

FAITH MOVES FORWARD 02: HOW SATAN KEEPS US STILL Study Notes

When we are walking by faith we advance. We move from faith to faith, from strength to strength, from glory to glory. Satan doesn't have the wisdom or power to destroy us all – he couldn't stop you getting saved, he couldn't stop you talking in tongues, he couldn't stop you getting healed and HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO STOP YOU ADVANCING IN FAITH and operating in AMAZING FAITH AND CHANGING THE WORLD. We are coming out and it will be GLORIOUS.

But I want to tell you that satan has a little compromise – if he cannot destroy you, he loves to distract you. It's a lot easier, and then he just keeps you still. He just keeps you where you are. You never progress, you never mature, you never move into something more. And the devil does this in the emotional realm.

Today I am going to expose that filthy liar and teach you how to deal with him so you can grow and advance. And where he loves to operate is in your friendships and relationships especially in the church so he can get you offended at church, and then all the blessings of church – you can no longer access them!

Read Ephesians 6.10 and 11. Notice that the devil has wiles. The Greek is *methodos*, and I am sure you can work out what English word we get from that. It comes from two Greek words – *meth* means with, and *odos* means road. The devil attacks us “with a road” – Satan has a road – a path. This will help you today, realize that satan only has one way to access your life. Most people believe that satan has multiple ways to access our lives but it is not true. He only has one road to you, and we are going to expose that road today and set up a road block.

So, imagine you want to go somewhere – forget GPS and SATELLITE APPS ON THE PHONE – right, old school times, you need a map. You want to get the map out and have a look at the roads. What is the route, what is the way to get there. You get somewhere by deciding a ROUTE. You find the ROAD. That is your METHOD OF GETTING THERE – your road. Now, Satan is not messing about with you – he has a method, he has a road.

Satan looks at you and has a chosen destination in mind – he is not messing around with the scenic route – he is driving straight at you! ON HIS ROAD – he wants to kill you, destroy you and at the least STOP YOU GROWING AND MOVING FORWARD.

Now faith MOVES FORWARD – so satan's plan is to get you off FAITH, get you to stop looking to JESUS, and therefore stop moving forward. So what is the road that satan is on and what is his destination?

Read 2 Cor. 2.11. We are not ignorant of his devices. The word devices is “*noemata*” in the Greek. “*Noe*” is your mind, your intelligence, your thinking, and we need to be aware of how satan thinks. We need to be aware of his schemes and plans and ideas!

Noemata means mind games. Satan loves mind games, he loves to confuse you, he loves to get into your mind and mess up your thinking. Satan works on an intellectual level. He does not operate on a faith level, on a spiritual level– but on an intellectual level. We are not ignorant of satan's mind games and we must know how they work!

That is the devil's destination for your life – to get inside your mind. To fill your mind with wrong emotions – when I see someone beating up a statue, I know satan has messed with their mind. He is in there. He likes to twist your perceptions of things and see

things that are godly and pure as ungodly and impure, and things that are impure as godly. He loves to mess up your mind, to get you depressed, hopeless, to mess up your thinking. He plays mind games with you.

How do we handle this? Read 2 Cor. 10:3-5. We bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

This is spiritual warfare – shouting at demons floating above a city. You have fallen for the mind games. YOU have missed the point. True spiritual warfare is TAKING THOUGHTS CAPTIVE. Most people just let thoughts go through their mind, their thought life is utterly unexamined. BUT WE HAVE TO BE DIFFERENT. If we want to progress in life, if we want to change the world, walk in our destiny, we have to GET A GRIP OF OUR THOUGHT LIFE.

Not just some of the time, not just when you feel spiritual and are in church, not just when you are thinking about God, but every thought you have must be kidnapped and made a slave and controlled by you. That is the way you stop satan playing mind games with you.

Satan is throwing thoughts into your mind all the time – he loves to use your mind as HIS PLAYGROUND. He wants to distort what you see, make you fall for illusions, and implant ideas that stop you moving forward. Thoughts like:

- This is how it is always going to be, it will never change
- Nothing will be different
- You can't succeed
- That person hates you, they all hate you, no one is for you

You need to TAKE THOSE THOUGHTS CAPTIVE – you need to GRAB THEM AND MAKE THAT THOUGHT SUBMIT TO JESUS' OBEDIENCE. Now notice that it is not our obedience that we bring thoughts to, it is the obedience of Jesus.

Imagine satan saying something like: "you are rubbish, look how badly you lost your temper, did you hear what you said about that person, God cannot bless you"

Now imagine me trying to bring that thought into my personal obedience. I would say something like: oh no I didn't mean it, I won't do it again, I am really a nice guy.

Satan is going to rip me to shreds on that, he is going to use my mind for his playground and swing on the swings and slide down the slide. He will condemn me, show me images of me losing my temper and not being a nice guy.

