

The Renewed Mind

Part 1: Mind of Christ Series

“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot, understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.” 1 Cor 2:14-16 (NIV)

Portion for the Journey:

It is vital that the Church in America to fully awaken to the battle which is raging to control of our minds and thoughts. Satan’s primary battleground has always been the mind. Sin entered the Garden of Eden when Eve’s mind was deceived (seduced or corrupted) from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus. The whole world is deceived through the power of the evil one. When we are saved, we are given a new spirit, but our minds (patterns or habits of thinking) need to be renewed and transformed through disciplined attention to the truth of God’s Word. We must walk in the Light and become doers of the Word. God wants His people to use their minds to be alert, to think, discern, test and to gain understanding of His ways. He wants us to love Him with all of our heart, mind, and spirit and to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. We need to be like the men of Issachar of whom it was said, were “...men who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do...” 1 Chron. 12:32; Titus 3:3; 1 John 5:1; Phil 3:6; 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 3:13; Matt. 22:37

As a nation, Americans appear to have lost our direction and ability to think and reason. This is in proportion to our rejection of the LORD and His ways. The Spirit of the Antichrist is rising in our nation at an alarming rate. Apostasy, deception and false religion abounds. Where is the Church of whom it was said, “they have turned the world upside down? Have we lost the “saltiness” to influence our society? Sadly, most Christians have become like the world we are called to reach. Henry Blamires, in his classic book, "The Christian Mind," states that Christians [as a whole] have so lost the "mind of Christ" that Christianity is relegated to a set of religious exercises without relevance to our daily lives or society as a larger whole." We cannot fulfill our calling to the Gospel unless the Christian mind is transformed. We need to lift our voices and cry out for God to renew and cleanse our minds, so that we have the mind of Christ set on His interests. 2 Tim. 1:7; Matt. 16:23; Acts 17:6

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” See Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4, 5; 2 Cor. 11:3

Man is composed of three parts: Mind, Body, and Spirit. It is important to note that while this verse addresses our bodies and our spiritual service of worship, the focus is to “transform” is our MINDS. The Scriptures show that prior to believing in Christ, our minds are natural or carnal (of the flesh) we cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit. The things of God are foolishness to us. Many believers are taught that spiritual transformation that takes place when we are saved, but are not taught to undertake the rigorous process to change our habits of thinking and learn to take every thought captive to the

obedience of Christ. If we fail to grow into mature thinking, we will continue to walk like “mere men” who are fleshly minded and remain babies in Christ.

What would it mean to have the mind of Christ? To be able to think His thoughts and understand His ways. To truly know Him and His power! The Word gives us clear practical directions to renew our mind in Christ. The Word as illuminated by the Holy Spirit is vital to renewing our minds so that we have the mind of Christ. Read 1 Cor. 1:18-1 Cor. 3:23 Write down the characteristics of the carnal (natural man, man of the flesh) versus the spiritual minded believer who has the Mind of Christ.

1. Immerse yourself in the Word of God with a desire to understand and apply God’s Word in an attitude of repentance. Transformation of our minds and thoughts comes through repentance, which means literally ‘to change the mind and purpose, to turn, but not necessarily to one’s starting place.’ The word actually has less to do with ‘being sorry,’ than with coming to the understanding of one’s need for radical change after reflection. The Greek word for “repent” used in the New Testament speaks directly to this area of the mind. The word “repent” (Strong’s #3340) comes from two words, #3326 “after” and “3539” “to understand.” It signifies that after hearing, considering and understanding the preacher or Word, the sinner is led to understand that the way he walked before was the way of misery, death, or hell. This word is believed to be derived from the Greek word for madness, evidences of insanity, with repentance making one wise again, or restoring the mind to itself. One is then expected to produce deeds that show the fruit of this repentance. Matt. 3:2,8 (Amp); Acts 3:19-20; 26:20

Weust notes that contrition and sorrow are part of the biblical definition of repentance, but these feelings occur only after the sinner’s change of mind that takes place when he has pondered and intellectually apprehended the character of his sin, man’s guilt and man’s duty to turn away from it. He states, “A mere emotional appeal to the sinner is not the best, an intellectual appeal must come first, since the act of repenting is a mental one at the start.” Thus his mind, purposes, and inclinations are changed which results in a total change in conduct. We turn from sin to God by first changing our thinking and attitudes toward the sin. Repentance is a first step to healing and deliverance. 2 Tim. 2:7

2. Confession of sin brings cleansing and forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 tells us that “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The word “confess” in the Greek also speaks to the mind being brought into agreement with God’s Word. The NT Greek word for “confess” is “homologeō” and comes from two root words, “homo” meaning, ‘to be together or the same’ (3674) and “logos” (3674) is ‘the Word.’ The Hebrew word for ‘confess’ as it appears in Ps. 38:18 is ‘nagad’ (5046) which means ‘to declare, confront, to stand boldly against, to expose, to denounce.’ So to confess our sins is not merely to recite a list of what we have done wrong, it means we agree with God about that sin. The good news is that when we do this, His blood cleanses us and keeps on cleansing us to make us clean and free from unrighteousness. Prov. 28:13, 1 John 1:5-10

