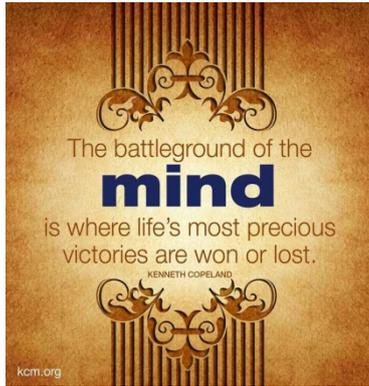


Australind Vineyard Christian Fellowship

from the Pastor's heart  The Sword of the Spirit the Word of God



The Battleground of the mind

Rom 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then **with the mind** I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Rom 8:5 For they that are after the flesh **do mind** the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. Rom 8:7 Because **the carnal mind** is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth **what is the mind of the Spirit**, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. Rom 11:34 For who hath known **the mind of the Lord**? or who hath been his counsellor? Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

It is evident that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all have a mind of their own but in perfect unity with one another. It is therefore critical that the minds of their creation are also in tune with them.

The mind of a person is not the heart of a person but is an equally important area of a person's life. The mind defines individuality and uniqueness of all human beings. Some have brilliant minds, others not so brilliant and then some have dull minds and worst of all some have wicked minds. Yet no mind is without hope to come into a unique relationship with God by the renewing of their mind. God speaks about the mind a lot in the Bible and it would be wise to pay heed to revelations about it and instructions to it. The mind is the battleground upon which life's battles are fought for the soul. **As a man thinks, so is he.**

The devil (liar) was able to change the mind of Eve on God's instructions to them and cause her to sin. Since he had no physical way of doing this, he had to convince Eve that she had been short changed by God on information that was crucial to her individuality as a person. Added to this, he performed some magic on her by tempting her to eat the forbidden fruit. In India, often time, mesmerism is used by street vendors to entice you into buying their merchandise. It has to do with tantalizing the eyes. Since the eyes are the window of the soul, what you see affects how you think. That is why the Bible says, the devil has blinded the eyes of the people so that they will not believe the gospel.

As Christians we are expected to go beyond the natural into the spiritual world of God by faith and into that which is mostly hidden. **To access the spiritual God has given us His word.** This word is a window into God's world and acts as an agent of delivery of the spiritual. The word also causes the unseen to manifest in the natural to make that which is unseen to be seen. The Bible teaches us that God made the world out of things unseen and called them out as seen. So also, faith opens the eyes of our understanding to the unseen and we too can call those things that are unseen into the seen world. That is why the devil seeks to destroy our knowledge of God and His ways by perpetrating the truth with lies. This is where he is most adept in influencing the mind with thoughts that are not Godly and secondly by playing with the eyes to believe what one sees rather than rely on the word of God to open the world of God to us. **This is witchcraft.**

It is imperative that we do not fall for the tricks of the mind by listening to the enemy and by judging our lives by what we see and think in the natural. Though the natural mind is given to us for worldly use, God is training us to be like Him by thinking like Him. That is why He said; "My thoughts are not your thoughts". The journey is difficult because we are living in the flesh and have a will, emotions and intellect. This is the soul makeup of every individual. It is in these areas that we have to guard our hearts and mind to focus on God's word rather than what we see, hear and feel in the natural that cause us to think differently to God's word.

There are 3 categories of people that we need to consider when discussing the areas of the mind. Those who have lost their mind and are lunatics, those who are blinded by the devil into believing a lie about life and God and then those whose minds have been renewed to know that life is lived by faith in the word of God.

The understanding I am trying to impart in this letter are for those whose minds have been renewed by the word of God. Even though this becomes true when we experience spiritual new birth yet there is a continued renewal of the mind that needs to take place because the knowledge of our faith is only given in bits. Should God give to us all in one hit, we would not be able to contain it. Many have lost their way or mind by trying to work out God. This is not our commission in life. God is unfathomable and beyond human reasoning. He has to be accepted by faith and a life with Him must be lived out in faith. To do this, there is a daily renewal of the mind that is required. It involves trust, patience,

faith, hope, assurances and a deep dependency on God that is born out of knowledge that we do not know everything there is to life and how it unfolds on a daily basis.

