

THE ENEMY WITHIN

By: Phillip Hayes

Many of you may remember the story of the Trojan Horse. It went something like this: "In Greek mythology the Trojan Horse was a wooden horse said to have been used by the Greeks during the Trojan War to enter the city of Troy and win the war. After a fruitless 10-year siege, the Greeks constructed a huge wooden horse at the behest of Odysseus, and hid a select force of men inside, including Odysseus himself. The Greeks pretended to sail away, and the Trojans pulled the horse into their city as a victory trophy. That night, the Greek force crept out of the horse and opened the gates for the rest of the Greek army, which had sailed back under the cover of darkness. The Greeks entered and destroyed the city, ending the war." The enemy was able to deceive them by gaining entry to their walled and gated city and destroyed them from within!

Most Christians are aware that we have an enemy. The enemy we are warned about is Satan. The Scriptures tell us he comes to steal, kill and destroy. We are told he is the master of deception therefore we must be on guard continually for his primary target is God's people. Ephesians chapter 6, verses 11 and 12 are clear about this. *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

Picture yourself as a city with great walls of protection about you. There is only one entry to you and that is the

door of your heart. Imagine your door being so solidly built that it cannot be penetrated by any outside forces. Jesus said, *"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid"* [Matthew 5:14].

Now, let's look at the city of the Trojans. After a siege of 10 years, the Greeks could not penetrate their great city! No doubt their walls were extremely well built and the massive door to their city must have also been impenetrable. It was impossible for their enemy to overcome them!

However they did, and we must learn a valuable lesson from their defeat. The enemy defeated them through deception and destroyed them from within. The enemy didn't have to break down the door to their city, they opened the door themselves!

I want you to understand there is only one way your enemy can destroy you and that is from within! If you allow him to get through the door of your heart, he will defeat and ultimately destroy you.

The Lord Jesus was very clear about the importance of the heart of man. Look at this remarkable teaching in Matthew chapter seven: *"And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man"* [Matthew 7:18-23].

The Lord is clear there is an entrance to the heart! You can open your heart to good or evil. Jesus wants us to understand that we must guard our hearts as it is the only

gateway the enemy can enter! Sin begins in the heart! Jesus taught that sin was not just a physical act, but sin was first conceived and committed in the heart. *"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart: [Matthew 5:28]."*

We find that the heart is capable of bringing forth good or evil. *"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" [Matthew 12:35].* Therefore throughout our lives our actions (both good and evil) begin in the heart!

Throughout the scriptures we find that the heart is often seen as the seat of emotions, desires, and will, while the mind is associated with intellect, reasoning, and understanding. In most cases the words *mind* and *heart* and *soul* are interchangeable. *"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" [Matthew 22:37].*

Think of it this way, the mind (ability of thought) is the door of your heart. Just as the eye is the window of the soul, your thoughts are the keys that opens your heart.

Sin can only be dealt with in the heart. The heart must be changed and then furiously guarded! Trying to legislate morality with rules, regulations and standards of men will never eradicate sin. Although the Bible clearly teaches us to be holy and live godly, you will fail miserably if God's Word is not anchored in your heart.

In order to change our hearts, we must change our thought patterns! Thoughts of evil and rebellion to God must be defeated with thoughts of righteousness and submission to God. The Apostle Paul said, *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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 4:7-8].

The importance of changing the way we think is vastly overlooked by most everyone.

We must keep the enemy from entering our hearts and destroying us from within!

Two of the most powerful and important verses in the New Testament are found in Romans chapter twelve. I believe these verses hold the key to guarding the door of our hearts!

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" [Romans 12:1-2].

I have studied the definitions of each word in these two verses that stood out to me many times. Such as: mercies, holy, reasonable, conformed, transformed, renewing and mind.

The more I studied these verses the more I was determined to understand what the Spirit was revealing.

