

Who and What Controls Your Mind IV

Fred R. Coulter—December, 24, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. There are so many things now that are out there to get your attention. Just think what they have discovered when people go out and they get away from the electricity. They have no television, they have no cell phones, they have no regular phone. They're out away from everyone else and it's peaceful and it's quiet and you can enjoy yourself

At first when they go out there, they're bored, because there's nothing to do. But since they have to cut their own wood, make their own kindling, make their own clothes, talk to one another—otherwise they'll all become deaf mutes—once they've been out there for a while, then they hate to come back and get into the rat race again. If you go the airport, you'll see it as never before. People, almost everyone, walking along, using their smart phone, texting someone. You look at everyone out there waiting for a plane, everyone's got a computer on, everyone's got a phone they're working with. No one's talking to anyone. It just shows you how human beings are.

All of these things, all of the gadgets that we have, and all of the means of using them, *controls our mind*. Now it's pretty close to Christmas. As a matter of fact, that's tomorrow. I don't announce it because we're going to celebrate it, hope you understand that, but I bet if I asked you to sing some of the Christmas carols, though you haven't participated in Christmas for how long, I bet you could do it almost by heart—couldn't you? Have we been programmed?

You go into a store and you're walking around, all of a sudden an impulse hits you; you buy something. Was that your thought? Or did that come via the music? They had secretly programmed in non-audible words, but mind-receptive words, 'Don't steal, don't steal, no shoplifting.' Just by having those suggestions in the background of the music, they reduced the shoplifting.

Now today it doesn't make any difference. You've seen the ad where the guy goes into the department store and the grocery store, and he stacks his cart full and he stuffs it in his coat, in his pockets, in his pants. So he gets to the door and the clerk runs up and, 'Here, Mr. Jones, is your receipt.' They can track it. They're working on things to try and control the mind even much more than we have ever thought. IBM says they are close to being able to develop a computer where you don't have to have hands-on. All you need to do is sit there and think. You don't even have to say, 'Computer on.'

I wonder how the message is going to be received with all the evil thoughts flowing around in your head, especially in the world, because it says that *the imagination of man is only evil all the time* (Gen. 6). Let's see what else it says about the thoughts of men.

Psalm 94:11: "The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." Man cut off from God by himself is all together vanity.

I know this past week they've been having the marathon on the planet and the universe, just running it steady on the Animal Planet Channel. It showed some of the things out there in the universe. Showed some of the things in the ocean. The ocean is such a fantastic thing. All we do, we just see the top of it, and say, 'Oh, that's great. God created this ocean.' How does He maintain it? What does it do to the earth? We couldn't live on the earth unless there were the ocean and God had it with the currents and had it with the tides, everything like this. Then all the fish and all of the small little things.

It showed how sardines reproduce. They get great schools of sardines and they're all going around in a circle. Then all of a sudden the females start laying their eggs, just blowing them out into the water. Then the males start squirting out all their sperm everywhere. Looking down from an airplane, down on that part of the ocean, it looks like a great white cloud. There are millions and millions and millions of them. Then it shows all of the other fish coming in to eat them up. You think, 'Oh, boy, how do we get any fish out of the ocean?' It's incredible how many are out there. Then it shows various different fish how they reproduce and all of that. *God made it so fantastic!* Everyone in its own niche, and yet, man has the audacity to think that he can become like God. Well, the thoughts of man are vanity.

Proverbs 15:26: "The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD, but the *words of* the pure *are* pleasant words." Here is the whole point of the book of Proverbs. Everywhere in the book of Proverbs, we have right/wrong, good/evil, if/then. Just like we covered in the last segment, we have three *ifs*—*if, if, if*—and two *thens*—*then, then*. And how we need to seek God's way. The book of Proverbs is also written so that it is designed also for unconverted people so that they can have some knowledge of God and give them direction on how to program their mind with the Word of God. Everything that you do from birth on programs your mind. Our minds are what are called very plastic.

We can actually change the neural connections by training and discipline.

They've even found that in a case of one woman they had to take out one half of her brain. When you take out the left half, the right half of the body virtually goes dead, because the left hemisphere controls the right side of your body. The right hemisphere controls the left side of your body. Over a period of time they were able to take that one half brain and re-program it by training and by therapy and by exercise so she could then move her limbs and walk and everything.

They've also found with babies that it's very important that they crawl. For a while they thought, 'Oh, boy, we'll help them walk.' So they got these little walkers that they would get in. Instead of crawling they would scoot along in the walkers. What they found out was that it affected the brain and their ability to read and remember when they got to school. They had a re-programming of their brain and they had a six-week course of twelve-year olds crawling. So crawling is necessary.

Our brain then can be programmed. This is why the book of Proverbs so that our brain can be programmed to know right from wrong, good from evil. Now today they're finding that with the college students they haven't been taught any morals, all through school. Truth is relevant. Truth is what one person will believe, but there's truth that another person will believe. There's no right, there's no wrong. Just as long as they get a benefit. Just like the Bible says, the wicked have to forsake their way.

