



Scripture nugget – Beautifying my mind

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though He was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2: 5-8).

Discerning the spiritual origin of our thoughts. The human mind is a big battlefield of Satan against God's Kingdom. Satan is adept at planting suggestions, insinuations and bad thoughts into human minds. Thus, we need to discern whether our thought is from the Evil One or from our Sanctifier, the Holy Spirit. Our fallen human nature predisposes us to judge others readily. Jesus tells us that we see the small faults of others quickly and magnified in our own eyes but fail to see the glaring faults of our own character. *Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye? (Matthew 7:3).* We need to subject our mind to holy discipline, and attempt to put on the pure, loving and humble mind of Christ (cf. Philippians 2:5-8). We cannot accept any bad, impure, unloving, judgemental thought that comes into our mind as our own. We need to reject it quickly and not to entertain it or allow it to stay in our mind. Sometimes the thought may come disguised as good but we can judge them by their hidden intention. If it is a good thought, it will not lead to the violation of God's commandments in any way. Anger in our heart gives rise to judgemental thoughts which we need to vigilantly reject. Self-congratulatory and ego-stroking thoughts bear the hallmarks of the Evil One.

Protecting our mind against evil. When we do not actively reject and throw out judgemental, unloving, impure, unholy thoughts, they may be manifested in some way in our speech and behaviour later. A bad tree cannot produce good fruits. The unjust, impure mind will lead to unloving, sinful behaviour. If a soul has been harboring judgemental thoughts, soon such a soul will find it excusable to talk about the perceived faults of others. However, unless we are in a position to correct a junior under our charge, once we highlight the faults of others, whether real or imaginary, we sin against the virtue of charity. The teaching of Jesus is clear: *Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you (Matthew 7:1-2).* Talking about the faults of others is the bad fruit of a judgemental mind which gives rise to a judgemental tongue. Once we use our tongue in such an unholy way, we are unable to remedy the irreparable, unseen harm we do to a soul's good name. Thus, St James likens the unholy tongue to an uncontrollable fire (cf. James 3:6). St Paul exhorts us to train our mind to be humble like Christ's.

Conversation with Jesus. Precious Lord, purify my mind of all unloving, impure and judgemental thoughts which are sins in Your eyes. Help me to be compassionate to others as You are compassionate to me. Whenever an unloving, judgemental thought appears in my mind, help me to renounce it and bless the person instead. Help me never to harbor negative thoughts but to dwell on beautiful things: Your love, Your life, Your Passion, Your Commandments and precepts. In this way, I turn my temptations into blessings and my thoughts will bring me closer to You. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.