

## THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

---

Brian Orchard, February 11, 2023

Last week we were in a discussion about the importance of the mind. We concluded last week with: the mind is everything. I would like to continue with that discussion, taking it more into the realm of the Spirit-led mind.

I'd like to start from Isaiah 40 because of its aspect of the greatness of God where it's describing God in various ways .

**Isaiah 40:10 Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.**

That's a very strong statement about the power and might of the Great God. It steps immediately into a more personal aspect where it says:

**11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.**

On one hand we're presented with the greatness and the power and the might of God. And immediately introduces the individual, personal aspect of a relationship with Him.

**12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?**

Immediately we can begin to think of God's dealing with Job when God sat Job down and began to ask him some very similar questions. It was for the same reason. No one is the answer to the question that is being asked. Nobody can do that or has done that.

**13 Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has taught Him?**

**14 With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding?**

The greatness of God's mind is what is being elevated, brought to our attention. Then, moving away from the personal aspect of the shepherd and the sheep, it then speaks of nations.

**15 Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing.**

**16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, (referring to the forests of Lebanon) Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering.**

**17 All nations before Him are as nothing, And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.**

Man cannot direct God. Man cannot approach the strength, the power, and the might of the mind of God. There is a great disparity between God and man. Verse 13 is carried forward into a New Testament setting by the Apostle Paul. Look at the context. There is a discussion of some importance about the physical and spiritual mind. Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13:

**1 Corinthians 2:16 For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?"**

A little different construction but the same point is being made. It is a rhetorical question, and the answer is no one. No one can approach the mind of God it is so great and so vast. But as it ends it says:

**16 ...But we have the mind of Christ.**

If you don't think about it you might think that means our mind equates with the mind of God. But it does not. Having discussed the greatness of God's mind it indicates that we have the ability to approach that mind because verse 15 says:

**15 But he who is spiritual judges all things,**

It is talking about the working of a human mind that has the addition of God's Spirit, he who is spiritual. That is the mind of Christ. It means that they can approach the mind of God. It doesn't mean it'll be absolutely equal with the mind of God. And our discussion today, is for us today. We're not talking about God's eternal family in the future after the first resurrection. We are talking about life today with a spirit mind. Clearly, having the mind of Christ does not mean that we have the fullness of the thinking and understanding that Christ had. We are not perfect as He was perfect.

It addresses a capacity of mind and perhaps we need to appreciate the capacity of mind that we have been given a little more than we do. It is the ability to think on a spiritual level, a level that the natural mind cannot, which is what this entire chapter is about. We have the capacity to judge, to rightfully examine.

**15 But he who is spiritual [examines] all things,**

It means to search out, to scrutinize, appraise, investigate. We have that ability, the mind that can do that. The natural mind cannot function in this way on a spiritual level. It does not have the ability. Once we have God's Spirit, we have to do something.

**Ephesians 4:23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,**

There is an action point. Be renewed in the spirit of your mind. That is something we must do. There are things that we have to do regarding the mind that we have been given by God. A mind that can examine and can understand spiritual things. It's not just something that operates on autopilot. There is something that we must do.

**Colossians 3:10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,**

We need to put on the new man. The mind of Christ allows this development. It allows us to grow and to be like Christ and the Father – the spiritual models that we have. It's possible for our minds to grow into the image of God, the One who created us. This mind that we are talking about is independent of heredity and environment. We all have a background. We all came from some particular place. The mind we're talking about today goes beyond that, goes into another realm altogether. It goes above and beyond personality. It doesn't remove personality, it doesn't remove your heredity, it doesn't remove the environmental factors that you grew up in. It means you've got a mind that rises above those things onto a different plateau, a different level of appreciation.

**11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.**

This is that other level, above our physical background that we grew up with, what our mind was formed in, that environment. We go into a different realm. You do not leave your personality behind, but you mold that personality into this new mind, this new man in the image of Jesus Christ.

**Colossians 1:26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.**

Sometimes we need to stop and think about what God has given us, where we are and what we have. How special, how privileged it is to be shown these things because we've gone on for generations and generations of people not knowing, not understanding the mystery of God that's been given to us by God's grace. We haven't earned it, but it's been given to us. We know things. We understand things that humanity in the main has never really appreciated.

