**Lesson Three--The Power of Stinking Thinking**

*#1 Proverbs 23:7 – “As a man thinks in his heart so is he.”*

*#2 Deut 30:19-20 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20 that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days..” NKJV*

#3There are many things that happen to us in our developing years and even afterwards that, while hidden from public view have a continual and far reaching affect on how we think, thus who we are today:

Physical Abuse Emotional Abuse Sexual Abuse Traumatic Events—fire, accident, attack by person or animal Environmental Abuse—parents fighting, parental drug use

It can be easy to see yourself as a victim instead of a victor.

It’s not just that toxic thinking brings mental toxicity, it is also that toxicity will manifest itself in some way, eventually. The greater the amount of toxicity the more you have to work to hide it.

Have you ever been around someone who was trying to hide something? Tobacco or alcohol?

Have you ever been around someone that you knew something was wrong but they would not admit it? And then later they confessed or “it came out and you said, “I knew there was something wrong……”

Most of us are pretty good as hiding what we want to keep hidden, at least from the casual observer. But the truth is not only can we not hide it from God, but neither can we hide it in such a way that it does not affect the rest of who we are. (compartmentalization)

**Let’s go deeper:**

*#4, #5, #6 Three different translations*

*Ex 34:7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." NKJV*

 #8 The thought pattern that we allow to dominate in our minds are genetically passed down to the 3rd and 4th generations. They lay dormant waiting to be activated by thinking in that area.

This is why certain behaviors or addictions show up generationally and culturally. Hank Williams, Jr. said, “It’s a family tradition…” It is not just environmental, it is also genetic --- it is a generational curse. A curse in the sense that the actions and behavior and thoughts of an ancestor are genetically encoded into your DNA, thus you have a genetic pre-disposition toward certain behavior (lesson #1).

The way we think and choose becomes the signal that activates or deactivates the generational issues that have been encoded into our DNA by our parents and grandparents and great-grandparents.

#8 If we believe the sin nature is transmitted through our DNA, if we believe that physical traits and health traits are transmitted through DNA, and that certain health traits can be triggered by lifestyle actions, why should we not believe the same about behavioral actions and choices?

**Example:** Identical twins raised together develop different likes, dislikes, introvert/extrovert, abilities based on how their choices react with their encoded DNA. And yet at the same time it has been show that twins raised separately frequently have many similarities in how they developed, the things they liked/disliked, the major life choices they made.

**#9 Sins of the parents can reach to the 3rd and 4th generations but we determine what sins and/or blessings will manifest themselves in our lives. You are only responsible to predisposition in as much as you choose to incorporate or eliminate.**

3rd & 4th Gen--Ex 20:5; Nu 14:18; Each shall die for his own sin-- Deut 24:16;

 Ezk 18:19,20

*#10 Deut 30:19-20 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20 that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days..." NKJV*

**A large portion of our life affecting problems come from our disregard of this pas**

**#11Addictive Behavior:** Let’s talk for a few minutes about addictive behavior. Chemically speaking the number one reason for addiction is [Dopamine](https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/dopamine-0). Dopamine is mysterious—no one fully understands all the clever things it does. But we do know this:

a) it is released in response to rewarding experiences

b) it makes us want to do whatever we can to get more of those experiences

Interestingly, dopamine also makes an appearance when we see or hear cues telling us that something we previously found rewarding is within reach (e.g. Golden arches on highway billboard, video games, etc)—its effect is to give us a helpful neuro-chemical nudge to stop what we’re doing and chase after the delight-producing object.

#12 The brain is like a muscle. The more you use it the stronger it becomes. The more a particular line of thinking is thought about or a particular personality trait is manifested the more it grows in the brain. The less it is thought about or acted upon the more it dies. Does it ever completely die? Short of a miracle from God—no. **But it can die enough to lose its hold upon you.**

**It is imperative that not only do you stop the bad thoughts but you must begin replacing them with the right thoughts!**

*#13 Col 3:1-4 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. NKJV*

Joyce Meyer tells of how she was delivered of smoking. She started at age 9. She liked smoking. But after she got saved God begin dealing with her. As a result of the conviction she begin telling herself how much she hated smoking. She said at first she felt silly and stupid for saying it. But as the days went by she begin to believe it then “feel” it in her body and her spirit. Then one day it just happened. She laid them down and never touched another one.

*#14Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV*

**Closing:**

***#15Closing Prayer***

***2 Cor 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, NKJV***