



**THE MIND
OF CHRIST**
Given O. Blakely

Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; **THAT YE MIGHT KNOW** the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? **BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.**”

Lesson 1 of 34 INTRODUCTION

The thrust of salvation involves our conformity to the Divine image. As it is written, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate **TO BE CONFORMED** to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom 8:29). Whether or not you comprehend the means by which this will be accomplished, you must understand that this is how the saved will at last appear.

Salvation is, in fact, the restoration of the image of God within man – an “image” that was marred by the entrance of sin. As it is written, "And have put on the new man, which is **RENEWED** in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col 3:10). This image-process will be complete when Jesus comes. As it is written, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, **WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM**; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). This “image” will be a more exact one than the one found in the creation of Adam.

The conformity of reference involves our works, but it goes much deeper than that. Further, the life we live in Christ involves personal discipline, but it is not primarily a life of discipline. We are not living according to an intellectual pattern, outlined for us in the Word of God. That sort of life is similar to keeping a person alive by machinery. In a mechanized form of “life,” the lungs and heart may function, but the individual is not productive, responsive, or beneficial.

MECHANICAL LIFE?

For many, living for Christ is much like being hooked up to a supposed spiritual life-support system. They follow a prescribed set of rules, and maintain identity with, what they conceive to be, the right group of people. However, they have no vibrant relationship with the Prince of life. They think they are alive, but they cannot be productive. They have no fruit, nor do they labor

together with God (1 Cor 3:9). A likeness of Christ cannot be seen in them, and their thoughts and ways are not that of God (Isa 55:8-9). You can be sure of this: The salvation of God does NOT produce that kind of people.

AN AREA OF CONTROVERSY

Theologically, men have haggled about the nature of spiritual life for centuries. Some are unwilling to acknowledge that an actual identity with God is achieved in Christ Jesus. They choose to believe that, armed with a logical mind and good study habits, they can appropriate an understanding of eternal things. Of course, they are wrong in the fullest and most exacting sense of the word. We certainly do not despise logical minds – but such minds can crucify Christ, as well as sit at His feet. Good study habits can be an asset, but they can also be a liability if not properly focused. They can help you to become a the worshiper of a false god as well as a disciple of Christ.

The very fact that all astute thinkers are not believers should tell us something. The mind must be brought under the control of the renewed heart to become an asset. Any and every mind that is dominated by the natural order is a condemned mind. The blessing of God cannot come upon it, and it cannot receive what God has to say.

If men are to be acceptable to God, and become those who are led and fed by Jesus, they must have a new mind – a mind that will fulfill the exhortation, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

Chapter 2 - TEMPLATE THEOLOGY THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 2 of 34 TEMPLATE THEOLOGY

When referring to our approach to understanding the Scripture, some prefer the word “hermeneutics.” That word means the “science of interpretation.” I do not prefer this term, because it accentuates man too much, and God too little. “Hermeneutics is a compendium of worldly wisdom. As such, when addressing the Scriptures, it falls into the category of “foolishness.” As it is written, "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Cor 3:19) – and Paul was speaking of such wisdom within the context of comprehending the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor 2:12-14).

In using the word “TEMPLATE THEOLOGY,” I mean reading the Word of God with a dominating perspective of worldly wisdom – a “hermeneutic,” if you please. For example, you can read

Scripture with the template of etymology over it. By this, I mean you rely ultimately upon the science of language to bring the meaning of the text to you. Those adopting this particular view speak much of “the original language,” treating it as though it were as sacred as the tablets upon which the Law was written (which tablets God did not preserve for human vision).

You can also read the Bible with the prevailing persuasion that once you are saved, you cannot possibly depart from the faith, and be lost. That imagination will corrupt nearly everything you read. It will seem to you that God validates your view throughout Scripture. You will imagine that you read of security for those without spiritual minds, simply upon the basis of their former supposed acceptance of Christ. In such a case, you will read over solemn warnings just as though they were not there.

Another may read the Scriptures as though “the New Testament” was merely a set of new laws and routines – similar, but a little more advanced – to the Old Testament, or Covenant. Such a view will look for new procedures and ceremonies that are now bound upon men. They will tend to equate, what they conceive to be a “precedence” with a Divine commandment. Of course, they allow themselves enough liberty to select the activities they consider to be a precedence, and to reject the ones they do not so consider.

One can also read our text, (2 Cor 2:11-16) convinced that Christ really is not possessed by the believer, and that human abilities are the key to understanding Scripture and advancing in the faith. The text will look differently to such an one, and the truth of it will be missed.

Let it be clear, the Scriptures are not to be read as a Baptist manual, a Church of Christ book of instructions, or a Charismatic confirmation. A religious template occurs when a person decides the parameters of truth, then lays that template over the Scriptures, and reads them as though that was the means of understanding them. In this case, a humanly devised syllabus is used to determine the meaning and applicability of Scripture. This, of course, removes the necessity for the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:13), the teaching Jesus (Eph 4:20-21; 1 John 5:20), and obtaining wisdom from above (James 3:17). Under such a theological system, there is no need to “pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col 1:9).

If, however, the text for this series of lessons is read with a true spiritual perspective, the reality of it will register upon the heart. That perspective, among other things, includes the persuasion that “the flesh profits nothing”(John 6:63), and that in our “flesh”nothing good dwells (Rom 7:7:18). Convinced that everything in Adam dies (Rom 5:1 Cor 15:22), and that the well of nature has been thoroughly corrupted, the message of the text comes across to us with great power.

We will learn from this passage that the “natural man” is incapable of receiving the “things of the Spirit of God.” Such things are “foolishness” to those limited to the Adamic nature. You must have, if I may use the expression, a basic theology that permits you to accept these words of the Spirit of God without reservation or questioning!

Chapter 3 - THE IMPOTENCY OF NATURE

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; **THAT YE MIGHT KNOW** the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? **BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.**”

Lesson 3 of 34

THE IMPOTENCY OF NATURE

What do we mean when we say “nature,” or “natural?” This is a pivotal point in Scripture, and must be comprehended to a measurable degree. Our text tells us about a “natural man.” That is not a specific person, but **A CLASSIFICATION** of people. It describes the unregenerate state – one in which the individual has not been united with Christ, or born again. It describes a generation that sprang from “the first man, Adam,” and has no personal relation at all to Jesus.

TRACED BACK TO ADAM

The “natural man” can be traced back to Adam – fallen Adam. The “natural man” is related to the “first man” by sin, as well as general origin. “And so it is written, “The **FIRST MAN** Adam was made a living soul; the **LAST ADAM** was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the Second Man is the Lord from heaven.” (1 Cor 15:45-47). “The **FIRST MAN**” is Adam, the **SECOND MAN**” is the Lord Jesus Christ, from heaven. Both men are progenitors, and both men have progeny, or offspring. In relation to God, the progeny, or children, can rise no further than their progenitor, or the one from whom they came.

This is a spiritual principle, not an earthly one. In this world, and in nature, an offspring can be more advanced than their natural father. But this is not so in the spiritual realm. This must be known, for all men are responsible to God, who is their “Maker” (Job 35:10; Psa 95:6; Isa 51:13; Jer 33:2). All men will give an account to God for what they have thought, said, and done (Rom 14:12; 1 Pet 4:5). What is more, all men will face an eternal destiny – and God will make that determination (Matt 25:34,41).

From the Divine point of view, **THERE ARE ONLY TWO MEN**. One is **FROM EARTH**, the other is **FROM HEAVEN**. One is associated with **A CURSE**, the other with **A BLESSING**. One brought **DEATH** to our race, the other brought **LIFE**. The Word of God is clear on this matter. The following passage is somewhat lengthy, but it will assist you in this series of lessons.

"Wherefore, as BY ONE MAN sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon ALL MEN, for that ALL have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that

had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if THROUGH THE OFFENCE OF ONE many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is BY ONE MAN, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was BY ONE that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was BY ONE to CONDEMNATION, but the free gift is of many offences unto JUSTIFICATION. For if BY ONE man's offence death reigned BY ONE; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life BY ONE, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence OF ONE judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness OF ONE the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as BY ONE man's disobedience many were MADE SINNERS, so by the obedience OF ONE shall many be MADE RIGHTEOUS." (Rom 5:12-19).

This circumstance is what requires the new birth, justification, redemption, and sanctification. It is why men must be reconciled to God (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:18; Col 1:21), delivered from the world (Gal 1:4), and identified with Christ Jesus (Acts 5:14; 1 Cor 1:9; 6:17; Eph 2:6; Col 1:13). It is why men must be "changed" to be accepted by God (2 Cor 3:18). It is what necessitates "transformation" (Rom 12:2), and regeneration (Tit 3:5). It is why men must be "delivered" (Rom 7:6; Col 1:13; 1 Thess 1:10), and transferred into Christ's Kingdom (Col 1:13). This is why sin – all sin in the aggregate – had to be taken away (John 1:29; Heb 9:26).

A "natural man" is a person who has not experienced the above conditions – supplied and required conditions.

Chapter 4 - THE GRAVITY OF THE PASSAGE

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

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THE GRAVITY OF THE PASSAGE

Notice the gravity of this passage. It interprets the extent of Adam's sin, as well as the marvelous effects of Christ's righteousness. Sin and death both entered by one man – Adam. Because of Adam's trespass, many (actually all) died. The gift of grace, which provides for full recovery, abounded to “many” through Jesus Christ. Adam brought judgment and condemnation. Jesus brought justification. Death reigns because of Adam. Life reigns because of Jesus. Because of Adam's disobedience, many were made sinners. Because of Christ's righteousness, many were made righteous. Both Adam and Jesus are progenitors, forefathers – each an ancestor of a direct line. All natural men can trace their ancestry back to Adam. All who are born again can trace their parentage back to Jesus Christ.

Try as you may, you cannot get more than two men out of Romans five. Adam and Christ! Also note that everyone associated with Adam partakes of the curse. Everyone related to Christ partakes of the blessing. Everyone traced back to Adam are unrighteous; everyone traced back to Jesus is righteous. Everything traced back to Adam is rejected. Everyone traced back to Jesus is accepted.

THE NATURAL ORDER WRITTEN OFF

The truth of the matter is this: God has written off the entire natural order. It has been summarily and irrevocably cursed. To the most far reaching extremity of creation, death dominates. “Heaven and earth shall pass away”– because of Adam's transgression. His sin brought a blight on humanity, the inanimate creation, and even the brute creation. God will not salvage nature, He will burn it up (2 Pet 3:10-12).

In Christ, regeneration has been introduced – a whole new creation. As it is written, “And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making ALL THINGS new’” (Rev 21:5). The consummation of this process was declared by Jesus. “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, IN THE REGENERATION when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne

. . . “ (Matt 19:28). Over 700 years before Jesus, Isaiah prophesied of that “regeneration.” “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind” (Isa 65:17, NASB). This declares the appointed demise of nature in all of its aspects. No created person or thing will survive the appointed demise of the present heavens and earth. All will be raised from the dead (John 5:28-29), in immortal bodies (1 Cor 15:42-55) to be judged by God, and assigned their place in eternity.

That is the context within which this series of lessons is presented.

Chapter 5 - NATURE IS INCAPABLE

THE MIND OF CHRIST

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to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

Lesson 5 of 34

NATURE IS INCAPABLE

Nature is incapable of receiving or producing anything eternal. In fact, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor 15:50). It has been written off, counted unworthy, and rejected as unsuitable to dwell with God. Because of this, nature is incapable of qualifying us to dwell with the Lord, or bringing an apprehension of the things of God. It can be cultured, trained, disciplined, and educated, but it will never be able to add to your faith or stabilize you in the grace of God. It cannot discover the "good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:1-2). There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule. The very best that nature has to offer is totally incapable of bringing to you the most elemental things of the Kingdom of God. There are no resources in the natural realm that can be used to prepare you to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

This is why our text emphatically states, "But a natural man DOES NOT ACCEPT the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Cor 2:14, NASB). Other versions read, "For the natural man IS NOT ABLE to take in the things of the Spirit of God: for they seem foolish to him, and he is NOT ABLE to have knowledge of them, because such knowledge comes ONLY through the Spirit" (BBE); and "But people who aren't spiritual CAN'T RECEIVE these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and THEY CAN'T understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means" (NLT).

