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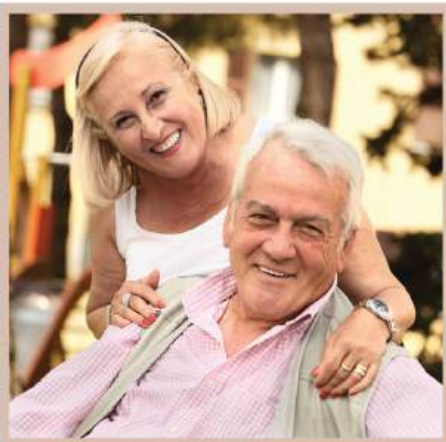


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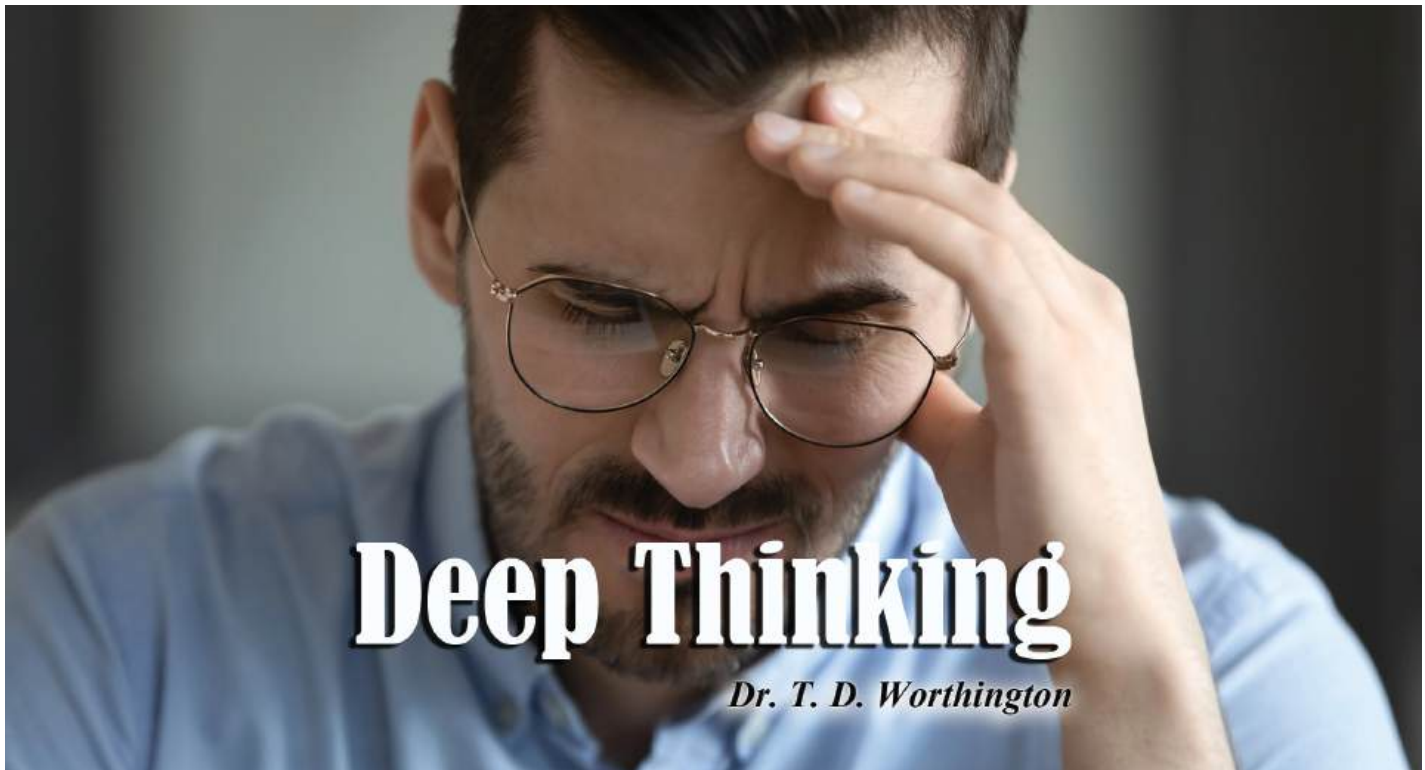
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Deep Thinking

Dr. T. D. Worthington

When we come up with a great idea, we often point our finger at our brain as if to say, ***“Something important is going on up here.”*** Although the mind plays an important role in the process, thinking only with our brain is shallow and dangerous. Let me explain.