**27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (It's this mind, Christ in you, Spirit-led mind.)**

**28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.**

This mind comes over and above all of the physical factors that have formed us, that have framed the way we think, the way we are. Jew or Gentile, the mind is the same. That is a very unifying aspect of the body that we can all, from whatever background, whatever race we are, we can all have the same mind.

These scriptures show us some basic elements of a Spirit mind. It is quite different from the spirit-in-man mind. It is a mind that allows us to enter into the spirit realm of the God family. We can search out, we can investigate, we can know the things of God. But we never approach the fullness of the mind of God. This mind leads to life. That is what is so important about it.

**Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, (The natural, normal, physical mind, the spirit in man mind is death.) but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

Obviously, we want to reject the one and embrace the other which is putting on the new man. We want to embrace this spiritual mind. It is not preprogrammed to be on the same level as God. It has flexibilities that need to be nurtured in order to grow towards Christ. There is no such thing as neutral thinking. You're either going forward towards the spiritual mind or you're going backwards towards the physical mind.

With the way Satan operates there is no neutral ground. There is no such thing as a vacuum. Satan does not allow a vacuum. His spirit, the attitude of his mind permeates the earth continually, 24/7. Either we are attuned to God, or we are attuned to Satan. There is no middle ground. You can't throw it into neutral and just say, "I'm not bothered one way or the other for the moment. I'm going to take a little sabbatical." We don't have that luxury once we've committed, once we've put our hand to the plow. There are two spirits, and we will always be influenced by one of those two spirits. This is where the work comes in. This is where we must do our part.

The Greek word for mind supports this importance. *Phroneo*, means to think, give one's mind to, to set one's mind on, or just simply to be minded. A particular way for the mind to operate.

**5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, (Set their minds – that's the part of *phroneo* and the opposite to that is) but those who live according to the Spirit, (set their minds on) the things of the Spirit.**

There is our marching order. We are to set our minds one way or the other. But we have the privilege of being able to set our minds on spiritual things, to set our minds in that direction. Clearly, there is a connection between the way one thinks and the way one lives. The way you live will be an expression of what you think, of what you set your mind on. And it is bound up in the choices that we make. And we must make

choices. God said, "I set before you two ways of life – choose!" You must choose what you connect your mind to in its development or lack thereof.

The picture I am trying to paint from scripture regarding the mind is that the mind is pliable, it is flexible; it can be bent in different directions. It can be influenced. While we stay in this physical body, this physical temple, we still have the ability to be connected to Satan's spirit which permeates the entire world. And if you're not actively trying to connect your mind to the Spirit of God then you'll be connecting to the spirit of Satan. You'll give him a door and he doesn't miss any opportunities.

When God created man He gave him a mind and He told the man to have dominion, to subdue, to tend and to keep. We apply that environmentally, perhaps more than anything else. But what if Adam had done perfectly what God had instructed him to do? He would have connected to the mind of God and he would have developed the mind of God. Part of having dominion and to subdue and to tend and to keep would involve the mind. That is part of our responsibility.

Deep in the meaning of *phroneo* is the close interrelationship between life and thought. We must set our minds; the life choices that we make will set our minds, either on the things of the flesh or the things of the Spirit. One leads to death. The other leads to life.

Note what Christ said to Peter in this regard. There's a very interesting example that involves a man who spent a lot of time with Jesus Christ. He was a disciple at this point in time. Jesus Christ used a very strong teaching point because Christ at this particular junction is beginning to lay out to the disciples His purpose for being on earth. He was going to be killed and He was going to be resurrected after three days. And He began to talk about this.

**Mark 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.**

There is the central core of salvation, that Christ is beginning to lay out. Peter missed the point of what Christ was saying.

**32 He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.**

From our perspective looking back it seems, how could he be so arrogant? But he was genuine. He was sincere but he didn't quite grasp the fullness of what Christ was trying to teach.

**33 But when He (Christ) had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."**

The word *phroneo* is the word mindful. “You’ve set your mind on the wrong things, Peter.” This was a very strong point of teaching. Here is somebody close to Christ, living with Christ, walking, talking, eating with Christ and he had set his mind on a different level than the mind that Christ was operating at. Granted, the Holy Spirit hadn’t been given but this is a teaching point. Satan loves very sincere people whose minds are set on the things of this world, on the mind of the flesh. And it is possible to be in God’s Church and have your mind set on the wrong thing and be sincere about what you are doing, believing in all your heart that you are doing the right thing.

