**Improve THIS and it will Improve Your Life**

**Improve your THINKING and It will Improve Your Life**

**Lesson 1**

**Proverbs 23:7**

**7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.**

Introduction – We need to understand the difference in educating ourselves and having a paradigm shift.

a. A paradigm is the way you see something. It is the map. You have have a

 great map of St. Louis and go to Chicago, but the map of St. Louis will not get

 you around Chicago.

c. Some people are frustrated because they are trying to get somewhere, but

 they are using the wrong map.

c. You cannot have a positive life and a negative mind – it’s impossible.

d. You cannot criticize people into being good and doing good.

e. Some people are going to have to improve the way they think in order to

 improve their life.

**1. You can’t change your ways without changing your thoughts**

Many people have changed their ways without changing their mind and they end up going right back to their old ways.

**Proverbs 26:11**

**11 As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly.**

A. What is the thing that has hurt you over and over and you seem to fall for it

 again and again?

B. Dajavu. Have you ever said to yourself, “how did I get here again?”

C. Sometimes we change:

 Husbands, wives, houses, cities, jobs, churches, etc, but never change our

 mind. Until we change our mind, we are bound to return to our old ways

 eventually.

D. How do I change my mind?

 1. Counseling.

 You have to be matched to the right counselor. Don’t decide that

 counseling doesn’t work because you had a bad experience. It

 does work. I have gone to counseling several times in my life and still go

 when I need to. Counseling is a great way to change your mind.

 2. Reading

 3. Changing influences in your life. Hang around someone else.

 4. Educating yourself.

 5. The principle of God’s word.

 6. Live your life by morals and principles. They will guide you.

**2. Change your thoughts by renewing your mind with God’s thoughts.**

**Hebrews 4:12-13**

**12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two- edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.**

A. Living and Powerful

God’s word will divide HIS THOUGHTS to us from OUR THOUGHTS. It separates the soul from the spirit or rather, our emotions from Gods truth.

Trying to HEAR from God without reading His word is not only dangerous, it will drive you insane.

B. Division of soul and spirit

 The word of God will separate feelings from facts.

 Soul – mind will and emotions

 Spirit – your God nature

C. Joints and marrow

In order to understand this part of the verse you have to go to the butcher shop. Think for a moment about a butcher with a clever in his hand, or a priest dividing up and animal for sacrifice. He disjoins the members of the body with a cleaver by either chopping a the joints, which is a natural place to cut, or by breaking a bone by chopping through it. (the marrow)

If he would have said, bone and marrow, it would be easy to reveal, but he says the word of God will divide even to joint and marrow. This phrase means that the word of God will separate the good part of you from the bad part of you.

If the eye offends you, pluck it out.

If the hand offends you, cut it off.

If the tongue offends you.

When you feel worthless because you have sinned, the Word of God, constructively points out the good in you and exposes just the part that is bad. You don’t destroy the whole person because of a sin. You reveal, expose and severe the part that is bad and keep the part that is good.

D. Thoughts and intents

 **2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV)**

 **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**

 1. You may think something, but that doesn’t mean you have sinned.

 Satan attacks you in your thoughts to lure you into sin.

 2. The word of God divides your thoughts from your intents.

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV)**

**3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**

E. *The Battlefield of the Mind* – Joyce Meyer

“Satan wars against our mind by bombarding our mind with cleverly devised patterns of nagging thoughts, suspicions, fears, doubts, wonderings, reasonings and theories.”

**3. Think Positive Thoughts if you Want a Positive Life**

**Philippians 4:8**

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things.

A. True nobles are just pure, lovely and good.

B. Your mind is similar to a computer, it can only give out what’s been put into it.

Have you ever gotten a computer virus before? It corrupts all of your files. The same thing happens to our mind, we get corrupted by something that goes wrong or bad. But on a computer there is a reset button that can wipe out the bad memory and reset it to the default factor settings. You have to remember, that God did not make you defective. Sometimes you have to reset your mind to think God’s thoughts instead of the corrupt thoughts that got in.

C. What is the first think you think of when you get up in the morning?

Do you think, “I’m lonely, or I’m still here, or I am dreading my day?” If you do, you are programming your emotions to respond to what you are thinking. Get ready for depression, discouragement and drama. What if you start your day by declaring positive confessions over your life.

D. Book- *Change Your Words, Change Your Life* by Joyce Meyer

Faith got this list from Joyce Meyer’s book, “Change Your Words, Change Your Life.” She taped it to the mirror in the bathroom and everyday she would say these things over herself as she got ready in the morning. I ask her to print me a copy and I started saying them. Before I knew it, I had my own list and now I confess her list and my list as the first thing I do in the mornings. Here are some of the things she mentions in her book. I seldom recommend a book that I think is good for everyone to read, but this is one. Everyone should read it and read it again every year.

Start your day by declaring these things over your life:

I can do whatever I need to do in Christ

God Loves Me Unconditionally

I will not live in fear

I am difficult to offend

I love people and I enjoy helping them

I trust God completely, no need to worry

I am content and emotionally stable

God meets all my needs abundantly

I pursue peace with God, myself and others

I live and love in the present & enjoy each moment

I am disciplined and self-controlled

I put God first in my life

E. You cannot have a positive life and a negative mind.

Our thoughts are going to affect every relationship in our life.

They are going to affect how we invest, how we take care of things, how we dress, the choices we make when we are tempted. If we are consumed with negative thinking, it will be impossible for us to have faith and to walk in the Spirit. Your life will not get straightened out until your mind does.

F. Positive minds produce positive lives.

I hear people say, I need to be “more” positive. No, you don’t need to be “more” positive, you need to be positive. You need to commit to a life change of thinking positive thoughts, reading positive books, hanging around positive people. More positive means you still have a lot of the old thinking in you. Get rid of the old thinking. Positive thinking will fill your life with hope, joy, faith and love.

Illustration - A little boy went out to play in his back yard with a baseball bat and ball. He said to himself, “I am the best hitter in the world. “ He didn’t let it discourage him, “he picked the ball back up and said, “ I am the best hitter in the world. “ He missed again. He did this three times and missed. He realized he has struck himself out, and a big smile broke out on his face and he said, “Well what do you know?, I’m the best pitcher in the world.” Now that’s a good attitude.

G. If your thoughts are negative, your mouth will be negative and if your mouth is negative, your life will be negative. Negative people who are always finding fault in others, starting or repeating rumors and always complain will leave you feeling dirty. That’s not just a feeling that conviction telling you that you are opening yourself to spirits of fear, anxiety, worry and strife. That feeling is your “Holy Spirit” alarm going off inside of you. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you when you do things that disconnect your from God.

Negative thinking will make you miserable and poison your outlook on life. It will rob you of your joy and will give your sleepless nights and worrisome days

H. The more positive we become, the more we are able to flow in the Spirit of

 God. You have to have hope and faith to move in the Spirit.