

Faith Is Action

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**MAKE UP YOUR MIND TO
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BY DORANNE HARDY

I believe, more now than at any other time, the real battlefield we all face today is for *the mind*. Even God's people have minds full of clutter and confusion. Many of their problems could be solved if they would only get the victory in their minds. The mind of man was not meant to bear all the stress and pressure we have today. Adam and Eve weren't created to bear the pressures our minds struggle with today. They were in an environment of absolute peace, perfect unity, perfectly blessed. They didn't have stress, and they didn't know violence. Their minds were pure; all they dwelled on was fellowship with the Lord and His goodness. But when sin entered their hearts, their minds became polluted, and the battlefield for the soul and spirit began in the mind.

Before you lose the battle for your soul, you first lose it in your mind. The wise man said, "*For as a man thinks in his heart so is he*" (Prov. 23:7). You are the product of all the many thoughts you allow to process in your mind. You can't blame the devil, because although he brings wrong thoughts, it is only if

you toy with them and embrace them, that they become *your thoughts* and *your* responsibility. Don't blame it on the devil at that point, because you can still cast those thoughts down:

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds: Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Whenever the enemy comes with any thought that's against the truth, against what you know is God's will for you, that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, it can become *a stronghold* unless you *immediately cast that thing down*. You have to *pull it down*. These are violent terms, so you must be aggressive to pull down those strongholds. You do this when you *take every thought captive*. You have to take hold of every harmful thought like a dangerous prisoner, and don't allow it to occupy your mind. If you allow the thought in

your mind, it will then fall down into your heart. Once it gets into your heart, it takes root and begins to grow, until *you become all those thoughts*.

The Mind Must Be Renewed

Paul said: “*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*” (Eph.4:23-24). Being renewed in the spirit of your mind implies a perpetual daily assignment. When you were born again, you became a new creation in Christ. You were washed in the blood, and as long as you don’t sin or backslide, *your soul is sealed by the blood of Jesus. But the mind is not sealed!* The soil of the mind is constantly being sown with seeds—good and bad, and you have to take care what kind of seeds you allow in your mind.

Let me explain it another way: You have a *spiritual* mind and a *natural* mind. Paul said, “*We have the mind of Christ.*” In order to have the mind of Christ after you are born again, you have to work at it. He said: “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*” (Phil.2:5). You have to *allow* it. To have the mind of Christ, you have to bring your thinking and your thoughts into obedience to Christ and to His Word.

What is *thinking*? Webster’s Dictionary: A *thought* (noun) is the *act of thinking, reflecting, mediating*

upon; reasoning, having imaginations, consideration, and opinions. To *think* (verb) is *using thoughts you form, or to have in mind things in a certain way; to hold in one’s opinion, to judge.* When you think, you are trying to make a judgment about something; so it’s to formulate a supposition or to *surmise*. It can also mean to *intend* or *purpose*.

Then there is the state when one continually brings to mind one thought or idea, which is *obsession*. This means you can’t get your mind on anything else. You know you have to do things, but you can’t get your mind together to do them, because you are too obsessed with one thought. Often this is when the devil comes with not only a thought, but has bombarded you with thought after thought, after thought, until your mind is completely filled with them.

States of Mind

The Bible describes types, functions, and states of the mind, such as in Acts 17:1, we find there is a *mind of readiness*. You probably know people in the church, that whatever needs to be done, are always ready to say, “I’m here. I will do it.”

According to Luke 12:39, there are people who have a *doubtful mind*. Before they get their victory or promise from God, they go through much warfare of doubting, because all kinds of doubtful seed have been sown into their minds, and they haven’t up-rooted it. The

enemy brought thought after thought; they received it, until they are so full of doubt, they struggle to believe.

There is the *mind of lowliness*. Some people are just *humble* and easily submit for the Lord's sake: "*But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves*" (Phil. 2:3).

This is akin to the *mind of humility* (Acts 20:19). Also called "*humbleness of mind*" in Col. 3:12, it is associated with "*mercy, kindness, meekness, longsuffering, and forgiveness.*" When somebody is humble, you cannot stay angry with him. I have tried to be angry with people, but when they humble themselves, I get soft, and I believe the Lord does too. If you have a humble spirit, you'll find great grace in the eyes of the Lord.