Satan is the master of deception. Again, this is a powerful warning. We must be careful what we are thinking about and where we are setting our minds. Peter was sincere but sincerely wrong. He was actually denying God’s plan of salvation that Christ was beginning to lay out! This is how Satan wants us to operate – worldly thinking but have us believe it is spiritual thinking. The letter of the law and the spirit of the law applies across the board, in all areas of our lives in things that we come into contact with on a daily basis.

Another important aspect of *phroneo* is that ‘to be minded’ requires context. This is deep into the meaning of the word *phroneo*, the Greek word. It requires a context about the thinking. Not so much about the process of thinking but as to the context of what is taught.

**Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.**

That is the principle, the context. What we think about is going to be what we become. It is an interesting little section of scripture because it is talking about the bread of a miser. about his delicacies:

**7 ..."Eat and drink!" he says to you,** (these delicacies, these very attractive things that look good) **But his heart is not with you.**

Deception is involved here. In his heart he is against you. But he’s offering you things that are appealing, things that are attractive, things that you’d like to have.

**8 The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up...**

This is a classic Satan. He offers us bread. He offers us delicacies. He wants you to think down his path, down his line of thinking sincerely but all he is trying to do is trap you into killing yourself. Death. It is very important.

**Psalms 55:21 The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, But war was in his heart; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords.**

This is, again, a classic maneuver by Satan. Satan knows how to present butter and oil for the carnal mind. He knows how to appeal to that mind because he’s created it. The spirit in man is exposed to Satan’s attitude, that carnality. He is the author of it. He knows how to put things in front of people that are attractive. He knows how to present

things to you so that you will be very sincere but sincerely wrong. That's exactly what he wants us to do.

**Proverbs 26:24 He who hates, disguises it with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;**

**25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart;**

**26 Though his hatred is covered by deceit, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.**

**Proverbs 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool...**

Satan is the master of deceit. The human mind is deceitful above all things. It covers the desperately sick aspect of the mind and likes to smooth it over with butter and oil and does not address the true nature of that mind. This is why repentance is so critically important in the development of a spiritual mind – critically important because it addresses the state of mind. We need to come to see our heart for what it is. That's what repentance is all about and we're dealing with a mind that is deceitful above all things, so the nature of the mind wants to repent under its own terms and circumstances.

How many people have been baptized over the years into God's Church that have not really experienced real repentance? And left their mind exposed in that sense to the world and to Satan and to his thoughts? He wants to kill. He wants to maim. He does not want you to be repentant, genuinely, deeply. He doesn't want you to embrace repentance as a way of life. He wants you to think of repentance as what you did prior to baptism so you could be baptized. All that did was to start, begin, a way of life. If you're going to put on a new man and put off the old man that's day by day by day and it goes on as long as you draw breath as a human being. It never ends in the development of a mind that approaches God's mind.

You cannot say, "I've repented (past)." What about yesterday? What about last week? Where are you in terms of repentance in dealing with this mind that is normally and eagerly wants to connect to Satan's mind. It likes the oil and the butter that is being offered. The attitude of 'I am wrong' is critically important! It is a safety device. Coming to see that I am wrong. God is the one that leads us to repentance. And He shows us clearly that what we are is wrong. And we embrace this as an attitude. We talk about spiritual mind. This is an attitude you and I must embrace. But it goes against the grain of everything we see and hear in society that tells us "you're okay". "You are good just as you are. You just misunderstood. You are okay." You are *not* okay! But this is not a negative attitude that crushes life out of you. This is the beginning of real life when we can say, "I am wrong!" We don't see a lot of that attitude today. We see a lot of "You are wrong. You need to address this. You need to change that." We do not see much of

the humility that comes from “I am wrong.” Because it means you do not trust that part of your mind that you still have that can connect to Satan. So, you check it. You hold it up to the light and examine it. And that is very, very important in this way of life.

God is preparing a mind that has context. This is not something that is imposed upon us. We are willing participants to have dominion, to dress and to keep this mind that we have been given. We exercise dominion by “proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

**Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, (it is addressed to us) by the mercies of God,**

And to have this kind of mind is through God’s mercy, God’s acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice, the forgiveness that comes with it.

**1 ...that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,**

That ties into baptism and into your repentance where you take that old man that you have now identified for what it is and you want to kill it. You demonstrate that by the act of baptism into the grave and coming back up to a new way of life. We become a living sacrifice.

