

The Mind of Christ *Philippians 2:5-11 (part 1)*

Good morning.

T.W. Hunt has a great study on the Mind of Christ I have done previously. Some of our teaching was borrowed from that study.

He said, *“Suppose Christ broke through the veil that separates the spiritual from the physical and audibly said to you today,*

*“I am going to require you to have **My mind** in all its fullness.*

However, I want people to know what a miracle of change I can work, so I am going to reveal to your church what your mind is like right now.

Next Sunday, in your church, I am going to take over the morning service and playback for all to hear every thought you had this last week.”

Would it appall you or delight you if Christ revealed your thoughts?”

One of the things the Lord does for us when He saves us from our sin is He changes us positionally instantly, even though practically, it is not always evident.

So, we are already a New Creation in Christ, but this change is also a life-long process of being transformed into a new creation as we are being conformed to the image of Christ.

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. NKJV

The Lord's desire for His children is to be free from the bondage that comes from the world, our flesh, and the enemy, as we are being transformed, by receiving the Mind of Christ.

Receiving the Mind of Christ is like many other things within our Christian walks. We already have the Mind of Christ, but our minds are also being renewed to have the Mind of Christ.

Paul told the Church at Corinth in ***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. NKJV***

The emphasis in ***1 Corinthians 2:16*** is that we must choose to live in light of the fact that we have the Mind of Christ.

Please open your Bibles to ***Philippians 2***, as we continue in our verse-by-verse study of Paul's Epistle to the Church at Philippi.

Last time, the portion of ***Philippians*** we were in, spoke on how Christians should ***conduct*** themselves as citizens of heaven, while here on Earth.

Paul communicated that Christians are Ambassadors for Christ.

The King of Heaven has a message that needs to be delivered, and Paul said believers in Christ are to deliver that message as though God were pleading through them.

Paul said let your *conduct* be worthy of the *Gospel*. Paul wanted Christians to be led by the Spirit and to remain in the unity of the *faith of the Gospel*.

Then Paul mentioned *adversaries*. Every true Christian has adversaries, as well as a main adversary.

Paul also taught about Like-minded believers.

The secret to maintaining peace within the body of Christ happens by all of its members, having a single-minded focus.

As followers of Christ, we must always check the **motivation** of our hearts and constantly ask ourselves why we do, what we do.

Today, we will have part one of a series on seven verses the Apostle Paul wrote as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Some commentators refer to these seven verses in *Philippians 2:5-11* as a hymn or a poem written by the Apostle Paul.

This hymn is a challenge for Christ-followers to live for Christ as Paul offered the most important reasons to have the Mind of Christ, by showing us the identity of our humble Christ.

This hymn tells us to have the Mind of Christ, and there is also a specific breakdown of the character of Jesus.

Read *Philippians 2:5-11*

There is enough Theology in these seven verses to spend ten lifetimes explaining them.

So, this study is by no means an exhaustive study, but rather, it scratches the surface of the hidden gems found in these verses.

I. Having the right mind.

Read *Philippians 2:5*

Paul instructed Christians to have the same Mind of Christ which means to have the same attitude Jesus had towards His life and situation.

Let this mind be in you or let this **attitude** be in you...

Warren Wiersbe said, “*Outlook determines outcome. If the outlook is selfish, the actions will be divisive and destructive.*”

Some Christians **admire** the attitude Jesus had as He submitted to the plan of the Father, but Paul instructed believers to not only admire Christ’s mind but, to have the same mind as well.

Having the Mind of Christ means we agree with Christ’s perspective, His will, and we have the same goals as Jesus as well.

Paul didn’t list the qualities of the mind of Christ in these verses. But by reading this passage in context, as well as other verses in scripture, we can find some qualities of the Mind of Christ.

1. Having the Mind of Christ means a person is truly **alive**.

An alive mind is active, not lazy. The mind that is alive in Christ reflects on the person of Christ with prayer, meditation on His Word, and chooses spiritual things over carnal things.

Romans 8:5 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, the things of the Spirit.

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. NKJV

The mind, which is alive in Christ, chooses to ***live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.***

We all struggle at times, but if we live according to the Spirit, we cannot fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. NKJV

The abundant life is offered to all believers but, unfortunately many times we fail to grab a hold of the abundant life which is truly a life worth living.

We will never truly live the abundant life promised to us by Jesus until we fully understand that once we are in Christ, we were given **new life**, free from the bondages of our old life.

