

Your Destiny Is Formed Through Choices

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You decide who you will become. Your destiny is formed by the choices you make in life. Your relationship with God and your thinking pattern will determine your life here and your eternal destiny hereafter.

How is this done? Thoughts produce action, which produce habits which form a lifestyle – and yes, even changes your physical brain and body. You are changing who you are physically by what you think and do. This will be explained in this thesis.

Salvation is a Choice of the Heart

Salvation is an end result of a person choosing to be saved by allowing God to conquer their soul. One can choose to resist the Almighty and not get saved. Sanctification / Christlikeness is an end result of a person choosing to yield to God and allow Him to help us control our thoughts.

Romans 2:6-9 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

Acts 28:24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

Biblical Definitions of the Heart

The word *heart* is found 833 times in the Bible. It is the UNSEEN part of man. It is imperative that we understand what the Bible teaches as Proverbs 4:23 states, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.”

The *heart* can refer to one of several things: 1) The Seat of Sinful Man; 2) The Seat of Affections; or 3) The Seat of Decision as One Responds to God & His Word.

1) Seat of Sinful Man

Mark 7:21 ...out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

Numbers 15:39 ...seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

- **Prideful Heart**

2 Chronicles 26:16 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction...

2 Chronicles 32:26 Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart...

Daniel 5:20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride...

Deuteronomy 8:14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God...

- **Rebellious Heart**

Deuteronomy 2:30 ...for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate...

Ezekiel 12:2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they *are* a rebellious house.

2 Chronicles 36:13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

Isaiah 14:13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

2) Seat of Affections

Deuteronomy 24:15 At his day thou shalt give *him* his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he *is* poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

What you love (spend time with and spend money on) is determined by affections of your heart.

3) The Seat of 'The Will' as One Responds to God & His Word

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

- **Reject God**

Exodus 8:15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he **hardened his heart**...

Mark 16:14 ...**unbelief and hardness of heart**, because they believed not them which had seen him...

Acts 5:33 When they heard *that*, they were **cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them**.

Acts 7:54 ...**they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth**.

Deuteronomy 30:17 But **if thine heart turn away**, so that thou wilt not hear, **but shalt be drawn away**, and worship other gods, and serve them;

- **Seek God**

Deuteronomy 4:29 But **if** from thence thou **shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him**,

Exo. 25:2...bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it **willingly with his heart**...

Joshua 24:23 put away, *said he*, the strange gods... **and incline your heart unto the LORD** God of Israel.

This is a *Whosoever Will* principle. You decide. The choice is yours:

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him...

- **Receive the Word of God**

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had **prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it**, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Acts 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them **David** to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the *son* of Jesse, **a man after mine own heart**...

- **Not Receive the Word of God**

Psalms 14:1 The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God*. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good*.

Isaiah 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matthew 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land?

- **Biblical Warnings**

Hebrews 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Hardening the heart against the Almighty is a learned response. The heart slowly hardens against God as the sinner says, “No” to the working of the Holy Spirit. Deceitfulness reigns in the heart and the Lord is not yielded to. The end result is a rebellious, stiff-necked, hard-hearted deceiver.

Proverbs 29:1 He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Jesus told a parable of a sower and the seed. The seed was the Word of God and the soil is the heart. The Lord wants your heart to be fertile ground to receive the Word of God and allow it to take root in your heart and life.

Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an **honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it***, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Your Thoughts Are A Choice

Sin is Exposed to Lead One to Salvation

Hebrews 4:12-13 For **the word of God *is* quick**, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, **and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but **all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him** with whom we have to do.

Review: Your Heart

- A) Seat of Sinful Man
- B) Seat of Affections – you love from the heart
- C) Seat of ‘The Will’ – To Receive or Reject the Word of God

The heart and mind are the unseen part of the human. But to the Lord, He sees all. Darkness and light are alike to Him. Our thoughts and heart are known open to His eyes.

Psalms 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Romans 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Sin is exposed by the Word of God. This is done to lead to Savior / to salvation

Romans 7:13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

The Mind is the Battlefield

When you get saved, the Battlefield is the mind.

Our (for the saved) spiritual weapon is the Holy Spirit helping us live a supernatural life – a “Spirit-filled” life to overcome our sinful natural lustful, deceitful, vile self.

2 Corinthians 10:4 For the **weapons of our warfare** *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;

We are to bring those thoughts “into captivity.”

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity** every thought to the obedience of Christ;

The Greek word for this is: (bringing into captivity)

αινεμαλωτι, ζω (1) **literally, as a military technical term take prisoner, lead captive; passive be carried off as prisoner** (LU 21.24); (2) figuratively; (a) in a bad sense of the inner religious and moral struggle resulting in subjection to sin *take captive, make prisoner* (RO 7.23); as leading someone astray *carry away, gain control over* (2T 3.6); (b) **in a good sense, as subjecting one's thoughts to Christ take captive, take control of** (2C 10.5)

When we bring evil thoughts into captivity – it is to the obedience of Christ. Hence, evil thoughts are not sinful – but to dwell upon them or to entertain them produces sin. Thoughts become sin when they are given life.

