

CHOICES

As I sat by the window early this morning, there were thoughts of staying at home today, instead of going to town, getting a padded handle wrap for my racquet, dropping a check off to a vendor, etc. With this thought of staying at home came a sense of peace. But as I sipped on a cup of coffee, another thought entered the mental realm; I had e-mailed a summary of an oil and gas deal I was selling to what I thought was a bona fide investor. Well, he had turned the deal down, based on an absurd reason. So that bit of negative line of thought started to permeate my thinking.

Determined to subdue this uninvited and interloper thought, I headed down to the pond. On the way there, other thoughts invaded my mind;

the road needs to be black-topped;
there are a few dandelions yet to be killed;
the trees I set out a few days ago are doing fine;
there is a small leak in the dam which I can remedy with bentonite;
the minnows are not as thick on the feeder as they were before;
there was a mother kingfisher squawking at me for invading her turf and getting
too close to her nest across the way;
and so forth.

Such thoughts and a thousand others, invade our minds every moment to derail the intent of our heart to keep our Heavenly Father at the forefront. Indeed, such seems impossible. We must make a continual choice and effort to control our thoughts and the directions they take us. We will reap the consequences of those choices, some immediately, some in the years to come.

There is an incident that seems to apply here that happened a few years back. A man called me from Florida about an exploration concept. One thing led to another and we drilled a very potent oil well in east Tennessee. Now this man was in his seventies, an Alpha male, an ex-Marine, and very capable at whatever he tackled. He had adopted a set of twins shortly after their birth, one boy and one girl. His wife was a very beautiful and stately woman, but she would not let him discipline either of their children, particularly the son (she operated out of emotions). At the time in which I was involved with him, the son was forty-two and still living with his parents. You fill in the blanks.

As this brief span of time in 2002 progressed, we were successful. The week after we completed the well, the forty-two year old son took a 9mm and shot his father in the head. As the mother and sister reeled from this trauma, they called me to take over operations of the well in Tennessee. As I visited with them, I related to them that I had been where they were, in a manner of speaking. Upon seeing me for the first time, the mother hugged me, and told me that "I had to help them get through this." I replied I would.

As the occasion presented itself, I told the mother and daughter they had a mental choice to make, whenever the flood of horror and thoughts of hate filled their minds. They could either think of forgiveness and goodness, or allow the thoughts of horror and hate to permeate their minds. If they allowed the latter, then their lives would fall apart and the negative would rule their lives from then on. If they chose the former, then some modicum of peace would come into their lives. At the time, they received this. Later there was a pattern of thought and action that proved otherwise. The mother that would not allow discipline, reaped what she had sown thirty-five years earlier. There was literally Hell to pay.

So we can see in this the application of the choice-action equation and its resulting consequences. No one could have ever guessed that the mother's choice to "be easy" on her son, would result in his great angst towards his father. Equally, no one can foretell the heartache and heartbreak that can occur when God's word is not heeded. But He has given His word to show us how to live. There are many, many beneficial promises of God which can be ours when we choose to live according to His conditions and requisites; equally, there are many judgments with their corresponding conditions and consequences that will come upon those who choose not to do so. Of the latter, there are two primary conditions that incur the whole spectrum of all that is negative and disturbing. One is the "casting of His Word behind our backs." The second is "forgetting Him."

The word *forgetting* has some interesting synonyms; from Webster:*

- lose remembrance
- slight
- neglect
- be heedless
- careless omission
- inattentive

from the Hebrew:*

- mislaid, inattention from want of memory.

Now it strikes me that all these definitions involve the same action as the one I had going to the pond, and the woman whose husband was shot by the undisciplined son; they are present or absent by the action of the will called "choice." We *choose* to remember, we *choose* to think upon, to meditate, to pay attention; we *choose* to mislay, to be carelessly inattentive, to carelessly omit or lose remembrance.

We can either *choose* to think thoughts of terror or thoughts of forgiveness. We can *choose* to dwell on the guy that spurned our deal, a demonic weed that plagues us, or the goodness of our Heavenly Father. We can *choose* to read, study and chew the Word, or let the tyranny of the immediate and mundane rule our thoughts and therefore our daily lives.

(*See frequently used reference list at end of book.)

