

199331 renewingofthemind siple rom8v12

12 verses 1 and 2, Romans chapter 12 verses 1 and 2. I do not remember when I learned verse 1. I sort of remember when I learned verse 2 but I learned verse 1 sometime way back there as a teenager when I was memorizing various important scripture verses and I think many many Christians have learned verse 1. Verse 1 of course has a very great challenge to our hearts and lives but what I know the way I learned it of course was in the the old version so you won't mind if I just give it to you from there and then whatever you've got will be alright but it says I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. Now I knew very early on that I ought to give my body to God that it was his, that he had redeemed it, I ought to give it to him, he wanted to live in it and make it his temple and glorify himself through my body. I learned very early on there's some things I should not do with my body as a Christian teenager and a Christian young person.

That my body should be kept for his honor and kept pure and clean and so forth. So there were sexual sins I ought not to be involved in, there were drinking and smoking and all kinds of things that were not healthy for my body that I ought to avoid because my body belonged to God. I don't remember when I first knew those things.

I learned them right from the earliest age of being brought up in the church. But I had no idea that what I needed even more than that was the second verse that he needed not only my body but he must have my mind. And so the second verse says and be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Now I think that at some point in their life every Christian longs to live and walk in the perfect will of God. In fact I think when we're first saved we may have the strongest desire to live and walk in the perfect will of God. But there are thousands and thousands of God's dear children redeemed by his precious blood who have yearnings and longings after God, go to church all the time, but in their hearts have lost hope that they can ever live and walk in the perfect will of God.

Now why is that? Well there's more than one reason, there are a number of reasons, but I believe that one of the main reasons is that we have not learned how to get our minds renewed. And that's what I want to talk to you about tonight is the renewing of the mind. Now to get started with that and to ask ourselves how does the mind work, probably be good for me to give you a story about a man who was in prison and he tried an experiment that has always been a lesson to me about how the mind works.

He was convicted of a very serious crime and was sentenced to life imprisonment. But because of his good behavior after he had been there for many many years, he came up before the parole officers and they decided that because of his good behavior that his sentence actually

should be cut shorter and that even though he'd been there many years he should not necessarily stay in for life and they were going to parole him. He had friends on the outside who had worked for him and they had gotten him a job.

He also had a room in a boarding house and they had prepared everything for him. They had gotten some street clothes for him and some of the things he would need to go back into regular life. And now after many many years in prison he was going to leave the prison.

Well you know prison life is a very very restrictive thing and this man of course had been in prison a long time so for many years he got up the same time every morning, put on the same kind of clothes, had breakfast at the same time, gone to do the same kind of exercises, went to do the same kind of work, the same kind of school, he had lunch at the same time, did the same thing every afternoon, had supper at the same time and pretty much the same kind of an evening and back to bed and lights out at a certain time and the next day it was the same. Now after you have done that for many many many years your entire life becomes shaped by your imprisonment and your thinking, your action, everything becomes completely ordered by the prison life and your whole life becomes a routine of bondage to prison life. But now he was going to go free.

So the day came when the great gates opened and he walked out through the gates and they clanged shut behind him and he was standing out on the sidewalk a free man. He started to walk down the sidewalk. Through the years of course he had become acquainted with many of the guards and they'd even become good friends.

And so there was a guard walking up in the wall and he called down to the man and he said, Hey Jack! And he stopped and said, Yes John? He said, Jack tell me what is it like to be free? And Jack stood there and thought for a few minutes and he finally said, I don't know John, I don't know. I'll tell you later. And so he walked down down the street thinking about that question.

What is it like to be free? And he thought, I'm going to try an experiment that will simulate my condition. And so when he got to the boarding house he looked all around down in the basement till he found a large bottle about that tall and it was shaped like this with a narrow neck at the top. And he put that up on a shelf.

Then every day as he went to work and came back to his boarding house and went to work and about his activities he looked for pieces of wire, small short pieces of wire. And wherever he'd find an old piece of wire laying around somewhere on the street or in the gutter or wherever he'd pick it up and bring it home with him and drop it down in the bottle. Now some of the wire was straight and stiff, some of it was soft, some of it was covered with rubber, some was bare, some was curly, some was springy, some was thick, some was thin, all kinds of pieces of wire.

And he kept dropping it down into the bottle. And the months went by and the months went by and the bottle got more and more full of these pieces of wire. And finally came to the place where he could no longer drop the wire into the bottle, he had to push it down in the bottle.

And he kept pushing it down in the bottle and pushing it down in the bottle. Are you getting the picture? Can you see it in your mind? And as the wire was forced down into the bottle it became all entangled, one piece with another, and it became packed into the bottle tighter and tighter and tighter and more and more entangled, forced into that place of imprisonment and held there in a vice-like grip until the night came when he tried to put a piece of wire in the bottle and he couldn't get one more piece of wire into the bottle. And he said to himself, now I'm going to see what it's like to be free after long imprisonment.

