

Beyond Coping: Accessing The Mind of Christ

**Evidence-Based Therapies,
the Supernatural Advantage,
and *you!***



***“...we have
the Mind of Christ.”
I Corinthians 2:16b (KJV)***

by Deborah Jean Armstrong, Psy.D.

Dedication

With Everlasting Praise
to You, our LORD Jesus,
and to You, our Abba in Heaven,
and to You, Holy Spirit,
and in Worship
for all that You have done
and continually do
so that we
might Live Immersed
in Your Infinite Love for us
and Manifest Your Glory

***Beyond Coping:
Accessing The Mind of Christ***

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Distributed by
Deborah Jean Armstrong, Psy.D.
6 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, NJ 08033
(856) 993-2814

www.drdeboraharmstrong.com
www.wordsthatheal.net
www.HisWordHealsToday.net

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The word “LORD” is capitalized as a way to denote exceeding awe, that He is not just the Master to Whom I yield obedience, but the Creator God Who made a Way to deliver His people. Capitalizing the word LORD is a convention borrowed from the King James Version of the Bible, where it was used to denote the Hebrew acronym for God, *YHVH*, in contrast to the Hebrew word, *Adonai*, which was rendered “Lord.”

Cover photograph: The Glory of God in Creation

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Introduction

Are you ready to move

Beyond Coping?

Over thirty years ago, our Abba in Heaven called me to become a psychologist. I have had the privilege to serve as a counselor in private practice for more than 20 years.

Usually those who come to speak with me for the first time have been hurting about something. As I listen, I begin to hear the negative things that they have been rehearsing in their own minds – things that others said or did that hurt them.

Those who come to speak with me have generally also been telling themselves negative things about themselves, and about their future. I have learned that these negative thoughts are like pine kindling.

When I was young, living in the tropics, my family would go to the cooler mountains for vacation. Sometimes it was so cool in the mountains that we needed coats outdoors. My dad would get up early in the morning, before the rest of us, to build a fire in the fireplace and warm the living room for us.

Next to the fireplace was a box of pine kindling, small pieces of golden, resin-rich pine to quickly get a fire going. The small pieces of pine kindling from inside the tree trunk caught fire more rapidly than the larger, bark-covered log.

I watched my dad position the fragrant pine kindling around and against the log in the fireplace as he built the fire. When he struck the match, and held it up close to the pine kindling, the fire blazed up quickly. As the pine kindling blazed against the log, the log itself caught fire. The log burned for a long time after the pine kindling was consumed.

Just like pine kindling gets a log fire going, negative thoughts can start negative feelings burning. Just as the log kept burning after the pine kindling was consumed, feelings of hurt may keep burning long after negative thoughts are no longer conscious.

Continuing to mentally rehearse the hurt keeps the fire burning. Thankfully, we can stop feeding the fire by changing how we think.

In this book, I review two psychological approaches that have helped to free up people who have been stuck in negative thinking. I also review a prayer approach through which the LORD Jesus has brought increased peace to me and to others.

**Are you ready to take charge
of your thoughts and your choices?**

**Choices lead to outcomes,
and you can become
a lot more effective than you have been.**

1

The Power of Your Thoughts

**“I am not throwing
one more log
on that fire!”**

As a person learns to identify negative thoughts, and replace them with healthier thoughts, the negative feelings diminish.

The initial hurtful words that are spoken to one person by another are like a dart; if a person does not shield themselves, the dart penetrates and causes a wound. But rehearsing those words after the initial penetration causes collateral damage beyond the initial wound. If a person starts to ruminate about the harm that someone did to them, they have just started a mental fire. The more time a person gives to ruminating about the event, the more they fuel the fire.

People speak out of the overflow of what is going on inside them. Think of your mind as a womb: thoughts birth words. So when people come into my office, they birth in words what they have been thinking.

Thoughts also birth decisions and action, or a lack of action. Those actions, or lack of action, constitute your life. That is why how you think is SO important.

For example, a person who believes that they can win at golf is more likely to practice and succeed at golf than someone who believes they can't succeed at it. A person who believes that they can learn and grow through life's difficulties is more likely to access the resources that will help them to learn and grow.

