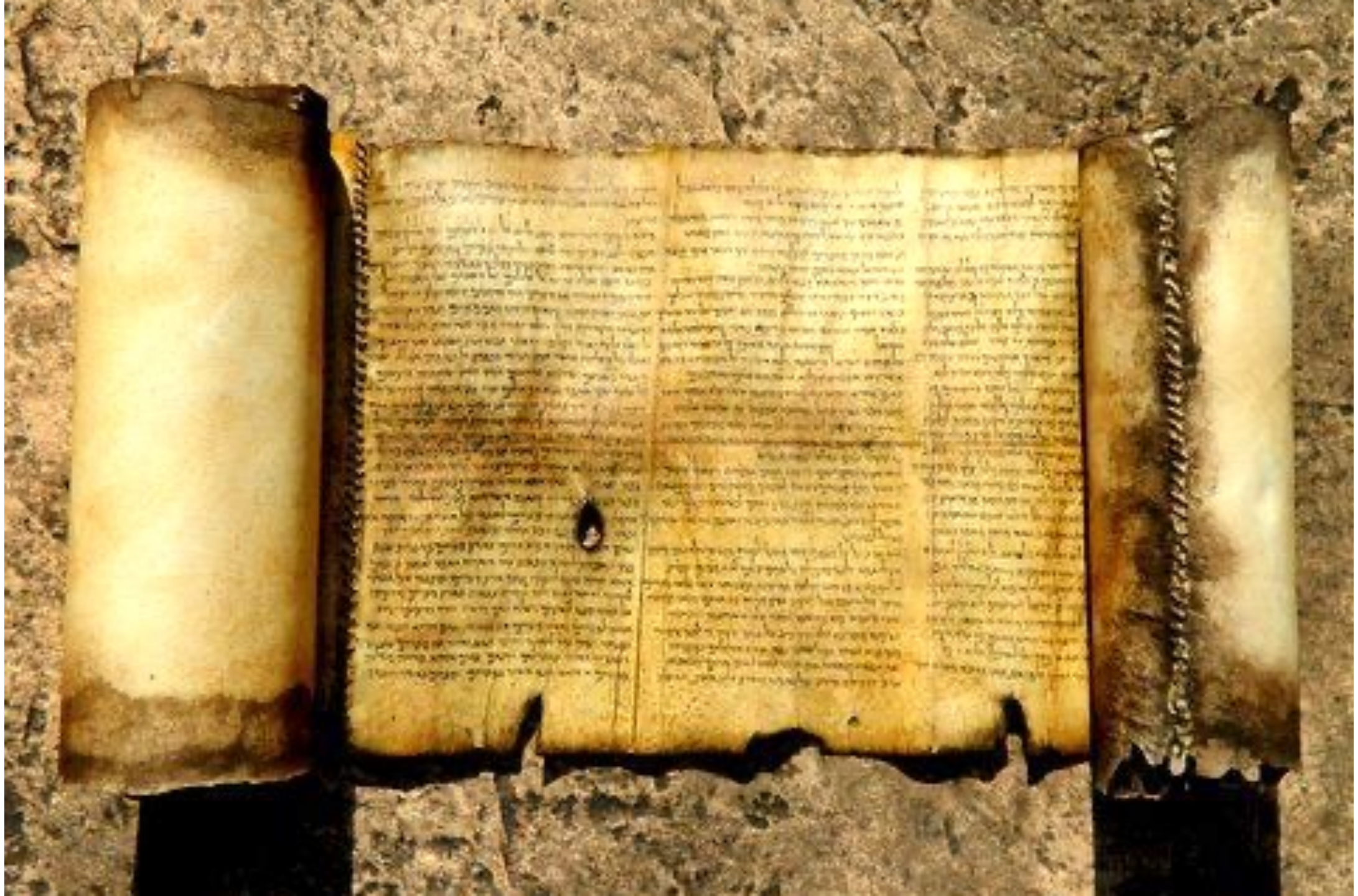
Mark 1:38 Jesus replied, “We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come.”

If the news isn’t also true, then it is not going to be very good.

Camp teachers are people too.

Sometimes we like to hear some reasons to believe that the good news is also true news.



Isaiah 11:12 And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

An area of study that has been encouraging to me is psychology and neuroscience.