Proverbs 16:1: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the LORD.... [In other words, God gave us this ability. But here's what happens when man is cut off from God.] ...All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes... [a man or a woman] ...but the LORD weighs the spirits" (vs 1-2). That is, the spirit that men and women have.

Have you had a hard time controlling something? Have you had a hard time getting a thought out of your mind? We've talked about that before, with the two sermons, *The Washing of the Water by the Word*.

- You need the Word of God, which is Truth, to overcome the carnal mind, which is deceitful.
- You need the commandments.
- You need the statutes.
- You need the judgments of God.
- You need everything about God's way so that your mind can function the way that God intends it to

—because He's given us free moral agency. Unless we train our mind to think properly, we're going to make wrong choices.

Verse 2: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes... [however, the correction comes]: ...Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established" (vs 2-3). That's exactly what God wants us to do.

This is why He gives other instruction here, v 6: "By mercy and Truth iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the LORD *men* turn away from evil." The only way you're going to do it is

- love God
- fear Him
- keep His commandments

That's how we're made. Yes, men cut off from God can think they can go out and do anything they want to. They can choose to do whatever they want to, but is it going to work? All the influences that we have today have really created the problems that we're looking at in this society.

But here is a promise from God, v 7: "When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Then you come down here to v 9: "A man's heart devises his way, but the LORD directs his steps." That is, if he does something that God asks every one of us to do. Let's see what that is.

- God will bless us
- God will be with us
- God will do the things to give us the right thoughts

especially having the Spirit of God. But even those without the Spirit of God, if they discipline themselves with the Word of God, they will be able to do quite well. They will be able to avoid evil. These are people who we would call upright in the society.

It's like one man found a whole bag of money that one of the Brinks trucks dropped and he turned it in. He did the right thing. When the news of that got on a talk program, a lot of people called in and said, 'Well, why did he do that? He should have kept it.' No! Even God says in the Old Testament that if your neighbor's ox gets out and you know it's his and you bring it into your property, then you let him know his ox is here and you give it back to him.

Here's the key on how to keep your mind daily. This is why prayer and study. This is why growing and overcoming. Isaiah 55:6: "Seek the LORD while He may be found... [He *can* be found!] ...call upon Him while He is near... [there is a requirement] ...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return

to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD" (vs 6-8). God wants us to learn to think like He does, with His character. Isn't that greater than anything that we can come up with ourselves? *Yes, indeed!*

Here's why, v 9: "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (v 9). That's how we return to God.

Let's see some other Proverbs concerning thoughts and what we need to do. I know when I began studying the Bible, now 52 years, one of the first things I did, and I didn't know what I'm preaching now, but I thought I'll study the book of Proverbs. That's what I did. I spent an hour every day studying Proverbs. I had a whole bunch of 3 by 5 cards and I made notes of the Scriptures, went by topic.

Proverbs 12:5: "The thoughts of the righteous *are* right; the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit. The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them" (vs 5-6).

Notice how quick these Proverbs are. What it does in reading and studying the Proverbs, it helps program your mind and it helps get things in a right perspective.

Proverbs 21:5: "The plans of the diligent *tend* only to plenty, but everyone *who* is hasty, only to poverty. The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro by those who seek death" (vs 5-6).

As I mentioned before, if you have a chance since tomorrow is going to be Christmas day, and by the time you get the video you'll be a week away, but it'll be New Years Day by that time, you go ahead and go on CNBC and watch the programs on *American Greed* and see all the plots and schemes. It exposes a lot of them on Wall Street and how they swindle, how they cheat, how they lie, how they present false books for the financial overseers to look at. It's really something what they do.

It also showed one program that I watched on the world's most famous jewel thief. He stole from some of the leading women in the world, like Liz Taylor and Zsa Zsa Gabor. He'd find out where they were. He could get into any apartment. He could scale any high tower building and he would know where to go. He would know how to get them. The police, when they got him, reduced his sentence if he would tell them how he did it, because they could never figure it out.

But here it is right there, v 6: "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro by those who seek death." (v 6).

These Proverbs, especially the first seven or eight, are the most important. Here's a good example of how the Proverbs give us warning. Let's come back here to chapter three for just a minute. What I want to do is read the first two words in

- v 27: "Do not..."
- v 28: "Do not..."
- v 29: "Do not..."
- v 30: "Do not..."
- v 31: "Do not..."

So you have 5 'Do not's' in a row. This is exactly what is needed for people to turn from evil and to do what is good

Verse 27: "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do *it*... [When someone does well, let them know.] ...Do not say to your neighbor, 'Go and come back again, and tomorrow I will give,' when you have it with you" (vs 27-28). God says, 'Give and it will be given back to you, patted down, jammed together, flowing over.'

Verse 29: "Do not plan evil against your neighbor since he dwells trustingly by you: Do not strive with a man without cause if he has done you no harm. Do not envy the oppressor, and choose none of his ways" (vs 29-31).

Come over here to the whole key of this series, Proverbs 4:23: "Above all guard the door of your mind with diligence..." We have so many things coming at us—visually, audio, inaudible. Right here in this room, right now, we have all of the frequencies of all the radio stations that are in this area. We have all the frequencies of all of the television stations that are not on cable.

We don't know how many other frequencies there are with that, but those things are there. We don't know they're there. The only way we know is we have a radio and we dial in. You have a receptor that responds to the wave that is sent out. We've got the waves from the light here. We have the waves, the sound from what we're doing here. We're recording it. All of these things you don't get when you're out in the wilderness, like we started out with.

- out there you'll hear the birds
- out there you'll see the stars
- out there you'll see the animals
- out there you have to work
- out there you've got to pull the weeds
- and you have to plant your food

Living where we live now we've got to "...guard the door of your minds with diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (v 23).

- the very substance of how we think
- what motivates us
- our values
- our decisions
- how we love
- how we hate

all of these things are out there. And isn't it amazing that in the age when we have most of the things that are against us, what do we have? *The whole Bible!*

We will see, a little later on, with the Word of God and with the Spirit of God, we are able to be led of the Holy Spirit so that we in our free moral agency choose what is right. God is not going to make us do anything. He will lead us, if we choose. He will answer our prayers, if we seek Him. But He's not going to come down and make us do a single solitary thing. *We have to choose!*

Verse 1: "O children... [Proverbs is good for children] ...hear the instruction of a father..." They all have to be reminded of this because I know and you know, I did and you did, when you were teenagers and were able to get out of the house, get away from your folks, get around your friends, you did things that you knew your parents wouldn't want you to do. Everyone has done that—right? I did, you did. have never talked to someone who was perfect as a child.

I So listen, v 2: "For I give you good doctrine; do not forsake my law, For I was my father's son, tender and the only *beloved* in the sight of my mother" (vs 2-3). This is Solomon writing here, referring to King David and his mother, Bathsheba.

Verse 4: "He also taught me, and said to me, 'Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live.'" Where do we find that? We covered that—didn't we? *Yes, we did!* (1-Chron. 28), especially when it came time for David to give up the ghost.

1-Chronicles 28:20: "And David said to Solomon his son, 'Be strong and of good courage, and do it. Do not fear, nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, *even my God, will be with you.* He will not fail you nor forsake you until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.'"

Come back here to v 9 and let's see what he said before that. This is very interesting, because Solomon is an example of having a father who taught him what was right, told him to keep the commandments of God, and he was the one to

oversee the building of the temple. And what happened to him later on? *He turned his back!*

But here's what he told him, v 9: "And you, Solomon my son, acknowledge the God of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind..." This is how we receive the blessings of God. Not doing it reluctantly, 'Okay, I'll do it because you say so.' I remember saying that to my parents once in a while when they told me to do something, 'Okay, I'll do it cause you say so.' How's that for an attitude?

"...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. If you seek Him... [Doesn't this sound like Isa. 55? And this was way before Isa. 55 was written.] ...seek Him, He will be found by you... [notice how this is like the Proverbs] ...But if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.... [The very first part of the last warning that David gave Solomon he forgot and did the opposite. Isn't that amazing?] ...Take heed now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and do *it*" (vs 9-10).

It's amazing, because the Bible is always up to date in every age. There's nothing old fashioned about it. The book of Revelation ties in all of the sophisticated technology that we have today, that they're going to use it. This is the book that tells us

- how to get our lives squared around
- how to find God
- who Jesus Christ is
- why He came
- why we need Him
- why we need to keep the commandments of God

Everything that we need! Then down through time as our lives go on—yes, we're going to have correction as we've seen it—God is able to guide us and direct us if we follow Him. Some of the travel will be a little difficult, but God is always there, because He won't forsake us. So Solomon did not live up to Prov. 4:1-4.

Verse 5: "Get wisdom... [He did. He was the wisest man the world has ever seen.] ...get understanding; forget *it* not, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she shall keep you... [That is, wisdom always referred to in the feminine gender.] ...love her, and she shall preserve you. Wisdom *is* the principal thing; get wisdom; and with all your getting get understanding" (vs 5-7). A lifelong education in the words and the way of God that

- grows deeper
- builds one upon another
- grows more profound

I've been studying the Bible for 52 years and preaching for about 50 years and I'm still learning from it; still learning from the Word of God. I know that in reading and studying, I'll be reading along and, 'Oh, that goes with this one. Oh, that goes with this one.'

Well, here we find it, v 8: "Exalt her, and she shall promote you; she shall bring you honor when you embrace her. She shall place upon your head a garland of grace; she shall bestow upon you a crown of glory" (vs 8-9).

