**Renewing the Christian Mind – Part 2**

***Focusing Our Attention on the Spirit of Our Minds***

**Romans 12**

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1. **Introduction (Romans 12:2)**
   1. **Do you EVER ponder what your mind is constantly occupied with?**
      1. It would be like waking up one day, coming downstairs to find every neighbour… all your in-laws, and your outlaws… every neighbourhood stray animal, and every salesman all living and interacting, and fighting in your kitchen, sitting room and dining room!
      2. Is that what you would even WANT to just allow to go on in your home?
      3. Well, take a GOOD LONG LOOK at what goes on IN YOUR HEAD from the time you wake up until the time you crash asleep at night!
      4. It used to be, that our grandparents filled their mind with: CHORES, planting, harvesting, fixing things, READING everything they could get their hands on, and just surviving!
      5. NOW DAYS... people’s minds are filled with THOUSANDS of hours of youtubes, movies, role playing gaming, TV, Facebook, Instagram, the News – not to mention all the WORRYING, and reviewing of memories of regret and hurt!
   2. **This morning I want to focus more of our attention on our minds**
      1. What we think about and how we think
      2. Specifically on “renewing your mind” – changing your mind
   3. **It is the key to a transformed life**
      1. Do you realise that you can be a born again child of God, and basically never change?
         1. A sincere Christian prays and prays for God to “fix” him - make him a better person, but nothing changes. So, he or she lives in defeat and discouragement and constantly asks, “Where is God? Why does He not help me?”
         2. Most Christians think that if they ask God to forgive them for a sin then that sin will just simply go away. And then it doesn’t.
         3. The reality is it won’t unless you use God’s Word to change your mind about yourself and your way of living.
         4. True lasting change comes when a person “thinks” from the patterns of God’s Word. The Bible calls it “renewing your mind” (Romans 12:2). When you change your thinking to God’s way of thinking, then your behaviour changes. It does not change until then.
      2. Salvation is designed to fully change us into Christ’s likeness (Rom 8:29; 2Cor 3:18)
      3. And the only thing holding anyone back is not their lack of money, their lack of intelligence, or their imperfect religious efforts – it is simply their unbiblical way of thinking about things! THEIR WRONG BELIEFS
2. **Last Week We Learned…**
   1. **Your Mind is Amazing**
      1. That unseen super-computer in your head can do unbelievable things
         1. Remember events, feelings, and even smells from 100 years ago
         2. It can process trillions of calculations a second allowing you to walk a tightrope, drive at 120Kph, catch a falling cup, and change a TV channel!!!
      2. The brain is absolutely fantastic – super designed – no accident! Not possible
         1. Your BRAIN has a complete self-sustaining pharmacy inside it capable of producing hundreds of necessary chemicals and hormones on a moments notice
         2. In other words, your body is a puppet, and your brain is the puppeteer!
         3. That means that the mind can overrule your heart and your body
         4. That’s what it was designed to do – we are NOT supposed to just “follow our heart”
         5. The mind is supposed to tell your body what to do – most everything that happens in your body, is initiated and controlled by the brain
      3. Your MIND is more than a BRAIN in your head
         1. It is MORE than the product of chemicals reacting with each other
         2. More than the result of your upbringing by your parents or your training at school
         3. More than all your experiences, good and bad
      4. Your mind is all the thoughts, feelings, memories and impulses from three areas of your life:
         1. Physical - chemical reactions between the 86 billion neurons that make up your memory
         2. Emotional - psychological activity of your soul
         3. And the spiritual activities within your spirit
         4. And at the centre of all that activity is your heart. That’s why the heart is described is mentioned so often when meditating on God’s words (Psalm 19:14).
   2. **Your Mind is Probably NOT in Good Shape**
      1. Somebody says, "I can't stop my outbursts. I get really irritated at the way people treat me. Every day I pray to God, but every day people still make me angry."
      2. Someone else says, "I can still hear my father saying ‘You'll never amount to anything! You're good for nothing!" And the damage hangs on, even decades later.