Disclaimer:

This is just some basic gist of some of the information.

(Leaves out lots of details.)

Don’t worry about getting it all this time through.

I am going to show you quotes from experts.

Then I am going to show that these relatively new research findings have been taught in the Bible for 2000+ years.

It's true, you can't be anxious and grateful at the same time.
- Lee Warren

Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It's true, you can't be anxious and grateful at the same time.

The hippocampus in your brain acts like a switch, and when you have a thought or a feeling it will either switch that down towards your amygdala, the part of your brain responsible for fear, anxiety, fight, or flight, or towards your front lobes, which will help you make a rational decision about how you're going to respond.

And the thing that reliably switches away from the amygdala and towards the frontal lobe is when you take a moment to find something to be grateful for in the midst of an anxious thought.
- Lee Warren

Psychology Today - Religion is a human universal. Every society that has ever existed has had some form of organized religion that has dominated its culture and often its government as well. For this reason, many psychologists believe we have an innate tendency toward religious belief.

- David Ludden

Acts 17:26 God began by making one person, and from him came all the different people who live everywhere in the world. God decided exactly when and where they must live. **27** God wanted them to look for Him and perhaps search all around for Him and find Him, though he is not far from any of us: (NCV)

The amount didn't matter — the results were the same. Spending on others made people happier than spending on themselves.

- Allen McConnell

Acts 20:35 ...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’

Happiness vs. Joy

This distinction is not that helpful here because it depends on how you define happiness.

Hedonic adaptation is the conjecture that humans quickly return to a relatively stable level of happiness (or sadness) despite major positive or negative events or life changes.

According to this theory, as a person makes more money, expectations and desires rise in tandem,

which results in no permanent gain in happiness. -Wikipedia

Ecclesiastes 5:10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, …

Side point – you can have money and be satisfied.

Philippians 4:11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

“There’s this, kind of, mistaken notion that happiness is all about self-care and self, self, self … But what the science suggests is that happy people are really other-oriented.”

- Laurie Santos

Philippians 2:4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus …

The seventy-five years and twenty million dollars expended on the Grant Study [Harvard Longevity Study] points to a straightforward five-word conclusion:

Happiness is love. Full stop.

-George Vaillant

1 Cor. 13:13 But now faith, hope, *and* love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Volitional choice leads to greater satisfaction and well-being.

- Ed Deci

1 Peter 5:2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

"The stories we tell ourselves shape our reality more than the reality itself."

– Richard Schwartz

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Summarizing:

And the mindsets that matter

are things like presence, things like gratitude, things like equanimity, things like noticing and having compassion …

It’s really a set of mindsets that are straight out of the playbooks of most of the world’s religious traditions, including Christianity.

-Laurie Santos

But she chooses not to become a Christian.

Yale psychology professor Dr. Laurie Santos openly struggles with a personal, paralyzing fear of death, which she discussed on her podcast.

- AI

Hebrews 2:14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

A couple more huge points.

You are not your brain …

the mind is intimately connected with, and can exert some pretty powerful effects on, the brain. In short, we believe that people are so much more than what their brain is trying to tell them they are and that the brain often gets in the way of our true, long-term goals and values in life (i.e., our true self).