Many preachers are teachers of our time have grown accustomed to people who profess to be "Christians," yet are abysmally ignorant of the things of God. However, this is not the Divine manner! Long-term "Christians" who remain ignorant of the things of God are simply "natural." They have either never been born again, or are drawing back to perdition (Heb 10:38). There is no other acceptable explanation. When a person rejects the Word of the Lord, God blinds them so that are not able to comprehend what He says. An inspired explanation of their condition has been provided: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (John 12:39-40).

Why has it become fashionable for preachers and teachers to mostly deal with human and behavioral problems: marriage, finances, etc.? It is because the people do not understand the things of God, and therefore are incapable of knowing how to address the thorny problems of life.

I understand that it is not fashionable to speak in this manner, particularly in academic circles – but this is how the Lord has spoken. We really have no alternative but to speak the same way. The

contemporary church has made a practice of qualifying men to proclaim the Gospel by granting them natural credentials. Such a procedure, as hallowed as it may appear to be, is not in harmony with the Word of the Lord. In fact, it is contrary to Revelation. Mind you, I am not against erudition and mental disciplines – but, in Christ, they are not the qualifiers! They are nothing more than inferior tools. They cannot produce one spark of spiritual understanding. They cannot bring you one millimeter closer to God. They cannot awaken the soul, neutralize Satan’s temptations, or bring the precious promises closer to your heart. The new birth and growing up into Christ are imperative!

Chapter 6 - AN OBSERVATION THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

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AN OBSERVATION

Over the years I have observed the distracting influence of worldly wisdom upon professing Christians. Many individuals exposed to limited amounts of formal education have keen insight into the things of God. On the other hand, many astute and formally educated thinkers consider the things of God to be nothing more than superstition. While this by no means places a premium upon ignorance, it does accentuate the liability of the natural order.

God has spoken on this matter, and He has done so with precision and conviction. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that NOT MANY WISE MEN after the flesh, NOT MANY MIGHTY, NOT MANY NOBLE, are called" (1 Cor 1:26). He does not say “not ANY,” but “not MANY.” He adds why God HAS done this: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world TO CONFOUND the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world TO CONFOUND the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, TO BRING TO NOUGHT things that are." AND WHY HAS GOD DONE THIS? “That no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor 1:27-29).

That is a passage that requires belief more than explanation. It confirms the nature of the subject we are addressing. What God is doing in Christ Jesus extends into the world to come, where its culmination will be realized, and the purpose for which the church was created will get underway.

Do not think for one moment that those who choose to obtain their credentials from God are noted for simplistic expression and rudimentary knowledge. A walk with God makes your mind more keen. It expands your capabilities, and enhances your expression. When you read the writings of Peter and John, you will never think they were called when they were fishermen. If God's Word had not told us these men were fishermen, and that Matthew as a tax collector, we would never have thought for a moment they came from that sort of background! For that matter, when you read the expressions of Paul the apostle, you would never conclude that he was formerly a devotee of the Law with all of its ceremonies, who hated the name of Jesus, and persecuted those who had fled to Him for refuge.

Earthly regimens and credentials do not qualify a man to traffic in heavenly realms. Worldly wisdom cannot distinguish or expound "the things which are NOT seen" (2 Cor 4:18). Those "things" are "eternal," and yet they MUST be seen, becoming the focus of our attention, if we are to be forever with the Lord.

What does the wisdom of this world know about "the god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4), or "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Eph 6:12), or "eternal life" (1 John 2:25), or a "reward in heaven" (Matt 5:12)? What kind of commentary can the world's wisdom make concerning "the good fight of faith" (1 Tim 6:12), the race that has been set before us (Heb 12:1-2), or the "crown of righteousness" (2 Tim 4:8). What does it know about an "anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:12), or a "High Priest in heaven who makes intercession for us (Heb 4:15-16)? What kind of word can it deliver concerning "the whole armor of God" (Eph 6:10-18), or spiritual weaponry that can "cast down imaginations" (2 Cor 10:4-6)? What wise man of the world can give a dissertation on that "good and acceptable, and perfect will of God?" (Rom 12:1-2). These are not optional things to be known, but things that MUST be known.

I will further ask, why is it that the modern church is so ignorant of all of the matters I have just mentioned – especially in view of the fact that God Almighty has said so much about them, and encased the revelation of them in Scripture? I will tell you why. It is because "the wisdom of this world" has become prominent in the nominal church – and that wisdom has arms that are too short to reach such matters. As Isaiah would say it, "For the bed is too short to stretch out on, and the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself in it" (Isa 28:20, NKJV). The world can teach one how to make a mega-church, or have a happy family – but it cannot tell you how to get them to heaven in an acceptable state, pass safely through the Day of Judgment, and have an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7 - IDENTIFYING THE SON OF GOD

THE MIND OF CHRIST

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himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?
BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

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IDENTIFYING THE SON OF GOD

There is no room for assumption in this matter. We are dealing with serious issues, and it is essential that we see them properly. I have said that nature has been rejected in its totality by God. The Adamic order has been written off, and is thus incapable of discernment or productivity in the spiritual realm.

On one occasion, Jesus interrogated His disciples concerning the people's view of Himself. After their initial response, Peter replied to Christ's pointed question, "But who do you say that I am?" His answer is commonly referred to as "the good confession." "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:15-16).

One might suppose this to be an obvious answer, requiring only common sense and a familiarity with the events of the time. After all, even the demons had confessed Jesus as the Son of God, called Christ (Luke 4:41). Jesus had confirmed He was the Christ to certain Jews that asked if this were the case (John 10:24-25). Martha, the sister of Lazarus, knew Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of God" (John 11:27). Academically speaking, there was nothing unique about this knowledge. Even the "powers of darkness" knew this.

The Lord Jesus took the time to explain the real situation to Peter. His assessment leaves no question about what happened to Peter on that eventful day. Each one of us does well to let his words sink down into our ears and hearts. "And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven'" (Matt 16:17, NASB).

Peter was not commended for having a good memory, being attentive, or even for having been perceptive. His logical mind was not declared to be his primary asset. His answer revealed that he had been "blessed," not merely quick to learn! What he confessed was NOT the result of learning, but of blessing. As a man, he had walked with the Son of God, yet it took the blessing of God for him to know it. The Adamic order could not identify or clarify the Christ to Him – and it cannot to you either. Jesus told Peter that His Father, Who is in heaven, had made this known to him. How He did it is not the point – that the Father DID do it is the point!

The Savior had already declared "All things are delivered to Me of My Father: and NO MAN KNOWETH WHO THE SON IS, BUT THE FATHER; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." (Luke 10:22). There is no age in which this ceases to be true. It was not obviated by the introduction of the New Covenant, but rather expanded. If this statement is true--and it emphatically is – Peter could not have known Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, without God showing it to him. Why was this the case? Because "the natural man" is impotent in the spiritual realm!

Consider that this truth – Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God – is the pivotal fact, upon which salvation is hinged. The persuasion of this single reality enables the soul to overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5). Of this passage, Robertson well says, "This sublime claim is not to be whittled down or away by explanations." Those that unduly exalt academic approaches do well to listen to one of their own princes! There has been infinitely more damage done by sophists trying to explain Christ's words than we dare to imagine.

Chapter 8 - FLESH CANNOT RISE ABOVE THE FLESH ITSELF

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

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FLESH CANNOT RISE ABOVE THE FLESH ITSELF

The expression "the flesh" occurs sixty-seven times from Genesis through Zechariah – but there it is never used in the apostolic use of the word. Jesus introduced a new sense of the word that focused on man's unseen nature. He said, "the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63), and spoke of judging "after the flesh" (John 8:15). John refers to "the will of the flesh" (John 1:13). It should be obvious in these texts that such expressions extended beyond the flesh and blood body in which we live.

The apostolic writings use the expression "the flesh" seventy-seven times. The vast majority of them do not refer to "flesh" as in "flesh and blood."

The fleshly order is one that is exclusively associated with Adam. It cannot conduct one into, or enable one to navigate in, the spiritual realm. No matter how much formal education and natural aptitude one has, neither of them are of any assistance at all when it comes to actually apprehending, or understanding, the things of God. One of the essential differences between the domain of the flesh and the domain of the Spirit is that mere intellectual knowledge brings no advantage in the spiritual realm. That is because that lofty realm is adapted to eternity, not time. In the Spirit, mere academic learning means nothing. The "things" to which we are exposed "in the Spirit" are intended to be apprehended, or taken hold of, and used in the good fight of faith, and our trek to glory. This is precisely why Paul prayed these remarkable prayers:

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, I . . . Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION in the KNOWLEDGE OF HIM: THE EYES OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING BEING ENLIGHTENED THAT YE MAY KNOW what is THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING, and what [is]

THE RICHES OF THE GLORY of His inheritance in the saints, And what is THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF THE POWER to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph 1:15-21).

"And again, "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL in ALL WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD" (Col 1:9-10).

Notice, the knowledge of reference has nothing to do with knowing HOW to DO this or that. Rather, it is to know God, and what He has provided in the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. These are things no professing believer can do without. If they are not possessed, the person will not be able to arrive safely in "the world to come." None of them can be confirmed by the natural senses. Like Moses, "the flesh" cannot lead us into the promised land! "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again'" (John 3:6-7, NASB). The "flesh" is totally incapable of transporting you into the spiritual realm – the realm into which you have been transferred in Christ Jesus (Col 1:13). Adam could not remain in the Garden of Eden after he had sinned. Neither can his progeny occupy that sacred realm of which the Garden was a type (Rev 2:7). Those who dwell in the house of the Lord forever must have a different lineage. "Flesh" is confined to the defiled realm, and cannot rise above it.

There is not a single shred of spiritual illumination that can come from the condemned realm – absolutely nothing pertinent to salvation and reconciliation to God can be appropriated from the wells of human wisdom. Those profitless resources are all in the domain of "the flesh," or that which is "natural," and passing away. As interesting as linguistics and other sciences may be, they cannot remove the lid from the "ark of the covenant," so to speak. They cannot clarify or expound spiritual realities. The flesh is an arid desert in which nothing spiritual or eternal grows or can grow! The "flesh" can only produce after its kind.

This is why we read expressions like the following:

"THE FLESH is weak" (Matt 26:41); "the sons of God: Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of THE FLESH, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

"For when we were in THE FLESH, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death" (Rom 7:5).

"So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with THE FLESH the law of sin." (Rom 7:25).

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after THE FLESH, but after the Spirit" (Rom 8:1).

"So then they that are in THE FLESH cannot please God" (Rom 8:8).

"For if ye live after THE FLESH, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom 8:13).

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for THE FLESH, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom 13:14).

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of THE FLESH. For THE FLESH lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against THE FLESH: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal 5:16-17).

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in THE FLESH" (Phil 3:3).

Nature holds no resources that will give any person an advantage in appropriating salvation, and preparing for eternity.

Chapter 9 - THE SPIRIT CANNOT OCCUPY THE REALM OF TH FLESH

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not

the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 9 of 34

THE SPIRIT CANNOT OCCUPY THE REALM OF TH FLESH

We are establishing that the domain of this world, and the domain of the Spirit cannot be merged, or blended together. While they exist at the same time, and are found in the same earthly tabernacle, they are separate in every sense of the word. “The flesh” is confined to the body of mortal flesh, and the domain that is suited for the flesh. The Holy Spirit, however, is not confined to the times and places of this world, and can lead (Rom 8:14) those who are redeemed into superior realms – “heavenly places” – where spiritual responses can be realized, and fellowship with Christ can be enjoyed.

