

## How do I get control of my thought life?

2 Cor 10:3-6 must surely be one of the top passages in the Bible to help Christians with their thought life and the actions that follow the thoughts.

With all of the pictures and moving images that are presented to you each day, there is an indelible mark on your mind that causes the thoughts to run to places you often don't want to go. God knew about the effect of those images when he warned the Jews to destroy the pictures in Canaan (Num 33:52).

"How can I stop these thoughts from coming into my head?" The trouble is that they are held in the mind as strong holds according to verse 5. And they are not easy to get out. To make any progress with your thoughts, you must understand what they do, what must be done with them, and how to do it. Here's a simple outline from the text.

These imaginations and thoughts:

1. Are in the flesh, v.3 — Gen 6:5, thus they will trouble you until you die.
2. Exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, v.5 — Gal 5:17, thus they are involved in the war between the flesh and spirit. When your mind runs to fleshly thoughts, it cannot be thinking godly thoughts at the same time. For instance, during a sermon, your mind will often run to something other than the preaching and you aren't able to remember anything that was preached during that "day dream."
3. Lead to disobedience, v.6 — When you find yourself in disobedience, check your thought life first; that's usually where the problem is. A Christian girl met a young man and decided to travel to the Bahamas with him. She had been thinking about finding a man. She thought it would be alright to travel with him. Yet, she's disobeying God.
4. Must be:
  - a. Pulled down, v.4
  - b. Cast down, v.5
  - c. Brought into captivity, v.5 — in other words, you can't pull them out and play with them when you want to and then put them back when you are through with them.
5. Must obey Christ, v.5 - 1 Cor 2:16 because we have the mind of Christ, Jesus is now supposed to be the ruler of the mind.
6. Cannot be whipped by carnal weapons, v.3, 4 - Clever psychology does not work!! Paul recommends dead reckoning, Rom 6:11. That is a Christian won't give in to the desires of the mind when he recognizes that his flesh is dead. When you fail to recognize that your flesh is dead, you end up running errands for a corpse.
7. Must be whipped by God's mighty weapons, v.4 — some of his weapons are:
  - a. Prov 16:3 - committing your works to the Lord
  - b. Heb 9:14 — pleading the blood of Christ
  - c. Ps 139:23-24 — letting God search your heart and try your thoughts.

- d. Ps 19:14 — meditating on things acceptable to God
  - i. Is 26:3 — keep your mind stayed on the Lord
  - ii. Col 3:15-16 — sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs
  - iii. Phil 4:8 — think good thoughts

If you will do these things, your thought life will make dramatic improvements, in time. And not only that, according to v.6, you should be ready to revenge the disobedience of your past thought life when your obedience is fulfilled. That is you will actually mark off time against the former wicked thoughts so that the further removed you are from them, the more likely you won't think about them anymore. Furthermore, your actions follow your thoughts. So, as you think right you will do right.