-Rebecca Gladding

1 Thess. 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete …

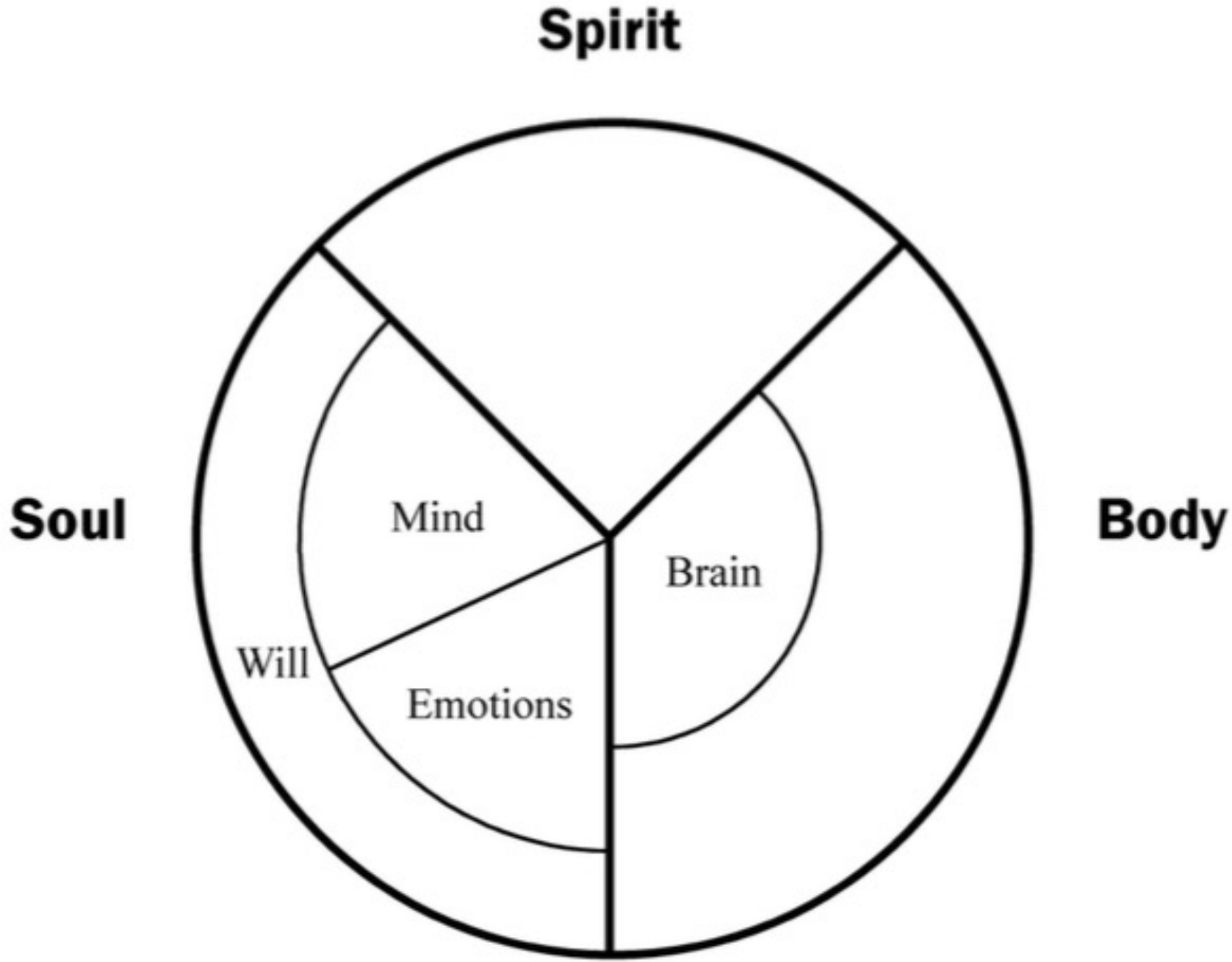
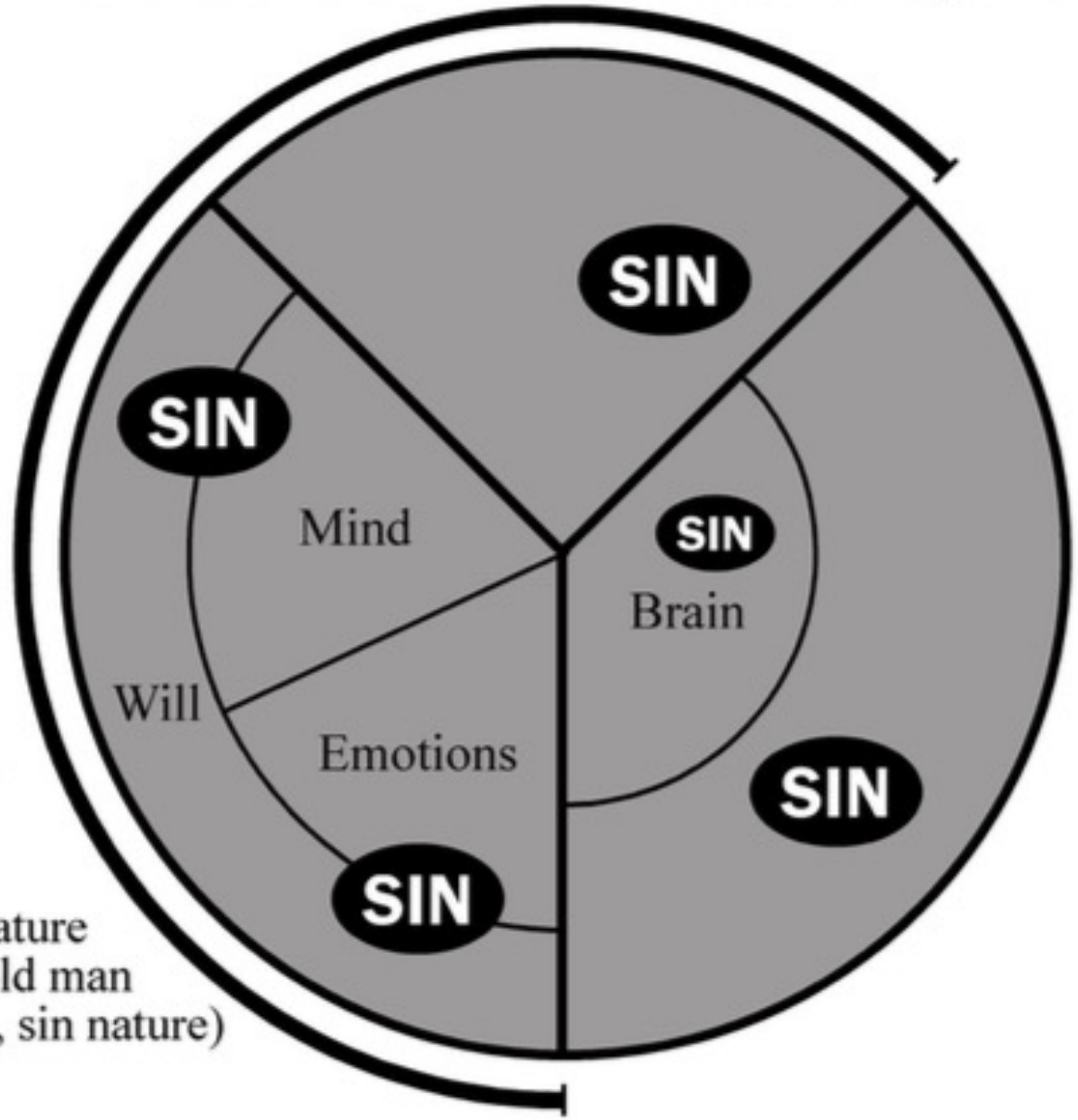

