

## The Mind of a Christian

*Since you all have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, frame your minds on the things above, not on the things upon the earth – Colossians 3:1-2.*

Through exercising our senses, we train to discern what is proper from what lacks in character, resulting in maturity, Hebrews 5:15. Maturity is the working out of our salvation, Philippians 2:12, which is done as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, for it is God who is working in us to both desirously will and to do His good pleasure, Philippians 2:13.

The concept of a thoughts conveys what goes through the mind. Prior to salvation, we conducted ourselves by the strong desires of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the thoughts and were by nature children of wrath, Ephesians 2:3. For a Christian, there are four sources that influence the thoughts: God, the world system, the sin nature, and Satan. When we walk by the Spirit, He produces desires within us that result in righteous thoughts and wants, Galatians 5:16-17. The world system seeks to control our thoughts by framing our minds on earthly things through the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of biological life, 1 John 2:16. Satan strongly desires that we act independently from God, persuading us to do his desirous will, 2 Timothy 2:26. The sin nature longs for sexual, religious, self-centered, and material things, Galatians 5:19-21. This is why it is important for the Christian to learn how to manage what goes through the mind, the thoughts, and, therefore, grow in the ability to discern the source of the influence on the thoughts.

Lust is a strong desire. Although we tend to use the concept of lust in a limiting way, relating to bad desires, since they are just strong desires, they are not within themselves defiling to a person. Therefore, a thought cannot be unrighteous, nor sinful, until it is accepted and acted upon, even when it is wicked. The strong desires that are self-induced come from the heart, which is the center of our being, where our person resides, Romans 1:24. The sin nature has its own strong desires that seek to rule over a person, Romans 6:12. The sin nature uses law to gain control, especially through religious superstitious awe, Romans 7:8. When we govern our lives by the Spirit, He produces in us strong desires that are contrary to the desires from the flesh, Galatians 5:16. Therefore, we are to put off the former conduct that was based upon deceitful desires and be renewed in the spirit of our mind by putting on the new man, Ephesians 4:22-23-24.

One of the benefits we possess because of the Holy Spirit washing and regenerating us is a new mind, Titus 3:5. 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. When we use this new mind, it will transform our conduct to show forth who we are in Christ, Romans 12:1-2. This new mind directly relates to the new man, the Christ, which God created when He raised Jesus out from the dead, 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.* The new man was created in righteousness and piety of the truth, Ephesians 4:24. Therefore, the Christian has the ability to think in a similar manner as Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:16, and can discern Spiritual things, 1 Corinthians 2:15.

Temptation comes from a person's own desires, which are used to draw them out and bait them, James 1:14. Our three enemies present us with strong desires, seeking to influence us to accept them as our own so that we can be tempted by them. However, no temptation comes upon us that is not common to man. And God always provides a way of escape so that we are able to bear up under it, 1 Corinthians 10:13. Therefore, the Christian must learn how to properly bear up under temptation resulting in victory over it.

Sin is encompassed in unrighteousness; therefore, all sin has a quality of unrighteousness. However, not all unrighteousness is sin, 1 John 5:17 *All quality of sin is unrighteous and there is a sin not facing death.* Unrighteousness encompasses sins, trespasses, transgressions, defilements, wrong conduct (lacks in character), and ungodliness, Romans 1:29-31. Sin is defined in Scripture as lawlessness, 1 John 3:4, and is exterior to the body, 1 Corinthians 6:18. Sin and a trespass are not the same, Ephesians 2:1. Therefore, thoughts do not make a person unrighteous, it is only when a determination is made to do something that is wrong, or lacking in character, when one comes to be in an unrighteous state, which will produce sin if the way of escape is not taken.

### The Process for Sin.

In James chapter one verses fourteen and fifteen, we are taken through the process by which a sin is produced. There is first a desire within a person, whether from that individual's own wants or by influence from other sources that seek to influence him to accept a desire as his own. Advertisement is a very good example of this type of influence. Its purpose is to persuade someone to purchase the product being pushed by getting them to desire it. A temptation is a solicitation to do something that lacks in character. When we encounter one of our enemies, they will present us with options to find one that will draw us out of our safe place and get us to accept it as our own. Keeping your desires under control is a result of having a mind that is framed the things above and, therefore, rejecting anything that does not fit within this framework. This helps to prevent us from succumbing to temptation, James 1:14. When a person accepts the desire from the temptation, the desire produces a trespass, which is when a determination is made to fulfill the desire that is against God's standard. This is when a person knows he will be acting against his conscience, Romans 2:15. This person is now in a state of unrighteousness because he is committed to do something that is wrong. If a trespass is not handled correctly by taking the way of escape, it will produce sin, James 1:15. The way of escape relates to the enemy. The sin nature involves apply the truth: know, reckon, yield. Defending against Satan is done by putting on the armor from God. Overcoming the world system is through properly dividing Scripture, which teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires.