

Who Controls Your
THOUGHTS?

BY **TONY EVANS**

Who Controls Your Thoughts?

We all face the challenge of controlling our thoughts, which have a huge impact on our actions and emotions, and sometimes feel out of our control. Satan uses our thoughts as a way of trying to control us. If you sometimes feel trapped in a cycle of wrong thinking, let bestselling author Tony Evans show you how to take control of your thought life and find the victory Christ offers.

Devotion #1

God looks at your future, while the enemy tries to keep you in your past.

God says, "You can, in spite of what has been done!" The enemy says, "You can't, because of what you have done!" God will never define you by your past issues, but the enemy will try to confine you by them. Whether it is the good, bad or ugly that dominates your life up until now, it is Satan's goal to keep you chained there.

Never let your yesterday keep you from your tomorrow. Learn from yesterday, but don't live in it. Your victory comes through learning and then applying what you've learned. Becoming who God wants you to be starts with your thoughts.

Always remember that Satan's number one strategy is to plant unhealthy thoughts in your mind, repeating them over and over until you start to think they are your own thoughts. When Satan told Eve she would be like God if she ate of the fruit, whose thought was that? That thought came straight from Satan himself. In fact, he'd had the same thought before, as we read in Isaiah 14:14: "I will make myself like the Most High." It was Satan's thought, but he planted it in Eve's mind.

So, be mindful of the devil. Don't let him have free reign in your mind.

Application Question: Who are you going to listen to?

Scripture Verses: 1 Peter 5:8; Romans 12:2

Devotion #2

When you tell yourself, I can't overcome this addiction, whose thought is that?

Or when you think, I have to have this drink, whose thought is that?

Or when you entertain such thoughts as, I am nothing. I have no value. I don't have power over my emotions of lust or anger, who is doing the talking?

We know these thoughts come from Satan because they are all lies, and he is the father of lies (John 8:44).

Satan makes quick work of planting thoughts and directing them. But his thoughts do not have to have the last word. You have the power to control your own thoughts. So, how should you respond to Satan's suggestions? The same way Jesus did when Peter tried to keep Him from going to the cross. Peter told Jesus, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

To which Jesus replied, "Get behind Me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:22-23).

Jesus knew that the words came from Peter, but the thoughts came from Satan. And when Satan gets into your mind, he gets into your actions. The key to overcoming him is to take your thoughts captive.

Application Question: How can a believer discern between thoughts planted by Satan and the believer's own thoughts?

Scripture Verses: John 8:44; Hebrews 3:1

Devotion #3

One reason Satan's strongholds are so powerful is that they become entrenched. This happens when Satan can get you to buy into the lie that your situation is hopeless. His goal is to get you to believe that by nature you are a drug addict or a manipulator or a negative person, that you are controlled by fear or shame, that nothing will ever change, and so on. Once you give in to and adopt this line of thinking, these fortresses become difficult to remove. Your behavior deteriorates even more since all of us act according to who we believe we are.

The only solution is to tear down these fortresses by "taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Reprogram your mind and release yourself from captivity. This is how you unleash your full potential and free yourself up to then help other men rise to do the same.

The solution is twofold but straightforward. First, identify Christ's thoughts on a matter, and secondly, align your own thinking under the rule of His truth.

Then the truth will set you free (John 8:32).

Application Question: In what areas of your life do you need to take your thoughts captive?

Scripture Verses: 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8

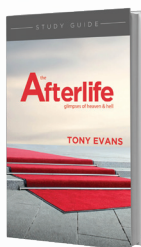
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The Urban Alternative (TUA) is a Christian broadcast ministry founded over 40 years ago by Dr. Tony Evans. At TUA, we seek to promote a kingdom agenda philosophy designed to enable people to live all of life underneath the comprehensive rule of God. This is accomplished through a variety of means, including media, resources, clergy ministries and community impact training. The Urban Alternative's daily radio broadcast airs on over 1,400 radio outlets in America and in over 100 countries worldwide. Find us online at tonyevans.org.

About The Author

Dr. Tony Evans is the founder and president of The Urban Alternative, a national ministry dedicated to restoring hope and transforming lives through the proclamation and application of God's Word. For over three decades, Dr. Evans has also served as senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas. He is a prolific author of numerous books, including the best-selling *Kingdom Man*. His radio program, "The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans," is heard daily on over 1,400 radio outlets. Dr. Evans is also the former chaplain for the Dallas Mavericks and former chaplain for the Dallas Cowboys.

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