

Six Biblical Steps to Transform Your Mind & Ignite Your Fulfillment in Christ

1. You begin each morning and each night by humbling yourself. To humble yourself, you must admit your helplessness to follow the teachings of Christ and to acquire his character on your own. Unless you receive inner power, love and everything good from God, you labor in vain. When you realize that you can't even love yourself or others without receiving God's love daily, you are being humbled. You are not love, but God is love and He gives His grace and love to the humble. (James 4:6) His grace is power to be reborn in Him and power to live the life He wills for you.

(Picture a young bird holding its mouth open when the mother bird arrives at the nest. The begging bird.)

When you keep your heart open to God daily and beg for his love, power, fulfillment and life like the helpless little bird staring up with a wide-open mouth, God promises to freely give His grace and loving character to you.

Also, when you do sin and experience your human weaknesses, confess them to God (confess means to admit your weaknesses and become that helpless, begging baby bird again) and He is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

When I experienced the loss of three major ministry opportunities over a three-month period, I went through each of these seven steps.

First, I humbled myself and confessed to God that the pain seemed too much at one time. My first thoughts were negative (normal) and I confessed that without God's power within me, my sorrow would take a long time to heal. But I imagined myself in my small nest in Branson, Mo. with my mouth open wide crying out to God for protection, spiritual food and comfort until the pain leaves and the "golden nugget"

God wants me to learn has been dropped into the nest.

(The nugget might be more of God's character, more of His love, greater empathy for others or whatever the gem is)

I just start waiting for God's next move in my life.

2. Discover the great power, love, fulfillment and life when Christ's Holy Spirit lives inside of you. And His power has unlimited potential. (Ephesians 3:16–20) With God's resurrection power living inside of you, you can do amazing things.

As I was waiting for God's power to strengthen me during my emotional pain, I continued to thank God for the Holy Spirit living inside of me. I knew that through God's power within me, I would be able to endure the pain and wait for the

"nugget."

3. Take every one of your thoughts (beliefs, imaginations, dreams, and ideas) captive to the obedience of Christ.

(II Corinthians 10:5) Since all of your emotions, words and actions originate in your mind and heart, you can wake up every morning with the assurance that you have the power to control how you feel, what you say and how you act all day long.

No one is a victim.

At this point, I enjoy using God's power within me to start controlling my thoughts. I begin evaluating each thought.

If I am thinking that losing three major jobs could cause great harmful stress, I immediately start transforming any negative thinking into positive thoughts. I might start thinking James 1:2, start counting all of the joy I will soon have because of this current painful trial.

I know I don't have the joy yet, but it will be coming soon as promised by God. God is always faithful to His word. In time, I have always seen the "nuggets" that God has brought after major trials and after discovering major weaknesses in my life. I feel safe with God's love and faithfulness and therefore, I can rest in God's promises and am willing to wait for the fruit of trials.

4. Guard your heart; you are what you think. (Proverbs 23:7) Also, whatever thoughts you sow into your mind, you will reap the consequences. (Galatians 6:7) You become what you think!

Spend a few seconds reflecting on what you are today and what you have. Everything about you is the result of what you have been thinking your whole life.

Day dreaming is thinking, planning is thinking, imagining is thinking, reacting to circumstances is thinking and wishing things could have been different for you is thinking. Your beliefs are your thoughts grouped together over many years. Sometimes "bad" things happen to you. What do you think about after a "bad" thing happens to you? Those thoughts are part of what determine your future emotions, words and actions.

One of the greatest truths in life: It's not what happens to you (your past, present or future circumstances) or what people do or say to you that cause your emotions. Your emotions come from what you think about after things happen to you! You control all of your emotions by what you think. Emotions are simply data telling you what you have been thinking.

I am continually aware that "as he thinks, so is he." I allow my emotions to surface anytime they want in order to reflect what I have been thinking for the past few

days or years. Our emotions are very good friends and they can tell us a lot about what we have been thinking.

Also, listen to your words and watch your actions and let them tell you what your heart looks like. Every thought you have is written on your heart. Guard your heart, for out of it comes the substance of life.

I am constantly “listening” to my whole life allowing it to show me a picture of my heart. I never get discouraged by what I see because I now know that I can override any past thoughts and transform my life by the renewing of my mind.

(Romans 12:2)

So, as I listen to the hurt feelings within myself, and listen to my blaming and judging thoughts of the ones who “caused” the loss of his jobs, He transforms my thoughts into gratefulness for the pain and for the upcoming additional character and love from God. I know that God will show me more wisdom,

lead me to the people who need ministering to from the new truths God has taught me and on and on. I actually want to become more like Christ and I realize that “trials and weaknesses” bring this goal faster than almost anything else.

