

Following a great sermon on lifestyle evangelism one family thought they had better do something to witness to Jesus. So they invited their neighbours to dinner the following Friday night.

When it came to the meal, the hostess was keen to show their neighbours that they upheld Christian standards in their home.

So she asked little 5 year old Johnny to say grace.

Little Johnny was a bit shy. "I don't know what to say" There was an awkward pause, followed by a reassuring smile from the boy's mother.

"Well darling," she said, " just say what Daddy said at breakfast this morning."

Obediently, the boy repeated, "Oh God, we've got those awful people coming to dinner tonight"

How true is that!

Join me in prayer

Most the time our troubles are caused by letting whatever we are thinking come out of our mouths which usually brings nothing but heartaches to us and the people around us.

The writer of Proverbs tries to warn us when he says:
Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

Paul warns us another way:

Romans 8:5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires

Quite simply, **our actions are a direct result of our thoughts.**

- If you have a **negative mind**, you will have a **negative life**.
- If, on the other hand, if you **seek God's will** first you will **begin to know the mind of Christ**.

Or to put it another way:

It is the thoughts that happen first in our minds that the devil uses because he knows that's where we are weakest.

THE WITHERED FIG TREE

18-20 Early the next morning Jesus was returning to the city. He was hungry. Seeing a lone fig tree alongside the road, he approached it anticipating a breakfast of figs.

When he got to the tree, there was nothing but fig leaves. He said, “No more figs from this tree—ever!” The fig tree withered on the spot, a dry stick. The disciples saw it happen. They rubbed their eyes, saying, “Did we really see this? A leafy tree one minute, a dry stick the next?”

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But Jesus was matter-of-fact: “Yes—and if you embrace this kingdom life and don’t doubt God, you’ll not only do minor feats like I did to the fig tree, but also triumph over huge obstacles. This mountain, for instance, you’ll tell, ‘Go jump in the lake,’ and it will jump. Absolutely everything, ranging from small to large, as you make it a part of your believing prayer, gets included as you lay hold of God.”

Jesus didn’t say

- ✓ “Whatever you ask for in prayer, **wonder if** it will happen

He said

Absolutely everything, ranging from small to large, as you make it a part of your believing prayer, gets included as you lay hold of God.”

Simply put: the closer you are to the Lord, the more he will be able to do though you!

Got it!

Don’t wonder – have faith in what the Lord is telling you.

Here’s another battlefield in the mind.

Look at 1 Corinthians 10:9-11

*We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.
And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.
These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us,
on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.*

Sometimes it seems that the whole world is complaining and grumbling and murmuring about something doesn’t it?

And many times, you and I get caught up in all of this, don’t we?

- ✓ **We are quick to judge**
- ✓ **Quick to believe the worst**

The Bible is very specific about the dangers of

- ✓ **grumbling,**
- ✓ **faultfinding**
- ✓ **and complaining.**

The complaining of the Israelites opened the door for the enemy to come in and destroy them.

- Just as it did for Israel, our complaining will**
- ✓ **stop us from going forward in a positive way in our lives and instead**
 - ✓ **drown us in a flood of negative feelings and emotions about everything and everyone around us.**

And just to make it clear- complaining begins with our thoughts and then moves to our mouths.

That's why Paul counsels us in Philippians 2:14, 15

Philippians 2:14 Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe

- Instead of complaining about your job or your friends or your spouse**
- ✓ **thank God that you have a job,**
 - ✓ **thank God for the good things your spouse and or your friends have brought into your life.**

You will be amazed at the difference that will make in your life and in your marriage.

Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

There's how you win and the devil loses.

No matter what the Lord faced in his life, he prayed and gave thanks to God.

And in return, he was able to move forward in his life instead of being drowned in negative feelings and emotions.

- ✓ **You too have the mind of Christ!**
- ✓ **You have it through His Spirit that lives and works inside of you.**
- ✓ **Why not start making the most of it!**
- ✓

AND AVOID THE CURSE WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT IN TWO WEEKS.

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Reedurban Presbyterian Church
The Third Sunday After Christmas

Glorifying God, Making Disciples, Meeting Human Needs
January 12, 2014 *Liturgist:*

PRELUDE

APPROACHING GOD IN WORSHIP

SILENT MOMENTS OF PREPARATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

We will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and the wonders that God has done.

How in the daytime the Lord led them with a cloud, and all night long with a fiery light.

He split rocks open in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.

Let us drink deeply of the Lord's goodness as we come into God's courts with praise!

*HYMN O Come All Ye Faithful No.249

*CALL TO CONFESSION

The God revealed to us in the pages of scripture is a welcoming and inclusive God who directs us to love one another. We seek to remove all the barriers that keep us from that love. Come now to confess all that separates you from others and from God.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of compassion, have mercy upon us as we make our confession. How often we do not do what we intended! What we confess is not how we act. We hear your word preached and we give our assent, but faith is found wanting when it comes time to obey. We are confronted by conflict; decisions are called for. Our desires are at odds with what you command and we do not do what you wish. O God, have mercy upon

us and in Christ forgive us. Give us the strength to do your will.

***SILENT PRAYER**

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Again, hear the words of Paul when he writes that God has bestowed on Christ "the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." As we make our confession we have the assurance that the exalted Christ intercedes on our behalf.

***RESPONSE OF PRAISE** The Gloria No. 278

from Angels We Have Heard on High

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

*Prepare our hearts, O God, to accept your Word. Silence in us any voices but your own, so that we may hear your Word and also do it; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 62 Responsive Reading

ANTHEM

OFFERING OF SELF AND SUBSTANCE TO GOD

*Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL

Children here today from ages 4 and up will be dismissed for the simultaneous Church School worship. Nursery is available for children under age 4.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and the Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

*HYMN Open My Eyes That I May See No. 563

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 2: 1 - 9

SERMON A Christian's Essential Skill – Knowing the Mind of Christ

"Doing," means giving one's self over to the power of God, submitting to it, trusting it, even though we have to release our own efforts to control our future. In human terms,

trusting God is the riskiest venture of all. Yet, ironically, it is the only way to new life and to a peace that passes all human understanding. We can continue to hang onto the lure of the past, but that requires us to continually recreate and rehearse the same story over and over again, with a deep anxiety that it might change. Anxiety is the tell-tail sign that we have made the wrong choice. Peace is the result of making the right choice.

*HYMN Blessed Assurance No. 572

*BENEDICTION

Wherever you go, God is sending you
Wherever you are, God has put you there.
He has a purpose in your being there.
Christ who indwells in you has something
He wants to do through you where you are.
Believe this and go in his grace and love and power.

*THE BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

**ALL WHO ARE ABLE PLEASE STAND*

Bold print denotes congregational responses