



TOXIC: Thoughts

Derek Sanford

October 8, 2017

Life Group Discussion Questions:

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Proverbs 4:23**. We learned in this sermon that most of life's battles are "won and lost with our thoughts." That is not what we're told by the philosophy of our modern world. What kinds of things "win the day" according to modern thought?
3. Read **Romans 12:2** and **Romans 8:5-7**. If your spiritual destiny begins with a renewed mind and a renewed mind comes from walking with the Spirit, what everyday steps should you take to walk in the Spirit? How well are your group members doing at walking in the Spirit?
4. Read **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**. The four kinds of thoughts that we battle are negative, fearful, discontent and critical. Give everyday examples of each kind of thoughts that we all battle. Give examples of how we can "take captive" these thoughts.
5. Read **Jeremiah 12:3**. What do we learn about our thoughts and our God in this passage?
6. In what ways can we become desensitized to what is right or wrong, good or evil, pleasing or displeasing to God when it comes to our thoughts?
7. Read **Philippians 4:7-8**. "Don't just starve your mind – feed it with positive food." What are the good things that are going on in your life that you need to dwell on? Remember, do not just starve your mind but feed it with positive food. Why is this so critical?
8. Dallas Willard said, "The ultimate freedom we have as human beings is the power to select what we will allow or require our minds to dwell upon." What process should we go through when we evaluate our thoughts?

Next Steps: Have group member's state how the group can pray and encourage them to detox their thought life.

Prayer Thought:

- **ADORATION:** praise and worship God for his holiness
- **CONFESSION:** the sinful thoughts in our lives that so easily make our lives toxic
- **THANKSGIVING:** thank Jesus for His cross that can detoxify our soul of guilt, fear, and all impurities
- **SUPPLICATION:** ask the Holy Spirit would push, challenge and cause us to hate the toxins in our life

Memory Verse: *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will."* **Romans 12:2**



TOXIC: Influences

Marcus Atkinson

October 15, 2017

Life Group Discussion Questions:

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Name some areas of struggle in your lives (body image, relationships, anxiety, finances, ambition, addiction, happiness, contentment, etc). What are the dominate cultural messages to us about these struggles (via social media, television, internet, music, etc)? What is the message of God's Word to us about them?
3. Read **Proverbs 4:23** and **25:26**. Marcus said that "the eyes and ears are gateways... whatever our mind processes regularly starts to take root in our hearts." How much gets past our "gates" without us being aware? How "numb" are we to toxic influences in the culture around us?
4. Read **John 10:7-10**. How does the knowledge that Christ is the "gate" for us help us to understand how to live out **Proverbs 4:23**?
5. Read **Romans 12:2** (The Message version is worth reading) and **Psalms 119:9-12**. How do we renew our minds? Does anyone have a personal example of this?
6. Read **1 Corinthians 6:12**. How do we walk the line of freedom and legalism when considering how to choose what we see/watch/hear?
7. Read **Philippians 4:8** and brainstorm the activities and influences that meet the criteria of Paul's list.

Next Steps: Take an inventory of what you consume from culture- media (tv, internet, apps, games, music), products, books, magazines, news, etc. Review the list and ask yourself two things: 1- Am I being entertained by sin? 2- Does this thing point me and my family to Christ or away from Him? Take a step to begin limiting the influence of those things that point away from Christ.

Prayer Thought: Lord, we want to want you more than we want anything else. Give us strong hearts to live radically committed to you, and surrendered hearts to let go of the things that could keep us from growing in you. Give us wisdom to see through your eyes the things that would influence us, and strengthen us to choose well.

Suggested Memory Verse: "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." **Philippians 4:8**



TOXIC: Words

Derek Sanford

October 22, 2017

Life Group Discussion Questions:

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Proverbs 12:18, 15:4, 18:21**. How have you seen the destructiveness of toxic words in your life?
3. Read **Proverbs 4:20, 23**. We can't control what others say about us but we can control what we believe. It is very hard to siphon those things out. What steps can we take to work through negative words directed at us? Read **1 Samuel 17:28-30** and discuss how David dealt with the words of his brother.
4. Read **Ephesians 4:29**. Discuss what areas of your life are most difficult for you to control what you say (home, work, driving, sports, etc.).
5. Read **Ephesians 4:25**. We are to speak truth with our neighbors. Read **Galatians 2:11-14** and discuss how Paul confronted Peter.
6. Read **Romans 16:1-16**. Identify how Paul encouraged the Christians in this passage. What do we learn about encouraging others from this passage?
7. Think back to the "Fire Fall" sermon during the month of August. We saw how God worked with Elijah in **1 Kings 17 – 18**. Look at the passage and see examples of Elijah speaking words of faith. (**1 Kings 17:1, 13-14, 20-22** and **1 Kings 18:36-39**)
8. Read **Matthew 12:34-37**. What impact should it have on our life knowing that an account will be given one day for our words? Is this truth affecting your life? What can your group do to help each other speak like it does?

Next Steps: Have group member's share words of encouragement and praise to each other.

Prayer Thought:

- **ADORATION:** praise and worship God for always speaking truth with love
- **CONFESSION:** acknowledge how destructive and careless our words are to each other
- **THANKSGIVING:** thank God for forgiving us for our evil and hurtful words
- **SUPPLICATION:** ask the Father to fill our mouths with kind, loving, encouraging and truthful words

Memory Verse: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." **Psalms 19:14**



TOXIC: Relationships

Derek Sanford

October 29, 2017

Life Group Discussion Questions:

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Derek talked about three categories of toxic company: The Chronically Negative, The Controller, and The Tempter. How did he describe each of these? Can you identify people in your life that fit in these categories?
3. Have someone in your group look up the following verses, and read them as you talk through the points: **1 Peter 4:10, Hebrews 6:1, 1 Corinthians 16:19-20, Proverbs 4:23, Galatians 5:14-15**. The biblical foundation for healthy boundaries includes the principal of good stewardship. This applies to financial resources, but also to taking responsibility of our life as a whole: how we use our gifts (1 Peter), pursue our growth (Hebrews), care for our bodies (1 Corinthians), guard our interior lives (Proverbs), and conduct our relationships (Galatians). Based on your experience of toxic relationships, how would you describe the impact these relationships have on your ability to steward your life and your energies well?
4. Briefly describe someone who has healthy boundaries. How have you seen this person establish or maintain their boundaries well?
5. Would you say people tend to respect or resist this person's boundaries? Why?

Next Steps:

1. Boundaries are something that need to be set, or our spiritual growth will be stunted. Here are some suggested boundaries to set:
 - I'm not going there with you; if the conversation goes toward complaining, trash talk, or gossip, I need to step away; I'm not going to let you treat me or talk to me that way.
 - What are some other boundaries you might need to set?
2. Who can/are you asking you to personally hold you accountable in this area? This is crucial to do and a much-needed step in order to better succeed in setting boundaries.

Prayer Thought: Split up into pairs or groups of three, and pray for each other's specific steps they need to take as individuals.

Suggested Memory Verse: *Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. 2 Timothy 2:16-17*