In Titus 1:15, Paul spoke of a *vile mind*. I have met people who have such vulgar minds, you can't say anything to them, without their making a double meaning of it that is filthy. They just have a *dirty mind*. Their minds are so embedded with filthy seeds that they are defiled by their own thoughts. When I worked at a glass factory before I got saved, there was a guy who had a defiled mind, and I could not stand to be around him. I was a sinner, but I couldn't stand him. I hated to call him to come fix my machine. His name was *Luther*, so when I needed my machine fixed, I would call him, *Lucifer*. Most people didn't know

what I was talking about, but I knew, and he knew. He'd say, "Don't call me that." I'd say, "*Okay, Lucifer.*"

In Eph. 4:17, Paul described a vain mind: "*...Walk not as other Gentiles (the unsaved) walk in the vanity of their mind.*" One person in my family lived to be 88 years old, and of all the people I've known in my life, she was the vainest person I'd ever met. I marveled how everything that occurred, revolved around her circle of thought: *me, my, and mine*. She couldn't put herself in another person's shoes and see another side of anything. Everything was always geared to her, because her mind was so full of self. She was blinded to anything beyond self, because she was so vain. Now we were all vain when we were 16 or 17 years old, but it's time to grow out of it when you are 25, and if you are 40 and 50, and still vain, you need deliverance!

There is a "*sound mind*" the Word promises us in 2Tim. 1:7; we won't have an *unstable* mind, or a *double mind* beset by fear and doubt, because "*A doubleminded person is unstable in all his ways*" (Js.1:8).

This is why you must let your roots go down deep in His Word, and work on your mind to get good thoughts in there. Obedient thoughts bring wrong thoughts into captivity. When the enemy sends thoughts of discouragement, malice, resentment, even backsliding, you can throw

them off.

The Seed Bed of the Mind

The best illustration of how to let the mind of Christ be in you is a *seed bed*. I have a large yard, and every spring I love to plant flowers for the season, and every year it gets more expensive to buy those flowers. One year, I decided to make a seed bed. At the end of the summer, I cut down all my scarlet sage that were dead. Then I took a big brown bag and shook all the seeds in it. I wrapped it up and took it down to the cellar and left it there all winter. When spring came, I got some trays and put good soil in them. You can't grow anything in bad soil, and if the soil of your mind is not good, you are not going to harvest good thoughts.

Using rich dirt, I sprinkled the seeds into the trays, watered them a little, and covered them with Saran wrap. About a month later, I checked, and there were little green shoots coming up. I removed the Saran wrap, watered them, and put them in the sunlight. In no time, because it was *good dirt* and *good seed*, I had so many flowers I put them on the back porch, the front porch, and in the flower bed around the patio. I didn't know where to put them all!

You need to visualize your mind as being like that seed bed: See the Word of God being sprinkled liberally into the seed bed of your mind, so that you will be abundant in produc-

ing good thoughts and deeds.

Another time I grew canter lilies. They have big beautiful red or yellow flowers, and they get very tall. I had so many bulbs, I didn't know where to put them all, so I planted them closer than they were supposed to be. Do you know what happened? They grew as tall as me! They were so tall, they shadowed the ground, and I didn't have to weed. I like flower beds that you don't have to weed! If you get the Word of God in you so thick, you won't have to be weeding all the time! You will have a good harvest of good thoughts. You will have thoughts that bless, thoughts that strengthen you, and thoughts that will carry you through your tests. It all depends on how you plant the seed bed of your mind.

If you allow your mind to be filled with negative things: resentment, malice, jealousy, they will get down into your heart, *and then you are responsible for those thoughts*. God is going to call you into account for those thoughts. You can't just think any old thing, because once it gets down into your heart, it creates a mental image, and when you have a mental picture of something, you usually act it out. So you have to take responsibility for how you take care of the seeding of your mind. The more you study God's Word, and sit under sound teaching of the Word, the more godly thoughts will fall into your seed bed and start growing. As they will develop in

you, you will grow into a strong, true Christian.

You can't control how the devil comes against you. He's going to come, because he is at war with us. When he brings thoughts to you that are suggestive, even repulsive, you know *it's not you thinking that!* Satan is trying to put those thoughts in your mind, and *you must resist them!*

Consider Adam and Eve: Imagine how wonderful the Garden of Eden was. They had everything. Think of the mind Adam had that he could name all of the animals. Our encyclopedias can't hold all the knowledge that Adam had in his head. He named all the animals; he knew all the plants; he knew all the trees; he knew everything, *but he didn't know what evil was!*

God told him: "*The garden is all yours*"— and commanded him: "*Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: But the day you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall surely die*" (Gen.1:16-17). That was as plain as God could make it.

Eve went wrong when she began to wander closer to the forbidden tree. She should have run the other way. Don't ever think that because you know how the devil is, and what temptation is, you can go up to the edge of it and know when to stop. Many people do, but they don't realize until it's too late, when they get there, the devil is going to push them, and they are going to fall

on the wrong side. Don't play with the idea! Don't allow yourself to entertain that thought. Resist it! Cast it down! Pull it down! Take it prisoner! Take it captive to God's Word.

