

## The Making of a Monster Genesis 3:1-5

### **Slide 1**

I can remember when I was a young boy that when I went to bed, I didn't want to sleep with my hand hanging off the side of my bed!

As a child, I was afraid that something might crawl out from under my bed and grab me.

Now don't laugh, some of you probably had a security blanket, stuffed animal, a night light, or maybe you needed to have your closet door closed completely.

For your information, I still won't dangle my arm off the side of the bed when I go to sleep.

And also, for your information, I don't go swimming anywhere that I can't see the bottom. If you watched as many Sci-Fi movies as I have, you wouldn't either.

A few years ago, this childhood reality was captured and capitalized on in the movie Monsters Inc.

In the movie, the monsters lived in a city called "Monstropolis," which was powered by energy harvested from the screams of little children.

So, at Monsters Incorporated (a.k.a. The Scare Factory), skilled monsters, employed as "scarers," ventured into the human world through doors that were portals into children's bedroom closets.

After which they would sneak into the bedrooms to scare children and harvest their screams. The whole thing gets turned on its head when a little girl is accidentally brought back through the portal of her closet door into the Scare Factory.

In the process, she destroys the façade that these frightening looking characters were scary! She discovers that some of them were actually nice, and they discovered that she wasn't toxic.

In the end the monsters discovered that they could gain all the necessary power they needed from children's laughter, which changed their evening missions.

However, I think we need to admit that there's still a scare factory in existence today. If we'd be honest with one another our minds are full of mind monsters.

Nikita Gill, a poet and writer, said it correctly when she wrote, *"The monsters were never under my bed. Because the monsters were inside my head."*

So, why do we struggle with mind monsters? In order to understand this, we need to go back to the beginning, to the Garden of Eden.

## **Slide 2**

Adam and Eve allowed a scare factory to be built in our minds when they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 3:1-5, *"Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

Adam and Eve fell for the lie of the enemy and in that moment mind monsters were created.

Then Paul comes along and tells us in Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.”*

So, it’s no wonder that their fall still impacts today. Those same mind monsters are still operating. We’re living under the curse of the Scare Factory.

Then Jesus came along to redeem, reconcile, and restore everything that was lost in the Garden, declaring in Matthew 22:37, *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*

Now, there’s a lot in this verse that we just don’t have time with which to deal, but what we need to focus on are these three parts that Jesus details: Heart – flesh, Soul – spirit, and Mind.

Man’s “mind” is an organ of the soul and is his computer by which he stores information gained through his six senses. The mind, like the heart, is also a separate but integral part of the soul.

Paul tried to explain how all this works in Galatians 5:17, *“For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.”*

And again, in Romans 8:7, *“The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.”*

So, Paul’s trying to teach us that there’s a war going on inside of us. The spiritual part of us is at war against the mind that has been established in us.

Then Paul comes along in Romans 7:25 and lets us in on a truth that we need to understand.

Romans 7:25, *“Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*

With my mind I serve the Lord. What determines that I serve God? My flesh doesn't. My Spirit has to overtake my carnal mind and when my mind is controlled by the Spirit of God, I serve Him with my mind.

Another way to say this is that my flesh doesn't determine where my life goes. My mind determines where my life goes.

My soul wants to delight in the Lord, but my carnal mind is warring against my soul. Our mind determines where our life goes, so we must deal with our mind.

But, before you get all twisted up in this, you must understand that I'm not talking about will power.

I'm talking about learning to allow the spirit to override your mind because you can have a new heart and a saved soul but still have the same mind.

Think about it. How is it you can come here, praise the paint off the wall, amen the message, then leave and struggle with the same mind monsters you were fighting before we sang your favorite worship song and allowed a preacher to preach you into a frenzy?

Simply put... our minds must be renewed. How is this accomplished? Paul tells us how in his letter to the Romans.

### **Slide 3**

Romans 12:2, *“Do not conform 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.”*

When the mind is renewed the mind is released. It's free to operate as God intended.

I'm glad you're saved, but is your mind transformed? If it isn't, then you need to know that a mind that's not influenced by God's truth is controlled by Satan's lies.

We're either being transformed, or we're staying the same. If we're staying the same, then our mind is carnal and therefore at war with the truth of God.

In your mind, you're constantly being fed lies. Who's our enemy? The Father of Lies! He can't tell the truth.

Listen to what he said in the garden! *"Did God really say?"* He gets us to question the truth of God's Word, telling us what He said was a lie.

Genesis 3:4-5, *"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

Eve listened to the lies of the enemy. Then, in Genesis 3:6, when the Woman saw the tree and realized what she'd get out of it, i.e. she'd know everything, she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.

Our enemy gets us to question God's truth and then convinces us that we'll know more than God. You'll gain knowledge. You'll gain mind power.

We lost more than our relationship in the Garden. We lost more than our power in the Garden. We lost more than dominion in the Garden. In the Garden we lost our mind!

