



Wholeheart Disciple, Part 7

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Series: Outlier University

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Loving God with all your Mind, part, 3

Tuesday, October 31st is All Saints Day Eve. This is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The days Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the Wittenberg Door. In a couple of weeks I want to share more about this day and why in 1517, God changed the world.

November 11-12th is our 24/7 War Room. Sign up, just take one hour during the 24 hour time period.

We have been studying how to be a Wholehearted Disciple for the past 10 weeks. Our seminal passage is Mark 12:30.

Loving God with your Mind, part 3

Faith and reason go together. Faith, “the substance of things unseen,” is not a leap into the darkness. Rather, faith is a leap out of the darkness!

- Christianity celebrates science because God is the creator of all.
- Christianity celebrates philosophy because God gave us the capacity to study deeply the purpose and plan for our lives.
- Christianity celebrates psychology because God gave us our hearts in order that we might think.
- All truth is God’s truth! But not all that is taught as truth, is truth!
- We are called to love God with all our mind, to be aware and ready in a winsome loving way, to share our faith.

My Thesis: You cannot truly love God with all your heart without first loving God with all your mind. Your heart follows your mind. Loving God with you mind involves loving God in deep intimacy.

Why must we Love God with our Minds?

1st Reason: Because We are in a Spiritual War for the Hearts and Minds of People.

- We looked at the 3 major Worldview of our culture.
- We looked at just how important is that we not only know the truth of our Faith but also how to engage dominant world views in America today.

2nd Reason: Because We have been given the Mind of Christ

1 Corinthians 2:9

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,

Nor have entered into the heart of man

The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

- When we begin to love God with all of our mind, this promise becomes our birthright.
- This is your inheritance: unimaginable blessing, beyond anything you can even imagine.
- For example, I know that has been true for me. I could not have imagined at 18 years old that, through giving my life to Christ, I would meet Liz, see the world, have seven awesome children, plant two churches and live in Colorado.

In this verse, we observe 3 Ways of Loving God with your Mind

1. Perceptual Knowledge.

Through your eyes and ears. Through observation and your 5 senses.

2. Conceptual Knowledge.

Through reasoning and intellectual inquiry.

3. Spiritual Knowledge.

This is through an intimate relationship with Christ.

Now turn to Romans 11:33

- Paul has been explaining God’s ultimate plan for the redemption of Israel in the last days. Difficult stuff to understand
- So he now leads us into the mind of Christ, a knowledge we can’t comprehend.

Romans 11:33-36

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

***34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has become His counselor?”^[1]***

***35 “Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”^[1]***

36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

- God’s ways are so much deeper and greater than anything we can imagine. They are beyond finding out.
- There is a depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God that have yet to be tapped.

Just like last week, we looked at **1 Corinthians 2:7**

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory.

- There is always so much more! How can we ever know the “mind of the Lord?”

- There is still so much more to our salvation, our calling and our redemption in Christ.
- All creation is created for His divine purposes. There is so much more to discover of the creation, the sea, the cosmos and the environment.
- For example, we just completed over 50 messages in Revelation, the Apocalypse, the unveiling. We must dive into and study to understand the mind of Christ.
- All of the divine strategy/plans of God, only known in the mind of God, are for His glory.

How do we discover these great mysteries? How do we tap into this supernatural divine knowledge and wisdom? Paul shows us how.

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

3rd Reason: Because our Lives are Transformed by Renewing our Mind

For example, I determined a year ago to get back in shape; to get back to my playing weight from college. I didn't wish that, hope that or even dream about it. I renewed my mind and disciplined my mind to work out.

- The body follows the mind!
- Discipline follows the mind.
- Actions follow your thinking.

Look at Paul's progression...

Romans 12:1

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

1st: Present your Life to Christ—body, soul, and spirit—as a Sacrifice.

- Using the old temple sacrificial system as an example, as the Jews would take an animal and lay it on the altar fire to be sacrificed, so we now lay our lives on the altar before Christ.
- But as the animal was killed and dead upon being laid upon the altar, we are alive, fully alive in Christ. We are a living sacrifice before Christ. We surrender our lives to Christ.
 - The Law always leads to killing things—death.
 - The old way of religion was death.
 - But we are now a “living sacrifice.”
 - Alive in grace, alive in love, alive in joy.
- The word translated “reasonable” can mean “pertaining to reason.” This is a rational thought through response to God.
- This is an act of consecration: physical, emotional and mental.
 - **Bodies-we come to worship. We are here!**
 - **Reasonable-rational response to truth from His Word.**
 - **This awakens our emotions and our mind to the love and mercies of God.**

Romans 12:2

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

2nd: Renew your mind and your life can be transformed!

