

Are You Thinking Straight?

By Fr. John Catoir, August 10, 2014

You can weaken the power that fear has over you one you learn to control your thoughts. Think about some favorite scripture quote to lift your spirit. Feelings follow thoughts.

“If I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.” (Psalm 23:4)

You can save a lot of money on doctor bills, reduce emotional stress, avoid needless conflict, increase your sense of well-being, and enjoy your precious life more, if you control your thoughts by using your faith more effectively.

The Bible repeats the phrase “Be not afraid,” 365 times, but it’s not so easy to do unless you decide to think straight. Some fears are objective and must be dealt with; call 911. But false or exaggerated fears need to be identified and crushed. If your nervous emotions make you feel danger, try reciting a memorized scripture quote over and over again to dilute the anxiety, and it will soon dissolve.

“In all circumstances give thanks to the Lord, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus,” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

An addiction to false fears can destroy your chances for a happy life. Peace and joy will elude you. Such fears must be rejected as you would poison.

Think straight about the nature of true love and true joy. True love is in the will not the feelings. The same is true for joy. The key is in the control of your thoughts.

**“Finally, bretheren, whosoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, whatsoever things that are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise think on these things,”
(Philippians 4:8)**

True love begins with physical attraction, and grows into a romance that leads to marriage. This permanent relationship consists of a commitment to stay together for better or worse, in good times and bad.

Romantic love is a dazzling emotional attraction, causing flights of fancy. If it doesn't advance to a higher level of commitment, it will remain in the clouds until it ends in misery for one or both parties.

True love requires each party to put on the will to bear discomfort. Think about it; love leads to service, and service leads to sacrifice, and sacrifice leads to the cross. Unite your emotional pain to the sufferings of Christ.

“Love is patient and kind... it endures all things,” (1Cor. 13:4)

Romantic love says, “I will love you a long as I am comfortable with our relationship.”

True Supernatural Joy also resides in the will not the feelings. You may feel frightened, but at the same time you know that you are held firmly in God's love.

“Don't be dejected and sad for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Numbers 8:10)

Your commitment to live in the joy of the Holy Spirit transcends all emotions. Once you choose to love God, and to live joyfully in His Spirit, you are a new creation, and no longer a poor, helpless creature.

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” (Galatians 2:21)

Psychiatric Abraham Low writes: “Feelings can be distressing, but they are not dangerous. People often suffer more from their nervous symptoms than from any real objective danger. Learn to laugh at your fears.”

“Do you want to know one of the best ways to lead people to God? It consists in giving them joy and making them happy.”

(St. Francis of Assisi.)