can happen to any of us. The sheer weight and persistence of the opposition overwhelms us and wears us down. We do not want to be

different or odd so we give in and then rationalize our surrender with something like, “Well, it *is* possible to interpret those passages in the Bible that way, you know.”

Music is another powerful mind bender. Those who have studied the effects of contemporary music have found that much of it provides a forceful impetus to accept Satan’s world view. It promotes the use of harmful drugs and the uninhibited practice of sex, as well as the alienation of the generations.

The immediate impact of Satan’s suggestions may not be as damaging as the cumulative effect. Our resistance to temptation does not only depend on our spiritual frame of mind at the moment of temptation alone, but also on the attitudes that have been forming in our minds for weeks, or even years, before the temptation occurs. James wrote, “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (James 1:14-15). There may be a period of time between the “conception” of lust and the actual “birth” of sin. If Satan can sow the seeds of unbiblical concepts in our minds by any possible means, then let them incubate, he has laid the foundation for later sin and spiritual defeat. What he can feed into our minds today through the eye-gate and ear-gate will help him accomplish his devious ends for tomorrow, or next week, or next year.

Is there any hope of winning this struggle? The odds against us seem to be enormous. We certainly can’t escape every satanic assault, for God has not called us to live in cloistered cells (see John 17:15). Is victory then possible? Can we resist Satan’s appeal to our sinful natures? Paul wondered the same thing: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Then he answered his own question: “I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Romans 7:24-25, KJV). Let’s see what provision Jesus Christ our Lord has made for victory.

THE CONQUEST BY THE NEW MIND

First, we need *a sound understanding of the Christian’s armor*, which God has provided to us. One piece is especially designed to protect

the mind, the only piece worn on the head. In order to win this battle with Satan, we must wear “the helmet of salvation” (Ephesians 6:17). It is no accident that the helmet is labeled “salvation.” When we are enjoying the assurance of our salvation, it is difficult for Satan to penetrate our minds. Our response to his attacks will be, “You can’t touch me, Satan. I’m a child of God. I have supernatural resources to resist you.” And such resistance sends him fleeing (James 4:7). When, on the other hand, we are plagued with doubts about our salvation and about the reality of God’s work in our lives, then we lower our defenses. We become easy prey for Satan’s destructive thoughts.

Have you placed your trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin? He promised to save you. Take Him at His Word. Don’t let Satan tell you anything different. “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may *know* that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). God wants you to enjoy the assurance of your salvation.

The second important principle for victory is *to be filled with the Spirit*. “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). We can never overemphasize the role of the Holy Spirit as a deterrent to Satan’s subtle mind-bending strategies. The major point of the Spirit’s filling is *control*. Just as alcohol controls the mind of an alcoholic, so the Holy Spirit wants to control our minds. To do this we must give up that control to Him; we must yield dominion of our thought processes to Him; we must consciously decide that we want His will more than our own will.

The Lord Jesus called the Holy Spirit “the Spirit of Truth.” He said the Spirit would guide us into all truth (John 16:13). If we allow Him to dominate our lives, He can help us sort our truth from error and guard us against Satan’s deceptive lies. He can even protect us against Satan’s subtle attacks at our weakest points, some which we may not even be aware of. When we are rightly related to the Holy Spirit, Satan cannot make his influence felt on our minds.

A third vital principle for victory is *to be programmed with the Word*. It has been suggested many times that the brain operates much like

a computer. Everything we have ever experienced is stored in its memory bank. We cannot always recall this at will, but it is there, permanently filed away for future reference. Brain surgeons have discovered that by stimulating certain areas of the cortex, patients can relive past incidents, experiencing all the sights, sounds, and sensations of the original events as though they were recorded and played back. All the information which has been fed into our computers through the five senses affects the way we think and the things we do. Jesus said, “But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (Matthew 15:18-19). Those things got into the heart (or mind) primarily through the eye-gate and the ear-gate. Appealing to the old sin nature and reinforcing their hold on the life, these evil thoughts, etc. erupt in sinful words and actions. If Satan can succeed in getting trash fed into our minds, trash is going to pour out from our lives. “Garbage in, garbage out,” is the way the computer people put it.

So, what we need to do is to reprogram the “computer” with the Word of God. Filling our minds with God’s Word is the only way to erase some of that old satanic input. Jesus said we are clean through the Word (John 15:3). *Clean* is the Greek word from which we get our English word “catharsis,” a purification, purgation, or cleansing. God’s Word is the only thing that can cleanse our minds of Satan’s crafty suggestions and the world’s faulty philosophy. While God’s Word may not actually remove Satan’s wrong information from our brain cells, it cancels his detrimental effect. The Bible has cleansing power. The psalmist agrees: “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word” (Psalm 119:9, NIV).

The apostle Paul appeals to us to *renew* our minds (Romans 12:2), that is, make them new in the sense of their nature or quality. God wants our minds to be distinctively different from what they were, programmed with His thoughts rather than man’s. Whatever else that involves, it certainly requires memorizing the Word, meditating on it, and relating it to our daily living. It is impossible for a Christian to grow in the Lord, do His will, and enjoy victory over sin without memorizing and meditating on the Word of God.

As we feed more of the Word into our minds, we are better able to evaluate everything we see and hear from God's perspective. We can test every thought by the standard of the Word, then decide what to discard and what to let settle down and become part of us. The Word provides a major safeguard against Satan's assaults on our minds.