      3. Another person says, “I can’t shut down my brain! It wears me out every day! I am so tired of fighting in my head!”
      4. Hey! If you don’t like what goes on inside your head, then this message is for YOU!
   3. **Renewing the Mind is Key to Changing for the Better – being Transformed!**

* + 1. Transformed – metamorphosis
       1. Changed like an ugly caterpillar into a butterfly
       2. Dramatic change – not just growth. A caterpillar can grow, and still be a caterpillar
       3. Transformation is NOT a once off event like salvation is
          1. Salvation is God forgiving you once and for all – in an instant
          2. Transformation is God changing you to be like His Son – sometimes a lifetime
          3. Philp 1:6
       4. But it can be SPED-UP by the renewing of our mind!
    2. Renewing Your Mind:
       1. EX: You renew your car every time you fill it up at the Petrol station - Otherwise it is useless. You renew your strength every time you rest and eat a healthy meal. You renew your phone when you plug it in and let it recharge. You renew your mind in the same way
       2. It means **Repairing** what is broken in your mind
          1. All the hurts and abuses
          2. All the fears
          3. All can be repaired and rebuilt at least in your mind
       3. It means **Restoring** your mind to how it was when it was made new at salvation!
          1. Like a marriage when the vows are renewed
          2. Listen to Isa 26:3 “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed [anchored, locked] on thee: because he trusteth in thee*.”
       4. It means **Re-filling** what has been used up - drained
          1. Putting good thoughts, sound thinking back into your mind after a trauma
          2. You have to do this all the time because LIFE just drains you!
       5. It means **Restarting** - To Make Again – start all over if you have to. Becoming like a little child again, and just trusting God, simply and completely! THAT renews your mind.
  1. **Then we looked at someone getting a right mind (Mark 5:15) – and it was marvellous**
     1. Having a NEW right mind – sound, stable, healthy mind (2Tim 1:7)
     2. Just look at the POWER of the gift of a RIGHT mind!
  2. **The important thing here is to find out HOW to renew our minds, so that we can be fully transformed from the inside out!**

1. **Some Preliminaries**
   1. **Make Sure You Have a New Mind to Work With**
      1. Your old mind (the one you have had since birth) is incapable of being renewed.
         1. It is VAIN – selfish, self-serving, survival of the fittest (Ps 94:11, *The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*.)
         2. It is at war with God – argues and finds fault with God (Romans 8:7, *The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*.)
         3. It is filled with satanic strongholds (2Cor 10:5) – hatred, anger, envy, porn, depression, suicidal thoughts…
         4. Worst of all, it is blind to how it really is! 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, "*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*."
      2. You will NEVER fix your old mind – never make it so that it doesn’t lust, hate, fight, get depressed, quit, or argue!
      3. Truth is: You need a whole new mind put in you. In the empty part of every human being that Paul calls, “*the spirit of your mind*” (Eph 4:22,23)
      4. It only happens when you are born of the Spirit of God! When God puts a new mind in your SPIRIT (Rom 8:6-10)
         1. To be carnally minded is “death”
         2. To be spiritually minded is life and peace.
            1. Your mind (way of thinking) is not from the flesh NOW, but from the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.
            2. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. NOT SAVED
            3. But, if Christ be in you, the body is now dead TOWARDS GOD because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of Christ’s righteousness in you.
            4. And THAT is where you will find the victorious, transformed Christian life!
            5. In the spirit of your mind
      5. If you DON’T have a new mind, a right mind, you can get it TODAY! Just believe the Gospel!
   2. **Focus on Renewing your Mind, not on Changing your Life**
      1. Problems with your mouth can’t actually be fixed with duct-tape!
      2. Problems with your eyes can’t actually be fixed with a blindfold!
      3. Problem with worry can’t actually be fixed with loads of money!
      4. It all starts in changing how you think!
      5. You see… Change comes easy when our way of thinking has changed
      6. 2Co 3:17,18  *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and* ***where the Spirit of the Lord is****, there is liberty.* [AND THERE IS CHANGE] *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*.