Mind monsters started operating in the Scare Factory of our brain and now, in our mind, we hear: *"Everyone is against me..., I can't recover..., I will always be like this..., no one cares."* This isn't reality, it's Satan's version of reality.

But, because we listen, we become paranoid. We become hopeless. We become helpless. We break relationships. We self-sabotage. Why? Because we've lost our mind and think like our enemy!

Paul again helps us learn this when he stated in Ephesians 6:12, *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."*

This word *"authorities"* used here is also translated *"principalities"* in other versions of the Bible. He said we're fighting against authorities and principalities.

The root word for principalities is principles. When we listen to him lie to us and believe what he says, it establishes the principles by which we live.

We allow the principle of defeat, the principle of despair, the principle of anger, or the principle of victim mentality to be established and set up. When we allow this to happen, we then view everything through that lens.

We make monsters if we don't take action.

#### **Slide 4**

First, we must intentionally and diligently filter what enters our minds. We must recognize the voice that's talking to us. The Bible says, *"My sheep know my voice."*

We must filter out any voice that isn't the voice of God. Therefore, we must cut off what feeds the principalities in our mind.

We need a plan of action. If you try to rely on your own will power, you'll fail.

You must intentionally strategize and monitor what you allow into your mind. The enemy is always trying to find points of entry, this is why you must manage points of entry.

Christians get angry when someone says, "*As believers you can't watch that or listen to that.*" It fills you with despair and a lack of hope.

If I listened to, watched, or took advise from strangers, I'd be full of despair and lack of hope, too! We better wake up. We're feeding mind monsters.

You absolutely must be careful of what you watch and to whom you listen. You can't feed a monster and kill a monster at the same time.

If my mind holds my future, then I need to pay attention to what's holding my mind. We make monsters when we don't filter.

Another action step is to fight. Remember, we lost our mind in the Garden. The Scare Factory is working overtime. We must resist what is already in our mind.

We must fight those thoughts. We must retrain our brain. We must practice Mind Control! Paul said to forget things that are behind, in other words we must fight bad memories.

David did this! When he faced an intimidating, fear inducing giant do you remember what he did? He remembered the bear and the lion that he killed with his sling shot.

He doesn't remember the misses. He doesn't remember the sheep he lost. Then he uses godly imagination and says this to the giant, "*I see you dead.*"

People, this is a battle. This is a fight. Our mind is the seat of memories and imaginations. If we don't control our mind it'll revert to our memories and our mind magnifies or minimizes our memories.

Thirdly, some mind monsters come from parents and some from pain. Regardless of where they've come, they shape how we see things. Because of this our mind is set. This is called our mindse.

We must deal with mindsets why? Romans 8:6, "*The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.*"

Mindsets produce strongholds. Strongholds are established to keep truth out. The inability to receive truth is evidence of a stronghold.

Haven't you met people that always seem to resist truth? Like COVID or the 2020 elections. Something is arguing against truth.

People who teach on forgiveness but can't seem to accept it are under a stronghold. People who teach on living in righteousness but can't seem to accept it are under a stronghold.

People who teach about filtering but won't accept that the songs coming out their car radios or tape players, that are filled with cursing, carousing, or drinking, are under a stronghold.

This is a fight! Strongholds (principles) are only broken by spiritual weapons. You can't just use positive thinking.



We must demolish arguments that rise up against the knowledge of God because truth is trying to enter. That's why we must use what God gave us...

2 Corinthians 10:3-6, *"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete."*

We need to capture every single thought and bring it into captivity. This is a war. Our thoughts must be captured. They must become prisoners of war. If it wasn't a fight, then why would we be told that we need weapons?

You don't change your life by changing your life! You change your life by changing your mind! Proverbs 23:7, *"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."*

Your mind establishes the map for your future! A bound mind results in a bound life. Mind monsters are made when we don't fight.

## **Slide 5**

### Conclusion

Lastly, focus is essential. Isaiah 26:3, *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."*

In other words, our focus is a force. The enemy uses distraction to keep us from focusing, but we must focus on the right things. The Word that frees your mind is not the word you hear. Remember the phrase, *"In one ear and out the other."*

The Word that frees your mind is the Word that becomes the engrafted Word, accepted Word, focused on Word. Remember you're responsible for the thoughts you sustain.

I can keep a thought or cast it down. I can't control every thought that passes through my head, but I can control the ones that stay there.

You need to focus. Mind monsters are made when we fail to focus. The enemy knows that he is powerless when we purpose to study the Bible, so he fights our focus.

*Philippian 2:5, "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."*

Give permission for Jesus' mind to overtake your mind. Allow His thinking to overtake your thinking. We can't just pursue the morals of Christ! We must also pursue the mind of Christ!

If we want to live like Jesus, then we must think like Him. We're not moved by what moved Jesus; we don't react like Jesus reacted; we can't forgive like Jesus. Why? Because we don't think like Him.

If we could ever learn to think like Jesus, then we'd begin to live like Jesus.

A lot of us have let Him get in our heart, but we need to let Him get in our head! We must let the same Jesus that saved our soul save our mind!