And so he laid the bottle down on the concrete floor and he took a hammer and with one blow he shattered that glass into a hundred pieces. And the wire was free! Or was it? Can you see it? You know as well as I do what happened. As soon as that prison was gone some of the pieces of wire sprang right out on the floor just like they were before, totally free, exactly in their original shape.

But the great mass of that wire, totally intertwined one piece with another, lay on the floor shaped in the exact shape of its imprisonment. It was technically free, completely free, but actually the strands of that wire had to be disentangled strand by strand to make it totally free in its experience. Now you say, well when I come to Christ doesn't he set me free? Well the scriptures say, Whomsoever the Son shall free, he shall be, what? Free indeed.

That's what the Word of God says. We believe that. In the heart and mind of God when Jesus sets us free, we're free.

And when we come to Christ and receive him as our Lord and Savior and let him come into our life and forgive us and make us a child of God, we are set free from all the bondage of our life of sin. But I'll tell you what many of us have found. That even though actually before God we are free, yet in our personal experience many of our thought patterns maintain the original shape of their bondage.

And many of the thought patterns that we have developed out in a life of sin, or even many of the thought patterns we have developed after we became a Christian have become very strong patterns of bondage in our mind. And we find that many of those patterns are still there, the same shape and the same bondage as before Christ set us free. And they have to be disentangled and set free strand by strand.

See, I know what I'm talking about because I came to Christ very, very early on. Now over the years as one who's been serving the Lord, I have known hundreds of people, probably more than that, probably more like thousands, who have come right out of the world, out of the midst of young adulthood or older adulthood, after living for years in sin, they have come to Christ and he set them free and they became a Christian. And it's been my experience as I have counseled with those people over the years that many of them were still struggling desperately with the thought patterns of the past.

And even though they've been set free by Christ, they found their mind was not free in their

experience. But you know what I found? I'm ashamed to say this, but I found that even though I received Christ when I was seven years old, yet as I grew up and nobody taught me much about the mind. And as I grew up, I developed many, many sinful thought patterns in my mind, even as a Christian teenager and young person.

And up into my young adulthood, I put many, many things into my mind that never should have gone into my mind as a Christian. And I put them there repeatedly again and again and again until I formed deep and powerful thought patterns in my mind. And finally, as a pastor preaching the gospel and trying to be a man of God and trying to help others to come to Christ and struggle with their problems, I found that I myself had problems.

And that even though Christ had set me free many years ago, I found that my mind was in cruel bondage to many sinful thought patterns from which I could not seem to get free. Am I speaking to your condition? My friends, if God had not taught me the things that I want to teach you tonight, I have no idea where I would be now. I'm sure I would not be standing here.

And I also want to testify to you tonight that it's a wonderful, wonderful thing, after years of having your mind in bondage to sinful thought patterns, it's a marvelous thing to have those patterns completely broken, completely cleansed, and your mind reprogrammed, and to have a mind that is free and can be filled with the Spirit of God and used for His glory. I want to tell you and testify before you tonight that for many, many years I've had a mind free. And so I want to help you tonight, with all my heart I want to help you, to get your mind renewed so your life can be transformed.

Now there's two words I want to deal with quickly tonight. The first one is the word transformed. Now that's there in the text.

Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now I'd like to have you help me with that word tonight. So what I'd like you to do is to get the word transformed up here in your hands and hold it up here, and when I say go, pull it apart like that.

Okay, you're going to help me? Yeah, it's silly isn't it? Doesn't it make you feel silly? It's childish, and it's good for your pride. Okay, when I say go, I pull it. Go! Oh, thank you.

You didn't have to hit that person. Anyway, thank you. Your word came apart right where mine did.

Right between the prefix trans and the suffix formed. So you have trans-formed, and trans means to be changed, and form means shape. So we're talking tonight about being changed in shape.

Oh, you say, I'd like to be changed in shape. No, no, that's not what we're talking about. There are other ways to deal with that.

No, no, no. What God is talking about is changing the shape of our life. Isn't that right? For when we become a Christian, God wants to change the shape of our entire life and reshape our life in the image of Jesus Christ.

Isn't that true? What man lost in the fall was the image of God, and in Christ we can be restored to that image. And so what God wants to do is reshape our entire life and make it like Christ, and that's a lifelong process. And we strive for that.

But it cannot be done without the renewing of the mind. And there are many, many scriptures, and I don't even have time to give them to you tonight, but when you go home, you get your concordance, and you do a study on the mind, and on the word knowledge, and the word thought, and you see what God has to say about this, and you will see again and again that he is saying we ought to be renewed after the image of him that created us through our knowledge through our minds. Over and over in all kinds of ways the Bible talks about us being reshaped in the image of Christ by the renewing of our minds.