Conversely, that which is born of the Spirit cannot dwell in the lower realm of “flesh,” where sin is committed. That is a domain for which such ones are not suited. There are some remarkable

things said about this in Scripture. They have proved to be troublesome ground for sophists, but they are a delight to the heart of those who choose to live by faith.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3:9). Other versions read, "Whoever has been born of God does not sin" (NKJV), "no one who is born of God practices sin" (NASB), "no one who is born of God will continue to sin" (NIV), "No one born of God commits sin" (RSV), "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin" (ASV).

This is a very difficult text for the spiritually unlearned – and , apparently for several translators as well. They imagine that it means the one born of God does not sin all of the time – only occasionally, or some of the time. That is, sin is not their continual manner. The new birth, however, does not result in a new nature that merely sins less, but one that does not sin at all!

Those who have some understanding of the new birth realize that the new nature is not the only nature we have. There is also another nature that is irrevocably tied to our bodies – "the old man" (Eph 4:22; Col 3:9), or "the flesh" (Rom 7:18).

However, the language here is precise. John does not say "the Christian" cannot sin, or "the believer" cannot sin. It is "WHAT IS BORN OF GOD" that cannot sin. That part of the believer is called "the new man" – a nature that is wholly new, and is separate and distinct from the perishable part of man. This nature is precisely described: "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:24). And again, "the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col 3:10). This is "Christ in you" (Col :27). It is the part of you that has fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9). Unlike "the old man," which is at home in the body, this "new creation" cannot traffic in the lowlands of the flesh. The reason this new creation "cannot sin" is because "His seed remains in him; and he CANNOT sin, because he has been born of God" (1 John 3:9) – he is NOT born of Adam, the father of the human race (Acts 17:26), but of God.

The reason why this sinless condition exists is this: "His seed abideth in him." Remember, that "seed" is "incorruptible" seed, which lives and abides forever (1 Pet 1:23). It is not capable of sinning because it is of another order. An anonymous quote from the past captures the sense of the text, and reads:

"Two natures beat within my breast
The one is foul, the one is blessed
The one I love, the one I hate.
The one I feed will dominate."

The "blessed" nature, or "the new man," is what is "begotten of God" (1 John 5:18), and "born of God" (1 John 3:9). That nature is suited for heaven, and will not be drug into the temporal domain, where sin is committed. That is precisely why, when one walks in the Spirit, he will "NOT fulfill the lust of the flesh," which equates to sinning (Gal 5:16).

As will be established, this circumstance is why we can possess "the mind of Christ."

Chapter 10 - SOME MAY OBJECT

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 10 of 34 SOME MAY OBJECT

The “blessed” nature, or “the new man,” is what is “begotten of God” (1 John 5:18), and “born of God” (1 John 3:9). That nature is suited for heaven, and will not be coerced into the temporal domain, where sin is committed. That is precisely why, when one walks in the Spirit, he will “NOT fulfill the lust of the flesh,” which equates to sinning (Gal 5:16).

Some may object, reminding us that “all have sinned and COME short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). Indeed, this is true – yet, for the believer, it is the “flesh,” or unregenerate part of us that succumbs to the wiles of the wicked one. Our “new man” does not sin – it is the “old man” that does so, and it is out present “vile bodies” (Phil 3:20-21) that welcome the desire to sin. This is precisely why we are admonished to “put on” the “new man,” and put off the “old man.” “That ye PUT OFF concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye PUT ON the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph 4:22-24). “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have PUT OFF the old man with his deeds; And have PUT ON the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him” (Col 3:9-10).

Sin is related exclusively with the “old man,” or the Adamic nature. This nature is also referred to as “the flesh” (Rom 7:25; 8:1-9,12-13; Gal 5:16). By faith, “our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin” (Rom 6:6, NKJV). By “done away,” the text does not mean it becomes immediately extinct. It is “done away” like the present heavens and earth are destined to pass away. In other words, that nature is destined for ultimate and final destruction, and must be viewed from that perspective. “The new man,” on the other hand, has “eternal life,” and is destined to be forever with the Lord.

At no point are the “sin and weight” of believers associated with their new nature, which cannot sin, because it “was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24, NKJV), and is “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him” (Col 3:10). Sin

is always identified with their old nature. The fact that “the old man” “CAN BE PUT OFF” confirms it is not part of the new creation (2 Cor 5:17). In other words, when we are tempted, we do not have to submit to the temptation. We can “resist the devil,” knowing that he will “flee” from us (James 4:7). We can also come “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). This can be done confidently knowing, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:13).

These benefits are all for those who are walking “in newness of life” (Rom 6:4) – those who have been “born again” (1 Pet 1:23), made “partakers of Christ” (Heb 3:14), and have received the Holy Spirit of God (Rom 8:15; 1 Thess 4:8). Not a single benefit of redemption has been given to “the flesh,” or “old man,” or anything associated with our persons that were brought into the world by means of a birth through a mother. Anything and everything that can be traced back to Adam are excluded from heaven – just as surely as Adam and Eve were excluded from the Garden of Eden. Experientially, the new birth is what qualifies you to receive what God is giving to men through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Where a “new man” does not exist, or where the Holy Spirit does not reside, there is no way to receive “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3). For those with discernment, this answers a lot of difficult questions.

Chapter 11 - THE RELEVANCE OF “THE MIND OF CHRIST”

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 11 of 34

THE RELEVANCE OF “THE MIND OF CHRIST”

From the standpoint of our experience, the “mind of Christ” equates to “the mind of the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is our interface with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by His ministry that we are tutored in the things of God. He is the “Anointing that we have received,” and His role in redemption is captured in these words: “But the Anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing TEACHETH YOU OF ALL

THINGS, and is truth, and is no lie, and even AS IT HATH TAUGHT YOU, ye shall abide in Him" (1 John 2:27).

We have "the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 3:15) – and yet their value is not found in mere academics, or intellectual perusal. This is how the Jews thought, and Jesus said to them, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39). How are men enabled to see the testimony of Jesus in the Scriptures? IT IS THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. That is how the mind is "renewed" – through the "renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5). Through His leading (Rom 8:14), and by means of your faith, you are brought to think like Jesus. This is not done naturally, or by the process of mere human logic or reasoning. The Spirit correlates Scripture with the Person of Christ, for it is Jesus of whom Scripture testifies.

The Spirit is, in fact, teaching us to think as Jesus does about "all things pertaining to life and godliness." When it comes to how a "man," or a person, is to think, it must be in harmony with, and be a reflection of, the way in which Jesus thinks. God has never said to Jesus, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD" (Isa 55:8). There is no record of the ministering Jesus ever asking God for direction or wisdom. Even in thought, He and the Father were "One" (John 10:30).

In order for man to be properly teachable, a new birth is necessary (John 3:7). In the process of that new birth, the Holy Spirit is given to the individual in order to teach and shape the person for fellowship Jesus here, and permanent residence with Him in the glory. In this shaping, thinking is fundamental, for "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov 23:7). Now, in Christ Jesus, thoughts that are temptations – "fiery darts" from the wicked one (Eph 6:16) – can be "quenched" (Eph 5:17). Aberrant thoughts and imaginations can be cast down and taken captive because they are seen for what they really are. That is involved in having the mind of Christ, which is the only valid thought pattern in the Kingdom of God. Any thought contrary to "the mind of Christ" is vain and inimical to God. This condition exists because the natural order has been written off, leaving room only for the heavenly perspective, which is really the ONLY perspective, as God see things. Those who extol the rationality of man forget that this was the source of man's downfall.

Thank God for the "power unto salvation" – a power that is sufficient to so shape the thinking of people that they can be able to say, "We have the mind of Christ."

Chapter 12 - THE FLESH PROFITS NOTHING

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he

himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?
BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

Lesson 12 of 34

THE FLESH PROFITS NOTHING

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; THE FLESH PROFITETH NOTHING the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life" (John 6:63).

Other versions read, "the flesh counts for NOTHING" (NIV), "the flesh is USELESS" (NRSV), "the flesh is of NO AVAIL" (RSV), "the flesh is of NO VALUE" (BBE), "the flesh DOESN'T HELP at all" (CEB), "DOESN'T CONTRIBUTE to that life" (GWN), "Human effort ACCOMPLISHES NOTHING (NLT), and "the flesh conveys NO BENEFIT whatever [there is NO PROFIT in it]" (AMPLIFIED).

It was certainly clear to the translators – all of them – what was actually stated in this word from King Jesus Himself. The nature of this word demands that we have an understanding of what was affirmed. We must pursue this line of reasoning further.

Although prideful men love to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think (Rom 12:3), God will not allow them to do so. "Flesh," or the natural part of man, is to be crucified (Gal 5:24), not praised or vaunted. Hear the words of the Savior. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh PROFITS NOTHING; the words that I have spoken to you are Spirit and are Life" (John 6:63, NASB). Nature gives us absolutely no benefit in the spiritual realm. It is always and only a liability, to be subordinated in the power of the Spirit. Jesus declared it "profits nothing," and it is in our personal interest to energetically embrace His announcement. It was not directed to the Apostles alone.

This means that natural aptitude does not, even in its most refined form, bring an advantage of any kind to the believer. An intellectual person is not given more ability in the spiritual realm than the more simplistic thinker. When it comes to the things of the Spirit of God, human logic and refined forms of human thinking are of no benefit. That means Hermeneutics give no spiritual advantage.

By definition "hermeneutics" is "The science of interpretation and explanation; exegesis; especially, that branch of theology which defines the laws whereby the meaning of the Scriptures is to be ascertained" (Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia). That certainly sounds impressive, and not a few

professing Christians rely on such a "science" to understand the Scriptures. But this is a false representation of the acquisition of godly understanding. It makes no room for "the mind of Christ." For that matter it excludes the validity of a prayer "that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will IN ALL WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING" (Col 1:9). If such a "science" is actually true, why would the Apostle to the Gentiles pray "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may GIVE UNTO YOU the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding BEING ENLIGHTENED; that ye MAY KNOW what is the hope of His calling, and what [is] the riches of the glory of His inheritance in

the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power" (Eph 1:17-19). Can such things be acquired by a special hermeneutic?

Can it be that such a prayer is no longer valid – to say nothing of the experience which was sought by it? Has time enabled humanity to discover a better means of acquiring wisdom and spiritual understanding? Is Jesus no longer needed? Or, are His words now obsolete?

Jesus, whose words will never pass away, said "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). Who is the individual that will dare to contradict the words of our Savior? If any are tempted to do so, let them follow Job the patriarch in laying their hand upon their mouth, forbidding such foolishness to pour from their lips (Job 40:4).

Chapter 13 - PAUL CONCURS

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 13 of 34 PAUL CONCURS

Paul not only acquiesced to this affirmation, he perceived and proclaimed its truth. “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing (to will, KJV) is present in me, but the doing of the good is not” (Rom 7:18, NASB). In spiritual life, Paul saw nature as a LIABILITY. He refused to acknowledge that anything “good” resided in this part of his person. When it came to him and the Lord, He would not seek grace, understanding, wisdom, or strength from the well of nature.

The principle of lawlessness, or the “law of sin,” resides in our natural persons, but not in our renewed, or born again part. How graphically this is stated by the Apostle. ““But I see ANOTHER LAW in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members . . . 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 7:23,25). The “captivity” of which he speaks is not a forcing of himself to sin, but a pressure impelling him to DEAL WITH SIN, quenching the fiery darts of temptation (Eph 6:16), resisting the devil (James 4:7), and refusing to yield to ungodliness (Tit 2:11-13). This is not how he preferred to spend his time. He preferred to engage in the acquisition of “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places” (Eph 1:3), and “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3).