- Loving God with all your mind leads to transformational thinking, transformed emotions, transformed lifestyle.
- **Renew** means to “renovate, restoration, transformation to freshness, to an original state.”
- This is intimating of the God-image being renewed within us, the original state in the Garden of Eden.
- When we renew our minds with God’s thoughts, God’s ways, God’s thinking and through the Word, the potential exists to tap into the original features of God’s original thinking and intention.
- When we renew our mind, we transform our old ways of thinking into a new vision, a new depth that we could not access before.
- **Transform**—literally means “a change in the form or formula of thought or being.”
 - A recovery of the many potentialities of God’s mind within our mind.
 - The original state impaired by sin and sinfulness.
- Saul of Tarsus was consumed with keeping the Law, which gave him a hatred for anyone who opposed him. He met Christ, began renewing his mind and discovered love and grace.
- Peter, the fisherman from Galilee, was a jealous, competitive, loud mouth, who became the pastoral leader in Jerusalem and the first key leader of the church.
- Martin Luther, an angry, frustrated, perfectionist Augustinian Monk, who discovered that to be righteous, one must live by faith (more on him in a couple of weeks.)

- Renewing one’s mind is necessary in order to tap into the resources of God—His wisdom, not our wisdom; His knowledge, not our knowledge; His vision, not our vision.
- Some of you have been alcoholics, adulterers, back stabbers, gossips and full of anger. God has transformed you because you renewed your mind.
- Crossroad in our life: Conform to the world or be Transformed by Christ.
- If we don’t renew our minds we will not be transformed but conformed.
 - The real question each day for us: Will I be transformed in my thinking or conformed in my thinking?
 - This is vital to a dynamic Christian life.
 - For example, the culture is like a fast moving river. Conforming comes with no effort—like jumping in a fast-moving river, you will be simply pulled along.
 - Transformation comes as we renew our efforts—like swimming against the tide of the river.

Thinking can change because our brains are a muscle, that if renewed and exercised, can grow. I believe all truth is God’s truth and this is the latest research on the brain.

Dr. Alex Dranovsky and Dr. Shawn Achor have written extensively on this. Research has shown that the brain has the ability to form new neural connections throughout a person’s life. This capacity, called neuroplasticity, has wide-ranging implications for everything from intellectual growth to recovering from brain damage.

- The brain works like a muscle, it gets stronger with training. When people learn a skill and use it often, they are working the part of the brain relevant to that skill.

- There are ways to train the part of the brain related to happiness, leading to a positive mindset both in the moment and in the long run.
- These include positive journaling, meditation, random acts of kindness and maintaining strong social connections.

Don't miss this! Look what the rest of the verse says, ***“that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*** Wow!

- Not just the good will of God; not even the acceptable will of God, but the PERFECT will of God.
- You must renew your mind!
- Love God with all your mind!

Here is the question: Are you loving God with ALL your mind?

Ralph Waldo Emerson said:

“Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.”

How do we Renew our Minds? Let me combine God's truth with the latest brain research on neuroplasticity:

- 1 Transformational Living comes primarily through Meditation.
Renewing your mind with God's Word, the Bible.
- 2 Transformation Living comes through deep personal relationships.
Renewing your mind by developing meaningful close friendships—
bloodstained allies .

Positive feelings increase the number of things a person can process, according to the broaden-and-build theory. Positive emotions trigger the release of the brain chemicals serotonin and dopamine – which play a significant role in motivation, motor control, and executive functions like memory, solving problems, paying attention and simultaneously thinking about multiple concepts.

- 3 Transformational Living comes thirdly through our Actions. We renew our minds through, what Achor calls, “random acts of kindness.”

Random acts of kindness also train the brain. According to research from Harvard University, writing a short email to different people each day, praising them for something specific, makes the sender happier and boosts their social connection scores into the top percentile. Social connectedness is a great predictor of happiness and can result in health benefits that are comparable to when a person stops smoking.

“The joy of being connected to other people is really fundamental to who we are as humans, and the brain is powerfully organized around supporting those connections,” says Yoni Ashar, who studies the neuroscience of compassion at the University of Colorado Boulder. “Being connected to each other is a major source of wellbeing, physical health, mental health [and] positive emotion.”

- 4 Transformational Living comes through Journaling.

One method of positive journaling is to write three new things for which you are grateful every day for 21 days. This trains the brain to constantly be on the lookout for something to appreciate. Martin Seligman, who’s considered the father of positive psychology, found that gratitude raises levels of optimism, happiness, and feelings of life satisfaction.