People stumble over the Word of God because they think it is complicated. Afterward when God opens your understanding, you can't believe how simple His Word is. You study and study, and then God speaks, and you just know it. Sometimes, you might wonder to yourself and think, how could I have missed that. It is so simple!

You may be intelligent and have knowledge of the Bible, but you need the revelation of the Word that only God can supply. The mystery of God is hidden in simplicity and must be revealed. *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you*

the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" [Ephesians 1:17-18].

Truthfully, your carnal intelligence produces reasoning that hinders the revelation of God. That is mankind's problem!

We think we are smart and can figure out the Word of God. This is why Christianity is so divided. Although man's intent may be good, the carnal man can never understand the things of God. *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" [1Corinthians 2:14].*

Spiritual understanding comes by revelation from God. Human reasoning interferes with what God is revealing. God is constantly revealing Truth! The reason we are not receiving from God is because we have a misconception of what the Bible is saying. Many times our interpretation is wrong because we have misunderstood the meaning of a single word.

Words are extremely important. As you study the Word of God the correct definition for every word should always be sought. Although each of us may have varying degrees of education, we are all without excuse when it comes to study. Today we have many tools for study in our possession; commentaries, concordances, dictionaries including Greek and Hebrew word definitions.

Let me put it this way. Let's say the Holy Spirit wanted to give you an understanding of a particular passage of scripture. However, there was a word within that passage that you thought meant something it did not. The Holy Spirit would then be hindered in revealing to you the real meaning. The wrong definition of a single word could stop the revelation!

Although language changes and no original manuscripts exist today, the Word of God is as sure today as it was when it was penned by men inspired by the Holy Ghost long ago. We can know God's revealed Truths if we give ourselves to the study of God's Word. But we must be diligent! Romans chapter twelve verses one and two reveal a great truth. My friends, the truth these scriptures reveal is this; If you are born again, God has done His part in your life, now it's up to you! You can literally transform your life by changing the way you think!

I AM BORN AGAIN. I have eternal life. He has made me a new creature and given me the Holy Ghost. He has given me His Word that has revealed who I am in Christ. I am sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. God's divine power has given me all things that pertain to life and godliness. He has placed a power within me that can do exceedingly, abundantly above anything I can ask or think. I am anointed. I am blessed. I accept, I acknowledge that God has given unto me every good thing in Christ Jesus.

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."
Don't you see? Paul was writing to men and women that were already born again and filled with the Spirit, but they had to do something in order for them to be TRANSFORMED! They were new creatures, but obviously Paul was speaking of a different transformation!

I believe Paul was talking about translating what God had put in their spirits into their souls and bodies. Everything your body and soul needs is in your spirit! We already have everything we need from God. But in order to manifest it, we must transform ourselves by renewing or changing the way we think.

Many Christians don't understand the relationship of the spirit, soul, mind and heart! Neither do they understand the vital importance of changing their thought patterns to be in alignment with the Word of God. They

fail to guard their hearts by thinking wrong thoughts thereby opening the door of their hearts to the enemy. Therefore, there is no change in them. They continue living like the world depending on psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, doctors, hospitals and medicine to relieve their suffering. While possessing the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

After years of serving God, the revelation came, I realized that it was truly up to me. Changing my thoughts would actually transform me! The word transform meant a total change, a metamorphosis, a transfiguration!

I believed all those things happened to me the second I was born again, but did I truly believe that I could change my very life by BELIEVING what God's Word boldly stated! Yes! That's what the Holy Spirit wanted me to see. I could transform myself by changing the way I thought!

That's where the battle would be won! My mind! My thoughts! God gave all mankind the power of choice. I can believe or disbelieve. I can receive knowledge or reject knowledge. I can keep the door of my heart closed to the enemy!

Oh children of God, we are not mere puppets in God's hands. He is not pulling the strings in our life. He has given us the power of choice! *"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live"* [Deuteronomy 30:19].

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" [Joshua 24:15].

You can live or die. You can be blessed or be

cursed. You can open your hearts to God and enjoy His blessings! You can give your thoughts to carnality and let the devil into your heart if you want! The choice has always been ours! You can transform yourself by renewing your mind, or you can simply refuse to do so and live a mediocre life. The choice is ours.

Another set of scriptures that has impacted me is found in 2 Corinthians. *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; 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" [2Corinthians10:4-5].*

There is a warfare! A war is going on in your mind! Here again, we find something that you must do. The strong holds are in the mind. Your thoughts must be changed! Your every thought must be brought to the obedience of Christ. Christ must have full authority over your thoughts for your heart to be protected.

Look at the word imaginations. This word does not mean what I always thought it meant. I thought it meant to imagine something: to day dream or imagine something bad, or something good might happen. In our modern English the word imagination actually means what I had thought: imagination: *the faculty of imagining, or of forming mental images or concepts of what is not actually present to the senses.* But the King James Old English meaning is far different: the word imaginations used in 2Corinthians means: *computation; reasoning; thought; perception; intellect.*

Casting down *reasonings* is what Paul was saying! Now, with the right definition, you can receive the revelation and understand much better what is required of you.

Human reasoning will defeat the purpose of God in your life! Our minds must be renewed to think like God

thinks! Impossible you say? Remember, a word is a thought expressed. Before you can say it, it must first be formed in your mind. This is why I can listen to someone talk for a short time and know where they are at with the Lord.

The carnal mind will always think contrary to God. *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" [Romans 8:6-8].*

The mind is a wonderful thing. God gave us the ability to think, to form judgments and draw conclusions. We need this ability in order to survive while in this world. However, our minds can also be our worst enemy when it comes to the things of God.

As a Christian, you know the battle has always been in your mind. Questions always come from your own reasonings. Am I really saved? Do I have the Holy Ghost? Am I born again? Is it God's will to heal me? All these negative thoughts come from the carnal mind!

I remember a certain young man that was really trying to live for God. He had really messed up and committed a sin. Somehow his failure had been found out and people were talking about it. Because he had a part in the ministry I approached and asked him if it was true. He said, "Yes it's true, but the devil made me do it." I said, "No, don't blame the devil, you did it when you were drawn away by your own lusts." He repented and acknowledged his own weakness. Although he didn't fully understand this, He had allowed sin to first be conceived in his heart by opening the door with lustful thoughts.

The reason I bring this up is most of us blame the devil for our sins and everything that goes wrong in our lives. Could it be that you or (what you think) is the problem?

The Word of God is clear. We do have an enemy that is called the devil. He is going about doing what he is supposed to do. I acknowledge that! However, he has no power or authority over a Blood washed, Holy Ghost filled saint of God. Absolutely none!

We have power and authority over all devils to cast them out. As a matter of fact, the devil is afraid of us! *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" [James 4:7].*

Do you really believe the devil will actually run from you if you resist him? I can say without hesitation that most Christians say they believe God's Word, but they really don't. Why? They reason that the devil is too big, and powerful, but they are just a little sinner saved by grace. Their battle is lost by allowing thoughts that are contrary to what God's Word clearly states!

We can cast down reasonings. We can bring every thought into captivity to Christ. We can transform ourselves by renewing our minds.

These words were written by men inspired by God to instruct us how to live agodly, overcoming and blessed lives in this evil and broken world.

It's been said, "The battle is the Lord's". And this is true. The Lord's battle was won on the Cross. Now the battle is at the door of your heart. It's a battle you can win or lose! Which will it be for you?

We must make up our minds every day that we will in no wise accept defeat and allow Satan access to our hearts! Our carnal minds must be crucified. We must die daily to all the negative thoughts our minds can conjure up. We must walk and live in the Spirit.

Make up your mind that you are going to transform yourself and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. You can do all things through Christ that strengthens you and conquer the enemy that seeks to destroy you from within!