

The Makeup of the Mind

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This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

GRACE PUBLICATIONS

P.O. BOX 18715

BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Printed in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

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From a message preached on September 3, 2002

Grace Publications is a ministry of
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INTRODUCTION

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

“I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jeremiah 17:9-10).

Just consider the things that are connected to the human heart. Guilt, anger, resentment, bitterness, poor self-esteem—all of these things spring from a deceitful, desperate place. And what is produced outwardly from such a place? Adulteries, fornication, thefts, murders, covetousness, wickedness, lasciviousness, blasphemy, pride, foolishness—the natural heart is just waiting to throw all of it out there when given the opportunity (Mark 7:21-22).

The good news is that we don’t have to give in to deceitful, desperate thinking that will lead to wicked, harmful actions. We can have the mind of Christ. We can choose to think His

thoughts and have those thoughts develop a sacred frame of reference in which we love ourselves and esteem others.

As you will see in these pages, Satan's attacks are against the believer's mind, and he wants to keep it in a state of disorder. This should come as no surprise, for the devil is the author of confusion. But God gave us a free volition, a will to choose, and we can use that will to choose how our minds are made up. If we will allow the Holy Spirit to teach us how to think with God according to every word of God, then we will have Christ's mind. Our minds will be rooted in truth and we will be able to resist any assault from the enemy of our souls.

Chapter One

THE MIND OF SATAN

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

“Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

“Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

“Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

“Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in

thee.

“By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

“Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

“Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

“All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more” (Ezekiel 28:11-19).

In eternity past, Lucifer was a bright star, the light-bearer who served in the presence of the Trinity. One commentator, Donald Grey Barnhouse, has speculated that one of Lucifer’s chief functions was to carry the praises of the uni-

verse before the throne of God. But his brightness and ability to behave as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) will help to set him up as the great counterfeit to Jesus Christ. This day is described in Revelation 13:11-15, and Revelation 20, where he is called Satan. The head of all of the angels, his authority extended over the music programs of the angels, and he taught angelic doctrine. As Lucifer, his responsibilities were extensive, and he enjoyed great honor in his perfection. Then, iniquity was found in him.

One of the main things about iniquity is the stand that it takes against governmental authority. Any action that goes against bona fide authority springs from iniquity.

According to Ezekiel 28, Satan had access to the Garden of Eden. Before his fall, he enjoyed the major privilege of walking upon the earth. His covering consisted of precious stones that represent the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance. The pipes that Lucifer sounded in eternity were made of gold. This same chapter declares that Lucifer was an anointed and perfect cherub during the days he served upon the holy mountain of God, walking amid the stones of fire.

What are the stones of fire? The Scriptures give us the answer. Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone (Matthew 21:42, Ephesians 2:20). The Holy Spirit is called “the spirit of burning” in Isaiah 4:4. God is the Rock, according to Deuteronomy 32:4. Today, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are fitting together a house, a temple fashioned of lively stones. These lively stones are believers who form the Church of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

Brought Down

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

“Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isaiah 14:12-15).

Lucifer walked among the Stones. He had access to the Trinity, and he heard the plans that God was making with regard to men, to redemption, and to the role of angels in serving

men (Acts 2:23). Perhaps that last item is the one that sparked Lucifer's rebellion. For whatever reason, being the anointed cherub was no longer enough for him, so he set his sights on being "like the most High." In rebelling, Lucifer came out from under the covering to the Stones of fire and was "cut down to the ground."

Rebellion is as the "sin of witchcraft," according to 1 Samuel 15:23: "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king." The Hebrew word for "witchcraft" speaks of divination and false prophecy. "Stubbornness" refers to pushing or pressing against something. This verse, directed at King Saul by the prophet Samuel, reveals that rebellion and stubbornness are linked to rejection of the Word of God.

Satan rejected the order of the Lord. What he heard in the convention of eternity (in Acts 2:23) did not sit well with "the anointed cherub." So he struck out on his own, introducing his will against the will of God, and a third of the angels followed his lead.

The devil and his demons now have turned their attention toward God's people. He consis-

tently uses his supernatural powers to destroy because he has brought himself out from under the covering of God. He has no love so he kills and murders. He has no joy so he promotes alcoholism and drug addictions. He has no peace so he uses manipulation to bring people under his control. He has no patience, no gentleness, and no goodness. Satan's whole operation is to attack, attack, attack—to go against the plan of God and the people of God in order to fulfill his desires as the god of this world.

Chapter Two

THE MIND OF SELF

“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

“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 vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:1-4).

Because of the war Satan is waging against believers, it very important for us to stay under the covering of God. The comfort and consolation of Christ comes to us as we fellowship around God’s Word in the power of the Holy Spirit. Simply, we make up our minds to think with God. That decision draws people together

in one accord and brings us under His covering.

