

The Four Voices: How to Think Like a Christian

Four Voices for Broken Men

Rough Transcript

Patrick Morley

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Welcome to Man In The Mirror Men's Bible Study. I'm Pat Morley. And today we're going to talk about **The Four Voices for Broken Men**. Please turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 4, verse 11. Just a quick review, as we try to wrap this up and bring everything into full alignment, the idea is that we all have a running conversation with ourselves going on all day long. We call it self-talk. We've learned that we are not the only voice up there in our heads. There are four other voices that are also up there trying to influence, exert themselves on what we think, say, and do. The premise for this series, the four voices in your head are the world, the flesh, the devil, and the Holy Spirit. Your job is to figure out which one is speaking and make the adjustment.

WE ARE ALL BROKEN

The first thing we're going to talk about this morning is the fact that we are all broken. A friend of mine was working with a contractor, had him doing some things around the house. The contractor was a Christian. My friend is a Christian. So they had had a few conversations. My friend knew that the contractor had something bothering him. So he had made up his mind that he was going to talk to him about it.

On the last day, when he was getting ready to pay him, he was writing the check and he said, "Well, how's it going with your family?" At which point, the contractor became very emotional, explained that his daughter had had a child out of wedlock. She was living in a dingy apartment all by herself, all alone. And after talking about it, he became more and more agitated. And then he said, "That's not the way we raised her. That's not the way we brought her up." My friend proceeded to give his own story, tell his own story about how his daughter had been in over 20 different relationships and had been married to a woman, how his son had been married and divorced three times and had broken off an engagement on top of that. And then also was paying alimony and child support to some son that they had never seen, who was now 18 years of age.

And then he said, "And that's not the way we raised our children." At which point, the contractor's eyes cracked, and he teared up. My friend went on to explain just how powerful unconditional love can be in a relationship with a child, and said that, "She needs you now. You can't desert her now. You need to be there for her now. This is a time to lean in, not to back away." A few hours later, he got a text from the contractor who said that he had made an appointment to see his daughter. And he was going to be taking her flowers to begin to try to restore the relationship.

We are all broken people. Just think right now, if you would, about someone, a person, anybody. It could be a wife, a child, a friend, a coworker. You know that you have to be careful about what you say to them, when you say it, how you say it, because they're broken. They're broken, you're broken, I'm broken, we're all broken. And so we have to be careful at how we talk to each other. And here are just a few examples.

You may be broken in one of these places, or the person you're trying to communicate with might be broken in one of these places. Low self-esteem, or thinking too highly of oneself. It could be some sort of abuse in the past, some kind of an attachment disorder. Distrust of people in an unhealthy way. Being paralyzed by fearful and anxious thoughts. You might be hypersensitive to negative cues, or you could be prickly and always ready to defend yourself. It could be that somebody cares too much about what other people think, or that they don't care enough. It could be abandonment issues. It could be sinful desires, or behaviors, or different hurts, or struggles of all different kinds.

The Big Idea today; **Regardless of why you are broken, you're responsible for what happens next.**

Regardless of why you are broken, you're responsible for what happens next. You can change the narrative that's in your mind. But you might be thinking, "Well, I don't understand why I have to do this. I was this way before. And the promise was is that Jesus was going to change my life. I gave my life to Jesus. So why am I still broken?"

THE WORLD, FLESH AND DEVIL ARE WHY YOU ARE STILL BROKEN

Second thing we want to talk about this morning is why we're still broken. The world, the flesh, and the devil are why you're still broken. The world, flesh, and devil are why you're still broken. In this series, we started out by saying that the idea was, from Proverbs 4:23, that, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." Everything you do flows from it. But then we also looked at why we needed to guard our heart, and that's because the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.

Demosthenes once said, "Nothing is easier than self-deceit. For what each man wishes, that he also believes true." And that's because the heart is deceitful. "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. Out of the heart come evil thoughts," says Jesus.

I know of a young couple who is going through some terrific marriage problems. They're really struggling. They're just very, very broken. But just let me ask you a question. Can you picture any way of ever getting a complete healing if you are a believer and you don't have some kind of a concept that takes into account the world, the flesh, and the devil? Let's just take a moment and look over some of the things that we've talked about in this series with regard to the world.

We said that all men seek happiness. That was Pascal. But the world says it's going to take a lot more than Jesus Christ to make you happy. Colossians 2:8, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human traditions and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ." Romans 12:2 says, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." First John chapter 2 verses 15 to 17, "Do not love the world or anything in the world because these do not come from the Father." First Corinthians 10:31, "The world in its present form is passing away." So I ask you, are you broken because the juggernaut of the world has crushed you in some way?

The second thing we looked at was the flesh. Why do we keep sinning? We keep sinning because we have a dual nature. And if you're a Christian, you also have a third. We are images of God because of creation. We are like the beasts because of the fall. And if you are a believer, you're a new creation in Christ. But even though you are a new creation, you still have the sinful nature as part of your being. That's why Paul said, in Romans 7:21, "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me." Galatians 5:17 says, "The flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh." So unless we bring the flesh into alignment with God's plan, we are always going to want what is selfish and sinful. The power of the flesh is secrecy. So my question for you is where are you broken, or are you broken by some sort of sensual cravings of the flesh? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life?

