

# A Battle for Our Hearts and Minds

## *We Need God's Perspective*

World Outreach Church  
Sermon Discussion Guide  
Sunday Sermon: **December 11, 2022**



There is a spiritual battle in the earth, and it is being played out in the expressions of our lives. But sometimes it is more comfortable to avoid the conflict around us. We are, however, more prepared to be salt and light as we watch, listen, think, and act—not in anger or violence—but with our faith. You see, the Church dictates the behaviors of our culture. Heartfelt repentance among God's people will have to take place before we see reform in the public square. *So, let the change begin with us ...*

### I. GOD'S THOUGHTS VS. MY THOUGHTS

Romans 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

#### Definitions

- ❖ Information – facts & data
- ❖ Knowledge – when information becomes available/personal
- ❖ Wisdom – best use of knowledge

Isaiah 55:6–9 <sup>6</sup> *Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.* <sup>7</sup> **Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts.** *Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.* <sup>8</sup> **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,”** declares the LORD. <sup>9</sup> *“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

1. **In what ways does the enemy try to consume our thoughts and distract us from aligning with God's Word?**
2. **How do your behaviors reflect the state of your mind? How would these change if you were to fully renew your thoughts according to God's Word?**

### II. FUTILE THINKING –LIFE APART FROM GOD

#### A. A Choice to Be Made

Deuteronomy 30:19–20 [Moses] <sup>19</sup> *This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. **Now choose life**, so that you and your children may live <sup>20</sup> and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.*

Joshua 24:15 [Joshua] *But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”*

3. **When was a time you hesitated or refused to speak up against evil because “it didn't affect you?”**
4. **How can you intentionally and purposefully bring Christ to the center of your own home and immediate family? Extended family? Friend groups?**

#### B. Refusing God's Perspective, A Downward Spiral

Romans 1:21–32 <sup>21</sup> *For **although they knew God**, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but **their thinking became futile** and their foolish hearts were darkened.* <sup>22</sup> *Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.*

<sup>24</sup> *Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.* <sup>25</sup> *They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.*

<sup>26</sup> **Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts.** Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, **he gave them over to a depraved mind**, to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; <sup>31</sup> they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup> Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

**They knew God, v.21**

**God gave them over to shameful lusts, v.26**

**God gave them over to a depraved mind, v.28**

1 Corinthians 1:18–25 <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written: **“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”** <sup>20</sup> Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

5. **How do you measure your success? What changes do you need to make in order to focus more on “storing up treasures in heaven” verses on this earth?**

### III. KNOWING GOD (THERE IS A GOD; HE CAN BE KNOWN!)

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: **that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.**

Philippians 3:8–11 <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to **the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. <sup>10</sup> **I want to know Christ** and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

6. **When did you come to know the Lord? How does knowing God bring freedom to your life?**

#### PRAYER

Almighty God, in humility we ask that You give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that we might know You better. We pray also that the eyes of our hearts may be enlightened in order that we may know the hope to which You have called us, the riches of Your glorious inheritance in the saints and Your incomparably great power for us who believe. Grant us understanding hearts to perceive Your power exerted in our Lord Jesus when He was raised from the dead and seated at Your right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come, amen. (from Ephesians 1:17-22)