Well, do you want your life transformed? I tell you, I do, and I always have from the day I received Jesus. You know, I still remember the night from the night that I invited Christ into my life, there's always been in my heart a desire to have my life changed and to be more like Christ. But boy, I tell you, for years it didn't work very good.

It didn't work very good. I wanted it, but I wasn't getting it. And I wanted to be changed, and I wanted to be different, and I wanted to be like the Lord, but I certainly wasn't.

And in spite of all my hunger and desire after him, in my own heart I was often full of hopelessness and despair and discouragement because my life was so unlike Jesus. And I had no idea whatsoever that the problem was my mind. And even while I was longing to be like Christ, I was still pouring into my mind all kinds of garbage.

And on the other hand, praying and crying out to God to change me, and did not understand the bondage that I was in. Now somebody says, well, why is the mind so important? You're talking like the mind is so important. Why is it so important? Does the Word of God teach it? Yes, it does.

Why, you say? Well, first of all, because everyone thinks. Oh, you say, I know some people that don't think. No, you don't.

You just know some people that think different than you do. But they all think. You say, well, they think very funny.

Well, yes, but they might think the same about you. You know, but we may think differently, but we all think. I pastored one time in a city where they had one of the largest mental institutions in the world.

It has over 7,000 patients. And as a pastor, I went there one time to call on someone from my

church. And I am the kind of pastor, I just walk into hospitals and just go where I want to go and act like I know what I'm doing.

You know, I never asked for any permission. And it was fine. I went in, went up in the elevator, went to see the person, and then went back and tried to get on the elevator.

I didn't have a pass. And the person in a white jacket said, well, where's your pass? And I said, what pass? Oh, you have to have a pass. I said, well, I've just been in here visiting someone from my church.

And they said, yeah, but we don't know about that. And I said, listen, I'm a pastor in this city. They said, yeah, but we have Napoleon down here the President of the United States.

And so, you know, I had quite a bit of trouble. As you can see, I did get out. And some of you think, yeah, but it hasn't been long.

Well, not really. Oh, yes, I did finally get out because I had some people in my church that happened to work there. And one of them came and vouched for me.

I was sure glad he liked me. Well, you better keep on good terms with your parishioners. You never know when it may save your life.

Anyway, very interesting about people thinking differently than we think, isn't it? And, you know, you may have heard this story before, but I want to tell you, I know where this story happened because that's where it happened. There was a man driving into Tuscaloosa and he got a flat tire right in front of that hospital. And just all kinds of people working out in the fields of that hospital.

And so there was a man out there working and he was watching this poor guy with a flat tire. And the guy took off the wheel, you know, he jacked the car up, he took off the wheel. And, of course, he had to take off the lugs and he set them in the hubcap.

He got out the new wheel and he accidentally kicked over the hubcap and all the lugs went down the drain. Now what? He's standing there, he's not far from town really, he's only a couple of miles, and he doesn't know what to do. And he's scratching his head and standing there trying to think what to do.

And the man with the hoe wandered over and he said, can I help you? And he said, well, I don't know any way you can help me. I kicked all the lugs down the drain. Oh, he says, no problem.

Just take one lug off the other three wheels and put it on. You'll get into town. Makes you wonder who needed to be in the hospital.

Oh yeah, I'd have never thought of that. Well, we all think, you better believe it, and not only do we all think, but we all think 24 hours a day. Absolutely.

Your mind, from the time that your mind is formed, it never stops functioning until you die. And you're not dead till your brain dead. Right? Yes.

Because the mind runs constantly 24 hours a day. That's why you dream at night. I never dream.

I'm too tired to dream. But you know, that's why, because your mind keeps going 24 hours a day. And let me tell you something else that you know about the mind.

You can go anywhere and do anything in your mind. Right? I mean, there are thousands of things that you can't do with your body, but in your mind, you can do them. Huh? And there are all kinds of things we do with our minds, aren't there? Aren't there? I mean, there are all kinds of things.

There are all kinds of things that some of you have done in your minds this week that you're ashamed of. Is that possible? I was preaching in Unionville and we went for dinner one night to a home where the man of the home owned a fantastic computer company. And that computer company makes highly sensitive equipment for the federal government, both of Canada and the United States.

And he said that equipment is so sensitive and it can pry into human lives so completely that he gets under conviction sometimes thinking that his company makes it. They have some wonderful machines out there. I mean, they can park across the street from you in a hotel room and point their equipment at the room in which you are and listen to your conversation.

In fact, in some cases, they can go into a room and take the conversation off the wall. That's scary, isn't it? That's scary. Suppose I told you that because that man's a friend of mine, he's loaned me a piece of equipment tonight.