This covering keeps us from the terrible onslaught of satanic division. Conspiracies and slander do not affect us. We are protected, and we desperately need protection from God. That is the whole purpose of God's covering for our mind; it is all about protection.

Paul was addressing the Philippian church from his prison cell in Rome. His primary theme in this epistle is joy and confidence in God. In Philippians 2:3, the apostle to the Gentiles describes how likeminded churches should operate—without strife and vainglory. This operation comes only when there is lowliness of mind present in each believer.

Strife comes from division. People start taking sides, and this is what happens when the fruit of the Spirit is not evident. If we are on God's side, then we are gatherers. If we are not on God's side, then we are scatterers, even if we don't really mean to scatter (Matthew 12:30). The fruit of the Spirit covers us as we gather, and the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified.

Love Yourself, Love Others

Division is detoured when we make up our minds to esteem one another as better than our-

selves. “Esteem” is from the present participle of the Greek word *hegeomai*, a word that speaks of the continuous action of putting someone higher in our thinking. Another should be set at the top of my mind.

This idea encompasses the principle of honor. I honor others. I honor their volition and freedom to choose. There is no interference, no manipulation, no carnal expectations, no soul attachments.

Esteeming others better than ourselves does not mean what many people take it to mean. It’s a very wonderful principle if we understand it correctly. I am to love myself. I am not putting myself down in order to raise someone else above me. I think more highly of others, but my thoughts about myself are not in the gutter. Think about what Jesus said:

“...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40).

How am I to love my neighbor? I am to love

him as I love myself. A person who has problems loving others really has a problem loving himself. He sees everything he dislikes about himself in others, therefore he cannot love others.

God can give us godly self-esteem. That is, He teaches us just how precious we are to Him. The make up of our mind must include His thoughts toward me, which are thoughts of peace, thoughts that always consider an expected end (see Jeremiah 29:11).

After I have learned to think with God regarding myself, then I can use my volition and choose to see others as better than myself. I honor and esteem others in terms of their rights and privileges to live unto God.

Chapter Three

THE MIND OF CHRIST

“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.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name;

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

“And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11).

Remember, the mind of the devil is a mind of selfish advantage. But a very different mind is represented in Christ.

Jesus was born to die. He became a man in order to pay for every sin the human race would commit. He took upon Himself all of our iniquities. Even though it was within His rights and power to demonstrate His omnipotence, He never did a thing in His humanity that was not led by the Holy Spirit.

There is no way for us to possess the mind of Christ apart from hearing the Word of God consistently. Romans 10:17 tells us that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Our problems of unbelief have a simple solution: Hear the Word, hear the Word, hear the Word! The Word provides us with the mind of Deity, the mind of the Creator, the mind of wisdom.

Are you having trouble surrendering to God? Hear the Word and have it give you the mind that led Christ to Calvary where He bled and died in your place.

God will give you the mind that forgives and forgets any wrong committed against you. The Word will make up your mind so that you will be absolutely convinced that He will never

leave you nor forsake you.

Satan understands just how much power resides in the Christian who has the mind of Christ. For this reason, the devil relentlessly attacks our minds.

Overcoming Our Weaknesses and Defeats

One of hell's great attacks is to keep someone rooted in his past. Perhaps you were hurt as a child or as a young person. Maybe there was an incident of molestation or abuse. That kind of wound can linger long in a person's life.

I can remember one young girl who struggled with such memories after many months of coming to church and private counseling sessions. Then, a Sunday morning sermon released her. She finally recognized that she had to start thinking with the mind of Christ. She simply had to agree to receive what the Word said about her. Now, she chooses to think about being free and clean and pure as one of God's cherished children.

God knows that we are human and that we are frail. We are weak. It is up to us to realize our needs and to realize that only God can meet those needs. We can try many things, but ultimately we have to come to the understanding

that only God can give us His mind through His Word.

We need to understand that sooner or later we will rise to the level of our character. If we are lax and passive, that will come out somehow. Circumstances will unveil such realities. On the other hand, if I am hungry and thirsty for the Word of God and I receive it regularly, my life will reveal that I have the mind of Christ.

Let's communicate the Word to each other in the power of the Spirit through the grace of God and watch what happens. Imagine the conversations we can have and can enjoy. Imagine what we can do in this world when our minds are renewed day by day. Imagine what can happen when believers look at each other and confess, "We are one, we are likeminded, we are in Christ, and we are His forever."

CONCLUSION

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy [Spirit] teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

“For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:12-16).

We have the mind of Christ.

It is contained within the pages of our Bibles. Let’s just use it. Let’s have it become the means

of everything that we say and do.

Sure, we are human and we will fail. But the Book tells us how to handle even these situations. I simply name my failure, confess it quickly, rebound, and return to thinking with the mind of God again.

By letting God's mind be in us, we can do all things. The attacks of Satan won't hinder us. We will understand our position and our standing in Christ, and we will live under the banner of love that He has raised up over us.