



# Life Principles Notes™

## How to Release Your Burdens

### Part 4: Controlling Your Thoughts

#### Summary:

##### **Do you struggle with your thoughts?**

Do you think things that you shouldn't—thoughts of unforgiveness, pride, lust, or anger?

The truth is, your mind is working all the time. The world is always feeding your brain information. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on advertising to convince you to buy products. The goal is to program your thinking to accept the lifestyle they're selling—a lifestyle that is nothing like what God has called you to.

What you think about affects you more than you realize. Who you are today is the result of what you've been thinking all these years.

How can you live a godly life and think properly when you live in a culture that constantly bombards you with ungodly propaganda?

#### **Key Passage:** [Colossians 3:1-3](#)

**Supporting Scripture:** *Romans 1:28; 8:5-8; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; 11:2-3; Philippians 4:4-9; 1 Peter 1:13.*

#### Scriptural Principles:

##### **1 Who can and who cannot.**

Our thoughts cause us to become what we are; they influence everything—our relationships, occupation, marriage. The question is: How do we manage what's controlling us so powerfully? Can we rule over our thoughts at all? Unfortunately, a lost person cannot live a godly life because he's living in the flesh—in his naturalness. He doesn't think about spiritual things, which is the only way to combat ungodly thoughts. The only weapons against ungodly thoughts are spiritual weapons—faith in God and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

##### **2 The mind of Christ.**

Of course, a person can only truly control his thoughts when he's trusted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. When Christ comes into your life, He abides in you and sends the Holy Spirit to enable you to live the Christian life. You become a brand new person who has power over sin and can make right decisions. As 1 Corinthians 2:16 promises, "We have the mind of Christ." To have the mind of Christ means that you're capable of processing information the way He does—through the grid of His values—and thinking in a manner that honors Him. Your mind is like a control tower—wherever you go and whatever you do, it's the result of the way you think. When you're being led by the mind of Christ, it will influence how you deal with temptations.

##### **3 The responsibility.**

Having the mind of Christ also means that you have a responsibility. First Peter 1:13 instructs, "Prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." When your mind is left in neutral, you will be in trouble. That's why you must prepare your mind and be alert to anything that could lead you into erroneous thinking. You must focus upon Him and learn to avoid the things that are harmful to your mind.

#### 4 Why you must screen your thoughts.

A thought reaps an action. An action reaps a habit. A habit reaps your character. Your character reaps your destiny.

Consider that: When you think about something that you agree with, your feelings get involved. The next thing you know, your body gets involved and you're moving in the direction of that thought. When you continue to pursue the actions associated with that thought, you develop a habit, and eventually it becomes a part of your character. And your character determines your destiny. Therefore, when you make a move in a direction as a result of how you think, remember it's ultimately affecting your destiny.

#### 5 Set your mind on the things above.

What is it that you seek in life above everything else? What is it that absolutely dominates what you think about? Security? Wealth? Entertainment? In 2 Corinthians 10:4–5, Paul tells us how he controls his thoughts, “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” When Christ becomes the priority of your life, you don't have to worry about anything else. You know that as long as Christ is first, God has promised to work on your behalf and help you.

#### 6 Selecting your thoughts—a grid for your mind.

How do you place Christ first in your life? When you fill your mind with the Word of God and set your mind to seeking Him, it sets up a grid of truth in your mind. Every ungodly thought that comes your way will set off an alarm within you, which will then allow you to select what thoughts you entertain and which ones you discard. Here are some questions to begin strengthening that grid within your mind:

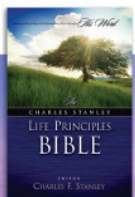
- What's the source of this thought? Where did that come from?
- If I keep thinking this way, where's it going to get me?
- Where will this thought eventually lead me in the long run?
- Is this thought scripturally sound?
- Is this thought going to build me up or tear me down?
- Can I share this thought with someone else?
- Does this thought make me feel guilty?
- Does this thought fit who I am as a follower of Jesus?

#### 7 Cultivate godly thoughts.

Once you discern that a thought represents God's best for you, you must cultivate it. As Philippians 4:8 says, “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.” You have the power to think the right thoughts and to reject evil thoughts—to become the person God created you to be.

### Conclusion:

Are you struggling with your thoughts? Do they reveal something within you that you're ashamed of? Wouldn't you rather have God's thoughts rather than the destructive and empty materialism and sensuality of the world? Of course you would! Then understand that the battle for what you want begins in your mind.



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If you don't like who you are or the course you're on today, you can change it by trusting Christ. What you're thinking is what you're going to become, but you have the power to think godly thoughts and to become everything wonderful God created you to be.

Therefore, make God the priority of your life and allow Him to become the focus of your thoughts. Then, all of the things that you need or desire in life—that fit His will for you—will be added to you. 🌟

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