

SECTION EIGHT  
THE ANALYSIS OF THE SOUL  
(2)

THE MIND  
CHAPTER ONE

**THE MIND A BATTLEFIELD**

The mind of man is man's thinking organ. Through the mind, we know, think, imagine, recollect, and understand. The intellectual power, rationality, wisdom, and intelligence of man all belong to the mind. Broadly speaking, our mind is everything related to our brain. Mind is the psychological term, while brain is the physiological term. The mind in psychology is the brain in physiology. The mind occupies a big part in man's life because the mind directs man's conduct the most.

**BEFORE REGENERATION**

According to the Bible, man's mind is a battlefield. This is something unique. In the mind Satan and the evil spirits battle with the truth and also battle with the believer. We may use an example. The will and the spirit are like a fortress which evil spirits try to attack and capture. Man's mind is the field on which the battle takes place and from which the fortress is stormed and taken. The apostle said, "For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, as we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5). The apostle first told us about a war, then he told us where this war is and what it is for. This war is completely related to the mind of man. The apostle likened the "reasonings" to the "enemy's stronghold." He considered the mind as a stronghold guarded by the enemy that must be "overthrown." He also considered that within this stronghold there are many "rebellious thoughts." The apostle had to overthrow the mind of man and imprison and "take captive" the "rebellious thoughts" in man's mind, so these thoughts would be brought completely unto the "obedience of Christ." From these verses we can see that the mind of man is a battlefield because this is where evil spirits war with God.

The Bible tells us that "the god of this age has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine on them" (2 Cor. 4:4). This agrees with the previously cited Scripture because this is how Satan guards and blinds the mind of man. Perhaps a man considers himself to be very intelligent, able to use various arguments to oppose the gospel. Some think that others do not believe because they do not yet understand. Actually, the eyes of men's minds have been covered up by Satan. Since men's minds are guarded by Satan, their "thoughts were hardened" (3:14). They were "doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). They are "enemies in [the] mind" (Col. 1:21) because "the mind set on the flesh is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7).

After reading these verses and seeing how the authority of darkness is especially related to man's mind, we can see that the mind is the part of man which is most easily attacked by Satan. The authority of darkness cannot directly do anything to man's will, emotion, and body unless it has gained quite considerable ground in him already. The same is not

true with the mind. It appears that the mind is the enemy's property already; he does not need any special permission or invitation from man before he can freely work in the mind. The apostle likens the mind to the enemy's "stronghold," as if to tell us how deeply rooted and firm the relationship between Satan with his evil spirits and the mind of man is. Therefore, Satan and his evil spirits can make man's mind their stronghold and keep man a prisoner through his mind. They put man under their authority by utilizing his mind. They also utilize the imprisoned mind to transmit poison to others, and cause them to rise up in rebellion against God. We cannot say with certainty how much of the philosophy, logic, knowledge, investigation, research, and science in the world today comes from the power and influence of darkness. But one thing is certain: reasonings that lift themselves up against the knowledge of God are the strongholds of the enemy.

The proximity of the mind to the authority of darkness is nothing strange. Mankind's first sin was the pursuit of "the knowledge of good and evil." That knowledge was from Satan. Hence, the knowledge (mind) of mankind is peculiarly compatible with Satan. After reading the Bible carefully and observing the experience of the saints, one can see that all the fellowship between man and Satan with his evil spirits is in the mind. One only needs to consider the temptations from the devil. All temptations from the devil to man occur in the mind. While it is true that the devil often uses the flesh to arouse man's consent, he always entices man by turning temptations into some kind of thoughts. We cannot separate temptations from the mind. All temptations are given to us through the thoughts. Since our thoughts have such an "open-door policy" with the authority of darkness, we should know how to guard our thoughts.

Before a man is born again, his thoughts prevent him from knowing God. Therefore, God's great power is needed to overthrow the reasonings of man. At the time a man is saved, one thing happens or should happen—repentance. Repentance in the original text means nothing other than "a change of mind." Because man is at enmity with God in the mind, God wants man's mind to have a change before He can give life to man. When man does not believe, his moral nature is in darkness. At the time he is saved, his mind is changed. God wants man first to have a change of mind before he receives a new heart because the mind is so united with the devil (Acts 11:18).

## **AFTER BELIEVING**

After a believer repents, his mind is not completely delivered from Satan's workings. As Satan previously worked through the mind, he still works now through the mind. The apostle said to the believers in Corinth, "But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). The apostle knew how the god of this world had blinded the minds of the unbelievers and, in the same way, how he was deluding the minds of those who already had believed. The apostle knew that even though the believers were already saved, their minds were not yet renewed. Therefore, it remains the most critical battlefield—the mind receives more attacks from the authority of darkness than any other organ of man's entire being. We must realize that evil spirits of Satan pay special attention to our minds and that they always attack us in our minds. "As the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness." Satan did not attack Eve's heart first, he attacked her mind first. In the same manner, evil spirits want to attack our mind first, not our heart, with the purpose of corrupting us from a faith in simplicity. They know that our mind is the weakest spot. Before we believed, the mind was their stronghold; even now there are still many places that are not yet overthrown. They start where they

can be most successful. Eve's heart was sinless, but she accepted the thought suggested by Satan in her mind. She was enchanted by the power of his subtlety to the point that her mind lost its rationality, thereby becoming trapped. Therefore, it is useless for a believer to boast that he is upright in his motive. His mind must be trained to withstand evil spirits. Otherwise, they will have a way to tempt and to deceive his mind, and will cause his will to lose its power of decision.

