

**Series: Peace of Mind
“Change Your Mind”
Romans 12:2**

Big Idea – The world wants to control your mind, but God wants to transform your mind.

Look at Romans 12:1 & 2

Romans 12:1 Therefore dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:1 Brothers and sisters, in view of all we have just shared about God's compassion, I encourage you to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, dedicated to God and pleasing to him. This kind of worship is appropriate for you.

2 Don't become like the people of this world. Instead, change the way you think. Then you will always be able to determine what God really wants—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

Romans 12:1 is the 4th “therefore” in Romans and it's the therefore of Dedication. True biblical dedication to God involves 3 steps or areas – 1. Body, 2. Mind, and 3. Will.

1. The believer's body is God's temple (1 Cor. 6:19-20) because the Spirit of God dwells within him (Rom. 8:9). It is our privilege to glorify Christ in our body and magnify Christ in our body (Phil. 1:20-21). We must yield the parts of our body as "instruments of righteousness" (Rom. 6:13) for the Holy Spirit to use in the doing of God's work.

3. Your mind controls your body, and your will controls your mind. Many people think they can control their will by "willpower," but usually they fail. (Paul said this in Rom. 7:15-21). It is only when we yield the will to God that His power can take over and give us the willpower (and the won't power!) that we need to be victorious Christians.

We surrender our wills to God through disciplined prayer. As we spend time in prayer, we surrender our will to God and pray, with the Lord, "Not my will, but Thy will be done." We must pray about everything, and let God have His way in everything.

Philippians 4:6 “Worry about nothing, pray about everything.”

I try to begin each day by surrendering my body (my eyes, my mouth, my ears, my hands, my feet, my brain) to the Lord. Then I spend time in His Word and let Him transform my mind and prepare my thinking for that new day. Then I pray, and I yield the plans of the day to Him and let Him work as He sees best. I especially pray about those tasks that I'm most concerned

about and He always sees me through. To have a right relationship with God, we should start the day by yielding to Him our bodies, minds, and wills.

Today we are going to focus on the second area of dedication, our Minds.

I want you to understand the reality that your negative thoughts are changing the chemical makeup of your brain. The reason is because every thought creates a neurochemical change in your body. When you think a positive thought, you get a surge of rewarding neurotransmitters releasing a very legal and exciting drug called dopamine. It's legal and it's powerful. And every time your brain drops some dopamine, you get this hit, this buzz, this thrill. Someone you like and respect comments on your latest Instagram posts. You get some dopamine. Someone says, Ooh, girl, your hair looks so good. Dopamine. Okay. It's that positive surge of release in your brain.

interesting the more often you think a thought, science tells us it's easier to think that thought again. Once you think a thought, you're creating neural pathways in your brain.

we have billions of neural pathways in our brain. The more often we think that thought, the more the connection is there, and it's easier to think that thought again, and before long, whatever we have been thinking becomes our default thought.

What we call a Stronghold. - If you believe a lie for long enough, you start to be impacted as if that lie were true. You get stuck in a rut. Imagine this. If your boy has a go-kart, and he rides it around the back yard for 100 days he would create a path, probably a dirt track in the yard.

In your mind if for a 100 days straight, you think on a lie, you start to believe the lie, and create a neural pathway through your brain.

With God's help, we learn how to renew our minds. How? Stay off that old path. I stay off that path for a 100 days, what happens? The grass grows back. There's more resistance. It's not as easy to walk. And I forge a new pathway in my brain toward the truth, and the truth ultimately sets me free. This is science and is Godly, because God created science.

Romans 12:2 says literally "don't be squeezed into the mold of the world but be transformed, changed by renewing your mind!"

How?

1. Remove the Lies

Ephesians 4:17 "So I encourage you in the Lord's name not to live any longer like other people in the world. Their minds are set on worthless things.

18 They can't understand because they are in the dark. They are excluded from the life that God approves of because of their ignorance and stubbornness.

19 Since they no longer have any sense of shame, they have become promiscuous. They practice every kind of sexual perversion with a constant desire for more.

Ephesians 4:20 But what you learned in Christ was not like this.

21 I know that you heard about him, and you are in him, so you were taught the truth that is in Jesus.

22 You were taught to leave your old self—to stop living the evil way you lived before. That old self becomes worse, because people are deceived by the evil things they want to do.

John 8:44 “You belong to your father the devil, and you want to do what he wants. He was a murderer from the beginning and was against the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he shows what he is really like, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”

Satan called here, a liar and the “father of lies” – he lied to Adam and Eve and told them if they disobeyed God they would not die. They disobeyed and began to die “wherefore as by one man sin entered the world and death by sin...”

