

The Renewed Mind

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Rom. 12:1-21

The Christian life is to be a transformed life...

One that does not conform to things of this world.

Rom. 12:2, *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

The Christian life also seeks to prove (demonstrate) that God’s way is better.

The Christian life requires a renewing of our minds in which we learn what is God’s will; in turn making it possible to be transformed.

What are some indications of a renewed mind? In Rom. 12:16, we find the mind or attitude that is to be found among Christians.

Rom. 12:16, *“Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.”*

Note first that there is to be...

Sameness of mind.

What this means...

The NKJV reads, ***“Be of the same mind toward one another...”***

Literally, “thinking the same thing”.

An exhortation that is frequently commanded of Christians:

The Christians in Rome.

Rom. 15:5, *“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:”*

The Christians in Corinth.

1 Cor. 1:10, *“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”*

The Christians in Philippi apparently had a problem with unity.

- Phil. 1:27, “*Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,*”
- Phil. 2:2-3, “*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*”
- Phil. 3:16, “*Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.*”
- Phil. 4:2, “*I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.*”

The Christians in Asia.

1 Pet. 3:8, “*Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.*”

As Christians are renewed in mind they will begin having similar goals, aims, views, etc.

We are instructed to come together and reason rationally.

Isa. 1:18, “*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*”

How this is possible...

So many times people try to reason without the Lord.

We are to seek the mind of Christ.

Phil. 2:5, “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*”

Each should strive to develop and emulate the mindset of Christ.

The more we become like Him, the sooner we become “*of the same mind*”.

We can have the same minds by setting our minds on things above.

Col. 3:1-2, “*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*”

Each should focus their attention more on spiritual matters.

Distracted by worldly matters and human opinions, oneness of mind will be destroyed.

We cannot find the mind of Christ through the opinions of men.

Where there is not unity, someone (perhaps everyone) is not setting their mind on Christ and things above!

As we return to our text (Rom. 12:2,16), we find that another indication of “The Renewed Mind” is...

Lowliness of mind.

What this means.

“Do not set your mind on high things.” (NKJV).

Paul touches upon this in his letter to Philippi:

Phil. 2:3, *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”*

“Do not be haughty.”

“Don’t become snobbish.”

“...but associate with the humble.” (NKJV).

“Associate with the lowly.”

“Take a real interest in ordinary people.”

A renewed mind makes a concerted effort not to be snobbish, and is willing to be associated with humble tasks and lowly people.

How this is possible...

By taking heed to what we learn from:

The attitude of David.

Psa. 131:1-2, *“LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.”*

The warning to Jeremiah.

Jer. 45:5, *“And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.”*

The teaching of Jesus.

Luke 22:24-27, *“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth*

serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.”

By noting what we learn from:

The example of Jesus.

Phil. 2:5-8, “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*”

The teaching of James.

James 2:1-5, “*My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*”

When one has the mind of Christ, his lowliness of mind will be manifested by the nature of his goals and the company he keeps.

Finally, similar to lowliness of mind, “The Renewed Mind” also possesses...

Humbleness of mind.

What this means...

“Do not be wise in your own opinion” (NKJV).

“Do not think too highly of yourselves.”

“Do not be conceited.”

“Don’t think you know it all.”

Similar warnings are found elsewhere:

Given by Solomon.

- Prov. 3:7, “*Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*”

- Prov. 26:12, “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.”

Lamented by Isaiah.

Isa. 5:21, “Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”

Cautioned by Paul.

1 Cor. 3:18, “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”

A renewed mind will maintain a strong sense of humility, an awareness that one has much to learn from God and others.

How this is possible...

Hopefully, by listening to the scriptures.

Such as that found in:

1 Cor. 8:2, “And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.”

The wisdom of this world is foolishness to God.

1 Cor. 1:20, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

Napoleon’s attitude. He had planned to invade Russia and defeat the Czar. Someone said in his presence, “Man proposes, but God disposes.” On hearing this remark, Napoleon replied, “I propose, and I dispose.” He deliberately left God out of the reckoning, and it proved fatal. For God dealt with Napoleon through one of His smallest and most fragile creations — the snowflake. His Corsican army was not prepared for the snow of Russia, and he was defeated. “Russia shall be mine,” his proud heart had said, but God was there.

Not many wise are receptive to the gospel.

1 Cor. 1:26, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”

In Florida, an atheist became incensed over the preparation of Easter and Passover holidays. He decided to contact his lawyer about the discrimination inflicted on atheists by the constant celebrations afforded to Christians and Jews with all their holidays while atheists had no holiday to celebrate. The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the long passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel and declared, “Case dismissed!” The lawyer

immediately stood and objected to the ruling and said, “You Honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter, and many other observances. Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur, and Hanukkah...yet my client and all other atheists have no such holiday!” The judge leaned forward in his chair and simply said, “Obviously, your client is too confused to even know about, much less celebrate his own atheists’ holiday!” The lawyer pompously said, “Your honor, we are unaware of any such holiday for atheists. Just when might that holiday be, your Honor?” The judge said, “Well it comes every year on exactly the same date – April 1st! Since our calendar sets April 1st as “April Fool’s Day”, consider that Psalm 14:1 and Psalm 53 state, “*The fool says in his heart, There is no God...*”. Therefore, in my opinion, if your client says there is no God, then by scripture he is a fool, thus April 1st is his holiday!”

God has chosen to confound the arrogant in their wisdom.

1 Cor. 1:27-29, “*But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*”

Hopefully, we can have a sense of humility aided by knowledge and experience...

Often, the more you learn, the more you realize how much you don’t know. And often, the older you get, the more you realize how little you know.

Hopefully, we can have a sense of humility by the example of Christ, who was willing to submit to the will of His Father.

- John 6:38, “*For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*”
- John 5:30, “*I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*”

Jesus did not think so highly of Himself that He viewed equality with God as something to be exploited.

Phil. 2:6, “*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*”

Adopting the mind of Christ will go a long way to helping maintain humility about one's self.

Conclusion.

Such are the qualities of "The Renewed Mind"...

- Sameness of mind.
- Lowliness of mind.
- Humbleness of mind.

The more we adopt the mind of Christ and make it our own...

- The more we will think the same.
- The less we will be snobbish and ambitious over the wrong things.
- The more we will associate with the less fortunate.
- The less conceited and arrogant we will be.

Such are the qualities of those who have the mind of Christ, and are being transformed by the renewing of their minds.

Are we setting our minds on things above, where Christ is?

Col. 3:1-2, *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."*

If we have been raised with Christ (via baptism), that is our duty!

Col. 2:12, *"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."*

If we have not yet been raised with Christ, why not today? Render obedience to the gospel in faith, repentance, confession, and baptism that you might begin to walk in newness of life!

- Acts 2:38, *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*
- Rom. 6:3-4, *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*