Spirit
Soul
Body
Mind
Brain
Will
Emotions

Diagram 9

The Old Self was Soul and Spirit



The Old Self

Adamic Nature
(old self, old man
dead spirit, sin nature)

John 3:7 [Jesus said] … You must be born again.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold new things have come.

Colossians 3:9 … since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self …

Our new self still
has our former body.

Rom 7:18 For I know
that good does not
dwell in me, that is,
in my flesh [body];

The Key to Behavior Change Is Identity Change

Our ***perception*** of who we are—our identity or self-image—has a dramatic effect on our future actions.

-Nir Eyal

Ephesians 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light.

Behavior that is incongruent with the self will not last.

- James Clear

"When actions align with who we believe we are, change becomes sustainable."

– Carol Dweck

What is likely to happen when people are told to behave saintly while being identified as a sinner?

Do some Bible teachers do this?

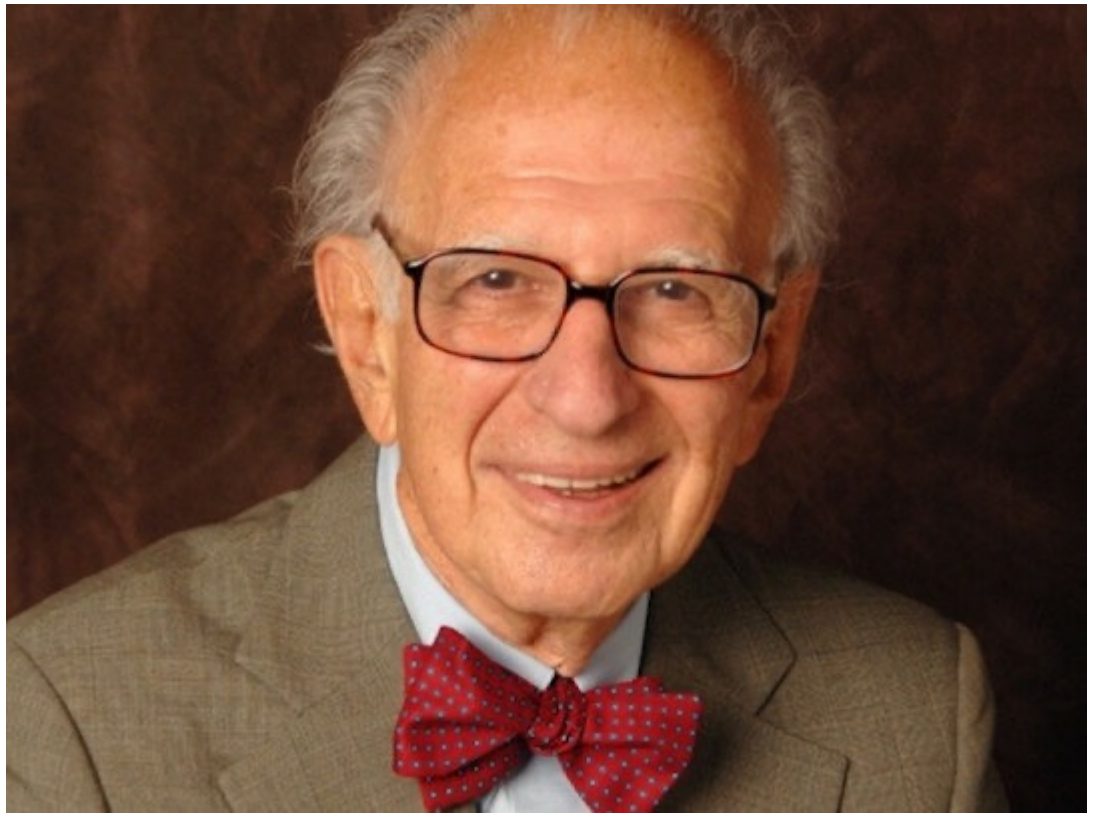
Does the Bible do this?

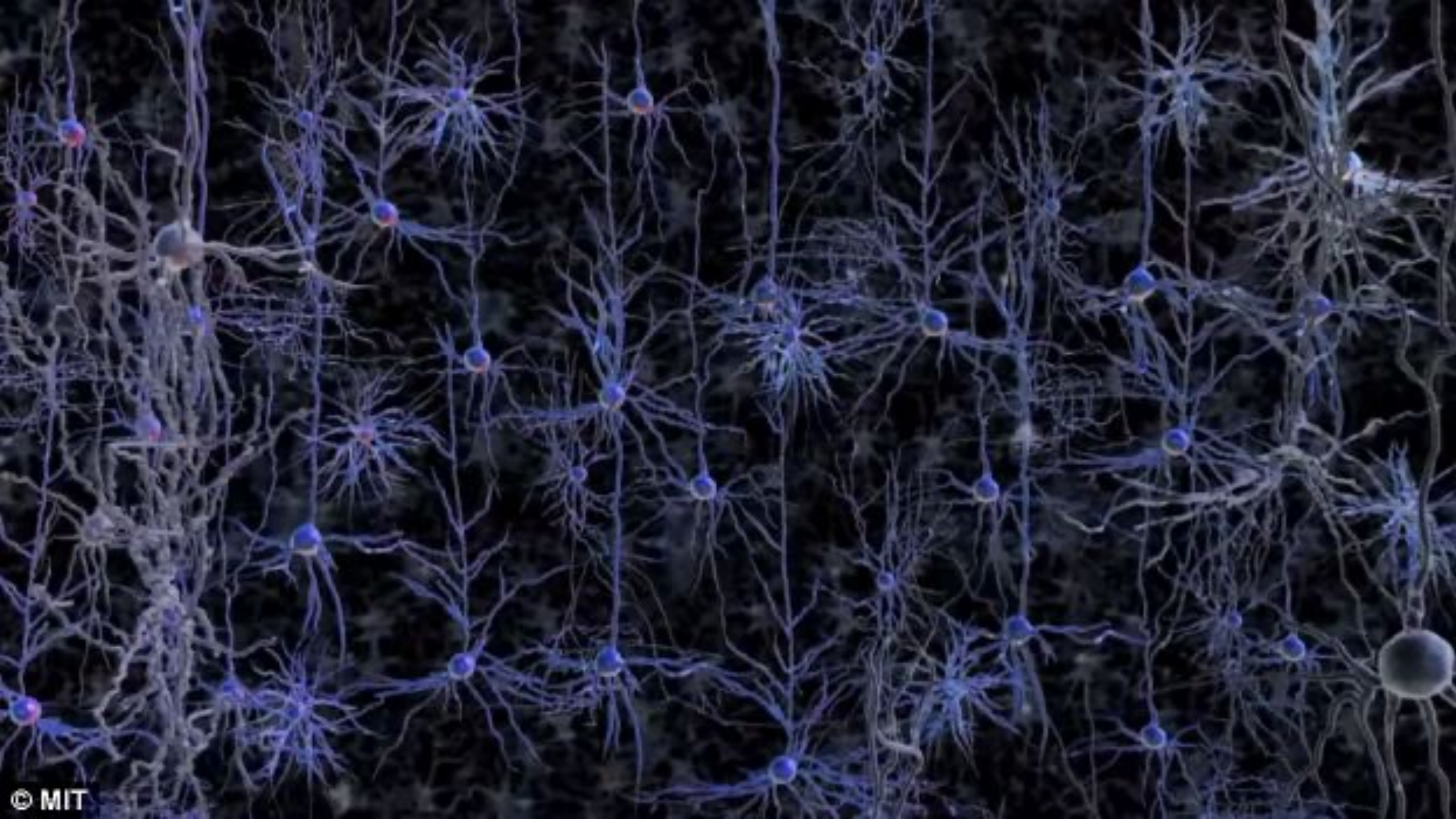
Ephesians 4:12 For the equipping of the saints …