Following 2 Corinthians 11:3, the apostle tells us where this danger comes from. Some will preach "another Jesus," causing them to "receive a different spirit" and accept "a different gospel" (v. 4). This means that the danger to the believers is to have erroneous teachings instilled into their minds which will lead them away from the pure gospel of Christ. This is what the "serpent" wants to do today. Satan will pretend to be an angel of light so that in their minds, believers will worship "another Jesus" who is not the Lord, receive "a different spirit" which is not the Holy Spirit, and through the believers spread "a different gospel" which is not the gospel of God's grace. The apostle told us that all this is done by Satan in the mind of the believers. One by one, Satan turns these "teachings" into thoughts and instills them into the mind of the believers. It is a very pitiful thing today that few believers are able to know these matters. How many believers know that Satan gives "good" thoughts to man?

We should know that a believer can receive a new life, a new heart, but not a new mind. Many believers have a new heart, but their head is old. The heart is full of love, but the head (the mind) does not have any discernment. Many are pure in their motive, but not so clear in the thoughts in their head. The mind is full of all kinds of mixture and very lacking in crucial, spiritual discernment. Many believers truly have a tender regard in their hearts for all of God's children, yet their minds are full of ideals, opinions, and goals. Many of God's best and most faithful children are very narrow and prejudiced in their thoughts. They have made up their minds about the truth. They only want their kind of truth and completely reject anything else which does not agree with their prejudices. All this happens because their heads are not as big as their hearts. There are also many of God's children whose minds can never come up with anything. Although they have heard many truths, they can never remember them; neither can they put them into practice or spread them to others. They have heard plenty, but there is no strength to express what they have heard. Though they have been receiving truths for years, they cannot meet the smallest needs of others. This kind of people may even boast that they are full of the Holy Spirit! This happens because their minds have not been completely renewed.

Man's head does more damage to him than his heart! If believers could differentiate between the renewing of the heart and the renewing of the head, they would not be misled to trust in man. Believers must know that a man can have the most intimate fellowship with God, and at the same time, the mind can unintentionally receive the suggestions of Satan, bringing his conduct, speech, and judgment into error. Other than the clear teaching of the Bible, no one person's word is entirely dependable. We should not live by the words of any one person just because we are close to him or admire and honor him. We must realize that even though a person's words and deeds are very holy, his thoughts are not necessarily entirely spiritual. Our attention should not be on his words and deeds, but on his mind, his head. If we believe what a worker says to be God's truth based on the words and conduct of the worker, we are making his words and conduct the standard for the truth, and not the Bible. Throughout history, many propagators of heresies were holy believers! Even though their heart—life—was renewed, their head—mind—was the same as before. Therefore, they behaved in such a way. We

admit that life is more important than knowledge—many times more important—but after we have been edified in life, we should not neglect the pursuit of knowledge, that is, the knowledge that proceeds from the renewed mind. Believers must realize that both their heart and mind must be renewed.

If the mind is not renewed, a believer's life will not be balanced; it will be almost impossible to do any work. Most teachings today emphasize a believer's spiritual life (the heart)—how one should love, be patient, humble, etc. These are surely very important, and nothing can substitute for these things. However, we should not think that these are sufficient to make up all the needs. They are important, but they do not include everything. It is equally important for a believer's mind to be renewed and enlarged and increase in strength so that it becomes strong. Otherwise, we will have an imbalanced life. Many people think that a spiritual believer should be one without any perception. It seems that the more foolish one is, the better. Besides being a little better than others in his living, he has no other usefulness, and he cannot be entrusted with anything. Of course, we do not want worldly intelligence and knowledge. But the goal of God's salvation is not that we would continue to use the same mind that was defiled by sin. God wants our mind to be renewed in the same way that our spirit is renewed. God wants our mind to be restored to the perfect condition that existed at the time of His creation so that we will not only glorify God in our living, but also with our mind. Countless numbers of God's children have become narrow, obstinate, hard, and even defiled through the negligence of their minds. The result is that they have come short of God's glory. Believers must know that in order for their lives to be full, their minds must be renewed. God's kingdom is lacking in workers because the minds of many believers are incapable of bearing anything. Believers forget that after they are saved, they should still pursue the full renewing of their mind. This results in their work being hindered. This is why the Bible emphatically tells the believers, "Be transformed by the renewing of the mind" (Rom. 12:2).

## **A MIND UNDER THE ATTACK OF EVIL SPIRITS**

If we examine all the experiences in the minds of the believers, we will realize that the minds of the believers are not just narrow; they also have many other sicknesses. For example, the mind is affected by thoughts and imaginations that cannot be controlled, filthy pictures, wandering and chaotic recollections, sudden loss of memory, prejudices that come from nowhere, lack of concentration, thoughts that are stagnant and obstructed as if the mind is chained, or fanatical thoughts that turn uncontrollably. Believers always feel that they have no strength to control their minds or direct them according to the will. Moreover, they often find themselves prone to forget about all kinds of things, great and small. They find themselves unknowingly committing many "indiscreet" mistakes, without ever bothering to learn the reason for committing them. As far as their body is concerned, they do not seem to have any illness. Yet they do not clearly know why their minds have these symptoms of sickness. Many believers' minds today are like this, but they do not know the cause.

