

# Understanding the Mind

Pastor Luther Walker

The mind is very powerful. The medical trade is again recognizing the importance of the mind in overall mental and physical health, although through secular and worldly religious methodology<sup>1</sup>. It is known that the state of mind directly impacts physical and psychological health and will dramatically influence healing<sup>2</sup>. The importance of the mind is expounded on within Scripture in detail, providing a vast amount of information concerning the uses of the mind and its impact on our everyday lives. What exactly is the mind? The mind is an aspect of intelligence and consciousness manifested as combinations of thoughts, perceptions, memories, emotions, imaginations, desirous wills, and determinations distinct to an individual<sup>3</sup>. Understanding the mind begins with comprehending the human nature. The human nature is comprised of three parts: body, soul, and spirit<sup>4</sup>. The soul and spirit are the sources of emotions<sup>i</sup> and logic<sup>ii</sup> within the human nature. Therefore, the mind is a product of the immaterial elements of a person through which there is a balance between emotions and reason to coordinate the properties of the soul and spirit for the well-being of that individual in any circumstance. Hence, the mind is the stream of individual consciousness within a being. This is not limited only to humans. All intelligent beings, spirit and human, possess a mind.

## The mind (νοῦς)

The mind (νοῦς) describes the faculty of intellectual perception<sup>5</sup>. The mind is intricately connected to the material substance, gray and white matter, that makes up the fleshly brain. The physical brain is perceived to produce thought, memory, intelligence, and emotions while regulating the body (breathing, temperature, hunger, etc.)<sup>6</sup>. The human nature does not exist without its physical parts. Damage to the body can impact a person's ability to use their mind. Whether through birth defects or injuries, the brain can be damaged in a way that makes it difficult for a person to mature in their intellectual perception, or articulate themselves in an understanding manner. However, prior to or after a person's death (separation of their soul and spirit from their body), there is no way to retrieve, transfer, or retain that individual's consciousness, knowledge, or experiences. Nonetheless, the soul and spirit of a human do not cease to exist at death; therefore, the knowledge and history of an individual are retained apart from the physical body<sup>7</sup>. Since this information is reserved separately from the flesh, the source of the mind cannot be from the material body. The brain is an instrument for the immaterial parts of the human nature. Although the record of a person's existence, desires, knowledge, and experience do not cease to exist when this body dies, in order for humans to interact with their environment, they must have a fleshly instrument to process their stream of consciousness. Therefore, even in death, we never become disembodied spirits, 2 Corinthians 12:2.

It is through the mind (νοῦς) that we are able to comprehend. On the road to Emmaus, two disciples encountered Christ after His resurrection. As they walked to the village and talked about

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<sup>1</sup> National Library of Medicine, A New Era for Mind–Body Medicine, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7486127>.

<sup>2</sup> Stanford Medicine New Center, A call to harness the mindset for healing, Alex Shashkevich, <https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2017/03/health-care-providers-should-harness-power-of-mindsets.html>

<sup>3</sup> Adopted from DR. H. Lavern Schafer's definition of the mind.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The soul interprets the five senses from the body. Within the spirit resides the ability to know oneself, 1 Corinthians 2:11.

<sup>5</sup> A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature – BDAG.

<sup>6</sup> Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopedia. "mind". Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mind>.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Corinthians 12:3. And I intuitively knew this man, whether in body, whether apart from the body I do not intuitively know.

what had happened, Jesus joined them and asked questions concerning what kind of conversation they were having and why they were sad. Cleopas was surprised that this man who had joined them was unaware of all that had happened in the last few days, for the High Priests and rulers of Israel delivered Jesus, a prophet of God, to be condemned to death and crucified, Luke 24:18-20. As they continued to walk, Jesus expounded on the Scriptures concerning the suffering of the Messiah and the glory to come<sup>8</sup>. After this experience, the two disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem and talked with the eleven disciples, for during the breaking of bread, Jesus opened their eyes, so they knew it was Him, Luke 24:30-32. While they reported this event to the disciples, Christ again appeared in their midst, frightening them, for they thought He was a spirit. However, after accepting and eating some food, He opened their minds to comprehend the Scriptures, Luke 24:45.

The mind (νοῦς) can be in a state of corruption due to determinations made concerning truth. After the Noahic flood, rather than turning to God, Noah's sons and their children decided that the full experiential knowledge of God was not information they found worthy of retaining<sup>9</sup>. They profess themselves to be wise; however, through their wisdom, their foolish hearts were darkened because they rejected truth, impacting the way they think, leaving them without excuse for their unrighteousness. Those who fully experientially knew the ordinance of God, that the ones practicing such things are worthy of death, not only those who are performing these things but also the ones approving towards the ones committing them<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, God permitted them to debase their way of thinking, which resulted in their minds coming to be in an unapproved state. This type of mind, when tested, has no value found in it, for it rejects truth and seeks to make up its own reality based upon imagination and fiction. It is the kind of mind that produces unrighteousness and sin, calling what is good bad and what is evil good while hiding the truth. Suppressing the truth, ungodliness, and unrighteousness brings wrath from God<sup>11</sup>. Wrath, in Romans 1:18, does not refer to the coming tribulation period; instead, it is manifested in God's refusal to show them mercy, allowing them to continue in their corruption, turning them over to the foolishness in their hearts to pervert themselves as they worship the creation rather than the Creator so that they fill up to the full their judgment<sup>12</sup>.

In the Christian life, within the mind (νοῦς) there is a battle between the standard in Christ by which we desire to live by and the decrees in our members that seek to bring us into captivity to the law of sin, Romans 7:23<sup>13</sup>. When God gave Moses the law, it was not a ridiculous standard that was designed to mock humans; instead, the Mosaic Law is logical, set apart, and beneficial for mankind<sup>14</sup>. Through it we are given a righteous, holy, and proper standard that did not exist before it had been brought into this world. However, the result of living by the law is not what we expect, Romans

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<sup>8</sup> Luke 24:25-27.

<sup>9</sup> Romans 1:28, And just as they did not approve worthy to have the God in full experiential knowledge, the God gave them over to an unapproved mind to do what is wrong,

<sup>10</sup> Romans 1:20 For the invisible things concerning Him from a creation of a world to the understanding things made has been caused to be clearly perceived, both His everlasting natural ability and Divinity, resulting in them being without excuse,

<sup>11</sup> Romans 1:18, For God's wrath is manifested from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, the ones holding down the truth in unrighteousness,

<sup>12</sup> Romans 1:32, Whoever fully experientially knew the ordinance of God; that the ones practicing such things are worthy of death, not only those who are practicing these things, but also the ones approving towards the ones practicing.

<sup>13</sup> but I see a different law in my members making war against the law of my mind and leading me into captivity to the law of the sin [nature], the one being in my members.

<sup>14</sup> Romans 7:14, We intuitively know that the law is spiritual ...; Romans 7:16, If I do that which I desire not, I agree the law is proper.

7:14<sup>15</sup>. Instead of bringing life to the one who lives by it, it produces death by taking advantage of the commandments and deceiving any who seek to be justified by law, Romans 7:11<sup>16</sup>. This good thing has become death to us not because it is death; instead, the Law exposes the sin nature for just how sinful it truly is, Romans 7:13<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, within us we find a standard by which the sin nature tries to govern our lives that is contrary to what our mind desires and seeks out.

*7:15 For that which I (old nature) work out, I (new nature) do not experientially know, for that which I (new nature) do not desirously will, this I (old nature) practice, but that which I (new nature) am indifferent to, this I (old nature) do. 7:16 But since that which I (new nature) do not desirously will, this I (old nature) do, I (new nature) together say with the law that [the law] is proper. 7:17 But now I (new nature), on my part, no longer work it out for myself, but the dwelling in me sin [nature]. 7:18 For I (new nature) intuitively know that dwelling in me, that is in my flesh, is no good. For the desirous will is present with me (new nature), but the working out of the proper, it is not found. 7:19 For not that which I (new nature) desirously will, to do good, but that bad which I (new nature) do not desirously will, this I (old nature) practice. 7:20 But since that which I (new nature) do not desirously will, this I (old nature) do, it is no longer I (new nature) working it out, but the sin [nature] residing in me. 7:21 Then I find the law to desirously will in me to do the proper, that in me the bad is present.*

Therefore, when we live by grace, we can serve God; however, when we govern our lives by any law, we subject ourselves to the rule of the sin nature, Romans 7:25<sup>18</sup>. The law was given through Moses; however, grace and truth came to be through Jesus Christ, John 1:17<sup>19</sup>. When we seek to be justified by law, we fall from grace, Galatians 5:4<sup>20</sup>. It is in the Christ that we have been freed from this body of death, for in Christ there is no condemnation. Therefore, with our minds we serve God and when we govern our lives according to the desires from the Spirit, we are free from the law of the sin and death, Romans 8:1-2<sup>21</sup>.

Who knows the mind (νοῦς) of the Lord? Who can counsel with Him? Romans 11:34<sup>22</sup>. Israel has been blinded for a short time, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, Romans 11:25<sup>23</sup>. Although they are enemies of the gospel for our sake, they are still elect as a nation by God, Romans 11:28<sup>24</sup>; therefore, God will make a new covenant with Israel, saving them, Romans 11:26-27<sup>25</sup>. Through Israel's lack of persuasion concerning what God has said, the nations are able to obtain mercy in Christ, for God has committed all unto unpersuadedness so that He can have mercy on all.

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<sup>15</sup> For we intuitively know that the law is logical, but I, on my part, am fleshly, having been sold under the sin [nature].

<sup>16</sup> For the sin [nature] taking opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it [the commandment] it killed.

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, did the good come to be to me death? May it never come to be! But the sin [nature], in order that it should be manifested sin, though the good to me working out death, in order that the sin [nature] should become according to excessive of sinfulness, through the commandment.

<sup>18</sup> I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; therefore then, I myself on the one hand with the mind serve to a law of God, on the other hand with the flesh [serve] to a law of sin.

<sup>19</sup> Because the law through Moses was given, the grace and the truth through Jesus Christ came to be.

<sup>20</sup> You have been caused to become unproductive from Christ, the ones being justified by law, you have fallen from grace.

<sup>21</sup> Then now there is no condemnation to the ones in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of the sin [nature] and the death.

<sup>22</sup> For who knows a mind of [the] Lord, or who became His counselor?

<sup>23</sup> For I do not desire for you to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery in order that you are not alongside yourselves in a frame of mind, because hardness from a part to Israel has come until which the fullness of the Gentiles has come.

<sup>24</sup> On the one hand according to the gospel, enemies because of you, on the other hand according to the elect, beloved because of the fathers.

<sup>25</sup> And thus all Israel will be saved just as it stands written, "The Deliverer will come out of Zion and turn away the ungodliness of Jacob." And "This is My covenant to them, when I will send away their sins."

What He has done is so beyond the thinking of any intelligent being (spirit and humans) that it was never considered as a possibility. If the rulers of this world had known what He was doing, they would not have crucified the Lord, 1 Corinthians 2:8<sup>26</sup>. However, it never even entered into the hearts of man to consider what God has prepared for those who love Him, 1 Corinthians 2:9<sup>27</sup>. However, because of what God has done, those who are in Christ have a quality of the mind of Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:16. *“For who has known [the] mind of the Lord; one who will be knit together with Him? Indeed, we have a [quality of the] mind of Christ”*. Since we are in Christ, we are able to understand Spiritual things because the Holy Spirit works with our spirit to put together spiritual concepts with spiritual words so that we comprehend the things of God, 1 Corinthians 2:13<sup>28</sup>,15<sup>29</sup>. We are not able to understand the things of the Holy Spirit through our fleshly desires, for one who is soulish does not have the ability to discern Spiritual things, 1 Corinthians 2:14<sup>30</sup>. When God raised Christ from the dead, He made a new man, 2 Corinthians 5:17 *“Wherefore, since someone is in Christ, a new creation, the archaic things have passed away, behold, all things have become new”*. All those who believe the gospel for salvation (1 Corinthians 15:3-4<sup>31</sup>) are placed into this new creation by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13<sup>32</sup>, after being washed and regenerated by the Spirit, Titus 3:5<sup>33</sup>, connecting us to God in spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:17<sup>34</sup>. Therefore, through Christ, we are now able to know the mind of the Lord, for He has called us friends<sup>35</sup> and has revealed all that He is doing so that we can have an unruffled mind in the face of the chaos that mankind will bring by disobedience and an alliance with Lucifer through the man of lawlessness<sup>36</sup>.

In contrast to living according to the legal age, we are to be transformed by using our renewed mind (νοῦς) so that we can determine what God’s desirous will is in our lives, Romans 12:2<sup>iii</sup>. This involves putting off the former conduct of the old man, who grows corrupt according to deceitful desires, and being renewed in the spirit of our mind while putting on the new man, who is created in true righteousness and holiness, Ephesians 4:22-24<sup>37</sup>. Living according to law does not require faith, for law is not out from faith, Galatians 3:12. As those who are saved by grace and righteous in Christ, our source for how we conduct ourselves is faith, Romans 1:17; therefore, we cannot follow the law,

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<sup>26</sup> which none of the rules of this age knew, for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

<sup>27</sup> But just as it is written, “The things an eye has not discerned and ear has not heard and has not entered upon the heart of man, the things God has prepared for those who love Him.

<sup>28</sup> Which things also we speak not in teaching of man’s wise words but in teaching of [the] Spirit, comparing spiritual [words] with spiritual [concepts].

<sup>29</sup> But the Spiritual one discerns all things, yet he is discerned by no one.

<sup>30</sup> But the soulish man does not welcome the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not inherently able to know them because they are spiritually discerned.

<sup>31</sup> For I delivered to you at first that which also you received, that Christ died concerning our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

<sup>32</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of the body, being many are one body, thus also is the Christ. For also by one Spirit, we all are immersed into one body, whether Jew, whether Gentiles, whether slave, whether free, and were all made to drink by one Spirit.

<sup>33</sup> Not out from works, the ones in righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us through washing and regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>34</sup> But the one joined to the Lord is one quality of spirit.

<sup>35</sup> John 15:15, I no longer say to you, servants, because the servant does not intuitively know his lord is doing. But I have called you friends because all that I have heard from the Father I have made known to you.

<sup>36</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one deceive you according to no matter, because unless the leaving comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

<sup>37</sup> You put off according to the former conduct, the old man, the one being corrupted according to the strong desires of wanderings and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind and to put on the new man, the one created according to God in righteousness and piety of the truth.

for it is contrary to faith. When we put on a mask, we are conforming ourselves to the former desires done in ignorance, 1 Peter 1:14. No one living by any quality of law can live out from grace. Seeking to be justified by law causes a person to fall from grace, Galatians 5:4. This type of justification is not restricted to only be seen as righteous before God; additionally, it aims to appear righteous before men by performing religious practices. An age refers to a period during which God shows something about Himself to intelligent beings. Often, within an age, humans are not the focus. However, in the legal age, along with the spirit beings, we learn that through law, we cannot please God by self-effort. This also applies to both the dispensations of law and grace. The dispensation of law revealed the sin nature for how truly sinful it is, Romans 7:13, where grace is entirely contrary to law, Romans 11:6. Grace is God's attitude by which He gives a benefit without consideration of merit. Works of the law produce debt, whereas grace produces freedom, Romans 4:4-5. We are not to put on a mask as though we live by any quality of law, for our standard before God is to love other Christians, John 13:34, and in doing so, we will never violate any law, for we seek the best for the one loved and are acting as mature sons. Therefore, we are to use our renewed mind in Christ to discern all situations and determine what is the good, acceptable, and mature way to follow the desirous will of God, Romans 12:2 – *And stop being outwardly conformed to this (previously mentioned) age, but be transformed by the renewed mind resulting in you testing what is the desirous will of God, the good and acceptable and mature.*

When it comes to what we have determined is good conduct, we are to be convinced within our own minds (νοῦς) concerning the way we behave, Romans 14:5. Whether it is to honor a day or to treat all days the same. When we eat, we are to be thankful for what we deem acceptable. Although we do not live under the law, which dictated what types of foods those under law could eat without defiling themselves before God, food, drink, and days can still impact a person's conscience. World religions, including Christendom, which is Satan's mimic of Christianity that he has planted within as many assemblies as he can to thwart the Church, are based upon touch not, taste not, handle not, Colossians 2:21. Through self-made religions comes false humility, the worship of angels, and neglecting of the body, which has no value against the satisfactions of the flesh, Colossians 2:23. None of us live to ourselves or die to ourselves. Since we live, let us live unto the Lord. Do not judge a brother in what he has determined is proper for him to do before God, and do not despise a fellow saint who does not honor God in the way you do. Do not be so arrogant and caught up in your esteem of yourself that you dictate your standards upon another saint, for we all stand before God and will give account, Romans 14:10. For what value does food and drink have in the Kingdom of God, Romans 14:17? Why, for the sake of our own standard, would we cause another saint to sin, Romans 14:20? Instead, let us train our senses to know the difference between what is proper and what is wrong, always willing to give up our freedoms for the sake of another saint while never allowing another to be put in bondage to the standards we have determined within our minds that are what God wants for us, for all that is not done out from faith is sin, Romans 14:23. This type of attitude towards others does not permit corruption and perversity within the assembly; instead, it seeks the best for the one loved and does not let the little things, like food, drink, and observation of days, cause divisions.