But if I bring that thought into the obedience of Christ, it goes like this:

JESUS CHRIST PAID FOR THAT IN FULL WITH HIS BLOOD AND HE HAS FORGOTTEN THAT AND I WILL TOO, I am blessed because of HIS GRACE AND GOODNESS NOT MINE. I am going to win because HE OBEYED.

Satan is going to flee from that kind of talk! And the devil can say what HE LIKES – "you failed, you failed, you are a failure, you will always be a failure, if people knew what you were really like" – that is irrelevant AS LONG AS YOU RESIST THOSE THOUGHTS, AS LONG AS YOU TAKE THEM CAPTIVE TO JESUS' OBEDIENCE. But if you receive those thoughts, if you accept satan's messed up view of reality, you will start thinking like that and FALL APART LIKE A \$2 suitcase! You will become the failure satan says you are!

Satan knows what happens when you have faith in your WORDS – he knows you are capable of walking superior to sickness to disease to poverty, that you can go into all the world and make disciples, that you can CHANGE THIS NATION.

Why did we have the first concession IN COURT FROM THE ABORTION LOBBY in over 50 years? Because we are speaking and believing and praying. Do you know Satan loves killing babies, before they speak and move any mountains or run him off?

And personally – you start speaking “Good things happen to me” – GOOD THINGS WILL HAPPEN TO YOU. Satan hates you – he doesn’t want good things happening to you, but if you are saying it in faith, he can’t do a thing about it.

So, satan gets in the satanmobile – and goes on the SAME ROAD everytime, he drives straight to your mind to play a mind game with you to mess up your mind so bad you end up speaking against your own future!

You end up so messed up by the mind games, you say with your OWN MOUTH: “Good things can’t happen to you, you are a loser, you are not good enough, you are a failure, you don’t feel like they will”

And you will have what you say! The devil’s destination – understand this – is for you to BE HIS PUPPET. He wants to get you in the emotional realm and CONTROL YOU THERE.

Listen carefully:

WHOEVER controls the thinking, controls the feelings.

WHOEVER controls the feelings controls the heart – you are who you feel you are.

WHOEVER controls the heart controls the marriage, controls the friends, controls the church you go to (did you know two people can go to the same church and yet be going to totally different churches?)

WHOEVER controls your heart controls your whole future.

THIS IS WHY I AM ALWAYS – all of the pastors at the TREE are always – going on and on and on about GETTING IN THE WORD, getting your mind RENEWED to the WORD, getting the WORD in your HEART, learning what God says about you, learning to think like God – because then you are setting up a roadblock for satan.

Satan knows empty minds are easier to fill! Satan is looking for someone to devour – and the person he can devour is the person who has made NO EFFORT to fill their mind with the WORD OF GOD. A nice little empty head – someone has made no effort to fill it. And satan can now throw all his rubbish in your head!

YOUR MIND IS GOING TO BE FILLED WITH SOMETHING – you cannot empty your mind – a lot of other religions will DISCUSS emptying your mind – that’s just satan’s clever way of getting you to get ready for him to fill it. God won’t force anything in your mind, so you need to FILL IT. You are the elder of your heart.

Listen a MARRIAGE that fails – it happens because satan is putting ideas in the minds of one or both of the spouses. It’s that simple.

So, wife is just sitting there – and satan is DRIVING ALONG – same destination all the time, same road: to play MIND GAMES.

So satan whispers in the wife's ear "Your marriage is failing, your marriage is failing". He is trying to play games in your mind – playground. He is trying to distort ideas and images.

So, wife is a Christian she thinks "hey that's satan" and rebukes the thought, takes it captive and gets back on thinking good. Their marriage isn't perfect, but it's good, it's strong, they love each other, support each other, good sex, good friends. So, she dismisses the thoughts and moves on. But satan is quite determined – so he keeps attacking the wife – like crashing thoughts into her mind all the time:

- Well it can't be strong forever, that just doesn't happen
- This is too good to be true, something must be wrong
- This marriage will end
- The bubble will burst

The wife thinks "those are stupid thoughts, just stupid", but if she does NOT THEN GET UP REBUKE THOSE THOUGHTS, make them HER SLAVE, TAKE THEM CAPTIVE and THEN OPEN HER BIBLE AND START MEDITATING ON THE WORD AND FILLING HER MIND, those thoughts will hang around. Thoughts then give birth to thoughts.

- No one can love you, you are not that loveable
- I think he likes someone else
- When was the last time he sent you flowers
- Did you see him checking out that women, did you
- There is something really out of order here
- Your marriage is in trouble. Your marriage is in trouble
- You need a lawyer

Satanic propaganda that is being thrown at the marriage. And satan is using your mind as a playground. Your life will just be torment every day, your life will just be pain every day. You need to put your foot down and stop satan!