In my experience, negative thoughts do not usually emerge in a vacuum. They have often been preceded by truly difficult experiences in which a person was not treated right and began to believe negative things about themselves, others, and their future.

Sometimes there is a little truth mixed in with the negative thoughts. But most of the negative thoughts are distortions, misperceptions, or things that are no longer true, even if they were true at one time.

The collateral damage may begin when a person starts to mentally replay the video or audio of the event, and harbors anger. Even if the anger starts out as righteous indignation because a person has truly not been treated right, hanging onto negative thoughts may undermine a person's ability to move forward.

If the issue is righteous indignation, you may need to place a distance between yourself and the person who has not been treating you right. Or you may choose to confront the person. For those who are wondering whether or not to confront, some guidelines are offered in the free eBook, [Coping Strategies](#), available online at www.drdeboraharmstrong.com/links.

You may choose to point out the behavior to others, such as your children, so they don't imitate it. Sometimes calmly pointing out the behavior to the person who did you wrong is enough to get the other person to reflect on that behavior and stop it. The point is to address the wrong done, in some constructive way, instead of harboring anger and hurt. If the hurt is allowed to fester, it may lead to psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, or a posttraumatic reaction.

If not addressed, negative rumination may also lead to behaviors that exacerbate the situation, like eating for comfort. The behavior may feel like a temporary solution, but it actually keeps a person stuck in an unproductive cycle where they fail to move forward toward their goals, because they have been wasting time and energy in negative thinking and compensatory behavior, instead of using that same time and energy to think productively and move forward toward their dreams. Instead of solving the initial problem, the compensatory behavior becomes an additional problem.

Let's go back to the root problem of negative thinking. The skill of learning to identify negative thoughts, challenge them, and replace them with constructive thoughts can be learned and taught, and needs to be practiced lifelong. With practice, identifying, challenging, and replacing negative thoughts becomes easier. In my opinion, identifying, challenging, and replacing negative thoughts is central and vital to mental health.

So how does a person learn to do that? I'm glad you asked.

In this book, I will share with you two evidence-based psychological approaches that have helped people with their thinking. Because of the volume of research that

supports both of these approaches, both have been recognized as effective and recommended by the Department of Defense and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for the treatment of traumatized veterans.¹

In addition to these two psychological approaches, I will share a supernatural advantage that is available to those who seek to know how the LORD Jesus sees them and the situation.

Five Categories of Negative Rumination

Negative rumination falls into five categories:

1. Negative thoughts about the self;
2. Negative thoughts about specific others;
3. Negative thoughts about the world;
4. Negative thoughts about the future;
5. Negative thoughts about God.

The Supernatural Advantage

For those who are willing to open themselves to the love of God for them, a supernatural advantage is available. The supernatural advantage includes:

¹ https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand_tx/talk_therapy.asp

- What God Says About You
- What God Says About Your Future
- What God Says About Others
- What God Says About Himself

It is God's Heart for you to live a Life where you experience yourself as Beautiful in Him, a Life that satisfies the deepest part of you, a Life without brokenness. It is His Delight to get more of His good gifts through to you, starting with Himself, as you are flooded with the Love of our Abba in Heaven, the LORD Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, for it is written in I John 4:8 that "God is Love."

It is His Heart to bring Light into the darkness and drive away any gloom. It is His Heart to Lighten your load. It is His Heart that your way be "easy," not grievous.

As it is written in Matthew 11:28-30,

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real Rest. Walk with Me and work with Me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with Me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (MSG)

When I was a girl, my family lived for two years on a hacienda, a rice farm, in the Philippines. The farmers used carabaos to plow the rice paddies, to prepare them for planting. Prior to plowing, a farmer would hand carve a yoke for the carabao,

shaping the yoke so that it would comfortably fit that particular carabao. So it is with Jesus; he shapes a double yoke especially for you and Him, so that you can comfortably bear the load with Him. You are not meant to bear it alone, but to yoke yourself to Him, to join yourself to Him, as the senior partner. And as the senior partner, He has already borne the heaviest part of the load for you.

