

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG276 – Renewing Our Minds

What I want to do today is just recognize that there is something really special about this timeframe of Sukkot that we are in. I want to read out of Second Corinthians, starting in chapter 10 at verses 3-7. What we are talking about is this idea of taking every thought captive. So Paul goes on in Corinthians here to say,

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete [and I am sure you could say our obedience is complete]. You are looking at things as they are outwardly. If anyone is confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so also are we.

It struck me today that this is a Scripture that we quote so often when we talk about spiritual warfare, and we are mainly looking at verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." We look at this idea when we are talking about spiritual warfare; and I think anybody would probably agree that we are in a lot of spiritual warfare surrounding us during these days that we are in. So I think we kind of go back to this Scripture, because if we are part of the army of the Lord, then how do we fight in this warfare? And it says that our weapons are powerful to the pulling down of the strongholds, and that we are destroying speculations.

So I want to focus this back on this thing of our minds, because a lot of times when we get into spiritual warfare we are dealing with and focused upon things going on around us, or things kind of outside of us that are either coming against us, or coming against the body of Christ, or coming against the Word of God or the Kingdom of God. We see kind of this outward thing that we are being spiritually attacked, or whatever our terminology is. But in looking at this again it struck me, which came during a time of prayer and meditation, that he kind of turns this. Yes, the weapons are "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses, and we are destroying speculations." Now speculations are something that you do with your mind, right? A speculation is a thought process that you are going through in your mind; and so this whole idea of spiritual warfare and the weapons of our warfare all of a sudden gets turned into this battle that takes place in our thinking.

"We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge" – that knowledge is something you have in your mind – "the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought" – that is certainly from your mind, thoughts come from our brain – "every thought captive to obedience to Christ." Now I know for me, I have been really reprogramming my own mind, saying, "I am grateful for the renewing of my mind, my subconscious mind, my conscious mind, into the mind of Christ." Because the Scripture says, "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16). It also says that we are to experience this renewing of our mind, which is what transforms us (Romans 12:2). For me, anyway, I think that is part of the battle that I face in my own walk with God, just this idea of my mind

and the thoughts of my mind, and the things we face on a human level from within ourselves. So all of a sudden this whole thing about the spiritual battle turned inward for me, and I thought, "Okay, that is not a problem, because we have these very effective, powerful spiritual weapons that are able to destroy the speculations." And I think really God is giving us the ability, and we have to believe in this ability, to destroy the natural mind as it exists and to not be conformed to this world, as it is speaking of in that Scripture. Our minds are not to be conformed, both conscious mind and subconscious mind, because they are both programmed in a different way. But either way, both of them are supposed to be renewed, being transformed away from the things of the world into the mind of Christ that Paul says we have. And so, I have been being just grateful that my mind is renewed to the mind of Christ. I am grateful that my subconscious mind is renewed to the mind of Christ, I am grateful that my conscious mind is renewed to the mind of Christ; because in that process, I win the war, the battle that comes against me, and I am transformed into a new creature. And that is what salvation is to bring to us, the transformation: "Behold, all things are made new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are new creatures in Christ. And really, what we are and the way we function as human beings, as creatures, if you want to call us that, is by virtue of what is playing in our mind, in our thinking.

So it is this idea of facing the speculations, facing the lofty things in our thinking that rise up against an encounter with the knowledge of God; which I think that as humans, there is an innate knowledge of God that is in us. We are created by Him. It says in the Scriptures that He put the spirit in man. He is the one that puts the spirit in man. So that spirit that He has put in man has an innate knowledge of God, which, when you talk about spiritual warfare, is part of what is being warred against, that knowledge of God; that we would come into a thinking process, or a thought process, that is the lie that is coming against the truth that He has implanted within us. And the only way to do that is to see that every thought is taken captive to the obedience to Christ. That is the mind of Christ that he is saying, "We have the mind of Christ." And you could say, "Well, maybe I am not quite there, I do not quite have the whole mind of Christ, but I am working at it." And I think that is what we face in this idea.