We usually assume that we love with our hearts and we think with our minds. However, the word of God teaches us that it is not quite that simple.

Let’s talk first about love. You probably never told your sweetheart that you loved her with all your liver. Or that she would always have a special place in your pancreas. Of course not; we all know that love comes from the heart. We even give little heart-shaped symbols on Valentine’s Day. Yet the word of God teaches us that heart-based love alone is inadequate. It is a single-dimensional love unlikely to weather the storms of life. A young lover may say, ***“My heart tells me***

she is the one.” Sorry, but that is not good enough. Your mind and your spirit must also agree that she is the one. Since we are commanded to love God, it is quite natural that He would give us the exact formula for the best kind of love.

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.”

Mark 12:30

There are days your love feels divided into pieces, scattered across a hundred demands, and you wonder whether any part of you has enough left to give to God. You find yourself tired, distracted, and pulled thin. Then you hear it. The greatest thing ever asked of you is also the simplest and the most whole. This is the recipe for complete love, and we already all have the resources to accomplish it. I have a heart, a soul, a mind, and even a little strength. Therefore, Christ has enabled me to

love God with the kind of love that pleases Him.

“Heart” represents the control center of human emotions; ***“soul”*** is the spiritual side of man; ***“mind”*** refers to our mental, reasoning, and intellectual capacity; and ***“strength”*** refers to the power available to us. These are the sources from which love for God should flow. Do you see the spokes of the wagon wheel of real love? With all of our strength, we should will to love God with all our emotions (*desires*), minds (*thoughts and decisions*), and bodies (*actions*). So, ***“heart... soul...and mind”*** cover every aspect of our personalities, being, and thoughts, as well as everything that influences our feelings, beliefs, desires, and intentions. ***“Strength”*** means force, power, and ability. This refers to the effort and passion with which we love God. Whereas the heart, soul, and mind direct how we feel and what we do, might is the force that determines the extent to which we do so.

So, we see that we must love God with our whole being. Since, as believers, we should already be loving God, this commandment doesn't seem that unreasonable, although we often fall short. This verse encourages us to gather our heart, soul, mind, and strength into one offering. We do not manufacture this love on our own; we return it to the God who loved us first. This is not just a duty; it's a doorway. A doorway to a deeper, more vibrant relationship with God. He already loves us with a boundless, all-encompassing love. Jesus has already proven that by giving His all for us by coming to this earth and dying on the cross. Our response should be to love Him back with everything we have and everything we are.

So, we have discovered that we don't just love with our hearts but also with our souls and minds, and that we do so with all the strength we have.

Now, Let's talk about how to think. We assumed wrongly that we only love with our hearts. Likewise, we assume that we only think with our minds, with our brains. Yet, we learn from the word of God that there is more to it than that.

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7

Thinking with your heart sounds weak and emotional. Husbands may sometimes even advise their wives not to think with their hearts. However, there is a place for heart-thinking. Actually, I believe the process of thinking is just like the formula for loving. This is multi-dimensional thinking. This is deep

thinking. You think with your heart, your soul, your mind, and you do so with all your strength. Multidimensional thinking is a cognitive approach that moves beyond what may seem like logical reasoning. It keeps you from making foolish assumptions. Again, as one spoke in a wheel, it is dangerous to just think with your heart, because it does often lead to emotional decisions.