It is His Heart to Restore your Life as you live in Relationship with Him. It is His Heart that you experience every day, more and more deeply, the greatness of His Love for you, His Joy in you, and His Delight in you.² It is His Heart that you watch His Love and His Health and His Provision begin to manifest in your life. As it is written in III John 1:2,

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” (NKJV) “Beloved friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and that you continually enjoy good health, just as your soul is prospering.” (TPT)

This is the Life in the Holy Spirit that is described in Romans 8. A life in which the Holy Spirit is given less freedom to operate is described in Romans 7, and is characterized by the struggle that accompanies a lack of yielding to the Spirit of God. The secret to a New Life in God is in moment by moment yielding to the Holy Spirit and His leading.

Moment by moment yielding to God is facilitated through praying in the Spirit, praying in tongues, and through immersion in the Word of God. Praying in the

² It is written in Zephaniah 3:17, *“The Lord your God is with you. The Mighty One will save you. The Lord will be happy with you. You will rest in His love. He will sing and be joyful about you.” (ICB)*

Spirit and immersion in the Word of God are like the audio speaker inside a professional football player's helmet, so that he can hear the coach call the plays.

Success on the football field starts in the mind. A quarterback pays attention, hears the coach call the play, and begins to implement it, along with others on the field who are committed to the same goal. Paul tells us in Romans 12:2 not to let the world around us pressure us into conforming to their way of thinking.

What would you think of a football player who tuned in to the coach for the opposing team and started running plays for the opposing team? Let's stop running the adversary's plays by harboring his lies, slander, twisting, and distortion in our thinking. As we attune our minds to Heaven's frequency, as we bring our thoughts into alignment with God's, we can win over the adversary.

Actually, the odds of winning, for one who follows Jesus, are a lot better than the odds of winning a football game! In a football game, the two teams may be pretty evenly matched. But in Messiah, in Christ, the LORD tells us through Paul in II Corinthians 2:14,

“God leads us from place to place in one perpetual victory parade.” (MSG)

The LORD Jesus has left us, His Bride, with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,³ with the Authority to bind every devil on earth, and with the Authority to release

³ It is written in Matthew 16:19 that Jesus said, *“And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.” (KJV)*

ourselves to His Holy Spirit so that His Good Plans may be implemented in us and through us, for us and for others.⁴

In Christ, we outrank the adversary, for He said in Luke 10:19,

“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”
(NKJV)

As it is written in Psalm 91:1,

“He who dwells in The Secret Place of the Most High shall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty.” (NKJV)

For those who dwell in that Secret Place with our Abba, with Yeshua, and with His Holy Spirit, all the rest of the verses in Psalm 91 apply, like clauses in a legal contract, for this psalm is actually part of the Law of God.

⁴ It is written in II Peter 1:3, *“Jesus has the Power of God. His Power has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know Him. Jesus called us by His Glory and Goodness.”* (ICB)

2

Stop Feeding the Fire

Cognitive Processing Therapy

(CPT)

I am indebted to the pastor who told me about Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT). CPT has helped many people think more clearly and feel better following a difficult experience or trauma.

CPT teaches a person to challenge a negative thought with a series of questions, much like an attorney would challenge an allegation in court. As a result of the challenging questions, the negative thought feels less true, and the negative feelings diminish in intensity.

CPT typically includes 12 sessions, once or twice a week, and daily homework, so that CPT may be completed in as few as 6 to 12 weeks. Research has shown that faithfulness with homework in between therapy sessions contributes to a positive treatment outcome.

CPT invites a person to:

- Consider the impact of an event on their thoughts and feelings.
- Learn to identify and challenge problem thoughts, which CPT calls “stuck points.”

- Identify alternative thoughts to replace the stuck points.

CPT offers a way to diminish the strength of problem thoughts and the strength of related feelings, such as fear, anxiety, irritability, and frustration.

CPT has been shown to be effective in the treatment of PTSD and depression. It is an evidence-based treatment supported by 23 randomized, controlled research studies. CPT is strongly recommended by the American Psychological Association, and has also been recommended as first-line treatment by the United States Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

For more information on CPT, including downloadable worksheets, visit www.drdeboraharmstrong.com/cpt. If you are a New Jersey resident, and would like to make an appointment to further discuss CPT, please feel free to call me at 856-993-2814. If you live outside New Jersey, and would like to find a provider of CPT in your area, you may visit cptforptsd.com.