But I do not pray for trails because I know how faithful God is. In the past three years I have gone through a heart attack, almost drowning, kidney transplant, shingles and many other sicknesses and I am is still rejoicing and ministering more than ever before.

I love all of life, the good and the “bad.”

With the power of the Holy Spirit living within you, your thoughts can literally shut your mouth before you speak. (James 1:19, James 3:2) And even more importantly, as you are quick to listen, you can slow down your thinking and speech to conform your thoughts and words to 8 giant standards.

Let your mind dwell on only these eight powerful, life-changing words: true, honorable, right, pure, beautiful, adorable, excellent and praise worthy.

(Philippians 4:8, 9)

Just imagine being able to control all of your thoughts leading to control of your emotions, words and actions... your whole body. (James 3:2)

Just think of it - control every part of your body! Is this not great power over your life today and forever?

No one controls how you think and thus, no one has the power to control how you feel, speak or act any longer.

You are never the victim of others or circumstances.

“Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what is good, acceptable and complete will of God.”

(Romans 12:2)

5. Now that you have this new power within you and you are controlling your thoughts, the words coming out of your mouth can be honorable not unwholesome.
(Ephesians 4:29)

Again, I listen carefully to hear the words I am saying and the thoughts I am thinking. It's so normal to think negative words about my circumstances of losing three major jobs, the money related to those jobs, the lost opportunities to minister relationship truths to millions,
and the time to look for new opportunities and having to get excited all over again.

It can take years and when you are 64 years old, it can seem impossible. But as I listen to my heart and discover what I have been thinking, I transform all of my current negative thoughts into positive. I think things like, "I can't wait to see what God is bringing me to do since I lost these jobs. I wonder what new or deeper character quality I'll see first in a few days or weeks. This experience just gives me more time to reflect on the truth that Christ is all I will ever need. I have so much more time right now as I wait on God, what should I do that I really like, fishing, gardening, grandkids, trips with my wife and family or friends."

I go on and on trying to figure out all of the good things that are already coming from this big loss. The list grows longer and longer each day.

I will often think about all of the things God is to me: front shield, rear guard, living water and bread, his sunshine, living light within him, lamp upon his feet at night or in dark times, He clothes me in royal purple,

I am the son of the King with all the privileges, I am salt to the world for preserving good, I will receive more than I can think of or ever imagine, Christ will meet all of my needs... all of them through His riches in heaven, He owns the cattle on a thousands hills and all of that wealth is mine and on and on.

He can transform my thoughts any time of the day, but the best times for me are early in the morning before I spring out of bed and just before I fall off to sleep at night. But I also can do it in the car, at the office, just about anywhere.

6. Finally, when you experience trials you can actually exalt, boast, honor your trials and weaknesses and start thinking about how much joy, more power and Godly character you will soon have. (Romans 5:3 – 5, James 1:2 – 4, II Corinthians 12:9,10, Isaiah 63:3, I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

These are life-changing verses to memorize!

This sixth point has changed people more than anything in the shortest time span.

Just imagine - all of your trials and weaknesses give you more of God's love, more Godly character and more of His power is matured within you with each passing blow in life!

You can literally list your weaknesses and major trials through your life and begin to thank God for how He has developed more of His power and love within you with each one.

If you have been angry over your weaknesses and trails, you block His good work in your life. Anger separates you from God. (I John 2:9-11)

Little by little, God will let you see His loving qualities growing within you as you honor your weaknesses and trials. You can literally give thanks to God for trials because you know that God will give you beauty for ashes, joy for sorrow and praise for the spirit of heaviness. (Isaiah 61:3)

Number six is the key. When I awaken in the morning and before I fall off to sleep at night, I allow my mind to go over all of the above verses.

I now love thinking about the control I have over my thoughts and about my weaknesses, mistreatments, trials, insults, distresses and everything else that could discourage, depress or emotionally hurt me. Because with each one of these painful circumstances,

I permit myself to boast in them knowing that I receive more of God's love, more of God's character and God's power within me grows closer to maturity each day.

After losing these major jobs, I suffered for more than two months.

He allowed the pain to last and felt the deep loss each day. But in the middle of the discouraging feelings, I continually transformed my thinking hour after hour.

Two months of this and at times you wonder if it will ever leave you. But like all the times in the past, it finally does. Sometimes it's two hours and other times it's months.

However long it takes is fine with me because the longer it takes the more my inner power is matured and the more loving character I receive.

My trials are a blessing to me today and therefore,
my thoughts about my trials are very positive
resulting in more joy, peace and love. By Gary Smalley