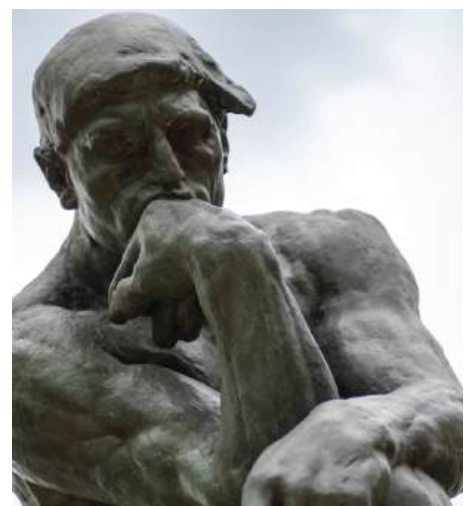
As we know, life is a lot about choices. Decisions are of many types and have many aspects. We constantly go through them, one decision after another, often failing to realize that the way we make them shapes who we are. Every decision leads to consequences. Actually, your whole life is a reflection of the stack of decisions you have made and the consequences you have faced. Many times, rather than calling them gains or losses, you should call them consequences. This may be why some people have trouble making decisions in the first place. Yet, in many things, God has given you the power to decide. Furthermore, deciding itself is a power, a power of influence over our lives and the lives of others. When facing a hard decision, so hard that we would prefer not to have to choose, we tend to forget that this choice is a gift. We also fail to see that making a choice demonstrates the power and free will God has given us.

So, we must learn to think with our heart, soul, and mind, and the more complex the decision, the greater strength God grants us to make the right choice. Again, do you see the spokes in the wheel? This is multi-dimensional decision-making. This

is what deep thinking is all about. It is the process of making a decision based on the unified consensus of the heart, soul, and mind. Let's think of some examples from the Bible of people who may have used this principle to arrive at a decision. Look at these examples where the heart, soul, mind, and strength were all at work.

Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22): God commanded Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham had to make a decision. His heart was torn between his love for Isaac and his greater love for God; his heart chose to obey God. His soul, the spiritual side of him, knew that earthly life was temporary anyway, and it made sense to trust God. His mind contemplated that God could work things out. He even contemplated that God could raise Isaac from the dead. In all this, we see his strength of heart, soul, and mind.

Esther's Plea (Esther 4): Queen Esther had to decide whether to approach the king uninvited to save her Jewish people. This choice carried a death penalty unless the king extended his scepter. Her heart was obviously broken over





the trials of her Jewish people. Her soul knew that Mordecai's message was from God, and with her mind she carefully weighed out all the possibilities and determined the best time to approach the king.

Moses Leaving Egypt (Exodus 2): Moses chose to abandon his life of comfort, privilege, and power as an Egyptian prince to suffer alongside his enslaved Hebrew people. His heart was naturally drawn to his people. His soul accepted the calling that God had given him to go before Pharaoh. His mind pondered the various ways he would approach the king, deal with his weakness, and lead his people.

Mary of Nazareth (Luke 1): Mary had to choose whether to accept the socially ruinous and dangerous reality of a miraculous pregnancy as an unwed young girl. Mary was a clear example of someone who *pondered or thought* with her heart. We also see her tender soul, or spirit, being one with the Spirit of God as she accepts her mission. Yet we also see her mind at work during her visit with Elizabeth, later as she follows Joseph's leadership, and in dozens of other ways.

Example: Here is a lazy man; he will not work, refuses to tithe on what little income he has, and comes to me for money to buy food for his family. So, I weigh it out. Sluggards should not eat. The Bible is clear on that. Plus, non-tithers are financially robbing God and will be judged for their lack of obedience. So, do I help him? My mind initially says "*no*." He is already under a financial curse; if I give him money, he will likely rob even more from God, putting him under greater judgment. My mind says it would not be in his interest to give him money.

Then my spirit speaks up and reminds me that although I am under no specific obligation to give him money, I certainly have the liberty to give food even to my enemies. So, perhaps I should consider some form of help.

Then my heart enters the picture and reminds me that he has children and a wife who are also suffering. Now, being convicted, I go back to my mind, specifically the mind of Christ, with the things my heart and spirit have revealed to me. Now, with my heart, soul, and mind in agreement, I ask my Heavenly Father for permission to help, for strength to help, and for guidance as to how to help specifically. Which means I will probably give his family food instead of money while trying to find him some work to do, if he is willing. That is deep thinking. It is multi-dimensional thinking. Again, do you see the spokes in the wheel?