In Christ there are battles to be fought, even though that is not the primary reason for being in Christ Jesus. That is because as long as we are in this unredeemed body, the Adamic nature is with us – and we will not be done with it until we are no longer “in the body.” It has a way of capturing our attention, but NOT our devotion. We do have to deal with it, but we do not have to yield to it. To think that the human intellect or natural aptitude has some qualities that will aid us in acquiring grace, fighting the good fight of faith, or preparing to be with the Lord, is to deny the clear affirmation: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom 7:18).

There is this driving compulsion to “attend upon the Lord without distraction” (1 Cor 7:35). We can deal with distractions that come from without our persons – wicked men, alluring sights and sounds, etc. But when there is “another law” WITHIN warring against the law of our mind, that is quite another matter. In that circumstance we must have access to another mind – “the mind of Christ,” or “the mind of the Lord” (Rom 11:34). That is the secret to being renewed in the spirit of our mind (Eph 4:23).

Paul’s “mind” (“my mind,” Rom 7:23) describes the regenerated part of His person. It was, in fact, “the mind of Christ,” which is the ONLY valid “mind” in the Kingdom of God. That is where he served God, for the remaining part of him was incapable of serving the Lord. Paul spoke for every regenerated person when he declared, “for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh” (Phil 3:3, NASB). Even though that deals a devastating blow to much of what calls itself “Christian,” it remains the truth, and is to be embraced. Adam and his lineage have been written off, and are in no way acceptable to God. A new genealogy must be established in which ones primary association is with Christ, not with Adam.

Chapter 14 - THE MIND OF THE FLESH

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 14 of 34

THE MIND OF THE FLESH

"Because THE CARNAL MIND is enmity against God: for IT IS NOT SUBJECT to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom 8:7)

"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 8:5)

I cannot leave this aspect of our study without referring to the extended commentary of the Holy Spirit on the "mind of the flesh," which is the opposite of "the mind of Christ." Some speak of "the mind of Christ" as though it belonged exclusively to the Apostles, or were optional in Kingdom life. They will allow the individual to lack "the mind of Christ," and still be a "Christian." God makes no such allowance.

The "carnal mind" is the fleshly mind – the mind that cannot think beyond the circumference of "this present evil world," from which Jesus has delivered us (Gal 1:4). In the place of "carnal mind," other versions read, "mind set on the flesh" (NASB), "sinful mind" (NIV), "the mind controlled by the old nature" (CJB), "wisdom of the flesh" (GENEVA), "the carnal mind set" (MIT). This is the mind that, in its very best state is like Adam's mind after he sinned. It is said of this kind of mind, it "is enmity against God" (KJV), "hostile toward God" (NASB), "opposite to God" (BBE), "is an enemy to God" (DOUAY), "is antagonistic toward God" (MIT), "is at war with God" (NIRV), "is opposed to God" (NJB), "is always hostile to God" (NLT). The Spirit adds, "for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

It may be a supposedly scientific mind like that of Charles Darwin, the father of the Theory of Evolution – but it is still hostile toward God, and cannot be subject to the Law of God. It may be the mind of a theorist like Sigmund Freud, noted for his extended studies of the human mind – but it is still hostile toward God, and cannot be subject to the Law of God. It may be the mind of a religious organizer, a developer of theoretic recovery programs, or an imaginative "worship leader" – but it is still hostile toward God, and cannot be subject to the Law of God.

Any individual whose mind is not governed by the Holy Spirit, and in strict harmony with the Scriptures, is a carnal person who is hostile toward God, and is not subject to the Law of God.

The Holy Spirit continues, "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. FOR TO BE CARNALLY MINDED IS DEATH; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh CANNOT PLEASE GOD. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell IN YOU. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, HE IS NONE OF HIS. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom 8:5-10).

The "Spirit of Christ" and "the mind of Christ" are so entwined that they cannot be separated. There simply is no room in the life of faith for any other mind. No other mind-set is accepted. In fact, any

other framework of thought is “hostile against God.” It not only is an affront to God, He is pledged to destroy it. As it is written, “For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate’” (1 Cor 1:19, NIV).

All of this is perfectly reasonable to faith. Salvation, after all, is deliverance from the state of nature, which has been corrupted by sin. How is it possible for the realm from which we have been delivered to offer us spiritual advantages? Were it possible for such to occur, we would not have required salvation in the first place. This is so elementary, that anyone who truly believes on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ will see it.

Chapter 15 - THE NECESSITY FOR THE REVEALING SPIRIT

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.”

Lesson 15 of 34

THE NECESSITY FOR THE REVEALING SPIRIT

“Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God.”

Humanity has fallen because of sin, and consequently, following the entrance of sin, no person who has even been on earth could of himself know the things of God. They cannot be discovered by observing nature – “the things that are made.” (Rom 1:20) – even though God has made His power and Godhead known in them. Perusing the whole human race from beginning to end God said, “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God” (Rom 3:11). Even after God had revealed His Law to Israel through Moses (John 1:17), and “by the disposition of angels” (Acts 7:53), they did not know His judgments (Psa 147:20). He said to them, “thou hast not known Me” (Isa 45:4), and declared “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa 55:8-9).

With a Divinely authored Textbook, they had not come to know Him or be acquainted with His ways. That nation proves that the things of God cannot be learned or appropriated academically. There is nothing in “nature” that can properly assess and know “the things of the Spirit of God.”

We have shown the poverty of “flesh” to yield anything profitable in the spiritual realm. There is, therefore, a necessity for the revealing Spirit. Our text states that the “things God has prepared for them that love Him” have been revealed “by the Spirit.” Whether that revelation is the initial one received by the Apostles and prophets, or the opening of that revelation to believers, is of no consequence. Sin has brought VANITY into the world: "The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are VANITY " (Psa 94:11). "Man is like to VANITY: his days are as a shadow that passeth away" (Psa 144:4). "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the VANITY of their mind" (Eph 4:17).

No individual can extricate the knowledge of God from the category of people of whom it is said, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa 55:8-9). Therefore, in Christ Jesus, "we have received, NOT the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT WE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor 2:12).

Once the revelation was given to the Apostles, an understanding of what was made known was also required. This is because what was revealed to them was outside the circumference of nature. Therefore Paul wrote of the Ephesians receiving the grace of God so they could understand what he had written to them: "If ye have heard of THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, YE MAY UNDERSTAND MY KNOWLEDGE in the mystery of Christ)" (Eph 3:4).

There is no point in this world at which the Holy Spirit ceases to be operative in spiritual life. He did not go back to heaven once He had revealed the things God had prepared for them that love Him. The purpose of the revelation was not so the Apostles could merely speak them, but so they could be “known,” or personally realized. Therefore Paul prayed, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might BY HIS SPIRIT in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, MAY BE ABLE to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which PASSETH KNOWLEDGE, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph 3:16-19).

– Given O. Blakely

Chapter 16 - MAN’S THREEFOLD NATURE

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know

them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

Lesson 16 of 34

MAN'S THREEFOLD NATURE

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess 5:23).

The differentiation between the "spirit" and the "soul" cannot be made intellectually, or by academic definition. Only the living Word of God can precisely distinguish them. Therefore it is written, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the DIVIDING ASUNDER OF SOUL AND SPIRIT, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb 4:12). Further, this is not done abstractly, but by the Lord with whom "all things are naked and opened" (Heb 4:13).

The threefold nature of man is relevant at this point. The totality of man is revealed as "spirit, soul, and body" (1 Thess 5:23). The essential person is the human "spirit." The unseen expressive part that is immediately related to the body is the "soul." Some have said this expressive part consists of the intellect the emotion, and the will. "The body" is "vile" because it has been used to express rebellion and sin.

The entire person will ultimately be saved. The "spirit" is saved by regeneration. The soul is to be sanctified and kept holy, together with the body. Both the soul and the body will be "saved," or "redeemed," at the resurrection of the dead. So far as the sanctification of the soul is concerned, we are told, "the engrafted Word," is "able to save the soul." That is, it is able to make human expression good and profitable in the sight of God.

Together, the spirit, soul, and body, comprise the individual. These parts do not all have the same weight, however. They are much like the tabernacle of old: the "most holy" place (Ex 26:33-34, the holy place (Ex 26:33), and the outer court (Ex 27:9-19; 40:8). The body parallels the "outer court." The "tabernacle," or structure, consisted of two parts, the holy place, and the most holy place. The "soul" parallels the Holy Place, and the "spirit" the Most Holy Place. The book of Hebrews describes it this way: "For there was a tabernacle made; THE FIRST, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called THE HOLIEST OF ALL; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly" (Heb 2-9:5).

The body parallels "the outer court," where exposure to the presence of God Himself was not realized, and intercession was not made. The soul parallels the holy place, where limited activity was found in relation to God. The spirit, however, parallels the holy of holies, where contact with the Living God was realized. There is where the communication took place. There is where the Presence of God was found.

There was no direct association with God in the outer court, or the first section of the Tabernacle – the Holy Place. The High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place only once a year, and there he made

atonement for the sins of the people (Ex 30:10; Heb 9:7). There, symbolically effective contact was made with God. However, during the time of the Old Covenant, even at that annual time, there was no cleansing of the conscience, or remission of sins (Heb 10:1-4).

Similarly, the human spirit is indwelt and sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God. Man's essential part is also referred to as "the heart" – "heart," as in central part. For the believer, that is where the Holy Spirit is sent: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal 4:6). That is the part of man that is made new – a "new heart" (Ezek 36:22). That is where the love of God is shed abroad (Rom 5:5). Obedience is rendered to God "from the heart" (Rom 6:17). Those in Christ have believed "with the heart" (Rom 10:10). That is where "the earnest," or down payment, "of the Spirit" is placed (2 Cor 1:22; Gal 4:6). That is where the "epistle of Christ" is written (2 Cor 3:3). The "heart" is where the light of God is shined (2 Cor 4:6). The "heart" is where Christ dwells (Eph 3:17). Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit come to clarify the things of God, and to enable us to experience Divine fellowship. They come as Revealers because of the spiritual destitution caused by sin (1 John 2:20,27; 5:20). We need the Spirit to reside in us, and the Lord Jesus to abide in us, because "the flesh profits nothing."

When we speak of "the mind of Christ," we are NOT speaking of something the body can possess. Our "souls," the expressive part associated with our bodies, are also unsuitable to contain "the mind of Christ." Your soul, which would otherwise drift away from God, requires an "anchor" to stabilize it (Heb 6:19). And it has to be "purified" (1 Pet 1:22). "The mind of Christ" is associated with your spirit – your essential person, which has been "created" anew in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:10; 4:24). There, and there alone, is where you can think like Jesus.

This is why a religion that centers in bodily activities, and man's natural thinking-aptitude, is off-center, and fundamentally unprofitable.

Chapter 17 - WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (2 Cor 2:11-16)

WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (2 Cor 2:15-16)

Now we come to the textual affirmation – “WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” I am well aware of the academic dexterity that has been employed to rid us of the implications of this text. Paul is not saying, “We have the Bible.” Neither is he saying, “We have the Scriptures” – although we certainly do, indeed, have the Scriptures. Of course, those to whom Paul was writing also had the Scriptures. That the Scriptures are more than a mere library of information is made clear by this Divine affirmation: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is A DISCERNER of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb 4:12). Again it is written, “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 3:15).

Confirming that the required power is not found in the text itself, Jesus said to a group of ardent students of Scripture, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life” (John 5:39-40). The Scriptures testify, but, of themselves, they do not give “ears to hear” (Deut 29:4). They testify, but they do not give understanding (Eph 1:18; Col 1:9). Relating the matter to our text, a person can have the Scriptures, yet fail to have “the mind of Christ.”