If a believer realizes that his mind is affected in the way mentioned above, he only needs to consider a few things to know where these ailments come from. He only needs to ask himself a few questions: Who controls his mind? Does he control it? If he does, why is he unable to control it now? Is it God who controls it? According to the principle of the Bible, God does not control man's mind for him. (We will speak in detail concerning this. For now, we will only mention it in brief.) If neither he nor God controls it, who does? It has to be the authority of darkness who usurps the mind and brings forth these kinds of

symptoms. Therefore, when a believer sees that he cannot control his own mind, he should know that this is the enemy's work. One point should always be remembered: man has a free will. God's goal is for man to rule himself. Man has the authority to rule over all of his own faculties. Hence, the mind should come under the rule of the will. A believer should ask himself if he has such a mind, and if his thoughts are his own. If they are not his own, they must be the work of evil spirits who work within man's mind. The will does not want to think, and the mind desires to obey the will. In spite of this, the mind finds itself continually thinking. This means that the thoughts in the mind are no longer his own thoughts, but the work of another "person" who is utilizing his thoughts against his will. If a believer does not choose to think, the thoughts that are in his mind are no longer his; they belong to evil spirits.

If a believer wants to differentiate which thoughts are his own and which are evil spirits, he should pay attention to how his "thoughts" come about. If his mind is initially quiet, steady, unperturbed, and working according to its disposed position, and suddenly, an idea or a thought comes like lightning that is totally unrelated to his work or his disposed position or is totally out of order, then the flashing thought is the work of evil spirits. Their intention is to inject their thoughts into the mind of the believer, fooling him into thinking that they are his own thoughts. As a rule, the thoughts that evil spirits inject into man's mind are always something that he does not have and something that is contrary to his usual train of thought. They are totally "new" and are sudden ideas that the person has never thought of before. After a believer has such a thought, he should first ask if he is thinking this way. Is it really him thinking? Does he want to think this way? Or is the "thought" itself being stirred up in the mind? Is it something he does not want and has never thought of before? A believer should find out if he is thinking the thoughts. If he has not originated the thought and is, in fact, against such a thought, even though the thought somehow finds its way into his mind, he can conclude that the thought has come from evil spirits. All the thoughts that his will never endorses, and all the thoughts that are actually against his will, are thoughts that are not from man himself, but are from outside.

Many times the believer's mind is full of thoughts, and he finds himself unable to stop these thoughts. His mind (head) is like a thinking machine, which has been "turned on" by an external force, thinking continually and uncontrollably. Even though a believer shakes his head incessantly and tries to reject such thoughts, he is not able to do so. The tide of thoughts comes like a rolling wave and refuses to stop day and night. Most believers do not know the reason for this. Little do they realize that this is the work of evil spirits. A believer should know what is "a thought." A thought is his mind grasping a matter. But in an unstoppable train of thought, it is no longer the mind grasping a matter, but a matter grasping the mind! Originally it was the mind thinking about things. Now the mind is not thinking about things, but things are compelling the mind. Many times a believer wants to drop a matter, but an external force seems to remind him in his mind all the time. It does not allow him to forget and forces him to keep on thinking. This is the work of evil spirits.

In short, a believer should investigate all abnormal phenomena. Unless they are due to natural illnesses, all abnormal phenomena are from evil spirits. God does not interfere with the functions of man's natural faculties. God never interjects His thoughts suddenly into man's thoughts, and He never cuts off the work of man's mind suddenly or robs him of anything. All sudden stoppages of thoughts that feel like the brain has become void, sudden appearances of incoherent thoughts in the mind, sudden lapses of memory in the middle of thoughts that feel like a snap of electric wire, or a continual inability to

exercise the mind or memory are the result of the works of evil spirits. Because evil spirits have occupied the faculty of the mind, they can seize it at times and stop its functions, or they can relax it at other times and make it active again. A believer should realize that natural causes can produce only natural illnesses. Sudden thoughts and sudden forgetfulness are beyond the control of our will and beyond the course of natural events. For this reason, they must be from some supernatural source. If a believer examines all the phenomena of his mind this way, he will not be ignorant of the reasons for his symptoms.

The book of Ephesians tells us that evil spirits operate "in the sons of disobedience" (2:2). This is a very important matter. Evil spirits work not only outside of man but also inside of man. If we want someone to work, at most we use words and expressions and other body movements. But evil spirits can do more than these. They are able to work not only from the outside, as from one man to another man, but they are able to operate within man. This means that they are able to penetrate into man's mind and work within him, causing man to obey them. Man cannot penetrate into the mind of another man and stealthily suggest many things in private to him, nor can man cause another man to be confused about the source of these suggestions. But evil spirits can do these things. They have ways that are unavailable to man in his normal communication with one another. First they work in man's mind and then reach man's emotion because the mind and the emotion are closely connected. They also begin from the mind and work their way into man's will because the mind and the will are also closely connected.