The abundant life in Christ is a life lived passionately serving and worshipping Him. True worship is telling the Lord what He is worth, by living for the glory of God, the Creator of all things.

So, the mind which is alive in Christ, surrenders to the leading of the Holy Spirit and usually, that involves a moment-by-moment decision to live for Jesus.

2. Having the Mind of Christ means a person is **single-minded** about the things of the Gospel.

An issue most Christians encounter while serving the Lord is distractions.

Distractions can come from the world, our flesh, our family members, worries, fears, insecurities, and even our enemy.

2 Corinthians 11:3 I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. NKJV

Stuart Briscoe said, *“Paul, as we have seen, was dealing with a particularly fractious group of people in the church of Corinth.*

They were divided on a number of issues. All of these issues, in Paul’s view, were less significant than the “main thing. Paul turned his attention to sharpening their focus on the main thing.

*“The main thing was that God had done something in human history to **change** their lives for time and eternity (through the Gospel of Jesus Christ).” (Stuart Briscoe)*

Our world is constantly trying to distract us from living for the Lord’s goals and objectives but having the Mind of Christ reminds us that the Good News of Jesus Christ is the main thing.

Jesus' entire life is an example of being single-minded.

When Satan tried to get Jesus to take a short cut instead of enduring the Cross, He rebuked the devil and said,

Matthew 4:10 "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" NKJV

From the very beginning of His time on earth, Jesus could not be distracted from fulfilling the will of the Father.

Our minds must be preoccupied with sincere and pure devotion to Christ. Single-mindedness is the discipline of attention.

With the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we have the ability to direct our focus and attention to the things of Christ and His Kingdom.

3. Having the Mind of Christ means a person is lowly.

From last time we were in ***Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. NKJV***

“Lowliness of mind” is translated ***“humility”*** in the NIV.

Every time someone encountered the Lord in the Old Testament, they were ***lowly***.

Jesus, almighty God in the flesh, humbly submitted Himself to a criminal's death to save lost sinners and submitted Himself to the will of the Father. We will look at this more next week.

James 4:6 "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." NKJV

David Guzik said, “*The carnal, human way is to overpower, dominate, manipulate, and out-manuever. The spiritual, Jesus way is to humble yourself, die to yourself, and let God show His resurrection power through you.*”

4. Having the Mind of Christ means a person is **pure**.

Titus 1:15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. NKJV

Purity is the natural state for the mind of a Christ-centered Christian because impurity comes from corruption, which is part of the natural man, not the born-again person.

Hunt said, “*Our safest course is to avoid temptation entirely, but our culture has made that difficult. Strength comes before, not during, temptation.*

“*Overcoming is a prior act. Know ahead of time which lusts are your greatest weaknesses. For some lusts you must be **prepared** to avert your eyes.*” (T. W. Hunt)

For the person who is preoccupied with impure thoughts,

2 Corinthians 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, NKJV

When our minds become dominated by carnal, fleshly thoughts, we need to take them captive, arrest them, in order to obey Christ, and this is done by the power of Christ living in me.

Carnal thoughts may come, but that is not where sin happens. Sometimes we can be doing absolutely nothing wrong, and suddenly a terrible thought enters our mind.

Sin occurs when we fail to take the carnal, fleshly thoughts, captive to the obedience of Christ.

5. Having the Mind of Christ means a person is responsive.

When we have the Mind of Christ we will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and we will respond to the Lord.

Think of the story of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus after the crucifixion of Christ. They didn't recognize it was Jesus walking with them, and then He taught them scripture.

Being responsive is a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

How can we become more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit?

Notice how Jesus led the disciples on the road to Emmaus.
Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. NKJV

You cannot hear the Lord without being in His Word and having a vibrant prayer life.

We know Jesus was sensitive to the Father's leading, He said...

John 8:28 I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. NKJV

Listen: As the Father is to the Son, so is Jesus to us.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. NKJV

The person with the Mind of Christ knows Jesus wants us to understand His Word. When there is a passage, we don't understand, the Spirit reveals it as we meditate in His Word.

6. Having the Mind of Christ means a person has **peace**.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. NKJV

We receive peace in our minds when our thoughts and focus are on God!

Sin separates us from the Lord and robs us of our peace. The person with the Mind of Christ is at rest knowing Jesus paid for our pardon.