Divisions within an assembly are works of the flesh. Separations within the body of the Christ are manifested in following after men rather than Christ. I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas. This is no different than causing divisions based upon supposed classes of Christians. I am a Christian, I am a spirit-filled Christian, I am a born-again spirit-filled Christian. The assemblies must be of one mind and the same knowledge, 1 Corinthians 1:10. We all belong to Christ. Within

Christendom, Satan places men in positions of esteem to drive independence from God within the assemblies. Rather than seeking out what Scripture states, those who attend these different churches that are led by a son of Satan lift up their leaders as great men, or even women, and will look down on others for not following them. From the most obvious heretics, such as tele-evangelists, to supposed theologians who teach false gospels so they can turn the grace of God into licentiousness, these assemblies are designed to manipulate the flesh so that the Church is not of the same mind concerning doctrine.

The Spiritual gifts are not something we are to be ignorant (not using the mind) about<sup>38</sup>; however, the lack of knowledge within many assemblies concerning them is stunning. Especially those assemblies that claim to possess the sign gifts such as speaking in tongues. Since the gift of speaking in tongues has caused itself to cease, 1 Corinthians 13:8, what is presented as tongues today comes from a different spirit<sup>39</sup>. The sign gifts are for the purpose of confirming to the Jews that it is God who is doing a work. Yet, because of the fleshly desires of men to be perceived more holy than others, there are many false teachers today still claiming to possess some special ability, asserting it is a result of them being closer to or having more faith in God than others. When the Spiritual gift of speaking in tongues was active, the one using it did not benefit in their understanding from the gift, for it was unfruitful to their minds, 1 Corinthians 14:14. When they would speak the wonders of God, which is what the gift was used for, they would worship God in spirit, not with their mind<sup>40</sup>. However, Paul also instructs them to worship with their minds. *And since the one speaking on a tongue edifies himself, it is better to speak five words with understanding in the assembly than ten thousand in an unknown language*, 1 Corinthians 14:19. Many assemblies are caught up with a different spirit that has been allowed to manipulate the Church into permitting heresy, 2 Corinthians 11:4. This is because they seek an emotional, visible, experience with God instead of a spiritual connection and understanding. Today, God is not visible in a Temple, shaking a mountain, destroying armies, or bringing fire and brimstone down upon the heads of those who do unrighteousness; instead, He abides within the saints of the Church, restrains the evil one of the world, and impacts the Christian's desires, giving them the ability to live out a righteous life so they can be luminaries among this perverse and corrupt generation<sup>41</sup>. Let us cast off the ignorance of the past and use our minds (νοῦς) to correctly understand Who our God is so that we express a proper opinion of Him through our lives.

When Christ ascended on high, He gave gifts to men. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors even teachers, to equip the saints for a work of ministry to edify the body of the Christ and bring us to a oneness of the faith, Ephesians 4:11-12. There is one body, Romans 12:5, one Lord, one faith, one emersion, one hope of our calling, Ephesian 4:5. Through these gifts, the assembly is brought to a full experiential knowledge of Christ unto a mature man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. In this state, we will not be tossed around by the teachings of men who seek to manipulate the inarticulate babblers through trickery and cunning means because we will be speaking the truth in love and growing up in all things to the head, which is Christ, Ephesians 4:14-15. Therefore, we are not to govern our lives as the Gentiles in the futility of the mind. Their minds (νοῦς) are empty, without purpose, and produce no good because the workings of their minds have been darkened, and through their ignorance and blindness of heart, they alienate themselves from the life of God, Ephesians 4:17-18.

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<sup>38</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:1

<sup>39</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:4

<sup>40</sup> Acts 2:11

<sup>41</sup> Philippians 2:15

When Christ was about to leave and return to the Father, He informed the disciples that He would send another comforter and leave His peace with them<sup>42</sup>. This peace is an unruffled mind that all Christians have the ability to possess, for He did not leave it only for the disciples but also for all who would believe because of their word<sup>43</sup>. The peace from God surpasses the mind and guards our hearts along with the results of the workings of our minds in Christ, Philippians 4:7. We know what is coming and how bad things will get; however, because we are in Christ, our minds can be in a state of peace even when the world is falling apart around us<sup>44</sup>. Knowing that the peace of God surpasses the mind, let us reason on the things that are true, noble, just, pure, agreeable (facing fondness), commendable, virtuous, and worthy of praise, Philippians 4:8.

There are a lot of false teachers in the world today. The apostle Peter warned us that there will be many dishonest instructors among us, just like there were many false prophets among the Israelites. These men and women will secretly bring in destructive heresies while denying the Lord who bought them, 2 Peter 2:1. Many of these destructive heresies involve the tribulation period. They push fear upon the people through their interpretations and predictions, all while collecting for themselves possessions. However, we are not to be shaken in our minds as though we will be left behind when the snatching away of the Church happens, and the tribulation comes, 2 Thessalonians 2:2. Apostasy means to stand away from. It can be used for leaving a belief system, such as when Paul was accused of teaching the Gentiles to stand away from (apostate) Moses, Acts 21:21. It is often defined as being defiant of an established system or authority, indicating a breach of faith. However, the original Greek word does not solely express this concept. A form of the word for apostasy is used in the concept of divorce. The certificate of divorce (*ἀποστασία*) is to stand away from a marriage, Matthew 19:7. When we examine the verb of apostasy, it becomes more apparent that the primary meaning of the word is “to stand away from”, not leaving the faith. Its root is *ιστημι* (stand). When expressing an action, apostate is use of departing. This concept is seen in Christ speaking at the end of the tribulation period to those who did not accept Him or believe in the message of the Kingdom of the Heavens, even though they were religious and did things in His name. He tells them to depart from him (*ἀπόστητε*), for they are workers of unrighteousness, Luke 13:27. Apostasy is not limited to being only defined as one who leaves the faith. Context reveals what is being left behind. The Church is going to depart; however, this apostasy does not refer to falling away from the Christian faith; instead, it is from the earth that the Church will depart. Although in the timeline of the Church in Revelation, we find the last period of the Church on earth is predominately defined as being lukewarm to Christ, Revelation 3:14-22, which some take as evidence of a spiritual apostasy, the other seven assemblies are still present, especially the Philadelphia assembly that is small but strong in God’s word, Revelation 3:7-13. These assemblies have stood for two thousand years, and although they have changed in prominence, they have always been present on the earth from the time after the Apostles. Therefore, we will not see a massive falling away from the faith before the tribulation period; instead, 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to when Christ returns and snatches (apostates) the Church from the earth, 1 Thessalonians 4:16. As far as a “spiritual” apostasy from the Christian faith, the man of lawlessness uses religion, including Christendom, to come into power<sup>45</sup>. Until the removal of the Church from the earth happens, the man of lawlessness cannot be revealed. This means the Church will not know who the beast of

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<sup>42</sup> John 14:27

<sup>43</sup> John 17:20

<sup>44</sup> 2 Timothy 3:1-5

<sup>45</sup> Revelation 17:3. There will be many still claiming to be of the Christian faith when the man of lawlessness rises.



Revelation will be, nor will the mark of the beast be implemented until the second half of the tribulation period, which starts at the signing of the peace treaty with Israel, not the rapture of the Church. Whether by word or by letter, as though by the apostles themselves, our minds are not to be shaken by someone claiming that the day of the Lord has already arrived, and we are left behind. God will not leave His own, Hebrews 13:5, and we are not appointed unto any quality of wrath 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

If anyone teaches words other than the healthy words of our Lord Jesus and the teaching of godliness, he is proud and not acquainted with the truth. These are men and women who have corrupted minds and are destitute of the truth, 1 Timothy 6:5. They teach that gain is godliness, 1 Timothy 6:5. The fondness for money is the root of all wrong. Those who are determined to be wealthy in this world fall into many types of temptations and snares due to foolish and harmful desires, 1 Timothy 6:9-10. A corrupt mind is just like the spoiling of good by a moth, Luke 12:33, or when a third of the ships of the sea will be ruined when it is turned to blood in the tribulation period, Revelation 11:18. Through their fleshly desires and lack of a firm mental grasp on the truth, they become morally corrupt within their minds and seek to spoil others with their false doctrines. In these last days, men will be fond of themselves, fond of money, puffed up in their minds, unthankful, without self-control, traitors, headstrong, and fond of pleasure rather than God<sup>46</sup>. Although they have a form of godliness, they deny its power while creeping into households and taking gullible women captive<sup>47</sup>. Just as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, they also resist the truth because their minds perish in their own corruption, 2 Timothy 3:8, 2 Peter 2:12.

## The thoughts – through the mind (διάνοια)

The thoughts (διάνοια) involve the perceptions, memories, emotions, imaginations, desires, and determinations that are distinct to an individual. They are what goes through the mind.

Under the Mosaic Law, Joshua was instructed to mutter<sup>48</sup> the law of the Lord under his breath every day, Joshua 1:8, for they were to love God with all their heart, soul, and all of what goes through their mind, Matthew 22:37. This is the first and greatest of the commandments, Mark 12:30. By muttering the law every day, the Israelite would be constantly cycling God's word through his thoughts.

Pride involves the thoughts of the heart, Luke 1:51. What goes through the mind can cause a person to be puffed up; have a higher estimate of their value than reality dictates or seeking to display themselves as having more significant worth than is accurate. God arranges Himself in battle against the proud, 1 Peter 5:5, for pride comes from thoughts in the heart that are arrogant, against God, and from those who are fond of themselves, 2 Timothy 3:2.

In Christ Jesus, we have a spirit of wisdom and revelation that encompasses the eyes of our thoughts being enlightened so that we may know the hope of His calling, Ephesians 1:18. One of the aspects of salvation is our spirit becomes connected to God, 1 Corinthians 6:17. This allows us to be able to

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<sup>46</sup> 1 Timothy 6:5

<sup>47</sup> 2 Timothy 3:6-7

<sup>48</sup> מנה means to moan, utter, or muse and is better translated as muttering under one's breath than to meditate upon. The tongue musing of His righteousness, Psalm 71:24. My tongue will not utter deceit, Job 27:4.

process thoughts that are righteous and full of clarity. In spiritual wisdom and revelation, our thoughts can discern the inherent ability of God when He raised Christ out from the dead and placed Him as head over the Church. In the resurrection, God created a new man in which Christ is the head and the Church is His body, Ephesians 1:22-23. In this new man, there is no condemnation, Romans 8:1. The archaic things have passed away, and all things have become new, 2 Corinthians 5:17<sup>49</sup>. As members of the body of Christ, we now have an inheritance with the saints and our thoughts are able to discern truth.

Before God saved us through His mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, we were dead in our trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2:1. In this state, what went through our minds was dictated and governed by the course of this malignantly evil age and the prince of the authority of the air, who now works in the sons of the unpersuaded, Ephesians 2:2. Therefore, our conduct involved seeking to do the strong desires and the thoughts from the flesh, which by nature bring wrath, Ephesians 2:3. Since God has saved us, we are not to walk in the same manner as the Gentiles, for we are now part of the Church. The Gentiles govern their lives in the foolishness of the mind, having their thoughts darkened, and are alienated from the life of God through their own ignorance and blindness of heart, Ephesians 4:16. Although we were enemies of God, alienated from Him in our malignantly evil thoughts, He has reconciled us, having made peace through the blood of Christ's cross, Colossians 1:20-21. By putting off the former conduct and being renewed by the new mind that we now possess in Christ, we are able to clothe ourselves with the new man, who is created in true righteousness and holiness, Ephesians 4:22-24, and, therefore, no longer subject ourselves to a lifestyle that is manipulated by the desires of the flesh because our thoughts have been enlightened.

When God makes a new covenant with the house of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom, He will put His law upon their thoughts and write it within their hearts, Hebrews 8:10. At this time, no one will need to learn about God, for they will intuitively know Him. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ states the new standard within His kingdom that Israel will adhere to, which not only involves actions but also the processes within the mind. This is why Christ states that if a man glances at a woman with the intent of committing adultery, he has already committed the trespass within his mind. Unlike today, within the heart and thoughts of the man in the Kingdom, he will know the law of God and, therefore, must determine to trespass, knowingly violating God's standards, Matthew 5:27-28. Christ does not change the definition of sin. Sin is lawlessness, 1 John 3:4. Therefore, sin is always an action. During the Millennial Kingdom, righteousness will rule, and anything the scandalizes will be cast into the lake of fire, for unrighteousness will not be tolerated, Matthew 13:41. This man scandalizes himself because He has gone against the normal way of thinking to fulfill the desires of this flesh, Matthew 5:29<sup>50</sup>.

Our thoughts are very sensitive. When dealing with an attack from Satan, we are to gird up our thoughts, be clear-minded, and hope upon the coming grace at the revelation of our Lord, 1 Peter 1:13. When Paul explains how to have victory over Satan by putting on the armor from God, one of the first steps is to protect the way we are thinking, Ephesians 6:14. We are not to be ignorant of the workings of Satan's mind, 2 Corinthians 2:11, for our battle is not of flesh and blood, Ephesians

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<sup>49</sup> Wherefore, since someone is in Christ, a new creation, the archaic things have passed away, behold, all things are new (new in kind).

<sup>50</sup> If your right eye scandalizes you. Sin is not mentioned. Although some translations use this word, it is not appropriate to express the words used in the original letter.

6:12. In each of his attacks the intent is to manipulate our way of thinking away from who we are in Christ so that he can persuade us to follow him rather than God, 2 Timothy 2:26. Therefore, we are to gird up our thoughts as obedient children who will not conform to the former lusts and ignorance; instead, as those who are holy, we will properly conduct ourselves in the face of his attack, standing firm in the Lord, Ephesians 6:13.

In his second letter, the apostle Peter writes for the purpose of stirring up our thinking to remember the words that have been spoken by the holy prophets and the commandments given to the apostles, 2 Peter 3:1. In these last days, there are many scoffers who walk according to their own desires, mocking the coming of the Lord. They willfully forget the word of God concerning the earth standing out from water and going through water, 2 Peter 3:5. However, the Lord is not slacked in His promises; instead, He is long-suffering for He did not predetermine that certain ones would perish but gives time for a change of mind, 2 Peter 3:9. We are to remember, “Perhaps today”, may in fact, be today. When the day comes, it will arrive quickly and without notice. The Church will hear the trumpet of God and rise to meet Him in the air, 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Therefore, let us heed the apostle’s words to stir up what goes through our minds so that we are diligent to be found in His peace, without spot and blameless at His coming, 2 Peter 3:14.

The whole world lies in the arms of the malignantly evil one. However, we have been given a way of thinking that makes it possible for us to know the truth experientially, 1 John 5:20. Therefore, we are not to be swayed by Satan as the world is; rather, we are to keep ourselves from idols, 1 John 5:21. Covetousness is idolatry, Colossians 3:5. Idolatry is a work of the flesh, Galatians 5:20, which is used by Satan to pacify the sin nature. This type of mindset is seen in seeking after what another person has. Whether it is their money, spouse, or any other aspect of their lifestyle that we actively attempt to usurp. The malignantly evil one cannot touch us; however, the world lays in his sway, 1 John 5:18-19. Therefore, rather than being manipulated by the world, let us use the way of thinking that has been given to us in Christ so that we experientially know the truth, which only comes by properly applying it in our lives.

## The results or conclusions of our mind (νόημα)

The conclusion of the mind is expressed by adding the ending ma (μα) to mind (νοῦς) to convey the result of the processes of the mind. Therefore, it (νόημα) focuses on the product of the working of the mind. These suppositions can have a negative impact on comprehension when the mind is in an unapproved state. Facts can be observed and understood, yet still ignored in the conclusion because of our way of thinking and the lack of ability within the mind to yield something of value.

We are not to be ignorant of the result of the working of the mind of Satan, 2 Corinthians 2:11. Rather, within the assembly, we are to be gracious towards each other and ourselves, especially when there must be communal discipline of separation. An assembly applies this type of correction to a saint because of his lifestyle of sin for the purpose of encouraging a change of mind and, therefore, for him to reject that type of conduct. The Church is not to rejoice or boast about accepting sinners within their midst, 1 Corinthians 5:1. Those in the assembly who glorify the corruption of the flesh negatively impact everyone, 1 Corinthians 5:6. However, we are to seek the best for other saints. Therefore, when a sinning Christian responds to discipline from the assembly, those in the Church

are to react in grace so that Satan is not given an opportunity to use it to cause divisions, discouragement, disappointment, and ultimately independence from God.

When it comes to the law, Israel is still blinded; therefore, the conclusions of their minds are just like having a veil over one's face, 2 Corinthians 3:14. However, when they turn to the Lord, the veil is lifted. Those in the Church see as in a mirror the proper opinion of the Lord as we are transformed into His image, 2 Corinthians 3:18. Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, Israel sought to establish her own righteousness and, therefore, did not submit to the righteousness from God, Romans 10:3. Although within the law and the prophets it is clearly shown that through the suffering, death, and resurrection of the Messiah, Israel, along with the Gentiles, would be saved, due to their desire to show their own righteousness through law, the Jews do not come to a proper conclusion of the truth through the reading of the Old Testament.

The message of the resurrection of Christ is so powerful that it cannot be snatched out of the minds of those who accept it. Satan will blind the conclusions of the mind to prevent the light of the Gospel from getting in, 2 Corinthians 4:4. This is why it is so important for us to present the gospel message accurately and why there are so many false gospels among those claiming to be Christians. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. His burial gives proof of His physical death. He was raised on the third day, just as Scripture stated He would be. Over five hundred witnesses, aside from the twelve disciples, saw the resurrected Christ, giving substantial historical evidence that He was physically raised from the dead, 1 Corinthians 15:1-5. This message has the inherent ability of God to save, Romans 1:16. Unlike the message of the kingdom of the heavens that Satan could snatch out of the hearts of those who received it, the good news of the resurrected Christ cannot be removed once it enters, Matthew 13:19. Therefore, if the gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing and should not persuade us to change the message. Instead, we are to herald with authority the gospel for salvation, for it is God who causes light to shine in darkness, 2 Corinthians 4:5-6. Satan does not prevent the thought processes or knowledge of the mind; instead, it is the conclusions of the mind that he desires to impact.