The way they move is by stealthily and secretly putting their favorite thoughts into man's mind in order to accomplish their goal. Or they may prevent man from thinking anything that they do not want him to think about. The Bible clearly teaches that the authority of darkness can give thoughts to man as well as steal thoughts away from man. John 13:2 says, "The devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, that he should betray Him." This speaks of the way Satan puts his thoughts into man's mind. Luke 8:12 says, "Then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart." This speaks of how Satan takes away the word which man should remember so that man forgets everything. These two verses tell us of the two kinds of work that evil spirits perform in man's mind. By these verses, we can identify the works of the evil spirits. Their works are always to add or subtract something from the mind of man.

## **THE REASON FOR THE EVIL SPIRITS' ATTACK**

Why are the believers' minds so attacked by evil spirits? One answer is that the believers themselves afford evil spirits (also called demons) an opportunity to attack in their minds. We should realize that it is possible for the believers' minds to suffer the demons' attacks. This is proven by the experiences of many believers. The place the demons most often attack is the mind because the mind and evil spirits have a special rapport. The attacks of evil spirits on the believers' minds produce the aforementioned phenomena. Parts or the whole of man's mind have already isolated themselves from man's sovereign rule and fallen into the hands of evil spirits. As a result, evil spirits are able to think and stop as they wish and ignore the believers' own will. Although the mind still resides in the body, its sovereignty belongs to someone else. Even though the believers may oppose it, nothing will avail. In whatever aspect the believers give place to evil spirits, that aspect will not thereafter obey man's own will. Instead, it will obey another will. When the believers give any ground in their minds to evil spirits, they have lost their sovereignty over their own minds. To put it in another way, if the mind of a believer has lost its sovereignty and is no longer able to rule over itself, the mind is already occupied



by evil spirits. If evil spirits have not attacked the believer's mind, his will should be able to rule over everything; he can think when he wants to think and stop when he wants to stop. He will not encounter any difficulty.

The minds of the believers are attacked by evil spirits because the believers have given place to evil spirits in their minds. Believers are prone to give more place in the mind to evil spirits because the mind is related to evil spirits in such a special way. These places become leverage in the believers' minds upon which evil spirits freely work. We should remember that man's mind is of man; if evil spirits do not have man's consent, they cannot use his mind. If man does not volunteer—intentionally or unintentionally—to hand over the mind to evil spirits, they cannot infringe on man's freedom. This does not mean that evil spirits will never tempt us in the mind (such will not happen in this life). But it means that when we exercise our will to oppose them, they will immediately stop. The problem today is that even though many believers exercise their own will to resist, temptations still do not stop. This should not happen; it is a proof of the work of evil spirits because it is done in disregard of man's will.

After a believer has indeed yielded to evil spirits, his mind will inevitably be filled with the works of evil spirits. Evil spirits will work on him according to the ground he has given them. Since he has given ground to evil spirits in his mind, they can do whatever they want in his mind. The most important principle in the work of evil spirits is that one has to give ground for them to work. They can only work when they have the ground. Without the ground, they have no way to work. The amount of their work is determined by the amount of ground they receive. Whenever believers give ground in their minds to evil spirits, the evil spirits will work in the believers' minds. There are six kinds of ground that believers can give to evil spirits. Let us consider each one of them briefly.

### **A. The Unrenewed Mind**

The flesh is always the place where evil spirits work. If the mind is not renewed, even if a person is regenerated in his spirit, evil spirits will still have a chance to work. Even though the minds of many believers were turned for a moment at the time of their repentance, it does not mean that their eyes, which have been blinded by Satan, were completely enlightened. Perhaps many areas are still "veiled." Because these dark places were the working ground for evil spirits in past days, the fact that they are diminished today does not mean that they are altogether annihilated. Evil spirits still occupy these areas, from which they also direct their operations. It is very common to see evil spirits occupying the minds of men through sin. This happens before they are saved or even after they are saved. Even though some changes have taken place, the old ground has not been uncovered or removed. Therefore, evil spirits still occupy them as their base of operations.

Evil spirits are very careful in covering up their works. If a believer is fleshly, they will generate many thoughts through his mind which are similar to his character and condition. They will make him believe that these are his own thoughts and that they are natural. If such a person is seeking for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they will counterfeit the work of the Holy Spirit and give him many supernatural revelations, convincing him that these are from God. Because evil spirits know that this kind of unrenewed mind is the best ground for their work, they obstruct the believer in many ways, causing him to become ignorant and not pursue the renewing of his mind. This is the most frequent ground given to evil spirits. But if there is only this kind of ground

given, without the passivity spoken of below, the mind and memory will still not be weakened too severely.

## **B. Improper Thoughts**

All sins arise when one gives ground to evil spirits. When a believer pays attention to sin in his mind, it means he has loaned his mind to the evil spirits because all sins come from evil spirits. If a believer yields to sin in his mind, he cannot refuse the evil spirits behind the sin. However long sinful thoughts reside in the heart, the evil spirits will work within him. All filthy, haughty, unkind, unrighteous, and similar thoughts give ground to evil spirits. Believers who yield in their minds and do not refuse these kinds of thought will find these kinds of thought coming back more easily the next time. It also becomes harder to ward them off because evil spirits have already occupied a place in their minds.