The Word commands us to "flee fornication! Flee idolatry! Flee youthful lusts!" (1Cor.6:18, 10:14, 2Tim. 2:22).

Whenever you play with what you know to be against God's Word, and think you will just see how far you can go, you're making a big mistake. This is not a game we are playing. This is about whether our souls make it, or whether they are lost. How we think determines the outcome. That's what Eve did when she first went near that tree. Look at the trouble we are all in because she hung around that tree! It was so enticing! It looked better than any tree in the garden. Then came the devil: "*Hey, Eve, God didn't really mean what He said. He just said that, because He knows if you eat of it, you will be as wise as Him, and you will know as much as He knows.*" They already knew everything but evil, but she did not reject the suggestion. The devil put the pressure on, "*Go ahead, and eat it—you will be like God.*" Just like it had done to Lucifer before he fell, pride came up in her heart. She bit, and when she did, she found out what evil is.

How could she have known that the day would come when one of her sons would slay the other, and then be driven away, so that she

wouldn't have either son? How could she have known what evil would cause, in that perfect state of purity and holiness? But she found out, and the devil seeks to do that to us too; to bring something or someone to entice us or obsess us with a person, or place, or thing.

Thought by thought, the devil sows his evil seeds. A person doesn't just take one giant step into sin—he eases into it little by little. His tolerance for that sin that he once would have been shocked by, becomes less, and he moves a little closer to that sin, until it doesn't bother him anymore. His conscience is becoming hardened. Those seeds in his mind are multiplying and are convincing him, reasoning with him that it's okay. Before he knows when to stop, he wakes up when it's too late, and finds himself in a pit.

Many young lives have been ruined by drugs, and today we have a heroin epidemic in this country, because Satan lied to them: *“You'll be an exception. You won't get hooked. Just try it.”* It breaks my heart to think how many young lives have been ruined, because they were enticed to *just try it once*. It all begins with one thought. Then first thing they knew, all those thoughts filled their minds, and they had lost control.

The Anointing Delivers

The only way that you can have a pure mind, the mind of Christ, is to remain under the control of the

Holy Spirit. He imparts the anointing that brings deliverance. His anointing sets you free. *The anointing destroys every yoke and breaks it into pieces* (Isa.10:27, 58:6). When the anointing flows in your life, you have the weapons of warfare that are mighty through God to pull down the strongholds in your mind.

When God made man, He gave us the right of choice, and with that right of choice we can use our minds to have the mind of Christ, under the control of the Holy Spirit, or we can yield our minds to other things. Just because a Christian is under the control of the Holy Spirit, doesn't mean that he can't get other thoughts. Many Christians follow *their own thoughts*, and they move ahead of God's will. God had put it into Moses' mind to deliver the Hebrew people, but Moses became angry when he saw an Egyptian beating one of his brethren, and he slew the Egyptian. God didn't tell him to do it that way. He ran ahead of God and leaned on his own understanding. Consequently, he had to run for his life and hide in the desert for forty years.

A classic case of obsessive thinking is Sarah and Abraham. God told them He was going to give them a child in their advanced age. For a long time, they didn't believe it. After many years, Abraham began to get his faith together, but Sarah, who had always been barren, still had wrong thoughts. When it didn't

happen right away, she reasoned that it could happen without her: *I'll give him my handmaiden Hagar, and a child by her will be mine.* The repercussions of this one erroneous decision are the cause of most everything that's happening in the news in the Middle East today! Because she didn't have the right mind and didn't think the right thoughts. Instead, she acted ahead of God's plan. You can't do your own thing and not make somebody else suffer for it. Everybody suffers when you get the wrong mind and the wrong thoughts.

The point: *You and I should have the mind of Christ*, but we may not always operate in the mind of Christ. You can get along without it, but you're going to have a tough row to hoe. And you must have the mind of Christ if you want to live in peace, dwell in love, and have lasting joy. Many Christians are in trouble, because of their own wrong choices. When Jesus saves us, He cleanses us. Our past is gone. Our sins are cast into the sea of forgetfulness, but some who have been damaged and scarred by their past, haul all that bitter baggage with them. I know people who can't grow in the Lord, because they are troubled about those who did them wrong in the past. They may have been molested, and that's a terrible thing and leaves deep scars, but the Lord is a healer. To allow the hurts of the past to defile the present and abort the future is the trick of the

enemy to steal our joy and peace in Christ.