**1 ...holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.**

If you have been called and God has led you to repentance, this is your reasonable service. Our lives in total are God’s. We gave our life to God at baptism. How many times do we give our life to God and then take it back under different circumstances? Not an unnatural thing to do. We are to give our life as a complete and total sacrifice:

**2 And do not be conformed to this world, (Do not tune in to the vibes of this world, to Satan’s broadcast.) but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,**

That is our responsibility. God gives us the ability to be transformed if we want it. If we desire it. If we hunger and strive for it.

**2 ...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

The law of God teaches us what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God. The law is an expression of God’s mind. God’s law will give you understanding that will transform your mind by the Spirit and we will end up with a spiritual mind that allows us to see the spiritual intent of the law. This is where it becomes absolutely critical for us.

The doctrine of Balaam is for you to substitute the works of the flesh for the works of the law. We can refine it down to in-house, in the Church, the letter of the law for the Spirit of the law. Going only as far as the letter of the law, that’s death. The law kills. We must take an extra step. To prevent this from happening we must exercise the mind of the Spirit.



**Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses.**

These verses use the example of prayer, but we can extrapolate this point into many other areas of our lives. We are weak human beings, and the Spirit helps us to address those weaknesses.

**26 ...For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit [Itself] makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.** (This is the working of the Holy Spirit with our minds in relationship to God.)

**27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**

It connects our minds to that great and awesome mind of God. Our minds *can* be spiritually oriented towards God the Father who is intimately involved in our frame of mind, our thought processes if we allow Him to be, if we open the door for Him.

This creates a mind of the Spirit. The connection to the Father through the Spirit of God is what we call as the mind of the Spirit. A human mind connected to the mind of God. This is our strength. God has given us a Spirit which gives us power, love, and a sound mind. It builds the defenses we need against such things as the doctrine of Balaam.

The doctrine of Balaam is expressed in many different ways. It is simply the way Satan operates. It's a way of understanding his mind as he wants to lead mankind to death. He wants to destroy any possibility of their being an eternal God family. Do not just constrain it down to one little instance back in the book of Numbers. This is the way Satan operates. You can drop the name 'doctrine of Balaam' and still come up with the same deal.

This mind of power, love and a sound mind will nullify the doctrine of Balaam, but the Holy Spirit must be utilized. The context that God has given us, (*phroneo* has to have a context) is the spirit intent of the law. We must set our minds on it. This is not automatic. Understand that we are not doing away with the letter of the law. We are putting the letter of the law in its right context. You have to obey the letter of the law if you're going to have the spiritual intent. You cannot have the spiritual intent of the law and throw the law away. The letter of the law is important. First you obey the letter of the law, but you don't stop there. You reach out for the understanding that comes from that particular law, growing in that knowledge and that understanding.

The mind of the Spirit proves what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**

There are a number of elements in this verse that flow on from the importance of the first two verses. We are able to take control of what we think. We can take control not to think of ourselves more highly. Secondly, we do not allow vain, prideful thoughts to well up within us. If we've gone through the process of repentance we can identify pride, we can identify vanity. We have seen those qualities within ourselves in the past, so we resist those thoughts. We forcibly focus on humility. And this frame of mind we are talking about requires humility. And fourthly faith is involved. The faith in Jesus Christ's sacrifice for forgiveness of our sins. Humility is an expression of acknowledgment of what we are in God's sight.

If we have truly repented and adopt this "I am wrong" frame of mind, what is there to be prideful about? What is there to be vain about? Those thoughts come from Satan. We are on the wrong wavelength if we allow pride to be a factor in who and what we are. We have nothing to be vain about. Our righteousness at the very best are filthy rags in God's sight.? Satan will pump that attitude into us if we allow him to do so.

The Apostle Peter noted that our adversary is like a roaring lion, seeking to devour us. The doctrine of Balaam is set up to devour God's people. We are to resist him by humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, by submission and humility.

It is interesting that all the things that we need to consider for growth and development in today's environment have become negatives. Submission is a dirty word today. People do not want to submit. Submit to who? Submit to what? I am my own person! I do not need to submit to you.

We need to consider that we are the fish swimming upstream in this environment in which we live. We arrive at humility by exercising our minds, by closely monitoring what goes into the mind. That is not so easy. The 'don't' in thinking highly of ourselves is our responsibility. It cannot be forced on you by anybody else. You have to come to that point in your own thinking.

