

Sermon Series

The Season of Formation

Foundational Text

Romans 8:29 Mirror Translation

“For those He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the exact image of His Son”

February 1, 2026

**Sermon Title** -- The Pitfall of Stink-in Think-in

**Sermon Text** -- Proverbs 23:7 NKJV

“As a man thinks in his heart -- So is he.”

## INTRO.

This is our third message – exposing dangerous pitfalls that can hinder our spiritual formation ... And what I find very interesting is – how the Spirit is choosing and exposing these pitfalls ... I see it as a “now word” for the entire body of Christ ... If you were to make an honest evaluation of the spiritual condition of the body of Christ – it is easy to see how many people have succumb to these pitfalls.

Let me remind you ... The first pitfall I addressed was Slumber ... The danger of falling into this pitfall is spiritual dullness ... And I will add this as well – heightened worldly awareness ... Those embedded in this pitfall become completely focused on the matters of this life – all the while – remaining ignorant of spiritual matters ... Actually, to the point where they may even mock – or completely deny – the things of the Spirit.

The second pitfall I addressed was the pitfall of Separation ... The danger of this pitfall is believing there is a location-based distance between you and God ... That He is in heaven and you are here on earth ... This belief leads to striving – trying to get God’s attention through works – so that He will become involved in your life ... The result of this pitfall is a distorted

image of God and a distorted image of self ... This leads to doubt – confusion – and can instill unbelief in our heart – to where you will question the validity of word of God.

So, notice the progression so far ... Spiritual dullness leads to blindness ... Blindness eventually leads to a seared conscience ... And once blindness takes hold – human ego becomes the driving influence in a person's life ... When that happens – perception of spiritual matters and self-identity becomes distorted – questioned – or even denied.

Now catch this ... You can exist in various degrees of these pitfalls ... Those fully embedded in them are easy to recognize ... Those who are asleep – and those who live from separation – clearly manifest these conditions in their lives ... But what I have seen – and even experienced personally – is that partial belief in these pitfalls is possible ... Certain areas – certain levels – and this is where it becomes extremely dangerous ... Because when you live in that subtle space – it becomes very easy to fall into the pitfall I want to expose today ... Stink-in Think-in.

### **What is Stink-in Think-in?**

Let's keep this simple ... Stink-in think-in is the result of someone functioning as a mere human being ... Thinking that is governed primarily by natural reasoning – ego driven based – rather than spiritual awareness.

At its worst – stink-in think-in completely denies the spiritual realm ... No angels – no demons – no unseen reality ... Life is reduced to what can be seen – measured – explained – or controlled ... And anything spiritual or mystical is dismissed as foolishness or denying reality.

At its best ... stink-in think-in doesn't deny God outright ... It simply manages Him ... It sprinkles spiritual language on top of worldly reasoning ... For example ... "Yes, I believe in God – I'm just not sure He will show up when I really need Him" ... "Yes – God exists – but He is distant – and you can never know what He will do."

Stink-in Think-in is a classic indicator of what I call a hybrid human being ... Someone who thinks naturally – reacts emotionally – reasons carnally – but claims to believe in God – reads the Word – and even attends church ... They live with one foot in the natural realm and one foot in the spiritual ... But neither side fully governs their thinking.

And this is the danger of stink-in think-in ... It feels reasonable – natural – and even mature ... But it quietly blocks transformation – because formation into the image of Christ requires spiritual perception – not merely human logic.

### **How does Stink-in Think-in develop in a Person's Life?**

I believe stink-in think-in develops slowly ... It is not something that happens overnight – it forms over time through multiple influences ... I'm not going to do a deep dive here because that is not the point of these messages ... The process may look different for each person – but the contributing factors are consistent.

One of the primary factors we have already touched on is slumber ... Remember what Paul said in Hebrews 5:11 ... “We have much to say about this topic although it is difficult to explain because you have become too dull and sluggish to understand.” ... When spiritual awareness dulls – the mind naturally fills in the gaps with natural reasoning and personal experience ... When this happens – the world begins shaping spiritual beliefs and personal identity rather than the Word of God through the indwelling Spirit ... The realities of this realm and past experiences slowly become the foundational truths of a person's belief system ... And when those beliefs are challenged – the natural mind instinctively defends them.

This is where stink-in think-in becomes recognizable ... When pressure rises – natural reasoning becomes the first response ... When circumstances carry more weight than revelation ... When logic feels practical but spiritual awareness feels unrealistic ... When prayer becomes optional but problem-solving feels essential ... These are clear indicators that stink-in think-in has taken control in your life.

When natural thinking becomes normal – a person is quietly falling into this pitfall – being formed into the image of a mere human being rather than the image of Christ ... And without realizing it – thinking begins governing identity instead of revelation ... And as a side note – ego grows and flourishes wherever stink-in think-in takes hold ... Because when awareness fades – self-preservation replaces spiritual perception ... And when stink-in think-in goes unchecked for long enough – it doesn't just affect how we think – it begins shaping who we become.

### **What are the Consequences and Dangers of Stink-in Think-in?**

Let me remind you of our foundational text for this message ... “As a man thinks in his heart – so is he” ... That statement alone reveals a critical incite ... Thinking does not stay in the mind ... It shapes identity – and identity governs behavior ... Now catch this ... Without getting overly detailed ... When natural thinking – which flows from ego and self-preservation – becomes the driving force in a person’s life – it will begin forming identity ... And once identity is formed – behavior simply follows.

This is why those who are awakened understand something very simple ... If you want to change something in your life – you must first change how you think about that thing ... Behavior does not lead transformation – thinking does ... Let me give you a natural example ... Every January there are new faces at the gym – but by March most are gone -- Why? ... Because while behavior changed for a moment – thinking never did ... Health was still viewed as an obligation – not a value – so effort eventually gave way to frustration.

This is exactly what stink-in think-in produces – frustration – confusion – and instability ... A sense that nothing is really changing ... Not because effort wasn't applied – but because thinking remained untouched ... But here is the real danger ... Those who are still asleep actually believe the solution is more effort ... Try harder – double down – and simply push through ... Unfortunately – stink-in think-in does not respond to effort – it only multiplies

frustration – instability – and exhaustion ... And this is why awareness always comes before transformation.

## TAKE AWAY

Whether we realize it or not – every one of us is caught in this pitfall to some degree – that is undeniable ... So, the question becomes – Do you want out? ... If your answer is yes – then you must be completely honest with yourself about your condition.

Let me share something personal – which will help clarify what I mean ... In my twenties – I was a drunk ... It reached a point where others were trying to awaken me to that reality ... I would quit drinking for short periods of time – but would relapse ... I doubled down on my efforts ... I even quit for twenty-eight days – my personal record – and then relapsed again ... The problem was never effort ... The problem was stink-in think-in ... I never changed how I thought about drinking ... It wasn't until the day I found a pamphlet concerning drinking and I honestly answered the questions on the back page that I had no choice but to conclude ... I had an issue ... Paul tells us to examine ourselves – but self-examination without honesty is useless.

Proverbs 4:23 reminds us to guard our heart because out of it flow the issues of life ... This tells us something important ... How we think – influences how we live ... And if you want to change behavior ... You must first change how you think about the matter.

So, here is a simple practice you can do every day ... Throughout your day – randomly pause and ask yourself this question ... “Am I being honest with myself?” ... Or ask this question ... “That thought I just had – did it come from my mind – or from the Spirit?” ... This practice is not about self-condemnation ... It is about self-awareness ... Because awareness is what keeps us from falling into the pitfall of stink-in think-in.