We are not those who govern their lives according to the desires of the flesh. In Christ, the sin nature has been rendered ineffective, Romans 6:6<sup>51</sup>. In Christ, we are no longer subject to the dominion that the desires from the flesh had over us before salvation, Romans 6:14. The struggles that we face in this life to do good are not carnal in nature. Therefore, our weaponry involves the inherent ability from God to tear down strongholds within the mind and bring every conclusion of the mind into captivity to obedience to the Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:5. The strongholds are the logic that comes from thoughts, perceptions, memories, emotions, imaginations, desires, and determinations, that lift themselves up against the experiential knowledge of God. The Christ involves the new man, not the old things from Adam. Therefore, when we use the instruments of warfare that God has provided for us, we are able to tear down any logic or high thing that lifts itself up against the knowledge of God so that we are governing our lives according to who we are in

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<sup>51</sup> "Done away with" or "Destroyed" that is found in some translations do not convey a proper interpretation of *καταργέω*, which means to work against, or render ineffective. The original word does not indicate that the sin nature has been eradicated; rather, in Christ it is unable to produce what it desires. This is done by walking according to the desires of the Spirit, Who produces desires in us that are contrary to the desires from the flesh and make it so our nature is not able to bring to completion its wants, Galatians 5:16. *Καταργέω* expresses a tree that is not producing good fruit using up the ground, Luke 13:7. It is rendering the ground ineffective.

Christ. The result is that the conclusions of our minds are based upon truth and, therefore, will stand approved when tested.

When someone comes preaching another Jesus, bringing a different spirit that we have not received, or proclaiming another gospel, why are the local assemblies putting up with them? Even many of the cults today are tolerated within the Church. Whether it is Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, or any other Judeo-Christian cult, instead of putting up a proper defense, they are welcomed. Just as Satan thoroughly deceived Eve with his trickery (*παρουσία*), he seeks to corrupt<sup>52</sup> the conclusion of the mind from the simplicity that is in the Christ, 2 Corinthians 11:3. There is one immersion, one Lord, one faith, one hope of our calling, yet, within many assemblies, they teach another Jesus, a different gospel, and call upon a different spirit. Whether it is those who claim to speak in tongues, or have special Spiritual gifts such as healing, discernment, working of miracles, or the ones subjecting others to law, they do not teach the truth and seek to ruin a person's understanding of the simplicity that is in Christ. In the new man (the Christ), there is no distinction between clergy and the people. There are no divisions between male and female. There is no separation of freemen from slaves, for we are all equal. The only head is Christ. Pastors and elder boards who permit themselves to be put into a position of absolute authority over the local assembly reject the truth of the Christ. We are part of one body, and no part of that body is without value, 1 Corinthians 12:14-27. When Satan tempted Eve in the garden, he did so in a subtle and crafty way so that she would not understand the calamity that he sought to bring upon her. In desiring to be like God, she transgressed. In the same manner, he attempts to cause damage to the saint's understanding of the Christ, pushing the false doctrine of the Nicolaitans<sup>53</sup> and permitting women in positions of teaching and authority over the local assembly because it is easier for him to deceive a woman thoroughly.

The conclusions of our minds are guarded by the peace from God, Philippians 4:7. Peace produces an unruffled mind. Christ has left His peace with us so that we are not shaken by what is happening around us, John 14:27. Since we have this peace, we are not to be anxious about anything, but in our worship and supplication, after thanksgiving, we are to ask, Philippians 4:6. Therefore, as we consider things that are true, noble, virtuous, pure, just, towards fondness, lovely and of good report the conclusions of our minds will be protected by the peace from God.

## The changing of the mind (*μετανοέω*)

The current English concept of repent, which expresses grief over one's past actions and, therefore, seeks forgiveness based upon regret for perceived sins, crimes, or omissions comes through the French word "repentir", which is based upon the Latin *penitire* (make sorry) with a prefix of "re" indicating "very much"<sup>54</sup>. In modern English, regret and repent have developed a distinct meaning; however, this is not true in older periods. Therefore, to repent was used to express regret that was so deep it caused a person to change his mind, resulting in a change of conduct. However, this concept

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<sup>52</sup> In the same way bad company corrupts kind habits, 1 Corinthians 15:33. *Φθείρω* causes harm and, therefore, bring ruin.

<sup>53</sup> The false doctrine in the local assembly that separates the clergy from the people. Although predominately seen in Catholicism, it also manifests itself in elder-run assemblies.

<sup>54</sup> Harper, D. (n.d.). Etymology of repent. Online Etymology Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.etymonline.com/word/repent>

of “repent”, which also comes over into modern English, did not evolve from the Greek μετανοέω; instead, it is from Latin. μετανοέω is a term for the mind that means “after the mind” and, therefore, is expressed in English as “a change of mind” without the concept of regret or remorse. Where the English concept of repent carries the meaning of regret, repent (μετανοέω) in Greek does not. Instead, ἀμεταμέλητος, means regret. It comes from caring or having concern about after something has been done, 2 Corinthians 7:10.

When John the Baptist came proclaiming the coming Messiah, he instructed Israel to change their mind concerning the approaching kingdom, Matthew 3:2. He was the one Isaiah prophesied concerning, referring to him as a voice in the wilderness calling Israel to prepare the way of the Lord. As a result of accepting John’s message, many confessed their sins because they changed their mind about the Kingdom, Matthew 3:6. With Israel, the timing of the Messiah was prophesied. They should have been waiting in anticipation and belief; however, many did not and were involved in a lifestyle they knew was against the Law. There is no indication of regret or remorse in this passage; instead, it is a verbal agreement that is a result of a change of mind based upon the facts of the message John proclaimed.

In chastising Chorazin and Bethsaida, while giving instructions to the seventy disciples He was sending out in twos to proclaim the Kingdom of God, Jesus states that if the inherent abilities that had come to be among them were done in Tyre and Sidon, these cities would have changed their minds in sackcloth and ashes, Luke 10:13. The remorse expressed in wrapping oneself in sackcloth and ashes is not to repent but a response to a change of the mind. A change of mind will often result in regrets for one’s previous action and seeking forgiveness, and in this case resulted in them using physical means to express their change of mind concerning their conduct. The generation Jesus was speaking to had become so malignantly evil that they ignored the evidence presented by the Messiah and continually sought a sign rather than change their mind. Because of this, the only sign they will receive is the death and resurrection of the Messiah – the sign of Jonah – for one who is greater than Solomon is among them, and even Nineveh will rise up in judgment against them for not changing their minds in the face of such incredible evidence, Luke 11:29-32.

In the first sermon after the creation of the Church in Acts chapter two, after the Holy Spirit of promise came upon the disciples in the upper room and Peter spoke to the Jews in Jerusalem who had gathered to find out what was going on due to the loud sound of a rushing wind, Peter instructed them to change their minds and be immersed in the name of Jesus Christ, Acts 2:38. In the Jewish culture, immersion in this manner involved the change of mind; therefore, agreeing with the message. Their immersion was because they believed that Jesus was the Messiah and He took away their sins through His death, just as Scripture states, and He was raised on the third day, not to gain salvation. As the Church in Jerusalem continued to grow, Peter and John were involved in a miracle with a lame man sitting by the Temple’s Beautiful Gate. As Peter and John passed him, the crippled man fixed his eyes upon them expecting alms; however, as he lifted the man by the hand, Peter instructed him to rise and walk in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 3:1-6. Leaping, he entered the Temple with Peter and John. Those who realized this was the man who sat by the gate begging for alms were filled with amazement and wonder, Acts 3:8-10. As the lame man who was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them on Solomon’s porch, Acts 3:11. In response to their wonder, Peter goes over what had recently happened and the fact that they denied the Holy and Just One, having Him put to death while permitting the release of a murderer. Peter then encourages them to change their minds and turn back to God because of the wiping away of

sins, Acts 3:19. The preposition εἰς (into) has a root meaning of “within”. In composition, it expresses direction, “to go into.” The sense that results from this use then conveys “into”, “unto”, or “for” in the accusive. When used to articulate “for” it indicates purpose. In 1 Corinthians 14:22, tongues are for a sign. The intent of this Spiritual gift in the Church was for a sign to the unbelieving Jews. Within the normal use of the word “into”, it is also used to express direction, involvement, purpose, and cause. Go in peace, John 1:18; coming down upon, Mark 1:10; with respect or reference to, Acts 2:25; against, Luke 12:10; among, Luke 10:36; expressing equivalence – unto a Son, Hebrews 1:5; because of, Romans 4:20; and for the purpose of, Matthew 8:4. With this in mind, we can understand that in Acts 2:38 when Peter instructs the Jews to repent and be baptized, his statement expresses the cause for changing the mind and immersion, not that repentance is for the purpose of gaining the forgiveness of sins. “... all of you change the mind and be immersed, each one of you on the basis of the name of Jesus Christ because of the sending away of your sins...” Matthew 12:41 is a good reference to show forceful evidence of the causal use of εἰς. Therefore, in Acts 2:38 after Peter first informed Israel of the resurrection of Christ, he instructs them to change their mind about the Messiah because through His resurrection sins have been sent away.

