

Abundant Living

MINISTRIES

Encouraging Christian Living Since 1978

October, 2024



Am I planning to vote next month?

Would Jesus vote? Considering that the government, in the time of Christ, did not invite citizens to vote, we don't have His example as evidence. He told us that we (His disciples) are to be like salt and light. SALT adds flavor... and also acts as a preservative and antiseptic. And light? I think we can be LIGHT by shining TRUTH into a dark world. So, YES... I think Jesus would cast a citizen's vote and urge His disciples to do likewise... promoting righteousness in the land. If Christians don't remain engaged, evil practices will rule.



John Charles, director

WHICH candidates should I vote for? I cast my votes for the candidates who will be more likely to promote POLICY which advances Biblical values. There are so MANY issues to consider: life (abortion), family (parental protections), religious liberty, selection of judges, biological sex & gender issues, violent crime, immigration, climate & the environment, health care, technology & AI, foreign policy, taxes & the economy, gun ownership, racial/ethnic issues, border protection (national security). On and on we could go. HELP ME DISCERN, LORD!

So I ask, "Which candidates will promote policy MORE-CLOSELY aligned with the issues which are MORE-CLEARLY explained in scripture?" To illustrate, I read that most Americans vote "taxes & economy." But the Bible doesn't seem to say much about tax rates. However, life, family, and selection of judges (whose rulings may promote righteousness), are more-clearly addressed.

WE MUST REMEMBER... Government is not the answer. JESUS IS!
Until He comes, let's be light and salt! And... **let's vote Biblical values!** - John

All-Day Praying



Question: I am just consumed with worry! My thoughts seem to run relentlessly through my mind and sometimes I wish I could just turn off my brain. Is it even possible to have victory over my mental anguish? I need help!

Response: I have often said that the biggest battles I fight are my "mind battles." I have discovered that what I think about is going to directly affect my mood, my emotions, my behavior, my actions & reactions, and the words that come out of my mouth. Yes... managing our thoughts is one of life's most essential skills!

Yet sadly, most people do not manage their thoughts. They instead are *prisoners* of their own thoughts. Whatever happens to pop into their head dictates the course of their day. But God doesn't want us to be in bondage to our thoughts. Rather, He has told us that we are to "take our thoughts captive" (2 Corinthians 10:5). He wouldn't have told us to do that, if it was an impossibility. He wants us to experience the freedom that comes when, instead of being prisoner to our thoughts, we become the master of them.

The challenge is... how does one do that in the nitty-gritty routines of daily life?

Scripture teaches that change (or “transformation”) comes by “the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). Simply put, *renewing* our minds requires replacing existing thoughts with NEW thoughts!

The very best “replacement thoughts” come from conversation with God. The apostle Paul encouraged followers of Christ to “pray continually” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17). Obviously he wasn’t expecting anyone to park on their knees 24/7. Rather, I understand that he was encouraging believers to develop a running dialogue with their heavenly Father throughout the day.

I need *practical* help to do this, mostly because my days get so filled up with busy demands of work, family, church, etc., that I can easily rush through days without even thinking about the Lord, let alone taking time to talk with Him.

Consider making some “prayer reminder cards” with some practical *questions*. Place them in locations where you are apt to spot them frequently throughout your day.

When you realize that your thoughts are going to the gutter (perhaps feelings and thoughts of anxiety, fear, jealousy, anger, sadness, rejection, frustration, loneliness, etc...) focus instead on one of those questions as a catalyst to get you talking to the Lord.

Consider making prayer reminder cards with a few practical questions.

Following are some suggested questions you could have on your own designed *prayer reminder card*. They are designed to prompt your mind to shift away from your normal thought habits... focusing instead on healthy and enjoyable conversation with Jesus.

 **What can I talk to the Lord about right now?**

Come near to God and He will come near to you (James 4:8).

Use this question to talk to the Lord about anything... the person ahead of you in the grocery store line, the beautiful sunset, the good meal you just enjoyed... just as you would make such comments to your closest human friend.


 **What problem(s) am I facing that I need to give to God?**

What problem(s) am I facing that I need to give to God again?

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6).

When you realize that you are worrying about a particular problem, do this... a) Tell the Lord your concerns. b) Ask Him for His help. c) Thank Him for carrying this burden for you! d) Picture placing your load of care in God’s hands. e) THEN, THANK HIM and again focus your mind on something different.

As you do this repeatedly, you will find that the worries begin to come with less frequency. And, when they do come, instead of consuming you with dread, you will much more quickly sense the calm that comes from trusting God to take care of them for you!

 **Is there something I could say to, or do for another person right now, to bless him/her?**

He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. (Proverbs 11:25).

Instead of reviewing the hurtful words or actions you received, or plotting how to get even, choose instead to reach out to that person with a kind word or deed. It is amazing how angry/hurt thoughts dissipate when replaced with practical kindness.

 **What good things in my life today, can I recognize as an evidence of God’s love?**

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Give thanks in all circumstances. (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

On days when your problems seem overwhelming, start listing all the blessings you enjoy from God’s hand. The dark cloud of gloom is bound to lift, as you focus on the many things for which you are thankful!

If you have committed your life to Jesus, He is with you always... every day... and all day long! He never leaves you. So, include Him “in the moment,” by *talking to Him* as you go about your daily tasks. You will find that He will help you win your mind battles... in a most enjoyable and delightful way!

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