As we read these things, think about the wisdom and knowledge and understanding of growing and overcoming to become qualified for the first resurrection. Think about what God is going to do at the resurrection. Are we not going to have a crown of life? *Yes!* We're even going to have a new name. Living eternally, you've got to have a new name. You can't have the old one. That was just temporary. That's for this life. So when someone says, 'Who are you?' You tell them who you are. But when you're resurrected from the dead and Christ gives you a new name, it's going to be quite something—isn't it? I wonder what that's going to be like, the ceremony of passing out the new names.

Verse 10: "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of your life *shall be* many." No one wants to die young. Anybody here been confronted with death or the possibility of death? *Yes, indeed!* Did you want to die? Were you in a car wreck and thought you were going to die? If you were, you can remember what happened.

I remember Dolores was in a car wreck and the car rolled over and she was left hanging upside down in the car. Remember that ad with Nationwide? You know, *Nationwide is on your side*. There was Dolores, Nationwide wasn't anywhere in sight. She came home and said, 'Oh, Dad, don't be mad.' *What happened?* She said, 'I wrecked the car.' I said, 'Are you all right?' Even in those, God spares us—right? *Yes, so we can learn the lessons!*

Verse 11: "I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in the right paths." How are we to be led today? '*As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.*' Just like wisdom. You have to choose wisdom. It's not going to come and force itself upon you and say, 'I'm wisdom, here, put this hat on. Are you smarter now?' *No, you have to choose it!* God wants us to exercise our minds.

Verse 12: "When you go, your steps shall not be hampered, and when you run, you shall not stumble.... [at my age I need that] ...Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; keep her, for she *is* your life.... [Notice, we've all of these things what God is going to do for you.] (Notice what happens here

next): ...Enter not into the path of the wicked... [Isn't that what Solomon did? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and go not in the way of evil *men*. Avoid it; do not go in it; turn from it, and pass on!.... [Because you're not going to miss anything except trouble.] ...For they do not sleep except when they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away unless they cause *some* to fall" (vs 12-16). You take these verses that we've just covered and watch some of the specials on National Geographic or History Channel about gangs. That's it right there.

Verse 17: "For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence." This is why all young people need to be taught. This is why a lot of the influence of the movies and media and television and music, and things, pressing upon their minds, leads them to disobedience, because this is the beat of Satan the devil.

Those who get into music, you need to be careful that you don't get into music that scrambles the brain—rock music, rap music, whatever other kind of music that they have. And it all started with the Beatles and it started with the wrong beat. What happens, it affects the mind just like a sound wave reflects on the speaker. You know how the speaker goes like this when the sound waves come through it. Well it reflects on the mind and it instills rebellion. Then they have the music amplified so much, the sound waves literally go through your whole body. I know one of the last movies I went to they had the music so loud; it was blasting and pounding right through everything. When I got out of that movie I was fit to be tied. I could hardly endure it. I almost got up and walked out, but I didn't.

Think of what it does when people watch moves, watch television, watch DVDs. Oh, now for Netflix, \$8 a month you can download 10 movies for a month, all you want. All of the movies now are more and more occult, more and more satanic, more and more transhumanism, as we covered in the series on *Transhumanism*.

Do this when you're watching television: look at the ads. Is there transhumanism involved? Big strong man, football, that's what they have now, have them all dressed up. Then they have several of those. You watch Walt Disney, what do they have? They have chimpanzees speaking. Then they have the ape world run loose. *Transhumanism!* 'Oop, we got the wrong genes, now they're all killers.' Then you go to Disneyland, what do you have? Mermaids, *transhumanism*—huh? Animals that speak, and all of that sort of thing.

Notice the difference right here in v 18 and this is why Proverbs is so good. Goes along, it defines evil, tells you what is wrong, tells you don't

do it, then gives you blessing and rewards for doing what is right, v 18: “But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day.” Growing and changing and overcoming.

Then the opposite: “The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble” (v 19). We’ll finish chapter four and then we’ll get into the New Testament on ***how God solves the problem of the wickedness of the human mind.*** How that’s where conversion takes place. The converted behavior is a reflection of a converted mind.

Verse 20: “My son, attend to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart, For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh” (vs 20-22). And I cannot emphasize enough, as we have covered concerning emotions and healing, that if you get into emotional thinking and you get into negative emotional thinking and you brew it up, stew it up, work it over in your mind.

I’ve seen this over and over again. Those who are bitter and hateful get sick quicker. *You cannot hold evil in your mind!* That’s why we’re to pray every day for forgiveness. *You cannot hold evil in your mind without souring your whole body!* Because what happens when you have evil thoughts and you’re holding bitterness and anger and hatred and jealousy and envy and the works of the flesh, what that does, your mind puts into your bloodstream toxic chemical responses to your thoughts. They know that it does.

