

Stinkin Thinkin!

Tim Dubberly, February 10, 2002- Edited February 13, 2005

Text: Matthew 6:24-34

Introduction:

Have you ever stopped and really considered what you spend most of your time thinking about? Do you think more about God and His love, power, sacrifice, work, etc...than you do about money and provision? Many would have to say that making money to supply our needs in life takes precedence over seeking out God's will and then doing our best to fulfill it.

Jesus taught many things in "His Sermon on the Mount." One of the most challenging things was what we spend our time thinking about. Is your mind on God or on the world? Are you thinking about how to win more souls or earn more money? Jesus began this discourse with "No man can serve two masters!" What is the center of your life, for whatever it is will show up in your thinking?

□ Once walking through the twisted little streets of Kowloon in Hong Kong, I came upon a tattoo studio. In the window were displayed samples of the tattoos available. On the chest or arms you could have tattooed an anchor or flag or mermaid or whatever. But what struck me with force were three words that could be tattooed on one's flesh, Born to lose.

I entered the shop in astonishment and, pointing to those words, asked the Chinese tattoo artist, "Does anyone really have that terrible phrase, Born to lose, tattooed on his body?"

He replied, "Yes, sometimes."

"But," I said, "I just can't believe that anyone in his right mind would do that."

The Chinese man simply tapped his forehead and said in broken English, "Before tattoo on body, tattoo on mind."

-- Norman Vincent Peale in Power of the Plus Factor, in Christianity Today.

Each day of our lives should be spent praying for God's will to lead us as we go about earning a living, buying the needed clothing and food that our family needs. Much of America goes about worrying over food, shelter, clothing, jobs, etc... However, God wants our minds to be upon Him for He will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory.

Here are a few "desires" of Christ for His people.

- I. Jesus does not want us to worry about our life (24-27).
- A. What is the most important thing in your life?
- Jesus said that we cannot serve two masters.
 - God guides while the devil tries to control.
- B. What are your long-range goals for life?
- Jesus taught that, “Life was more than meat and the body more than raiment.”
 - Is God and His will, at the top of your desire?
- C. What do you consider to be your greatest resource?
- Jesus taught that the “Heavenly Father” takes care the birds and feeds them;
 - He said, “Are you not much better than a bird?”

If we are not careful, our thoughts will become mixed with the thought process of the world and not totally influenced by God.

□ A farmer went each week to the Farmers' Market to sell, among other things, the cottage cheese and apple butter made on his farm. He carried these in two large tubs, from which he ladled the cottage cheese or apple butter into smaller containers the customers brought. One day he got to the market and discovered he'd forgotten one ladle. He felt he had no choice but to use the one for both products. Before long he couldn't tell which was which.

That's the way it is when we try to dispense the good news of Christ using hearts, minds, and tongues too recently immersed in the coarseness and one-up-manship of the world. Nobody gets any nourishment.

Beth Landers, Waterloo, Ontario. Leadership, Vol. 5, no. 2.

II. He does not want us to think about our material needs (28-30).

A. He uses raiment as a point of reference to deal with material needs.

- He said, “Why take ye thought for raiment?”
- Only by understanding what Christ is dealing with would help us from asking, “is that not a dumb question?”

■ The story is told of Rose Greenhow, a Confederate spy during the Civil War, who tried to evade capture and the loss of her fortune by sewing the gold she had gained into the seams of her dress. But the ship she boarded sank, and the weight of the gold made it impossible for the life preserver to support her. She sank to the bottom with all her wealth. Dr. Pierce Harris, who told the story, pointed out that death did to her what it does to all of us, because we "cannot take it with us" when we die. But sometimes, we might add, it takes us with it!

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988), p. 339.

B. God wants us to understand that He has a plan for our lives.

- He points out the lilies and how they are beautifully clothed.
- Even though they are temporary God loves them enough to care for them.

C. We are important to Him.

- He said, “shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”
- What are we thinking? Have we fully put everything in God’s control?

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.

- He longs for that relationship like He had with Adam.

III. Jesus does not want us to waste time wondering like the world (31-33).

A. He wants us to realize that our heavenly Father knows what we have need of and He will take care of us.

- We must cast our cares upon Him and stop carrying them around so that our mind might be free to care for others.

□ There is a story of two Buddhist monks walking in a drenching thunderstorm. They came to a stream, and it was swollen out of its banks. A beautiful young Japanese woman in a kimono stood there wanting to get to the other side but was afraid of the currents. In characteristic Buddhist compassion, one of the monks said, "Can I help you?"

The woman said, "I need to cross this stream."

The monk picked her up, put her on his shoulder, carried her through the water, and put her down on the other side. He and his companion went on to the monastery.

That night his companion said to him, "I have a bone to pick with you. As Buddhist monks, we have taken vows not to look on a woman, much less touch her body. Back there by the river you did both."

The first monk said, "My brother, I put that woman down on the other side of the river. You're still carrying her in your mind."

-- John Claypool, "The Future and Forgetting," Preaching Today, Tape No. 109.

B. His plan for us, as Christians, is to "seek ye first the kingdom of God."

- We should come to the knowledge that seeking Him and His will first in our lives.
- This will initiate the blessings of God that will flood into our lives and "all these things shall be added unto you."

C. God desires for us to walk in His peace and provision.

- He does not want us to worry about tomorrow because He is already at work making things work together for your good.

Conclusion:

Jesus wanted above everything else that we put off the old man completely. Not just that we repent of sin but that we put on the mind of Christ. He wanted us to realize that He has a plan and He will make things to work together for your good no matter what happens along the way.

We need to realize today that we are allowing the 'Stinkin Thinkin' of the world to torpedo our joy and peace in God. He is the "good Shepherd" and His will for us is to rest in the security that "God is for us and who then can be against us."

Many in the church today seem to be oblivious to God's desire for their life. They 'work God in' to their busy hectic lives. This is not His will.

□ I believe a very large majority of churchgoers are merely unthinking, slumbering worshipers of an unknown God.

Charles H. Spurgeon in Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Vol. 11. Christianity Today, Vol. 40, no. 1.

God wants us to face this question about ourselves today. He wants us to deal with it and resolve it in our own minds and hearts.

□ D. L. Moody, the great American evangelist, once said, "If a man is stealing nuts and bolts from a railway track, and, in order to change him, you send him to college, at the end of his education, he will steal the whole railway track."

-- Ravi Zacharias, "The Lostness of Humankind," Preaching Today, Tape No. 118.

The only way you can change your 'Stinkin Thinkin' is by changing your heart, and the only way that can happen is when you allow Jesus to be Lord over everything in your life. Jesus once asked this question, "Lovest thou these more than me?" What is your answer today?