

POWER
OF A
TRANSFORMED
MIND

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Crossroads Full Gospel
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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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POWER OF A TRANSFORMED MIND

Originally God created man with a perfect memory and a willing desire to serve Him. Adam and Eve would have forgotten nothing. They would merely have had to think about any past event in order to recall it in its entirety.

Today, however (and obviously this was the case shortly after mankind's Fall), it seems so easy for man to forget God, let alone to have a continuous desire to obey Him.

It appears that shortly after the Fall of man, and because of it, man deteriorated genetically. This deterioration affected man's memory - his ability to recall information. This means that man quite often loses his focus, experiencing difficulty in continuing to meditate or think on the things he ought. This is not just because of genetics, but because of the pressures exerted by the "flesh" of man which, when yielded to, causes man to focus on fleshly, worldly, self-seeking things.

***“ . . . It appears that shortly after the Fall
of man, and because of it, man
deteriorated genetically. This
deterioration affected man's memory -
his ability to recall information. . . ”***

Knowing all this, God has instigated commandments to help counteract some of man's weaknesses. For instance, so we may progress in the faith, God commands His people to study His Word and to fellowship with faith-filled Christians (Disciples of Christ).

**2 TIMOTHY 2:15 Study (young and old) to show
yourself approved unto God, a workman who needs**

not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (analyzing and applying) the Word of truth.

HEBREWS 10:25 Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as Believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing - warning, urging and encouraging - one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching (the return of our Lord Jesus Christ). (Amp)

If we as Christians choose not to study God's Word or fellowship with other faith-filled Christians, there will be a danger of us quickly becoming forgetful and even worse - losing the reality of the faith-knowledge we have gained.

Also, the devil may take advantage of our weakness in this area, and steal the Word out of our hearts if we are not diligent.

MARK 4:15 And these are they who are beside the road, where the Word is sown; but when they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts.

So we need to continually feed ourselves upon God's Word, meditating on it, confessing it in order to help our focus, and acting upon it in faith, trusting in God's empowerment to keep it alive in our hearts. Fellowshiping with other Christians is also important in this regard, so that both they and we may be edified in the faith. Let us warn you that your flesh (your mind and senses) may not want to do all of this. But your regenerated spirit, empowered by the Divine Nature, desires spiritual food and fellowship with the Lover of your soul!

GROWING IN THE LORD

After salvation, you need to renew your mind (the way you think) through studying the Word of God, and listening to anointed preaching and teaching. **As we have already learned**, God's Word states that we are three-part beings. You are a spirit,

you have a soul (spiritual mind) and you live in a body of flesh and bones. While your spirit is made pure at salvation, your mind is not. Yes it is positionally (legally) saved - but for the most part, it takes time to bring our condition (our experience) into line with our position. Let's face it, many Christians don't act as though they are saved, but the fact is that they are saved if "in Christ." This process of bringing our condition (how we live on a daily basis) up to our legal position (of righteousness) is called "ongoing sanctification." Part of this process takes place through "the renewing of the mind."

As a new Christian, much of your thinking, and therefore many of your attitudes and opinions, will still oppose God's ways and His will in your life. For this reason your mind needs to be renewed or washed with the principles of God, so you can begin to think in the way that God thinks - with help of course from God's grace, which comes to us through the Holy Spirit.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you (Christians) wholly (entirely); and I pray God (that) your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

EPHESIANS 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind (this is meant to be a continuous process)

To have your mind renewed, you must come to the knowledge of God's Word - the Bible. This means that you need to diligently study God's principles and adopt His way of thinking as your own. To do this you need to work with the Holy Spirit. You cannot do it by yourself because the change involves the heart, not just the head. The renewed mind is therefore a mind which has learned, by God's grace, to live according to His Word - in any area. This needs to be, of course, a continuing process, and this process is called "ongoing sanctification".

JOSHUA 1:8 This Book of the Law (God's Word) shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate therein day and night (think about God's Word constantly), that you may observe (be watchful) to do (act) according to all that is written therein: (and this is the promise) for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success.

God's law for us as Christians is to be written on our hearts, and it should govern our behaviour. It can be summed up as follows:- we are to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Mark 12:29-31).

“. . .As a new Christian, much of your thinking, and therefore many of your attitudes and opinions, will still oppose God's ways and His will in your life. . .”

God has revealed many things in His Word that we need to know so we can be empowered by God's grace to fulfil this greatest commandment of all. This then becomes a way of life whereby we love with the love of God.

JAMES 1:21 Wherefore . . . receive with meekness the engrafted (implanted) Word which is able to save your souls.

Until our minds are renewed, we may not know what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God (**Romans 12:1-2**). We may inadvertently do something wrong and thereby sin against God, knowingly or unknowingly. Most basically defined, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. Sin is not only doing that which is wrong, in thought, word or deed, sin is also not doing that which is right, morally and spiritually. This means that there are sins of commission -

wrongdoing - and sins of omission - not doing right. Without God in your life, positionally and experientially, you will sin. Only through Jesus Christ, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can we avoid sin and walk in righteousness. Only through yielding to the Lord and seeking His empowerment can we truly do so.