This is why he says here: “...health to all their flesh.... [your body] ...Above all **guard the door of your mind with diligence**, for out of it are the issues of life.”

Notice how he ends this chapter, the same way. This is why Proverbs are so fantastic. Verse 24: “Put away from you a deceitful mouth... [Do we have a deceitful heart above all things? Did Paul say, lie not one to another? *Yes, he did!* Even converted people we have to overcome that.] ...and devious lips put far from you. Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be established*” (vs 24-26). Isn’t that interesting?

Proverbs 16:3. Let’s see the difference here: “Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.”

That goes right here with Proverbs 4:26: “Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be established*. Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil” (vs 26-27).

All of this takes

- ***thinking***, thinking with the Word of God
- ***choices***, so that you make the right choices

and don’t get into the habit of getting into wrong choices. That’s how you ***guard the door of your mind!***

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Now let’s see God’s solution to the evil in the heart. In addition to programming our minds, we need something else that is done so it can become permanent. Here is what God starts with; God’s plan begins with the solution of the carnal mind. The law of sin and death: How do you overcome that? It’s not removed, but we can overcome it. One thing for sure, if you don’t have the Spirit of God, *you cannot overcome the law of sin and death.* You may be able to discipline yourself. You may be able to keep the commandments in the letter of the law, but you cannot overcome the evil that is within, because something has to happen.

Here is what it is without the Spirit of God. Mark 7:21: “For from within, out of the hearts of men...” This is why ***we are to guard the door of our mind and our heart.*** Not only coming from within, but how does it get in there in the first place so it comes out? Today we have so much of it.

Verse 21: “For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders.” Starts right out—sex problems right off. That’s the entrance that Satan has. That is one of the biggest problems of the human race. Here in America, they’re taking things down, ***down, down.*** They have found out that sex education in the schools is not good enough for the kids, so now they’re going online to learn more about sex through pornography.

Once you get rid of God, once you get rid of the commandments of God, Satan is right there to take everything down, ***down, down.*** Dolores and I were commenting—because there are so many pedophiles out there—that sooner or later there are going to be so many of them. Then the majority of people will say, ‘Well, that’s okay.’ ***That’s how Satan destroys people!*** First entrance is sex.

I’ve got a book that is called, *Sex on the Brain*. It shows that people inwardly have many thoughts a day concerning sex. Think what it is if they’re popping online to watch pornography. Think what it is when they’re texting 12-year-olds, 13-year-olds, 14-year-olds setting up rendezvous. Think of what is happening.

This has happened in every society. This is absolutely nothing new, but it’s new to this nation from the point of view that we started out this nation based upon the Bible and God. But the big problem

was we denied Him concerning the Sabbath. And *that became the entrance to take it down*, to bring in false doctrine. God's plan, the Sabbath is part of it. It's not the whole thing, that's part of it, but God's plan is to change the human mind, to convert it. And here's what has to change:

Verse 22: "Thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these things go forth from within, and **these defile a man**" (vs 22-23). In other words, these are the sins. All of these sins come almost naturally, because of *the law of sin and death*.

What happens? How is this changed? *It's changed, because God has given penalties for sin!* Every time you sin, there's a penalty, whether you realize it or not. Pretty soon the penalties accumulate and you sin more and more. You get into a mental state of denial and you lie to yourself; you lie to other people. Then one day you get real miserable. One day you wonder, what's happening to my life? One day, even those who don't believe in God, or hadn't believed in God, start crying out to God because it's so miserable.

Then God gives you an opportunity. If you want out of your mess, you turn to God. If you want out of the dead-end that you have boxed yourself into, you turn to God. How do you do that? *By repentance!* Let's see how important repentance is. It's required of all of us, because we're all sinners. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,' therefore, we've got to repent. God is the One Who leads us to repentance. A lot of people are sorry for what they do. They don't want to suffer the penalty that they're going to go through, especially if they've gotten caught by the law.

Now I was watching *American Greed* just the other day. There were some young men who went to Mexico with counterfeit \$100 bills, intending to buy out Mexico and come home loaded with goodies. They got caught! I think that program is entitled *In Prison Abroad*. The Mexicans were right on top of it. They bought something from a storeowner. The storeowner chased them, they were driving in their car. Pretty soon they didn't see the storeowner's car. What happened was the storeowner went, called the police, and said, 'There's this vehicle that is coming and I have a counterfeit \$100 bill. It's no good.'

So, it was just a two-lane road and it came to a little town and guess what greeted them when they got into the town? *A police car and a police pickup blocking the road!* 'Oh, Senor, where are you from? How long have you been here?' *'No, that's not true. We didn't have it.'* They searched the car, guess what they found? *About 6 or 8 of these counterfeit*

\$100 bills! 'Oh, where did those come from?' 'Where are you staying?' *We just got here!* So, they're searching the car and right up on the dashboard, here's a little parking ticket—La Grande Hotel. Guess what they found there? *A big stash of counterfeit \$100 bills!* And they couldn't believe this is happening. 'How could this happen?'