      7. Tit 3:3-6  *For we ourselves also* ***were*** *sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour*.
      8. No wonder the apostle Paul tells us to renew our minds BACK to that state where the Holy Spirit can restore order and peace and stability!
   3. **Put Most of your Efforts into Working on the SPIRIT of your Mind – *be renewed in the spirit of your mind* (Eph 4:22,23)**
      1. Not your ability to think great thoughts, and understand great mysteries, and work through massive problems…
         1. It is GREAT to eat well, and get enough sleep so your physical mind can think clearly – junk food is making EVERYONE thin skinned and agitated and shallow in their thinking across the board!
         2. It is very important to have supporting friends, and a family atmosphere
         3. But it is MOST important to have the spiritual dimension of your mind strongest
      2. So:
         1. Become **slow to speak** – THINK a lot before you say a word “*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath*” (James 1:19)
         2. Take Second Place - Humble yourself. God gives great GRACE to those who take second place!
         3. Desperately want a new mind, like the man in Mark 5! Until you are desperate, you won’t take it even if it was handed to you on a silver platter
   4. Those things will get you ready for the FOUR steps to renewing, regenerating, restoring, and recovering your mind
      1. READING
      2. RELEASING
      3. REPLACING
      4. Taking RESPONSIBILITY
2. **Message - How To Renew Your Mind – Part 2**
   1. **#1 READ the Bible (Joshua 1:8) – it is the Mind of God**
      1. Can you imagine if could have had the mind of Jesus Christ?
         1. Not all the **knowledge** of Jesus Christ as God (infinite)
         2. But the MIND - *the way of thinking* that He had!
         3. Well, you are NOT born with the mind of Christ – but from your new birth, you have access to it now! In the Book you hold in your hand! It works in you like DYNAMITE!
            1. IT gives you all the faith you need to believe God
            2. It breaks down the walls of confusion and pride
            3. It becomes a defence in you from sin and temptation
            4. It energises your joy
            5. THAT Book does!
            6. Music can’t do this for very long, family and friendships can’t match the effect of believing this Book, religions can’t accomplish what this Book can
            7. That’s because it is the MIND of God, the way HE thinks, written to change the way YOU and I think, so that our lives can be transformed!
         4. Let me ask you again! Can you imagine if you had the mind of Jesus Christ?
      2. To get the mind of Christ into YOUR mind starts with READING that Book!
         1. Because THAT BOOK is the mind of Christ!
         2. Evidently, we have the mind of Christ AVAILABLE TO US (1Cor 2:16; Philp 2:5)
         3. It is not in some mystical form, but in a Book that anyone can read for themselves!
      3. So, Saturate your thinking, your understanding, your conclusions with the word of God (Joshua 1:8) – that’s how great leaders are made!
         1. That means, Read VAST amounts of Scripture!
            1. Page after page, chapter after chapter – start to finish, and then again and again
            2. You HAVE to read 2, 3, or 4 chapters a day! 30 minutes every day! Read all the way through your Bible every year!
            3. I don’t care if you are busy with 13 kids, all under the age of 9…
            4. Or that you run a big bank or software company and have to be in the office from 7am till 7pm
            5. Or that you are as dumb as a tree stump!
            6. There is NO more important reading than what you hold in your hand!
         2. Yes, read EVERYTHING you can get your hands on.
            1. I have read all the way through hundreds of science books, both evolutionary and creation-based
            2. I have read and studied hundreds and hundreds of books on Astronomy
            3. As well as World History Books, Biographies, and even a few dozen comic books!
            4. I am not talking about reading webpages, or watching youtubes – I’m talking good old fashioned BOOKS!
            5. I may be slowing down in my old age, but THAT Book right there gets read the most
         3. But always, most of all, READ through the pages of that book called the word of God (1Thes 2:13)!
            1. Quiet yourself down, and as you read through your Bible, let God speak right to you!
            2. As you read and read and read, AND believe this Bible, you will get a renewed mind
            3. Become fully persuaded of its rightness (Romans 4:18-21) – convinced that THIS is THE way to win!
         4. EX: Can you imagine preparing for a final soccer match and discovering the private personal journal of Lionel Messi of Barcelona, the number 1 player? YOU WOULD DEVOUR IT to know how he thinks and how he succeeds!