In addition to sin, there are many other improper thoughts that can become a base of operation for evil spirits. Evil spirits often inject a thought into the believers. If they receive it, the thought becomes a ground for the evil spirits to work on. Every unconfirmed idea, every vain thought, every notion that comes from nowhere, a sentence one hears in passing, a line in a book one reads accidentally, as well as all the fancies in human life give ground to evil spirits. They enable the evil spirits to work in the future—perhaps after several years. They also cause the believers to be full of prejudice, rebel against God's truth, and believe in many heresies.

## **C. Misunderstanding God's Truth**

Believers seldom realize that any time they accept the lies from evil spirits, they give place to evil spirits. If we misconstrue the efforts of evil spirits in us, in our environment, and in our work by considering them to be natural, obvious, spontaneous, or caused by ourselves, we have given ground to evil spirits and allowed them to continue their works in these matters. We have accepted the lies from evil spirits, and they are able to work through the lies that we have accepted. Because we have chosen to believe that these thoughts are not from evil spirits, choosing instead to believe that these things are caused by good reasons that originate from ourselves, subconsciously we have allowed these things to remain in us. Though this allowance is the result of our being deceived, it has nevertheless given sufficient ground to evil spirits to continue their work.

On the other hand, many believers misunderstand God's truth and are not clear about what it means to die with the Lord, to consecrate themselves to the Lord, to wait on the Holy Spirit, and to know God's move and other truths. As a result, prejudice develops in their heart, and they begin to have ideas about what spiritual teachings should be like. Evil spirits will seize this opportunity and give the believers what they misunderstand and what they think they know. In this way, evil spirits go along with the believers' misunderstanding and work accordingly. The believers think that these proceed from God. Actually, evil spirits have counterfeited God's work through their misunderstanding.

## **D. Receiving Suggestions**

Evil spirits very frequently inject their thoughts into the believer's mind. They especially love to "prophecy" to the believer about his circumstances and future. They tell the believer what he will become and what he will encounter in the future. If a believer does not know that these are from evil spirits and accepts them or does not reject them,



allowing them to remain in the mind, evil spirits will work in the environment at the right time and cause the believer to encounter the thing which was prophesied. In his ignorance, the believer may consider that he himself has long known about this. Actually, evil spirits have disguised their ideas into some kind of prophecy and injected them into the mind of the believer with the intention of testing the believer's will to see if he will accept or refuse it. If the believer's will does not oppose it or if it agrees with it, evil spirits will gain ground and work on the believer as much as they will. All of the words of fortune-tellers and palm readers are fulfilled according to this principle.

Sometimes evil spirits give similar prophecies concerning a believer's body. They tell him that he is weak or sick. If the believer accepts his thought, he will really become sick and weakened. When the believer is in his sickness, he only knows that he is sick. Those with scientific knowledge may say that it is psychological, but those with spiritual insight know that this is caused by the believer accepting the suggestion of evil spirits; he has given ground to them, and they are working according to the ground given to them. Countless cases of so-called natural illness and so-called psychological activity are the work of evil spirits who work through the ground given to them by man. If a believer does not resist all the thoughts that come from evil spirits, they will work according to the thoughts they have given to the believer because they have been afforded the ground.

### **E. Being Empty in the Mind**

God created a mind for man; it was not meant to fall into disuse. From the beginning God wanted man to hear the word and understand it (Matt. 13:23). From the beginning God wanted man to use his mind to receive His word. This word would then reach from the mind to his love, his will, and his spirit. Therefore, an active mind is a barrier to the work of evil spirits. Consequently, the biggest goal of evil spirits is to make a believer's mind sink into a state of emptiness. To be empty means to have nothing inside and to be a vacuum. Evil spirits will do this either by deceptions or force; they will cause the believer's mind to become emptiness. Evil spirits know that when the believer's mind is empty, he will not be able to think and will lose his reason and sense and will indiscriminately accept the "teachings" of evil spirits. He will not care what the nature or the outcome of these teachings are.

Believers should exercise their own minds. However, the exercise of the mind is not expedient for evil spirits. As a result, evil spirits try their best to cause the believers' minds to become empty. When the believers' minds are functioning normally, the believers will discern all senseless, extraordinary revelations and all kinds of injected thoughts; they will know the source of these thoughts. Emptiness of the mind gives ground to evil spirits. All revelations and thoughts received while the mind is empty are from evil spirits. If a believer does not use his mind for a moment, he will see evil spirits zealously coming to his aid!

### **F. Passivity in the Mind**

Generally speaking, there is not much difference between emptiness of the mind and passivity of the mind. But strictly speaking, being empty in the mind is not using the mind, while being passive in the mind is waiting for external forces to come and use the mind. Passivity is one step further than emptiness. To be passive is to not move on our own and allow external forces to come and move us. To be passive in the mind is to stop thinking on our own and allow outside forces to think in our own mind. To be passive is to become a machine.