3

The Power of “I Can”

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

I am so grateful for the two mentors who told me about Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) during my pre-doctoral psychology internship at Princeton University. EMDR therapy has helped people around the world process through trauma and reduce their distress levels after a difficult experience.

While doing EMDR therapy, people learn to identify negative beliefs about themselves that may have come to feel true after a difficult experience, and may have led them to feel down on themselves. If not addressed, negative beliefs about the self may undermine a person’s will to act, and impede their progress.

EMDR therapy is structured with specific phases and protocols, and is more focused than conventional talk therapy. Because EMDR accelerates treatment, it may move a person more efficiently toward their goals than conventional talk therapy. EMDR therapy may also be open-ended, and may continue as long as a person has target events that they would like to work on.

How does EMDR therapy work? What makes EMDR therapy unique? EMDR therapy uses eye movements, or alternating bilateral stimulation (ABS) in the form

of sounds or hand tapping,⁵ to process through a difficult experience and reduce distress levels. During EMDR therapy, a positive belief about the self typically comes to feel truer than the previously held negative belief.

During EMDR therapy, a person typically finds the distress level associated with a past event diminishing as they:

- Identify the negative feelings regarding a past event, and the negative thoughts that go with the negative feelings;
- Choose a preferred positive thought to replace a negative thought;
- Process through the past event with BLS.

On a scale from zero to 10, where zero is no distress at all, and 10 is the most distress a person can imagine feeling, the goal is for the distress level regarding a past trauma to diminish to zero or 1.

EMDR therapy has been shown to be effective for the treatment of PTSD. In their Practice Guidelines, the United States Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs recommend EMDR therapy in their highest category for those who have been traumatized. EMDR therapy is an evidence-based treatment supported by more than 36 randomized, controlled research studies.

If you would like to learn more about the research that supports EMDR, including SPECT scans showing the calming effect of EMDR therapy on brain function,

⁵ ABS may also be administered by handheld pulsers. Some people have found that the ABS, even apart from EMDR, helps them relax.

please visit www.drdeboraharmstrong.com/emdr. If you are a New Jersey resident, and would like to make an appointment to further discuss EMDR therapy, please feel free to call me at 856-993-2814. If you live outside New Jersey, and would like to find an EMDR clinician in your area, you may visit emdr.com.

The Supernatural Advantage

Sometimes, when doing EMDR therapy with a person who loves Jesus, I have invited them, as a cognitive interweave, to listen for what Jesus may want them to know about themselves. What they understand from Him directly is often more effective than something I might say on my own, and I have seen their distress level go down with this cognitive interweave.

Sometimes negative thoughts about the self may take the form of “I can’t” statements. If not addressed, these thoughts may foster passivity and sabotage a person’s motivation to act on their own behalf. EMDR therapy may help “I can” statements begin to feel truer, and increase a person’s sense of efficacy and belief in their ability to act to influence outcomes.

Scripture teaches us of the power that we have in Jesus to be effective in accomplishing all that He has destined for us to fulfill in our lives. It is written in Philippians 4:13,

“I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.” (NKJV)

As we immerse ourselves in Jesus and in His Word, and obey His commands, we live as One with Him and with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, one Family in

Him, and accomplish His Kingdom purposes in this realm on behalf of ourselves, our families, and our nations.

4

LORD Jesus, What Do *You* Say?

“He sent His Word, and healed them.”

It is written in Psalm 107:20,

“He sent His Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.” (KJV)

In the past, you may have noticed yourself engaging in behaviors that were counterproductive. Usually, those behaviors are preceded by negative thoughts about the self or others. In the following example, the real name of the person has been changed to protect her identity.

Trudy (which is not her real name) had been bothered by a difficult past event. After that event, she felt unsure of herself. She was still troubled by the event months later. She knew that ruminating about the event was unproductive, and was keeping her stuck. The negative belief about herself was, “I’m broken and I can’t be fixed.” She asked, “LORD Jesus, what would You say about me in this situation?” He answered her in the words of Luke 17:1-3a,

“‘There will always be temptations to sin,’ Jesus said one day to His disciples, ‘but woe to the man who does the tempting. If he were thrown into the sea with a huge rock tied to his neck, he would be far better off than

facing the punishment in store for those who harm these little children's souls. I am warning you!'” (TLB)

Trudy realized, “I am God’s child. I need to give this matter over to the LORD, and stop ruminating about it. He will handle it. The other person involved in the event has not yet been repentant, so I need to beware of them, like Paul said about Alexander the coppersmith,⁶ and not give them the opportunity to do me further harm.”