The third thing we looked at, the devil. The Bible doesn't say much about the devil, but what it does say gives us a very clear picture. He is a liar and the father of lies. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood,

but against the rulers, authorities and powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. The devil knows that if you're a believer he can't keep you out of heaven. So his greatest pleasure is to make your life on earth as miserable as he can. But he knows his time is short. And he knows that greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world. And so are you broken by the lies, the temptations, and the deceptions that the devil uses to get you off track and into trouble? The Big Idea here today; **Regardless of why you're broken, you're responsible for what happens next.**

DISCIPLESHIP IS HOW YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

So what happens next is discipleship. Discipleship is how you take responsibility for your life. This is how you make the adjustment to the narrative in your head. In our text for the day, Ephesians chapter 4, beginning of verse 11, we see the most lofty and succinct explanation of the discipleship process and its desired outcomes that you can find anywhere in scripture. "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors, and teachers..." So Jesus Christ has appointed men to what end, and women too? To what end? "To equip his people for works of service." Why? "So that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Jesus has made it possible, through appointing disciple makers, for us to become mature, for us to achieve unity, for us to learn how to do works of service, for us to attain the full measure of Jesus Christ.

And then look what happens when we do. In verse 14, "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming." One thing to keep in mind is, as Jesus talked about in the parable of the wheat and the tares, or the wheat and the weeds, that Satan has sewn his disciples among us. So part of the reason that we are susceptible to the world, flesh, and devil is because of the deceitful scheming of these people. A lot of people might call the world, the flesh, and the devil a conspiracy, but I don't really think that's true. I think each of them are much too greedy for their own glory to ever be willing to share it, but they do collaborate all the time.

Then in verse 15, "Instead, speaking the truth in love," the truth in love, "we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." So we have this beautiful, lofty, and succinct explanation of discipleship. And we can see that one of the outcomes of that is that is how we are able to no longer be infants and tossed about by cunning teachings, and crafty people, and their deceitful schemings.

One of the important things that this process shows us here in Ephesians 4 verse 11 to 16, is that we do become more mature and more capable as we become more experienced. Let me ask you. What is something that you are really experienced at and do it very, very well? It could be your work. It could be a sport. It could be a hobby, maybe like photography. It could be at being a father. It could be at being a husband. Maybe you're a great chef. Maybe you are a great soldier. Maybe you are an incredible IT professional and you really know how to fix computers. But just think about something that you're very experienced at, and that you do very, very well.

When you compare what you are experienced at doing to someone who is not experienced, what is the difference? Well, as an experienced person, when you are doing the thing that you are so capable of, you know what to expect. And when a problem arises, you're much more capable of handling it. So that's why discipleship is the process by which we can take personal responsibility because we've become as experienced in the knowledge of Christ, and also the world, the flesh, the devil, and the Holy Spirit. We become experienced in this knowledge so that we are able to then, as it says in the text, no longer be infants tossed back and forth.

Something that I'm fascinated with is hiking. That's the thing that I'm experienced in right now, that I'm doing a lot of. I'm getting ready to hike the Black Mountain Crest Trail. It covers five of the 10 tallest peaks east of the Mississippi in one hike. All five mountains are 6,000 feet or higher. And it's all in one hike. Well, when I read about the Black Mountain Crest Trail, it sounds pretty scary, but I'm an experienced hiker and I know what to expect and I know how to handle any kind of problems that I encounter along the way. And it gives me a sense of mastery over hiking. So I'm not at all concerned about it. The amount of elevation change is roughly equal to the amount of elevation change in a hike I did last year, which is the Grand Canyon, the rim to rim Grand Canyon. So it gives me a sense of confidence.

And you know that if you're experienced in anything, you feel more confident about it. And discipleship is where we get the experience and the confidence to be able to fix the broken things, because of the world, the flesh, and the devil. And God has given us the Holy Spirit to do that with. The Holy Spirit is how we are able to test the spirits, the Bible tells us. In Luke chapter 11, verse 11, Jesus says, "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

What is keeping us broken, or the reason that we're still broken, is the world, the flesh, and the devil. But the fourth voice, the voice of the Holy Spirit, is a gift that God wants to give us, to fill us up so that we can experience the fruit of the Holy Spirit. His love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. And you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.

I love this story about a father and son who were working together to clear a field of some large rocks. The son wanted to help his dad. So he said, "What can I do?" And so his father put him over into one corner of the field and said that. "Pick up those rocks and move them to a pile." The father watched the son struggling to pick up a rock. He was pouring sweat. And eventually the boy said, "I give up. I can't do it." His dad said to him, he said, "Well, have you given it everything?" He said, "Yes, Dad, I gave it every ounce of my strength, but I just can't, I can't do it." The father said, "Well, you haven't done everything. You haven't asked me for help." And then the father joined his son and helped him move this large rock.

We have the opportunity to ask the Father to give us the Holy Spirit, who is the voice that overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Big Idea today is; **Regardless of why you are a broken, you're responsible for what happens next.** Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Guard your heart. You can win the struggle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Even though we are still broken, we can win the battle for our souls. Thanks. I hope you've enjoyed this series. God bless.

Okay, men, I hope you've enjoyed this series on the four voices. It's been an honor to bring it to you with Brett and Kyrie. We think this is some of the most important information that we can possibly pass on to you about how to walk with Christ. I just thought I'd take a second here and show you the craziness. This is the place where I do my work and these are all the notes that I have as I'm trying to give that talk to you. And Brett and Kyrie have their own system as well. Anyway, it's really been wonderful to have this time together with you. Let me go ahead and say a prayer as we close it all out here.

Our dearest Father, thank you for your word and for how you use it to change our lives, to transform us. I just thank you for the men that have been involved in this series, and pray that you would use the concept of these four voices to really help them parse what's going on in their heads, and construct and reconstruct the narrative of a biblical worldview, and that you get glory for it. And we ask this in Jesus' name. And join me in saying Amen. Thanks. See you next series.