And in a minute, we're going to pull down this screen and I'm going to take this equipment out from under here and set it up on here. It's all plugged in and it has a little cone that goes with it. And I'm going to point the cone at someone in this audience and I'm going to play on this screen everything you've thought for the past week.

How long would it take to empty the auditorium? Somebody would get hurt. You know, in a way, because most of you here tonight are Christians, in a way, it's not funny, is it? In a way, it's really sad. And you see, the reason that gets to my heart so much is because I've sat there so often, so many years, and if somebody had said they were going to do that, I'd have been the first one to run for the door.

Because during that week, I'd thought some things I didn't want anybody else to know about. I knew God knew and I was ashamed, but I hope nobody else would know. And the word of God says, as a man thinks in his heart, what? So is he.

Why is our mind so important? Because our mind will shape our life. Absolutely. Our mind will

shape our life.

It may take time, but it will shape our life. God says, be not deceived. God is not mocked.

For whatsoever a man sows, and I could add in his mind, because it doesn't make any difference, that shall he also reap. He that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. And he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And my friend, what I sow in my mind, I will reap in one way or another. And there are things that we think in our minds that we say to ourselves, I would never do this really in real life. I mean, there have been people who thought, who just thought because they were so full of anger and bitterness they thought about killing somebody, but they said, of course, I would never do it.

But it sure is fun to think about it. And then eventually they did do it. And there have been thousands of people who have thought impure sexual thoughts in their minds for years and said, of course, I would never do it.

I mean, I would never be unfaithful to my wife, or I would never, you know, do this or do that. But I've been a pastor for 44 years, and I have counseled people who have been in the highest echelons of the Christian church with PhDs and with long histories of Christian ministry. And they have, some of them, been in prison, and I was on their discipline committee and was appointed as their counselor.

And as I tried to help those people get their lives back together, they told me a history of thought, sin, of constant using their minds in ways that were contrary to the laws of God. And their minds became so full and so imprisoned and enslaved to those thought patterns that things they thought they would never, never do, they did do. And so, my friends, tonight, the mind is important because it will shape our life.

And I know some of you are sitting there and saying, please tell me how to get my mind renewed. I don't want my life like that. I want my life reshaped in the image of Christ.

I want it to be godly, and I don't want my mind to do that to my life. And so I want to do that for you tonight. Now, as I'm doing this and I'm talking about this, I know that someone may be saying, and I want to deal with this very kindly, someone may be saying, but, Pastor Siple, I didn't put everything in my mind that's in there.

Yeah, I know that. That's true in many, many cases. There are many people sitting in this place here tonight who have many things in their minds that were put in there by other people when they were children.

Sometimes they're very young children. And on up into their teen years, things they could not avoid that they could not do anything about as a little child and adults and others put awful things into their minds. And their minds are still struggling and grappling with those awful

thought patterns that were put there by others.

Yes, I know that. And God knows that. And his heart is broken over that.

And then there are things we have added, aren't there? There are thought patterns we have developed. But let me say something very important tonight. We can't, once we become adults and become Christians, we can't go on blaming other people for the rest of our lives.

Because once we become a Christian and we're an adult Christian, God has given us answers as to how to get that mind cleaned up and get it renewed. And we must not go on and on and on throughout our life blaming others for the condition of our mind because we can get our minds renewed and get them changed and get our life changed. God has provided for it.

And we need to stop the blaming game at some point and start to let God change our minds. You know, sometimes we even blame God, don't we? I've talked to people who said, listen, I don't want that stuff in my mind. And I've gone to God a thousand times and I've wept and I've plead and I've said, oh God, take that out of my mind.

Take it out of my mind. And God won't do it. And we're even a little angry at God or maybe quite angry at God.

And we blame him because he hasn't done it. But he couldn't do it without damaging your brain. Unless he did it as an act of divine healing, he could do that.

It's like the little boy, you know, that was helping his mother. And it's a wonderful thing for little boys to help their mother. And he was down in the basement cleaning the basement for his mother.

And he was sweeping the floor and he decided to sweep under the old sofa and he ran the broom under the sofa and out came a mouse. And what had happened was that the mouse's hole was behind the sofa and had just come out and the broom come up behind it and hit it from behind. It ran on out into the floor.

Then it couldn't get back to the hole and the little boy took after it. And he, he began to gain on and it got to the other side of the room and it was cornered because it couldn't go anywhere. And he hit it with a broom.

It could still run. It ran out to the middle of the floor, but it was running slow now and he caught up with it and he hit it again. Now it couldn't run.

So he stood there and he beat it with the broom and killed it about five times. And when he got done, it was a mess. It was smashed.

It was bloody. It was horrible. But he was very proud of what he had done for his mother.

