

Sermon: For Those Who Have Ears by Jim Carmichael

We have a money raising program for missions at Park Plaza called "Sowing for Eternity"

This lesson will be on those who have ears...and ... Hear... and the result of that "hearing" ... is thinking... correct thinking... and of course the result of correct thinking... is the true sowing for eternity...

For you are what you think. Not just thinking about what you want to become but thinking of yourselves in terms of having already arrived.

For instance, you may think you want to be a preacher someday, change that to thinking "I am a preacher" ... and maybe you merely need to improve your knowledge of the subject.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.

One wise king wrote: "As [a person] thinks in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)

So back to thinking you are a preacher now... absolutely believe that, with absolute faith and no wavering.

You may remember last month I spoke of faith, how you must have faith, absolute faith if you expect God to hear you.

You must pray constantly, you must think upon these things, what you think is who you are, who you become.

I also mentioned being able to be a competent Christian Apologist, and how to properly "hear" the word, which is write

the word, study, and meditate upon it.

I started out saying this lesson will be on those who have ears... listen.

I heard many times as a child that God gave us two ears and one mouth, so that we would listen twice as much as we talk. And, I remember that my grandmother used to tell me to keep quiet and let people think I'm stupid, or I could open my mouth and remove all doubt.

She wasn't being mean, but it was her way of saying, be quiet and listen.... listen... to use my ears and learn, learn, and become wise... well, as most of you know it didn't work all that well for me, however it was sound advice in principle... But only if implemented.

And during my years in sales I learned listening was the most important part of selling or of a conversation...and that most of us only listen for about 3 seconds and then start thinking of our response, so we must train ourselves to listen, just listen, do not try to start coming up with responses, but focusing what is being said.

The second and third parts of the lesson is when we hear properly, we think properly and hearing properly means making sure we are "hearing" the right things and becoming what we think.

To find a path to a result, we must establish the desired result or recognize the result of taking a certain path.

I want to look at two views of this subject from a worldly view, and a Christian view.

I saw a movie once, called the "Secret". I really do not remember much about it, except that it expounded upon the idea that rich people thought of themselves as rich before they ever made the first dime...they became what they thought.

The Secret, a best-selling 2006 self-help book written by Rhonda Byrne, based on that earlier film of the same name is based on the law of attraction and claims that positive thinking can create life-changing results such as increased happiness, health, and wealth.

Seeking God with all our hearts, minds, bodies, souls, and strength must be our true path and finding Him, Knowing Him, worshiping Him, and Obeying Him as our one and only goal in life; in other words, being a true disciple of Christ... Leave wealth to the others, we don't need it and shouldn't even want it.

We must see ourselves this way... think of ourselves this way... keeping our thinking on the path that leads to eternal life in Heaven worshiping God for eternity as our true goal.

When I was a young man I had a pretty low opinion of myself, I didn't even feel I was worthy to go to church even though I wanted to, I always thought those good and fine people would wonder what I was doing there, not realizing truly good and fine people would never think that, they would just be happy to see me there... I suffered from what the great sales trainer Zig Zigglar described as "stinkin thinkin".

The law of attraction

Law of attraction (or New Thought) let me repeat... new thought, you see we are talking about changing how we think...

The Secret speculates that the law of attraction is a natural law which determines the complete order of the universe and of our personal lives through the process of "like attracts like".

The author claims that as we think and feel, a corresponding frequency is sent out into the universe which attracts back to

us events and circumstances on that same frequency.

For example, if a person thinks angry thoughts and feels angry, the author claims that said person will attract back events and circumstances that cause them to feel more anger.

Conversely, if the person thinks and feels positively, they will attract back positive events and circumstances.

Proponents claim that desirable outcomes such as better health, wealth, and happiness can be attracted simply by changing one's thoughts and feelings. For example, some proponents believe that using "the Secret" can cure cancer.