3. We are to separate ourselves from the world. We are never to confess our sins and receive forgiveness with the idea that we can go back and sin again. We need to leave the world and not look back! The world refers to the present realm of mankind living in darkness and alienation and opposition to God. These are the polluted kingdoms of man that Satan offered to turn over to Jesus when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness. For now, we are in the world but are not to be “of the world.” God repeatedly warned Israel not to make friends with the wicked nations surrounding them. He warned Israel these nations would become a snare to them. 2 Cor. 6:1-18 calls us to ‘be separate’ and this word means ‘to sever, to set up boundaries between or to be set apart.’ Lot attempted to live with one foot in the world and one for God. This destroyed his family and very nearly killed him. Read the following verses and meditate on the ways God calls us to be different and set apart to the Himself and His

Kingdom. How do we set boundaries so that we remain 'set apart' for the LORD? What are the promises He gives us if we do this? 2 Cor. 6:1-18; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4; John 17

4. Do not be conformed to this world. The mindset within the Church today is often identical to the world in temporal focus and reliance upon man's ways and institutions for solutions. In most cases, the moral base of the Church reflects our culture in incidence of teen pregnancy, premarital sex, abortion, adultery, divorce, suicide, alcoholism, and pornography. If we are to survive, the Church must be restored to conformity with the mind of Christ which is eternally focused and supernatural in expectation. We are to be salt and light to the world, but if the Church loses its saltiness how can anything be done? We are to be careful not to display an image of ourselves that is conformed to our former life as a sinner. The word 'conformed' (Strong's 4964) in the Greek is 'suschematizo'. This is the same word in 2 Cor. 11:13-15 which is translated "disguised." Do not assume the outward appearances or expressions of the world in fashion, habits, speech patterns, and artificiality. The Greek word means to fashion alike or conform to a pattern. This verb makes specific reference to that which is transitory, changeable, and unstable. Thus we are not to disguise ourselves to appear like those in the world.¹

5. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind. As we renew our minds we need to recognize that we are no longer who we were before we were saved. We have a new identity in Christ. We are sons and daughters of the King. We are changed into His likeness as we spend time gazing at Him. We do this through the time we spend seeking Him in His Word, spending time in His presence in prayer and with a listening heart. We are not to walk as carnal believers or "men and women of the flesh!" Instead, we are to allow the LORD to train us and bring us into maturity. The word "transformed" means to 'Give expression to the divine nature, shining in resplendent glory of God. To allow heavenly radiance to pervading our thoughts, words, ideas. The word for 'transformed' is the same as "transfigured" that was used in Matt. 17:2. "And He was transfigured before them and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light." This word is Strong's #3339 and in the Greek is 'metamorphosis,' means literally to change from one form to another. (i.e. a worm into a butterfly) See also 2 Cor. 3:18. Denotes change in condition involving a miracle of transformation from earthly form to a supernatural form, also used to describe the invisible process that takes place to change Christians. Wuest says it is both the outward expression of the true inward nature and significant change in activity. At the transfiguration, Jesus' of expression changed from servant to deity in all His glory.²



"...[be] aware that the challenge you face is supported by demonic energy that is resisting change. The enemy is squatting ...where he does not belong, and he has barricaded himself in. He has no intention of ever relinquishing this ground."

"Opened from the Inside: Taking the Stronghold of Zion" by Bob Sorge 2010



6. Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

We need to be very alert to the fact that the focus of our warfare is in the mind. 2 Cor. 4:4 tells us that the god of this world blinds *the minds* of the unbelieving, preventing them from seeing the light of the Gospel. We are given divine weapons that are highly effective through the Word of God in *prayer, proclamation and preaching* to pull down strongholds the enemy has erected in our minds and the minds of unbelievers. We are called to take every thought captive to the obedience of

¹ Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament Vol. 3, Golden Nuggets, p. 26-28

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Christ. Ask the LORD to shine His Light and truth on our thoughts and ways of thinking and to reveal errors so they can be confessed and we can repent. Ps. 119:130; Luke 2:35

Three specific areas in our thought life that need to be conquered according to 2 Cor. 10:3-5:

- **“Strongholds”** are any places where the enemy has a “strong hold” on one’s thinking. It is used with reference to a fortified place that is highly guarded and is figurative of habits of thinking, ideologies, arguments or philosophies that hold a person or even entire people groups in particular patterns of thinking or behaving. It comes from the Greek Word ‘schoe’ (2192) which means to hold on to firmly. You will hear the term stronghold used with reference to actual geographical areas in which the enemy has become firmly entrenched, or with reference to spiritual strongholds in which the enemy holds a person's spirit, emotions, mind and heart in captivity from knowing the Truth of God. This can include false doctrines, deceptions, and sinful or bitter patterns of thinking. A stronghold may form through believing a lie or through making vows and judgments. A vow is a promise that is taken very seriously in the spirit realm. Many vows are linked with judgments of another which also keep us in bondage. An example would be saying, “I will never be like....” Any area of our mind that is not surrendered to the LORD is vulnerable to formation of a stronghold.
- **“High Places”** refer to the heights or hills, places and methods of forbidden worship. High places are usually related to idolatry, but always to disobedience to God’s way. Deut. 12:1-8 calls us to “utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree...” We are instructed to worship the Lord in the manner which He has specified in His word and not “every man whatsoever is right in His own eyes.” (i.e. no moral absolutes, relativism) This might mean worshipping Him in rituals or traditions while our hearts are far away from Him when He has called us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. It could be seen in idolatry where other things take place of supremacy in our lives. Even ministry can become a high place, where we seek to serve God but do not seek God to know His heart and His plans.
- **“Imaginations”** (also translated arguments or philosophies) refers thoughts in the mind that precedes and determines conduct. These imaginations start as reasonings that are woven together to form the way we think or mindset that shapes the way we behave. “Imaginations” is translated from the Greek word **“logismos”** which means to reckon, a calculation, consideration or reflection. Logismos comes from the word Logos which is the intelligent understanding and thought processes, an orderly linking and knitting together in connected arrangement of words, inward thoughts and feelings of the mind. These are The Hebrew word for imaginations is “Chashab” which means literally “to plait or interpenetrate, to weave or fabricate, to plot or contrive from intellectual or mental effort. The way we think is an interweaving of all that we are exposed to that helps to form our opinions and our thinking. These are learned through family, education, culture, and entertainment and can include anxiety, fear, worries. These ways of thinking can contain truth or lies. Today many people live by the philosophy of “eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” This philosophy determines their conduct of following after fleshly pleasures without considering eternal consequences. But the Word of the Lord says, [Rom 14:17](#) For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

These patterns of thinking come from a variety of sources--parents, education, movies, books, advertising, religious teachings, cultural or ethnic heritage. Everything that enters our mind

influences our thinking and alters our perception of the world. The secular-minded Jews of Jesus day sought to establish Jesus as their earthly king, but failed to recognize His divinity. They missed the day of His visitation. Americans are highly influenced by the Greek "mindset" and this effects the way we think about God and the world and subconsciously affects our actions. The Greeks were highly intellectual individuals, who prided themselves on being open to new ways of thinking. They held a belief in the division of all that is spiritual from the secular world. Their gods were not interested in the daily affairs of man. On the other hand, the Hebrew mindset worshipped a God who was vitally intertwined with all of the affairs of man in his day to day life. This difference in mindset allowed them to commune with God and worship Him in the midst of pots & pans or in a sheepfold.

[Romans 2:15](#) Indicates that these thoughts (logismos) or imaginations go hand in hand with the conscience, their imaginations or ways of thinking will defend their conscience. This prevents the Law of God from speaking effectively through the conscience of the unbeliever. This is why radical Muslims, for example, behave as they do. Their consciences have been seared by deceived thinking that causes them to believe they are doing the right things to their cause. Their apprehension of Truth is based upon a false way of thinking and everything they do flows from this point in their lives. 1 Tim. 4:1-2

Digging Deeper in the Word:

Meditate on the power of our Savior to defeat these strongholds! Remember, we do not go through this process alone! Jesus will help us step by step as we turn our thoughts to Him. Whether we are praying for strongholds in our own lives, believers, or the unsaved, we have the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ. The reason "*the Son of God appeared was to DESTROY [undo, loosen, dissolve, demolish, disentangle, annihilate] the works of the devil*" so man could be reconciled to God. 1 John 3:8b; Isa. 45:1-4 NIV; Col. 2:15; Luke 11:20-22; Heb. 2:14-15; Jer. 1:9-10

As we cast off our old self and old ways of thinking, we must be diligent to replace our thoughts with the knowledge of God through His Word and seek to guard our thoughts according to our identity in Christ. As we cast away a worldly "self-centered" perspective we now need to focus our minds on loving the LORD with all of our mind (heart, mind, spirit and soul). **We must seek to develop an eternal perspective** that recognizes our new identity in Christ and our citizenship in heaven and place in His Kingdom. We are to constantly keep seeking and constantly setting our minds on the things above and not on the things of this earth. Our study of the Word is not for a historical perspective but to gain a sense of our present life set in eternity with Jesus in the heavenly places. 2 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 1:18-18-20; Isa. 43:10; Eph. 5:25-27; Col. 3:2, 16; Phil. 4:8

What is God speaking to my heart? The handout accompanying this lesson lists many of the differences between a secular mindset and the Christian mindset. Ask the LORD to show you any areas of your thinking where you may be living or behaving with a secular mindset or not fully walking in the truth of the mind set upon the LORD. [Matt. 28:18-20](#)

Heart Response to the LORD: Ask the Lord to fill you with His Spirit. Pray that His light and truth will free you from your old self and patterns of thinking. Meditate in the Word to renew your mind. Pray for the Church to be renewed to have the mind of Christ and again influence our society so we can live according to the standard which is Jesus Christ.