I don't know how sorrowful they were, but they got big time in Mexico. *Yes, indeed!* There comes a point and they got caught. How much time they served? *Don't know!* Now I suppose if they were sitting in jail they had some second thoughts. I don't know if they repented to God or not. I didn't finish the rest of the story of when they got out. But some of them can spend 10-14 years in jail overseas.

Every American traveling overseas can become a target of men who want you to bring back some cocaine or heroin. There have been those who have persuaded gullible people to do so. That's why, ***never consent to anything that is wrong!*** Going to get you in trouble. Because our nature is law of sin and death and we're given to do these things, like it says there in Mark 7

Here's what Jesus said, Luke 13:1: "Now at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." Now isn't it true, when something happens you say, 'Oh, they deserved that.' Really? What are your sins?

Verse 2: "And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish' (vs 2-3). *The only way back to God is to repent!* And if you start repenting, God will hear you, but you better be sincere. Not just, 'Oh, save me from this mess.' Then you get out of the mess and you turn around and do the same thing. That's not going to work.

Verse 4: "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell... [an accident] ...and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish'" (vs 4-5). It's repentance!

Let's see what happens with repentance. God is involved. Remember where it says there that when one sinner repents the angels of heaven rejoice. God knows! He even knows when a sparrow falls. First you recognize evil, you're sorry. If you want to get back to God, then you need to call out to God. Rom. 1 talks about how the societies degenerate and get into evil.

Then Romans 2:1 says: "Therefore you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges

another...” Isn’t that happens? Isn’t that what Jesus was talking about here. ‘Do you suppose that these were sinners above others? No, I tell you.’

“...you are condemning your own self; for you who judge *another* are doing the same things” (v 1). Especially if you’re unconverted and the law of sin and death has not been taken care of through repentance and baptism, you’re going to do the same thing.

Paul then explains the process as it comes along here, v 2: “But we know that the judgment of God is according to Truth...” God is always going to judge you according to the Truth. What is Truth?

- Your commandments
- Your laws
- Your statutes
- Your judgment

Who is Truth? Jesus said, ‘***I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.***’

“...according to Truth upon those who commit such things.... [Everything that’s listed here in chapter one.] ...Now, do you think yourself, O man, whoever is judging those who commit such things, and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?” (vs 2-4). Once you start repenting, seeing what is wrong, and you’re crying out to God, and you really are sincere and mean it, then God is going to *lead* you to further repentance. God is going to help you understand what you need to understand.

Let’s see what happens to those who won’t, v 5: “But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God’s righteous judgment, Who will render to each one according to his own works” (vs 5-6). Is that not fair judgment? *Yes, it is!* God is going to take care of it. *Yes!*

Verse 7: “On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life.” God says

- Are you fed up with what this is?
- Are you fed up with your life?
- Do you want to change?
- Do you want to overcome this?

I’ll help you overcome it, but you have to come to Me,’ God says.

- If you come to Me, I’ll come to you.
 - If you cry out to Me, I will hear you.
 - If you repent of your sins, I’ll forgive you
- but you need to go on beyond that.’

Verse 8: “On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the* Jew first, and of *the* Greek” (vs 8-9). All you have to do is read the book of Revelation and understand that. All you have to do is read any of the Prophets and understand that.

But to those who are seeking God, v 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek.” How does God forgive?

Remember what did Jesus say? ***Every sin that a man has committed will be forgiven. Every blasphemy against the Son of man will be forgiven, except the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.*** That is rejecting God and that is rejecting God’s leading with the Holy Spirit to bring you to repentance.

There could not be anything more profound than this chapter two in the book of Acts. Here the Holy Spirit was poured out. They heard them speaking in their languages where all of the Jews and the proselytes had come from, in their own language the wonderful works of God. Fantastic thing; never happened before. Only seven weeks before, Jesus Christ was crucified. A lot of them were right there cheering on, ‘Get rid of him.’ Then Peter gave this sermon and he said, ‘*You* have killed the Author of life.’

Acts 2:36: “Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified...” Think about those who were out there who were saying, ‘Crucify Him! Crucify Him!’ Now they’re hearing Peter say this. What do you think that’s going to do to them? It caused a lot of them to repent, turn to God. *God is willing to forgive!*

“...Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now after hearing this, they were cut to the heart...” (vs 36-37). There has to be

- a change of heart
- a change of mind
- a desiring to have all the evil and sin that you have committed wiped away.

God will do that because He knows that He has given us, within us, human nature, the law of sin and death. Of and by ourselves we’re headed straight for death, but God is there through Christ to redeem us and He loves us. That’s why He sent Jesus Christ.

