

*Men of God:  
A Roadmap for Spiritual Growth*

Rev. Dr. David T.A. Strain  
Session 5:  
Thoughts and Feelings

February 28, 2023

# Outline

Week 1: Men of God: Hindrances and Helps to Growth Part 1

Week 2: Men of God: Hindrances and Helps to Growth Part 2

Week 3: Men of God: Time and Priorities

Week 4: Men of God: Friendship and Community

**Week 5: Men of God: Thoughts and Feelings**

Week 6: Men of God: Home and Family

Week 7: Men of God: Work and Play

Week 8: Men of God: Money and Stewardship

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

“[M]ental health among men often goes untreated because they are far less likely to seek mental health treatment than women. Depression and suicide are ranked as a leading cause of death among men. Six million men are affected by depression in the United States every single year. Men (79% of 38,364) die by suicide at a rate four times higher than women ([Mental Health America \[MHA\], 2020](#)). They also die due to alcohol-related causes at 62,000 in comparison to women at 26,000. Men are also two to three times more likely to misuse drugs than women ([Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, 2017](#)). (Benita M Chatmon, *Males and Mental Health Stigma*, in *The American Journal of Men’s Health*, Vol. 14, July-Aug, 2020)

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

“[M]ental health among men often goes untreated because they are far less likely to seek mental health treatment than women. Depression and suicide are ranked as a leading cause of death among men. Six million men are affected by depression in the United States every single year. Men (79% of 38,364) die by suicide at a rate four times higher than women ([Mental Health America \[MHA\], 2020](#)). They also die due to alcohol-related causes at 62,000 in comparison to women at 26,000. Men are also two to three times more likely to misuse drugs than women ([Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, 2017](#)). (Benita M Chatmon, *Males and Mental Health Stigma*, in *The American Journal of Men’s Health*, Vol. 14, July-Aug, 2020)

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

Romans 1:18-32, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; <sup>27</sup> and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

<sup>28</sup> And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup> Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

Ephesians 4:17, ‘Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup>They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.’”

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

2 Corinthians 4:4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

# The Noetic Effects of Sin

*Taking ownership for the spiritual and moral character of our interior life is the first step in disciplining ourselves, and growing in holiness in mind and heart.*

# Worldliness: A Missing Category

“Many of the distinctions separating Christian conduct from ‘worldly conduct’ have been challenged if not altogether undermined. Even the words *worldly* and *worldliness* have, within a generation, lost most of their traditional meaning.”

(James Davidson Hunter, *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation*, [Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987] 63)

# Worldliness: A Missing Category

“The goal of worldly people is to move forward rather than upward, to live horizontally rather than vertically. They seek after outward prosperity rather than holiness. They burst with selfish desires rather than heartfelt supplications. If they do not deny God, they ignore and forget him, or else they use him only for their selfish ends.”

(Joel Beeke, *Overcoming the World: Grace to Win the Daily Battle* [Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005] 16)

# Worldliness: A Missing Category

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)

# Worldliness: A Missing Category

*Worldliness isn't a matter of behavior or conforming to external rules. It is a matter of the head and the heart, long before it's an issue for our conduct.*

# Worldliness: The Desires of the Flesh

“Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup> since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) <sup>20</sup> And he said, “*What comes out of a person* is what defiles him. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> *All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.*” (Mark 7:18)

# Worldliness: The Desires of the Eyes

“[a]round half of adults 25 and older say viewing porn is wrong (54%), and among teens and young adults 13-24, only a third say viewing porn is wrong (32%)... between 6 and 12 percent of people aged 13 and older view porn daily; 14 to 21 percent view porn weekly; 13 to 19 percent view it once or twice a month; and 18 to 32 percent view it less often... Twice as many male teens and young adults use porn than female teens and young adults (67% compared to 33%), and four times as many male adults 25+ use porn than female adults (47% compared to 12%)... young adults (57%) are much more likely than both teens (37%) or adults 25+ (29%) to be a frequent porn user.”

<https://www.barna.com/research/porn-in-the-digital-age-new-research-reveals-10-trends/>

# Worldliness: The Desires of the Eyes

In our increasingly visually-oriented, screen-driven society, we are bombarded with images designed to lure us into all manner of greed and covetousness, to manipulate us into fear or anxiety, to undermine our convictions or subvert our commitments.

# Worldliness: The Pride of Life

We are given to boasting in what we have, who we are, and what we have done. Certainly, this may not come out of your mouth. You may be far too well-mannered for that, of course. But how many of us root our sense of self-worth in our accomplishments, nonetheless?

# The Ministry of Metathinking

“Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.” (1 Cor. 14:20)

# The Ministry of Metathinking

The clearest example of biblical ministry of metathinking can be found in Psalms 42 and Psalm 43.

# The Ministry of Metathinking

Notice the refrain in 42:5, and again in 42: 11, and again in 43:5,

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”

# The Ministry of Metathinking

““I say that we must talk to ourselves instead of allowing ‘ourselves’ to talk to us! Do you realize what that means? I suggest that the main trouble in this whole matter of spiritual depression in a sense is this, that we allow our self to talk to us instead of talking to our self. Am I just trying to be deliberately paradoxical? Far from it. This is the very essence of wisdom in this matter. Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they start talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man’s treatment was this; instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul?’ he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: ‘Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to you’. Do you know what I mean? If you do not, you have had but little experience.

The main art in the matter of spiritual living is to know how to handle yourself. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself.

[D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016). 20-21]

# The Ministry of Metathinking

We must do more than simply understand how we are currently thinking. We must stop the tape that's already playing in our minds, and start talking to ourselves, preaching to ourselves, the great gospel truths that anchor our lives instead. We must *weigh* our thinking and *judge* it at the bar of God's Word, and then we must work to think *God's* thoughts after him, by the faithful proclamation of the Word of God to our own hearts, rather than simply acquiescing in our own wrongheadedness.

# The Peace of God to Guard your Mind

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:4-7)

# Intravenous Bible

“Finally, brothers, 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.” (Phil. 4:8)

# Intravenous Bible

Who is writing the script that plays in your head and heart? Preach the Word to yourself. That is how you will not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind!

## Link to Men of God Series

<https://fpcjackson.org/resource-library/series-index/men-of-god/>