**Proverbs 3:1 My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands;**

**2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.**

We're trying to take the law from its letter of the law state into its spiritual intent state because that begins to approach the mind of God.

**3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,**

This is possible through the Holy Spirit being a part of our minds. And the heart, of course, frames who we are as individuals.

**4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man.**

## **5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart,**

Trust is hard to come by today because the experiences that we have had over the last thirty, forty, fifty years in the Church of God. Satan's been working to destroy our ability to trust as we have moved from organization to organization. The ability to trust has become more and more difficult. It does not say trust in man. It says:

### **5 . . . And lean not on your own understanding;**

There it is. Do not lean on your own understanding. 'I am wrong' is an attitude that questions. This is what I feel. This is what I think. Is that right? Do you ever go through that process or do you automatically conclude what you are thinking is right because you're thinking it. We tend to do that. Lean not on your own understanding. And there are times when you need to be able to say, "I need counsel. I need to run this by somebody else. This is what I am thinking but maybe I do not see the entire picture. Maybe there are pieces of information I do not have." You allow that kind of thinking and seek wise counsel in whatever area it is that you are dealing with in your life.

### **6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**

### **7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.**

### **8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.**

### **34 Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble.**

To those who are dealing with their fleshly minds, realize what it is and are putting effort into dealing with it. The more you try the more help God will give you but you have to have that ability, the desire to want to exercise your mind. You've got to think about the things that God has given you.

We do well on the Sabbath here. We have a couple of hours, three hours together and that is great and then for the other six days you are back in a totally different environment that does not support that kind of mental activity. You are striving with your minds to survive in this environment with jobs, with education, with family needs and so forth. There are an incredible amount of distractions in this society today to prevent you taking the time to think, to exercise your mind about God, God's law, God's plan, God's purpose and what it means for you and your life.

Satan doesn't want to give you time. We all say, "I don't know where the time has gone. It is not by chance. It's a lifestyle that Satan has put upon mankind so that we don't have the time unless we really set our mind to have the time, on the things that are important. The week goes by and you look back and, "Oh man! I meant to do this. I meant to pray about that. I meant to study this." It happens but we have to put the brakes on.

We arrive at humility by exercising our minds. The carnal mind elevates itself; its thinking processes are orchestrated by the pompous and vain mind of Satan. The fact is that in the last days people will be lovers of their own selves. That is the number one thing that Paul says to Timothy. It is the number one factor. That's Satan's power turned up so that we only think about ourselves. We only care about ourselves. Our minds are focused on ourselves and *our* lives. That is what Satan wants...

Our faith in Christ creates a new mentality. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ." Paul immediately, when he says that about Christ follows it up with saying "Christ humbled Himself." He was the Word. He was God. He was with God and He humbled Himself to become a sacrifice for all humanity. This mind is a mind of humility. What is the purpose of this humble, spiritually transformed mind? When you put the context together you go from "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought" to:

**Romans 12:4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,**

**5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.**

You immediately come to the unity that's God's people are to have through the same mind. Having the same mind lifts us above the physical environmental factors and heredity factors. We all have the same mind which produces the unity we call the body of Christ. This is about building a family, a God family

**16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.**

If somebody wants to have a discussion and it begins like this. "I am right. You are wrong. Now let us talk about it." That attitude is everywhere. And is not a useful discussion to have. To have the mind of the Spirit God the Father is intimately involved in the thinking processes.

**Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.**

If you want the mind of the Spirit, it's through genuine, deep, sincere, ongoing repentance. That is the path that we must walk.

**Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God (Romans 12:1, the sacrifice God is looking for) are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart — These, O God, You will not despise.**

This is not weakness! Meekness is not weakness. We are talking about being strong because when you see your fleshly mind for what it is and you want to get rid of that

functioning, you're going to be strong. To have the attitude, "I am wrong" is a strength. It is a power. It is not weakness. Do not be afraid to embrace "I may be wrong." I need to pray about this. I need to see what God's mind is on the matter. What stands between me and the doctrine of Balaam? The mind of the Spirit stands between those two things. A mind where the things of the flesh have been killed through faith in Christ, a mind renewed according to the Spirit, a truly repentant mind.

**Colossians 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.**

## **2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**

There was a time in my history of pastoring where I wondered whether I was pastoring congregations of the Church of God or congregations of Rush Limbaugh. Because I would listen to him all week, come together on the Sabbath and guess what all the discussions were about? Right-wing politics. "Set your mind on things above." How much time do we spend drinking in the garbage that the media presents to us?