Passivity in the mind offers the best working ground for evil spirits. There is no other ground that evil spirits like more. If a believer does not use his own mind and expects outside forces to come upon him, supernatural evil spirits will have an opportunity to take possession of his will and body. Just as a foolish mind can easily be cheated because of its ignorance, a passive mind can easily be attacked because of its lack of consciousness. It cannot respond if it acts as though it has no brain. If a believer allows his mind to stop thinking, reasoning, and deciding, and if he does not compare his own experience and walk with that revealed in the Bible, he is inviting Satan's deceptions to come into his mind.

In trying to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, many believers consider that henceforth they do not need to weigh, consider, or decide whether any seemingly God-given thoughts are according to the light of the Bible. They think that the meaning of being led by the Holy Spirit is like being dead, and that they should only listen to the thoughts and impulses that come from the mind. In particular, they believe that the thoughts that come after praying are from God. As a result, while they pray and after they pray, they allow their minds to sink into passivity. They stop their own thoughts and every other activity of the mind, in hope of receiving "God's thoughts." They believe that this kind of thought is from God, and they become hardened, obstinate, and unreasonable persons doing many hardened, obstinate, and unreasonable things. Little do they realize that (1) praying does not cause thoughts to become God's thoughts; (2) waiting for godly thoughts, before and after they pray, only invites evil spirits to counterfeit God; and (3) God's guidance is in the intuition and not in the mind. Many believers do not understand that God does not want man to be passive, but to co-labor with Him in an active way. They expend considerable effort to train themselves to become men with passive minds—to become persons who do not know how to think by themselves—and they expect to receive God's thoughts this way. Little do they realize that when they do not use their minds, God does not use their minds either, and He does not give them His thoughts, because His principle is that man would use his own will to control his own faculties and co-labor with Him. When men do not use their mind, evil spirits take the opportunity to come in and control. God does not want men to become machines in order to receive His revelation. Only evil spirits want men to behave this way. Hence all passivity affords convenience for evil spirits. Evil spirits utilize the ignorance and passivity of the believers to work in their minds.

## **PASSIVITY**

Any ground given by the believers to evil spirits induces the work of evil spirits. Of all these grounds, the most important one is passivity because passivity expresses the attitude of the will, and the will represents the whole person. Passivity can cause evil spirits to work freely. Of course, such work is always camouflaged on the outside so that believers do not realize that evil spirits are working. Believers sink into passivity through their ignorance. When they misunderstand the place of the mind in the spiritual life, by either considering it more important or less important, they allow their own minds to sink into passivity. Then they follow the thoughts of the passive mind. Hence, it is indispensable to clearly see the way of God's leading.

Passivity of the mind is caused by misunderstanding the meaning of consecration to God and obeying the Holy Spirit. Many believers think that their thoughts are hindrances to their spiritual lives. Little do they know that the real hindrance is when their head stops working or when it works in disarray. They do not realize that the proper functioning of the head is profitable and necessary because only by functioning

in this way will one be able to co-labor with God. We have said emphatically before that the right way to follow God's leading is to depend on the intuition and not on the mind. This is very crucial, and we should not forget it. A believer should follow the revelation in the intuition and not the thoughts in the mind. Those who walk according to the mind are walking according to the flesh. This leads to the wrong way. However, this does not mean that the mind is useless in secondary things. If we regard the mind as an organ for direct fellowship with God and for receiving revelation, we are greatly wrong. But this does not mean that the mind should not fulfill its part of the work or help the intuition. The intuition is the organ that knows God's will. But we still need the mind to examine and see if our feeling proceeds from the intuition or if it is a counterfeit of our own emotions. We have to know if the inner feeling is God's will and according to the Bible. We know with our intuition, but we confirm with our mind. How easily we are prone to make mistakes! If we do not have the assistance of the mind, it is hard for us to decide what is of God.

The proper track of guidance requires the mind. The guidance of the intuition on many occasions is contrary to reason, and we should not use our mind to argue against our intuition; rather, we should use our mind to study if something is of God. It is a very quick thing for the intuition to know God's will, but we need time to consider and ponder with our mind and see if what we know is of the intuition and the Holy Spirit. If it comes from God, while we are considering and pondering it, the intuition will give us a more definite feeling and cause us to have a deeper faith to believe that it is from God. This kind of work—and only this kind of examining—by the mind is profitable and proper. If this exercise is from fleshly thoughts and feelings, repeated examination will only cause the conscience to protest. Therefore, a rational investigation for the purpose of understanding whether or not something is from God is not an impediment, but an opportunity for the intuition to prove itself. If a matter is truly from the intuition, it will not be afraid of any investigation by the reason in the mind. On the contrary, many of the leadings that fear investigation probably originate from the self! The mind should not take the lead, but the mind is definitely needed in examining every kind of leading to see if it is from God.

This kind of teaching is scriptural because the Bible says, "Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is,"..."proving what is well pleasing to the Lord" (Eph. 5:17, 10). The function of the mind cannot be buried. God does not negate the faculty of man's soul; rather, He renews and uses it. God wants believers to know what they are doing when they obey Him; He does not want to have senseless and blind obedience. God does not want believers to be muddle-headed about what they are doing. He does not want them to hear or feel something, presume that they are clear about God's will, and then act accordingly. Neither does God want to directly manipulate any believer just to make him ignorantly obey in darkness. God wants the believer to understand His will and consciously exercise himself to obey. A lazy person does not want to bear any responsibility for himself; he just wants to passively allow God to use him or his members. But God wants man to actively seek His will and exercise his own will and himself to obey Him. God wants man's intuition to agree with his consciousness.