Satan does not like what you are reading right now. He wants us to bypass our conscious minds and put our trust in a mindless, experience-centered emotionalism. There is a growing distrust in our day of a rational understanding of the Word in favor of an irrational trust in experience. Professing Christians are saying, "I had this experience, so it must be from God." When we elevate experience over the Word, Satan has us primed for any kind of heretical doctrine or worldly value system he wants to feed in, for he is able to influence and manipulate our experiences. He would love for us to board up our brains and function on emotion and experience alone. *Don't do it!* Program your mind with God's Word. Study it, learn what it means, memorize it, think about it, and live it.

The last essential principle for victory to consider is this: *Be captivated by Christ*. Follow Paul's example when he said, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3). This battle cannot be won with natural resources, with human wisdom, or with the energy of the flesh. We cannot defeat human reason with human reason. Paul went on to explain that the only effective weapons for pulling down Satan's deeply entrenched philosophies are the mighty weapons which God makes available (v. 4). Then he made this penetrating observation: "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (v. 5). Paul was out to capture for Christ the thoughts of the false apostles at Corinth. But he knew he could only do this as his own thoughts were first brought into submissive obedience to Christ. We can withstand Satan's reasonings and defeat all the proud ideas that are contrary to the knowledge of God as we subjugate our minds to the obedience of Christ. Paul wanted every thought that lingered in his mind to be at Christ's command, absolutely subject to Christ, just as a prisoner of war is subject to his captor.

Don't miss that word *obedience*. It means, literally, "to hear under." As captives of Christ, under His authority and fully committed to obey Him, we need to hear every thought that invades our minds. With that decision made, Satan's efforts to influence us with his philosophies and the world's values will fall on deaf ears. We will be saying, "I can't respond to that. I'm a captive of Christ. I am committed to obey *Him*."

Most of us long to have good feelings about our lives and our relationships with other people, but we fail to recognize that obedience is essential to right feelings. We usually have it backward. We say, "If I could feel properly about this, then I would act properly." For example, we may insist, "If I could love my mate more, then I could treat him/her with more respect." So we pray for more love, and usually get no answer because God has laid down certain prerequisites for enjoying right feelings. Then when our feelings don't change, we get discouraged and defeated, and we blame God for not answering our prayers. The first thing we need to do in a situation like that is to study God's Word to see how love *acts*, then program our minds with that information. When a difficult situation arises, we need to check our first reaction, play the tape of God's Word in our minds, and then consciously choose to act as the Word of God instructs, no matter how we feel.

When we step out by faith to act, God's power and grace become available to help us, and we begin to establish new habit patterns of obedience. They become ingrained in our minds, like rivulets in a hillside during a rain. And right feelings will follow, just as surely as God is Truth. Jesus told us to keep His commandments and our joy would be full (John 15:10-11). Try it. Bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Satan's most concentrated and clever tactics to capture your mind will then be frustrated.

WIN the BATTLE for YOUR MIND

EXAM BOOKLET

AK '05 (3 UNITS)

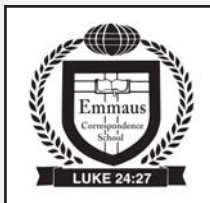
STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue C. yellow
B. green D. orange

_____ **B** _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

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CHAPTER 1 EXAM**ENEMY OF THE MIND**

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. After we become Christians, Satan
 - A. leaves us alone, because Jesus is more powerful than he is
 - B. does not care, because he still has control of unbelievers
 - C. lays claim to us for the future
 - D. seeks to influence our minds_____

2. The “new” mind of a Christian
 - A. has the same capacities for spiritual truth it had before
 - B. replaces the previous carnal mind
 - C. has new capacities for spiritual truth
 - D. balances pleasing self with pleasing God_____

3. According to Romans 7:23, 25, Paul
 - A. realized his mind lacked the capacity to sin
 - B. rejoiced that his old sin nature was gone forever
 - C. finally experienced complete mental peace
 - D. experienced a spiritual struggle in his mind concerning sin_____

4. In Revelation 12:9, Satan is known as a
 - A. false spiritual leader
 - B. deceiver
 - C. brilliant thinker
 - D. fallen angel_____

5. James 1:14-15 reveals that
 - A. our attitudes influence our resistance to temptation
 - B. being tempted is a sin
 - C. our minds are less important than our emotions
 - D. we can escape every satanic assault_____

6. Which piece of the Christian's armor is especially designed to protect the mind?
A. The breastplate of righteousness
B. The belt of hope
C. The helmet of salvation
D. The helmet of truth _____
7. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Spirit of
A. truth
B. righteousness
C. godly thinking
D. eternal hope _____
8. The Bible we have today
A. gives us ideas we can use to develop our own truth
B. has limited perspectives on our culture today
C. is not as important as experience-oriented emotionalism
D. gives us the standard for testing every thought _____
9. Each Christian can win the battle for his or her mind by using
A. natural resources wisely
B. human wisdom
C. human reason
D. the spiritual weapons God makes available _____
10. According to 2 Corinthians 10:5, we are to
A. take pride in our holy thoughts
B. evaluate our mental condition regularly
C. subject every thought to Christ's authority
D. try to stop having negative thoughts _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Why does Satan so diligently attack the minds of believers? What can believers do to counter his attacks?