We are easily set up for this because if we are going to obey the law of God, we will be regarded as a conservative in this environment. I don't know how you cannot be conservative if you're going to live by the law of God in this society today. You will be conservative which means you don't approve of left-wing politics and somebody comes along with right-wing politics and that sounds good compared to this. And it is all wrong. But any of us can fall into that trap. We love the right-wing 'yap-yap' shows as I call them, drinking it all in because they hate the liberals. That is down at the lower level of the fleshly existence. We've got to let that kind of stuff go.

## **3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**

That old man is gone. Snap that connection. That connection is going to kill you if you do not get rid of it. Connect to God and His will, what His thought pattern is. That part of your mind that Satan can work with is dead. Satan cannot work with the mind of the Spirit. God sets bounds on Satan. He did not allow Balaam to curse Israel. He drew a line. He said, "You can't go beyond that line." Satan cannot touch a mind of the Spirit. That is God's Spirit. That's outside of the realm that Satan can get at. If we go back over the line and we have the mind of the flesh, Satan's right there. That is within his boundaries. He can get at the mind of the flesh. The more we become spiritually minded, the stronger the ground will be that we stand on spiritually. It is really up to us whether we allow Satan's influence to be strong on us or not.

Last week one of the things that I noted, was with that example of Balaam and Balak. It was the young men that were the target. They paraded the women of Moab before the young men of Israel. There is a difference between the young developing mind and an older more mature mind. Satan's religious systems are pictured by a great harlot. It is an apt and brilliant analogy. We are introduced to the system that is

portrayed by a great harlot who sits on many waters who has influenced the kings of the earth.

**Revelation 17:5 ... MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

This is a world-ruling system. All the kings, all the leaders of this earth. It does not matter what they represent in terms of political nature. It's one system and this is the Mother of Harlots. Proverbs 7 is a great lesson for all of us. It's interesting that we begin with the emphasis again on God's law and its spiritual nature because it talks about the heart.

**Proverbs 7:1 My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you.**

**2 Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye.**

What's the most important thing in your life day by day as you go through every day of life? Is it God's law and what God's law is telling you, teaching you?

**3 Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart**

**4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," And call understanding your nearest kin, (What's the purpose of all of this?)**

**5 That they may keep you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words.**

From Revelation 17 we know the system that encompasses the earth is akin to an immoral woman and a seductress. This is an analogy. It can be specific, but it is telling us something on a broader scale. Then it goes into the reality of a young mind in this environment.

**6 For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,**

**7 And saw among the simple, (It means the younger, less mature mind) I perceived among the youths, A young man devoid of understanding,**

**8 Passing along the street near her corner;**

We have identified a harlot doing her work. And this young man has no real concept of what he's about and he goes near her corner.

**8 ...And he took the path to her house**

**9 In the twilight, in the evening, In the black and dark night.**

The fleshly mind loves darkness. The spiritual mind loves light. God's law is a lamp. It is a light, but men love darkness.

**10 And there a woman met him, With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.**

**11 She was loud and rebellious, Her feet would not stay at home.**

**12 At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner.**

This is an analogy for us to think about in the way Satan operates. This is the doctrine of Balaam being expressed in a slightly different way. This describes Satan's operation.

**13 So she caught him and kissed him; With an impudent face she said to him:**

**14 "I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows.**

She puts a little bit of a religious twist to it. Now, when the young men of Israel saw the young women of Moab, the women of Moab were instructed to tell them if they want them, they must embrace their gods. Get them to embrace your gods and reject the true God and take on the false gods. And that is exactly what they did. "I have peace offerings. Come and offer your offering to my god. My god will do this, and my god will do that." That is exactly what each did.

**15 So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you.**

'Found you' because he put himself in the wrong place. He should not have been exposing his mind to these things.

**16 I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.**

**17 I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. (oil and butter)**

**18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love.**

**19 For my husband is not at home; He has gone on a long journey; (Christ has not yet returned.)**

**20 He has taken a bag of money with him, And will come home on the appointed day."(This is a very good definition of the doctrine of Balaam.)**

**21 With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, (It was his choice. He put himself there in that place deliberately.) caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him.**

**22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,**

**23 Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life.**

Perfect description of the doctrine of Balaam. Perfect description of Satan's MO. And we need to be aware of that. And we need a mind that can identify and draw away from it. Satan's way is to seduce man's mind into a course of action that produces death. A

take-away point that I make from that little section of scripture: We control the context of our thinking. We are *in control* of the context of our thinking.