From my personal experience, up to about 15 or 20 years ago if someone asked me how I was doing, the new way of simply saying hello, I would answer something like "well as good as can be expected under the circumstances" and honestly it was just my way of using a form of "dry humor" to answer a "non-question" because I really didn't believe then, nor now, that people really want to know how you're doing or feeling, it is just the new hello with icing on it.

By the way, next time you ask someone how their doing, try to make sure you mean it, the difference will surprise you...

Test it sometime when someone casually asks you how you're doing by answering with a list of aches and pains...

A person stopped me once, about 20 years ago and said, hey you're supposed to be a salesman, try saying "never better" when someone asks you how you're doing, and so I tried it, and have been saying it ever since, because I found those words made me feel better,

Did you get that?

JUST SAYING THE WORDS IMPROVED MY PERSONAL HAPPINESS AND WELL

BEING, and for most people hearing it makes them feel better,

AGAIN, I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU GET THAT,

JUST THE WORDS I SAY TO ANOTHER PERSON ALSO MAKES MANY PEOPLE FEEL BETTER THEMSELVES...

JUST SAYING THE WORDS CREATES A FEELING OF WELL BEING FOR ALL INVOLVED,

And in some cases, this opens up an opportunity to evangelize because they will test me on it... saying something like... really you've never been better in your whole life, and of course I will answer that it's a spiritual thing, every day I am one day closer to heaven.

Now we just hit upon another "secret" to proper thinking and that is proper speaking... forcing yourselves to speak properly will have a reaction of proper thinking...this is also a biblical principle...

One of the things stated in the bible I have never been comfortable with because of my sense of humor, and what seems to me my endless chatter is that we are all held accountable for all idle words

Matthew 12:. 36 But I tell you that men will give an account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."...

Play with that for a second, what we say comes from what we think, yet we can control what we think, by what we say...one empowers the other... first you must decide to say only right things... and the right thoughts will develop from that...and will return to even better words, or the right words coming more easily...

So, is there any scientific proof behind all this?

Lets go back to the "Secret" for a moment...

The book begins by introducing and explaining the mechanisms of the law of attraction, and then describes historical examples of its application and great men and women in history who have claimed to have harnessed its power.

The book describes the law as accounting for a magnetic power that is emitted through one's thoughts. The power of thoughts is likened to the power in a transmission tower, which sends out a frequency to the universe and then returns the same frequency in a physical or elemental form.

Ask, believe, and receive. This creative process is based on a quote from the Bible"

and all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matthew 21:22)

Now I want again to point out a couple of things, I want to proceed with the idea that this is all true.

It is in Job 38:35 that we are told that lightening's can be sent and will manifest themselves in speech when they arrive at their destination.

We now know that light, and radio waves are merely two forms of the same thing, electro-magnetic waves, therefore radio waves are merely a form of light, and can by the use of a radio transmitter be sent and will manifest themselves in speech when they arrive at their destination.

This is one of the evidences we use in Christian Apologetics, highlighting biblical scientific principles now proven by human scientific studies.

"One of the most powerful uses of gratitude can be incorporated in the Creative Process to turbo-charge what you want."

Scripture tells us to be “thankful in everything, in all circumstances” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). When we find ourselves overwhelmed with burdens and worried about tomorrow, we can praise God for who he is and his promise to never leave us or forsake us. We have been blessed with the free gift of salvation and eternal life!

Psalm 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name

Psalm 107:1 1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

The Secret highlights gratitude and visualization as the two most powerful processes to help make one's desires manifest. It claims that being grateful both lifts your frequency higher and affirms that you believe you will receive your desire.

Visualization is said to help focus the mind to send out the clearest message to the universe.

God has created us with eyes in our hearts with which we can see, picture and visualize.

God wants to fill these eyes with His dreams, visions and images (Acts 2:17).

Jesus lived in pictures continuously (Jn. 5:19,20,30).

