



Victory over Destructive Thoughts

In the battle of the mind, every nano-second counts. Rejecting wrong thoughts effectively is a discipline that requires practice and persistence to master.

Sometimes a simple analogy from the world we live in that brings up a strong mental image can be very helpful. **Who better to model the art of swift, unforgiving and absolute rejection than the entertainment industry?** This is one place where popular culture can teach us a thing or two about how to deal with the enemy.

I don't know about you, but my family loves to watch music and talent competitions such as *American Idol* and *America's Got Talent*. It's both exhilarating and crushing to watch the contestants struggle to fulfill their dreams of the spotlight. While watching can be very entertaining, it can also be like witnessing a terrible accident; you can hardly stand to watch for the horror, but you have a hard time pulling your eyes away. There are the times you aren't sure which way things are going to go, when the judges listen for a while without interrupting. But the biggest dramas come when, only a few seconds into the performance, before the contestant has had a chance to utter even a few syllables or dance a few steps, a **HUGE RED X** with screeching BUZZER sound lights up the SCREEN. **NOPE!** The greatest humiliation and rejection of all comes whenever someone gets **3 BIG RED Xs** back to back... **BUZZ, BUZZ, BUZZ!** When this happens, the message given from the powers that be is crystal clear: **You are OUT.** No arguments. No quarrels. No second chances. You're **DONE. C'ya!**

Devastated, rejected and completely dismissed before having a chance to even engage—it's not a great scenario for any wanna-be performer, but is a potentially game-changing one when applied to the battle for the mind. Picture the same scene, but in relation to you and your thought life. You are like the judge, and the thoughts that come into your mind are like the contestants hoping to gain entry to the next level of acceptance. Just like the judges have the power and authority to eject someone from the stage, you can do the same with any thought that comes your way.

Each thought can either be allowed to enter, thus further engaging your mind, heart, will, and emotions OR it can be flatly refused—blocked from access.

With the power of the Holy Spirit, you can discern whether each thought is from God or from somewhere else (such as your human mind or an enemy "plant"). There are times when it's difficult to know for sure where the thought is from, and life guided by the Spirit includes becoming more and more adept at knowing the difference. But there are also times when there is no question the thought or emotion that is bubbling up through your being is NOT from God and therefore is **BAD NEWS**—suitable **ONLY** for the mental incinerator. The sooner you train yourself to have no mercy to such thoughts, the sooner you will start experiencing increasing victory in mind renewal, which will ultimately empower your triumph in other arenas too. However, if you allow any out-of-place thought to keep coming (even for a few seconds) instead of BUZZING it and EVICTING it immediately, it will **engage**. Whenever a thought actually engages your mind, it is getting a grip—a hold. That's when it starts capturing your imagination, and a captured imagination means the enemy has made it past the guards of your heart; (Proverbs 4:23) Once destructive thoughts penetrate this barrier, they are much harder to expel. It's like the enemy capturing a beachhead on a battlefield. From that position an attack can be mounted with great force. However, just as easily, the intruding thought can be drowned before reaching the sandy shore. It's key to realize, the outcome is **ENTIRELY UP TO YOU.**

Indeed your mind operates very much like the TV talent show, with you in control of the buzzers. So when you sense ANYTHING coming that doesn't line up with God's word, it's time for an **IMMEDIATE, RUTHLESS, and SINGLE-MINDED VETO!** When you do, you will be on your way to mastering one of the most powerful spiritual weapons given to any follower of Christ: "taking every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ."

(2 Corinthians 10:5)



Kick wrong thoughts off your mind stage like the most ruthless, unforgiving, uncompromising Simon Cowell that ever walked the face of the earth.