Trudy’s new positive thought about herself was, “With Christ in me, the Hope of Glory,⁷ I can respond effectively to this situation in a way that keeps me Safe in Him and brings Him Glory.” She felt better and breathed a sigh of relief. She realized Jesus was with and in her, and that the Holy Spirit was guiding her as she yielded to Him.

On the following page is a worksheet, Learning to Listen to Jesus, that may help you to work through an example of your own. Thank You, Abba, for all the healing that I have seen You do in me and in others as we listen to Jesus!

It is written in II Corinthians 2:16 that “*we have the mind of Christ.*” The Greek word translated “mind” is *nous*, which also means understanding, including empathy. In other words, we have the ability to understand something the way that

⁶ It is written in II Timothy 4:14-15, “*Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.*” (KJV)

⁷ It is written in Colossians 1:21, 27, “*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled...to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.*” (KJV)

Jesus does, to understand from His perspective. And we have the ability to feel His feelings with Him.

The word *nous* also includes the ability to discern between good and evil, which means that in Christ we are able, as it is written in Psalm 45:7, to “love righteousness and hate wickedness.” (NKJV) The word *nous* includes the ability to consider a matter and to respond soberly and calmly.⁸ Thank You, Abba, for giving me the ability to consider a matter with You and with the LORD Jesus, and to respond soberly and calmly to the situation in the power of Your Holy Spirit.

The word *nous*, like the Greek word *psyche*, includes thoughts, feelings, and will. Because we have the *nous* of the LORD Jesus, the Mind of Christ, within us, we are able to think His thoughts, feel His feelings, and will His Will. We can align ourselves with Him to purpose what He purposes, and to desire what He desires for us, and for those around us.

When we do this, we are no longer doubleminded, fragmented, and lacking focus. It is written in James 1:8,

“A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways.” (KJV)

When you are around a doubleminded person, you don’t know what behavior is going to manifest next. It is as if there are two souls manifesting, two different ways of thinking, two different sets of desires and feelings, two competing wills.

⁸ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3563/kjv/tr/0-1/>

This is reflected in the Greek word translated “doubleminded;” the word is *dípsychos*, from the prefix *dis-*, meaning “two,” and *psyché*, meaning “soul.”

If we let ourselves be influenced by other ways of thinking instead of Christ’s way of thinking, we, too, will look doubleminded.⁹ But if we yoke ourselves to the LORD Jesus Christ,¹⁰ join ourselves to Him, and walk with Him, we become one with Him in the Spirit,¹¹ and the inner war that is described in Romans 7 comes to an end.¹²

⁹ The solution for doublemindedness is given in James 4:8, “*Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded.*” (KJV)

¹⁰ It is written in Matthew 11:28-30, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find Rest unto your souls (psyche). For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*” (KJV)

¹¹ It is written in I Corinthians 6:17, “*But if you give yourself to the Lord, you and Christ are joined together as one person.*” (TLB)

¹² It is written in Romans 7:21-25, “*Through my experience of this principle, I discover that even when I want to do good, evil is ready to sabotage me.* ²² *Truly, deep within my true identity, I love to do what pleases God.* ²³ *But I discern another power operating in my humanity, waging a war against the moral principles of my conscience and bringing me into captivity as a prisoner to the “law” of sin—this unwelcome intruder in my humanity.* ²⁴ *What an agonizing situation I am in! So who has the power to rescue this miserable man from the unwelcome intruder of sin and death?* ²⁵ *I give all my thanks to God, for His mighty power has finally provided a Way out through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One! So if left to myself, the flesh is aligned with the law of sin, but now my renewed mind is fixed on and submitted to God’s righteous principles.*” (TPT)

Learning to Listen to Jesus

Worksheet

1. Identify the Stressor: “What situation is bothering you?”

Examples: difficult situation at work, with a family member, or at school

2. Name the Feeling(s): “How do you feel about that situation?”

Examples: feeling hurt, angry, frustrated, afraid

3. Find the False Belief: “What is the false belief about yourself in that situation?”

Examples: “I’m worthless.” “I don’t matter.”