What is significant in all this is that the entirety of our fourscore and ten years are comprised of micro-moments of individual thoughts that involve instantaneous choices. The sum total of our lives each day is comprised of thousands of mental choices. Before you know it, an instant converts to a minute; a minute becomes an hour; an hour becomes a day, a day becomes a week, and so forth. If our particular stage in life is comprised of a tremendous level of activity, that level of activity holds a commensurate level of mental choices.

The younger we are, the more tyrannical the world in which we live becomes. There is simply little or no time for introspection, much less thoughts of God Almighty. He thus becomes forgotten by nothing more or less than omission, most of which is careless, inattentive, neglected and heedless. Enter the Grim Reaper.

Literally dozens of irrelevant thoughts surreptitiously began to permeate my mind and provide static for my intent to go to the pond in the first place, which was to try to hear from the Heavenlies. Sound familiar?

This diabolical tyranny of our senses must have increased a 100-fold in the last two generations. The permeation of the electronic and cyberspace world, along with an increase in the demonic, has virtually obliterated our spiritual sound wave spectrum. Baal rules.

Being created in the image of the Trinity, we are comprised of a spirit, soul and a body. The body has two elements, the voluntary and the involuntary; the soul is comprised of three parts, the mind, will and emotions; the spirit has only one part, complete in and of itself.

When I find my emotions are out of kilter, whether mad, hurt, sad, offended, etc., I turn to the Book of Psalms, and there find the Balm of Gilead, and healing for that which is out of sorts. When my thoughts are fragmented, confused, uncertain, etc., I turn to the Book of Proverbs.

In Proverbs 1:32, there is a special statement; “For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them; but he who listens to Me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of evil.”

To make sure we are on the same track, definitions are in order:

Simple: inconsiderate, unwary, artless, guileless, unsuspecting; these are those who through want of knowledge and experience, act unwisely.

Turning away: perverse, backsliding, drawing back, retreating.

Complacency: careless, at ease, prosperity, safety.

Fools: asses, literally.

Secure: safely, without turmoil or disruption.

It is interesting that throughout Scripture the word “complacency” nearly always connotes prosperity. Why prosperity? We read in Ezekiel, that was one of the sins of Sodom, as well as one of Israel. It is apparent prosperity ushers in all sorts of distractions and activities such as:

bills cooking shopping babies cars traffic school politics TV
Dow Jones ponds A/C yard news games play school mowing sports
chiropractor tires repairs dominoes cookouts chemtrails vacations
sewing excessive work savings groceries loans computer e-mail
weeds swimming pools clothes ipods cell phones truck hitches prices

None of these in and of themselves are evil; it is from their perspective into which we run into trouble. Centering our thoughts on any one of these things can get us so preoccupied with them, that our lives get out of balance and we “forget” other things that are important. This bane of “forgetting” is connected to “prosperity.” Prosperity ushers in all sorts of distractions, not the least of which is a sense of being bullet-proof. Prosperity, while not evil in and of itself, carries with it this sense of satisfaction and feelings that are warm and fuzzy, everything is all right.

The lynchpin, therefore, is the state of our minds in the midst of this prosperity, particularly within the purview of the will. It is here that we make a choice that either brings us into the place of being complacent, or keeps us within the bounds of the Godly.

It is difficult to grasp that God is everywhere and all-knowing. These are concepts with which we make a mental slap and go on down our life’s highway. But let us dig a little deeper; if God is God, then He by definition is Everything. If He then is **Everything**, then our thoughts must fall **within** that Everything. In other words, what we are, including the imperfection of what we think, is to conform to the confines of what He is. Otherwise, we are not only deceiving ourselves, we are disputing Him **and** His Word.

Paul wasn’t just blathering when he said to “take every thought captive to obey Christ.” We have blundered down our individual paths as if we, and our thoughts, were stand-alone and separate from our Father. They are not; if we are reborn spiritually by Him, then we are in Him. But our old nature still wants to rear its ugly head and keep our thoughts sin-centered. This is why we must wash our minds with the “water of the Word.” It cannot be any other way.

Two verses that are especially basic to this subject are found in Isaiah 26:3, “Thou dost keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee.” Ezekiel 23:35, “Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, therefore bear the consequences of your lewdness and harlotry.”

He is superlative in all respects; how we voluntarily choose to place ourselves, and our thoughts, is the question.

One of the Sons of Issachar. March 30, 2007