To me, when you look at the age around us that we are into, so much of what is going on is a matter of speculations. It is this thought process that is raising itself up against the knowledge of God, against the truth of God, against Christ. I mean, you watch YouTube hearings from Congress of people under oath, swearing about all these things of woke mentality, things that are belief systems of woke mentality, belief systems of the trans culture, things that are just literally lies being called the truth and calling the truth that we know a lie. All of a sudden you realize what has been said to us before, Armageddon and the last battle are taking place between your ears. That is really where this warfare is. And I was just saying to myself, "Why have I not emphasized that more when I keep defaulting back to this verse 4 of Second Corinthians 10, 'The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh'?" I cannot fight my brain from a fleshly level or by using fleshly means, but these weapons are divinely powerful for the destruction of the fortresses, because that is what our minds do. They build up walls of a belief system, and those beliefs are really what become our problem.

I go back to our history and some of what we witnessed with John Stevens, from the very beginning what he was fighting was the religious belief systems of denominations and of religious organizations that had been established for hundreds of years. And so, when our minds develop these speculations and then coalesce those speculations into a belief system, all of a sudden we can realize that these things are fortresses that are absolutely against what God is trying to say. He is saying, "I am going to do a new thing. Will you be aware of what I am doing when I am bringing something new into the earth, when I am speaking a Word to you?" And then we realize, well unfortunately, there is a prophecy that

says, "Having eyes they see not, having ears they hear not." I was going back to John the eighth chapter. Read that yourself from verse 31 on down to the end and listen to that argument, and ask yourself, does not that argument sound an awful lot like what we hear on the news today? We hear people arguing this point and that point, and it is all these speculations that have been developed. And they have been developed, this woke mentality has been developed, over a process of time, and so has a lot of the political thinking and a lot of the worldly thinking, and now it is developed into literally a fortress. I mean, these are belief systems that you are not even allowed to question. You cannot question that men can have babies – of course you cannot question that! That is just a foregone fact of reality of the day that we live in. And I would say, "No, it is a speculation that at some point became a fortification of a walled city that the woke are hiding in, with all of their other little deceptive thought processes." But we are not supposed to be locked into that same thing.

The Scripture starts out saying, "Do not be conformed to this world," and it is our job that we do not become conformed. It is not somebody else's job. This is my subconscious mind. This is my conscious mind. These are my thoughts. This is my faith. This is my thinking that is developing into not a walled city of perversion, but the city of God. When you read about all the people of faith in Hebrews 11, it is talking about the fact that they were looking for a city whose builder and maker was God, and that is what we are looking for. We are looking for a heart and a mind that have been developed into the heart and thinking of God. And that is what it is telling us that we have to do, that we bring every thought captive to obedience to Christ and the thinking of Christ.

We are in a very special time to be looking at this and working at this and believing for it to work for us, because we are in the days of Sukkot. One of the unique concepts of the fact that God told Israel to go out and live in booths during this time of the year is that if you build your sukkah with some semblance of the Scripture's direction, you realize that after you build it and you are sitting there with your family in the sukkah, you are surrounded by walls; you are not really looking out at the world around you. The point is not to be looking at the world around you, but what do we do when we build it? We leave the roof open so that we can see up and out. And I think it is one of the things that we should be doing during this time. Christ was very clear about this: "When you see these things, look up." And it was so real to me that as a people, we need to be more careful not to be focusing on what is happening around us. I mean, we know pretty much what is going on out there, and you can watch a little bit of news and see what is going on out there, but we are not supposed to be looking out. And part of what we are learning in this timeframe that we are in with Sukkot and dwelling in our sukkah is that we are not to be having our minds focused and fixed on the things of this world that are going on, we are to be looking up. We are to be training our mind into another focus.

It is tricky sometimes if we focus on the things of this world, because I fall into this and go, "Well, I need to be praying about this," or, "I need to be praying against this issue that is taking place." I mean, right now as we are speaking there are a lot of things on the table out here in the world, where the nations are fixed on what is taking place in Israel and Gaza and all of that over the next 72 hours, and you think, "Boy, I should be praying about this part of the deal, and that part, and this country over here that is voting for having a two-state solution." It is easy to get our prayer kind of sucked into prayer about the negative that is transpiring, and it can almost feel like the right thing. And I felt like God was kind of giving me an on-course correction or direction and just saying, "No, that is not what you are praying about. That is not what your focus is upon. Your focus is on looking up."