However, believers do not realize that this is the right track of God's leading. They allow themselves to sink into passivity, hoping that God will put His will into their minds. They may receive some supernatural leading and may follow blindly without examining with their minds whether this leading is from God. They may mindlessly exercise their members and, without a clear understanding of God's will, hope that God would somehow use their members without their conscious effort. The result of this behavior is

demon-possession. The condition for demon-possession is passivity in man. (We will speak of this in detail elsewhere.) When man does not use his own mind, God will not use his mind either, because doing so would contradict the principle of God's work. The result is that evil spirits will seize the opportunity to take over the believer's mind. Countless numbers of believers do not know that there are evil spirits in the world and that these evil spirits are doing their utmost to deceive God's children. If believers fulfill the condition for evil spirits to work, they will work. Moreover, they are everywhere scouting and looking for an opportunity to come in to take over the believers. Therefore, it is a very foolish thing to allow the mind to sink into passivity.

There is another matter that we should know about: the condition for evil spirits to work. We have already spoken briefly about passivity. However, we must go on to investigate it one step further. In this world there are some people who are very interested in fellowship with evil spirits. No ordinary man would want to be possessed by demons, but these people are willing to be possessed by demons. These are the necromancers, planchettes, mediums, and typtologists [ones who "bring down" spirits]. If we consider carefully the reason for their being demon-possessed, we can understand the principle of all demon-possession because all demon-possession follows the same principle. These people tell us that in order to be possessed by a demon, which they call a god, their will must be completely void of resistance. This means that they must be willing to accept anything that comes to their bodies. However, in order for their will to be passive, their mind must be empty and completely functionless, for only emptiness of the mind produces passivity of the will. These two things are the basic conditions for being possessed by the demons. This is why a typtologist has to shake his head and dishevel his hair, and continue doing this for a long time until he becomes completely numbed in his head. Only then can he be possessed by a so-called god, and only then can the evil spirit operate. When the head is this empty, the will naturally loses all its functions. When this state is reached, little by little, the mouth no longer moves according to the person's own will, and the whole body begins to shiver. Soon after, the "god" comes to his body. With those who communicate with demons, the methods by which they become possessed may be different in outward respects. However, upon examining the principle, we can find that the methods are all done through the mind becoming empty and the will becoming passive. One thing is certain: if you ask these people, they will surely tell you that when demons come, their mind cannot think (of course, if the will could become passive without the mind becoming empty, the mind would still think), and their will cannot function. Moreover, they must attain to a state of emptiness in the mind and passivity in the will before the demons will come. Otherwise, they will not come.

The so-called modern-day hypnotism, which disguises itself under the name of science, and religious and transcendental meditation, etc., which enable people to possess the power of telepathy and hear things from different directions, as well as healing and transformation, are actually founded upon these two principles. Although in name they are for the good of mankind, the methods of "concentration," "mental focus," "yoga," "meditation," etc., all require the mind to first become quiet and the will to become passive. Soon after, supernatural spirits will come and show these ones many wonderful things. For now, we will not ask if the ones who perform these things know that they are inviting evil spirits. All we know is that by doing these things, they are fulfilling the condition for evil spirits to possess them. As such, they cannot avoid the consequence. In the end, they may wake up to the fact that they have received evil spirits.

We cannot cover these matters in detail. We merely want believers to understand that in order for evil spirits to work on man, it is necessary that man's mind and will be completely empty and passive. Evil spirits rejoice exceedingly at all who fulfill this condition and immediately go to work. When a "heathen" fulfills this condition, evil spirits will possess him; when a believer fulfills this condition, evil spirits will also come into him without any reservation.

We need to realize that many believers are ignorant of the conditions whereby evil spirits work and the fact that once a person fulfills these conditions, evil spirits will work in an unrestricted way. Therefore, many have unconsciously become mediums for demons and have even become possessed by demons! Believers often try in the meetings to wait for the visitation of the Holy Spirit. They gather until midnight and are filled with all sorts of soulish activities. Their minds become numb, and their hearts are swayed beyond their control. Suddenly, they will begin to experience strange things, such as speaking in tongues, seeing visions, feeling joyful, etc. They feel that the Holy Spirit has indeed come. But we should realize that with such an emptiness of mind and passivity of will, the only ones that will work are evil spirits; the Holy Spirit will not work. I will mention one obvious example: in meetings, their favorite prayer is to pray with one word, such as "glory," or "hallelujah." They chant repeatedly with their mouths single words. If we say the same word a few dozen times, we know what will happen: we will be muttering the same word in our mouth, but our mind will no longer know the meaning. This is the emptiness of the mind. However, one can no longer control himself; he must continue with this chanting. This is the passivity of the will. Finally, some external force will take over his throat and turn his jaws to utter things which are incomprehensible to him. At this point, an ignorant believer will think that he has experienced the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" because he has received the evidence of baptism—speaking in tongues. Little does he realize that he has merely fulfilled the condition for evil spirits to work; he has emptied his mind and allowed his will to become passive and has been taken over by demons!

