

GoDeeper



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP, FAMILY, OR IN YOUR PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY TIME.

Re:New| Pastor Steve Wells |01.24.2020
Replay message at: <http://www.northpointeFL.org/messages>

Read part of the article from Bible.org about guarding your mind with your small group or family. For the complete article visit this link: <https://bible.org/seriespage/6-strategy-six-guard-our-mind>.

Along with guarding our eyes and ears, we must also guard our mind--**2 Corinthians 10:4-5, Matthew 5:29-30**. In order to be holy and pure, both in heart and body, we must fight. War isn't easy. Our enemy is relentless in trying to conquer his prey, and lust is one of his most commonly used weapons. In this battle for our mind, Paul says we must "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." Satan always targets the mind—it is our primary battlefield. He bombards every believer's mind with sexual images and thoughts. He does this through the world system which he rules and his myriads of demons. He understands that if he can control the mind, he can control the body. So, if we are going to "learn to control our bodies in a way that is pure and honorable," (**1 Thess 4:4**) we must fight to control our mind. Satan's attack on our mind overlaps with his attacks on our eyes and ears. It is through the eyes and ears that input is given to the mind. Therefore, by guarding the first two, we guard the latter. However, that is not the only way we guard our mind. How else should we guard our mind?

1. In order to guard our mind, we must recognize ungodly thoughts and ideas by testing them against God's Word.

Read Psalm 19:7. The Hebrew word for "simple" has the meaning of "open-minded." "The ancient Jews described it as someone whose mind was like an open door: everything went in and everything went out." This person is gullible and will believe anything. His mind is open even to thoughts and images that should be rejected. However, David says that by filling the mind with God's Word, one becomes wise to discern what is not of God (**cf. Heb 5:14**). Wisdom in Scripture primarily refers to knowledge of God and obedience to him (**cf. Prov 9:10**). That is why Scripture describes the "fool" as one who says there is no God (**Psalm 14:1**).

A person who does not know the Word of God will have difficulty testing what is not good and therefore have difficulty protecting himself. His mind will continually be saturated by ungodly thoughts meant to control and destroy him. He will lack the power and discernment to close the door on sexual thoughts and many times will not only accept them but also cultivate them. If we are going to protect our mind, we must recognize what is not godly. When watching TV shows, listening to music, or engaging in risqué conversations that cultivate and stir lust, the simple accepts what pollutes his soul, while the wise recognizes what would dishonor God's temple (**1 Cor 6:19**).

2. In order to guard our mind, we must reject the ungodly by using God's Word.

While the simple opens the door, the wise closes the door. Again, this is done first by recognizing what is wrong and then using Truth to combat what is false and sinful. When Christ was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, he quoted Scripture to reject Satan and his lies. We should do the same. Arm yourself by memorizing Bible verses related to lust and purity such as:

Matthew 5:27-28 (ESV), 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 (ESV), 1 Thessalonians 4:2-8 (ESV)

3. In order to guard our mind, we may at times need to command the devil to leave in Jesus name.

Again, when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, he initially responded to the temptation with quoting Scripture, but ultimately he commanded the devil to leave--**Matthew 4:10-11**. Similarly, at times you may need to do this. When battles with lust, pornography, and illicit sex are especially difficult, we can be sure that the enemy has set up camp in these areas, and we may need to pray in authority over these demonic strongholds to be broken in the name of Jesus. Some struggle with this, arguing that authority over the demonic was exclusively for Christ and his apostles. However, I believe there are many evidences that demonstrate this is for every believer. For instance:

- Christ is our perfect model for everything in life, including spiritual warfare (**cf. Phil 2:5-11, Heb 12:2-4, 1 Peter 2:21-24**).
- Other believers commanded demons to leave throughout the New Testament--**16:18, Acts 8:6-7**
- Finally, Scripture indicates that Christ has given us his authority based on our union with him. **Ephesians 1:20-22, Ephesians 2:6, 1 Cor 6:3**

We have authority over the demonic just as the apostles and the early church, and we are called to conquer them with the spiritual weapons God has given us (**cf. Eph 6:10-19**). Unfortunately, many believers neglect this authority not only to their own detriment but also to the detriment of others. When Christ sent believers into the world to proclaim the gospel, he sent them in all the authority given to him (**Matt 28:18-20**). We need this authority not just to spread the gospel but also for spiritual warfare.

Christ's authority is important in battling lust because some strongholds and temptations are not just of the flesh, they are demonic. Like Christ in the wilderness, Paul, at times, recognized certain obstacles and temptations were not just of the flesh and of the world, but of the devil. (**1 Thessalonians 2:18**)

As we submit to God through his Word, prayer, and the ministry of other saints, we can resist the devil, and he will flee from us (**James 4:7**). However, at times, resistance may include commanding the demonic to leave in the name of Jesus as demonstrated by Christ and the early church. It is not God's will for us to live bound to lust and sexual immorality, and God has given us all the resources to walk in freedom, including his Word and his authority--**cf. 2 Peter 1:3, cf. Eph 5:25-27**.

Are you guarding your mind? Are you taking every thought captive and making it obedient to Christ? Are you filling your mind with God's Word? Are you resisting the devil's attacks so that he flees?

Reflection

1. Why is the mind so important in our battle for purity?
2. In what ways does the enemy bombard our mind with sexual images and thoughts?
3. How can a person tell when certain strongholds, especially sexual ones, are also demonic?
4. How should we resist the devil so he flees? In what ways is God calling you to better guard your mind?
5. What other questions or thoughts do you have about this section?
6. In what ways can you pray in response? Take a second to pray as the Lord leads.

The Church Family Campout is coming up! Set up your tent anytime after 3pm on Friday 1/29. Campfire & s'mores provided. Worship under the stars together at 8pm. Plan to have your tent packed by 11am Saturday 1/30. For complete details visit northpointeFL.Org/campout

