

# *The Mind Set on the Spirit*

## Part 2: Mind of Christ Series

*“For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

Romans 8:6-8 (NASB77)

### *Portion for the Journey*

Have you ever wished you could re-write Samson’s story? His life had all the makings of a true “super hero.” He was born with a calling to deliver God’s people from the Philistines. Samson was born with an amazing sense of purpose and destiny... raised in a godly home by loving parents. An Angel of the Lord even announced his birth! He was given supernatural strength. Sadly, we see Samson making choices that prevented him from living the truly “set apart” life with the Lord. If we pay attention to Samson’s mistakes, we can see the consequences that follow a casual recklessness toward God’s Word in a believer’s life. Samson’s fleshly or worldly mindset caused him to walk like “mere man” and prevented him from obeying the Spirit’s direction and guidance. (1 Cor. 3:1-3)

The Lord purposed to use Samson to deliver Israel from the Philistines who had ruled over Israel for forty years. The word “Philistine” means literally ‘to wallow in the dust,’ representing the works of the flesh or those who live according to the world. Instead of overcoming the Philistines, Samson was overcome by them. Meditation on Judges 13-16 reveals a prayer strategy for the Church today because we struggle with these same temptations. *Note the progression of Samson’s fall:*

**Samson took his call to separation unto the LORD lightly.** As a Nazarite, he was called to live a life of complete holiness unto the LORD. God’s consecration was the source of his strength; his weakness came from his unsanctified mindset. Samson constantly put himself in the way of temptation. Contrast with John the Baptist, another Nazarite from before birth, who faithfully remained separated from the world. Lev. 20:26; Num. 6:1-21; Luke 1:5-25; Matt. 3:1; 11:11

**Samson walked in carnality, led by his fleshly desires rather than by obedience to the Spirit.** He looked for immediate gratification of the flesh and ignored God’s call to holiness. Samson mistakenly believed that his strength came from his hair, not realizing that his strength came from his obedience to the LORD. He did not seek to walk in holiness or according to God’s law. For example, he broke the restriction of not touching the dead (especially an “unclean” animal) when he took honey from the lion’s carcass. Also, he chose his wife, and later a harlot, because they “looked good” to him even though he was forbidden to marry a Philistine. He showed no remorse for falling into an adulterous relationship with Delilah. Lev. 11:8; Deut. 7:6; Jud. 14:3; 16:1; 1 Pet. 1:15; Eph. 1:4; 5:27

**Samson’s carnality led him to form forbidden alliances with the Philistines who were his enemies.** He married a foreign wife even though the Law clearly forbade this union. His slide into sexual immorality led to adultery with a harlot and then seduction by Delilah whose treachery ultimately caused his complete downfall. He was enticed and worn down with her daily words and did not recognize repeated betrayals. Prov. 4:14; 1 Cor. 5:9-11; Ezra 10: 10-17; 1 Ki 11:1-3; Deut. 7:2; 17:17; Neh. 13:23-31; Ex. 34:12; Ja. 4:4; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14

**Confidence in man's ways: Samson put confidence in his mental and physical strength and failed to recognize that his power was a gift to glorify God and benefit God's people.** He took pride in his own mental abilities rather than God's wisdom. For example, he enjoyed taunting his enemies with riddles and wagered on his cunning. Zech. 4:6; Ps. 1:1; Prov. 12:15; 14:12; Rom. 1:24-28; 1 Cor. 10:31; Ps. 62:7; Acts 12:23; 1 Cor. 1:18-19, 24

**Although physically strong, Samson was not mentally alert to the dangers that surrounded him.**

Samson's blindness came long before the Philistines gouged out his eyes. He was seduced by mental tactics of the world and failed to see the signs warning him of danger. He was unable learn from his experiences. Sadly, he didn't even realize when the LORD's Spirit departed from him. De. 13:5-10; Mark 13:22-23; Rev. 2:20; 2 Pet. 1:5-11

**Samson's fall caused him to lose his strength and "become like any man."** He was brought into darkness, bondage and slavery where his enemies made a mockery of him. The greatest tragedy is that the God of Israel was not glorified in the sight of evil men. Jud. 16:7,11,13,17

**God remained faithful to Samson, even though Samson failed to walk in His ways.** When he repented and called upon the Lord, God heard Samson's prayer, restored him and completed His purposes. Samson's name is listed in the Hebrews 11 "Great Hall of Faith," not because of his strength or his performance, but because God's hand was sovereignly upon him as it is upon His Church. Jer. 10:23; Matt. 16:18; Ps. 2; Heb. 11:32

### *Digging Deeper in the Word:*

1. Samson ignored God's call to holiness and separation from the world. We are also called to be holy and live in separation from the world. What can we learn from Samson's example? Read through the specific aspects of Samson's failure and ask the LORD to show you if any of these characteristics in your life. How does Samson's life compare to the believer's life today?

