

## BEING SPIRITUALLY MINDED - THE TRUE BATTLEFIELD

As you know, we're half way through a series on "being spiritually minded." The purpose of this series is to highlight the fact that in order to be spiritual you need not disengage or disassociate the mind. Keeping your mind active is vital to achieving a measure of spirituality that is both effective and sincere. Being so spiritual that you're no earthly good, has little or no value to anyone. Note, true spirituality is being totally reliant on the Holy Spirit's guidance and influences, and remember, He will always magnify Jesus - not human ego. True spirituality means thinking as Jesus thought, and conducting yourself as He conducted Himself [here on earth].

You should always be willing to allow God to examine what's going on in your mind. Not that He doesn't already know, but in order that you may find out what is pleasing to Him. In **Psalm 26:2** king David affirms this, "***Examine me O Lord, and prove me; try [examine] my mind and my heart.***" **Psalm 7:9**, "***For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds.***" **Jeremiah 17:10**, "***I, the Lord, search the heart and test the mind.***"

Notice, God is not just interested in what's held in the heart, He pays attention to what's going on in the mind! Why is this? For, *as a man thinks in his heart, so he is* [**Proverbs 23:7**]. But what does this mean? I believe "thinking in the heart" refers directly to those thoughts that stem from things that have been established in your heart - whether good or bad. With all of us, it is what we think and not what we say that reveals the true person. In this instance, the Proverb warns us not to be the guest of a miser who grudges every bite of food we take, because it's what he thinks, not what he says, that counts!

**Hebrews 10:16**, "***This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord; I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them.***" It is very clear from this verse that the New Covenant includes God dealing directly with the mind. The Greek word used here suggests *understanding, insight, perception and the entire faculty of thought*. When this faculty is energised or influenced by the Lord, the whole mindset changes from the fearful negativism of the carnal mind, to the vibrant positive thinking of the quickened spiritual mind.

Before you came to Christ your mind and your heart had the law of sin and death written all over them. Hence, you were blinded by the god of this age [the devil] and you could not see the true glory of God's Word, which is Christ Jesus, and you chose not to believe [**2 Corinthians 3:14** and **4:4**]. The devil [the god of this age] still craves to write his law on people's hearts and on their minds. Therefore, right now, there is an ongoing battle raging, a battle for the occupation of two key territories - people's minds and hearts. The devil wants his dominion or rule to produce *sin and death*, and God intends for His Holy Spirit to take up residence and produce *life and peace*. The one habitation is set up in darkness in order to feed the lusts of the flesh, and the other is established in His glorious light to bring about a lifestyle of worship. The one occupancy breeds fear but the other builds faith!

Remember, the mind is a pivotal instrument when it comes to your faith. It is the arena [the sphere of activity] of your faith. It's where your beliefs are established! Who ever, or whatever, you allow to control your thoughts, will direct your actions and dictate your future. The true battlefield is the mind! You may think, to your own detriment, that the battle is against those powers and principalities and rulers of darkness in high places. But you are wrong! That's only part of our warfare.

Concerning this spiritual battle, The Word of God is very clear about the strategy we must use. Look at what **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** says, ***“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God [God-empowered] for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments [imagination] and every thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”***

Although you are mortal, living in the realities of this present world, you should not fight with mere human weaponry. You must use God-empowered weapons for the sole purpose of demolishing strongholds. And this verse tells us exactly what is meant by strongholds. The battle is in the mind. Therefore, the strongholds mentioned imply *reasoning's, ideas, attitudes* and *imagination's*. In fact, anything that opposes God's will, plan and purpose for you should be included. And your single aim in this spiritual battle is to tare down every stronghold by bringing each disobedient thought into captivity and making it line up with the life and teachings of Christ.

If the battle is in the mind, then it's with your own reasoning's, ideas, attitudes and imaginations, and surely you must have a healthy distrust of self. **Proverbs 3:5** tells you to, ***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”*** An acknowledgement that you probably do not know what is best for you, and that you are not fully capable of guiding yourself is a great start! The above scripture could also read, *“Completely distrust your own understanding, reasoning and intellect.”* Let's take this thought further by examining some other scriptures.

A simple New Testament definition of “mind” is, *the part of you or faculty that thinks or reasons.*

It denotes the seat of reflective consciousness and comprises of the functions of perception and understanding; including those of feeling, judging and determining. Four Greek words are translated “mind” and they all refer to *understanding, thought and reason*. These three elements are always present.

In the New Testament the “mind” is thought of as either being good or evil - spiritual or carnal.

In the negative, the mind is:

*Hardened* - **2 Cor.3:14**

*Blinded* - **2 Cor.4:4**

*Corrupt* - **2 Tim.3:8**

*Depraved* - **Rom.1:28**

In the positive, the mind is:

*Renewed* - **Rom.12:2**

*Pure* - **2 Peter 3:1**

And, it can be truly in love with God [**Luke 10:27**], and impregnated with God's laws [**Hebrews 8:10**].

Notice how the mind, in the negative, does not need any outside help to manifest its carnal characteristics. However, in the positive, it must have the influence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in order to become pure or be renewed. Therefore, left to its own devices, the mind will always produce carnality.

All believers are told to have the *mind of Christ* [1 Cor.2:16], and they are instructed to be *united in mind* [Rom.12:16]. But in both instances the Greek word “noon” is used and this implies sensibility [the state or quality of being sensible]. It also suggest an acuteness of perception or delicacy of feeling. Therefore, having the mind of Christ will be evidenced by *sensible*, *acutely perceptive* and *delicately sensitive* behaviour. I do not often see many self-confessed “spiritually minded” people who display these attributes. Most of the *religious minds* I have encountered are nonsensical, acutely unperceptive, and grossly insensitive. More in keeping with the law of sin and death, than the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, you cannot fully trust your own mind or reasoning when it comes to spiritual matters. You can only trust in the Living God and know that He will lead you and guide you by His blessed Holy Spirit that is constantly at work in you [perfecting His will]. Remember, the weapons of your warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God [God-empowered], for demolishing anything that opposes God’s will for you.

However, the battle is in the mind, and God has empowered you to experience the victory in every situation. Your faith cannot fail! The devil cannot steal from you! You have the helmet of salvation on your head, protecting your mind, and you have the sword of the spirit and the shield of faith, that extinguishes all the fiery darts of the enemy. These darts are the evil and accusing thoughts that he attacks your mind with!

It is clear that as Christians our warfare is not against physical forces, but against invisible powers who seek to effect our minds and control our behaviour. Therefore, your personal faith must position itself against this onslaught by standing your ground and wilfully resisting the devil. And this requires you to actively engaging your mind to take on both Satan and your own flesh head-on, in the knowledge that you are fully equipped with resurrection power!