TITLE: Innocence of Infancy!

TEXT: Gen. 2:4,7-25 & 3:6-11; Pr. 23:7; Lk. 6:45;

Mk. 10:15-16; Mt. 10:15-16; 2 Co. 10:5; Phil. 4:4-11

INTRODUCTION: The mind is really a pretty powerful and potentially wonderful thing. The mind is the part of us where our thoughts find their origin.

I love reading Genesis chapters 1 and 2, especially Genesis chapter 2.

In Genesis chapter 2 we find mankind in its innocence of infancy.

When you look at a newborn baby. When you watch an infant as they lie there sleeping what is it that we often will say about them?

They look so sweet and innocent. And they do. There just seems to be this ore-ah of total and complete innocence about them as they lie there sleeping.

I wonder if this is how God must have felt when He looked upon newly created mankind in his infancy.

**Gen. 2:4 , 7-25 (NIV)  
4This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.**

**—7the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.**

This is the story of mankind in the innocence of infancy. And God was like a dotting father.

**7the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the**

**breath of life, and the man became a living being.**

Man was created and he was created in childlike innocence.

After God created man, what is it that Scripture says God did?

Like a new parent God gets the babies room ready…

**8Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.**

Then He provides for the infants needs.

**9And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.**

God then sets up a pretty neat backyard for the infant to play in..

**10A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters.**

**15The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

God then makes all kinds of things to entertain and please His new child…

**19Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.**

Can’t you just picture God smiling as Adam uses the mind that God has given him to name all the animals and living creatures? Giraffe, hippopotamus, cow, cat, dog, lion, seagull, pelican, goat, monkey….Some names very simple, some very complex, yet whatever man names the creatures God has created, that is what they will be called by…..

Then God sees that Adam has another need, the need for human fellowshipand human relationship**.**

**But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh.**

**22Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.**

And then the statement that shows the true innocence of man in his infancy.

**25The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.**

You can have two infants of the opposite sex playing with each other without clothes on or even bathing together and there is still a real since of innocence about it.

An infant doesn’t feel shame by their nudity do they?

Why not? Their minds don’t yet have the progression of sin to where they have the ability to have bad or lustful thoughts.

Man, as created, was created in that same kind of innocence. In Genesis chapter 2, man did not yet have the capacity for bad or lustful thoughts so the man and the woman could be unclothed in each other’s presence and feel no guilt or shame. At that point in time, we were truly innocent. Sin had not yet entered the equation.

God also gives His newborn creation the instruction of a loving father. Some loving, fatherly advice, that if heeded, would ensure mankind living their life in this child-like innocence forever.

**16And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”**

This is kind of like when we tell our children that the stove is hot and that if they touch it they will get burned. The hot stove has the potential to hurt you so stay away from it…

Well, we know what happens in the next chapter of Genesis, Genesis chapter 3… Man disobeys this fatherly advice, and he ends up getting burned by the sin of disobedience.

And what is the immediate result of this disobedience?

Man loses his innocence!

**Gen. 3:6 -11 (NIV)  
6When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.**

**8Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”**

**10He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”**

**11And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”**

Before man’s disobedience, he was naked and felt no shame—after man sinned the first consequence of sin was that man realized that he was naked and he felt something that he had never experienced before. He felt shame because of his nakedness.

Why? Because now his mind had been corrupted by sin. Now for the first time in his existence his mind had the capacity for evil as well as for good. Now mankind had the capacity for lustful and inappropriate thoughts.

And that seed of sin has been passed on from generation to generation and infects each and every one of us today.

Our minds have all been infected with sin. We have all lost the innocence of our infancy.

Yet our minds remain the most powerful part of our being.

Do you realize that your brain is the most powerful muscle in your body?

(Some of you may be thinking that if my brain is the most powerful muscle in my body then I am in real trouble!)

But it is true! Our brain is the most powerful muscle in our bodies if we measure power by potential.

Illustration: You may be 6’ 6’’tall and 210 lbs. of solid mussel, be able to bench press 500 lbs. and yet not be able to lift a 1000 pound boulder by your sheer strength.

However, if you put your mind to the task and set up a block and tackle you can lift that 1000 pound boulder.

All the great inventors of history have accomplished much greater things through the mussel of their minds than the other muscles in their body.

Our minds are powerful things. They have a tremendous capacity for good and they have a tremendous capacity for evil. But whether they produce good or evil our minds are very powerful..

Chuck Swindol once said this about the thoughts that our minds produce:

*Thoughts are the thermostat that regulates what we accomplish in life. If I feed my mind upon doubt, disbelief, and discouragement, that is precisely what kind of day my body will experience! If I adjust my thermostat forward to thoughts filled with vision, vitality, and victory, I can count on that kind of day. Thus you and I become what we think about!*

Neither Dale Carnegie or Norman Vincent Peale originated such a message--God did!

**Prov. 23:7 (NKJV)  
7 For as (a man) thinks in his heart, so *is* he.**

**Example:** Teenage Child out with the car and they are supposed to be home by 10:00 and it is after midnight and they are still not home…

Your Mind starts working overtime…

Well, they must have had car trouble, maybe they have had an accident, maybe they are lying hurt in a ditch somewhere, maybe they are trapped and being eaten by hungry lions…

Before you know it you have mentally convinced yourself of the worst and it has robbed you of all peace and when they do get home at 1:15 you are so upset and worried that you make them wish that they were dead!

Or the jealous husband or wife whose spouse goes out with a friend and is supposed to be home about 8:00 and when they are not home by 8:30 your mind starts to work overtime and you end up having them in a hotel somewhere with some other person and when they get home at 9:00 simply because they lost track of the time you have accused them of some pretty awful things….