We receive perfect peace and abundant life when we change our perspective and see things the way the Lord sees them. We need the Lord to give us eternal vision and change our hearts.

True peace is not found in a location, through situations, or from things.

True peace only comes from knowing the Prince of peace personally.

Jesus was at *perfect peace* even during the most trying moments of life because He knew He was right in the center of the Father's will.

T. W. Hunt said, *“God's goal for me is that I be like Christ. The one aspect of my personality that He will constantly measure for Christlikeness is my mind.*

He helps in my growth by revealing through His Word the expectations He has for my mind.

“I am assured that I can have His mind because of His office as Savior. Through His Word, His work, His grace, and His Spirit, I have the mind of Christ and will grow in it.”

Worry is a sin. It usually means you are not trusting in God.

If you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit is in you so, you can live by faith, and not worry.

The Spirit empowers you to be faithful, to trust Him, and to yield to the Lord's will.

With the Spirit living in you, you can trust God because you know the things that happen to you will turn out for His will.

The thing you worry about the most reveals what you are failing to trust the Lord for, but we can trust the Lord.

II. The action steps to have the Mind of Christ.

There are some action steps found within the New Testament for Christ-followers to keep the Mind of Christ.

1. To keep the Mind of Christ, we constantly **refocus** on Christ.

Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. NKJV

The ***KJV*** of ***Colossians 3:2, Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. KJV*** This means we are to direct the affections of our mind onto Christ.

Wiersbe said, “*The power of Christ in the life of the believer does more than merely restrain the desires of the flesh: It puts new desires within him. Nature determines appetite.*”

“*The Christian has the very nature of God within and this means he has godly ambitions and desires.*” (Warren Wiersbe)

The Apostle Paul said in ***Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, NKJV***

Within your old life, your citizenship was on earth but now, you have a new life in Christ.

Since we have New Life in Christ, we should seek the things which are above, where Jesus is seated.

A Christian is seated in the heavenly places, and we are only visiting the world because we have died to the old man. We are new creations, new people, and our identity is now in Christ.

2. We must submit our will to the Lord to keep the Mind of Christ.

Romans 12:1 I 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.

Romans 12:2 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.

NKJV

Romans 12:1-2 is the key for Christ-followers to determine the Lord's will for our lives.

Because of all the mercies God has given us, we should therefore, give ourselves fully to God, as a *Living Sacrifice!*

For those who claim to follow Jesus, a "*Living Sacrifice*" is someone who willingly places themselves on the Altar, to actively do the work and will of God.

In the Levitical Law of the Old Testament, the Lord was very clear about the different types and reasons for animal sacrifices.

There were burnt offerings, meal offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings.

When Jesus Christ offered Himself as our offering on the Cross at Calvary, He fulfilled all of the righteous requirements of the Law on our behalf.

So, there is no longer a need for animal sacrifices.

Jesus covered our sins, made peace between God and us, and paid for all our trespasses. This is how we become “***Holy, acceptable***” to the Lord.

The problem with ***Living Sacrifices*** on the Altar is that they tend to climb off of the Altar, from time to time.

Paul was saying in ***Romans 12:1-2***, “*Go back, and continually place ourselves on the Altar of God.*”

We need not only to place ourselves on the Altar daily, but we also need to examine our walk and willingly place ourselves on the Altar, moment by moment!

The Spirit-filled walk of a believer happens by dying to self and living for Christ, **moment** by **moment**.

3. With the Mind of Christ, we are to **be ready** to fulfill the call of the Lord.

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. NKJV

T.W. Hunt said, “*Our minds are to remain prepared for action.*

Readiness is being qualified for service.

If our will is set and our mind has grown through constant renewal, we will be qualified for any test God allows to come our way.”

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. NKJV

gotquestions.org gave some truths about the Mind of Christ:

- 1) The Mind of Christ stands in sharp contrast to the wisdom of man.
- 2) The Mind of Christ involves wisdom from God, once hidden but now revealed.
- 3) The Mind of Christ is given to believers through the Spirit of God.
- 4) The Mind of Christ cannot be understood by those without the Holy Spirit.
- 5) The Mind of Christ gives believers discernment in spiritual matters.

To have the Mind of Christ, someone must first have **Saving** Faith, in Christ. After salvation, the believer willingly places their life under God's **influence**.

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer, infusing them with wisdom, this is the Mind of Christ.

The believer is to yield to the Spirit's leading and allow the Holy Spirit to transform and renew their mind.