

SABBATH THOUGHT 2025-04-19—WHY THE MIND OF CHRIST?

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

The first Great Commandment is to love God:

MARK 12:30 'And **you shall love the LORD your God** with all your heart, with all your soul, **with all your mind**, and with all your strength.' This *is* the first commandment.

Love toward God must come from every fiber of our being: the heart, soul, strength, and MIND. But how does one have a mind with the thoughts and THINKING that can love God who sacrificed His Son¹. It begins with WHY Jesus Christ came into the world:

1 JOHN 4:9-10 In this **the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him [Jesus Christ]**. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

While the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is absolutely necessary for the remission of sins, God's *main* purpose for sending Jesus Christ in the flesh was so that "we might **live [eternally]** through Him." That is a tall order because the gift of eternal life requires much more than being forgiven of sins. Really? How can that be?!? Eternal life is dependent upon BECOMING agape love. To "love the LORD your God with **all your mind**" is MUCH more than forgiveness of sin; it is a new way of THINKING. It requires a MIND (in addition to the rest of our being) that fulfills the Great Commandment. To even begin keeping that Commandment with our minds requires the Holy Spirit:

2 TIMOTHY 1:6-7 Therefore I [Paul] remind you to stir up **the gift of God [the Holy Spirit]** which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us **a spirit** of fear, but of power and **of love** and **of a sound mind**.

EPHESIANS 4:23-24 and be renewed in **the spirit of your mind**, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

The Holy Spirit is given to CHANGE our minds and thinking. Forgiveness of sin is a primary focus for Christians, especially during the Passover and days of Unleavened Bread, but how many consider the vital importance of having a SOUND **mind**? And what does that mean exactly? The Greek defines it as having a mind that is disciplined and controlled; one that is being trained to THINK a certain way! Where does that mind come from?

1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" **But we have the mind of Christ.**

¹ John 3:16.

A “sound mind” IS the mind of Christ. It is the standard for THINKING. Jesus was not focused on His sacrifice for forgiveness of sin in the beginning of His ministry but rather all that which is necessary for eternal life. Most Christians tend to concentrate on the Passover sacrifice for sins rather than on the GOSPEL message of Jesus Christ living in us. This is why He said He IS The Way and The Life². Ask yourself, *how* is that He is The Way and The Life? Jesus spent His entire physical life in perfect submission to God, service to Him, and loving Him. As a result, only He possessed the “words of eternal life” as Simon Peter said³.

Scripture does not say to have the mind of *God* in us, but the mind of CHRIST. Does that surprise you? There are several important reasons for this. First of all, there is only one God Most High. Jesus said, “*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*” (John 4:24). Without the mind of Christ, who has ever WORSHIPPED God in spirit and truth? Only Jesus knows *how* to worship God.

Jesus is the Son of God but even He says His Father is greater⁴; therefore, none will ever be equal to the authority, power, and wisdom of God the Father. Neither Jesus Christ nor the children of God will be the equal of God; instead, we are to be like Jesus Christ who is a SON of God. In fact, that is exactly what Scripture says:

ROMANS 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. 29 For whom [those who are called] He [God the Father] foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He [*Jesus Christ*] might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He [*God the Father*] predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

To be “conformed to the image of His Son [*Jesus Christ*]” requires having HIS mind in us so that *our* thinking can be CHANGED in order to worship and love God. Jesus Christ REVEALED the Father. He knew God *before* His days in the flesh, so revealing God the Father from the perspective (mind) of Jesus as the Son allows us to know God the Father as CHILDREN—sons and daughters of God:

MATTHEW 11:27 “All things have been delivered to Me [*Jesus Christ*] by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

JOHN 17:3, 6-8 “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ... 6 “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 7 “Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8 “For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

² John 14:6.

³ John 6:68.

⁴ John 14:28.

It makes perfect sense that the SON reveals the Father because that is the same relationship the saints will have as children of God. Therefore, Jesus, as the *only* Son (for the time being), is the perfect One to reveal God the Father to His other potential children.

Jesus' mind was perfect thinking and, thereby, perfect in worship and love of His Father as the Son. His mind in us changes our thinking so we can have a relationship with God the Father based upon agape love. But what was Jesus' relationship with God the Father?

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He [Jesus Christ] humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

During His life, Jesus' had the discipline and control—a SOUND mind—necessary to love God in accordance with the Great Commandment. As previously mentioned, Jesus was not focused on forgiveness of sins as much as He was in teaching and being the example of righteous THINKING toward God. How did He exemplify perfect agape love toward God?

