**Prisoners of Hope *(Zechariah 9:12)* January 9, 2011**

1. How we think in our heart will determine the person we are. How we think in our heart also sets the limits on what we can walk in and accomplish in life. It is imperative that our thinking is transformed by the Word of God.
* **Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
* **Proverbs 23:7a** For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.
* **Matthew 12:35** A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.
1. The person who truly thinks in line with God’s Word will not be governed and limited by outward circumstances; their limits will only be set by God!
* **Psalms 1:1-3** Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2) But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3) He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.
1. We must have God given “hope” in our heart
* **1 Cor 13:13** And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.
* Hope is defined as “joyful and confident expectation.”
* To accomplish “the hope of our calling” God has for our life, that hope must be formed in the thinking of our heart. Joyful confident expectation must be formed in our heart by God’s Word.
* Do you have joyful confident expectation for your family, church and your life? Too many people meditate day and night on their problems instead of God’s Word and on who they are in Christ, on who Christ is in them and on His great covenant mercy.
1. Abraham’s hope and expectation wasn’t molded by what he saw with his eyes or by his circumstances but by the Word of God.
* **Romans 4:18 (AMP)**  [*For Abraham, human reason for*] hope being gone, hoped in faith that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been promised, So [*numberless*] shall your descendants be. [*Gen. 15:5.*]
1. Don’t let present negative circumstances form you hope

**(See** **Mark 9:14-27)**

* First we see hope had formed in the heart of the man’s heart due to the word that he heard of what Jesus could do for his son.
* When he doesn’t see the results he was initially looking for, hope fades fast in his heart. He says to Jesus, *“if You can do anything, have compassion on us…”*
* This has been such a big problem for some: setting our expectation by what we see happening around us instead of the Word of God. (see James 1:7)
* Jesus says to the man, *“if you can believe, all things are possible.”* The only “if” is if we can believe; it is not if He can, or if he wants to do it.
1. If you negativity is in your heart keep your mouth shut and fill your heart with God’s truth
* In **Luke 1:13-14 & 18-20** the angel Gabriel told Zacharias… “your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth…” “Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years. And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."
	+ God had to cause him to be mute so he wouldn’t kill what God had destined to do through speaking with unbelief.
* **Proverbs 13:3** He who guards his mouth preserves his life, *But* he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.
* *Do you want attention or do want change?* If you want attention continually focus on telling everyone your problems; if you want change, continue to speak the truth of God’s Word to your problems.
* In Joshua chapter 7, when God told the children of Israel He would cause the walls of Jericho to fall, He told them to circle the walls seven days while remaining silent. On the seventh day they shouted with a victory shout of joy. For seven days the reality of the walls falling got bigger and bigger in their heart; on the seventh day they released God’s will with praise. Hebrews 11:30 says “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down.”
* **Hebrews 10:23** Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

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