Before the resurrection of Christ, God permitted the Gentile nations to go in their own ways. Now, God is calling for all men to change their minds, Acts 17:30. Paul was appointed to preach the gospel among the nations so that all should change their minds and turn to God, doing works worthy of a change of mind, Acts 26:20.

In dealing with the assembly in Corinth, Paul expresses his concern that when he comes to them, he will find among them those who have not changed their minds regarding their uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness, 2 Corinthians 12:21. This was an assembly that was plagued with carnal members who caused divisions and boasted about sins so heinous that even the Gentiles would not be involved in them, 1 Corinthians 5:1. If he finds them in this condition, after having warned them three times, he will not spare them, 2 Corinthians 13:2.

At the beginning of the book of Revelation, John writes to the seven messengers of the seven assemblies. Through time and study of God’s Word, we now understand that this refers to the seven periods of the Church while it is upon the earth. Five of the seven assemblies are instructed to change their minds. The assembly in Ephesus is to change her mind concerning love for the brethren, Revelation 2:5. They were known for their labor, intense work, patience, and not tolerating wrong. Many claiming to be apostles came to the assembly and after the assembly tested them, they were found to be false. Unfortunately, in dealing with these men, the assembly lost her first love, which is for the brethren. We should listen to what is said to this assembly and ensure we do not forget that our fellowship involves doing what is best for other Christians, even when defending the faith and exposing unbelievers for who they truly are. The assembly in Pergamos is instructed to repent because she has accepted the doctrine of Balaam. Their leaders were willing to cause the saints to stumble for financial gain, encouraging idolatry and fornication among them, which brings discipline, Revelation 2:14. Although she is indifferent to the false teachings of the Nicolaitans, which separate the clergy from the people, she was willing to merchandize the saints. We would also do well to heed this warning. Tithing, bookshops, coffee shops, financial agreements with government entities, monetary agreements with the world system, and other means of gaining money from the assembly are not appropriate and are based upon false doctrine. The assembly in Thyatira, which is still represented in Catholicism, permitted the prophetess Jezebel to teach and seduce the saints to commit spiritual fornication and sacrifice to idols. This is seen in their worship

of images of Mother Mary and other saints, penitence processes, and separation of the clergy. This assembly was given time to change her mind. Because she did not change her mind, she lost her position of predominance, Revelation 2:20-22. The worship of angels, humans, and self-made religions involving the neglecting of the body do not belong in the Church. The assembly in Sardis, Reformed and Covenant theology, is instructed to change her mind, for her works are not found to be brought to completion by God, Revelation 3:2. They claim the name of Jesus but do not follow His words. This assembly shows us the importance of maintaining a proper presentation of the gospel for salvation and rightly dividing Scripture, for in their rejection of truth, many defiled themselves and did not have life. The assembly that represents the final predominate condition of the Church on earth becomes lukewarm to Christ. Rather than being among them, He is seen knocking on the door of the assembly. They are happy with their worldly wealth even though they are poor, naked, blind, and miserable because of their lack of doctrine. Those in the assembly are instructed to change their mind concerning the value of their financial wealth, which is only maintained by rejecting proper doctrine, Revelation 3:19. Those who do not change their minds will go on into the tribulation period, for they do not belong to Christ. We would also do well to listen and not permit financial gain to influence how our assembly functions, for it will result in a loss of true wealth, which is only found in Christ.

Repentance does not come from the threat of judgment; instead, it is by the kindness of God that a person is led to change the mind, Romans 2:4. A man who judges another, while practicing the very things he is judging others for doing, thinks down upon the riches of God's kindness, forbearance, and longsuffering. However, the Lord is not delaying His promise; instead, He is longsuffering. He did not predetermine that certain ones should perish; therefore, He is giving time for a change of mind, 2 Peter 3:9. It was through the kindness of God that our savior appeared, Titus 3:4. The truth of the gospel is not about being saved from hell, fire, and damnations, it is about being righteous before God in His goodness and kindness.

Unlike the sorrow that the world system brings, which produces death, godly grief produces repentance without regret, 2 Corinthians 7:10. When we are grieved in a godly manner, salvation from the works of the flesh is the result. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians saints, he has some very harsh words about their carnal lifestyle through which they were causing divisions, boasting about sin, and producing envy, strife, and contention among the saints. By calling them out for their unrighteous conduct and neglect of the truth, Paul grieved them in a godly manner, which resulted in their change of mind and, therefore, correction in these matters. Since changing the mind is without regret (*ἄμεταμέλητος*), repentance cannot mean to be remorseful for one's sin or lifestyle. Rather, it is to change the mind based upon facts presented, which will result in a change of behavior that rejects a sinful and corrupt existence. The Church is a place for believers to come together and learn as they grow in a oneness of the faith, separating themselves from the ways of the unsaved and being a luminary to this crooked and perverse generation. It is not a place for works of the flesh nor to boast about acceptance of someone living a corrupt lifestyle. A little leaven impacts the whole loaf, just as permitting and celebrating sin in the assembly negatively impacts everyone.

In Paul's exhortation to Timothy in caring for the saints as a Pastor, we are encouraged to be diligent to present ourselves as unashamed workmen, cutting straight the word of God, 2 Timothy 2:15, while not fighting over words on the bases of nothing useful, upon which hearers are caused to turn against, 2 Timothy 2:14. Instead, we are to shun profane and idle babblings upon which ungodliness increases. For through such things gangrene is spread among the saints by those



straying from the truth, 2 Timothy 2:16-17. The Lord knows who belongs to Him, and He knows how to save. Therefore, we are to cleanse ourselves to be vessels of honor, fleeing the desires of our youth and pursuing righteousness, love, faith, and peace so that as servants of the Lord we are not quarrelsome but gentle, able to teach, longsuffering in objectivity of mind correcting those who oppose themselves to encourage them to change their mind and know the truth, 2 Timothy 2:25.

Although a novice should never be put into a position of a Pastor, especially over children, the length of time that a person has been a Christian does not imply maturity, 1 Timothy 3:6. Addressing the saints in Jerusalem, Paul calls them out for their lack of spiritual growth. Even though they had been saved for a long enough time that they should be able to at least teach the basics of the Christian life, Hebrews 5:12, because of their lack of maturity they needed someone to again teach them the basics, feeding them milk rather than meat. Meat is for the mature, who have trained their senses to discern what is proper from what is wrong, Hebrews 5:13. Rather than staying in this condition, they are to change their minds concerning dead works and of faith towards God so that they can move beyond the elementary principles of the Christ, Hebrews 6:1. The saints of the Church in Jerusalem had gone back to living under law, rejecting grace, Acts 21:20. They do not need to be saved again, for it is impossible to be renewed to a state where you change your mind again, Hebrews 6:6. The changing of the mind (repentance) concerning salvation permanently impacts a person. Although there are those who after salvation reject grace and try to live under law, seeking to show God their own righteousness apart from Christ, or completely walk away from the faith, they have not lost the salvation that came because of changing the mind concerning the facts of the gospel<sup>55</sup>. However, just as the thorns and thistles that the earth produces are burned up, the wrong works they produce, no matter how righteous they perceive them to be, will come to the same end, Hebrews 6:7-8. Therefore, let us lay aside the things of the past and go on to maturity.

Our actions are important to consider. There are times when we will think little of what God has provided for us and reject it. This attitude may result in a loss that cannot be restored. Esau is used as an example of one who considered his birthright to be of little value, trading the promise from God for a bowl of lentil soup, Hebrews 12:16. However, when it came to the financial blessing, he was rejected, even though he sought a change of mind with tears, for his father was not going to retract or change the blessing that he had placed upon Jacob, even though that was not his intent. Rebecca's boldness in sending Jacob to receive the blessing was a direct result of Esau's attitude towards his birthright. For if he did not want the birthright, why would he receive the blessing? Therefore, let us be careful to strengthen the weak knees and make straight the path of our feet so that we pursue peace and holiness while scoping out for any root of bitterness that may spring up among us and cause many to be defiled, Hebrews 12:12-14.

The gift of God is without regret and, therefore, irrevocable, Romans 11:29. However, the Lord is also not slacked in His promise; instead, He is long suffering to give all time to come to a change of mind, 2 Peter 3:9. It is God's desirous will that all men are saved, not just a select few, 1 Timothy 2:4. There are things that God has determined will happen; however, He did not determine that certain ones should perish, and therefore, did not predetermine some to be saved. Before creation began, within the decree, God determined that all those who are in Christ will be blameless before

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<sup>55</sup> The facts of the gospel are that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. Evidence is given supporting these facts by His burial and after resurrection being seen by over five hundred brethren at once, apart from His manifestations and verifications of life the apostles, 1 Corinthians 15:1-5.

