

Building Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus



Wholeheart Disciple, Part 6

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Series: Outlier University

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Loving God with your Mind, part 2

- These are interesting times we are living in. From hurricanes in Texas, Louisiana and Florida to the shooting in Las Vegas. The most murderous rampage in U.S. history, with 58 dead and almost 500 wounded.
- Yet, never have I witnessed a more active engaged American Church!
- I recently watched a video from Central Christian Church in Las Vegas. This church has been on a non-stop crusade to reach out, love and practically help the victims of the shooting.
 - From visiting the wounded in local hospitals,
 - to making care packages,
 - even fixing the bullet riddled truck for a lady who rescued countless victims. We watched as they told this lady that the church would fix her truck. She just broke down in tears.
- Last month we sent a team into Houston to clean up houses devastated by flooding. They came back beaming with stories of love, grace and hard work.
- Last week we returned from our church's Wholeheart Advance, where God mightily touched the lives of over 80 men.
- The Tuesday after the Advance, 50 men showed up at 6am to worship and pray at what we are calling "Morning Fire." Men shared through tears of praying with their wives for the first time; of sharing their newly revived faith with neighbors and co-workers. Men worshipped with hands and hearts upraised.
- So many of you are sharing your faith, inviting people to church. This morning I received texts from one of our Stewards at The Road, telling us of witnessing to a person yesterday. He texted,

“She has lots of hurts. Drug and alcohol issues. A sister who died when she was 14 and has been in depression ever since.” She is hearing the loving joyful gospel of Jesus Christ yesterday and today because of one man who has chosen to listen and share!

- Over 100 of you are attending Outlier University and learning how to be missional, about apologetics and finances.

We need a revival. We desperately need a spiritual awakening. I’m choosing to believe in the soul of Christ. If the soul of Jesus continues to rise in times like these, it could be that God is going to give Jesus to our nation.

Mark 12:28-30

²⁸Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?” ²⁹Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.

- Jesus was picking different facets of the personality to emphasize that we are to love Him with everything we have: heart, soul, mind and strength.
- This means that Christianity involves both the heart, the emotions and the mind, our intellect.
- In previous messages we have studied:
 - Loving God with all our heart, loving Him with our emotions.
 - Then we looked at loving God with our soul, loving Him through a renewed identity.

- Our last time we looked at loving God with our mind. This is part 2.
- Christianity is a thinking person's religion. It is about study, reflection, meditation and thought.
- Historically speaking, the greatest thinkers, philosophers and scientists have been Christians.

There is so much here and this part 2. You can go online and listen to "Loving with All your mind."

My Thesis: You cannot truly love God with all your heart without first loving God with all your mind. Your heart follows your mind.

- The hardest thing to do is get people to think.
- We need to do what the Bible instructs us to do, which is to think.
- We need to learn to live the way Jesus lived, robust thinking coupled with faithful love.
- We are to seek God emotionally and intellectually.

I'm advocating an intellectually deep, historically faithful, robust faith:

- based on scientific and historical evidence,
- based on God's character,
- based on the supernatural,
- based on solid theology,
- based on Who God is,
- based on faith and reason,
- based in the Bible (next week is "Reformation Sunday" and the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing the 95 theses to the Wittenberg Door) Maxims of the Reformation: Sola Scriptura

- You cannot know God intimately at the heart level without knowing Who He is—His character, His attributes, His personality.

Why must we Love God with our Minds?

Three weeks ago, **1st Reason: Because We are in a Spiritual War for the Hearts and Minds of People.**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

- A “stronghold” is an idea or theory that undermines the knowledge of God.
- There are strongholds and ideas that you and I grew up with, that work against the wisdom and knowledge of God. When you get saved, you begin a new process of renewing your mind against these strongholds.
- There are strongholds and ideas in western culture, in our educational system, that work against the knowledge of God. Apologetics, two of the classes we are currently offering at Outlier University, help provide an argument against that idea.
- This is primarily a local church function because it is a part of engaging the culture around us. It is about spiritual warfare.
 - Satan knows that if he can control how you think, he can control you!
 - The universities know this; demons know this.
 - Demons are involved in trying to control culture.

