



# Our Thoughts Determine Our Destiny

Adapted from “Who are You Spiritually?” series by Sam Rijfkogel

There is an old children's song, “The Bear Went Over the Mountain.” The song, sung in the tune of, “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow,” reads like this:

*The bear went over the mountain  
The bear went over the mountain  
The bear went over the mountain  
To see what he could see  
To see what he could see  
To see what he could see  
The other side of the mountain  
The other side of the mountain  
The other side of the mountain  
Was all that he could see<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Public Domain

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When you read the lyrics to that song, the conclusion is the bear just keeps going over mountains and all he could ever see are more mountains.

John Maxwell, in his book, *Thinking for a Change*, said, "Our thoughts determine our destiny. Our destiny determines our legacy." It has been said, "We don't reproduce what we do, we reproduce who we are."<sup>2</sup>

Life can be compared to a series of mountains. We focus on just getting over the mountain in front of us, justifying who we are by what we do, or trying to climb mountains in our abilities.

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<sup>2</sup> John Maxwell, *Thinking for a Change: 11 Ways Highly Success People Approach Life and Work* (New York City, NY: Warner Books, 2003).



## “COURAGE” Level Questions

**C1:** Why do you think so many men are driven by their actions?

**C2:** Describe a time you drove yourself to perform. What was the main reason for that drive? Did it kind of take over your life for a while?

**NOTE:** Paul teaches us that we should evaluate ourselves from God's viewpoint and not from ours or the viewpoint of others. It is easy to fall into the trap of equating our identity with our gifts and talents.

Read **Genesis 1:26 (ESV)** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

### **C3: What does this verse teach about identity?**

Now read these verses:

**Romans 10:1-4 (ESV)** Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

**Philippians 3:7-9 (ESV)** But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

**1 John 3:1 (ESV)** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

**C4:** What do you think John meant when he said, "We are God's children?"



## **“STRENGTH” Level Questions**

Look at what Paul said in **2 Corinthians 5:14-17 (NLT)**

**S1:** What would Paul say to the man who thinks "I am accepted by what I do." (**see verse 16**)

**S2:** What would Paul say to the person who says, "I have all these dysfunctions from my past so there is no way God can use me." (**see verse 17**)

**S3:** Have you seen any of the signs of "approval addiction" in yours or someone else's life? If so, what were the long-term results?

# “ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Let's look at a passage of scripture from **Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV)**.


**E1:** Notice the words “seated” and “set.” What was Paul stressing by using these words?

**E2:** Who are the “approval addicted” men in your life whom you could help change the way they approach their identity?

Read **Colossians 3:5-12 (ESV)**

**E3:** What do each of these qualities have to do with dying to self? Which two qualities do you think needs work in your life?

- Anger

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- Rage
  - Malice
  - Slander
  - Filthy language
  - Lying

**E4:** What do each of these qualities have to do with the new self? Which two qualities do you think you need to work on?

- Compassion
- Kindness



- Humility
- Gentleness
- Patience