It has to be an operation by faith. You have to believe what God has said that if you repent of your sins, ***He will forgive you!*** He is the living God. He is the One Who knows all our thoughts, so this is really quite a powerful thing here. Cut to the heart. Another place it says there in Luke 15 about the

prodigal son. Right in the middle of feeding the swine and starvation, they wouldn't even give him anything to eat, what does it say there? **And when he came to himself.** So, when we're cut to the heart, we come to ourselves and we acknowledge what we have done, not to people, but *to God and God is One Who forgives!*

"...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?'.... [This is something, you said, 'You're all a bunch of murderers.'] ...Then Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (vs 37-38).

That is going to bring conversion! When you receive the Holy Spirit, something happens to your mind and to your heart that you can never do without turning to God. You can never do unless you do it God's way. You cannot turn to God and say, 'Oh, God, forgive me. Oh, by the way, the preacher says come to church on Sunday.' Now they have it to where people in Protestantism really don't even know what they're doing.

Are you a sinner? *Everyone's going to say yes!* 'Do you believe in Jesus? *Yes!* Especially if you're standing there in a Sunday-keeping Christian church. You want your sins forgiven? *Yes!* Do you accept Jesus? *Yes!* You're saved.' No baptism, none! baptism is significant. That's the burying of the old self. You must receive the Holy Spirit after you have been baptized, so that's what happened here.

Verse 39^[transcriber's correction]: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call." So when God reaches down and leads you to repentance, He is *calling you*, and in calling you, you have to answer.

Verse 40: "And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation.'" If he thought that was a perverse generation, I wonder what Peter would think if he were resurrected today and saw this generation.

Verse 41: "Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized... [That is, they repented and had joy for the fact that they had their sins forgiven.] ...and about **three thousand** souls were added that day." How many were there at Pentecost? I suppose they could hold 50,000-60,000 there in the court.

What happens with baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit? We have the spirit of man, which we have already covered, and how the Spirit of God unites with our spirit. Let's come to Colossians 2, and let's see how it is defined here. Something happens. *There must be a change of mind*

and heart with the receiving of the Holy Spirit that is that causes conversion, though it's just a start when you receive the Holy Spirit. But it is a change and that change is necessary in order for you to grow in grace and knowledge and become a son or daughter of God at the resurrection. This is called the *circumcision of the heart*.

Colossians 2:11, concerning Christ. "In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands... [The covenant with Israel was circumcision of the flesh, but that didn't change the heart.] ...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."

God does something to you at the point of receiving the Holy Spirit sending His Spirit to unite with the spirit of your mind. It's called *circumcision of the heart*. It takes away the hardness and rebellion and defiance against God, because you've repented and you're humble and you're yielded to God and you want to go God's way.

Notice how this is accomplished, v 12: "Having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." This is affected by baptism and you enter into covenant. Just like there was the covenant of circumcision with Abraham, for the promise of the land, now this is a covenant for *the promise of eternal life and the Kingdom of God*. But it has to be of the mind and of the heart from *within*.

Verse 13: "For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses." Every one of them blotted out; new start. Now we can begin to have our minds reprogrammed with the Spirit of God, with the Word of God, to have it written in our hearts and in our minds so everything that we study in the Old Testament—like we have with the book of Proverbs—also has a spiritual application and fulfillment through the Spirit of God. Now everything is raised to a higher level.

"...made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (vs 13-14). Jesus was the sin of the whole world, every human being. ***As God manifested in the flesh, His sacrifice covers all human beings***—past, present and future. That's why it had to be God.

Now let's come back to Romans 2 and see what happens with this *circumcision of the heart*. This takes away the carnal mind bit-y-it. Fr the first time in our lives we have a power from God we did not have:

- to help us with our choices to choose God's way
- to help us with our choices to love God
- to keep His commandments

Not only to keep them in the letter, but to keep them in the Spirit, so that from *within*, instead of proceeding all the evil thoughts and adultery and fornication and murders and thefts and covetousness, and all of this, now proceed

- love
- faith
- joy
- understanding
- loving obedience
- converted mind
- converted heart

—given the extra strength now so we can ***guard the door of our mind***. Paul makes it very clear here showing the difference, it's talking to the Jews and they still boast. But until they accept Jesus Christ all their boasting is in vain.

Romans 2:21: “You then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, ‘Do not steal,’ are you stealing? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ are you committing adultery?” (vs 21-22). Now let's apply this to those who have the Spirit of God, are in the Church of God. You can't be living the way of the world any longer. That's why God brings judgment upon His Church. All you have to do is read Rev. 2 and 3, and you will see. All you have to do is remember what happened in the past: We became like the world.

“...You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law?” (vs 22-23). You can have the law and the letter of the law, but unless you have it in your heart and in your mind and conversion, having it *outside* doesn't change the *inside*. That's why the book of Proverbs is to program the mind, to get you thinking correctly. We're born in this world with *the law of sin and death* in us, but we have no thought process. We learn that! And when we live in the world, we learn the wrong way.