I think we all can acknowledge to some degree or another the influence of social media today. And mostly social media is embraced by something you hold in your hand. It could be a phone. It can be an iPad; it can be a computer. That stuff spits out the garbage that will cause your demise if you embrace it. I don't want to search it because it can be a deadly trap if that's what you allow your mind to think about, to dwell on.

Today, the percentage of mental disease amongst teens is shocking – 34% of teens (if I remember correctly) have some kind of mental problem. A vast number of them suffer from depression. Where does this come from? From Satan feeding young minds that want to embrace these things that are destructive over the long haul.

I do have a healthy concern for the end result of technology if we embrace it fully and totally. It is useful. I cannot do my job without it. But I'm not going to delve into a lot of the stuff that's out there that's going to mold my mind, take my mind away from where it needs to be. If we expose our minds to the way of Satan, as expressed in the world around us, the doctrine of Balaam may well come into play.

All minds are vulnerable, but particularly young developing minds. Our colleges and our universities are simply meant to be crucibles for the mental development of young minds into mature thinking. There is a reason why those responsible for Critical Theory built it into the European university institutions, primarily Germany. And that Critical Theory built into the universities in Europe came to the United States. Hitler helped bring that over here by his attitude toward Jews and it was Jewish intellectuals involved in embedding this into the university system. It's come here and it underscores our modern day educational system.

Dewey, the father of American education saw to that, and it is producing graduates. Critical Theory opposes the basic tenants of western civilization. Today we know it better as Critical Race Theory. It's Critical Theory whether it's got race in the title or not. There are two factors that are very important in this Critical Theory. One, it is anti-God. And two, it is anti-family. It ties those two things together. If you can destroy family, you destroy God. And that is where this attack is taking place today. Young, developing minds.

It is in the family that a healthy mind can be developed. This is where our responsibilities kick in as far as parents are concerned, to try and help raise children who can identify these aspects of our society around us and teach them how to avoid those things. Family is critically important! When God's law is internalized, it creates children of God. God is creating a family and we have physical families to help in that creation. We are trying to raise young people to become godly people, become children of God.



**Micah 6:4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. (we apply that to ourselves having been brought out of spiritual Egypt.)**

**5 O My people, remember now What Balak king of Moab counseled, And what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, From Acacia Grove to Gilgal, That you may know the righteousness of the Lord."**

We are to look at how Satan's mind operates. We are to look at these things to learn about the mind of the Spirit, what it is and embrace it. We know the righteousness of God because by faith in Christ we have the Spirit of God within us.

**1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! (And we are. We are the children of God not the children of Satan.) Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.**

And John just spun off a statement in chapter 2, "Love not the world or the things of the world" because they are destructive. They are destructive to being a son of God.

**2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

**3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**

Exercise the mind. Use the mind to think about the things of God, the law of God, the spiritual intent of the law. By all means focus on the letter of the law, fulfill the letter of the law but that's a steppingstone. Take the next step. What does this law really teach me about the mind of God?

**4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.**

**5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.**

**6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.**

There is this desire not to sin. Jesus Christ never had the desire to sin. Christ never wanted to sin and the more we develop the mind of the Spirit the less inclined we will be to go after the way of Satan that he's offering us in this world.

God has given us a mind of the Spirit. It must be nourished. It must be protected. It has to be developed, it has to be cherished. Love the position that God has put you in, an incredible position.

**Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, (and it's through that faith in Jesus Christ's sacrifice that we**

receive the Spirit) **even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**

And Satan will want to convince you that the works of the law makes you righteous.

**Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**

We have the power of a sound mind. We can do what needs to be done if we desire it, if we hunger for it, if we thirst for it.

**17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**

**18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.** (You have life through that Spirit.)

**25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

It is a way of being. It is a total way of thinking. We need to embrace it, we need to think about our environment, we need to think about what we do each week, what we set our minds on, what we let our minds be occupied with. The spiritual intent of God's law is a way of thinking and being. It will give you a mind that will recognize and reject the doctrine of Balaam. The mind of the Spirit produces the fruits of the Spirit, peace, joy, happiness, fulfillment. The mind of the Spirit is everything!