At some point, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit Themselves have to enter into the matter, impacting the individual, and granting a perspective that cannot be possessed without their influence. God gives the spirit of wisdom and revelation (Eph 1:17). Jesus teaches (Eph 4:20-21), and gives us “an understanding” (1 John 5:20). The Holy Spirit, or “Anointing,” also teaches US (1 John 2:20,27). It is the Scriptures that they open, giving discernment to the readers and hearers. However, and you must be clear about this, NO ONE CAN COME TO A “KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH” (1 Tim 2:4; 3:7; 10:26) INDEPENDENTLY OF DIVINE INFLUENCE. If a person desires enlightenment, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,” the enlightenment of “the eyes of your understanding,” knowing “the hope of His calling,” and what is “the riches of the glory of His [God’s] inheritance in the saints” (Eph 1:17-19), he has to receive such things from “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory” (Eph 1:17). That is involved in having “the mind of Christ.”

It is true that Paul confirms his apostleship in this text – but that is not all that he does. He did receive his message from the Spirit of God. The question is whether or not this text is limited to the Apostles. When Paul says “we,” does he mean “we Apostles?” If so, why did he not say that? He spoke after that manner in another place. “And by referring to this, when you read YOU can UNDERSTAND my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit” (Eph 3:4-5). When it comes to what God speaks, it must be coupled with an “ear to hear.” When it comes to what He does, there has to be “eyes to see.” When it comes to what He has

revealed in the Scriptures, there has to be a certain mind-set – “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:16), a renewed mind (Rom 12:2; Eph 4:23), a “sound mind” (2 Tim 1:7), a mind that is “girded up, sober, and dominated by hope (1 Pet 1:13). The person must have the “same mind” on key matters that Jesus had (1 Pet 4:1). Believers are told, "Let THIS mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

In order for Paul to communicate the truth given to him, he himself had to possess “the mind of Christ.” In order for the readers of his word to comprehend what he wrote, they also had to “have the mind of Christ.”

Chapter 18 - TWO ASPECTS OF THE TEXT

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (2 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 18 of 34

TWO ASPECTS OF THE TEXT

There are two aspects of this text. First, the source of the message, and second the apprehension of the message. Paul affirms that both the SOURCE of the message and the APPREHENSION of it, require the Spirit of God.

THE SOURCE OF THE MESSAGE

Paul clearly states, “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost THE HOLY GHOST TEACHETH.” Earlier in Second Corinthians Paul wrote, "But God hath REVEALED them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:10-11).

To the Ephesians he wrote, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is NOW REVEALED unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph 3:4-5).

The message of Paul and the Apostles was not their conclusion after reading the Scriptures. It is true that men can form conclusions from the Word of God, but those conclusions are not the message that sanctifies, frees, and empowers. Further, the message is spoken "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor 2:13) – "combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words" (NASB).

This necessarily means that the message revealed by God, and taught in words that the Holy Spirit teaches, cannot be disbelieved or ignored with impunity. Whatever men may think about their imagined freedom, they are not free to reject what God has revealed. The rejection of the truth is due to the delusion of the devil, not the freedom of men. If men refuse to receive what God has said, Satan begins to work in them, because they are occupying the realm of darkness, over which he rules.

THE APPREHENSION OF THE MESSAGE

Secondly, the wisdom of men is so corrupt it cannot comprehend the truth of God, even after their wisdom has been confronted with a revealed message. The world's reaction to Jesus, the Truth incarnate, confirms this to be the case (John 1:10). Nature has been so corrupted that it cannot discover the things "God has prepared for them that love Him." After being in the presence of the Christ for three years, the real Jesus eluded even the Apostles (John 14:8-9). Bringing the truth of God within the proximity of the "natural man" does not make it discernible. Apologetics, a facet of human wisdom, cannot produce faith, which comes "by hearing, and hearing [comes] by the Word of the Lord" (Rim 10:17). Human wisdom, however refined it may be, does not hold the key that unlocks the message given by God.

The Apostle confirms this to be the case when he says, "which things we also speak, NOT in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Cor 2:13-14, NASB). Mind you, the "natural man" cannot "ACCEPT the things of the Spirit of God," even when spiritual thoughts are combined with spiritual words! Such words are "spiritually discerned." Other versions read, "judged" (American Standard), "comprehended" (Common English), "evaluated" (Holman Christian Standard), "examined" (Darby), "ascertained" (Idiomatic Translation), "understood" (New International Readers), "assessed" (New Jerusalem), and "spiritually discerned and estimated, and appreciated" (Amplified).

There can be no question about what the text is saying! Men must appropriate another mind – a new mind – "THE MIND OF CHRIST."

Chapter 19 - APPRAISING ALL THINGS

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but

which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 19 of 34 APPRAISING ALL THINGS

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Cor 2:15).

Other versions read, "appraises all things" (New American Standard), "makes judgments about all things" (New International)"discern all things" (New Revised Std), "comprehend everything" (Common English), "can evaluate everything" (Complete Jewish Bible), "can assess the value of everything" (New Jerusalem), "discusseth all things" (Tyndale).

The lexical meaning of the word translated "judgeth" is, "to investigate, examine, inquire into, scrutinize, sift, question " (Thayer), "to try to learn the nature or truth of something by the process of careful study, evaluation and judgment - 'to examine carefully, to investigate, to study thoroughly" (Louw-Nida). In other words "he that is spiritual" has the aptitude and resources required to thoroughly examine something to determine its truth and relevancy. This is not something he that is "spiritual" SHOULD do, but something they actually DO. Again, the "spiritual" person is one who possesses the Holy Spirit, which is given to those who are in Christ. It is to be understood that he that is "spiritual" grows and advances in this holy aptitude.

Paul continues his explanation of this situation. "But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man" (1 Cor 2:15, NASB). Indeed, is this confined to the Apostles? The very thought is an absurdity! Spirituality is something experienced by every person "joined to the Lord." It is the result of the work of the Spirit, enabling the individual to discern the message of the Spirit. Furthermore, such a person cannot be understood by those who do not have the Spirit.

The message was not only given by the Spirit, it is comprehended through His indispensable ministry. Without the Holy Spirit, Christ cannot dwell in your heart by faith. As it is written, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS BY FAITH; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, MAY BE ABLE . . ." (Eph 3:16-19). And the revelation of the things "God has prepared for them that love Him" cannot be "spiritually discerned" by those who do not have the Holy Spirit.

The things that are comprehended are stated earlier, in First Corinthians 2:9-10: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor 2:9-10). It should be evident that this blessing was not confined to the apostles. It is a provision within the scope of salvation, not apostleship alone.

STATED ANOTHER WAY

Permit me to state this another way. The message of Divine provision in Christ cannot be identified with our persons apart from the Spirit of God. There will be no confidence that they belong to us unless we ourselves are “spiritual.” The “day” cannot “dawn” nor the “day star” arise in “your heart” through the means of academic excellence. As it is written, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto YE DO WELL that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, UNTIL the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet 1:19).

Men do not become expert in the “heavenly places” and “the things of the Spirit of God” by means of IQ and mental disciplines. Those imagining this to be the case need only review the prevailing lack of confidence and full assurance in the religious community.

Only the person that is born again can obtain comfort and joy from the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God. Only when this occurs, do we “know the things God has prepared for those that love Him.” Only then do we become spiritually stable, so that we are "no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph 4:14).

Chapter 20 - THE NATURAL MAN VERSUS THE SPIRITUAL MAN

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 20 of 34

THE NATURAL MAN VERSUS THE SPIRITUAL MAN

"But the NATURAL MAN receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Cor 2:14-15)

The “prince of the power of the air” now works “in the children of disobedience” (Eph 2:2). He works in them by seducing them into thinking like he does. However, the devil is not the only spirit at work in the world. The Holy Spirit is also working in the children of obedience, those who are “obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7). He brings “the mind of Christ” to them, clarifying the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit is the “Unction” or “Anointing” that teaches us “all things” (1 John 2:20,27). From the perspective of our text, those “all things” equate to “the mind of Christ.”

THE NATURAL MAN

Notice, Paul does not say the “non-Apostle” cannot receive the “things of the Spirit of God, but the Apostle can.” He speaks of the person confined to nature – the “natural man.” This is the individual that can be traced back to Adam alone. As it is written, “However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the Second Man is from heaven” (1 Cor 15:46-47). The thinking of a real “Christian” is like the thinking of “The Second Man.”

In his Word Pictures, A.T. Robertson well says, “The natural man is the unregenerate man while the spiritual man is the renewed man, born again of the Spirit of God . . . Hence Paul and all spiritual men are superior to those who try and shake their faith in Christ, the mystery of God . . .”

Even the academic community can see Paul the knowledge he has to the Apostles. It is the privilege of all who are in Christ Jesus to think in the same manner, as his teaching proclaims. WHEN

NATURE DOMINATES

It is remarkable how much the “natural man” dominates modern church circles. From the Sunday school classroom to seminary halls, the “natural man” has found a resting place. He is consulted about Biblical interpretation and application. He develops strategies for the church, and provides official credentials that permit their recipients to speak authoritatively. However, all of this has not changed the Word of the Lord. The “natural man” still cannot comprehend “the things of the Spirit of God.” They are still “foolishness” to him.

If we choose to believe the delusion that “the natural man” is compared with non-Apostles, we will have to live with the results. That would mean anyone but an Apostle is absolutely incapable of understanding the things of God. A non-Apostle is shut up to being hostile to God. Paul, in such a case, has arrogantly flaunted his Apostleship in the face of the Corinthian believers, who were incapable of seeing what he saw, and understanding what he understood.

Our text affirms that Paul received the message by the Spirit of God. It did not come from “nature,” so to speak, but from the Spirit. What is more, he delivered that message in “words” taught by the Spirit, thereby maintaining its purity (1 Cor 2:13). Those words were basically derived from Scripture, and elaborated on by inspiration. But that was not the end of the matter. The message received from the Spirit, and delivered through the Spirit, was also comprehended through the Spirit. The “natural man” could not gain spiritual advantage from the message. It was foolishness to him, and thereby he rejected it in favor of other pursuits.

Chapter 21 - LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU!

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know

them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 21 of 34

LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU!

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

Other versions read, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (New International). "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (New Revised Std), "You should think in the same way Christ Jesus does" (New International Readers), "Make your own the mind of Christ Jesus" (New Jerusalem Bible).

The word translated "mind" comes from a word meaning. "To have understanding, be wise; to feel, to think; to have an opinion of one's self, think of one's self, to be modest, not let one's opinion (though just) of himself exceed the bounds of modesty; to think or judge what one's opinion is; to be of the same mind i.e. agreed together, cherish the same views, be harmonious; to direct one's mind to a thing, to seek, to strive for" (Thayer); "think in such a way" (Friberg), and "to employ one's faculty for thoughtful planning, with emphasis upon the underlying disposition or attitude - 'to have an attitude, to think in a particular manner" (Louw-Nida). The word "attitude" is proper if its true definition is accepted: "a settled way of thinking or feeling" (Oxford Dict).

This is not the only text that deals with the mind of the Lord. In salvation, there is no place for any other "mind." Any other frame of reference is appropriately termed "ignorance." Those who do not think like Jesus cannot be trusted to deliver His message – regardless of their credentials. Further, we may speak for the Lord Jesus only to the degree we have embraced His mind. Any other mind disqualifies us from the service of the King!

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5 KJV). The Apostle takes the loftiest aspect of Christ's mind, and imposes it upon the people of God. The staggering consideration of Christ's humiliation is called to mind. He emptied Himself of Divine prerogatives, and assumed the form of a servant, in order to the salvation of humanity. If we are astounded at the mind of an Apostle, what will we do with "the mind of Christ?" Paul says we are to participate in it, not marvel at it! Of course, if we cannot actually have "the mind of Christ," this is a vain word, to be ignored by all of us.