JOHN 16:33 “These things I [*Jesus Christ*] have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Jesus overcame—conquered, prevailed, got the victory over—this sinful world. But that has a depth of discipline and control that is far beyond simple repenting and asking God to forgive our sins. It is, in all regards, a way of thinking that OVERCOMES sins and has agape love. You see, God cannot be tempted:

JAMES 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

But JESUS was most certainly tempted:

HEBREWS 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest [Jesus Christ] who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

A deaf and blind person has no concept of a bird. In that sense, God cannot be tempted so it falls to Jesus Christ to teach us how to change our thinking so we can overcome temptations. We need the sound mind of CHRIST to overcome this world. Jesus' mind was pure and undefiled agape love toward God the Father. He was perfect in obedience to the LAW of God and the WILL of God because His thoughts were always in submission to God, service to Him, and love for Him. In fact, Jesus LEARNED obedience because He was tempted:

HEBREWS 5:8-9 though He [*Jesus Christ*] was a Son, yet **He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.** 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

The sufferings of Jesus Christ immediately bring thoughts about His sacrifice. However, many of His sufferings were the constant temptations of evil men throughout His ministry. He obeyed God and overcame their temptations, especially those of the priests and scribes. His mind is what WE require to receive eternal life, which is how we live through Him and why He is the Captain of our salvation. He was made perfect through sufferings⁵ so His sound mind is exactly what we need:

HEBREWS 2:10, 14-18 For it was fitting for Him [*Jesus Christ*], for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, **in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.** ... 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, **He Himself [*Jesus Christ*] likewise shared in the same,** that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and **release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage [*of the mind*].** 16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 Therefore, **in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God,** to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 **For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.**

The OT story of the days of Unleavened Bread is about leaving Egypt, which is symbolic of carnal, evil thinking. Even though the ancient Israelites rebelled and spent 40 years wandering until that generation died in the wilderness, there is also a lesson for us. We, too, will not reach the Promised Land until we have spent a lifetime escaping a world of carnal thinking. To change our THINKING requires having the sound mind of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness of sins is the first step in salvation but that is simple compared to the real battle for our minds:

[TS2009] ROMANS 7:21-24 I [*Paul*] find therefore this law, that when I wish to do the good, that the evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the [law of God] according to the inward man, 23 but I see another [law] in my members, **battling against the [law] of my mind,** and bringing me into captivity to the [law] of sin which is in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?

Without the mind of Christ, humans only have a reprobate mind, which is incapable of loving God the Father and fulfilling the Great Commandment. In fact, a carnal mind is not just incapable of loving God; it is HOSTILE toward God:

ROMANS 8:5-7 For those who live according to **the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh,** but those *who live according to the Spirit, [set their minds on] the things of the Spirit.* 6 For **to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually**

⁵ Heb. 2:10.

mind *is life* and peace. 7 Because **the carnal mind is enmity [hostility] against God**; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

God "sent His own Son **in the likeness of flesh of sin**"⁶ for the very purpose that Jesus would BECOME The Way to change our *thinking* by having His sound mind in us. Without it, we cannot learn obedience (as Jesus Christ did) or overcome the temptations of the world (as Jesus Christ did). Without His mind and his Way of THINKING, there is no salvation because He IS The Life. Without His mind in us, God will literally reject ours:

ROMANS 1:28 And even as **they did not like to retain God in their knowledge [in their minds], God gave them over to a debased [reprobate, worthless, REJECTED] mind**, to do those things which are not fitting;

The Passover sacrifice aside, Jesus primary purpose and ministry was a message and example of a new way of THINKING so "that we might **live** through **Him**":

1 PETER 2:21 For to this you were called, because **Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps**:

And the only way to have the mind of Christ is by becoming a **living** sacrifice ACCEPTABLE to God in the manner and example of Jesus:

ROMANS 12:1-2 I [Paul] beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, **acceptable to God**, *which is* your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what *is* that good and **acceptable and perfect will of God**.

Only the mind of Christ is acceptable to God! If our minds are not changed and become like the mind of Christ, there will be NO eternal life. His mind in us is how we overcome the thinking of this sinful world, His mind is how we "lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us,"⁷ His mind is how we learn obedience though suffering, and His mind is how we fulfill the Great Commandment. Without the mind of Christ, we **will not** be ACCEPTED by God. The hard battle of this life is overcoming carnal and reprobate THINKING. To have the mind of Christ means we must "put on the [Lord Jesus Christ], and **make no provision** for the lusts of **the flesh**."⁸ Putting on the mind of Christ is the goal of the days of Unleavened Bread.

May God's grace and peace be upon you!

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⁶ Rom. 8:3. Also Phil 2:7.

⁷ Heb. 12:1.

⁸ Rom. 13:14.