



Mind Games

WEEK 1 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In the first message of the new series, *Mind Games*, we will learn how to lower stress and anxiety, increase God's peace and presence in our lives, and be equipped to stay positive in a negative world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The environment around us, the words spoken to us, the relationships we have, and the pressures we face all take their toll on our mind. We will have challenges in life; however, will we live in fear or faith? Will we walk in stress and anxiety or God's peace? The key during challenging times is to watch our thoughts and realize what we are meditating on—is it God's truth or life's ever-changing circumstances?

2 Corinthians 2:11 says that we need: *To keep Satan from getting the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his wiles and intentions.* We need to be aware of the "wiles" (strategies and games) the enemy is trying to play with our souls. If the enemy can barrage our minds with misbeliefs, negative thoughts, and twisted emotions, he will gain an advantage over our entire lives and keep us from what God's called us to do.

When we embrace misbeliefs (a false belief or opinion), we begin lying to ourselves and start negative "self-talk." We need to remember the power of our thoughts to shape our lives—both positively and negatively. What we think and believe determines how we feel and what we do.

Thought=>Emotion=>Choice=>Habit=>Character=>Destiny

- How do our thoughts affect our destiny?
- Have you ever embraced a misbelief? How did believing the lie impact you?
- Share a time when believing God's truth over the enemy's lies affected your life.

In contrast, the mind is the central part of our soul indelibly tied to our will and emotions.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

- What can we do daily to renew our mind?

A stronghold is a negative mental attitude that comes as a result of continually believing misbeliefs or lies. There are irrational and rational strongholds:

1. Irrational Strongholds

Irrational strongholds primarily have to do with fears and worries that are completely unrealistic. These include such strongholds as a fear of disease, a fear of premature death, an abnormal fear of rejection, etc.

- Have you ever experienced an irrational stronghold?

2. Rational Strongholds

Rational strongholds are logical thoughts that are naturally inclined to allow the mind to dominate and hinder faith. The logical mind, although necessary and wonderful, will work against your spiritual life—unless it is submitted to the control of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The unsubmitted, rational mind will always try to talk you out of doing things God’s way—by faith.

- Are there any rational strongholds affecting your life today?

It’s important to capture our ungodly thoughts before they sink deep into our emotions and lead to poor choices. Rather than listen to these lying thoughts, emotions, and slanderous accusations, we can do two things:

1. Take responsibility for our thoughts.

- How can we take responsibility for our thoughts?

2. Submit our thoughts to the Word of God.

- Give a practical example of how we can submit our thoughts to God’s Word.

LIFE CHALLENGE

This week, whenever a negative thought comes to your mind, stop, pray, and align that thought to God’s Word. Stay in the Word daily and begin to speak Scripture over your life.

PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSE IN PRAYER