So he grabbed the mouse up in the kitchen. He could see his mother sitting in the living room

in a chair and he raced into the living room where she was sitting and stopped in front of her and held it up and he said, mother, mother, mother, look at this, that I was down in the basement and I was sweeping under the sofa and this ran out from under the sofa and I chased the mouse across the room and I hit him with a broom and he was still running. So I hit him again and then he couldn't run anymore.

And then, and then he noticed that the pastor was sitting there talking to his mother. And he looked at the pastor and looked at his mother and looked at the bloody mouse. And he said, and then, and then the Lord called him home.

Oh, yes. Don't you think it's time to stop the blaming game? Not exactly. Let me deal with my other word.

Will you help me just one more time with the other word, conformed? Ah, come on. It's good for your pride. Hold it up.

Come on. Now, some of you, you're, you're balking, you're being rebellious. No, hold it up.

Are you ready to pull it? Pull it. Thank you. Good.

And you didn't even hit your partner. That's great. You're improving.

Well, the word conformed is very much like transformed, only the con, the prefix con means like, and of course, form still means shape. So that word means to be shaped like. Now, the other one means to be changed in shape and made into the image of Christ.

This one means to be shaped like, and it says do not be shaped like what? The world. Well, how can I avoid it? But be transformed, reshaped by the renewing of your mind. Now, if you can be reshaped by having your mind renewed, how are we shaped like the world? Listen carefully.

By thinking the thoughts of the world after them. And my friends, if we fill our minds with the thoughts of the world and the kind of thinking that the world has, we will have a life shaped like the world rather than shaped like Jesus Christ. Now, I want to give you three things very quickly tonight, and then I'm going to be done.

But these are very important. So you've got to really get these three steps in having your renewed. Having that mind totally renewed so your life can be completely changed.

Number one, change the input into your mind. Go through your life and clean out all the input into your mind that is dishonoring to God. Somebody sits there and says, good grief, I wouldn't have anything left to do.

Yeah, that's what I'm concerned about. You see, the problem is that even as a Christian, we have the tendency to pour all this garbage into our minds. And I have a friend in Akron, Ohio that says, garbage in, garbage out.

The mind is like a computer. Well, not really, really. The computer is like the mind.

The mind is the original and the master. And the computer is made like it. But you know, when you program a computer, what you put in is what? What you get out.

Exactly. And when I resigned from my church, I walked away from a church office that had secretaries and computers and all this equipment and everything. And all at once I realized shortly before I left that I was going to be without any of it.

And I thought, oh my, I better do something. And I went out and got a computer. I had never touched the things.

You know, everybody else did it. My secretary even typed my sermons and everything. You know, it's fantastic.

But all at once I had to do it with this computer. Oh man, I had a time. First.

And I went into the office one day. I was still pastoring there at that time. And there was our minister of music who was the office computer expert.

And I said, Floyd. And I was quite upset. And I said, Floyd, that thing just won't do what I tell it to do.

He's real sweet. And he just smiled really sweet and looked at me and he said, Pastor, it does exactly what you tell it to do. And we say, my mind won't do what I want it to do.

Careful. What you put in is what you'll get out. Huh? You tell the computer that two and two makes five and it'll give you wrong answers every time you ask it a mathematical question.

And what we put into our minds has to be changed. And so the first step is, I must go through my life honestly, humbly, brokenly before God and say, oh God, show me all of the junk that I'm putting into my mind. And by your grace, help me to stop it, to repent and to get it out of my life.

Well, you may have to go through your library and your magazine racks. I did. I went through my library and I had a big steel can way out in the backyard and I just carried it all out there.

I mean, it wasn't, now don't mistake me. I didn't have any pornographic magazines or anything. Some of you do.

I'm sure you do. But I had a lot of books that certainly did not honor God in any way. So I carried them out and burned them.

And then I went through all my television viewing and when I got done, I had a lot more time on my hands. Because I found once I went through that and cleaned it up in the sight of God, there wasn't much left. You better believe it.

You know what's amazing to me? Christians who 20 years ago would have railed at the thought of going to a theater or watching things in their own living room with their kids watching too, that they would have considered absolutely rotten 20 years ago in the theater. Is that right? You see, I like to read. I love to read.

And when I hit junior high, I was going to a little schoolhouse in the country where I think we probably had a library of about 12 books, you know. There's nothing. And I hit junior high school in a city and I walked into the library and I went crazy.

I mean, here's this fiction, all of this fiction. I went down one side and up the other. And I wasn't very careful what I read.

And even after I was in the ministry, I thought I could read the novels that were on the top of the list and still serve God. And I didn't know that I was fouling up my mind. Huh? And I'm just saying the first step is clean up all the input.

And if you don't do it, I tell you, you cannot get your mind renewed. You cannot. I don't care what anybody tells you or what you try to do or anything else.