The Spirit is not calling upon us to make a disciplined attempt to think like Jesus, although our effort will surely be involved. This is a summons to appropriation. We are to "LET," or allow, this mind

to be in us. That is another way of saying this is a trait of spiritual life. If we refuse to be dominated by the flesh, and walk in the Spirit, we will thereby allow Christ's mind to dwell in us. If we flirt, as it were, with the world, we will in no way have "the mind of Christ."

Some will object, saying this passage encourages us to have the attitude of Jesus – that it has nothing to do with us really possessing His mind. If this supposition is true, then we are encouraged to develop a Christlike attitude in the energy of nature. This is a Sinaitic approach that leads us into hopelessness. If, in a totally innocent state, Adam fell prey to the wiles of the Devil, what will happen to his progeny? Israel, after witnessing the greatest signs and wonders the world has ever seen, succumbed to unbelief, what will happen to those who seek after their own righteousness, as Israel did (Rom 10:1-4)?

Does anyone really think we can have the “attitude” of Jesus without having the same mind that He had? It is always true that when men approach the Word of God with mere human scholarship in mind, they lose the life-giving properties that it has. Such people always “dumb-down” the Word of God, attempting to drag it into the realm from which Jesus has delivered us (Gal 1:4). The Spirit is not urging us to capitalize on our natural abilities, i.e., those we have received from Adam. They have proved destitute in the crucible of spiritual life. Rather, the Spirit is entreating us to appropriate the nature of Jesus. “LET this mind be in you . . .” Other translations use the term “attitude,” i.e., NASB and NIV, which has led to some confusion. Notice what the message says. This “mind,” which is to be found in us, was in Christ Jesus, “Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped” (Phil 2:5).

Do not miss the weight of this statement! We are admonished to possess the same mind, or, as some prefer, “attitude,” as the One Who was “in the form of God,” and was “equal” in all respects to the Father! Who is the individual that supposes nature can provide the resources to do this? Can Divine qualities be copied, or emulated? The person who would dare to assume such a thing betrays the smallness of their view of God! Peter reminds us that we “participate” in the Divine nature (2 Pet 1:4). The “mind of Christ” is part of that Nature!

Chapter 22 - ARM YOURSELVES WITH THE SAME MIND!

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 22 of 34

ARM YOURSELVES WITH THE SAME MIND!

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with THE SAME MIND: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin" (1 Pet 4:1 KJV).

Because of the nature of spiritual life, a certain mind-set is required to live within its circumference. This manner of thought protects us in the midst of opposition. Peter speaks of this as the “mind” possessed by Jesus – “The same mind.” As Paul would say, “Let THIS mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5).

This is a discerning mind – one that perceives what God has prepared for them that love Him! Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame,” in anticipation of “the joy set before Him” (Heb 12:1-2). The keen awareness of what God had “prepared” for Him, so to speak, enabled Him to endure the very curse of His Father (Gal 3:10-13) – an undeserved curse considering His wholly righteous Person; a deserved curse, in that the iniquity of us all was laid upon Him (Isa 53:6). Note, Isaiah does not refer to the “iniquities” (plural) of us all, but to the “iniquity” (singular) OF US ALL. That is, the aggregate sin of mankind – all of it from Adam to the end of the world.

Again, you may choose to believe that you yourself can appropriate this “mind” in your own strength and wisdom. That persuasion, however, is a delusion. Arming yourself with the “mind” Jesus possessed presupposes the poverty of natural resources. The “whole armor of God” is also appropriated by the child of God. Mind you, it is appropriated, NOT developed. The “truth,” “righteousness,” “peace,” “faith,” “salvation,” and “Word of God” are appropriated, and are found outside of ourselves (Eph 6:14-17). They are not natural resources. They are not developed, they are OBTAINED. They exist in their totality BEFORE you have them. It is the same with “the mind of Christ,” with which you are to be “armed.”

We are to “arm” ourselves with that same mind, thereby becoming equal to the challenges of life in “this present evil world.” It should not surprise us that Satan would introduce doctrines forbidding us to have that “mind,” affirming that such a mind was given only to the Apostles. Such delusions are to be thrown down with spiritual weaponry (2 Cor 10:5ff). They are unworthy of being entertained by those professing faith in Christ.

Arming yourself with “the same mind”–“the mind of Christ”– will cause the individual to suffer within, and often even without, when temptations come, or when sin is committed. For this reason we are told, “for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin” (1 Pet 4:1). Other versions read, “for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin” (NRSV); “for the death of the flesh puts an end to sin” (BBE); “whoever suffers in the body is done with sin” (NIV); “For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin” (NLT).

Some of the versions miss the point of the text, referring to suffering physically (NIV, NLT). “In the flesh’ is not the same as “in the body of flesh.” The text is saying that when sin afflicts us, we will cease from doing it. That is, the suffering produced by temptation develops within a hatred for sin. We are to receive the instruction of grace which is “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12). When that is actually done, it develops an inveterate hatred of sin. The spiritual alertness it produces causes temptation to sin to be a hurtful intrusion. It is then, and only then, that we “cease from sin.” Jesus lived in this state continually, without a single interruption. As a Man this is how He lived,

unwilling to let anything interrupt His communion with the Father. In our measure, as we “have the mind of Christ,” sin will become so repulsive to us that we will not commit it. The frame of

mind – having “the same mind” – is not a once-for-all transaction. It is to be the continual posture of life. That is the challenge Peter sets before us. While we are in this world, there is a part of us that is to be rejected and crucified – “the flesh” (Gal 5:24), or “the old man” (Eph 4:22). When this is done, sin will not be committed.

Chapter 23 - LIVING WATER THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 23 of 34 LIVING WATER

Jesus spoke of spiritual life as a well of “living water” within. He said to an inquiring woman from Samaria, "If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water" (John 4:10). Again, Jesus said to the multitudes during one of the Jewish Feasts, "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:38-39).

“Living water” is water conducive to life – it promotes and sustains spiritual life. Because it “springs” forth, it is always fresh and refreshing. It is also in abundance, flowing like the mighty river that issued from the wilderness rock, refreshing Israel of old (Exodus 17 and Numbers 20). It is also life- giving, like the river of water that flowed out from the altar of God in Ezekiel’s vision of the healing waters (Ezek 47). Those waters “healed” and made whole everywhere they flowed. They were “living waters.”

What spiritual reality is depicted by the term “living waters?” John informs us that Jesus was speaking about the Holy Spirit, Who would be given to believers when Jesus was glorified. I suggest to you this is involved in “the mind of Christ.” Paul associates “the mind of Christ” with being “spiritual”– having the ability to discern the “things of the Spirit of God.”

It is the Holy Spirit that gives us “the mind of Christ.” Whether we are speaking of an Apostle receiving the initial message, or you comprehending the message, the Cause is the same. The Holy Spirit is the Agent, and the “mind of Christ” is the means. Remember, the only Man fully recognized

by God is the Lord Jesus Christ. We are received by virtue of our identity with Him (Eph 1:6). Too, the only mind God acknowledges is “the mind of Christ.” Any other mind is simply unacceptable.

Spiritual mindedness is what brings life to the believer. Without a spiritual mind, spirituality is only an imagination! The person who does not think in accord with the Holy Spirit is simply not spiritual, profession notwithstanding! Being “spiritual” involves more than an outward regimentation, although that is the fruit of being spiritual. Being “spiritual” includes death to the world order, and sensitivity to God (Rom 6:11).

Life involves emotion, but it is not emotion. Spiritual life is joyful receptivity in the Presence of the Almighty. It is involvement with God – and it comes through the faculty of spiritual mindedness – having “the mind of Christ.” That “mind” is like a cleansing river that flows through the believer. It brings true perspective and rationality. It broadens the understanding and enables the individual to see “the invisible God” and an eternal “inheritance” that is “reserved in heaven” (Heb 11:27; 1 Pet 1:4). Spiritual life is also like an inward river that flows out, testifying to the marvelous work of God and its impact upon the lives of those possessing this inner river.

Chapter 24 - THE POWER OF CHRIST EXPERIENCED THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 24 of 34

THE POWER OF CHRIST EXPERIENCED

“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor 12:9-10).

The “power of Christ” can, indeed, be coercive – like driving demons out of those dominated by them – but the demons were subservient to Jesus (Mk 1:25; 5:9; 9:25). He forced a raging sea to be calm, and commanded a harsh wind to cease blowing (Mk 4:39). It can cause the multiplication of visible things – like turning water into wine (John 2:7-10), and multiplying bread (Matt 14:19; 15:36-37).

In the experience of salvation, however, Christ's power is not coercive, nor does it operate within the believer independently of volition and personal involvement. If this is not the case, we have Divine power sustaining us without the interplay of the regenerated spirit – something even surface reasoning compels us to deny. First, within the framework of His power, the people become “willing” (Psa 110:3). They are brought to a point where they earnestly want what Jesus gives. An example of this taking place is seen in Saul of Tarsus. Though he was an avid persecutor of the church, he experienced some inward turmoil. The glorified Jesus referred to this when He said to Saul, “it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,” or “goads” (Acts 9:5). That was a prelude to his readiness to receive salvation.

In the working of salvation, no person is “delivered from the power of darkness” that does not want to be delivered. Nor, indeed, is anyone translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son who has no desire for such a translation. It is true that the Spirit is instrumental in preparing a person for salvation

– convincing of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come (John 16:8-10). That is because “the power of Christ” is not experienced in salvation until the people are willing. This manner was demonstrated in Israel's deliverance from Egypt. They came out by the mighty hand of God – but not until they wanted to come out, and knew very well they could not do it by their own power or ability. God was surely involved in all of that preparatory work – but it was because His salvation is not carried out by coercion – forcing it to take place, even though the people do not want to be saved.

“The power of Christ” exercises great power in the mind. The “power of Christ” does not rely upon human initiative, but works in concert with it. The chief asset we possess when kept by Divine power is that of our renewed mind. That power enables us to maintain Divine perspective under great stress. The human spirit is sustained primarily through spiritual understanding, or faith. Such things as “contentment,” “peace,” and “joy” are all realized in our thoughts. They are evidence of Divine “power,” and are an aspect of “the mind of Christ.”

We possess the “power of Christ” when we have His mind. That power is for the edification of God's people, as well as our own spiritual stability. I will go so far as to say, the individual that lacks “the mind of Christ” also lacks spiritual power. In fact, such are spiritually impotent. We possess spiritual power ONLY to the degree that our thoughts are in accord with the Lord Jesus Christ!

Chapter 25 - CHRIST DWELLS IN OUR HEARTS THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he

himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 25 of 34

CHRIST DWELLS IN OUR HEARTS

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ MAY dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love . . ." (Eph 3:16-17).

One of the great accomplishments of salvation is the indwelling Christ. How marvelous that He can take up residence within the believer. Jesus promised, "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will MANIFEST MYSELF to him . . . and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and MAKE OUR ABODE with him" (John 14:21,23).

It is the indwelling Christ that is our "hope of glory" – "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27).

Perhaps you have heard the saying, "Ask Jesus to come into your heart." This is a saying borne out of spiritual ignorance. Such a request is nowhere found or suggested in Scripture. Christ, with the Father, takes up Their abode in the one so described: "if man love Me, He will keep My words" (John 14:23). Men do not ask God and Christ to do this. This is what They do when the individual is that kind of person. Further, keeping Christ's words involves responding properly to what He told His Apostles to tell the people: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). The men He commissioned to preach the Gospel expressed it this way: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Jesus Himself assesses the real nature of an individual's response to those words, and does what He promised.

The issue is not receiving Christ, but Christ abiding, or remaining, in the individual. Christ does not remain where He is not wanted or obeyed. That is strongly confirmed in His earthly ministry. When Paul addressed this matter of the indwelling Christ, he made clear that the real thing that is needed is CHRIST RECEIVING US: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as CHRIST ALSO RECEIVED US to the glory of God" (Rom 15:7). That is the point at which we are said to have "received Christ" (Col 2:6) – not as a response to our request, but because of our response to the Gospel.