The devil is really good at playing in your mind. He is great at putting thoughts in there that deceive you. Why is nearly 1 in 5 people in the UK taking anti-depressants? THE THING THAT DEPRESSES YOU IS YOUR THOUGHTS. People are buying all these how to think books because their thoughts are all over the place.

Devil in Greek is diabolos. Devil is not his name, his name is satan, devil is what he does. It's a revelation on how he behaves. Dia means "through", to penetrate something, to go right through, to pierce. Ballo means to throw with force and speed. Like throwing a ball or rock, it is a fast word. It's the word used when Jesus cast out demons.

Read John 13.2. It's the same word for devil as a verb, the devil threw into the heart of Judas! It means to throw something at someone again and again and again and again until you break it. That is how the devil works. It is the only way he works. He drips, and drips and drips and drips until he wears you down so much that you just start thinking like him.

That is why you all need:

- I. YOU NEED TO PUT THE WORD OF GOD INSIDE YOU. Do you have a Bible reading plan? Are you reading the Word every day? Are you meditating on the Word?

2. **YOU NEED PEOPLE AROUND YOU WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU** – we all get tired, life happens to all of us, we can support you. We need to be in a community.

Satan has no mercy, he waits until you are exhausted, wiped out, and then puts pictures in your head. Read Daniel 7.25. One of satan's tactics is to wear you out.

Satan loves to wear you out – continual deceiving, the same journey over and over, the same method, the same wile! **ACCUSE YOU**, make you negative, paint a negative picture of you, your wife, your family, your church. **OVER AND OVER.**

We need to watch the thoughts in our mind. There are times I won't talk to you about something complex because I am flat out exhausted. There is a reason I rest on Fridays, most pastors rest on Monday, but I want to be fresh over the weekend.

We open the door to satan, we get these negative images and thoughts, he is playing in our head. What happens next? Satan plays around in your heart until he owns it, then out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. You have negative thoughts about someone, you play it around, you see it differently, you replay it again and again – what's next? **THAT IN YOUR HEART IS COMING OUT** – out of your mouth, you won't be able to stop it.

You will be in a place and you will hear it coming out of your mouth – pessimistic, disapproving, cynical, mocking, sarcastic, negative, tiny little words coming out of your mouth. Better to stop it at the thought level – get before the LORD and say "I need some of your thoughts in here" open your BIBLE and get reading.

Satan will try and stop you, he might be speaking to you right now:

- Don't listen to this message, this is legalism, he's fallen from grace, he should be preaching on grace all the time
- He doesn't appreciate you, why are you listening to him?
- There are other churches you know, ones that would preach something that will honour you and recognize your gift, they'd actually have you speaking this week.
- He's not talking to you – you are wonderful – it's your spouse that's the ungrateful one, I bet they don't even listen today, or think it's them. (He could say that to both husband and wife at once)

Satan wants that root of bitterness in your heart. He wants you to hate people – he wants to uproot you from your family, your community. He wants you to believe his lies and use those lies to remove friends and relationships from your life.

THE DEVIL has always been going for relationships. He started off separating 1/3 of the angels from God with lies. He then drives to **EDEN** – on his one road – to ruin the relationship between Adam and God and Adam and Eve, then Cain and Abel, got one to kill the other. Satan hates relationships! He loves breaking them. **WE HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO DEAL WITH HIM!** He especially hates relationships that help you move forward.

Listen – your relationship can be a **BLESSING** to your life or they can be the greatest **CURSE** in your life. You have to pursue them, work on them – **HUNT THEM DOWN**, we covered that last week. But you also need to know how to handle a conflict – most relationships are destroyed over a tiny issue but no one dealt with it, and satan loves the

strife. I think that satan loves – causing strife, and I think he loves trying to cause the most strife with the smallest issue, I think that makes him laugh.

Most times a couple comes to me for marriage counselling, they do not come until they are continually fighting. Most times they do not know what started it. It cannot have been that important! They forgot.

Satan has come to steal kill and destroy. And that is one area he will do it – he wants to steal fellowship from you – the joy of great meetings, the joy of peace with your wife, the wonderful love of a small group. He wants to kill your friendships. He wants to destroy you having any way of restoring the relationship.

It's time to stop him driving into your life – it's time to stop being offended, stop being upset at every little thing, stop **REPLAYING HIS THOUGHTS ALL THE TIME**, and **WALK FREE FROM IT ALL**. That can happen – for you!

A lie is at the root of every offense. You have to believe a lie or you would not be offended. You didn't take a thought captive, that's why you are upset. You didn't elder your heart.

If the police came round today and said we have reliable evidence that someone is stalking you – they are watching you and they want to break into your house. You would be careful, you would not be casual. Satan is stalking you, he wants to break into your mind. He wants to put thoughts in there that should not be there. You need to stop being casual about this.