I understand that life *is often about the uncertainty of choices*. The reality is that it is impossible to

predict the consequences of most choices fully. We can work on complex decisions as much as we want; yet still making a choice will almost always involve taking a risk. Even if you obey God like the Apostle Paul, it doesn't mean you won't end up in jail. It is often wise to anticipate potential consequences as much as possible. However, if you think it through completely, then you can accept any consequences of your decisions. Whenever you face unwanted consequences from a good choice, there is nothing else to do but accept them and move forward, focusing on what you can still control.

Conclusion: Choices, decisions, and consequences are things we all face in our relationships and our lives. However, all of these come more easily when you learn to love and think more deeply. If Sherry says to me: "*I love God the most, but beyond that I love you from the deepest part of my heart.*" I could rightly reply, "*Is that all? I don't want some crummy tidbits of love from your heart. I want you to love me with your mind and with your spirit also.*"

Life is a maze of endless choices, and every choice we make either takes us closer or farther away from where God wants us to be. So, it is best if we learn to do some deep loving and some deep thinking.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for fifty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.

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The Unpopular Message

In **Luke** chapter 4, our Lord preached his first sermon to a packed-out synagogue full of religious hypocrites who were living in denial and defiance. It was His hometown, Nazareth. These were the people He played with, worked with, and worshiped with. However, within seconds of His sermon introduction, the congregation stood up. Not out of respect, not to clap, but to curse! They grabbed hold of Jesus, took Him to the edge of their town where an 80-foot cliff loomed over the valley, and tried to throw Him off.

What in the world just happened? What would provoke church-goers to take the guest preacher to a cliff and try to kill him? If you know the story of Jesus, you know this was actually not that unusual. He was a controversial figure and often provoked that kind of response from those considered morally upstanding and beyond reproach. At first, it wasn't the political crowd or the non-religious crowd that was against Him; it was the religious crowd that had the hardest time receiving His message. It was outrageously offensive to them. It still is. So, what did He say that provoked their anger to the point of contemplating murder? He must have said something pretty bad. His passage came from **Isaiah 61**: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to*

set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:18-19

What a tremendous promise! It looks to me like this should be good news for anyone; but apparently it wasn't. It is still not popular with many today. However, that is the message we have been called to share. Thank you for your support of our ministry. Because of you, the message of Christ is being presented daily to thousands of souls.

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The Fields Are Ready!

“... Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

John 4:35

As Jesus speaks about the fields ready for harvest, it is a reproach to all who refuse to labor for our Lord. It also serves as a challenge for every Christian to be dynamically involved in the Master's service. It is important we remember that we are the laborers needed for the harvest. God has us. If we don't do the job, who will? That is our mission at **GoMix Christian Radio**. It is a mission in which we hope you will join us by becoming a **Faith Partner** and supporting our **Fall Share-A-Thon** with your prayers and financial support.

This is the season of harvest. We see the proof of that all around us. It would be such a wonderful thing if all of God's children would actively serve in the field of harvest. We know not all of God's children will obey, but we are most grateful for all those that will.