- The ideas of the dominant culture, what the Scriptures are calling “strongholds” of thinking, are controlling people unless we as a church can be conversant in what the issues are.
- People live largely through ideas. Worldview. We are to be winsome and joyful in sharing our ideas with the culture. This is about spiritual warfare.
- We talked about worldview: how you see life. Like a pair of glasses that we see life through. For example, you take the shooting in Ferguson Missouri, or the National Anthem debate at NFL games, you would think that the two different views of these issues couldn't be more divided. Venus and Mars. Worldview issue.

3 Major Worldviews Today:

- 1. Scientific Naturalism (The dominant view in western culture and on the university)**
- 2. Post Modern Relativism**
- 3. Supernatural Biblical Christianity**

I maintain that what is at issue today is not just whether Christianity is true, but can Christianity be known to be true—the creeds of the church, the Bible, doctrine—or are they simply things we must accept by blind faith?

Supernatural Biblical Christianity is an issue of the heart and mind.

We are to engage our minds because there is a spiritual battle being waged for not just the mind of the people in America, but your own.

- A vibrant faith based in love and reasoning. Augustine summarized this fact in his dictum, "I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe" (Sermo 43:9).

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. Science is not the problem, worldview is the problem.
- Christianity celebrates philosophy. Again philosophy’s not the problem, worldview is.
- 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.

Why must we Love God with our Minds?

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

1 Corinthian 2:16

For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

- When you give your life to Christ, you are given the Holy Spirit, who begins to speak into your heart and mind, the wisdom and knowledge of God.
- Jesus said, ***“when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”*** John 16:13
- This is an access into wisdom, knowledge and mysteries that you did not have before. Our mind is being regenerated into a new process of thinking.

- Paul, in explaining “the mind of Christ” leads up to this astounding statement by explaining, first of all, that the wisdom and knowledge of God is not at all like the wisdom of the world.

1 Corinthians 2:6

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

I Corinthians 2:7- 8

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, ⁸ which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

- This is wisdom that has been hidden and unknown, until Christ came.
- These are the hundreds of prophecies of Jesus coming that the leaders, rulers and wise did not see coming.
- Even today, the PhD from Stanford cannot understand or grasp.
- But there is so much God has destined for us, that He wants to reveal to us.
- C.S. Lewis in his classic, Mere Christianity, writes,

... God is no fonder of intellectual slackers than of any other slackers. If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, brains and all. But, fortunately, it works the other way round. Anyone who is honestly trying to be a Christian will soon find his intelligence being sharpened: one of the reasons why it needs no special education to be a Christian is that Christianity is an education itself. That is why an uneducated believer like Bunyan was able to write a book [The Pilgrim's Progress] that has astonished the whole world.

1 Corinthians 2:9

***⁹ But as it is written: "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, live in Colorado.

3 Ways of Loving God with your Mind

1. **"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard." Perceptual Knowledge.** Through your eyes and ears. Through observation and your 5 senses.
 - You now have a 6th sense about you. The Holy Spirit can guide you into a knowledge and wisdom you did not have before.
2. **"Nor have entered into the heart of man" Conceptual Knowledge.** Through reasoning and intellectual inquiry.
 - Through conceptual knowledge we can test, verify and discern truth from falsehood.
 - Paul challenges the Thessalonians to "test everything; hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

- In Revelation 2:2, Jesus commended the church at Ephesus because they "have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false."

3. "The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." Spiritual Knowledge. This is through an intimate relationship with Christ.

- All of these, working together in synergy, this is how we love God with our mind. Perceptual, Conceptional, and Spiritual.

How is it possible to love God with such perception?

1 Corinthians 2:10-16

¹⁰ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy^[d] Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. ¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

- We can now experience the wisdom and knowledge of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- You cannot discern the ways of God through the wisdom of the world but only through the wisdom freely given by the Holy Spirit.
- That is why you begin to be called a fool. If you have not been called a fool, lunatic, or “out of your mind” then you are not really following Christ yet!
- For example, if someone says, “You’re out of your mind!” You should agree with them. You are out of YOUR mind. But you are INTO the mind of God!
- It is as we spend time with Jesus and His Book that we are transformed.
 - As you read God’s Word and spend time with Jesus, you begin to think like Him.
 - Meditating on the Scriptures.
 - Listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit.

John 10: 2-4

² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

And this gives new meaning to what Jesus said,

John 4: 23-24

²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

- Deeply emotion touching tunes coupled with deeply robust lyrics!
- Melodies that bring life to our emotions.
- Lyrics and words that bring life to our minds.

