

## The Necessity of Mental Exercise

*No longer be children...but, grow up. Ephesians 4:14-15*

**We must outgrow spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ caused by \_\_\_\_\_!**

“No longer be children... tossed... carried by doctrine...trickery... craftiness...deceitful scheming

**Disorienting influences that drive and deceive spiritual juveniles:**

### 1. Spiritual juveniles are misled by shifting “winds of \_\_\_\_\_!”

The spiritually immature are “tossed here and there and carried about.”

“Walk no longer just as \_\_\_\_\_” 4:17

- Why do they walk that way?
- How do they walk as a result?
- Why don't we walk that way?
- What is our guidance system?

### 2. Spiritual juveniles are conned by the “\_\_\_\_\_ of men!”

Spiritual immaturity is rooted in thinking like a \_\_\_\_\_ person.

Eph. 2:2-3 “...walked according to the course of this world...  
...the spirit working in the sons of disobedience”

#### 1 Corinthians 2:14-15

- The natural man is dominated by the “\_\_\_\_\_.” (*psychikos*)
- **Discernment** is a distinguishing mark of the “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- We are commanded to be “\_\_\_\_\_” in our thinking. 1 Cor. 14:20  
How? “Examine everything” through the lens of \_\_\_\_\_ as focused by God's \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. Spiritual juveniles are fooled by “\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ scheming.”

Spiritual immaturity makes us vulnerable to spiritual counterfeits.

#### 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 “craftiness...deceitful...disguises”

- Satan has always “deceived” by his “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- Satan uses a \_\_\_\_\_ disguise.
  - a “false \_\_\_\_\_” 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3
  - a false \_\_\_\_\_ the synagogue of \_\_\_\_\_ Rev. 2:9
  - a false \_\_\_\_\_ the doctrines of demons 1 Tim. 4:1
  - “false \_\_\_\_\_” so-called brothers 2 Cor 11:26; 1 Cor. 5:11
  - “false \_\_\_\_\_” 2 Corinthians 11:13
  - “false \_\_\_\_\_” Galatians 1:5-9 et al.

...so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Matthew 24:24

### Challenge: Fine-tune your \_\_\_\_\_ sensor!

Examine everything carefully... 1 Th. 5:21; Acts 17:11; Hebrews 5:14

...to train your \_\_\_\_\_ to discern & \_\_\_\_\_ God's \_\_\_\_\_

& \_\_\_\_\_ Word.

## Discussion Guide: The Necessity of Mental Exercise

*No longer be children...but, grow up.* Ephesians 4:14-15

1. **Hebrews 5:14 indicates that spiritually mature people have their senses exercised** (trained in the gym) **by God's Word**. Remember this is both the written and **personal** Word of God. (Heb. 4:12)
  - Do you think our culture values mental exercise? Does the church?
  - What are the challenges we face to healthy mental exercise?
  - What do you do personally to exercise your mind toward spiritual maturity?
  - Are any of these mental/spiritual disciplines part of your daily exercise?
    - Bible Reading and Study
    - Scripture Memorization and Meditation
    - Practicing Silence and listening to God
    - Reading Christian *thinkers* and journaling your own thoughts
  - What do you find helpful in training your children to think spiritually and develop discernment? How do you counter the *world-think* that comes through school, social and pop media, friends, etc.
  
2. **A Christian writer stated that the Green Bay Packers went from being chumps to being champs when Coach Vince Lombardi challenged their thinking and taught them to think differently**. Many current motivational speakers in business and sports focus on the power of the mind to enhance performance and achieve goals.
  - Discern and discuss the elements of this pop message that are true/false (besides the fact that the Packers are still chumps)!
  - What verses can we share that speak to the importance and/or way to train our thinking?
  - Hints:
    - *"think on these things"*
    - *"by the renewing of your mind"*
    - *"...then you will have success"*
    - *"destroying speculations...raised up against the knowledge of God... thought captive"*
  - At what point does "the power of the mind" become false teaching? (It's easy to google "The Power of the Mind" and find lots of examples.)

**Prayer Target: Taking thoughts captive to obedience to Christ.**

**Use 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 as a guide for your prayer time and to support each other this week.**

## The Necessity of Mental Exercise

*No longer be children...but, grow up.* Ephesians 4:14-15

### We must outgrow spiritual immaturity and disorientation caused by gullibility.

"No longer be children... tossed... carried by doctrine...trickery... craftiness...deceitful scheming

*Disorienting influences that drive and deceive spiritual juveniles:*

#### 1. Spiritual juveniles are misled by shifting "winds of doctrine."

The spiritually immature are "*tossed here and there and carried about.*"

"Walk no longer just as Gentiles!" 4:17

- Why do they walk that way?  
*their mind...their understanding...the ignorance that is in them...*
- How do they walk as a result?  
*given themselves over to sensuality... 19*
- Why don't we walk that way?  
*You did not learn Christ in this way...and have been taught... 20*
- What is our guidance system?  
*Truth in love...grow up! 4:15*

#### 2. Spiritual juveniles are conned by the "trickery of men."

Spiritual immaturity is rooted in thinking like a "natural" person.

"...walked according to the course of this world... Eph. 2:2-3  
...the spirit working in the sons of disobedience"

##### 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

- The natural man is dominated by the "psyche" (*psychikos*)
- **Discernment** is a distinguishing mark of the "spiritual."
- We are commanded to be "mature" in our thinking. 1 Cor. 14:20  
How? "Examine everything" through the lens of Scripture as focused by God's Spirit.

#### 3. Spiritual juveniles are fooled by "craftiness in deceitful scheming."

Spiritual immaturity makes us vulnerable to spiritual counterfeits.

##### 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 "craftiness...deceitful...disguises"

- Satan has always "deceived" by his "craftiness."
  - Satan uses a religious "disguise."
    - a "false "Jesus" 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3
    - a false "church" *the synagogue of Satan* Rev. 2:9
    - a false "doctrine" *the doctrines of demons* 1 Tim. 4:1
    - "false brothers" *so-called brothers* 1 Cor. 5:11, 2 Cor. 11:26;
    - "false ministers" 2 Corinthians 11:13
    - "false gospel" Galatians 1:5-9 et al.
- ...so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.* Matthew 24:24

### Challenge: Fine-tune your bologna sensor!

Examine everything carefully... 1 Th. 5:21; Acts 17:11; Hebrews 5:14

...to train your senses to discern and practice God's written and personal Word.