What precautions do you take to stop your mind and emotions being infiltrated by injections from satan? What in your daily routine are you doing to fill your mind with good things and good thoughts?

YOUR MIND IS TOO PRECIOUS to be satan's playground.

So, let's wrap this up with some practical things:

Sometime after we finish today, a thought will come into your mind. It might be a rude thought, it might be just selfish, it might even scare you. *Where did that come from?*

We have to take every thought captive. Now I want you to consider **THOUGHTS** like a phone call. I remember the days where you didn't know who was calling. You don't have a clue. Everyone rang the same, granma to the debt collector. It was exciting answering the phone, it was a gamble. **BUT** today, your mobile rings – you know who it is, it tells you their name and everything. It is on the screen in big letters.

We need to screen our calls into our mind – it is obvious if the thought is from satan or God or your thought. If the caller ID says satan, hang up on that thought, take it captive and do not have a discussion. **RESIST IT, REBUKE IT AND DEAL WITH IT.**

You will never get healed. Sorry, not in.

You will die. Sorry, not in.

Did you hear what they said about that? Sorry, not in

You will never get that promotion. Sorry, not in.

Then realize you are getting these calls because your line is open, your mind is empty. So make an outgoing call. CHOOSE TO THINK SOME GOOD THINGS.

Read Php. 4:8. This verse outlines what you should be thinking on. Here is an excerpt on the commentary on this verse from the Copeland Study Bible:

It outlines each type of thought God wants us to entertain. When you think on what is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, virtuous and praiseworthy, you will control your thought life and become a spiritual powerhouse.

Whatever is true. What is true? The Word of God. The devil is a liar—and he stands for everything opposite of God's Word. When you hear thoughts that are condemning, laced with guilt, critical of others or riddled with fear, they aren't true because they aren't of God. Anything that is contrary to the Word of God—a disregard for life or marriage, an argument against the tithe or any other command in the Word—is not truth. And it has no place in our thought lives.

Whatever is noble. The word noble means "righteous, good, honorable, moral, decent, upright." To think on things that fit this description, we must keep ourselves from thinking things that are the opposite. This includes much of secular entertainment these days. To keep our thoughts on what is good and righteous, we must spend much of our time thinking about the Word of God, and not polluting our minds with the things of this world.

Whatever is just. It can often be difficult to not dwell on the injustices of the world—there are so many. But putting too much focus on them can be discouraging and breed bitterness, fear and discouragement. When we see injustice, we are called to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves ([Proverbs 31:8](#)), pray, and take action when appropriate. But be careful not to let injustice dominate your thought life.

Whatever is pure. When we were instructed to flee from sexual immorality (I Corinthians 6:18), that includes sexually immoral thoughts. Lustful thoughts are sinful and destructive, and a key way Satan seeks to control the lives of people in the world. If you struggle with impure thoughts, know this—you have been made free by the blood of Jesus! John 8:36 says, "So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free." Ask Him to help you and deliver you—He wants you free.

Whatever is lovely. Do you think lovely things about others? Or are you cruel and condemning? Love believes the best about others. So, be sure your thoughts toward those around you are lovely and kind—always looking for the good and asking the Lord to help you be a blessing and encouragement to them.

Whatever is of a good report. There are a lot of bad reports out there. The doctor, the news, our friends and relatives, books and magazines. If we aren't paying attention, those reports will dominate our thought life. Some people say, "Well, I have to be informed." It is sometimes helpful to know about world events, but it is not healthy or positive for you to dwell on every negative thing the devil is doing in this world. Keep your thoughts focused on a good report, and surround yourself with others who do the same.

Whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy. These things are a combination of everything listed above. Righteousness, purity, and just and loving thoughts are virtuous and worthy of praise.

Listen, when you seek to mold your thought life around those things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, virtuous and praiseworthy, you will know how to control your thought life and live above the devil's reach. You can retrain your mind to start thinking in the way God has called you to think. So, start thinking good thoughts today! Choose to actively think good thoughts.



FAITH MOVES FORWARD 02: HOW SATAN KEEPS US STILL Study Notes

- I. Can satan destroy us right now?
2. What is satan's compromise when he finds out he cannot destroy us?
3. What does the word "wiles" mean?
4. What does the word "devices" mean?
5. What does it mean to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ?
6. What sort of thoughts do we need to bring captive?
7. What is the mind so important to control?
8. We have to fill our minds with the Word of God. Do you have a Bible reading plan?
Are you reading the Word every day? Are you meditating on the Word?
9. Are you in a community that encourages you? Are there people around you who can help you especially when you are worn out?
10. How does seeing a thought like a phone call help us take thoughts captive?
- II. How does Php. 4.8 help us fill our minds and screen our thoughts?
12. What about this message inspired, encouraged and challenged you the most?



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