4. Ask Jesus for the Truth: “Lord Jesus, what would *You* say about me in that situation?”

Examples: “I am valuable.” “I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine.”

(Isaiah 43:1, KJV)

Jesus counsels us to be wise, with an ample supply of oil to fill our lamps,¹³ so that we may keep shining in the darkness. So we need to be filled and overflowing with the Truth about ourselves, the Truth about the world around us, and the Truth about our future. This Truth is available to us in the Word of God made alive to us in Christ Jesus through His Holy Spirit, Whom Jesus also called “the Spirit of Truth.”¹⁴

The Holy Spirit brings the Words of God alive in us and teaches us their application to our lives. As we yield continually to Him, we experience success, and are effective in responding to life’s challenges.

As we let God’s Words govern what we think and what we do, we renovate and refresh our minds, and we are transformed. It is written in Romans 12:1-2,

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (KJV)

¹³ It is written in Matthew 25:1-4, “When My coming draws near, Heaven’s Kingdom realm can be compared to ten maidens who took their oil lamps and went outside to meet the Bridegroom and His Bride. Five of them were foolish and ill-prepared, for they took no extra oil for their lamps. Five of them were wise, for they took flasks of olive oil with their lamps.” (TPT)

¹⁴ It is written in John 15:26 and John 16:13, “And I will send you the Divine Encourager from the very Presence of My Father. He will come to you, the Spirit of Truth, emanating from the Father, and He will speak to you about Me....When the Truth-giving Spirit comes, He will unveil the reality of every truth within you. He won’t speak on His own, but only what He hears from the Father, and He will reveal prophetically to you what is to come.” (TPT)

As we yield to the Holy Spirit to bring His Words alive in us by obedience, we reap the benefits of peace and prosperity, and are effective in all we do, for it is written in Deuteronomy 28:1-2,

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.” (KJV)

As we speak God’s Words and His promises throughout the day, over ourselves and over our families, we are effective in shaping the minds of the next generation, for it is written in Deuteronomy 6:6-7,

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” (KJV)

5

Which Jesus Do You Follow?

There are many voices that claim to speak for Christ, to be “Christian.” But the word “Christian” may be defined in many ways. Some of Hitler’s followers claimed to be “Christian.”

What is the litmus test for what is truly “Christian” and what is not?

The Scriptures.

Is This Thought from God, or Not?

You may have wondered at times, “Is this thought from God, or not?”

Christ will never speak to you in your spirit something that is contrary to the Bible, His Written Word. God is consistent in what He says. God does not lie and cannot lie, for it is written in Numbers 23:19,

“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” (KJV)

When Jesus walked on the earth, there had been others claiming to be deliverers, ready to resist Roman rule and drive Rome out of Judea. Some of the Jewish people had embraced these supposed deliverers, believing them to be potential

messiahs.¹⁵ But all of them failed the test of Scripture. As recorded in the New Testament, only Jesus fulfilled 46 prophecies regarding the Messiah.¹⁶

The Twisting of Scripture

When the adversary tempted Jesus in the wilderness, the devil's third and final strategy was to try to take a Scripture verse out of context and twist it to support his own agenda, which was getting Jesus to do the devil's will instead of the Will of His Abba in Heaven.¹⁷ This was consistently the devil's agenda in all three of his temptations of Jesus – that Jesus would do what the devil wanted, and obey the devil, instead of obeying God.

The same is true for us. It is consistently the devil's agenda that we would do what *he* wants - that we would do *his* will, instead of God's will.

How can we protect ourselves from those who would try to twist Scripture to support their own agendas?

- **Immerse** yourself in the Scriptures.
- **Read the Scriptures aloud** as well as quietly.
- **Sing** the Scriptures.