Him in holiness. Before God laid down the foundations that support the universe, He determined that God the Son would come and wrap Himself in flesh, providing a sacrifice for sins. However, He did not determine that certain ones would perish. Instead, He determined that through the gospel for salvation, those who believe are saved without regret.

## The Consideration of the Mind (κατανοέω)

With the mind we observe, consider, and contemplate, which results in perception.

In speaking about the rules of His coming Kingdom, Jesus addresses judging another person. You will be held to the same standard of judgment that you apply to others, Matthew 7:1-2. Therefore, rather than glancing at the speck in your brother's eye, you should consider the plank that is in your own, Matthew 7:3. There is truth in this statement that can be applied, but not misapplied, to the dispensation of grace. Let us not scope out others to identify what they are doing wrong while overlooking our own faults; instead, all things are to be done for the edification of the saints.

The Kingdom of God is of more value than the things of this world. A foolish man lays up treasures in this life, ignoring the reality that we do not know when our life will be required of us, Luke 12:16-21. The promise from God has come to Israel and they were more concerned with what they will eat than with accepting His salvation. After speaking the parable of the rich man who stored up for himself treasures on earth only to die before he could enjoy them, Jesus then instructs the disciples to consider the ravens and how they do not sow or reap, yet God feeds them, Luke 12:24. In addition, they should contemplate how the lilies of the field do not toil or spin, yet their beauty exceeds that of Solomon in all his glory, Luke 12:27. In this life, God knows what we need, and just like the Jews are being instructed to not act as the Gentiles, we of the Church can learn from this and keep our focus on Spiritual things rather than what this world has to offer. There is nothing wrong with being wealthy. However, we are not to put our trust in uncertain riches or have a fondness for money, for those determining to be rich bring upon themselves many temptations and difficulties, 1 Timothy 6:6-19. Consider what wealth really is in this life. Is it the things related to eternal life or the temporal things of this world?

When those of the circumcision heard that Peter had entered the home of a Gentile, they contended with him questioning why he ate with uncircumcised men, Acts 11:2-3. In response, Peter explains what happened before he entered Cornelius' home and how the Gentiles receive the gospel message of the resurrected Christ. During his time in the city of Joppa, while praying he received a vision of a great sheet. Staring at it, he observed that it was full of four-footed animals, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air, Acts 11:6. When instructed to rise, kill and eat, Peter commented that he has never let anything that is unclean enter his mouth. To this the Lord informed him that He has cleansed them and, therefore, Peter is not to call that which is cleaned common. This was a sign to Peter that the Gentiles were being granted a change of mind unto life, Acts 11:13-18. Peter considered what was in the sheet, which resulted in perceiving what God was showing him concerning the Nations.

In considering the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ, we perceive that the proper opinion expressed of Him is higher than that given to Moses. Moses was faithful in his household; however, Christ is a Son over His own house, Hebrews 3:1-6. Therefore, having a High

Priest over the house of God, let us contemplate each other for the purpose of stirring others up to love and proper works while not forsaking the assembling of each other, Hebrews 10:24. The day draws near, the night is well spent. Let us walk in the light as children of the day and cast off the things of darkness, Romans 13:12. For when we ponder Who Christ is and what He has done, we recognize what we have in Christ and, therefore, will not be those who are shortsighted and blind, forgetting we have been cleansed from our old sins, 2 Peter 1:9.

Let us not be those who hear the Word, but do not respond to it. They are like a man who considers himself in a mirror who immediately forgets what type of man he is as soon as he goes away from it, James 1:23-24. Those who bend over to carefully observe the mature law and continue in it are not forgetful hearers but doers, James 1:25. We live out from faith by grace, not by law. As we consider that standard by which we are to govern our lives, we then need to apply them to our conduct. We do not overcome sin through law, become friends of the world, or allow Satan to manipulate us into acting independent from God. Nor do we live by any law principle, for law is not out from faith. Instead, we take God at His Word and use the things given to us that pertain to eternal life so that we live a life of righteousness, even in the face of such a corrupt and perverse generation.

## Foolishness (ἀνόητος)

Showing a lack of perception and intelligence is expressed by someone who is not using their mind. They are mindless (ἀνόητος) in their activities, slow in their heart to believe, bewitched to not obey the truth, foolishly think that we mature in the flesh after beginning in the Spirit, and fall into many foolish and harmful desires because of a determination to become wealthy. All because they are not using their mind.

After the resurrection of Christ, two disciples were traveling to Emmaus discussing what had happened over the last few days, Luke 24:13-14. During this time, Christ joins them and questions what manner of conversation they are having and why they are so sad, Luke 24:15-17. After explaining what had happened, for they were astonished that this man who had joined them was unaware, they express their doubt in the testimony from some of the women saying that Christ was alive, Luke 24:23-24. At this point, Christ calls them out for not using their minds. If they considered the Scripture, they would know it states that the Messiah would enter into His glory after suffering these things, Luke 24:25; 1 Peter 1:10-12. He then started at Moses and the prophets explaining all that Scripture reveals about Himself to bring them to an understanding of the truth, Luke 24:27.

The saints in Galatia were manipulated by some false teachers claiming to be from Jerusalem because they were not using their minds, Galatians 3:1. Although Christ was clearly portrayed among them as crucified, they were persuaded that they had to be circumcised to be saved. However, if they had used their minds, they would have perceived that since they received salvation apart from the works of the law, they could not through the law become mature, Galatian 3:2-3. Today, a Christian who thinks that law has value in their life is not using their mind.

## To Set to the Mind - Admonish (νουθετέω)

Admonishing, warning, or instructing are expressed by setting something to the mind.

When Paul was leaving Ephesus, possibly for his last time, he warned the pastors of the assembly in the city concerning wolves that will come in and not spare the flock. Even some among them will rise up speaking perverse things and drawing disciples away to themselves, Acts 20:29-30. Over the previous three years Paul had not cease to set in their mind (warn them) about this danger, Acts 20:31. After Paul, and the other apostles, pass from this earth, we find the assembly at Ephesus did heed Paul's warning. Unfortunately, to the point of losing the love for the brethren, Revelation 2:2-4.

As Paul wraps up the letter to the assembly in Rome, he expresses his confidence in their ability to be full of goodness, knowledge, and able to admonish one another, Romans 15:14. Because of the grace given to Paul, for he is the steward of the dispensation of grace, he wrote to remind them of many points related to salvation. As we mature in our Christian lives, we will come to a point of being able to properly admonish (set to the mind) other saints, especially when it comes to dangers to our mental and physical state.

Paul had a rather difficult time with the saints of Corinth because they were carnal. In his first letter to correct their unrighteous boasting, divisions, and improper use of Spiritual gifts, his purpose was not to shame them but to warn them, 1 Corinthians 4:14. Although they may have ten thousand instructors, Paul is their father in the faith and, therefore, they should mimic him.

To the saints, God desires to make known what the riches of the proper opinion of the mystery among the Gentiles is, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. Therefore, while heralding with authority, he set to everyone's mind and taught in wisdom about the mystery of the Christ, Colossians 1:28. He did not use a wisdom of this world nor persuasive words of man's wisdom so that our faith would be in Jesus Christ, not men, 1 Corinthians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 3:19. This wisdom is for the mature, 1 Corinthians 2:6. One that comes from the Holy Spirit comparing spiritual concepts with spiritual words, 1 Corinthians 2:13. His warning is for the purpose of presenting all as mature in Christ, Colossians 1:28. Therefore, we are to let the word of the Christ richly dwell in us in all wisdom so that we are able to teach and admonish properly ourselves with Psalms and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to God, Colossians 3:16, so that all that we do, whether in word or work, is done in the character of Christ, Colossians 3:17.

We are to recognize those among us that labor over and admonish us in the Lord, treating them with high esteem in love for their work, 1 Thessalonians 5:12. However, to the unruly, we are to warn, for they need to be corrected concerning their disorderly or insubordinate conduct, which does not belong among the saints, 1 Thessalonians 5:14. Those who are admonished are not to be treated as an enemy; rather, the truth is to be set to their mind as a brother, 2 Thessalonians 3:15. Therefore, let us not render wrong for wrong; instead, we are to pursue what is beneficial among the saints and to all, 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

## To Give Careful Thought (προνοέω)

With the mind, we can think of things beforehand to anticipate the needs and directions that are best for the saints, our families, and ourselves.

Rather than repaying wrong for wrong, we are to give forethought to what is proper in the sight of all men, Romans 12:17. When possible, living peacefully, giving place to wrath, for our mind is to be giving careful thought to overcoming what is wrong with that which is proper, Romans 12:21.

In caring for the gifts given to Paul by the Churches for other saints, he gave careful thought to ensure they were handled in a correct manner, not just before God, but also men, 2 Corinthians 8:16. How an assembly manages its funds should always be transparent to its members and done in a way that has a good appearance to all. A good example of this is in how the assembly pays their bills by ensuring they are on time.