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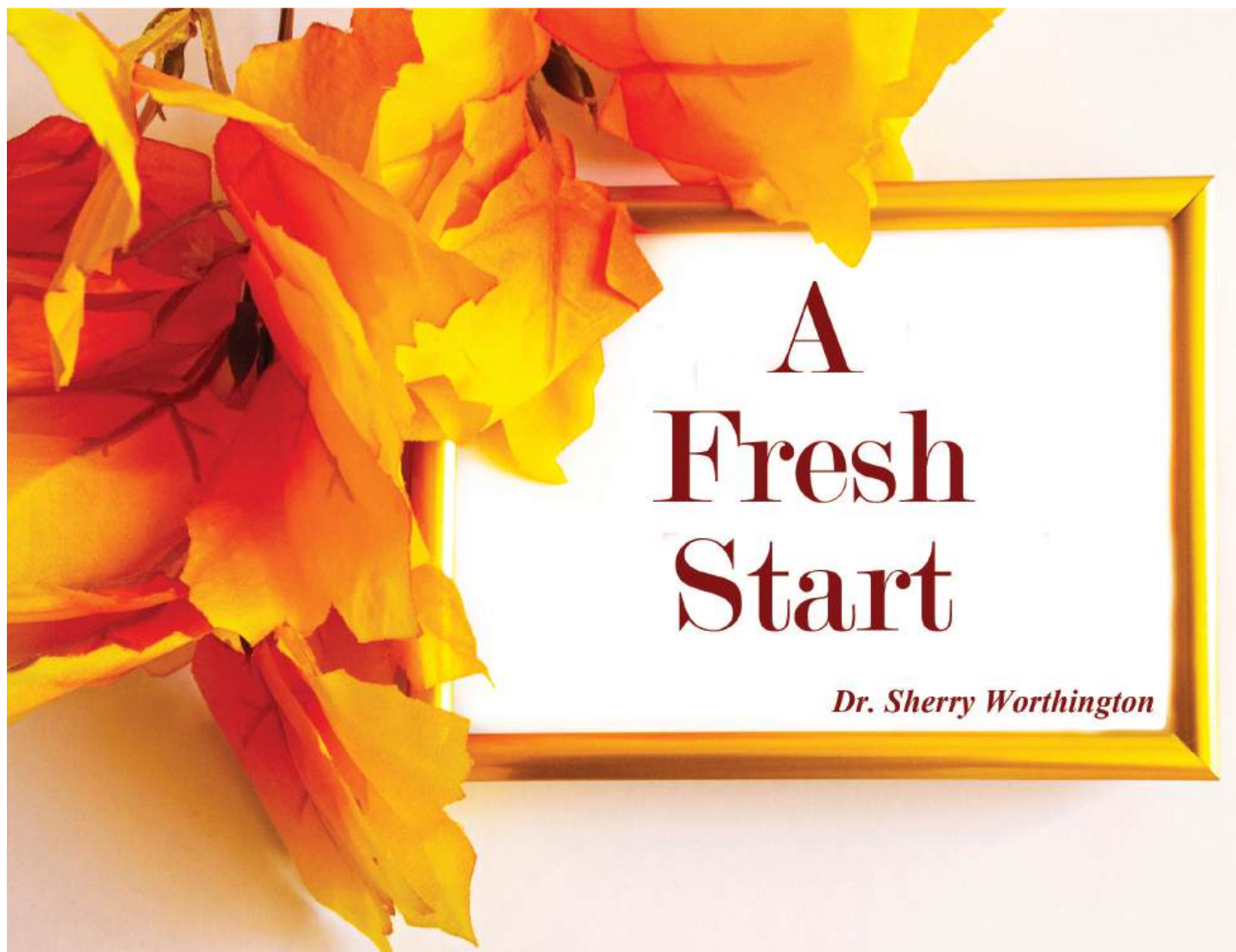


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One Saturday morning, I was lying in bed thinking about all that had transpired this past week. It had been an unusually busy week, and I had not stopped to digest it all. Life had been full, to say the least. Some matters had come to my attention that grieved my heart, our national news had been depressing, and I was unusually tired. I had allowed myself to get down and negative.

When I let myself get this way, I start to feel defeated. Once I finish my pity party, I begin to thank the Lord for all of my blessings. I start with my salvation, my wonderful husband and family, the friends he has blessed me with, and I end with the beautiful ministry that he allows me to serve.

How long does my pity party last? Usually, mine is relatively short-lived, but I have known people who live in a state of negativity and pity. They spend their entire lives searching for death in other people and life in general, and are determined to stay in a state of disgust. Most people seem to be somewhere in the middle.

What gives us away? Our countenance, our actions, but most of all our words. **James 1:26** teaches us, ***"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is in vain."*** When we are negative and talk about each other, we are not mature in the faith. We are still

babes, and perhaps we should keep a pacifier in our mouths until we grow up.

Many people in our world walk around looking for death. Everything about our country is bad. America has its problems, but there is still a lot of good here. Perhaps those that hate her so much should go live somewhere else. We need to love our country and work towards making her better because we care about her and our children's future. As Christians, we are responsible for looking for the good in all things. We need to pray for our leaders and support those who adhere most closely to the values taught in God's Word.

