

Sacred 4-Letter Words: MIND

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – February 7, 2021 – Pastor Craig Carter

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In this sermon series we are looking at four-letter English words that help us live as God intends us to live. Last week we were encouraged to be PURE in our hearts and lives. The most important instruction from last week was: **Guard your thoughts**. This week we will consider how we can best transform our MIND.

What we think dramatically affects who we become and what we do.

Because of sin and SELF, we are constantly struggling with our minds and our thought patterns. It is a challenge to have our minds in a godly place all the time.

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2 NLT)

If we are going to be like Christ and have the MIND of Christ as we are instructed to, we must let God change the way we think. As is true for most spiritual development, there is also a role we have in this transformation process.

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. (Colossians 3:1-4 NLT)

How to have the right mind for following Christ:

1. Forget the past and Filter your mind.

Before we knew Christ, our minds were darkened by sin and we thought in ungodly and even destructive patterns. When we are saved, we become "new creatures" and can put the past behind us.

Everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage...Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (Philippians 3:8, 13b-14 NLT)

How do we go about changing our thinking patterns?

We must realize our new life in Christ and put to death the old self and its ways.

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20 NLT)

So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. (Colossians 1:5a NLT)

We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:5 NIV)

We must filter what goes into our minds.

2. Focus on the future and Fill your mind.

How do we focus on the future life we have with God? Pursue the things that are valuable in the kingdom of God. See things from God's perspective. Evaluate everything based on what God would think – is it good? Is it important?

First Word. Last Word. God's Word. Choose to read some portion of scripture at the beginning and end of every day.

Meditate on scripture throughout the day and night. Spend time reflecting on it, gnawing on it (like a dog with a bone), and returning to it for further insight.

Conclusion

⇒ How aware are you of where your thoughts go every day? Ask God to make you conscious of your thoughts. You can choose not to entertain every thought that knocks on your door. Ask God to help you filter out the ungodly and unhelpful thoughts.

⇒ How could you more effectively focus on God's perspective in all things?

⇒ What is one scripture you could meditate on this week? Write it on a note card, put it on your phone lock screen or tape it to your bathroom mirror. Commit to memorizing it this week.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. (Colossians 3:2 NIV)