For those who need assistance within an assembly, it is important to take care of the ones who have no one else; however, if they are able to tend to themselves, they are not to burden the Church. If there are family members that fail to give forethought concerning the care of their own household, this includes their parents, they are worse than an unbeliever and have denied the faith, 1 Timothy 5:8.

## Suppose or Suspect (ὑπονοέω)

The forming of an opinion or conjecture that is based upon a small amount of evidence or suspicion.

John the Baptist asked the Jews, “Who do they suppose he is?” The Jews sent by the Priests and Levites questioned John concerning who he was. They inquired if he was Elijah or a prophet, to which he denied, for he is the voice in the wilderness calling for Israel to prepare for the coming of her Messiah, John 1:19-22. They supposed he might be the Messiah; however, he was the messenger of the King and states that the One coming after him, he is not even worthy enough to latch His shoes, Acts 13:25.

Facing the threat of an ambush by the Jews, Paul declares to Festus that as a Roman citizen he appeals his case to Caesar to stop Festus from sending him to Jerusalem, Acts 25:9. After King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus, he spoke of Paul to them. Informing them that the High Priests and elders of Israel sought a judgment against Paul; however, he insisted on an opportunity for Paul to defend himself before his accusers, according to Roman law. This was not actually the reason Festus desired to send Paul to Jerusalem, it was to allow the Jews to kill him along the way, Acts 25:3. As he spoke to Agrippa concerning Paul, the matter they brought before Festus was not an issue with Roman law; instead, it was a supposed violation of their own religion, Acts 25:18. The High Priests and elders of Israel did not have facts to back up their accusation, and therefore, if examined in a court of Roman law, Paul would have been set free.

On their way to Rome, the ship carrying Paul and the other prisoners was caught in a storm that held them for fourteen nights before the sailors supposed they drew near to land, Acts 27:27. In response to their suspicions, they began taking soundings and discovered they were approaching

land, causing them to fear they may run into the rocks, Acts 27:29. During the storm they did not have much evidence of land approaching; however, based upon the little evidence they had their assumption proved to be true.

## The Intent of the Mind (ἔννοια)

Within the mind, the intent of the heart resides. These are the formulated plans, the firm directive of the mind.

The Word of God is able to discern between the inner burning (ἐνθύμησις) and intent (ἔννοια) of the heart, Hebrews 4:12. There is nothing within us, even our formulated plans, that is hidden from God. The intent of the mind is different from the inner burnings of the heart. Although inner burning (ἐνθύμησις) is often translated as thoughts, it is not a term that relates to the mind; rather, it is the burning desires within the heart that produce malignant evil, Matthew 9:4, and causes a person to think that the Divine Nature is likened to silver and gold or some shape or inner burning of men, Acts 17:29. God's Word is able to discern between what is burning within us and what the formulated plans are within our minds. The temptations we struggle with do not work out their intent when we are applying the truth. Our High Priest understands our struggle; therefore, we can enter into His rest and come to the throne of grace with confidence. Entering His rest is when we are in a state of ceasing from working for salvation. God's attitude towards us is that we have a benefit without consideration of merit and, therefore, can come before Him to find mercy when the inner burnings become the intent because we did not apply a proper defense.

Since Christ has suffered in the flesh, we are to equip ourselves with the same intent of mind, for when we suffer in the flesh we cease from sin, 1 Peter 4:1. It is the will of God that through doing good we silence the ignorance of unwise (ἄφρονων) men, 1 Peter 2:15. We are sojourners among the Nations. We have spent enough of our past lifetime doing the desires of the Gentiles manifesting the works of the flesh, 1 Peter 4:3. Therefore, the formulated plans of our minds are to be set in the same way as Christ, so that we no longer live the remainder of our life here on earth to the desires of men, according to the way we previously governed our conduct, but to the desirous will of God, 1 Peter 4:2.

## A good mind (εὖνοια)

The husband is obligated to render a good mind that is due to the wife. In the same manner, the wife is also to have a good mind towards the husband, 1 Corinthians 7:3<sup>iv</sup>. Within marriage, the woman does not have authority over her own body and neither does the husband, for they are now one flesh. Therefore, the conjugal relationship in marriage is not to be used to manipulate each other, 1 Corinthians 7:4-5. They are not instructed to render an obligation of sex to each other; rather, by repaying an obligated good mind toward each other they will not unduly withhold coitus.

As servants of Christ, we are to submit to those who are in authority over us with respect out from a sincere heart as though we are serving Christ. We are not to seek the approval of men; instead, we are to do the desirous will of God out from our soul with a good mind serving as unto the Lord, Ephesians 6:5-7.

## The Framing of the Mind (φρονησις)

The framing of the mind describes the boundaries put on how a person thinks and perceives themselves, others, and the world around them.

When Christ began revealing to the disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes, Peter rebuked Him because Peter's mind was not framed on the things of God, Matthew 16:23.

Those who govern their lives according to the flesh, frame their minds on the things of the flesh, Romans 8:5. This is a type of mindset that does not comprehend Spiritual things and is hostile towards God, Romans 8:7.

It is important to have a proper frame of mind concerning ourselves, especially when relating to other Christians. Everyone is to not have a higher frame of mind about themselves that is alongside how it is necessary to frame the mind but is to frame the mind in a saving manner, Romans 12:3. We are all given a measure of faith and are, therefore, to frame our mind accordingly. This directly impacts how we relate, support, and edify to other members of the body of Christ. We are to have the same frame of mind towards each other, not setting our mind on high things, but related to being humble, Romans 12:16.

Maturity changes our frame of mind. When we were inarticulate babblers, we spoke as inarticulate babblers, we thought as inarticulate babblers, we framed our minds as inarticulate babblers. However, when we become mature, we are to put away childish things, 1 Corinthians 13:11. An inarticulate babbler is a person who is unskilled in the word of righteousness due to a lack of training the senses to discern what is proper from what is wrong, Hebrews 5:13. This holds true with Scriptures. Misapplying the Old Testament is due to a person acting in a childish manner, not comprehending the things of maturity.

Our frame of mind should be the same frame of mind that was in Christ when He set aside His glory and took on the form of a man, being obedient to God the Father even to the point of death, Philippians 2:6-8. The second Person of the Godhead did not lose His Deity when He wrapped Himself in flesh; however, to fulfill the desires of the Father, He willingly subjected Himself to the appearance of man. In the same manner, we are not to let our position in this world impact our willingness to be obedient to God in caring for other saints, even if it means we are doing the menial tasks, which are done for us by others because of our position and authority.

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<sup>i</sup> The soul is used in two primary ways in Scripture: the life of a person and the emotional center. Matthew 26:38; Hebrews 10:38; Acts 2:27; Acts 3:23. It is distinct from the spirit, Hebrews 4:12.

<sup>ii</sup> The spirit is the part of a human that has the ability to intuitively know the things of the human, 1 Corinthians 2:11. Intuitive knowledge is within the mind.

<sup>iii</sup> Renew in Romans 12:2 is not a verb and, therefore, cannot be translated as the renewing of. It is a noun that is limited by mind. The mind is a renewed type of mind. *“And stop being outwardly conformed (putting on a mask) to this age, but be*

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*transformed by the renewness of the mind ...*” This renewal came about by the Holy Spirit washing and regenerating us, Titus 3:5.

<sup>iv</sup> There is a textual issue in 1 Corinthians 7:3 concerning a good mind (εὐνοίαν). In the Critic’s text, evidence is given from a mix of the three textual families (Alexandrian, Western, Byzantine) to indicate it is not part of the original letter. However, the Majority text supports its inclusion based upon the majority of the Byzantine family. Although the textual evidence provided in the Critic’s text appears to have better support, the Critic’s text also modifies the word before εὐνοίαν, turning ὀφειλή into a noun rather than a participle (ὀφειλομένην). In the Critic’s text 1 Corinthians 7:3 states, “The man is to repay the obligation to the woman ...” In the Majority text, the object is defined and expressed as a characteristic not a thing. “The man is to repay to the woman the obligated good mind ...” τὴν ὀφειλήν is used two other times in Scripture. In Matthew 18:32, where the context provides an explanation of what the obligation is. And in Romans 13:7, the obligation paid (τὰς ὀφειλάς) is specifically stated: taxes, customs, respect, and honor. The participle of obligate is used 32 times in Scripture. Within the normal use of a participle, it is found without an object (supplied by context), with an infinitive as the object, or a noun serving as the object, as it conveys a characteristic of a person being indebted rather than just a single point of obligation. The evidence for the original form of this sentence is split, being a bit heavier on the Critic’s text side; however, context and the normal use of the language gives substantial support for the reading provided in the Majority text when the form of obligated is also considered. To summarize, although there is a bit more textual support for the Critic’s text, the context and normal use of the words supply better support for the inclusion of a good mind.