What kind of lies does the devil tell people?

You're worthless, not good enough, not smart enough, not pretty, not handsome
You can't make it, can't succeed, can't get a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife
You won't get over cancer, won't get a job, won't have enough money...

God doesn't love you, God's deserted you, God won't use you because you're damaged goods...

These lies make ruts, or neural pathways in your brain that get deeper and deeper the more you think about them.

2. Replace the lies with God's truth

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

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

John 8:32 “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Psalms 1:2 “But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.”

Psalms 119:15 “I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.”

Psalms 143:5 “... I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.”

What does it mean to meditate —To engage in mental exercise; to focus or fix one's thoughts.

Discipline of Meditation: (New age) One with the universe.

In Eastern meditation they want you to empty your mind

In biblical/Christian meditation you will fill your mind with God's truth - Fix mind.

Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed/focused on You, because he trusts in You."

Training my mind to focus—Focus is a skill.

Great theologian Jackie Chan (The Karate Kid)—"Your focus needs more focus."

Mind Drifts—Generally to the lies—Can't, Won't. Not.

Mind—Train it toward truth.

"...dear brothers and sisters, one final thing.(**) Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Philippians 4:8 NLT (Chained in Prison)

Doesn't say, God let me down, Can't go on, Life can't get worse.

... if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."
Philippians 4:8

3. Re-wire your brain

Neural Pathways—The More you think thought—Easier is to think.

Create new neural pathways—Renewing mind with truth

3. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

5 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 Cor 10:3-5

Train your mind with that truth over and over again – How?

Speak it, write it, text it, repeat it!

4. Renew your perspective

Called "Reframing" – it's all about how you see it!

Our problem is Cognitive Biases the Mental Filters we grow up with

Cognitive bias—Mistake in reasoning based on personal experiences or preferences.
(It's a Mental filter that impacts how think.)

If you Grew up around abusive men—Hard trust men.
If your Parents said “rich people bad”— may Feel guilty start to succeed.

The FILTERS you have—Shape how you see life.

Cognitive Bias is a Default Filter—Pre-wired interpretation
This is Why—2 people respond differently to the same situation.

Not that the FACTS are different—It’s the FILTER.

Receive Feedback—Some Offended (Others Thankful)
Church—Christians a bunch of hypocrites—others, I can really feel God there
Read some news sources—Vaccine answer—Kill you (chip)

Biblical example in Numbers 13/14—Moses sent 12 spies to explore land.
2 (Joshua & Caleb) said “Great—Beautiful—Let’s go take the land!”
10 (the majority) —Land devours—Giants—We are like grasshoppers!

Not that the FACTS are different—It’s the FILTER.

Not just the FILTER—It’s also the FRAME

Same situation—How you frame it—Determines how you see it.
(Tool called) Reframing

- Reframing—Creating a different way of looking at a situation or relationship by changing its meaning.

You can’t control what happens to you.
But you can control how you frame it.

Wanted something in life?—Experiencing opposite!

Worked hard, degree—Job overqualified diff field.
Dreamed great marriage—Married sweetheart—Divorced.
This point life—Expected something different, better.

Paul dreamed of going to Rome— as a Preacher— but certainly not as a Prisoner.

Paul could’ve framed situation (Phil 1:12-13 NWV)

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me really sucks. As a result of the hell I’ve been through, I’m quitting Bible study and never going back to church.
Phil 1:12-13 NWV (Whiners)

12 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Phil 1:12-13

What most people would think is bad—Framing it as good! To do this you must believe Romans 8:28 “God is working all things...

Chained influential Roman guards—New every 8 hours—Vs 14.

14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear. Phil 1:14

If God works in all things for good
Reject unhealthy Default Frames. (Loser, Failure, Not smart)

Reframing
Not passively receiving circumstance—Actively interpreting.

Not interpreting God thru circumstances!
Interpreting my circumstances thru goodness of God!

What has happened me—Actually served advance the gospel.

You can't control what happens to you.
But you can control how you frame it.

Romans 8:36 - As it is written in the Scriptures: “For you we are in danger of death all the time. People think we are worth no more than sheep to be killed.”

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

38 I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love which Christ Jesus our Lord shows us. We can't be separated by death or life, by angels or rulers, by anything in the present or anything in the future, by forces

39 or powers in the world above or in the world below, or by anything else in creation.

Replace the world's lies with God's truth