

Marshal Your Thoughts

2 - Affirm God's Word

People often think of change and improvement as coming from the outside in, rather than from the inside out. Highly maturing Christians, however, are those who allow God to change them from the inside out as a result of a second habit—the habit of regularly “*affirming God's Word.*” The Bible puts it this way, “...*Let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind*” (Romans 12:1).

Welcome

Did you find yourself acting your way into a better way of thinking and feeling this past week? Explain.

Worship

Spend time in thanksgiving to God for all that He has done and has promised to do. Ask the group to participate in the following sentence prayer, “God, I thank you for...” Some appropriate songs include “As the Deer” (71), “Give Thanks” (68), “Doxology” (66), “Thank You, Lord!” (781).

Word

1. Comment on the following statement, “*The way we think determines the way we feel, and the way we feel determines the way we act.*”

Read 1 Peter 1:13-16

2. *What does it mean to prepare your mind for action?*
3. *How does having a disciplined mind affect our ability to live a holy (set-apart) life for God?*
4. *In what areas of your life are you most challenged by the false and negative messages of the world? As a way of combating these messages, what particular truths or promises from God's Word could you focus on instead? [It might be helpful to write these affirmations down on 3x5 cards and review them daily!]*
5. *In what way does affirming the positive messages from God's Word differ from pop psychology's “power of positive thinking?”*

Works

Highly mature Christians develop the habit of “*affirming God's Word.*” They make a conscious choice about what they focus their attention upon. To a great extent, our attitudes shaped by what we watch, who we listen to, what we read, and what we think about. Instead of letting other people decide what you are going to focus upon, consciously choose to focus on truths that nurture your life, rather than defeat it.

Write **Philippians 4:8-9** on a note card and carry it with you this week. When you feel wrong attitudes cropping up this week (and they most certainly will), deliberately refocus your thinking. Ask God to continue His transforming work within you as you begin to marshal your thoughts toward the truths of God's Word.