

September 1999 The Mind of Christ

by Aaron Greenway

Living in today's world is not easy. There are distractions on all sides begging for our attention in an attempt to compromise us. You cannot go through a supermarket today without being confronted by purposely-placed magazines with partially-clad women on the front of them. You cannot drive down the street without being cut off by someone in their F150. The temptations do not end here. When others speak ill of us, what is the first reaction on our end? To fight back, right? When we are put in the “hot spot” on something, it is much easier to bend the truth, right?

We are surrounded by temptation and it seems the more we try to fight it, the more it seems to have a hold of us. Well, now we have a dilemma. If we fight evil, we lose; if we give in, we really lose. How do we extricate ourselves from the power of sin?

The problem is and has always been the condition of our hearts.

A heart of sin will always sin. What we say, what we think, how we act (especially when we are alone) always displays the attitude and condition of the heart. But when God gives us the mind of Christ, our thoughts, actions and motives are consumed with God. We begin acting out in obedience to what is already inside. A heart that lives and breathes holiness and righteousness will produce actions that are righteous and holy.

Now, what used to be a struggle to keep a wicked thought out of our minds is now an action-producing thought that becomes an act of worship to our great God and King.

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“Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

— Galatians 5:16

Every time Scripture tells us to cast off sin (Romans 13:12) or to resist the devil (James 4:7), it is

in conjunction with commands to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14) and to draw near to God (James 4:8)...as if when we are doing one, we are doing the other.

In the church today, we desperately need the mind of Christ, to be filled with the Holy Spirit daily. The question then becomes, how do we get the mind of Christ?

1. **Prayer.** We ask God to purge our minds of wrong desires and attitudes. We ask Him to fill us with the Holy Spirit and to give us the mind of Christ, because only He can change us. This is not a one time prayer. This is on-going, deep communion with the Lord.
2. We fill our hearts and minds with **God's Word** with a deep hunger to know God. If we read the Bible simply out of duty or theological study without a hunger to know God and especially without the Holy Spirit, the Bible becomes nothing more than dead words on a page. Is the Word of God truly "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb" (Psalm 19:10)?
3. Keeping ourselves in check with other **mature believers** (No one is, in the words of a friend of mine, a 'Lone-Ranger Christian'). I can't begin to count the times that God moved in my heart as a brother in Christ would share of how God was moving in his.

An even more basic question rises out of all of this: Do we know God the way we say we do? Has knowing God changed our behavior? Has knowing God changed our attitudes? Has knowing God changed our perceptions of life? Has knowing God changed our motives? If not, then we must beg the question.

Do we have the mind of Christ or do we have a foolish, worldly perspective? Are we swept away by the Spirit of God or by our own selfishness and lusts? After all, a heart filled with God cannot help but put out the things that make Him who He is. To practice righteous living, to love others, to be humble and broken, to be pure in heart and mind is a natural 'spill over' of what is already deep down. Even better, we return that love and devotion to God Himself. What better way to worship Him than to be consumed by and swept away by His ways and His Holy Spirit?

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of cross.”

— Philippians 2:5-8

To close this, I want to quote “The Mind of Christ,” a song recorded by Truth (a Christian contemporary group) off their “One” compact disc, released in 1995. The song is sung by Jody MacBrayer who is now first tenor for Avalon. If you ever get a chance, take a listen to this song:

Verse One:

To receive when others reject
To treat each one with true respect
To shield when others throw stones
To be with one who's all alone
To think and choose, to see the very best
To live like this
Is nothing less than to possess

Chorus:

The mind of Christ
My highest goal
The Lord's delight
The desire of my soul
The Father's heart
Will always guide my life
If I will have in me
The mind of Christ

Verse Two:

To build up when others tear down
To seek the lost until they're found
To give grace where it's needed most,
Rejecting pride when others boast
To sacrifice my all without regret
To live like this
Is nothing less than to possess.

“...but we have the mind of Christ”
— I Corinthians 2:16b