The mind is a pretty powerful thing! And when we let our thoughts run wild, they can become very destructive and harmful things.

That is why Scripture has so much admonition for us concerning the thoughts we allow our minds to process.

Because **For as (a man) thinks in his heart, so he becomes.**

Think tense and anxious thoughts and you will become tense and anxious!

Think good and peaceful and wholesome thoughts and you will experience the same!

As far as our thoughts are concerned we are what we eat..

Jesus has this to say to us in:

**Luke 6:45 (NIV)  
45The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.**

Heart and mind are synonymous in Greek thought.

They both speak of the inner seat of our emotions and will and can often be used interchangeably in Scripture.

**45The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart** (his mind)**, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart** (his mind**). For out of the overflow of his heart** (or mind) **his mouth speaks.**

As a Child of God, as a believer who has been sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ, God wants us to strive to come back to the place of the childlike innocence of infancy.

I want to go to an enlightening portion of Scripture this morning. Enlightening if we can grasp its meaning.

**Mark 10:15 -16 (NIV)  
15I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” 16And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.**

Jesus said: **15I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it!**

Let me ask you a question this morning? What age of child do you think that Jesus was talking about here that we must become like to enter the kingdom of God?

I have always pictured a preschool age child, a toddler or maybe a 5-6 year old..

But I don’t know if that fits here.

How do we often describe toddlers of two years of age?

The terrible two’s! They now have their legs working pretty well and they can get into everything...

I remember a particular young child when they were about 5-6 that I often found myself wanting to clobber them.

You would be standing talking with someone at a Church fellowship and this kid would be 40 foot across the room and run full bore at you and just as he was about to slam into you he would drop his head and wham!

It happened to me on several occasions. And if you didn’t notice the little guy coming it could really hurt.

On what part of the male anatomy do you think a five-year-olds head would hit?

Think of this as the little children that Jesus was talking about in this portion of Scripture it loses something.

**15I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it!**

I don’t think that this was the age group that Jesus was using as His illustration.

Part of the reason I don’t believe this is because of the particular word that Jesus uses for “little Child” here.

He uses the word..

***pahee-dee'-on***

***N*euter diminutive of G3816; a *childling* (of either sex), that is, (properly) an infant.**

This also fits the thought of Jesus taking them up into his arms.

What is it about an infant child that is so special and so unique?

They are totally and completely dependent upon their parents.

They live by blind faith! They can’t tell you what they want. They can’t tell you where they want to go. If they eat they eat because you have chosen to feed them. If they need to be clothed, they have to depend totally upon you to see that they are. If they have any need, they simply rely upon you as their parent to supply that need.

And they don’t worry! They don’t bother themselves with things such as, O my, I wonder where my next meal is going to come from? I hope my dad has work this week! Where will I get the money to buy a new pair of shoes?

That is why an infant looks so peaceful when they are sleeping. They literally don’t have a care in the world…

They simply totally and completely trust in their parents to see that their needs are met.

And this is how Jesus says that we must become if we are to enter the Kingdom of God.

Come to the place of blind faith! Come to the place of complete and total trust in God for our every need..

To stop muddling our minds with unproductive, negative, and faithless thoughts.

**Matt. 6:25 -27 (NIV)  
25“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?**

So, once we leave infancy how can we come back to that place? How can we become as a little child and truly embrace the kingdom of God?

By coming back to that place of simple faith and trust!

By choosing to take charge of our minds and the thoughts that they produce.

How can we possibly do that?

There is only one way that it will be possible for us to do this and that is in and through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Choosing to live our life surrendered to Him.

**2 Cor. 10:5 (NIV)  
5We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

We need to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ!

Start to have a lustful or inappropriate thought. Take that thought captive, isolate it in your mind, and then make it obedient to Christ.

Start to worry about a situation that is beyond your immediate control to change, then take that thought captive, isolate it in your mind, and then make it obedient to Christ.

Start to think that everyone is against you or that someone has wronged you in some terrible way and as a result you find yourself anxious and depressed, take control of those thoughts, isolate them in your mind, and make them obedient to Christ..

The good news is, that through Christ Jesus God has given us the ability to do just that!

I want to close with a portion of Scripture this morning, that if we learn it and live it, it will enable us to take control of our thoughts and make them obedient to Christ and we will find ourselves returning to the innocence of infancy whereby we can and will be used by God in a mighty way..

**Phil. 4:4 through Phil. 4:11 (NIV)  
4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**8Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ……And the God of peace will be with you.**

Has the peace of God seemed to elude you this morning?

Has your mind seemed to be taken over with thoughts that have taken control of your life and robbed you of your inner peace and joy and presence of mind?

If so, then take those thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ!

Learn and live the words of Scripture..

**4Rejoice in the Lord always. 5Let your gentleness be evident to all. 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**Think about things that are true, things that are noble, things that are right, things that are pure, things that are lovely, things that are admirable— things that are excellent or praiseworthy……And the God of peace will be with you.**

If the things that are entering our mind don’t fit this list then take them captive and make them obedient to Christ!

And Gods promise is that the peace of God will be with us!! Gods’ peace will set up a guard over our mind and our heart and we will experience the presence of His sweet peace. A peace that transcends all human understanding.

Do you have the peace of God in your life this morning? A peace that transcends all human understanding?

A peace that transcends and overpowers even the difficult situations that you may be going through.

God has promised us that kind of peace if we but return to the innocence of infancy whereby all our faith and all of our trust we simply place in Him?

Do you desire this peace in your life today? Then simply surrender your life, surrender even your thoughts to Jesus. Take them captive and make them obedient to Jesus and the God of peace will always be with you…