



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## The Importance of Thoughts

- by Bill Crews

If you are concerned about your character, your conduct, your life and your destiny, then be concerned about your thoughts. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). The heart is the mind, and the mind is the center of thoughts. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). A man may not be what he appears to be, but he is what he thinks.

What goes **into** your mind, then, is extremely important. Be careful about the interests you acquire, the tastes you cultivate, the desires you develop. They shape what goes into your mind. The conversations you listen to, the scenes you observe, the movies you view, the TV programs you tune into, the newspapers, magazines and books you read, the songs by which you are entertained, the jokes you laugh at, the things you are taught all have a part in feeding information into your mind.

You evaluate and monitor all that you hear and see. Your standard for evaluation and your conscience are vital and play their roles. You may seek out or receive what is vulgar or distorted, or you may reject and refuse it. You may pursue and embrace what is wholesome and true, or you may have no interest in it and neglect it. Be cautious, particular and selective about what goes into your mind. If you allow garbage to go in, then garbage will come out in the form of words and deeds.

What goes on **in** your mind is also extremely important. Be careful about your thoughts, meditations, desires, ambitions, daydreams and fantasies. You determine what goes on in your mind. You are the master of it because you have control over it.

It is your own little secret world -- except that God knows all about it, and will one day bring it to light when you have to answer for it in the judgment (Eccl. 12:14; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10). And sooner or later it will find expression in your life and make itself known.

We cannot be like God without thinking the thoughts of God. We cannot know the thoughts of God apart from the revelation of the things of God in the word of God (1 Cor. 2:11-13). We cannot have the thoughts of God in our hearts apart from reverent study of and meditation upon the word of God, coupled with a sincere desire to do the will of God (Jn. 7:17).

## Looking Like Him

by Rickie Jenkins

The purpose of revelation is not simply information but transformation. The gospel affects the heart of man. It touches him at his very core. It changes who he is. In repentance the old man is crucified. That man is buried in baptism and a new man with a new relationship to God is born. Don't stop there. That is the beginning. When that new man grows up, the aim is to look like Christ (2Cor. 3:18). So what does that man look like?

**First, transformation changes the character of the new man.** God is love, so man seeks to become like God. Love does not describe what a man does but who the new man is. God is pure so man seeks to become pure as He is pure. God is righteous so man does not simply do right but he seeks to be righteous. God is who we seek to become. That is why a passage like 1Corinthians 13:4-7 is so important. The passage describes the character of God. We want to be like Him.

**Second, transformation changes how the new man behaves.** There is a change in the way he treats people, even his enemies. Whereas before we might have exchanged evil for evil, now it is pray for, do good and speak well of even our enemies (Mat. 5:44-45). The new man no longer lies, now changed when he speaks, he tells the truth. When he works he labors to have to give to those who have need. He controls his anger. He is tenderhearted and forgiving (Eph. 4: 25-32).

**What is the net result?** If the gospel changes the heart of man so that he looks like God and acts like God how that would help us in local churches? Aren't most problems because of carnality? Don't most problems come because the old man raises his head again? Aren't those problems at their heart problems of character? Why would people who are trying to become like God mess with sin or even things questionable? Where is the debate on those things? Things like drinking, dancing, gambling? How do those things make me like God? When I love like He loves where is envy, hatred and strife? Transformation is not simple but it simply solves the sins of carnality that destroy us. He loves what is right and hates what is wrong (1Cor. 13:6).

**What would be the net result in our homes?** If husbands are being transformed to love their wives as Christ loved the church where is the problem of submission? If husbands sacrifice themselves for the good of their wives where is the problem with respectful obedience? If husbands are growing to look like God where is the failure to provide for his family? If wives are being transformed to look like Him where is the nagging? Where is the complaining? Where is the self-centeredness? If parents are being transformed to be like God where is the provoking the child to wrath? For children, how could there be failure to honor mother and father? Where is there room for a grudge for either a parent or a child?

Maybe this is an oversimplification but haven't we given Satan enough time and place in our hearts and lives? Can't we see the dead end of following him? A suggestion; give God and His way a fervent try. Then there will be joy and peace that passes understanding. That will produce peaceable fruits of righteousness. Focus Magazine June 3, 2020

## The Cure for Fighting

- by Greg Gwin

A common complaint of parents is the frequent fussing and fighting that occurs between their children. The scenario typically develops like this: one starts it all with an unkind word or deed, the other responds in kind, and the fight is on. Before it is over, the words have become meaner, the blows have become harder, and tempers have flared higher. Usually these serious fights result over some amazingly petty and insignificant things. And, of course, there's always the "tattling" and accusations concerning who is at fault. All in all, it is a pretty ugly thing.

Spiritual brothers often exhibit the same propensity for fighting. The similarities are truly striking! Think about it: it's usually started by an unkind word or deed; words become harsher; tempers get involved; it is usually over something that is very insignificant; there's always the name calling and finger pointing coupled with gossip and rumoring. All in all, it is a pretty ugly thing.

The important 'bottom line' is that God commands us to be better than this. That goes for our relationships in the family and in the church. Parents hope that the problems with their children will be overcome with teaching and maturity. It is certain that problems among brethren can only be avoided in the same way.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." (Romans 12: 10). Think! Collegevue 7/23/24