

Our structure

Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Matthew 6, 2 Corinthians 10:1-6

The Bible is clear on structure. If the Bible is our guide then we do what it says, otherwise we are just being foolish caught in some mix of cognitive bias, conformity, group think, and/or other form of self-deception. These are the simple facts.

The only way to get out of this bog of self-deception is to develop a new mindset. This can only be created through understanding the intangible results of compliance to God (Those who have ears to hear). Our faith is full grown after we experience God's amazing grace working within us. In the accumulation of Godly experiences we grow into that grace more and more. Yet we must act.

“Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”

FRANK OUTLAW

Late President of the Bi-Lo Stores

<https://quoteinvestigator.com/2013/01/10/watch-your-thoughts/>

To increase our thought awareness it is crucial that we practice slowing down our movements in our body and our thinking. Imagine working on an assembly line with items moving at a high speed, too fast for us to count. How could we take captive anything moving at such a speed? Imagine again slowing down the process to a rate where we can easily touch each item and count with peace. Such a pace ought to be our goal. We ought to exist at a pace where we can examine and be aware of our mental attitude continuously while making necessary adjustments as they are needed.

Through a regular practice of meditation we can empower ourselves to slow down and better understand our thoughts, perceptions, sensations, and beliefs. Our investment into this meditation ought to be sufficient enough to bring about progression toward the desired goal. Thirty minutes before we start each day and 15 minutes before we go to sleep ought to be a good start.

Cognitive dissonance: Developing this new Godly way of life is to live beyond our own understanding which means we will experience cognitive dissonance. It helps to discuss with others who understand our process or new structure and share our questions and confusion. Using others as a soundboard to brainstorm through difficulties and struggles is essential. Left to our own thinking we may be easily deceived.

Intangible learning: The spiritual reality is intangible. Our thoughts will need guidance toward seeking, sensing, perceiving, and understanding such intangibles. We ought to practice the intangible character of God each day. We ought to daily seek the implementation of God's goodness in our thoughts and actions. Being patient without love still misses the mark/sin.

Resistance/anger/fear/selfishness/dishonesty/pride/etc.

We must practice awareness of these as they occur and confess them to another person while taking ownership and avoiding blaming/shaming. Justifying our sin is to convince ourselves it is okay to be in it. To let go and let God is to take captive our reasoning for the sin and convincing ourselves to believe/have faith in thinking more Christlike/with God's character. This may take a lot of practice, prayer, and discussion. Each person responds to this process in their own unique way. Since we are sinners, this process ought to be ever continuing. Reliance upon pride and the world's ways can be a very difficult thing to release from our grip. Yet the more we can understand the spiritual destruction within it the easier it is to stop obeying its ways. We must further seek spiritual understanding everyday.

Daily guidance

In the beginning developing structure is to first be introduced to it. We develop the plan, get acclimated to the plan, and practice the plan enough for it to become a habit.

Uncertainty, confusion, and awkwardness are normal responses to doing things out of "our ordinary." Getting acclimated is to make the unordinary ordinary. Once we have done it enough to where we are comfortable, which is often faster than it at first feels (another reason to question our judgements), we can begin to settle into the new ordinary. We will know it is a habit when we begin to feel it is part our new way of life. It will come to feel like it is part of our new identity.

Write down a plan for 30 minutes meditation and prayer (no one is perfect, but we ought to strive for perfection - not having a plan is planning to fail)
Write down Godly character goal and ways to put it into practice.
Practice obedience to Godly wisdom more than to our own understanding.

The chart below is a guide to help us begin our focus each day. We are to set our minds on God's interests. It doesn't take long to mark with a yes or a no whether we completed the helpful actions or not.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Pray: Guidance for growth and strength to do God's will							
Meditation: Godly character "how it is good"							
New Godly action							
Cognitive dissonance							
Discussion of personal experience or struggle							
Check for: fear, resentment dishonesty, pride selfishness							

If we are not progressing into God's goodness then we ought to examine our choices. Are we choosing God's understanding or our own? Are we giving our hearts, minds, souls, and strength to God's goodness, will, ways, and path?

Are we too tired, busy, or just don't have enough time for God?

Everyday we go without seeking God we go without God. God may be around us, but if we are not focused and attentive with our hearts to God's purposes, how can God be in us? (John 15) Reviewing cognitive biases may be helpful.