My Story

My parents divorced when I was an infant. My mother kept my sister, who was two years older than me, and they moved in with my grandmother, who watched my sister while my mother worked. She was not willing to watch an infant, so I was placed with a foster family at nine months old. I didn't know until I was 70 years old that I was actually placed with my father's relatives at only *three months old!* I found out by accident after reading an article in my local Baltimore newspaper.

My maiden name was *Searfoss* which is quite uncommon. There are none in the Baltimore telephone book. The article was about a man named *Searfoss* who was arrested in Florida for *peeping-Tom* type of crimes in K-Mart and Wal-Mart stores. It caught my eye because of his last name.

Shortly thereafter, while chatting on the phone with my sister who lives in Ohio, I related to her the article. To my surprise, she said, *"About five years ago a man got in touch with me because he knew I was a Searfoss, and his deceased mother was a Searfoss too. I took his name and number. He lives in Florida, but I never followed up on it."* She had kept the information. His last name was *Jones*.

Nervous and uncertain, I called the number while thinking *He's not*

going to know who I am! When he answered, I said, “*Is this Mr. Jones?*” He replied, “*Yes, it is.*” I said, “*My name is Doranne...*” I was getting ready to tell him a long string of who I was, but he interrupted me: “*Doranne? Doranne! Oh my God, I’ve wondered about you all my life. I’m 92 years old, and I’ve always wondered what happened to you!*”

“*Really?*”, I exclaimed in amazement. He continued: “*When your mom and dad broke up, my mother (my father’s sister) took you. She was going to raise you, but she died suddenly after she took you. There I was left to raise my brother and little sister, and I was only 22. I had to work, and it was during the depression, so I had my little sister take care of you. We loved you so much, but I had so much on me that I had to give you back. Later I married, but we never had children, and we have always wondered about you through the years. I felt like I should have raised you, but I was just a young man with so much on me.*”

I couldn’t believe it! I related to him the story in the newspaper, but he said that he did not know him. It was as if the Lord used that article to bring us together before he died. A year later, on vacation in Florida, I went to meet him. As soon as we saw each other, we could see the *Searfoss* family resemblance. He was delighted to see me, and we stayed in touch till he died at age 96. I learned how faithful God is to heal

our hearts of rejection even from years ago.

What I want you to see: when we cast down those imaginations of rejection, and pull down these strongholds of years of wrong thinking, we defeat Satan’s devices to destroy our future. These are thoughts and imaginations that are warring against the knowledge of God and can rob us of our blessing from God. Keep this in mind when those thoughts come and bombard you—and realize it is the devil battling you! He is trying to make the knowledge of God of non-effect in your heart by sowing all that other stuff in your seed bed. You must resist him, and you have to do this daily.

I could have all kinds of scars from my past. I did have problems growing up because of the rejection I experienced when I was put in a foster home at only three months old. My whole life I thought I was dumb and ugly. I thought that was why they gave *me* away and kept my sister. I grew up with wrong thinking about myself. I recently got back in contact with a friend who grew up with me, and she said to me, “*You were always so smart.*” I said, “*Huh? How can you say that?*”

I only remember that when I came home from school, Pop, who raised me, would sit for hours and help me with my homework, and I felt so dumb. I had the scars of being rejected, and I didn’t give

anyone a chance to hurt me again, so I kept up my guard. I had to leave those scars and baggage under the blood when I came to Jesus, and let His blood cleanse my soul to be rid of all the hurt.

You may have a bad marriage, or your spouse walked out on you and did you wrong. You just have to put it behind you and go on with Jesus. If you had a life of poverty, and you didn't have clothes or shoes like the other children had, you can't dwell on that and whine, "Well, my folks didn't give to me." I remember the time my son Chochie said to me, "*You know Mom, when I was growing up, I never felt deprived.*" I thought, *Wow!* because we had it tough financially when he was growing up. But I didn't let him know how tough we had it. He didn't know the difference. He just went on his way enjoying life. He didn't know when we didn't have anything for supper; that I was waiting on the Lord to send the ravens or something.

When I remember our time in our William Street church (1960-1973), it seems like the people that Brother Hardy and I worked to help the most were the ones who turned on us. People we seemed to give the less attention to were always the ones who were there for us. But I had to get over those betrayals.

I remember when we were in the first storefront mission (1958-1959). I was newly saved and still working at the glass factory, and everything I

made, after I paid our rent, I put in the offering to pay the mission rent, gas, and electric. People did me so wrong: They actually complained about how I dressed! If I didn't pay the bills for the mission, I could have had better clothes to dress up! I mean, that hurt me, because before I got saved, I dressed up even if I didn't have money to eat. Wearing nice clothes was my bag! But I couldn't let those hurtful things stop me. I had to let a mind of humility overrule my feelings.