People in restaurants give the servers a hard time about the food. In grocery stores, we complain about the lines. In front of our children, we tear down the adults in their lives that we should be teaching them to respect. Some of the children talk about others with disgust, and we wonder why.

James is a wonderful book to study the tongue and the damage it can do. **James 3:8** states, ***“But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”***

In our society, the tongue lashes out in person, on the phone, in text messages, and with the notorious social media. The barrage of text messages, chats, and media posts has hurt many young people. Most of the time it is not face-to-face. People talk by text, argue by text, attack by text, and even break up by text. Some things may be said better in a letter because of special circumstances, but we need to communicate everything in a spirit of love. We cannot convey our hearts or our tone within social media or texts.

Many things would never be said if we could only say them face-to-face. The tongue was hard enough to tame before all of the different avenues of communication developed. James wrote his letter when communication was limited to face-to-face or by the written word. It was a lot of work to write a letter in 60 AD.

Often, when something is bothering me, I write a letter. I don't usually end up giving it to anyone because, more often than not, it helps me think things through and move on.



Sometimes the Lord convicts me that I have made myself an idol and that I need to get off my high horse. I realize there are times that situations need to be dealt with, but we have to tread carefully. We need to ask ourselves, *“Why am I angry?”* Am I angry because my Lord was hurt, or because I felt attacked? Good question! Most of us would have to say that we are angry because someone didn't bow to our idol of self. Just as Nebuchadnezzar threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace for not bowing, we throw others into our furnace of fury.

Why are we negative? Why do we spew out death wherever we go? If we are a Christian, if we are God's child, this should not be. **James 3:10 -11** reads, ***“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?”***

We have forgotten who our Father is. Our God is the creator of the universe, and there is not a problem he doesn't know about. There is nothing we are facing he can't handle.

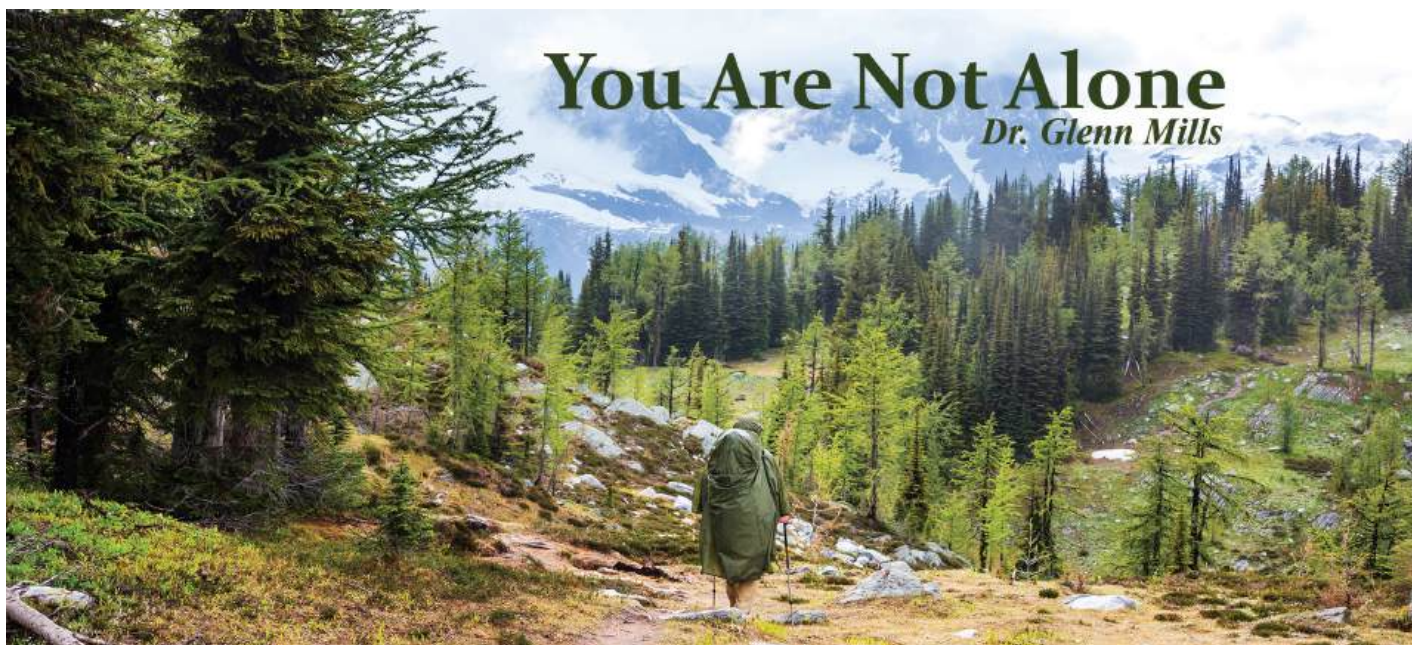
It is sad that I have to learn these things at my age. Lately I have become more appreciative of those around me. I have learned that when I am critical of other Christians, I am critical of God's children. None of us are perfect, and there are ways we can all improve, but I am so thankful for each person in my life.

