

WHO IS THIS GOD?

A Handbook for Life with Him

July 2024 Issue

Chapter Thirty-Two: Be Prepared: Know the Truth

Book Nook

Every Thought Captive, is the title of Ray Stedman's June 13, 2024 daily devotional. It focuses on this battle of the mind. He quotes the following verses to show believers how to gain permanent victory over wrong thoughts, regardless of their source.

We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NLT)

He says that some of our wrong thinking is from ideas and thoughts we want to hold onto, because we gain pleasure or feel independent from God when we do so. We must find their root and bring it to Jesus as the Lord of our life. If we don't allow Him to be the Lord of our lives, we will never obey Christ in these areas.

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (Philippians 4:8 NLT)

Paul Bryan
Email: Paulebryan@who-is-this-god.com
www.facebook.com/PaulEBryan46
Website: www.who-is-this-god.com

The Battleground for Truth Is the Mind and Heart. These battles are primarily fought in the minds and hearts of people. There, the enemy tries to gain a foothold with lies and deceptions to influence thinking, values, and behavior. Most of these influences are so subtle that many people don't recognize their source. Sometimes the source is our own thoughts and other times it may be thoughts demons put into our minds.

Be Prepared: Wear the Full Armor of God. Followers of Jesus Christ must be prepared and always wear the full armor of God. Therefore, they must be committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:15) and wear God's whole armor, as identified in Ephesians 6:13-18. If they do so, they can be confident of prevailing against the lies and deceptions of their spiritual enemy.

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:13-18 ESV)

Story Time

Beware and be alert. Many years ago, my friend, Harvey, invited me to his small farm where he had some cattle. He wanted to show me something in the field but warned me that a young steer (with shortened horns) might sneak up behind us. If my friend wasn't alert to its presence and location, it would come up behind him, put his head and horns between his legs, and playfully lift him off the ground. As we walked, I was alert to its location but soon was caught up in conversation and lost sight of the steer. Then, suddenly, I was being lifted off the ground. You can imagine that it was not a pleasant experience.

Followers of Christ **don't** need to constantly look for the sneaky thoughts from the enemy. However, they should understand their subtle approach and be alert to their lies and deceptions. They must also be willing to confront their own selfish, self-centered thoughts and take these also captive to obey the Lordship of Jesus Christ. If He is truly Lord of their life, then He must be in control, otherwise their victories over sin will be brief.

Receive Jesus's peace, not fear. When believers focus on Jesus, they can receive His gift of peace of mind and heart.

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. (John 14:27 NLT)