If you don't let God help you stop putting the rotten stuff into your mind, you're never going to get your mind renewed or free. Ever. So that's the first step.

We've got to stop thinking the world's philosophies, having the world's attitudes, the world's books, the world's TV, the world's music, the world's entertainment. Unless we want to be like the world. Because what you think is what you will be.

And so if we think their thoughts will be shaped like them. We may try to look a little different, but basically we won't be much different. The second thing we have to do is we have to begin to fill our minds with the thoughts of God.

You stop putting the thoughts of the world into your mind and you start putting the thoughts of God into your mind. Do you want to be like Jesus? Then the word of God says, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. And Paul said, we have the mind of Christ.

And my friend, if you want to be shaped like Christ, you have to think his thoughts after him. How can you do that? Well, the first thing, of course, is to read your Bible, to read it, to study it, to memorize it, to meditate on it, to apply it to your life and to fill your thought processes with the holy word of God, because that is God speaking. Those are his words.

They are the words of the son of God and the spirit of God. And if you fill your mind with the words of God, your life will begin to be shaped like God. Absolutely.

You say, well, I got to read more than the Bible. That's right. Read Christian books.

I'll tell you, never in my lifetime has there been so many Christian books available as there is today. I mean, you don't have enough money to buy the books that are available. Good ones,

all kinds of good ones.

I mean, you can go to a Christian bookstore, you could stand there and spend a thousand dollars without even hardly turning around. The whole place is filled with wonderful Christian literature of all kinds. Let's get Christian books and read them.

Let's have Christian music and listen to it. Somebody says, oh, I knew you'd get to that. Of course, you knew I'd get to that because you know it's a problem in your life.

And I'm not just ranting against something. I'm up here wanting to help you with all my heart because I've been pastoring all these years and trying to help people that are Christians get their life straightened out and filled with God so they can get on with the business. I want to help you.

I want to help you. So you've got to take all the garbage out, stop putting the garbage in, and start putting the thoughts of God into your mind and fill your mind with the thoughts of God. Any of you ever learned the first psalm? Well, some of you probably learned it in recent versions.

You know, I learned it a long time ago, so I learned it in the King James. But let me just listen carefully now. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council.

Yeah, you know it, don't you? Well, that's a way to start that psalm, isn't it? Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly. But Christians are walking in the council of the ungodly. They're running to the ungodly to find out how to run their lives instead of going to the word of God to find out how to run their lives.

And God's word says, blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in his law he meditates once in a while when he gets time. That's the perverse version.

And in his law doth he meditate day and night. You say, oh, my lambs, that would make a terrible, boring, dried-up life. Oh, you think so.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither, and everything he does will prosper. You want to get going, get your life moving, get power in it? Stop putting the garbage in and start filling it with the word of God and meditate in it day and night.

And God's promises for you are fantastic. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish. And so

God wants us to start filling our minds with new thought patterns. Amen? The thoughts of God.

Now, I have one more. I said I had three things to say to you. Here's the last one.

Very quickly. Here's the last thing. One of our problems is that we have developed habits of thinking.

Now, we may stop all the bad input, and we may start to fill our minds with the things of God and with the word of God and books and music and everything that's Christian, and we may just fill our mind with the new things of God. But we may still find that we have some very deep thought patterns that are habitual that we can't seem to break. And we've confessed them to God, and we hate them, and we want to be cleansed of them, and we've asked God to take them out of our minds, and he hasn't done it.

And we're going along trying to live the Christian life, and all at once something triggers that old sinful thought pattern, and clickety-clack, our mind is a way down that track before we hardly notice it. It may be thought patterns of fear. It may be thought patterns of anger.

It may be thought patterns of bitterness. It may be thought patterns of sexual impurity. All kinds of thought patterns that have become deeply ingrained in our mind, thought patterns of worry that we've had all our life, and they're very deep habits of thinking.

And we have wanted to put them away, and God knows that, and we've confessed them as sin, and we have rejected them, and God knows that, and he accepted our decision, and he cleansed us and forgave us. But the habit is still there, and it defeats us. Now, habits are wonderful things, but because we're sinners, they can be bad things.

Habits are great, you know. Did you ever see a little baby trying to learn to eat? They're marvelous. You know, you put him up in a high chair, and you put some of that gook in front of him they call baby food, and you give him a spoon, and he digs it into the gook, and he makes it pass in his mouth, and puts it in his hair.

And then he's a little frustrated, and he makes, he gets some more, and he makes a pass at his mouth, and he dumps it down the front. Now he's mad, and so mother takes his hand and guides it into the food, and he gets half of it in his mouth. And it takes a little while for him to learn how to handle his eating instruments, right? But I've eaten with a number of you now, and you didn't have that problem at all.

I mean, you didn't even think about it. You have a habit, the same as I. And you sat there and talked a mile a minute, and just shoveled it in. No problem.