         5. Well, In this Book, in our VERY HANDS, we have the very mind of God expressed in words, and in the lives of those who strove to live by them!
         6. ONLY that Book will fill the spirit of your mind with right thoughts! Good thoughts! Healthy thoughts! Strong thoughts!
      4. Secondly, As you read, PAY ATTENTION - LISTEN to the words that God has given you
         1. Have you ever noticed the fashions of this world?
         2. Let the Bible FASHION your mind – like a horseshoe is fashioned by the anvil! (1Peter 1:13-15)
            1. What “fashion” is your mind shaped to?
            2. By the way, it will be reflected by the clothes you wear, the words you speak, and the places you go!
         3. Don’t just let your experiences forge and shape the way you think and live – far too many let a bad experience in a church, or in a marriage, or at a job destroy them!
            1. Let God’s wisdom become YOUR wisdom (James 1:5)
            2. Question it. Learn from it.
            3. Let HIS ways of doing things, become your ways of doing things
            4. Let HIS thoughts become your thoughts
            5. Just allow God to hammer and shape your mind into order according to the whole counsel of God – not just little pet snippets that you like!!!
      5. Third, ARM yourselves with the very same mind that Christ had (1Peter 4:1,2)

* + - 1. ‘Arm’ is a military word like armistice, and “take up arms”
         1. It means to get yourself armed with whatever you need to defeat whatever is going on in your life
         2. And the weapon is not a weapon like our tongue is, or like our fists are
         3. But it is the actual ways that Jesus THOUGHT about things that gave Him the upper hand in every situation, and every fight!
      2. Pick up the words of Christ and use them as a weapon…
         1. Against temptations (remember what Jesus did at HIS temptations)
         2. Against spiritual attacks (the sword of the Spirit)
         3. Against times of weaknesses
         4. And especially when the devil has won a battle
         5. THOSE will be times when you must grab this Book and BLAST BACK
      3. When you take the very words of Scripture and start believing them instead of your emotional mind, or the weaknesses of your physical mind – is when you have His mind
         1. His was a mind that was at peace (John 14:27)
         2. Submitted to the will of God over His own will, plans and wants
         3. Willing to suffer to do that will
         4. Rejecting lusts, temptations, and cultural pressures
         5. Standing out from the crowd and being distinctively different
         6. Extending limitless kindness and charity to everyone
         7. Personally covering the sins against Him – constantly – not just a once off
         8. Confident that God His Father was in control at every step
      4. THAT would be a mighty strong mind to have. Because a right mind, a renewed mind is a HELMET of salvation against spiritual, emotional, and even physical attacks (Eph 6:17; Philp 4:7).
         1. Do you want resilience against quitting? Arm yourself with the MIND of Christ
         2. Do you want strength of commitment? Arm yourself with the MIND of Christ
         3. Do you want stability of mind in a very shaky world? Arm yourself!
    1. Do what you know to do (James 1:21,22)
       1. Every time you spend reading in this book of books, you should come away knowing something different to be doing, or something new to be doing, and something better
       2. You are not expected to BE perfect, but God and everyone else around you expects you to be working on being a better man, a better woman, a more godly Christian!