During this time in the wilderness that is celebrated by Tabernacles, the reality is that His Presence was with them day and night; and it was when they looked out at the wilderness that surrounded them that they got in trouble. How many times did they look around and go, "Oh my gosh, no food! Oh my gosh, no water! Oh my gosh, this is a long journey! I am tired of living in a tent." The Hebrew word for tent is *ohel*, and I think a lot of them felt that way after so long of living in a tent; you know, you think, "Oh hell, enough of this!" When they looked out, when they looked around themselves, they got in trouble. But God was right there, and it was really an issue of a change of focus. I talked about this in the podcast called, [*The Bronze Serpent*](#). See, because they murmured and complained, God brought the serpents in, and they were getting bitten by snakes and dying. So they said, "Go pray that the snakes go away," and God did not take the snakes away. What did He do? He changed their focus. He had them build this brass serpent and put it on a standard, and hold the standard so that when they got bit they had to look up. They had to look, they had to change their focus off of the wilderness around them and all the snakes squirming around on the sand. I think God is trying to get us to change our focus during this time, and I believe we can do that.

You ask, "What are we going to focus on?" Well, I have a good Psalm for you. Psalm 2, verses 1 through 8, gives us this really great thing. It says, "Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel to together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, 'Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!'" See, that is what this is all about. They want to throw away morality. They want to throw away what God has taught in His Word through the Torah. And God's response is simple: He sits in the heavens and laughs. He scoffs at them. "Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, 'But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.'" What is our focus during all of this? He says, "'I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.''" So during all of this craziness that is going on around the earth with all the nations, God has a very simple thing. He is sitting on His throne, and He has already installed His King on the throne in Zion. It is a done deal, and our focus is to be on that. Our focus is to be on Him. And when our focus is on Him, then what do we do? We go into the other Psalms, we tell the nations that the King reigns (Psalm 96:10). Our voice is to tell the world, "Hey, the King reigns. The King reigns. I do not need to argue with you about all of your morality and all of your philosophy and all of your theology. I just need to tell you one thing: Christ reigns. He reigns as Lord supreme. He reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords, and my focus is not on what you guys are doing down here. It is not on you nations surrounding me and all that you are trying to accomplish in the earth in your will. My focus is up through the roof of my little sukkah, and I am going to keep my focus, my mind, stayed upon Him."

Let our mind be stayed upon Him; because when it stayed upon Him, then those weapons – remember that it says they are divinely powerful. But it is dependent on focus. I think everything about where we are at is an issue of awareness – it is our awareness that He reigns. We can either be aware of the battle or we can be aware of the fact that the battle is already won. It is already done, it is a done deal, and He already reigns. That is going to bring down the lofty thoughts, it is going to kill the speculations, it is going to tear down the walls that have exalted themselves against the will of God in this day; and it is going to keep us free in our own warfare, because our minds now are going to be transformed into an obedience of the mind of Christ, and that ends the war. How do we end the war? We control our own thinking. We use these divinely powerful messages that we have, the awareness of His Presence. We develop an awareness of His Presence and we develop the awareness of the reality of who He is and

where He is seated and what God has done. And if you want to say, "What is God doing today?" He is laughing. And if we are not laughing with Him, our focus is wrong.

So we have to change our focus and we have to bring it upon Him so that our minds are stayed upon Him, and we are taking His divine Presence constantly in our thoughts. And if our thoughts try to waver off into something else, "But I need to deal with this...." No, look on the throne, there He is. He is seated. "I have seated My King on the throne in Zion." And I encourage you, follow this out in the Scriptures, because there is Scripture after Scripture after Scripture. Psalm 96:10-11 says, "Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns; indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.' Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all it contains." See, all of the earth, all of nature, wants to be laughing with God on His throne while they all go, "We are going to change everything about nature!" and all that. No, the earth is not going to be moved, because the King is seated on His throne. "Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns.'" I think there was a message one time about that, called, *Tell Them the Lord Reigns*. So that is what we are going to do. But first we get our focus fixed upon the Lord, and we keep it there; and we are going to find out how powerful that is in changing our own thought process.

Do not let it slide back, work with it. It is a war, and this is the war: Can you keep your mind stayed upon Him? That is the war. Can we keep our mind stayed upon Him? Can we keep every thought in obedience to Christ? When we are looking at what the devil or his minions are doing, then our mind is not on Him, on the Lord and what He is doing. You cannot be thinking those two thoughts at one time, so we have to keep our focus set. And I think this is a perfect time to restructure our whole thought process. Let's do what Christ said: "When you see all of these things take place, look up, for your redemption draws nigh."

I bless this to us all. I hope this is a help for not just a focus during this time, but for the days ahead. We are going to experience the renewing of our mind and be transformed into His image. I believe that with all my heart.

Amen.