You didn't even have to look. Habits. Wonderful things.

I mean, if you couldn't form habits, you'd be still getting dressed this morning. That's right. But you just do a thousand, probably a million things without even thinking.

Habits. And those habits of thought are the most powerful habits on earth. Now what can you do? Listen carefully now.

Listen very carefully about those habits. Best place to break a habit is in the middle, okay? Now here's how it works. You've rejected it.

You've confessed it to God. You don't want it in your life. And He accepts that, and He's forgiven you, and He accepted you at face value.

Now you're going along trying to live the Christian life, and something triggers that old thought pattern, whatever it is. And clickety-clack, your mind goes running down that track, and you're way into it, and all at once a little voice says to you, you're thinking it again. Right there you have a very important choice to make.

Now listen to me. If you have confessed that thought pattern as sin, and you don't want it, and you've told God so, I want to tell you something very important. When you think that thought pattern as a habit, you are thinking it automatically without a choice on your part.

Just like any other habit, it's just automatic. When it's triggered, zoop, away it goes. You've made no choice in the matter.

But somewhere down that thought pattern, you'll be conscious of what you're doing, and the little voice will say you're doing it again, and at that point you have a choice. Okay? Now listen to me carefully. Up till then, you have not sinned.

If you've confessed those thought patterns as sinful, and asked God to take them out of your life, and you don't want them, when you think those thought patterns automatically without your choice, right up to the point of your awareness and your choice, you have not sinned because you have to make a choice to sin. It's just automatic. So up to then you have not sinned, and if you confess that as sin, you will not get the victory.

Do not confess that as sin. Up to that point you have not sinned. I don't care what the thought pattern is, if you've already confessed it and rejected it.

It's just a habit. But now you have a choice to make. Now what you need to do is say, thank you Lord for speaking to me, and thank you for giving me the victory.

In Jesus' name I refuse to think those thoughts, and turn your mind to the things of God. And if you do that, at that point you have not sinned at all. And my friend, let me tell you something else.

If you will do that, and you will do it every time, the next time that your mind runs down that track, it won't go as far before you'll stop. And the next time your mind runs down that track, it won't go as far as it did before, and it will get shorter and shorter and shorter, until you find yourself catching it right at the beginning. And then pretty soon, I've got wonderful news for

you, pretty soon that entire thought pattern will be gone from your mind.

And you will no longer have that habit. It will no longer plague you. You will no longer have a problem with it.

Oh, that's wonderful. Oh, the freedom of the mind. When all that old worry pattern is gone, or all that old anger, that old fear, or that old impure sexual thought patterns, or whatever it was, wonder when it's gone.

Did you get what I said about how to make it go, how to stop it? You say, but I have tried that. I have tried that, and I have stopped right there and said, I'm not going to think that, and tried to turn my mind to the things of God, and it came right back. And I tried to turn away from it, and it came right back.

Now, if that happens, you're not only dealing with a habit, you're dealing with the devil. If it's just a habit, you can stop when you're aware of it and turn your mind to something else. If you can't stop, you're now dealing with more than a habit, you're dealing with demonic pressure.

You say, what should I do? Exactly what Jesus did, though he didn't have a sinful habit. There's a place where Satan is called Apollyon. That means Lord of the flies.

Have you ever had a problem with a big, nasty fly in the hot summertime? And it comes swarming around, and you say, go away, and it comes right back, and you say, go away, and it comes right back, and that's why he's called Lord of the flies. You remember when Jesus was tempted? After he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, the devil came to him and said, if thou be the Son of God, command these stones be made bread. And Jesus said, it is written, I shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil took him up and stood him on the pinnacle of the temple and said, if you're the Son of God, cast yourself down, because it is written, he shall give his angels charge over thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against the stone. And he said, it is written again, thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the test, and the devil came right back. Do you see this sticky fly business? And he came right back, and he took him up into a high mountain, and he showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and the glory of them, and he said, all this is mine, and I give it to whomsoever I will, and if you will only fall down and worship me, all shall be yours.

And then Jesus gave the formula that God used to set my mind free. Here it is. Jesus said, Satan, go away, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, and the devil left him.

Now, I've never been tempted to worship the devil, so I don't need that verse of scripture. I had some other mind problems. What you do is you ask God to guide you to a passage of scripture that applies to your particular mind problem.

For instance, suppose you have the worry problem. Why not go to Philippians 4, 6, and 7 that says, be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God, and a peace of God that passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. That's a great one for people that worry, isn't it? You say, how would you use it? Well, you'd use it like this.

If you try to turn away from that old worry pattern, and it comes right back, you just stop and turn on the devil as if you could see him standing right in front of you. Now, if other people around, I would do it silently. Okay, they may not understand.

