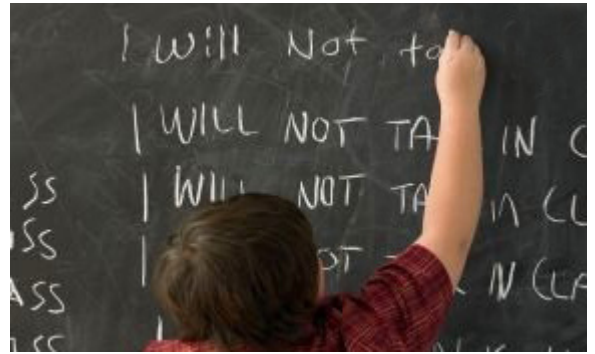


*"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." **Philippians 4:8 KJV***



IF you keep your mind within the parameters of God's Word, you are the master of what you think, but without God's Word you have no standard. If you have no standard, you cannot test or try anything! This applies to all your decisions! What is your standard of a good parking space and who or what determines its value ? Thoughts are from three places; you, God, and Satan. But think for a moment on these words, "Who is speaking?" Say them in your mind. Who spoke? What voice did you hear? Your own, of course. and so it is with every thought you think! So how will you know if Satan has whispered a thought into your conscience? How would you know? God's Word has two criteria for any thought; virtue and praise. Virtue is the power of God's Holy Purity, and unless the thought lifts up God's Word, there is no praise. In addition to being true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, but thoughts must also be virtuous and God honoring. This is a discipline of thought that will take a lifetime to master, but would cure 99% of the ills of the present-day believer. If we disallowed any thought that didn't measure up to the standard of God's Word, we would prevent the doubt, despair, and discord that so easily finds residence in our soul. Our actions would follow suite, and kindness and brotherly Love would be automatic. Our testimony to the world would be spotless! The secret of this discipline is meditation upon the Word of God. Reading God's Word is like putting your food in your mouth, but unless you chew and swallow, you will either choke, starve, or both. Meditation is thinking; is the "chewing and swallowing" of a Holy Life. It is a command! *"This Book of the Law (God's Word) shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate (think) therein DAY AND NIGHT, that thou mayest observe to DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT IS WRITTEN therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."* It allows God's Word to "dwell in us richly." Without meditation we become emaciated believers. Satan's prison camps of Doubt, Despair, and Discord are full of starving believers. The sad part is, they could free themselves with the solid gold key of faith. When we allow the whispers of evil in our thoughts either knowingly or unknowingly, we bind our souls in the chains of sin once again and become servants to our own carnal desires. *"His servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? For to be carnally minded (thought outside of God's Word) is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* Many times the only reason we disobey God is the fear of men!

True and honest, just and pure,
Thoughts of these effect a cure,
For sin-sick souls in Satan's hold,
Replacing sin with faith's pure gold. -CGP

Pay attention to what you're thinking. Just because it's in your head doesn't mean that it started there. If you fill your mind with the purity of God's Word, there'll be no room for anything else.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds (of unbelieving thought;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (God's Word)." 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 KJV