Being a Christian does not eliminate the need for ongoing renewal of the mind which will direct our paths. Many have tried to outwork knowledge and have ended up in disaster like Eve. Being a Christian requires sitting at the feet of Jesus and allowing the Holy Spirit to refresh our thinking daily and to deal with sin. Too often, we become comfortable with what we know and think that a relationship with God can be outworked on a formula. As a result, tradition and ritual become the norm of spiritual life. Then, prayers are offered without any meaning or sincerity, God is sought for His blessings only and when it is convenient God gets some acknowledgement of the blessings He provides.

When I was asked to go from one level of faith to another, I had to renew my thinking each time it was required of me. Most of the time what I knew by faith defied logic. It did not compute to my natural way of thinking which was designed and influenced largely by my experiences, other people, and observations of life and to some degree by my education. Yet, when I simply obeyed God His logic defying instructions of faith made absolute sense. This was usually in hindsight rather than foresight. **So the renewing of my mind was to simply obey God and trust Him** for the outcome and not worry about the situation or circumstances in life. After long trials and errors, I realised that obedience was better than sacrifice. The more I practised what the Lord said and not what my mind or eyes said; the more I was able to progress in faith. This in turn made my mind a different place to be in than what it had previously been like. As a result, where I had felt fear before, I no longer felt fear and where I had felt depression before, I no longer felt depressed. The list of changes in my thinking goes on and on. The changes brought assurance, growth, confidence, trust, patience and faith and acceptance of God.

The renewal of the mind did not stop the enemy from attacking or tempting this new found release. In fact, he heightened the attacks to make it look like it was all a fake. However, as I pressed on in God my trust and love for God and His ways grew. Soon, spiritual warfare became a matter of overcoming the weakness of the mind by believing what God said and not what the devil or my mind said. From time to time, the intensity of the warfare would increase and things like rejection, loneliness, weird thoughts and depression would try to make their way back. However, since I knew what they looked like and that they were of the enemy I was able to fight them off. This is the battle not only to overcome but to renew the mind to receive what God has said and not what man, the devil or I think in the natural. All hope is in Jesus whose mind we carry. **Let it be in you.** Then you will know what the mind of God is because of His Spirit in you. God has a plan for the world and us individually. We just have to trust Him about it. His wisdom is beyond our ability to understand but it is peaceable and gentle.

The common areas of battles in one's mind are as follows: *Temptations of the devil. Is God really there? Will God answer my prayer? I cannot hear or see God. He blesses others more than me. Does God love me? I am condemned and rejected because of my mistakes and sins. The word of God is too complicated and I will never understand it. God is allowing these bad things to happen to me and the world. God did not really mean that in His word. I can make it on my own.*

When you have exhausted all your mindsets and thoughts that come at you constantly you will find that often time your course of action is contrary to what God says about you or wanted you to do. Many hear voices, laughter, taunts and have weird thoughts that the evil one puts into them. These are basically one's own thoughts that are influenced by the evil one through the eyes and circumstances in life or by other's words that he uses to manipulate your thinking. That is why Jesus said; "It is not what you hear but how you hear it." **A man is as he thinks but he thinks as he hears, sees and senses.** God wants you to renew your mind and come to the fullness of His blessings. **You are what He says you are.** If you are righteous before God you have nothing to fear. You have to renew your mind to accept what God says. I urge you not to be intimidated by your thought life. There are thoughts that you can think and imagine deliberately that is not Godly. You just have to learn to eliminate it from your thinking knowing that it is not good. Ask God to help you if you cannot overcome them. Then there are thoughts that come as an influence because of what you expose yourself to in conversations with others or what you see on TV and what you see and experience in life or have heard in the past. These thoughts are not all true and if they are true there is an explanation for them and God is able to heal you of them.

Finally, there are thoughts that we need to think that will help us to grow in God. Practise thoughts such as love toward God and one another. These are good thoughts to have. Then act upon your thoughts and do to others as you would do to yourself. Then there are thoughts of a hope and dreams of a future in Christ which you need to activate and put into play. To do this, you must act in faith and added to this, God's plans for your life and His thoughts toward you are plainly written in the Bible for you to receive as His promises.

My friends; Jesus and the Father love you and have given you the Holy Spirit that you might know this. It His Spirit in you who is leading us in the way you must go. There is no need for you to be afraid in any circumstance. I always draw my strength from Apostle Paul who faced innumerable evils and suffering. Through it all he said; "rejoice and again I say rejoice". Let us learn to do that and love God and give Him our best thoughts. Even our thoughts are a living sacrifice to Him. ***Thinking God thoughts are positive thoughts.***

With love - *Pastor Noble*

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