Eating Humble Pie

You talk about *getting humble!* The sister who played the piano was a real scatter-brain. Her thoughts were so jumbled you could not stay on her train of thought. We only had eight people in the mission, but we started on live radio every Sunday afternoon. I was always nervous, because there was nobody else to sing but me. When it was time to sing, I would look at her to give me the key. Flustered, she would always hit *a clinker*, and leave me singing "*Amazing Grace*" or whatever song, at a too high pitch. I knew I sounded like a fool, but I had to keep singing, croaking up and down, because it was live radio.

One day I got so mad at her, I said, "*Look, I'm tired of you doing this to me. We're going to practice.*" I went down to the mission all that week, and we practiced in the right key. I said to her, "*That's it. Do you have it now?*" She was confident:

“Yes, I’ve got it.”

That Sunday I was ready to sing, *and she hit a clinker again!* I thought: *That’s it! I quit!* When the radio broadcast was over, I declared myself. I was furious: *“I’m leaving this church, and I’m never coming back! I’m going over to that revival center in East Baltimore where there is no pressure; where you don’t hear prophecies telling everybody to get right, and nobody is getting right. I’m going to a church where there’s no pressure!”*

I walked out of that mission, slammed the door, *and oh, I felt good!* I had let everyone know how I felt. I walked to the corner, waiting for the transit bus to come, when the Holy Spirit told me, *“You are not your own. You have been bought with a price. If you step on that bus, I won’t trouble you anymore.”*

I mean to tell you, *I was shook up!* I let the bus go by, but I kept thinking *I can’t go back there—not after all I said! I’m getting on the next bus.* The next bus came, and I could not pick up my foot to get on that bus. I didn’t know what to do. Bus after bus was passing, and I was crying right on the corner of Greene and Baltimore Streets. A sailor came up to me and said, *“What’s the matter, Honey?”* I glared at him: *“Get out of here!”* I mean, I was shaken in my soul!

I thought: *What am I going to do now?* I knew I could not get on the bus to go home. I remembered a sister in the Lord who lived nearby on

Lombard Street, so I went there. She opened the door, and she knew that I should have been in church at that time for the afternoon service, but she didn’t say, *“What are you doing here?”* She knew I was troubled, and she just opened her arms and pulled me in her house. She started to pray, and I cried, and I cried, and I cried. You talk about getting humble.

She said, *“Sister Hardy, you stay here with me this afternoon, and we are going to pray, and then we will have dinner. After dinner, I’m going to go to church with you.”* I said, *“Well, if you go with me, that will really help me.”*

We went to church for the night service, and when I walked in, the pianist said all loud, *“I thought you said you weren’t coming back anymore!”* I didn’t say a word. I had to learn to have a humble mind, and that experience taught me much. I don’t want to say too many words when I’m mad, because I don’t like to eat crow.

You can’t always do what you want to do. What would have happened if I had disobeyed and got on that bus, and God took His Spirit from me? People are not aware of the presence of God anymore. We have to be aware of the presence of God. You just don’t get up and go here or go there on your own. You have to let the Holy Spirit lead you. *“The sons of God are those who are led by the Spirit of God”* (Rom.8:14). The Holy Spirit won’t

lead you to places you shouldn't go. He won't lead you out of the will of God. He won't lead you to do things that will damage you.

When thoughts come, we have to decide whether it is God's thoughts or our own thoughts. If it is God's thought, it will line up with His Word.

Hebrews 4:12 says, "*For the Word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" Do you see how connected they are—the thought and the heart? If the seed bed of your mind is full of the Word of God, when the enemy comes with thoughts, the Word will discern the intent of those thoughts and reveal what is of God and *what is not*. We have to analyze *how* we are thinking and *what* we are thinking and discern if they align with the obedience of Christ. If so, we can let it grow by meditating on it; if not, we must pull it out, take it captive, and bring it into subjection to His Word.

One thing about having the Word of God as a discerner of the thought: *you can't deceive the Holy Spirit*. If the Holy Spirit is controlling your mind, you will not be deceived. Paul said, "*The Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things.... He that is spiritual, discerns all things*" (1Cor.2:13, 15).

A Menu for the Mind

Paul gave us the menu to feed our spiritual minds the right spiritual food to grow by in Philippians 4:8: "*Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"

When somebody comes to you with a bad report, answer with a good report from God's Word. When somebody comes with a half-truth, which is a lie, cut them off. When people come with unclean jokes, dishonest suggestions, even racist remarks, it's up to you whether you want to be a partaker of their filthiness or of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. It's up to you to make up your mind.