Setting Our Minds on Things Above

Children of God don’t have to live in spiritual defeat, repeating the same sins over and over. But in order to have victory, we need the right mental focus. Colossians 3:2 says, “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” Choosing to think about what matters to God is an important part of walking in the Spirit. We will never attain sinless perfection in this lifetime. But with the right mindset, we can experience consistent spiritual victory.

Why should we set our minds on the things above?

1. To Obey Jesus
   
   He told His disciples, “Seek first [God’s] kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).
   
   What promise does Jesus give if we will follow this command (v. 31)?

   Do you believe you are “seeking first the kingdom of God”? Explain.

2. To Prepare for Eternity

   Speaking about His return, Jesus said, “Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap” (Luke 21:34).

   What pleasure or worry distracts you from God’s priorities for your life?

   Read Colossians 3:1-4. What two reasons (vv. 2-3) does Paul give for setting our minds on things above?

   One day, we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). Is there anything God is prompting you to do or stop doing?

3. To Have Victory over Sin

   Those who determine ahead of time to obey God are far more likely to resist temptation when it strikes. Read Romans 8:5-6 and 13.
Think about your spiritual weaknesses. Are there sins you commit over and over?

If so, do you determine ahead of time not to indulge in those sins? Why or why not?

Purposing ahead of time to make a righteous choice does not guarantee that we will obey God at the moment of testing. But it does set the stage for spiritual victory.

4. To Overcome Fear, Anxiety, and Stress

By focusing on heavenly realities, we gain God’s outlook. His eternal viewpoint puts earthly worries in perspective.

List some negative emotions that won’t be present in eternity (Revelations 21:4).

What do believers have the privilege of doing (1 Peter 5:7)? Have you been exercising this privilege? If not, what hinders you?

How do we set our minds on things above?

1. By Renewing Our Minds

Our world is, for the most part, hostile toward God and His kingdom. That’s why we must take time on a regular basis to refresh our minds with truth. The best way to do this is by reading Scripture.

Read Hebrews 4:12. How does the Bible “judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart”?

After being inundated with worldly thinking, what happens within you through reading God’s Word?

Romans 12:2 says when we renew our minds, we will “prove what the will of God is.” What do you think that means?
2. By Resisting the Devil’s Lies

Satan reinforces the world’s perspective that wealth, appearance, material success, and popularity are of utmost importance. He also looks for other ways to disrupt our relationship with the Lord and discredit our testimonies. These include isolating us from other believers, persuading us of our superiority or inferiority, or tempting us to unhealthy extremes and addictions.

In what ways does Satan or the spirits who serve Him generally work on you?

Second Corinthians 10:3-5 mentions our spiritual battle. How do we stand against the lies that the Enemy wants us to believe (v. 5)?

James 4:7 says, “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” How would you describe to a new believer how to resist Satan?

3. By Fellowshipping with God

Another way to set our minds on spiritual things is to spend one-on-one time with the Father. When you are alone with Him, ask for His guidance for your life and healing for your heartaches. It’s also important to simply worship Him.

What does Isaiah 26:3 say is the fruit of focusing on and trusting the Lord?

Have you found this to be true in your life? Why or why not?

4. By Fellowshipping with Other Believers

What happens when we gather together with other believers (Hebrews 10: 24-25)?

Revelation 12:11 says that believers overcome “because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony.” How do conversion stories and other examples of God’s faithfulness encourage your faith?
If you don’t have one or two Christian friends with whom you can share your spiritual ups and downs, try getting involved in a Sunday school or another small group setting that promotes community.

Prayer: Father, thank You for the spiritual victory Jesus provided at the cross. Teach me to focus on heavenly realities so I can walk by the power of the Holy Spirit, not my own strength. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.