



The heart of man plans his way,
but the Lord establishes his steps.
Prov. 16:9

Origins



THE ORIGINS OF THOUGHT

At the completion of creation, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:31). Adam and Eve were in righteous fellowship with God. Genesis 3:1-7 describes the far-reaching and devastating blow to the human mind that would affect every human being who lived thereafter. Without question, Satan waged war against God and the human race in this monumental passage where the battlefield (Rom 10:9-13) turns out to be Eve's mind. In the end, Eve exchanged the truth of God (Gen 2:17) for the lie of Satan (Gen 3:4-5), and the human mind has never been the same since. By Noah's time (Gen 6:5) "every intention of the thoughts" of men "was only evil continually."



THE CURRENT (DEFAULT) CONDITION OF THE MIND

2 Tim 3:7 "always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth"

A passing review of how the New Testament describes the default condition of the human mind leaves us wondering if there is any good to be found there at all.

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|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Rom 1:28 "debased" | 5. Eph 4:18 "darkened" | 9. Col 2:18 "sensuous" |
| 2. 2 Cor 3:14 "hardened" | 6. Col 1:21 "hostile" | 10. 1 Tim 6:5 "depraved" |
| 3. 2 Cor 4:4 "blinded" | 7. Col 2:4 "deluded" | 11. 2 Tim 3:8 "corrupted" |
| 4. Eph 4:17 "futility" | 8. Col 2:8 "deceived" | 12. Titus 1:15 "defiled" |



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What is the Original Cause of this Default Condition of the Mind? Gen 3:1, 5

How does the mind respond to God Today? Gen. 3:10

In your opinion, has man's thoughts improved or worsened since the times of Noah? Gen 6:5

Is the Mind and it's thoughts trustworthy in this default condition today? Jeremiah 17:9

Can this mind be restored? 2 Cor. 5:17, Eph 4:24



CHALLENGE: RECLAIMING THE MIND

How can we reclaim the Mind? The Mind must be...

1. Redeemed Rom 10:9-13
2. Renewed 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom 12:2
3. Illuminated 1 Cor. 2:12-13; Ps 119:18

The ultimate pattern of reclaiming the mind is maintaining the Mind of Christ 1 Cor. 2:16



THE NEVER ENDING BATTLE FOR THE MIND

In warning believers about life's ongoing, never-ending battle for the mind, Paul tells about the schemes or designs of the devil. We would be wise to begin by recording in our minds how we can defend ourselves...

Please Memorize these passages:

- *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.* Eph 6:11
- *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ* 1 Pet 1:13

Origins

Preach to yourself

No one is more influential in your life than you are. Because no one talks to you more than you do.

Your inner conversion is always interpreting life, therefore we must learn to interpret life with Biblical truth.

In our sin, we constantly find our responses to life in our fallen world to be disconnected from the theology that we confess. Anger, fear, panic, discouragement stalk our hearts and whisper in our ears a false gospel that will lure our lives away from what we say we believe.

The Two Parts of Meditation

Preaching to yourself entails **Listening** and **Responding**.

The battleground is meditation. What is it that is capturing your idle thoughts? What fear or frustration is filling your spare moments? Will you just listen to yourself, or will you start talking? Not just talking but preaching — not letting your concerns shape you, but forming your concerns by the gospel. You must consistently preach the truth of God's word, applying them to yourself, shaping your steps and decisions at every juncture of life.

The Biblical design for dealing with the mind is to preach to yourself. This is modeled for us in various places, particularly in the Psalms.

Psalm 42:5, 11

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me? (Listen)
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God. (Response)

After asking yourself the questions (Why are you sad, upset? cast down) the psalmist responds with a command to self (HOPE IN GOD) strengthening his own faith, remembering that his God is worthy of praise and what his God has done.

Some Questions to ask your Soul?

- O my soul... What do I desire and why do I desire it?
- O my soul... am I seeking my own will of God's will?
- O my soul... What is the origin of my feelings?
- O my soul... do I know what God desires for me and what he has done for me?

Renewal



Psalm 37:4-5 **Delight** yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the **desires** of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and **he will act**

USING THE RENEWED MIND

The process of renewing your mind is **counter-intuitive**. Psalm 119 provides detailed insight into a Christian's new relation to the Bible, which contains the mind of Christ.

- **DELIGHT** First, there will be a great love for and tremendous delight in the Scriptures (vs 47-48).
- **DESIRE** Second, a believer in Christ will have a strong desire to know God's Word (**Remember** God's Word) as the best way to know God (vs 16, 93, 176), by battling against **forgetting** Him and His word.
- **DIRECT** Third, when one knows God, it then leads to obeying Him (vs 44-45) because it directs our path (vs 105).



THE CHRISTLIKE MIND

To hear something once for most people is not enough. To briefly ponder something profound does not allow enough time to grasp and fully understand its significance. Therefore, prolonged thought or pondering, AKA meditation is necessary. Psalm 119 testifies to the importance and blessing of lingering long over God's Word.

Scripture commands that believers meditate in three areas:

1. **GOD** Ps 27:4; 63:6.

2. **GOD'S WORD** Joshua 1:8; Ps 1:2

3. **GOD'S WORKS** Ps 143:5; 145:5



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What is the scriptural process of renewing the mind? Ps 119:97, 148

What does Meditation accomplish for the believer?