Jesus filled the eyes of His listeners by constantly teaching with parables (Matt. 13:34).

We are commanded to meditate on the Word, which involves prayerfully rolling it around in our hearts and minds. Since the Bible is full of picture stories, we will by necessity be picturing as we meditate upon Scripture (Josh. 1:8).

When we reason together with God, He uses imagery (Isa. 1:18).

Thinking of the words of God, visualizing my life following

these words have changed by life, my thinking, and my words.

The final chapters of "The Secret" offer a more spiritual perspective on the law of attraction, and how it relates to one's life and the world.

Is there any truth to "The Secret"? The simple answer is yes, for example, an idea of the law of attraction is that our physical health is determined by our thoughts and feelings.

It has been medically proven that stress and worry are harmful to the body, while joy and peace aid in the healing process.

The Bible agrees, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

"A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones" (Proverbs 15:30).

As David was struggling with the guilt of his unconfessed, evil actions, he declared, "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long" (Psalm 32:3).

Our thoughts and feelings do have an impact on our physical well-being. However, this is due to how God designed our bodies.

When young I thought of myself in a completely different way than I have for the last 25 years.

At a family reunion, a couple of years ago, a cousin who I was very close with when young told me she would have never recognized me. I've also had a friend I hadn't seen in many years tell me the same thing, somehow after returning to the church, thinking of myself in a new way, as a child of God literally changed me, it not only changed my direction in life, it not only changed my way of viewing the world and myself, it changed my physical appearance.

All this can get very deep, much deeper than we need to go or know, and there are many verses we simply can't understand unless we add all this quantum physics to the mix, but again, we have no need for the deeper mechanisms, all we need to know is that it exists, and we are told to harness the power, whether we understand it or not and the scripture tells us how to harness it so that we change... into the creatures God had in mind for us... But He gave us the choice to change or not to change.

So, I profess that we should think of ourselves as copies of Christ... denying all worldly attractions, resisting with all the strength we have of physical lusting, cravings, and coveting worldly properties.

I profess we should think of ourselves as copies of Christ, seeking God and His will in our lives with every ounce of human strength we possess, every thought, every action being made with the knowledge that we are in the presence of God, and we have no other desire in life except to please him.

I profess we should pick up our crosses daily and follow Him **to Calvary,**

Let's keep our thoughts on things above and become Christ like, live our lives as if we are going to live forever... because we are

Recognize all that glitters for what it truly is... a trap of Satan... a snare to lure us into the depths of hell forever.

John Bunyan in the book Pilgrims Progress points out the deadliest place for Christians seeking God is Vanity Fair... in short... where all worldly passions can be found... all that glitters...

The worldly things are poison to our eternal life.

We must think of all these things for what they are; the

deadliest poison of all; for it destroys not only your physical life, but your eternal life.

It's all a snare.

So, let's wrap up with an overview;

So, what is or should be our goal? What is the destination we seek? Is it not eternal life in heaven where there will no longer be pain, loss, death, and aging?

We must decide heaven is our goal, with nothing else as even a second choice as we travel the path.

We must know the way; we must know the map, which is God's word.

We must think about and study God's word.

We must think of ourselves, and visualize ourselves as a completely devoted child of God, no other goals in life, no other desires, no concern for this life in a worldly sense.

We must resist the deadliest poison, and accept only the bread of life, and the blood of the lamb as our nourishment.

And, I will see you there, and along the way... Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

And I want to add, not only think about them, but talk about them, visualize them, all with a grateful attitude.

And how will we know we have arrived? The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is a biblical term that sums up nine attributes of a Christian according to Paul the Apostle in his Letter to the Galatians: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

So what we should think is in Philippians 4:8 and how we should view our selves is found in Galatians 5:22 – 23.

Thank you for your time and the lesson is yours, I pray you will keep your mind on things above, visualize yourselves as the children of God that you are, be grateful that you have found the true path to eternal life and let your speech be witnesses to that always.