

# What do you spend your time thinking about?

Sermon by Pastor Diana J. Perkins

January 17, 2016

Yesterday, I turned on the radio and the Christian radio stations that I usually listen to was not coming in so I tuned in to MPBN as sometimes I get information concerning current events around the world. However, I was shocked at the program that was being aired. The person who was being interviewed was excited and motivated to turn the hearts of the American people away from the sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman to accepting and exploring alternate lifestyles. Within the three minutes or so that I listened, he boasted about how he gained attention and support from the White House concerning his endeavors and how far he has gone to reach his goals using modern technology to spread his message, especially to the youth who are estranged from their families because of their choices. I turned it off and sat and thought about the damage that is being done to peoples' lives in these trying times. God's Word commands us to protect our minds, for the things that we think about and meditate about feeds the soul and motivates us to make decisions that will determine how we live on earth and also our eternal destiny. Disobedience and rebellion to parents can have severe consequences.

I am going to read from the book of Ephesians chapter 4 beginning with verse 17. I am going to quote from the CEV version. "As a follower of the Lord, I order you to stop living like stupid, godless people. Their minds are in the dark and they are stubborn and ignorant and have missed out on the life that comes from God. They no longer have any feelings about what is right, and they are so greedy that they do all kinds of indecent things. But that isn't what you were taught about Jesus Christ. He is the truth, and you heard about him and learned about him. You were told that your foolish desires will destroy you and that you must give up your old way of life with all its bad habits. Let the Spirit change your way of thinking and make you into a new person. You were created to be like God and so you must please him and be truly holy."

People are confused and are stumbling around in darkness because the truth is being twisted and distorted and knowledge is being hidden from them. In Ephesians 6:10, Paul talks about putting on the whole armor of God so that when the spiritual warfare is over, we will continue to stand firm. He tells us that our battle is not with humans, but it is a spiritual battle against forces and authorities, against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world. Only those who have properly prepared themselves will be able to defend themselves against these evil spiritual powers. The first thing he mentions is truth. Let the truth be like a belt around your waist and let God's justice protect you like armor. Your desires to tell the good news about peace are like shoes on your feet. Use your faith like a shield so you will be able to stop the flaming arrows of the evil one. The helmet is God's saving power and the sword is the word of God that comes from the Spirit. He admonishes

**us never to stop praying by the power of the Spirit, especially for others. Paul asked people to pray for him and we need to pray for each other. Pray for those who are determined to spread the gospel in its purity and entirety. There is a battle going on in the spiritual world to hinder and destroy the truth of the Word of God the truth of God's word cannot enter into the ears of people to save their souls. Romans 10:17 reads like this: Faith comes by hearing and hearing from the word of God. It is interesting to continue reading that chapter for Paul asked the question, "Am I saying that Israel did not hear the word? No, they heard it, but rejected it." The Scriptures say that the message was told everywhere on earth and it was announced all over the world.**

**There were prophets who were fearless enough to spread the truth even when they faced persecution and threats of death. Isaiah stood firm and spoke God's word even though the word fell on deaf ears because people refused to listen. He prophesied that God would be found by people who were not looking for him and He would appear to the ones who were not asking about Him. The Gentiles would accept the simplicity and truth of the gospel when the Jews rejected their Savior.**

**Isaiah said of the people of Israel, "All day long the Lord has reached out to people who are stubborn and refuse to obey."**

**In Romans chapter 1 verse 16, Paul says he is proud of the gospel for it is God's powerful way of saving all people who have faith whether they are Jew or Gentile. The truth is that God accepts everyone who has faith for the Scripture says that the people God accepts because of their faith will live.**

**From heaven God shows how angry he is with the wicked and evil things that sinful people do in order to crush the truth. Even though we cannot see the eternal power and character of God, from the beginning of creation God has shown what these are like by all he has made. That is why all people are without excuse. They know about God but they don't honor him or even thank him. Their thoughts are useless and their stupid minds are in the dark. They claim to be wise, but they are fools. They refuse to worship God and they worship idols made in the images of people, birds, fish etc.**

**In verse 24 it says that because -of their deeds, God let the people go their own way. They did what they wanted to do and their filthy thoughts made them do shameful things with their bodies. They gave up the truth about God for a lie and they worshipped the creation rather than the Creator. God will be praised forever! Amen. If you continue reading this chapter you will find that women turned away from natural desires and did unnatural acts with women and men behaved the same way. This is God's punishment for people's foolish deeds. Because these people refused even to think about God, he let their useless**

**minds rule over them. That is why they do all sorts of indecent things. They are evil, wicked and greedy as well as mean in every possible way. These people don't respect their parents. They are stupid, unreliable and they don't have any love or pity for others. They know God has said that anyone who acts this way deserves to die, but they keep on doing evil things and they even encourage others to do them.**

**In Romans chapter 2, it speaks about those who are stubborn and who refuse to turn to God. There will come a day when God will show how angry he is and will judge the world with fairness. He will reward each of us for what we have done. To those who have patiently done what is good will receive glory, honor and immortality. But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness they will receive from the wrath of God. The Bible says that it is the goodness of God that leads people to repent.**

**If you read the account of the destruction of the earth during the flood from which Noah and his family were spared, you will notice that God took note that the thoughts and imaginations of the people of that day were wicked continually. See Genesis 6:5**

**In Psalm 19:14, King David wrote these words. "Let the words of my mouth, the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight Oh Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Proverbs 23:7 "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."**

**There is a story of a king who coveted some land that was near his palace. The story is found in 1 Kings 21. Naboth had inherited the vineyard from his ancestors and one day King Ahab took note of the piece of land. He asked Naboth to give him the land so he could plant a vegetable garden for he had been thinking about it. He offered to give Naboth a vineyard that was better than this one or if that wasn't suitable to him, he would pay him a sum of money for it. But Naboth wasn't interested in giving up the property as the Lord had given it to him as an inheritance from my fathers so he declined the offers.**

**Ahab was very unhappy with the response from Naboth and he went into his house with his head hung low, went to bed and refused to eat his supper. Naboth had made it clear that his family inheritance meant more to him than money and he wasn't about to lose it. Jezebel, his wife, asked him why his spirit was so sullen that he wouldn't even eat his food. He told her the refusal of Naboth concerning acquiring his property. Her reply was to take authority over Naboth for he was the king and get up, eat some food and be cheerful for she would take charge and would get the land for him without Naboth's consent.**

**She wrote letters in Ahab's name. sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the nobles of the city and they had a gathering where Naboth was seated in the seat of high honor and two scoundrels were placed before him who accused him of blaspheming God and the king. Then they took him out and stoned him and Ahab, upon hearing the news, took possession and claimed the property. And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, the Tishbite, telling him to arise and go to the vineyard and confront King Ahab. Elijah was to ask him "Have you murdered and also taken possession?" He obeyed and told King Ahab that in the same place that dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, the dogs would also lick up his blood. God is a just God and King Ahab allowed his thoughts to take him down the wrong path to the point that he didn't care what happened to Naboth as long as he got the land that he coveted. Thoughts are powerful! Take charge of your thoughts.**

**Philippians 4:8 tells us what things we should meditate and think about!**