

INNER IMAGE

By Dr. J. Terry Twerell

Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever reason he does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that He himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel (John 5:16-20)

The human mind is a complex machine that has potential for great pleasure and great harm. Our daily journey through life receives guidance in the thoughts and visions in our mind. The mind evaluates, judges, sorts, calls for reaction and action, and generally runs the production we call “living.” Unfortunately, all this control generally takes place in an unconscious format in which we simply follow the thoughts and direction of our mind, without debate or second opinion. Our prejudices dictate our state of mind, and we are not even aware that we have these prejudices. Our angers push people and events around in order to obtain what we want, and we are generally not even aware of what we want in the first place. What is it that seems to orchestrate our lives even beyond our conscious thoughts? It is an addiction to thinking.

We receive instructions that the human species is able to think and rationalize and therefore is set apart from the animals and other lower life forms. Why then is such a gift of thinking and rational process so often a curse to our species? The philosopher Descartes proclaimed, “I think therefore I am,” and described a path that most of our society clings to in an often-destructive manner. This leads to false identity with who we are and what our purpose and goals are. Jesus, in the above passage, dramatically pulls away from the natural process of thinking and provides insight to a new and deeper way of approaching life. “*The son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.*” The capacity to find direction for His daily journey came not from His own thoughts but from a vision he had of what the father was doing. What is this vision and how did he obtain it in such a direct and profound fashion? Is this simply a statement of his ability, or is it, like so much of his teaching, an insight into the new reality that is available to all mankind? The answers to these questions are really keys to unlocking the fullness of the spiritual dimension of man that has and, for the most part, continues to lie dormant in the human makeup.

As human beings, we receive literally thousands of stimuli that cause us to focus on exterior reality. We evaluate and process these impacts based upon certain internal value systems that define what is safe or unsafe for our survival. These evaluations can be as simple as what flavor of ice cream to choose or complex as seeking a mate. To process all of the data we find around us, we think and ponder the pro's and con's of each item and either draw conclusion or retreat into some emotional base that forces us away from dealing with the situation at hand. Daily, we find anxiety, depression, fear, and other pains creep into our lives, as we are unable to process the data successfully. However, Jesus said that he made his decisions not on what he perceived around him, but on what he saw the Father doing. Therefore, his evaluation system is not dependent on

what is around him, but rather on what is deeper within.

The difference between our evaluation system and the one Jesus described lies in the place called the ego. From birth, we receive personal and cultural conditioning forming mental images of who we are. This data processing in the mind forms an understanding called our ego, or false self, for it is not who we really are; it is the result of the process of this environmental formulation. When we think, we process everything through this image and draw conclusion biased by this conditioning. A child is raised in an abusive home will have a much different view of his/her self-worth and the safety of the world around him/her than will the child raised in a safe nurturing environment. As an adult, each of these individuals will react out of their own understanding of the world rather than on the actual incident they face. For example, Howard Young, in his book *Rational Counseling Primer*, tells of two small children playing on a beach. A large wave comes and washes over both children. One child runs screaming to his mother, panic stricken by the terrible thing that just happened. The other child sits on the beach, laughs at the joy of the wave, and waits for another to wash over him again. Here we find the same wave, but two different evaluations. The ego evaluations of each child are unique to their perception of the reality around them based on training and molding of the environment of their lives. Neither is right nor wrong, just trained to perceive differently. Each thinks about the event and processes it into their response, building even more data for future evaluation. It is not the event that causes our emotional response, but what we believe about the event. "*I think that is _____,*" is a blank filled by our personal evaluation. But what if we could retrain the thinking and come to a place of true evaluation, not based upon our conditioning, but upon insight from a greater source of truth? What if we could stop thinking out of our own bias and step into a place that gives us clear vision of reality? Possibly, at that moment we would understand the reality and power of what Jesus was saying. "*The son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing.*" At that moment, in the freedom of true enlightenment, we would enter into our Inner Image.

Meditation

Make a list of matters that bring you strong positive and negative emotions. These can be people, places, things, or events that your emotions define . Ask yourself how you came to have such strong emotion about these areas.

Sit quietly and listen to your mind as it thinks things through. Don't stop thinking, just listen to your thoughts as an outside observer.

Focus on quieting your thoughts by picking one thought or one outside object to intensely view. Take time to feel all that your body is experiencing by the world around you (try to use all five senses).

Be aware of the thoughts that bring negative feelings to you and change them into a positive framework.

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