       3. It starts with just doing what you know you are supposed to be doing
          1. Read your Bible everyday
          2. Pray without ceasing – never quit
          3. Love the brethren
          4. Tell someone about Christ and how to be born again, every chance you can
          5. Be in church – be THE church!
          6. Love your wife sacrificially, gentlemen
          7. Love your husband submissively, ladies
          8. Honour and obey your parents, young people
          9. Tithe and give to Faith Promise for missions
          10. Look for Jesus to return at any minute and live like He is coming today!
          11. Flee from youthful lusts – don’t even try and battle some sins
       4. Be ye DOERS of the word means what it says!
    2. Memorize and Meditate on what you have read
       1. Memorizing is STORING the words of Scriptures away on purpose, like stock-piling:
          1. Fresh Batteries for times without electricity
          2. Chainsaws for when things block your thinking
          3. Dynamite for when the world caves in around you
          4. Psa 119:11  *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*.
          5. Psa 119:*16  I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word*.
          6. Heb\_8:10  *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:*
       2. Listen to King David talk about meditating about what God wrote
          1. Psa\_1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he **meditate** day and night.
          2. Psa\_119:23 Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did **meditate** in thy statutes.
          3. Psa\_119:97 MEM. O how love I thy law! it is **my meditation** all the day.
          4. Psa\_119:99 I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my **meditation**.
          5. Psa\_119:148 Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.
       3. To meditate is to ponder, think a lot about, wonder about, probe & explore what God said
       4. Memorizing and Meditating on Scriptures will seriously benefit anybody! (1Tim 4:15)
    3. Finally, Trust that God is right (Proverbs 3:5,6; Isa 26:3)
       1. There is NO WAY you will ever in this life be able to figure out what is all going on, and why this happened, and how to live, and how to die! Your mind is going to just have to anchor itself in the strength of Almighty God!
       2. Trust His love for you, and for your family
       3. Trust His will for you – it’s perfect, even when it certainly doesn’t seem like it
       4. Trust His work in and on you – it never stops!
       5. Trust His strength – he will hold you even when you have let go!
       6. Trust in the Lord when your understanding draws a blank!
    4. A change of mind is not done in some mystical, magical hocus-pocus fashion, but only as we align our thoughts with the thoughts presented in this BOOK!
       1. Jer 29:11  *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*.
       2. Psa 40:5  *Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered*.
       3. Psa 33:11  *The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations*.
  1. **Next Week**
     1. RELEASING
     2. REPLACING
     3. Taking RESPONSIBILITY
     4. After saturating your mind with the mind of God, there are going to be a lot of things you are going to have to just let go of!
     5. And it may be the hardest thing you have ever done, but once done, the bonds will be broken, and the chains in your mind WILL fall away! Guaranteed!
     6. You will have to… RELEASE Everything You Struggle With, and Start Over.
     7. This is unbelievably important! You cannot just keep ADDING “stuff” into your head and expect it all to just “get along” – like putting more and more CATS into a locked room!!!

1. **Conclusion**
   1. **There is a lot to work on!**
   2. **But only because too many are starting from zero – have a bit of catching up to do**
   3. **Even if you just only BEGIN to work on the above list, your life will start to heal and change…**
   4. **How?**
   5. **By the renewing of your mind – an ongoing effort on your part, so that God can complete the work that’s on HIS part – to make YOU more like Jesus!**
   6. **A “renewed mind” is the key to a transformed life!**
   7. **It STARTS with READING that BOOK in your hands!**
      1. SATURATE your thinking, your understanding, your conclusions with the word of God – the very MIND of God!
      2. PAY ATTENTION - LISTEN to the words that God has given you
      3. ARM yourselves with the very same mind that Christ had
      4. DO what you know to do (James 1:21,22)
      5. MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on what you have read
      6. Finally, TRUST that God is right (Proverbs 3:5,6; Isa 26:3)
   8. **That is, IF you are tired of the THOUSANDS of hours of youtubes, movies, role playing gaming, TV, Facebook, Instagram, the News – not to mention all the WORRYING, and reviewing of memories of regret and hurt!**
   9. **That is, If you want the mind of Christ running your life instead of the old man, and especially instead of the devil!**
   10. **If you DON’T have a new mind, a right mind, you can get it TODAY! Just believe the Gospel!**