We are not going to win others to Christ or influence babes in the faith if we have a critical spirit. Isn't it time to do something about it? We can't change others, but we can change ourselves with God's help. Once we allow God to change us on the inside, our whole perspective changes. Our world becomes a lot brighter!

The best time to start is now!



Dr. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



You Are Not Alone

Dr. Glenn Mills

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;”

John 14:16

If I were to make a list of all the negative feelings we deal with in life, I would have to say the feeling of isolation would be at the top of the list. There is nothing in life worse than feeling you are alone, even when you may be standing in a crowd. You feel like no one else knows what you are dealing with or going through at that moment. That mindset can cause us to make wrong choices, bringing even more pain into our lives. Sadly, this feeling has even driven way too many wonderful people to commit suicide.

I have been watching a program on the History Channel entitled, *Alone*. It is about ten people who are situated in an isolated place where they live alone completely off the land and its resources. They are allowed to take ten survival items such as a sleeping bag, axe, knife, saw, fishing hooks, etc. The one who lasts the longest wins half a million dollars. The longest time anyone has stayed to date is around 100 days. Sounds easy enough, but it is far from easy.

I have observed several seasons so far and there is one element that continues to cause many of the contestants to give up and go home. Amazingly, it is not the wild bears, wolves, and cougars that pass within inches of their hand-built shelter at night. It is not severe weather such as days of rain and below freezing temperatures. It is not even excessive weight loss due to slow starvation that gets to them. It is isolation, the feeling of aloneness that makes many of the contestants throw in the towel.

Each contestant has a satellite device they can use to contact the show’s base at a moment’s notice in case of emergency. The device also has a button you can push to ‘tap-out’, which means you give up the challenge. Everyone seems somewhat excited, yet apprehensive, when they are dropped off by boat, floating plane, or helicopter to their new remote home. But soon reality sets in, they are all alone to survive the elements, set up shelter, and find as much food as possible before freezing weather sets in. Most contestants do well for a week or so, but eventually the aloneness starts eating away at them.

Like others who watch the program, Kim and I try to guess who will be the next one to give up and go home. After weeks of isolation, even the thoughts of a half a million dollars start to fade and give way to thoughts of spouses, family, friends, and lots and lots of good food. All the bugs, slugs, and weeds just are not enough. The contestants all hope to win the money, but they also have other reasons for going. Some want to “find themselves” and others may desire to see just how much they can take and how far they can go. One thing I have noticed is that if they go trying to escape some problem, it will not be long before that problem will be right there to haunt them.

The *Alone* series proves a very important point; people do not like to be alone. Even so-called hermits like the companionship of a dog or some type of animal. I found it funny that one contestant, who I was sure would go a long way, had to tap out after he killed a squirrel that had been hanging around his campsite. He broke down when he felt he had killed his little friend, even though it was meat

for survival. And even though many of the contestants are experts in survival skills, isolation gets the best of them.

But I can say with confidence that the History Channel was not the first to come up with the idea of Alone. No, that idea was used by one of the craftiest creatures known to mankind for thousands of years. His name is Satan, Lucifer, the father of lies, the dragon, the false accuser, and many other names. Satan has been using the tactic of isolation since the time of creation. Only heaven knows the lives he has destroyed by convincing some poor soul they were all alone and without hope.