When it comes to the matter of Christ dwelling in us, the teaching is clear. Such an indwelling cannot be obtained automatically, or without Divine assistance. A short man-created prayer will not get the job done! As a matter of fact, there is not a single instance or suggestion of anyone being led in prayer to be saved. We have specific conversions recorded about Pentecost (Acts 2:38-47), and they resulted in the Lord adding the people to the church (Acts 2:47). There were many

conversions in the city of Samaria as a result of Philip's preaching (Acts 8:12). We also have an example of some praying women being saved (Acts 16:13-15), and a Philippian jailor and his household who were saved, after He asked what to do to be saved (Acts 16:30-31). Prayer is not mentioned in any of these instances – or any other case. The word of Jesus is, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," NOT "he that prayeth and is baptized."

Here is the teaching of the Lord on the matter. It was revealed to Paul, and he, in turn, made it known to believers – and only to believers. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would GRANT YOU, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might BY HIS SPIRIT in the inner man;

That Christ MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS BY FAITH." The purpose for this marvelous indwelling is clearly stated: "that ye, being ROOTED AND GROUNDED in love, May be ABLE TO COMPREHEND with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; AND TO KNOW the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, THAT YE MIGHT BE filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph 3:14-19).

The indwelling Christ, in the individual who has been "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," is the proper environment for having "the mind of Christ," and is indispensable to spiritual life and growth. We know by revelation that this cannot occur in our flesh, or lower nature. It is a product of "the mind of Christ," or being "filled with all the fulness of God."

It CANNOT BE CONFIRMED that the person who is not advancing in the matter of spiritual comprehension has Christ dwelling within – and comprehension is an essential aspect of a godly mind. This is not something that we are to judge in others, but rather is something we must know of ourselves. Further, even when the individual is "strengthened with might by the Holy Spirit," Christ dwells within "BY faith" – which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). Other versions read, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (NIV); Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see" (NLT).

I want to emphasize that the evidence of Christ dwelling within us is found in our thoughts. Where thoughts are unaffected, there has been no new birth. It is just that simple. When the Lord Jesus Christ is possessed (and He does dwell within our hearts by faith – Ephesians 3:16-17), He brings His mind. If Christ is really "in you" (2 Cor 13:5), His "mind" is included in the experience. Further, if Christ is really dwelling in you, He is at work, doing what He has been appointed to do. That appointment is spelled out in First John 5:20: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, and eternal life" (1 John 5:20). If this is not experienced, then in what sense can Christ possibly be "in us?" And if we are not growing in comprehension, spiritual understanding, and godly wisdom, what advantage has (supposedly) receiving Jesus into your heart given?

Chapter 26 - THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELLING IN US RICHLY
THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 26 of 34

THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELLING IN US RICHLY

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col 3:16)

The richness of the Word of Christ is discovered in our insightful meditations. Because these thought patterns are actually expressions of “the mind of Christ,” the Word is called “the Word of Christ.” As it is written; “Let the word [spoken by] Christ (the Messiah) have its home [in your hearts and minds] and dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom [in spiritual things, and as you sing] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with [His] grace in your hearts. (Col 3:16 Amplified).

The “mind of Christ” is realized in the crucible of Divine fellowship. In that fellowship an exchange takes place. Our thoughts are exchanged for the thoughts of Jesus. As He makes Himself “manifest” to us, the world, together with its delusions, begins to wane. We thus begin to see things from Christ’s perspective, and not from that of “the flesh.” It is at this point that we become profitable to our brothers and sisters in Christ. That is when we can speak to one another in edification, building up one another in the faith.

This is more than learning some new facts, although that is involved. Neither can you appropriate spiritual perspective through mere human disciplines. Heavenly realities can only be perceived with heavenly assistance. That is when God enables us to "be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col 1:9).

This comes as Jesus “manifests,” or makes Himself known to you (John 14:21). It is then that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," gives “unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph 1:17-19). That is when “the word of Christ” is dwelling in you “richly.” Other versions read, “in all wealth: (BBE), “abundantly” (DOUAY), “plenteously” (GENEVA), “profusely” (MIT), and “like a rich treasure” (NIRV).

The “word of Christ,” which is “the mind of Christ” expressed, is calculated to make you wise, so that you can handle the Word correctly, as God intends for it to be handled (2 Tim 2:15). No person, however educated they may be, can properly expound the Scriptures if they do not “have the mind of Christ, or the word of Christ is not dwelling in them richly.

When the Word of Christ is dwelling in you richly, you are empowered to strengthen Christ’s brothers and sisters by insightful expressions. That is an outcome of your fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9), and possession of “the mind of Christ.”

Chapter 27 - JOINED TO THE LORD THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 27 of 34

JOINED TO THE LORD

“But he that is joined unto the Lord IS ONE SPIRIT.” (1 Cor 6:17).

The possession of “the mind of Christ” is not experienced from a distance. It is not theoretical or hypothetical. It is not like having a library of books available to you. The relationship of the saved with the Savior is a LIVING one, with very real, practical, and ongoing benefits. It is not something to merely talk about, but is intended to be enjoyed and nurtured by faith. It is the result of being brought together with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prior to the statement of our text (1 Cor 6:17), the Spirit reminded the Corinthians of their status in Christ Jesus: “Know ye not that the unrighteous SHALL NOT inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such WERE SOME OF YOU: but ye ARE WASHED, but ye are SANCTIFIED, but ye are JUSTIFIED in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor 6:11). What a marvelous transition – from being in a condition that did not allow one to inherit the kingdom of God, to a state where we are WASHED – cleansed from all sin and what disqualified us for union with Christ. Now those in Christ have been SANCTIFIED – removed from a condemned realm, and set apart for God. Now we are JUSTIFIED – disassociated with iniquity, and given the righteousness of God.

And what is the purpose for these marvelous Divine accomplishments? Is it just so we can be “Christians?” Is the forgiveness of sins the end of the matter? It is obvious that multitudes actually think this is true. They imagine that NOT being condemned is really the whole of the salvation. But this is not a proper perception, and congregations of professing believers must be told this. God did not put us in Christ so He could help us with our problems, and cause us to realize our dreams. Such objectives did not require “the Word” to be “made flesh” (John 1:14), be tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15), lay down His life a ransom for many (Matt 20:28), raise from the dead (Acts 13:30), ascend back into heaven (Eph 4:8), be enthroned at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33; 5:31), be made the Head over all things to the church (Eph 1:22), and be our “Great High Priest” (Heb 4:14).

Is there any person who imagines all of that was required for Jesus to help us with our problems, secure our marriages, and have food and clothing, and perhaps even be rich? Those are all things angels could do – if that is the kind of thing God is doing in salvation. The purpose of salvation is not to optimize our life in the world, but to orient us for being in the presence of the Lord forever in “the world to come.”

We are not the heart of the Kingdom, JESUS IS! The objective of God is to make believers like His Son – conforming them to His image (Rom 8:29-30). It is to enable them to fulfill this marvelous word: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THE WORLD" (1 John 4:17). At the very best, ones love for God is infantile until “as He [Jesus] is, so are we in the world.”

The unity we enjoy with Christ – being called into His fellowship (1 Cor 1:9), is so remarkable men often struggle to believe it. Whole bodies of theology have been developed to explain a supposed gulf between Jesus and His people.

The Spirit puts to silence such pointless speculations. The involvements of being “one spirit” with the Lord are challenging. We have actually been united with Christ! WE ARE “IN CHRIST” (Rom 8:1; 12:5; 1 Cor 1:2,30; 1 Cor 16:24; 2 Cor 1:21; 2 Cor 2:14; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 3:28; Eph 1:1; 2:6,10,13; Phil 1:11; 1 Thess 2:14, etc.). Further, CHRIST IS IN US (Rom 8:10; 2 Cor 13:5; Gal 4:19; Col 1:27).

Part of that glorious union with Christ is, “we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:16). We are admonished to allow this mind to be in us, ridding ourselves of other mind-sets: "LET this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5). That is why God has washed, sanctified, and justified you.

Chapter 28 - A QUESTION THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man

receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 28 of 34 A QUESTION

I would pose a question to you. IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE JOINED TO THE LORD AND NOT POSSESS HIS MIND? It is to be understood that this is a mind-set that grows and advances when one is living by faith and walking in the Spirit. If it is possible to be in Christ and yet not possess His mind to some degree, what are the advantages of being in Christ? What is the difference between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion if our basic thinking has not been changed? How does being in Christ differ from being under the Law if it is still true, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD" (Isa 55:8)? – and "thoughts, or thinking, has to do with the mind.

How can the Lord reason with us if we think differently than Him? If we do not experience the "renewing of the mind" (Rom 12:2), how can we possibly "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom 12:2)? If our thinking is at a variance with God's thoughts, how can we "be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph 3:18-19) – or is such a mind-set an option without which we can remain acceptable to God?

How can we have our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb 5:14), if our thinking is out of sync with that of God and Christ? Exactly what is the new birth if our thinking is not altered by it.

From another perspective, is it possible to come into harmony with Christ in our thinking by sheer natural abilities? Can we train ourselves to think like Jesus? Are men capable of originating a special course that teaches people how to think in a spiritually sound manner? If so, then why did Jesus say, "Ye MUST be born again" (John 3:7).

The answer to these questions should be obvious. Those who insist we cannot have the mind of Christ have exalted the flesh, convinced that it is capable of doing what is requisite without the re-creation of God Almighty. Those who are in Christ are appropriately described as "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:10). Be sure of this, no person can walk in the "good works" God has ordained if their hearts and minds have not been changed. The "works" in which God has ordained that we "should walk" involve the possession of a new heart and mind. They require our minds to be synchronized with "the Mind of the Lord" (Lev 24:12; Rom 11:34; 1 Cor 2:16). That synchronization can extend no further than our actual participation in the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God (Rom 12:1-2) – which participation is imperative. If we are not involved in what God is doing, He is not profitably involved in what we are doing.

Those who lack “the mind of Christ” are being governed by unbelief. By that very act of unbelief, they have overestimated their natural powers, which have been blighted by sin. Our minds can be spiritually productive ONLY as they are united with Christ. That experience is being “joined to the Lord,” and thereby possessing His mind.

Chapter 29 - CHRIST’S PRAYER FOR OUR PARTICIPATION THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of

no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 29 of 34

CHRIST’S PRAYER FOR OUR PARTICIPATION

On the evening of His betrayal, our Lord’s mind was occupied with considerations of Himself and of His people. He prayed with God’s “eternal purpose” in mind, and did so with great power. FIRST HE PRAYED FOR HIMSELF: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17:5). His earthly ministry in Person had been completed, and now He sought the glory He had before coming into the world. His ministry from heaven would require that glory – the ministry of High Priest (Heb 3:1; 4:14; 6:20), which would involve His mediation (Heb 12:24), and intercession (Heb 7:25).

SECOND HE PRAYED "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them

. . . Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, as we are . . . I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil . . . Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John 17:9-18).

THIRD HE PRAYED FOR THOSE WHO WOULD BELIEVE ON HIM through the apostles’ words: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17:23).

This is one of the most abused passages in Christendom. Myriads suppose that Jesus was praying for the organic unity of His people, i.e., that they would work together in harmony and love. Of

course, that is not to be despised. One cannot walk with Jesus, however, and avoid such marvelous unity. The Lord was primarily praying that those who believed on Him through the Apostle's word would be "ONE" – united. And how is that unity to take place? Is it by wearing the same sectarian name? Indeed not. It is by having "THE SAME MIND" (1 Cor 1:10; Phil 4:2; 1 Pet 4:1). That mind is "the mind of Christ."

Jesus knew that if men did not think like Him, they could not work with Him. He knew that if those who believed were not together, the world would not believe – no matter how much supposed labor was expended to make that happen. This should not surprise us. The nominal church has only produced more factions, more division, and more disagreement – and God does not work for good in such an environment – just as Jesus did not work in the environment of the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Lawyers. If you wanted to hear Jesus, you did not follow the leaders of the various Jewish factions.