2. What are the results of a mind set on the flesh? What are the results of a person who has the mind of Christ? Ephesians 2:3 makes reference to the "desires of the flesh and of the mind." What do you think the "desires of the mind" would refer to in the natural man? How was Eve tempted by the desires of her mind? Rom. 8:2, 5-8; Eph.2:3; 2 Cor. 11:3; Phil. 2:12-13

3. Col. 3:1-17 provides a practical outline for this process of transformation from the flesh to the Spirit takes place! Make two columns, one listing what we are to "remove" (cast off) in our thinking and behavior and another list of those truths and characteristics we are to have as we chose to renew our minds as believers in Jesus and His Kingdom. See also Rom. 13:11-14; Ephesians 4:13-5:21; Rom. 12:3,9-21; James 1:21

4. **Pray for a restoration of the Mind of Christ!** Ask the LORD which prayer point to focus on in your prayer time. Read the verses provided and choose one verse at a time for meditation. You may look up word meanings, read different translations, or check cross references. Let the LORD guide you. Then pray through your meditation notes, first for yourself and then for the Church in America. This strategy makes an excellent prayer base for ongoing intercession for the Church.

**...Devoted to the TRUTH:** We are living in a time of great deception. There is only one source of Truth, that which flows from God. It is vital that we examine all teachings in the light of God's Word. Pray for

the Church to be grounded in the Word and founded upon sound doctrine. 2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15; Acts 17:10-11; John 8:31-32; 4:23, 24; 14:17; 17:17; 2 Tim. 2:15; Ps. 119:105

**...To be fully awake and alert:** That the Church will come to a full state of alertness to know times and be prepared to take action. Isa. 52:1-2; Matt. 25:1-13; Rom. 13:11; 1 Cor. 15:34; Eph.5:14-17; 1 Chr. 12:32; Mk. 13:37; 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:18

**...to exercise spiritual discernment** in all situations, testing the spirits and recognizing what is of God versus this evil world. Pray for pastors to especially be gifted in discernment at all times: 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal 6:4; Ps. 19:12; 1 Thes. 5:20-21; 1 John 4:1, Rev.2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Kings 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4; Ps. 119:125; Mal. 3:18; 1 Cor. 14:29; Matt. 16:3; Luke 12:56; 2 Cor. 4:4; Mark 4:13; Heb. 5:14; 1 John 2 3 (Amp)

**...To repent of sin and worldliness:** This involves the conscious awareness of sin and alignment of one's thinking with God's Word, renouncing all thoughts and actions that are unworthy of Him. Isa. 1:18; Matt. 4:17; 9:12-13; Mark 1:15

**..To remove all double-mindedness:** The Western mind follows the Greek mindset by dividing life into secular and sacred realms. Jesus warned that no man can serve two masters. Pray for the Church to have single-minded devotion to Jesus. James 1:8; 4:8; Ps. 119:113; Josh. 24:15; Deut. 30:15-20; 1 Ki. 18:21; Matt. 6:24

**....To be transformed through the renewing of the mind:** Do we see ourselves as a kingdom of priests? Paul chided the Corinthians for walking like mere men and reminded them they are stewards of the mysteries of God. Rom. 12:2-4; 1 Cor. 3:3,4; 9:17; Eph. 3:2; Isa. 55:6-11; 1 Cor. 2:1,9-15

**...To be disciplined in mind:** ...in thought life--Phil. 2:5-6; 4:8; 2 Tim. 1:7; Prov. 23:12; ...in faith--Col. 2:5; ...in holiness of body--1 Tim. 4:8; Matt. 6:22, 23; Rom. 12:1,2

**....To love the LORD with all our mind:** That study and sound thinking and reasoning would be returned to the proper place in the Body of Christ. That Christians would reveal God's glory in all areas of scholasticism, science and the arts. Mark 12:30; Eph. 2:3; Col. 1:20; Heb. 8:10; 1 Pet. 1:13; Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:27

**....Desire God above all:** That our love of the LORD supersedes all else. That we would have an eternal perspective in our mindset, seeing ourselves as ambassadors whose true home is in heaven. May we look for and hasten His return. 2 Pet. 3:12; Ps. 73:25-26; 142:5; 42:2; 63:1-3; Phil. 1:23; 3:7-8; Hab. 3:17-19; Lam. 3:24

*What the Lord is speaking to me:*

*My heart responding to the LORD:*