Verse 23: “You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law? For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision” (vs 23-25)—likewise, spiritually. You cannot go back into the world and live the way the world lives, because then sooner or later the Spirit of God will withdraw, if you do not follow that lead of God's Spirit to repent.

Verse 26: “Therefore, if the uncircumcised... [in the flesh] ...are keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, are a transgressor of *the* law?... [He's talking about converted Gentiles.] (here's the key): ...For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh” (vs 26-28). It doesn't change the heart and mind.

- you still have a deceitful nature
- you still have a carnal mind
- you are still hostile to the ways of God, to the laws of God

Were the Jews that way? *Yes, indeed!* They are to this day. Read Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. How good were the Jews? Having the law, having the priesthood, having the temple, having the sacrifices, and all of that, it did them no good, because they didn't believe God and have faith in Him. And they didn't have the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 29: “Rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart... [accomplished by *baptism and receiving of the Holy Spirit*] ...and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.”

Let's see what we are to do, and let's see how God wants us to participate with His Spirit, with His Word in overcoming. The evil, though our hearts are circumcised, is not sucked out of our brain. It has to be overcome *from within* with God's Spirit, and here's how that is done:

Ephesians 4:21: “If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the* truth in Jesus: That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man... [You put in the Spirit of God by repentance and baptism, God puts it in. Then you start putting off the old way, the old thoughts, the old self.] ...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (vs 21-23).

God has made our minds so that our mind can be renewed every single day. One of the important things to understand is this. God expects us to use our mind. He made our mind to be used for the right purpose. We're seeing what the world is doing. We're seeing how they want to destroy the creation of God when they think they're improving it. Verse 23: “And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (vs 23-24). And all of

that comes with prayer and study and living, overcoming, growing continuously.

Paul goes on to say how to do it. When you find you do something you shouldn't do, repent of it and put it away. Some days you'll have little bloopers, other days you'll have big bloopers. Other days maybe even the floor may fall out! But you can still recover.

Verse 24: "And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created... [He is creating in us. That's *the secret of God*, His workmanship creating in us. The world can't see that, but God is working in us.] ...in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another" (vs 24-25). We need to think with the Truth, *the Truth, the Truth!* Which then is deductive thinking. Then we bring in the emotions after that. You can't do this just emotionally.

1. first you have to recognize what the problem is
2. understand the sin
3. go to God and ask forgiveness
4. then have the strength of God's Spirit to begin to overcome it

It may you a while to overcome it, but you can.

Verse 26: "When you become angry, do not sin..." That's a hard one. That is a difficult one. Most of the time when I get angry I have to repent. I'm sure you do. I don't know if I have really had 'righteous indignation' that was so hot that I could say this was really good.

Here's how you *guard the door of your mind and your emotions*: "...Do not let the sun go down on your anger.... [—or your bitterness, or your hostility, or your disappointment, or your depression, or whatever it is.] ...Neither give place to the devil" (vs 26-27). What does this do? This tells us if we don't do what he says up here, the devil is going to come along and say, 'Hello, I'm back. Wouldn't you like a benefit?'

Verse 28: "Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with his hands, working at what is good, so that he may impart something to the one who has need. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth... [How's that for a project to overcome?] ...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And **grieve** not... [do not vex or that is frustrate or quench] ...the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption" (vs 28-30). We *vex* God's Spirit when are at cross-purposes with our behavior and sin.

Notice, all of these things he's talking to converted people. They need to overcome. Verse 31: "Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice.... [replace that with this]: ...and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you" (vs 31-32).

This tells us what to do. In Eph. 4 it tells us what not to do. Whenever you come across something not to do, then find out what to do. Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children.... [How's that for a high goal? How is that for a high standard?] ...And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (vs 1-2). Then he says again avoid all these things.

That's why guard—above all—*guard the door of your mind and be diligent to do so, for out of it are the issues of life!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 94:11
- 2) Proverbs 15:26
- 3) Proverbs 16:1-3, 6-7, 9
- 4) Isaiah 55:6-9
- 5) Proverbs 12:5-6
- 6) Proverbs 21:5-6
- 7) Proverbs 3:27-31
- 8) Proverbs 4:23, 1-4
- 9) 1-Chronicles 28:20, 9-10
- 10) Proverbs 4:5-26
- 11) Proverbs 16:3
- 12) Proverbs 4:26-27
- 13) Mark 7:21-23
- 14) Luke 13:1-5
- 15) Romans 2:1-10
- 16) Acts 2:36-41
- 17) Colossians 2:11-14
- 18) Romans 2:21-29
- 19) Ephesians 4:21-32
- 20) Ephesians 5:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 6
- Luke 15
- Revelation 2, 3

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Washing of the Water by the Word*
- *Transhumanism*

Book: *Sex on the Brain: The Biological Differences Between Men and Women* by Deborah Blum

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