Today believers think that as long as what they have received makes them more "happy," "spiritual," "zealous," or "holy," it must all come from the Holy Spirit. They do not realize that this is the deception of evil spirits, who will resort to any means to gain the believers. Once the evil spirits detect that the believers have displayed signs of the typologists, they do not let the chance pass and immediately come into these believers. They do not want to scare the believers away. Hence, they do everything to gain the believers' trust. They counterfeit the Lord Jesus, His loveliness, glory, and beauty, causing the believers to worship, love, and consecrate themselves to such a "Jesus." What in fact happens is that the believers are worshipping, loving, and consecrating to evil spirits. When evil spirits have gained the full faith and trust of the believers, which can take variable lengths of time (in many cases, many years), they will put into the believers things that are more obviously of evil spirits. But by then, because of the believers' pride, laziness, and foolishness, most will not want to examine the kind of spirit they have received.

One thing is certain (if only the believers can remember this one thing): there is a basic difference between the work of evil spirits and the work of the Holy Spirit. Only when a man fulfills the condition for the working of the Holy Spirit will the Holy Spirit work. Similarly, only when man fulfills the condition for the working of evil spirits will the evil spirits work. Even if a man is pursuing the Holy Spirit outwardly, as long as he fulfills the condition for evil spirits to work, the Holy Spirit will not work. Evil spirits will seize the opportunity to work. Therefore, an ordinary believer need not be concerned if he



cannot distinguish between something from God and something that counterfeits God; he only needs to examine the conditions under which he received these things initially. If he initially fulfilled the conditions for the working of the Holy Spirit, what he has received must be from God. If he initially fulfilled the conditions for the working of evil spirits, even though he was outwardly pursuing the Holy Spirit, what he has received must be from the evil spirits. We are not rejecting supernatural things. But we need to distinguish what is from God and what is from Satan.

What are the basic differences between the conditions for the Holy Spirit to work and the conditions for evil spirits to work? (1) All supernatural revelations, visions, wonders, etc. that require the complete cessation of the mind's function or that are received when the believer's mind stops functioning are not from God. (2) Visions that come from the Holy Spirit are always given to believers when their minds are completely active. Moreover, every faculty of the believers' minds must be enlivened to receive a vision from the Holy Spirit. When evil spirits work, it is entirely the opposite. (3) Everything that comes from God agrees with God's nature and the Bible.

Let us not care for the outward form, whether it plainly identifies itself as being from demons, disguises itself as being from a divine source, or comes in different kinds of outward designations. We only need to ask what is the principle behind the works. We should realize that all supernatural revelations that are of the authority of darkness require the suspension of the function of the mind. But if something is from God, both the capacities and faculties of the mind can still be active and not suffer any hindrance. The vision seen by the Israelites at Mount Sinai in the Old Testament and the vision seen by Peter at Joppa in the New Testament, both confirm that those who see visions are entirely capable of using their own minds.

There is a basic difference between the revelations and visions given by God as recorded in the Bible and the so-called revelations and visions believers receive today. In studying each case of God's supernatural revelation as recorded in the New Testament, we see that everyone who received a revelation had a functioning mind; they were all able to control themselves and could use any member of their body. But the so-called supernatural revelations today all require that the recipient's mind be passive, some totally, some partially. In addition, the recipient is either partially or totally unable to use his own members. This is the basic difference between something being from God and something being from the demons. For example, the tongue-speaking as recorded in the Bible shows that all the speakers were able to control themselves and were all fully conscious. For example, Peter on the day of Pentecost could still hear the people's mockery and reply. He could still prove that those with him were not drunk but were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). The tongue-speakers in the church in Corinth could count and know that the number was "two or three" (1 Cor. 14:29); they could exercise self-discipline to speak "one by one" (v. 31), and if there were no interpreter, they could even "be silent" and not speak (v. 28). They all were conscious and could exercise self-control. This is because "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets" (v. 32). Is this the case with tongue-speakers today? Is it not true that they have completely lost control of themselves and are completely ignorant of what they are doing? Is it not true that the spirits of the prophets are not subject to the prophets, and instead that the prophets are subject to the spirits? Here we can see the basic distinction between what is from God and what is from demons.

All that we have said above concerns the difference between supernatural things given by the Holy Spirit and supernatural things given by evil spirits. Now we want to briefly

see the difference between the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of evil spirits with respect to natural things. Let us consider the example of hearing the voice of God. The first thing we need to remember is that the Holy Spirit always intends that we understand things clearly (Eph. 1:17-18). The Holy Spirit never regards man as a machine. He has no intention for man to follow Him senselessly, not even in the matter of doing good. Moreover, He expresses His will from man's spirit—the deepest part of his being. God's leading is never (1) confused, (2) blurred, (3) stupefying, or (4) forceful. Whatever comes from evil spirits has the following characteristics: (1) It enters from the outside, mostly from the mind; it never issues from the deepest part of one's being. It is never an intuitive revelation, but a thought that comes like lightning. (2) It is always compelling, impulsive, and forceful, demanding immediate action. It does not allow time for one to think, consider, or examine. (3) It causes the believer's mind to become numb and confounded, and makes him unable to think. Everything that comes from evil spirits, whether supernatural or natural, always causes the believer to lose the proper use of the mind. But whatever comes from the Holy Spirit is not this way.