James 1:14-15 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

When lust hath conceived – when it is given life (conception); sin is the result. A person can choose to bring an evil thought into captivity or to give it life (sin is result).

Thoughts Will Empower or Drain You

You do not always choose which thoughts enter your mind, but which thoughts you will entertain. Your thoughts will either empower you or drain you.

Zig Ziglar has said, “You are what you are and you are where you are because of what has gone into your mind. You change what you are and you change where you are by changing what goes into your mind.”¹

What you focus on becomes who you are! There is **Biblical evidence** and **scientific evidence** for this.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he...

- **Recurring patterns of behavior will change your brain:**

Your thought processes actually produce physical changes in your brain. Marcus Buckingham describes the brain’s inner workings and how these physical changes occur.

“Your brain is constructed of a mind-boggling number of neurons – perhaps twenty billion or more. These neurons don’t do the learning for you; this is accomplished by a little something called a *synapse*. Some of these synapses send signals away from the neuron toward other neurons, while others are designed to do the opposite. They receive signals from other neurons. The process of learning occurs this way: one neuron sends out a signal through the transmitting synapse, and over in a different area of your brain, another neuron picks up this signal through its receiving synapse. During the course of your life, each neuron will forge tens of thousands of these synaptic connections with other neurons, and with each new connection one new snippet of information is learned.”²

“It takes significant resources to forge new synaptic connections – genes have to be turned on, proteins created, synapses fired, blood vessels built – and nature is not in the habit of wasting resources unnecessarily. Consequently, once connections have been forged, your brain is designed to protect these connections by insulating them with a substance called myelin. This protection ensures that you don’t have to keep relearning things you’ve already learned. But this myelin coating is not without its costs. It actively hinders synaptic growth. This means that when you reach adulthood, your brain is less malleable than it was in childhood, and therefore that, when it comes to learning, your adult brain will always be looking for the least biologically costly way to forge new connections – which is to piggyback on connections already in place. You will actually grow the most new connections in those areas of your brain where you already have the most existing connections.”³

Hence, your thinking patterns in the past will determine the thinking pattern of the future. Godly thinking will tend to produce more godly thinking; and sinful thinking will produce an ‘easement’ to continue in sinful patterns of thought.

Mr. Buckingham goes on to state, “Current brain sciences suggests that during the course of your life they (recurring patterns of behavior) will become ever more pronounced, that strong synaptic branches

¹ Zig Ziglar quote

² Marcus Buckingham [The One Thing You Need To Know](#), p.236

³ Marcus Buckingham *Ibid*, p. 241-242

tend to become stronger still, and in this sense, you are becoming more and more of who you already are.”⁴

Thoughts that are chosen produce patterns of thought that are not easily broken. These are not easily broken because the physical brain has created natural synaptic branches on which those thoughts can flow.

This is a two-edged sword. It empowers the Christian into godly living and drains the carnal Christian through worldly thought.

- **Thoughts Can Empower You**

Your life has purpose as you (1) yield to the Spirit to lead your life; (2) lose your life for the gospel’s sake; and as you (3) follow Jesus as Lord of your life. This allows you to be the person God intended you to be.

- **Thoughts Can Drain You**

Your life can be vexed (1) by the influence of sinners; (2) as sin hinders your testimony; and (3) as you leave God-given authority in your life.

How to Change Your Thoughts

How do we change our thoughts to godly thinking?

1) You must be saved

1 Thess. 2:13 ...when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh** also in you that believe.

2) You Must Read the Word of God

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

3) You Must Meditate Upon the Word of God

Psalms 1:2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

4) You Must Do / Obey the Word of God

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt **meditate therein day and night**, that thou mayest **observe to do** according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Matt. 7:24 Therefore whosoever **heareth** these sayings of mine, **and doeth them**, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock...

The heart is likened to soil. It is to be softened as the mind meditates and obeys the Bible.

⁴ Marcus Buckingham The One Thing You Need To Know, p.250

This work of the heart and mind allowing God to change us is a gradual, life-long process. There are no shortcuts to holiness and godliness. The heart must be tender to the Lord and the mind must change its way of thinking. This is truly a supernatural work. The Greek word for *transformed* in Romans 12:2 is the word we get *Metamorphosis* from. This change of thinking is likened to a caterpillar changing into a beautiful butterfly!

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be **ye transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The process of changing our thinking is also found in Ephesians 4:22-24:

That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation **the old man**, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**;

And that ye **put on the new man**, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

A saved person has the mind of Christ – in our ‘new man’ which we receive with Bible salvation:

1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

We will to love what we decide to love. Jesus told us that we should put the Lord first in our lives:

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Our destiny is formed through the choices we make. These choices are our thought-by-thought process as we live out our daily life. We are in a constant state of change as we choose our thoughts.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he...

1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...

Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...

Ephesians 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind...

Make Wise Choices

Romans 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Rom. 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.