Now, if nobody else around, I do it out loud, just because I like to do it that way. But he'll hear you if you do it silently, I'll tell you. You just turn on Satan, and you say, Satan, and you always use the name of Jesus.

So you turn on him, and you say, Satan, some of you should write this down, because it can change your life. Satan, in Jesus' name, you go away, for it is written. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, and you just give him the whole passage.

And when you're finished, you say, therefore, Satan, in Jesus' name, you go away. Now, don't ask God to send him away. He told you to send him away.

He said, you resist the devil, and he will flee from you. You do it in Jesus' name, but you do it. You say, what if I've had a terrible time with impure thought patterns? Ah, I've got a good one for you.

It's just a couple of verses down in Philippians 4, it's to verse 8. Here it is, listen. Satan, in Jesus' name, you go away, for it is written, whatsoever things are pure, think on these things. Therefore, Satan, in Jesus' name, you go away.

You say, come on now, that's too simple. No, it's what Jesus did, and it worked for him, and it's written there for us. No, it's not too simple.

The gospel is simple, it's just not easy. Huh? Being a Christian is not complicated. It's simple, it's just not easy.

And if he doesn't move immediately, you give it to him again. If he doesn't go, give it to him again. Give it to him two or three times, if you have to.

What I found is, though, normally he leaves immediately. You say, does that really work? I'll tell you what. I learned to say that formula so many times that I could say it in my sleep.

I got to where I said it sometimes, who knows how many times, 50 times a day, whatever. But you know, it only took God, after years, it only took God a few weeks, to set my mind absolutely free. And then I could renew it with the things of God.

And it changed my life. I'm sure it saved my life. And I want to tell you it will work.

I have seen it work. The people who have the worst mind problem of anybody in the world are practicing homosexuals. And I have seen it work for them.

Okay? And I'm telling you, it will work. If you will work it. And if you can't remember what I have said tonight in those three points, get this tape if you have to sell your automobile.

And I'm not interested in selling tapes. I don't get a penny out of the tapes sold here. And I don't get anything out of the ones sold by the Canadian Revival Fellowship either.

So, you know, just get the tape, will you? I had a man come up to me and he said, Pastor Sibley, I heard you preach that sermon a year ago, and I just want you to know it absolutely transformed my entire life. And he said, if you ever need to preach that sermon somewhere and you're sick, just call me. I have it memorized.

I'll give it. And so I want to encourage you tonight that God will renew your mind. And when he does, he will transform your life.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Our heads bowed, our eyes closed. Now, I realize that this is very personal business that I've been preaching about tonight, and I'm not going to take much time with this, but you're here and you say, oh, Pastor Sibley, I've been waiting to hear that one for years.

Thank God I'm in this meeting tonight. I finally found out what to do about my mind problem. And by God's grace, I'm going to do it, and I'm going to get my mind renewed.

And I'd just like to have you, I'd like to say that to God tonight in some way, and I'd like to have you remember me in prayer. Just quietly stand to your feet and just stay where you are. Our heads bowed and our eyes closed, no one looking around.

You say, I'm going to do something with those principles, and I'm going to get my mind renewed by God's grace. And I want to just say that to God tonight physically by an act, by standing. I'm going to wait just a little bit here for you.

Don't think about anybody else. Our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed. It's between you and God.

Some of you, you need this to save your marriage, to save maybe your career, to save maybe your life for all I know. Wait just a moment longer. You want to say, yes, I'm going to do this with God's help.

Just wait a moment longer. I don't want to cut it off while people are still standing. So be patient with me for just a moment.

See, some of you are going to see me somewhere a year from now, and you're going to say,

thank God for that night. That changed my life. Just another moment, and then I'm going to pray.

Now, Father, I thank you tonight for your word, and I thank you for the wonderful freedom that we have in Christ. I want to pray for my brothers and sisters who have stood to their feet tonight, and even some maybe that, I don't know why, but for some reason they haven't had the courage to do that. But in their hearts, they're saying, I want to do this.

I want this change. Oh, Father, I pray that right now your Holy Spirit will respond to their action and to their commitment and their decision tonight. I pray your Holy Spirit will seal that decision in their heart and in their life and put the determination and the strength there in their inner being by your Holy Spirit that they'll carry through.

Oh, Lord, help them to get a hold of these principles and even get them written down on a card or a piece of paper and to carry through to clean out all the wrong input and to begin to fill their minds with the things of God and then to take a stand against those habits and see them broken by God's grace. We ask it in the name of Jesus. You may be seated in Jesus' name.

Amen. Now you have 10 minutes. The tuck shop is not open.

The dining room is not open. You cannot buy any ice cream. You have 10 minutes and then back in here for a great musical concert.

Good night. If you've got to go out of here, hurry up. Just don't run over each other.