Saints is used around 60 times. Sinners arguably 0.

Neurons that fire together wire together.

- Donald Hebb




© MIT

Every thought you repeatedly engage strengthens certain neural circuits and weakens others.

- Lee Warren

Thoughts

Have a lot of them: 6000+ a day

Most are repetitive: ≈90%

Most negative: ≈80%

Many are not true:

≈90% of what people worry will happen actually does not.

Schwartz and I believe that we do have the ability to harness the power of focused attention to change our brain in ways that are healthy and beneficial to us. Even more to the point, many of the thoughts, impulses, urges, and sensations we experience do not reflect who we are or the life we want to live. These false missives are not true representations of us, but rather are inaccurate, and highly deceptive, brain messages.

- Rebecca Gladding

Romans
7:15-25

The first step is to train yourself, through repetition and practice, to catch the debilitating "fake news" thoughts as they happen … and replace them with more accurate self-assessments.

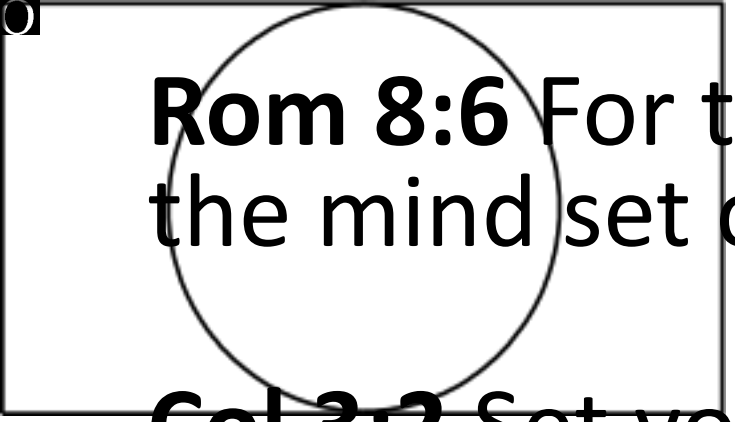
- Keven Duffy

2 Cor. 10:5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

Learn to “biopsy” or examine your thoughts/feelings and think about your thinking before you react or give in to it.

Think about the harmful or negative thought patterns you’ve had before, and make a self-brain surgery decision to transplant a healthier response.

- Lee Warren



Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Heb 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus …

Phil 4:8 … whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,

so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

This news isn’t just true … it’s good!