

Large Group – Between Your Ears

MS 10.7.20

HS 10.14.20

LESSON SUMMARY:

What do you really believe? Pastor JR dives into this truth: How we think impacts how we live. What we think about school, our parents, our siblings, RUSH, work, etc. will affect how we act in and towards those things.

Pastor JR covers several passages in the Bible that emphasize the importance of the mind, such as:

- **Matthew 22.37:** *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*
- **Romans 12.2:** *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”*
- **Ephesians 4.22-23:** *“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; “to be made new in the attitude of your minds...”*
- **Colossians 3.2:** *“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”*
- **Romans 8.5-7:** *“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. “The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. “The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.”*

So not only do we see that our thought life is important, we also see that we have a responsibility to control it. So how do we do that? **2 Corinthians 10.5:** *We 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.* Let’s put that in practical terms, through 3 steps:

1. Admit it / expose it (where what you BELIEVE contradicts the TRUTH found in the Bible)
2. Realize and identify it as a lie
3. Remove and replace

This process takes practice. So are you ready to dive in and really analyze your thought life? Are you ready to see what you really believe and why? Over the next few months, we will help you walk through several key areas you might be believing lies and help you walk through these 3 steps to literally change the way you think. And when you do this, it will change how you live. Let’s go!

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you agree with Pastor JR that your thought life affects your feelings, actions, and behavior? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think the Bible speaks so much about the mind?
3. Take the example Pastor JR used: "I don't care what people think." Have you ever said this? If so, do you really mean it? What are some examples in your life that might show that isn't true?
 - Encourage students to really be honest with themselves here. You could even point out that several of us don't say what we're actually thinking during small group, in fear of what others may think of us.
 - Based on individual evaluation, encourage students to come up with an actual true statement, based on their actions. Ex: "I care a lot about what other people think about me," or "I care what a certain group of people at school think about me," etc.

DIVE DEEPER:

- Read through Romans 7:14-25. Discuss the meaning of this (many students who are unfamiliar with this passage will likely need this broken down and explained more than others). We see an example here of Paul's struggle with sin in his life. He concludes in verse 24 with, "What a wretched man I am!" It is here that Paul has a decision to make. He can continue dwelling on his mistakes, leading him to feel completely worthless, OR he can take his thought captive and make it obedient to Christ.
- Read Romans 7:25-8:1. How is this an example of Paul replacing his thoughts with truth?
- Let's dive into Pastor JR's other example. The truth is: God is in complete control. Encourage your students to evaluate whether they really believe this, by looking at their behavior. Look at the following beliefs:
 - I believe God has completely lost control of the world. If I believe this, I may:
 - Feel anxious/worried about the future
 - Have a difficult time making decisions in life, gripped by fear
 - I believe I am in complete control of my life. If I believe this, I may:
 - Fall apart when something unexpected happens
 - Try to control every area of my life
 - Needing to be perfect at things
 - Compulsive behavior
 - Trying to manipulate/control others
 - I believe God is in complete control. If I believe this, I will:
 - Live with peace
 - Be able to adjust when unexpected things happen
- Take time in your group to discuss which "bucket" your students fit (or have them add another!). If your group doesn't open up and get deep easily, consider having them write down their response. This would be great information to have as you move into 1-on-1 conversations in the next few weeks.