

Where Do Those Thoughts Come From?

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

1 John 3:23-24 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

1 John 4:1-3 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

- I. So we have a command from the Scripture here not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits to see if they be of God.
 - A. It is spirits of devils that try to influence our thinking to lead us away from God and righteousness.
 - B. It is the Spirit of God that influences our thinking to lead us in the paths of righteousness and a closer walk with God.
 - C. “Every spirit that confesseth...” and “...every spirit that confesseth not...”
 1. It is made clear here that the Bible is not referring to people and what they say, but to the spirit from which the thought came, whether to our own mind, or to the mind of someone we are listening to or reading after.
 - D. To try the spirits is simply to look closely at the direction it is leading your thoughts.
 1. Are the thoughts being presented to your mind tending to soften or remove the enmity between good and evil?
 2. Are they making something that is wrong seem not AS wrong as you have been led to believe?
 3. Are they a direct challenge to something that is wrong, and has always been considered wrong by the people of God?
 4. You can be sure that these thoughts are the voices of spirits of devils.
 5. The Spirit of God will never lead your mind to think more favorably, or sympathetically with what is evil in God’s sight.
 6. These kinds of thoughts are riddled with lies wrapped in some truth, and the truth usually has something to do with what they consider to be “love.”
- II. Thoughts that center on ourselves are not from the Spirit of God, but from the spirits of devils.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

- A. Jesus said that when the Spirit of Truth is come He will testify of Jesus Christ.
 1. That means that the Spirit of God will focus on Christ; his work of redemption, his deity, his humanity, his power, his promises, his plans for us for eternity.
 2. Not OUR problems, OUR struggles, OUR needs, OUR troubles.
 3. The Gospel message will not be about how much He loves us, and how He wants to make us happy and prosperous.

4. The Spirit of Truth will not focus on himself; therefore, He will not be the star of the show.

John 16:13 **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.**

5. Did you ever hear the term, “Holy Ghost meeting,” or “Holy Ghost – Filled Revival?”
 6. The Holy Spirit of God does not inhabit or indwell a building or a tent, but PEOPLE.
 7. The Spirit of God speaks to people in their minds not to crowds through the audio system.
- B. All thoughts that enter your mind and cause you to focus on what you are feeling are not from God, but are the work of spirits of devils.
- C. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Truth, and truth is what He will lead your thoughts toward.
1. The truths of God, not the truths of men.
 2. Not the truths that you have learned from men, but truth that is directly from God’s Word and leads your thoughts toward righteousness.
 3. TRUE righteousness – not just do’s and don’ts and conforming to the standards of a certain group, but the truth of God that makes us more and more conformed to the image and likeness of his Son.

III. So the command is to try the spirits; that is, the suggestions, the proposals, the theories, the questions, that are introduced into our thoughts, directly in the privacy of our own mind, or indirectly through the writings or the speaking of other people.

- A. Where do these thoughts come from? Are they a product of our own mind, or the mind of someone else, or are they coming from another intelligence outside of ourselves?
 1. If you believe they are the product of our own then you must not believe in anything spiritual.
- B. Our mind is the battlefield where God and evil do battle for our soul.
- C. If we do not do our diligence to practice what the Bible tells us here we cannot possibly overcome the world and sin and temptation, but we will eventually be vanquished by the influence of evil and fade away into the abyss of darkness.
- D. This will change the way you hear preaching and understand the writings of others.
- E. It will change the way you discern whether what you are hearing is coming from God or not.
- F. It will open your understanding about what is coming out of the mouths of your children, your spouse, your fellow Christians.
- G. When will we realize that our thoughts are a plaything of the devil, and also the way God communicates with us through his Spirit?
- H. Only then will we realize the importance of this truth revealed in this command to try the spirits.

Proverbs 25:28 **He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.**

Proverbs 16:32 **He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.**