

## Small Group Guide: RETHINK HOW YOU'RE THINKING - Think About Yourself

**Opening Question:** When you “space out” or daydream, what kind of things do you usually find yourself thinking about? (be honest but lighthearted...)

**Opening Prayer:** *Father, thank you for bringing us together today. As we talk about our thoughts and how they shape our lives, we ask you to gently show us where you want to renovate our minds. Help us to be honest, safe with each other, and open to your Spirit. Give us understanding as we look at your Word, and teach us how to think more like Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*

### **Key Takeaways:**

#### **Your thoughts control your life, but you control your thoughts.**

Where you are today is largely the result of the thoughts you've allowed and entertained over time.

#### **Behavior is the fruit; thoughts are the root.**

Lasting change never starts with behavior modification. It starts with a renewed mind.

Thoughts → feelings → actions.

#### **Don't conform; be transformed.**

The world applies outside pressure to make us “fit in.” God transforms us from the inside out through the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2).

#### **Repentance and confession are about how we think.**

*Repent* (metanoia) = to change the way you think.

*Confess* (homologeō) = to “say the same thing” as God says.

We don't just confess sin; we also confess truth—what God says about himself, about us, and about life.

#### **Renovation of the mind is messy but necessary.**

Being “made new in the attitude of your minds” (Ephesians 4:23) is like renovating a house—disruptive, uncomfortable, but worth it.

#### **Old mental ruts must be demolished, not decorated.**

Repeated thoughts carve “paths” in our brains. Even if they lead to bad conclusions (“I'll never change,” “I'm not enough”), we default there because they're familiar. Those ruts need to be demolished and replaced with God's truth.

#### **Jesus has broken the chains; many of us still live like we're chained.**

Shame, “not enough” statements, and old labels come from the enemy, not from God. In Christ, the chains are snapped, but we must learn to walk in that freedom.

#### **Confessing Scripture out loud helps rewire our thinking.**

Speaking God's Word over ourselves (e.g., “I am a new creation in Christ,” “There is now no condemnation...”) is a key tool in renewing the mind.

## **Discussion Questions:**

### **1. Read Romans 13:11–14.**

- What do you think it means to “understand the present time” or “seize the moment” in everyday life?
- In what kinds of situations might people sense a need to “wake up” spiritually or mentally?

### **2. Read Romans 12:2.**

- How would you describe the difference between being conformed to this world and being transformed by the renewing of your mind?
- Where do you see people today experiencing pressure to conform in their thinking?

### **3. Read Ephesians 4:23–24 and 4:31–5:1.**

- What connections do you notice between a person’s thought life and their actions or reactions?
- What might it look like, in a practical sense, to “be imitators of God” in our thinking?

### **4. Thought Patterns and Direction**

- The statement was made by Pastor Dan: “Your thoughts control your life, but you control your thoughts.” What stands out to you about that idea?
- How have you seen patterns of thinking shape outcomes in people’s lives (positively or negatively)?

### **5. “Not Enough” Thinking**

- Pastor Dan mentioned common “not enough” thoughts (like not good enough, not strong enough, etc.). Why do you think those kinds of thoughts are so common?
- What impact can those kinds of beliefs have on a person’s decisions or relationships over time?

### **6. Breaking Free from Old Patterns**

- Have someone from the Group explain the elephant illustration in his/her own words.
- The elephant illustration showed how something can feel limiting even when freedom is possible. Why do you think people sometimes stay stuck in unhelpful thought patterns?
- What are some healthy ways people can begin replacing negative or untrue thoughts with truth?

### **7. Confessing Truth**

- The idea of “confessing truth”—speaking what God says about us—was emphasized in the sermon. Why might that be important?
- What are some Bible verses or truths from God’s Word that people often find helpful when trying to renew their thinking?

### **8. The Renovation Process**

- The mind was compared to a house under renovation. What parts of that illustration stand out to you?
- What helps people stay encouraged when growth feels slow or messy?

## **Practical Applications:**

1. **Identify and Write One “Chain.”**  
This week, prayerfully identify one recurring negative thought (e.g., “I’ll always be this way”). Write it down, call it what it is (a lie, shame, worldly thinking), and ask God to begin demolishing it.
2. **Replace the Lie with a Verse.**  
Find one Scripture from the Bible that contradicts that lie (e.g., 2 Corinthians 5:17 for “I’ll never change”). Write that verse next to the lie and keep it where you’ll see it daily.
3. **Practice Daily Confession of Truth.**  
Once or twice a day, read your chosen verse out loud and add a simple confession: “This is true of me in Christ.” Do this for at least 7 days and pay attention to any shift in your reactions or feelings.
4. **Thought-Check Before Action.**  
At least once per day when you’re tempted to a sinful habit or unhelpful reaction, pause and ask: “What am I thinking right now that’s leading me here?” Jot it down or talk to God about it. Begin training yourself to trace behavior back to thoughts.
5. **Share with a Trusted Believer.**  
Tell one trusted Christian friend or someone in your Community Group about the mental rut or “not enough” statement you’re working on. Ask them to pray for you this week and, if you’re comfortable, to text you your chosen verse once or twice as encouragement.

## **MEMORY VERSE for the Week:**

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2, NIV)

**Closing Prayer:** *Lord, thank you for these truths we’ve talked about today. Thank you that we don’t have to stay stuck in old patterns of thinking, and that you’ve already broken the chains through Jesus. Help us this week to recognize lies quickly and to replace them with your Word. Renew our minds, renovate our thinking, and let that show up in our feelings and actions. Strengthen each person here to walk in the freedom and identity you’ve given them. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*