I'm sure you have heard his degrading lies from time to time. "You are all alone," he whispers during your times of confusion and pain. "No one cares about you," he says when the phone is not ringing. "No one understands you," he murmurs when your ideas and opinions are rejected. "Your sin is too big this time," he shouts, drowning out the voice of God. And the bad part is, Satan knows exactly when to attack us. It is when we are weak, confused, weary, disappointed, frustrated, hurting, and discouraged. He is like a lion that seeks out the weak ones in the herd, isolates them, and then devours them.

However, the great news is, as children of God, we are NEVER alone. God and Jesus made us a promise They have been faithful to keep and that is, "We will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5) Since God created the planet and mankind, He has made Himself available to those who would seek and desire Him. He sent Jesus to die for our sins and bring us into a loving relationship with Him as our Father. And, when Jesus had finished His redemptive work and returned to Heaven, God sent us the precious Holy Spirit. John 14:17 says, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Thank God, we are never, ever alone. We may be weary or under a heavy burden, but we are not alone. We may sin, disobey God's instruction, or momentarily reject His leading, but we are never alone. God's presence is not based on our performance or worthiness. It is based on His love and mercy. Yes, He may have to deal with our sin, but He will not forsake us in any way. The Holy Spirit, as the Scripture says, not only dwells with us,

but also lives in us. That's right, He lives in our hearts, souls, and minds. He never, ever abandons us for any reason unless we make a conscience decision to reject His leadership and presence.

Just as people can feel alone in a crowd, we can also feel alone if we do not continually acknowledge the presence of God in our lives, by His Holy Spirit. The contestants of Alone do well until they let their minds get the best of them. We are no different if we let our mind have its way. We must stay spiritually focused on our personal relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We must openly communicate and fellowship with them. Stay in the Word and hold to God's promises. Realize our feelings cannot always be trusted, but God can. Talk with God often and listen expectantly. Praise God; we even have a great cloud of witnesses cheering us on daily.

You can expect Satan to show up and start his lies, but when he does, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) Be watchful for others who may be struggling with aloneness and help them as the Holy Spirit leads. Share with them God's love and promises.

While only one can win the half million dollars for surviving Alone, as children of God we are never alone, and in Him we are all winners.



Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with Glenn Mills Ministries. More information is available at www.glennmillsministries.com

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Me, Forgive THAT??

Many years ago, a close friend announced to our whole youth group something about me that I certainly did not want brought to their attention. Everyone laughed. I am sure that she had no idea how much her statement hurt me. Needless to say, our friendship soon dissolved. Young and inexperienced, I should have handled the situation differently. I have since forgiven her, realizing that I have probably unknowingly done similar things and realizing that God has forgiven me for much. However, whenever I think of her, what I remember is that incident. Sometimes, forgiveness is difficult.

Franklin Graham addresses that issue in his book, All for Jesus. He gives three reasons why we tend to struggle with forgiveness:

1. We focus on what hurt us instead of focusing on the person who hurt us.
2. We overlook our own failures.
3. We believe we have the ability to judge the motives of others.

When Jesus taught us to pray in **Matthew 6:9-15**, we are told to pray that God would forgive us as we forgive others. To the degree that we forgive others, we will be forgiven of the earthly effects of our sin. With that in mind, we should be able to forgive seventy times seven times. In our flesh, we choose the extent of our judgment by how much we judge others.

We don't know how to forgive until we have been forgiven by God Himself. God provided a way for us to have complete forgiveness of our soul and spirit through Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross. Have you received the gift of God's forgiveness personally? Our perfect God forgives our imperfections. Surely, we can forgive the imperfections in others, realizing that we are all sinfully imperfect.

Satan will bring to our minds the wrongs that have been committed against us. If we dwell on those, we can find ourselves becoming unforgiving. Each time he reminds us, we need to renew our forgiveness and not dwell on the wrong. The most blessed aspect of God's forgiveness is that He chooses to forget and erase our sin from His records. When we mention our past forgiven sins to Him, He responds, "I don't know what you are talking about."

Ponder that!



Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. Now retired, she formerly served as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



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