There is no way to get around this requirement, or to pretend it is not there: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all SPEAK THE SAME THING, and that there be NO DIVISIONS among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in THE SAME MIND AND IN THE SAME JUDGMENT" (1 Cor 1:10).

Chapter 30 - JESUS PRAYED FOR THE ULTIMATE CAUSE

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 30 of 34

JESUS PRAYED FOR THE ULTIMATE CAUSE

Jesus prayed for the ultimate cause of all unity, all works, all growth, and all preparation for glory. His prayer was for our participation in the Godhead! Observe, He was not praying for the Apostles alone, but for those who would believe on Him through their word. That includes you! "Neither pray I for these alone, but FOR THEM ALSO WHICH SHALL BELIEVE ON ME THROUGH THEIR

WORD; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one IN US: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which thou gavest Me I have given them; THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in

Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:20-23).

It is pure folly to imagine that the world will believe that God has sent Christ if professed believers are themselves not "one." The disunity that is glaringly present in Christendom prohibits the world from believing God sent Christ Jesus. The irony of the situation is that every person who is born again begins "in Christ," being also called into His fellowship. They begin reconciled to God, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Every born again person commences like the early believers, being of "one heart and one soul" with those who have believed (Acts 4:32). Every believer begins being united with all other true believers, and is admonished, "Endeavoring to KEEP the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3).

What has divided believers is teaching – false doctrines and erroneous emphases. Believers are not one because their teaching is not single. Men have allowed that condition to exist for over 1,700 years. Now, there are over 1,400 major divisions in Christendom, with, it is estimated 232,000 minor ones.

Jesus prayed that we might become one with Himself and the Father. Paul called it being "joined to the Lord." This is the place where "the mind of Christ" is appropriated. For the Apostles, that involved receiving the revelation of the things "prepared for them that love" God. For us, it involves believing on Christ because of their word.

The "mind of Christ" is required to receive the revelation AND to discern it. It is a serious error to suppose that the "natural mind" can comprehend the message after it had been given. In fact, Paul affirms that the message – the revealed message – is foolishness to the "carnal mind" (Rom 8:7; 1 Cor 1:18). To argue the point is to waste the time of believers and clutter their minds with meaningless jargon. The Lord has already spoken on this subject, and there simply is no room for any word to the contrary.

Chapter 31 - PUTTING ON THE NEW SELF

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 31 of 34

PUTTING ON THE NEW SELF

"And that ye put on THE NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:24). "And have put on THE NEW MAN, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col 3:10).

The life of faith involves putting on "the new man," or "new self." That "new self" does not simply consist of a set of reformed habits. It involves knowledge and understanding. As it is written, "Do not lie to one another, since you LAID ASIDE the old self with its evil practices, and have PUT ON the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him" (Col 3:9-10, NASB).

If you are in Christ Jesus, there are two differing natures in your body. One is to be "put off," or NOT allowed to dominate your thinking, while the other is to be "put on," or given the precedence in your thinking. It is a principle that was lived out in Israel of old, who occupied a land with enemies in it enemies that had to be subdued.

THE NEW SELF EQUALS "THE MIND OF CHRIST"

The "new man," or "new self," is nothing less than "the mind of Christ." The "old man" has thoughts and ways of which God unequivocally says, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:8-9). Apart from the new birth, this is true of every person who has ever lived. In fact, it is that circumstance that demands the new birth (1 Pet 1:23), regeneration (Tit 3:5), and being created anew (Eph 2:10). The old self is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1), alienated from the life of God (Eph 4:18), "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12). Furthermore, the "sinful nature" (NIV) cannot be changed, improved, or reformed. There is nothing in it that can be made acceptable to God. There is no procedure or set of rules that can cause those who are "alienated and enemies" to be reformed and made acceptable to God (Col 1:21). There must be a "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). This being true, all reform movements, recovery programs, and various forms of moral disciplines can really do nothing more than the Law of God did. They cannot change the essential person. Only the "new man" – the new creation – "is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that CREATED him" (Col 3:10). There is no way to be renewed in knowledge apart from the Person of Christ.

If those that are in Christ are told they cannot have "the mind of Christ," they will not be emboldened to "put on the new self." That is why our adversary, the devil, perpetrates such doctrines. They result in believers going backward instead of forward. The people of God must energetically shun any teaching that suggests Christ, in any of His redemptive capacities, is not available to them – or that the gifts and abilities that enable change were only received by the apostles. Such doctrines have not come from God!

Chapter 32 - KNOWING WHOM WE HAVE BELIEVED

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 32 of 34

KNOWING WHOM WE HAVE BELIEVED

The hallmark of the New Covenant is this; “they shall ALL KNOW ME, from the least to the greatest” (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:11). This is not a promise of information, but of participation. It is not knowing about the Lord, but having spiritual intimacy WITH Him. It involves fellowship with both the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3), and being taught by God the Father (John 6:45), and Jesus the Son (1 John 5:20). An example of the effectiveness of this Divine teaching is found in Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians. "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are TAUGHT OF GOD to love one another" (1 Thess 4:9). That certainly is not an appropriate description of the “churches” of our day, which, generally speaking, have to be constantly taught to love one another.

This Divine teaching results in a personal knowledge in which the character of God Himself is experienced in measure by the believer. The thoughts of God are entertained in the mind of the child of God. There comes an inner awareness of the truth that is so pervasive, convicting, and dominating,

that sin is hated and righteousness is loved. Through the “precious promises” of God [which are teaching], we become “partakers of the Divine nature.” As it is written, "According as His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that BY THESE ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet 1:3-4). There is no legitimate reason for any believer to be lacking in this matter of being “partakers of the Divine nature.” If this is not happening, an inordinate attachment to this present evil world exists.

Seeing the reality of this type of knowledge, Paul willingly abandoned every competing pursuit to know Christ. As he wrote, "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of

Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:7-11, NIV). Further, this was a lifetime pursuit, not a single event that took place at conversion. As he went on to say, "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14, NIV).

Additionally, the Spirit moved him to write that this is actually the standard mind-set in the Kingdom of God: "All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained " (Phil 3:15-16, NIV). That is, with each advance in understanding, we are to shape our lives to conform to what we have come to know.

This was an effective pursuit, as is made clear by Paul's own confession. ". . . for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Tim 1:12, NIV).

I suggest to you that knowing the Lord is the pragmatic way of saying, "we have the mind of Christ." There can be no knowledge of, or intimacy with, the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from thought! Of the ungodly, it is said, "In his pride the wicked does not seek Him; in all his THOUGHTS there is no room for God" (Psa 10:4, NIV). The "mind of Christ" puts God into our thoughts, together with the good things that He has promised to those that love Him. One of the defining marks of real "Christians" is how they think.

Chapter 33 - AN ASPECT OF FAITH

THE MIND OF CHRIST

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; THAT YE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? BUT WE

HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST." (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 33 of 34

AN ASPECT OF FAITH

Possessing “the mind of Christ” is an aspect of faith. Faith, of course, is a quality that influences our thought patterns, perspectives, and expressions. How well Paul stated it to the Corinthians. “But having THE SAME SPIRIT OF FAITH, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore also we speak” (2 Cor 4:13). The “spirit of faith” moves the person with faith to declare what he has seen and embraced. By calling this “the spirit of faith,” he confirms that faith is living, vibrant, and growing. Faith can be increased (Lk 17:5), and grow “exceedingly” (2 Thess 1:3).

I suggest to you that the revealed thoughts of Christ had permeated the mind of Paul. This did not occur by coercion, or without the Apostle’s involvement – but it did occur. The mind can be “willing,” as indicated by the expression “a willing mind” (2 Cor 8:12). Some people speak of knowing and speaking the mind of the Lord as though it was done robotically. They speak of being “slain in the Spirit,” which insinuates a state of unwillingness. The Holy Spirit does not slay, but brings life, alertness, perception, and understanding.

Paul spoke and wrote powerfully because he had “the mind of Christ.” In his measure, which was significant, he thought like Jesus thinks. He diagnosed circumstances like Jesus does. Concerning the great salvation that he expounded, he saw it like Jesus does. He had “the mind of Christ.” The fact that Paul said “WE have the mind of Christ” proves that it was not a unique experience – only for him. The “we” refers to those who were with him, preaching and expounding the same Gospel. They were not apostles like Paul, but, in their measure, they had the same mind – “the mind of Christ.” Paul could send them out, as he did Timothy and Titus, knowing they would preach the same Gospel, and make the same applications, that he did. They had “the mind of Christ.”

Further, because we are urged elsewhere to LET that “mind” dwell in us (Phil 2:5), we know we have not been excluded by this word. Additionally, because we are admonished to “arm” ourselves with this “same mind” (1 Pet 4:1), we see it is not something optional. It is an absolute necessity! Paul addressed two individuals who were at variance in this manner: "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of THE SAME MIND in the Lord" (Phil 4:2). In fact “the unity of the Spirit,” which is to be kept by all believers (Eph 4:3) is a certain way of thinking – having “the mind of Christ.” It is a unity that results from seeing things alike, having the same understanding and comprehension. In Christ Jesus there is no such thing as a valid view that is not harmonious with the whole of truth. If two professed believers are at variance with one another in a particular view, one of them is wrong, and both may possibly be wrong. There is no such thing as variance

in Christ or His body. There are differing measures, but they are all harmonious with one another. There are different insights, but they all blend together. There are facets of truth like there are facets of a diamond. But they are not in opposition to each other. While others haggle about whether or not the text applies to us, why not simply appropriate “the mind of Christ,” and go on your way rejoicing. It is possible for someone like Paul to have such insights they are, as Peter put it, “hard to be understood” (2 Pet 3:16). Those who are “unlearned and unstable wrest” such words, but only destroy themselves in doing so (2 Pet 3:16). Those who are “unlearned and unstable” should not be teaching, and we are not interested in their comments.

Chapter 34 - CONCLUSION

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; **THAT YE MIGHT KNOW** the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? **BUT WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST.**” (1 Cor 2:11-16)

Lesson 34 of 34 CONCLUSION

It is true that the Apostles are unique in the body of Christ. They are set “first” in the body, preeminent because of their proximity to Christ, and the inspiration they received (1 Cor 12:28). However, they are not isolated from the remainder of the body. They are saved “by grace through faith” like the rest of us. They are called to obtain a “blessing” just like you. An “inheritance” is reserved for them in heaven, and also for you. They are “ministers,” not gods. As it is written, “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but **MINISTERS** by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?” (1 Cor 3:5).

We want to make sure we do not make the same mistake as the people of Lystra. “And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you in order that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, **WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM**” (Acts 14:12-16).

This in no way derogates the Apostles, through whom we have believed (John 17:20). Indeed, they

are the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:14), and delivered the basis for our faith (Eph 2:20). We will not allow a theology that diminishes the reality of those things.

What this series is intended to show you is simply this: “the mind of Christ” is an aspect of salvation, as well as inspiration. If we exclude this “mind” from salvation, there is no way that we can be “conformed to the image” of God’s Son, which is God’s predestinated purpose for the saved (Rom 8:29). Without “the mind of Christ,” He cannot be “formed” in us (Gal 4:19).

This truth is clearly stated in another place." . . .God . . . But BY HIS DOING you are in Christ Jesus, who BECAME TO US wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD" (1 Cor 1:28-31).

I am affirming that Jesus becoming our “wisdom” is nothing less than us possessing “the mind of Christ.” If this is not the case, men will always and only “boast” in men, a practice strictly forbidden by God Almighty (1 Cor 1:29; 3:21).

Now, go in the strength of the Lord. As Paul would say, “Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything” (2 Tim 2:7, NASB).

- Given O. Blakely