

THE BATTLE FOR THE MIND

Sometimes Christians, in seeking fellowship with God, allow their minds to become passive. Their sincere desire to hear from God, especially in prayer, causes them to open their thought-life to whatever comes in, thinking that only God will speak to them. Blanking out all thoughts as much as possible, they assume they are now ready to hear from the Lord. They do not understand that God speaks to our spirits, and our spirits then communicate to our minds--and that all of this is in accord with the written Word. For the Spirit and the Word must agree.

To leave our minds wide open, without questioning and discerning the source of input, advances Satan's purposes. We can become confused when our spirits caution us, but our minds speak so loudly against that caution that we feel guilty if we do not obey.

Demons often apply a mental force that is much different from the gentle constraint of the Holy Spirit when he gives direction. This powerful coercion from the enemy commands us to carry out an order without question. God's admonition to "try the spirits" (1 John 4:1) is seldom beneficial at this point, for any questioning seems to be disobedience. Such demons usually apply additional pressure by instilling the thought that the matter must be accomplished in haste: "Don't ask questions, just hurry." And so, if we are not aware of the enemy's devices, we scurry about until we are spiritually, mentally, and physically worn out--which is exactly what Satan wants (see Dan. 7:25).

At times, believers fall prey to what appear to be "good" thoughts, thoughts that seem religious and right. Because these thoughts seem good, there is never the inclination to question them. But because they were not born in the spirit by the Holy Spirit they will never bear fruit. Many Christians with good hearts fall for the lies of these "spirits of religion" and their efforts have little effect on furthering the kingdom of God. They constantly keep busy doing good deeds but their motivation is not from God's Word or His Spirit.

Mature Christians are careful when they use the expression "God told me." They understand that whatever they hear must be carefully confirmed by God's Word as well as by other mature Christians. The Holy Spirit living in others will confirm the direction that God gives. It is the Holy Spirit in others that bears witness with our spirit, either confirming or denying the input.

It is extremely important to test every theory and determine the source of every thought. Failure to discover the origin of what we hear or read provides the enemy with a place to work.

Ray Besson, THE REAL BATTLE, Tyndale, 1988