

The Way of the Lord

35. The Lordship of Jesus: Mutually Becoming More Like Him (Part 3)

In our last segment we illustrated how God intends for your brain to function. He wants your thoughts to be healthy so they can reach your free will and heart conscience. Then you can respond as Jesus would, choosing right and rejecting wrong. Remember though, if any negative thoughts attach to toxic memories, you'll be unable to make Christ-like decisions. Nor will Jesus have *rule* in your mind as LORD.

If you've been hindered by passive aggressive symptoms and toxic memories, we have some ways to help! We're going to discuss how our Lord intends for you to *stop* toxic memories from growing larger. And we'll show you how to renew your mind if toxic memories exist there. Let's begin by anchoring a key passage that will help you in this battle going on in your brain: "*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*" (2 Corinthians 10:4,5).

Each toxic memory had a demonic stronghold wrapped around it, deceiving you with defensive arguments and pretensions. *Arguments* deny that you have a problem. *Pretensions* are the rebellious resistance you erect to keep from being confronted. If you've demolished the strongholds, then you've blown away the power behind arguments or pretensions. All that's left are the toxic memories that the strongholds produced.

This is where you need the help of others who care enough for you to point out these toxic motives and responses. When they point them out to you, *repent!* The biblical pattern of repentance and change is twofold: you *cast away* the old, then you *put on* the new: "*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness*" (Ephesians 4:22-24).

If you repent, your thought can then travel to your free will area. It's there, along with the conscience in your heart, that you can now turn to Jesus to *heal the memory* and help you *respond as He would*. Here you can effectually pray for the Spirit of Christ to be at work in you to heal any toxic memories, and to fill in those old response ruts with those like Jesus. In this way you've taken captive the thought and made it obedient to Christ.

Every *toxic* thought that's changed into a *healthy* thought is a stepping stone to you becoming more like Jesus and living in His LORDship. What we've been talking about is how to *renew your mind*, changing toxic motives and responses into healthy, Christ-like ones. Keep in mind that the toxic memories in your brain often remain hidden until they show up as passive aggressive behaviors that hurt other people. This is why it's so important that you're open for others to point out these destructive behaviors that produce ongoing apprehension.

A key part of healing toxic memories is for you to *forgive from your heart* the people who've hurt you (Matthew 6:14,15). Then your heavenly Father will forgive *you*. You're also commanded to *pray* for those who've hurt you—in fact, to *bless* them! (Romans 12:14). As you imitate Jesus in these character traits of forgiveness and blessing, *He* will heal your emotions.

Make sure that you've turned away from the world's ways, values and goals. These have entrapped your *mind* in your old way of thinking. It's no small thing that you're warned: "*Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God*" (James 4:4). Our Lord is calling you to be transformed as your *mind* obeys HIS pattern of living. That's because ultimately, having your *mind* transformed into HIS way allows you to discern your Father's good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

There's one more battleground we need to address so you can prevent toxic memories from even forming in your brain. Your first line of defense is to *evaluate each thought* as it comes to your mind from your five senses. If the incoming thought prompts *negative feelings* such as anxiety, anger, fear, or any other emotional tension, STOP it right there. *Capture* the thought, and align it with the way Christ would have you respond (2 Corinthians 10:5). Intentionally look to *Jesus* and how HE would respond if He were you. And *pray for wisdom*, asking His Spirit for guidance.

A potentially painful thought must be stopped *before* it receives a negative chemical and becomes a toxic memory. Remember, *all* spiritual warfare is a battle over who or what will rule your brain. That's why it's essential that you STOP negative thoughts from becoming toxic memories. Otherwise, they'll produce passive aggressive symptoms in *you*, and ongoing apprehension in *others*. We also encourage you, •be proactive in exposing any toxic memories in your brain. Don't keep them hidden out of shame or embarrassment. •Get together with those in your faith family who care about you and know you well. Ask each one to reveal any attitudes and behaviors in you that cause ongoing apprehension in your relationship with them. •Take the time to go through God's Word together. Find out what God says to help you transform the causes of ongoing apprehension into love-based, Christ-like attitudes and actions. You'll not only discover Christ-like character qualities to *replace* your old responses. You'll also find that your determination to remove old symptoms strengthens you to resist *future attacks* by Satan.

Here's the transformation that Peter urges you to intentionally seek: "*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 1:5-8). We really encourage you to put on hold your other priorities, and make *removing toxic attitudes and actions* your first priority. Deliberately set time aside for each of you to focus on those things that *hinder* the Lordship of Jesus in your life and allow ongoing apprehension to continue. (See Ecclesiastes 7:25.) Probe and investigate the source of tension in your relationship. Don't let apprehension and toxic motivations keep you *all* from walking the way of the Lord.

For Further Study

- Hebraic Article: *Freeing People From Co-dependency*
- Book: *Christian Halakhahs*
- Lifebyte 74: *Having the Heart of Jesus — A Kingdom Mindset*
- Lifebyte 75: *To Serve the King, You Must Leave Your Comfort Zone*

Each is a free download on our website: <restorationministries.org>