

**Message Study Guide**

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on [thorncreek.church/live](http://thorncreek.church/live))

**Warming up**

1. What on your mind?

**Digging Deeper & Application**

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

2. Mark Twain said, "What a wee little part of a person's life are his acts and his words! His real life is led in his head, and is known to none but himself. All day long, the mill of his brain is grinding, and his thoughts, not those other things, are his history." Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
3. Please read Matthew 9:1-4. What does this say about our thought life and God's ability to know our thoughts?
  - a. Do you think it matters to God what we think to ourselves?
4. Read Jeremiah 4:14. How do our thoughts affect our heart?
5. Marcus Aurelius, said, "The most important things in life are the thoughts you choose to think". If you think long enough..."God is not real" or "Church is a waste of time"...You'll eventually stop going to church and/or stop believing in God. Do you think the power of good thoughts completely lies in our ability to choose what we think about?
6. Compare with John Ortberg's quote, "As a general rule, our emotions flow out of our thoughts. Discouraged people tend to think discouraging thoughts. Worried people tend to think anxious thoughts. These thoughts become so automatic that, like the lingering skunk odor, after a while we don't even notice we are thinking them."

7. Please read Romans 8:5-8. What is the difference between the two thinkers in this passage?
  - a. What controls each of them? How does it affect their thinking?
  
8. One Bible Scholar said, "To be spiritually minded is to seek those feelings and views which the Holy Spirit produces, and to follow his leadings." How do you know if thoughts are pleasing to God's Holy Spirit?
  
9. John Ortberg said, "Learning to walk in the Spirit takes at least as much grace and strength as learning to walk on two legs, and the Spirit will always help lead us toward God's best version of ourselves." Is it possible our best version of ourselves lies in us learning to be led by God's Holy Spirit in our thinking?
  
10. Much of our spiritual growth has to do with monitoring our spiritual thoughts. According to Philippians 4:4-8, what does this scripture say is our part and what is God's part?

### **Application**

**Below are some key points to take away from this study. Take time to discuss the points and pray together:**

- Your thought life is driven by your spiritual life. What fills your mind will eventually fill your heart.
- "Our defeat or victory begins with what we think, and if we guard our thoughts we shall not have much trouble anywhere else along the line." Vance Havner (Preached for 73 years)
- **Romans 8:5-8 (NLT):** 5 Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. 7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.