- Meditation Cleanses away the old thoughts that are not of God.
- Meditation Protects the mind by blocking and rejecting incoming thoughts that contradict God.



CHALLENGE: THINK ON THESE THINGS

We need to carefully and nutritionally feed the mind and soul. So What's the recommended soul food? The minds diet includes whatsoever is... Phil. 4:8

1. true
2. honorable
3. just
4. pure
5. lovely
6. commendable
7. excellent
8. praiseworthy



CULTIVATING A CHRISTIAN MIND-SET

The most authoritative declaration on how the proper Christian mind-set is made to grow and strengthen is stated by the great king Solomon, the wisest man who ever lives. 1 Kings 3:12, 4:29-34

Memorize:

- *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.* Prov 1:7
- *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.* Prov 9:10

USING THE RENEWED MIND

Thinking like a Christian begins with...

DELIGHTING IN GOD'S WORD

Psalms 119:47-48 (ESV)

⁴⁷ for I find my delight in your commandments,
which I love.

⁴⁸ I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.

DESIRING GOD'S WORD

Psalms 119:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ I will delight in your statutes;
I will not **forget** your word.

Psalms 119:93 (ESV)

⁹³ I will never **forget** your precepts,
for by them you have given me life.

Psalms 119:176 (ESV)

¹⁷⁶ I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant,
for I do not **forget** your commandments.

BEING DIRECTED BY GOD'S WORD

Psalms 119:44-45 (ESV)

⁴⁴ I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever,

⁴⁵ and I shall walk in a wide place,
for I have sought your precepts.

Psalms 119:105 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁰⁵ Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Renewal

Making Everything New

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Renewing of the mind is the process of transformation. You become a different person - changing and becoming more like Christ in your thoughts, words and actions when you begin to discern the will of God.

Ask yourself...

What does God desire for me in this case?

What purpose does he have in my current circumstances?

Can I see the will of God for me, for others?

Potential



John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

THE POTENTIAL OF A RENEWED MIND

Once the process of renewing your mind (What we considered last time) advances, your mind begins to experience the necessary freedom to explore its proper potential.

- **FREEDOM** from ignorance (Jn 8:32 *you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free*).
- **UNLIMITED** access to the truth (1 Jn 3:20 *...God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything*)
- **TAUGHT** by God Himself. (John 6:45 *It is written in the Prophets, And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me*).



KNOWING THE MIND OF GOD

The Christian mind should be a repository of God’s revealed truth. That is why the Bible exists: to reveal who God is primarily to the Christian. Truth does not originate from humans but from God.

There is nothing in the way God has designed mankind that prevents the possibility of our knowing the mind of God. He is the God who created men and women as creatures capable of knowing His mind and will and who has made information about His mind and will available in revealed truths. (Ronald Nash -RTS Prof.)

Therefore, Christians should be the champions of truth in a world filled with lies that are deceptively disguised and falsely declared as the truth. **There is nothing irrational or illogical about the content of divine revelation that we cannot ultimately know and share with others.**



DISCUSSION: Critical and Passive Thinking

1 Cor. 1:25 *the foolishness of God* [is not foolishness at all and] *is wiser than men* [far beyond human comprehension], *and the weakness of God is stronger than men* [far beyond the limits of human effort] AMP

- **Critical Thinking** does not quickly accept things at face value but asks clear probing questions and is active in utilizing Godly logic and wisdom to avoid errors and unreasoned conclusions.
- **Passive Thinking** can easily overlook the availability of new information and fails to analyze matters effectively.



CHALLENGE: Thinking Is Essential

Thinking is what shapes who you are. How you think about yourself, God and the World is the greatest factor in your development.

Proverbs 23:7 *for as a man thinks in his heart, so is he* Therefore, Critical thinking is essential, particularly for a Christian, because as his mind begins to be renewed by the mind of God, he must cast off thinking that is based on human wisdom and not Godly wisdom.

1 Cor 1:19-20 *For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*

The Christian mind has great potential - it must be invested!

BLINDED MINDS

Before beginning to have our minds renewed by God, our minds were blinded by the god of this world.

2 Cor. 4:4 In their case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

Even after salvation, Christians can easily be deceived to allow the world to do some of their thinking for them. This is exactly what happened to Eve in the garden (Gen 3, 2 Cor. 11:3)

- First, she allowed Satan to influence her own thinking
- Second, she did some of her own thinking independent of God
- Finally, she acted on her own conclusions, ignoring God's command

This mind was wasted because it was blinded, and so too have many minds since.

INVESTED MINDS

God created logic and the ability for us come to come to reason (Is 1:18)

The Bible teaches us to invest our minds in thinking Biblically about the world we live in.

Both **divine revelation** and **human reasoning** must be used in balance. We must both think critically, embracing natural revelation - and at the same time - value the higher level and credibility of God's special revelation as seen in the Bible.

Both are necessary.

The proper balance comes by beginning with Scripture, which is inerrant. Where the Bible speaks to a discipline, its truth is superior.

When the Bible does not speak, there is a whole world of God's creation to explore for knowledge, but with the caution that man's ability to draw conclusions is fallible, unlike God's Word.

Proverbs 9:10 **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.**

NEXT THINGS

From here we will turn to look at a whole set of issues in which the way we think about them is of vital importance:

Worship, psychology, gender, science, education, history, government, economics, literature, music, entertainment, etc.