

The Counsel and Imagination of the Heart

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

Jeremiah 23:9-32 Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: **they speak a vision of their own heart**, and not out of the mouth of the LORD. They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that **walketh after the imagination of his own heart**, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it? Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, **they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart**; Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 7:23-30 But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, **but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart**, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they

hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth. Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

Jeremiah 9:12-16 Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through? And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; But have **walked after the imagination of their own heart**, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

Jeremiah 11:7-8 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, **but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart**: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.

Jeremiah 13:10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which **walk in the imagination of their heart**, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.

Jeremiah 16:12 And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one **after the imagination of his evil heart**, that they may not hearken unto me:

Jeremiah 18:12-18 And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do **the imagination of his evil heart**. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head. I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity. Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

Luke 1:50-51 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in **the imagination of their hearts**.

- I. Our walk involves some very important things.
 - A. Our decisions.
 - B. Our direction.
 - C. Our destination.

- D. Our purpose.
- E. Others are following us.

II. Our course is determined by the counsel and imagination of our heart or by the Word of God.

- A. Our course is set by our little choices and decisions, which are made according to the counsel and imagination of our heart or the Word and authority of God.
 - 1. Either our heart is our counselor or the Word of God is.
 - 2. When you listen to both and then lay aside the Word of God and choose the way that your feelings agree with – you are walking after the counsel and imagination of your heart.
- B. Our walk is determined by these little things.
 - 1. We may profess with our mouth to be walking after God's counsel, but the little things in our life tell the truth about what is guiding us.
 - 2. When your choices directly contradict the Word of God and his ways you are obviously walking in the imagination of your heart.
- C. The imagination of your heart means that you are walking according to your feelings, your intellect, and your will.
- D. "Follow your heart ..." is very bad and evil counsel.

[Prov. 28:26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool:](#)

- E. God is real and not imagination.
 - 1. Walking after imagination is just that ...nothing real or solid other than what you "think" or "feel."
 - 2. Not foundation or anything to refer to as authority except your opinions and the opinions of others.
 - 3. Those who do not walk after their imaginations have a solid foundation: "Thus saith the Lord."

III. The world is going to have great influence on your feelings, intellect, and will.

- A. Feelings – seeking pleasure and avoiding anything unpleasant.
- B. Intellect – Your way of thinking; seeking to be wise and knowledgeable and understanding.
 - 1. Your "way of thinking" has been programmed and greatly influenced by the world and still is if you are subjecting yourself to its influence.
- C. Will – Choosing the way that pleases yourself the most and agrees with your intellect (thinking) the most.
- D. This is the target of temptation.
- E. Temptation always has its power in these areas.
- F. These are the areas where we are vulnerable and weak.
- G. Therefore, these are the areas where we will most likely be deceived.
- H. These are the areas of life that the world operates in completely.

IV. You can fulfill all the needs of feelings, intellect, and will by simply taking God at his Word and walking in it.

- A. Feelings

[Psa. 119:16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.](#)

[Psa. 119:162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.](#)

Jer. 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

B. Intellect

Psa. 119:42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Eccl. 2:26 For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail,

Col. 2:2-3 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; ³In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Psa. 119:101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

Psa. 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

- C. When your heart finds its joy in God and his Word and your mind finds its answers there, also, then your will will be much more inclined to walk in those ways.
- D. If your heart is finding its pleasure in worldly things and your mind is searching for answers in the counsel of the ungodly then you will be walking after the imagination of your heart.
 - 1. You will lay aside the Word of God in practice, if not in profession.
 - 2. You will face the judgment of God on your life and on your children and all who follow you down the road as you walk away from God.