¹⁵ Acts 5:34-39

¹⁶ <https://www.learnreligions.com/prophecies-of-jesus-fulfilled-700159>

¹⁷ Luke 4:1-13

- **Memorize and meditate** on Scriptures.
- **Pray** the Scriptures. Turn the Scriptures into prayers.
- Get to know the Scriptures, not just your favorite Scriptures, but the surrounding verses and **context**.

Most of all, **obey** the Scriptures. As you obey, you manifest the Word of God in your behavior, and the very cells of very body, as well as your mind, will come to know the Scriptures by obedience. It is written I Timothy 4:8,

“Bodily exercise is all right, but spiritual exercise is much more important and is a tonic for all you do. So exercise yourself spiritually, and practice being a better Christian because that will help you not only now in this life, but in the next life too.” (TLB)

As you learn to know the Scriptures, by study and by obedience, the Holy Spirit can bring pertinent Scriptures to your mind as needed, for it is written in John 14:26 that Jesus said,

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (KJV)

6

The Power of Envisioning

What Do You Want to See Happen?

Once you have learned to successfully challenge negative thinking, it becomes easier to stop replaying the mental videos of situations where others have said or done things that hurt you.

In addition, you can proactively generate positive mental videos that will help move you forward toward your goals. The following exercise is designed to help you picture yourself in a future where everything is the way that you would most like it to be.

1. Envision yourself where you would like to be **10 days from now**. Think about what you would like and write it down below. Envision that you have done your best and accomplished what is most important to you, and how you feel about that.

You may need more sheets of paper for this exercise, or you may prefer to do this exercise at the computer. You may want to use blank paper to *draw* what you envision instead of *writing* your vision in words. Or you may do both.

2. Envision yourself where you would like to be **tomorrow**.

3. Envision yourself where you would like to be **later on today**.

4. Envision yourself where you would like to be **5 years from now**.

Does what you envision lead you to want to make any changes in your life? If so, what would you want to change to expedite your progress toward your vision?

Consider reviewing these things that you have envisioned, and the steps that you would like to take toward your vision, every day this week.

The Supernatural Advantage

It is written in Habakkuk 2:2,

“The LORD answered me: Write down this vision; clearly inscribe it on tablets so one may easily read it.” (HCSB) “And the Lord said to me, “Write My answer on a billboard, large and clear, so that anyone can read it at a glance and rush to tell the others.” (TLB) “And then GOD answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what’s coming.” (MSG)

If you would like to access the supernatural advantage, ask the Holy Spirit to give you His vision for your future. Then draw or write down what He tells you.

If you would like, you may use the following questions to record the vision that God gives to you.

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where He would like you to be **10 days from now**. Envision yourself cooperating with Him one step at a time to get there. Notice what those steps are, and write them down. It is written in Psalm 37:23,

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way.” (NKJV)

2. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where He would like you to be **tomorrow**.

3. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where He would like you to be **later on today**.

4. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where He would like you to be **5 years from now**.

Does what the Holy Spirit has shown you require you to make any changes in your life? If so, what do you need to change to progress toward the vision He has given you? What could you do differently to accelerate your progress toward His vision for you?

You may review what you have written or drawn regularly to help you keep on track towards our Abba's vision for you. And you can praise Him as you see parts of His vision beginning to be fulfilled in your life as you follow Him.

Conclusion

The goals of this book have been:

- To highlight how you can change your thinking to improve your emotional wellbeing. This starts with identifying negative beliefs, and replacing them with beliefs that reduce your distress and move you forward towards your goals.
- To identify two psychological approaches to help you identify and replace negative thoughts. These approaches were Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR).
- To identify some of the supernatural resources that are available to you in God – resources that you may access to accelerate your progress towards the good plans that He has for you. These resources included communing with Jesus about a problem situation, and asking the Holy Spirit to share with you the visions that He has for you.

What was the most helpful part of this book for you?

What would you have changed to make this book more helpful to you?

Please feel free to call me at 856-993-2814 with any feedback that you may wish me to have.

Thank you for participating in this study! May our Abba in Heaven speedily move you beyond coping to accelerating in Him toward all the good things that He longs to bring into your life as you seek Him. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

If you would like to access the self-paced, online course that goes with this book, including 6 audio sessions, you may visit:

https://hiswordhealstoday.net/purchase?product_id=3660829