When convicted of sin, we should always come to God through repentance and allow His full blessing back into our lives. If we don't, the enemy will, in some way, take advantage of our wrongdoing. However we have the assurance that:

1 JOHN 1:9 If we confess (acknowledge then forsake) our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (the results of sin).

God is faithful and just. So if you have sinned, confess that you have sinned, repent and receive His forgiveness. Then receive your cleansing of all unrighteousness (any consequence of that sin), so that the enemy can have no hold on you. Amen.

Note: Once we have truly repented of any sin, turning our back on that sin with the help of God's grace, it is forgiven and forgotten as far as God is concerned. So we need to forget about it also. But be aware that our spiritual enemy will try to use any feelings of condemnation which we may still be harbouring concerning past sin. He will try to convince us that we are not really forgiven or that we are unworthy to receive God's love etc. We need to recognize all such accusations as lies, and cast them down in the Name of Jesus the moment they appear. We need to declare what God's Word tells us, e.g. "*Their sin and iniquities will I remember no more*" (Hebrews 10:17). (Also look at Micah 7:18-19; Isaiah 43:25; 1 John 1:9.) By declaring and truly agreeing with the truth of God's Word, we can know victory in this area.

You see man was originally created to be a partaker of God's Divine Nature - which was lost to man when Adam sinned in the garden. At the Fall man not only lost access to the Divine Nature, he became controlled by the sin nature - which is the reason man

is not only born in a state of sin but also receives power from this nature to sin.

Born-again Christians, however, have nailed the old man (the old unregenerate self) to the Cross. This occurred when they were saved, being identified with Christ's death.

ROMANS 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized (spiritually) into Jesus Christ were baptized (spiritually) into His death?

When they were resurrected, spiritually speaking, after this funeral of the old man, God gave back that which had been lost, i.e. the graces and energies of His Divine Nature. Therefore Christians again have the power, which comes through the Divine Nature, to do God's will fully.

“...Most basically defined, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. . .”

We know, however, that the sin nature, the lower weaker nature of man, remains an issue which saved man still needs to deal with on a day-to-day basis. Concerning the Christian, while the sin nature was positionally (or legally) defeated, and thus taken care of, at Calvary, conditionally (or experientially) it is a different matter. It remains the Christian's responsibility to allow God to help them renew their mind and then to act according to this renewal, in any particular area, so that the sin nature is conditionally defeated in that area.

Note: The sin nature, broadly speaking, concerns man thinking and working out his own ideas without God. Quite often this is described in terms of the wording “the flesh,” a term which can also mean the mind and senses of man and even the physical body of man.

We therefore need God's help (His grace) on a daily basis in order for our condition (our walk) to match our legal position in Christ. The empowerment to do this is provided by the graces of the Divine Nature. As the Believer yields to the Holy Spirit, the power to resist the dictates of the sin nature (the flesh) now comes through the Divine Nature. This too is the good news of the Gospel - we don't have to sin! Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (a new creation): old things (the old unregenerate self) are (is) passed away; behold, all things are become new.

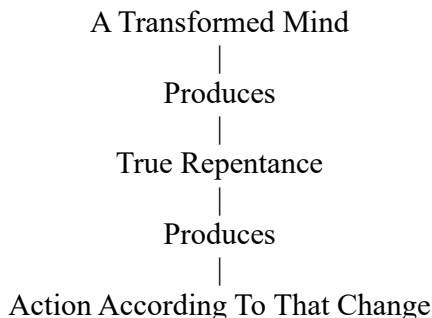
A TRANSFORMED MIND PRODUCES REPENTANCE

ROMANS 12:2 Do not be conformed to the ways of this world: but be transformed (changed) by the renewing of your mind (the way you think), that you may prove (and know) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

To have our minds transformed in any area, a change must take place in our thinking. This is what the Bible describes as “*the renewing of your mind.*” This happens when we reject our old way of thinking (or anyone else's) and accept God's way of thinking, wholeheartedly. Only after this can we then be in a position to truly repent. Strangely enough, we may not even understand God's thinking in an area, but our trust in Him and His Word can override our logical reasoning as we side with God and agree with Him. We can then say, “I'm wrong, You must be right, for You are God and the lover of my soul. You know best - Lord I repent. Help me to live the saved life, change me and empower me.”

“...The sin nature, the lower weaker nature of man, remains an issue which saved man still needs to deal with on a day-to-day basis. . .”

True repentance will then always produce action according to that change of mind.



Godly repentance will come about as we, with the help of the Holy Spirit, renew our minds with God’s Word of truth. Then empowered by the Spirit, we can act accordingly. We will then be capable of producing fruits of repentance, which are works of righteousness (works of faith motivated by love). We know that this lifestyle change can only come about by God’s grace working through us. Therefore God gets the glory for what He is doing through the yielded son or daughter. Amen.

THE SIN NATURE

We as humans are eternal spirit beings, each person having a soul that contains our mind, will and emotions. Thus man is a spirit and has a soul, all this encompassed within a physical body which functions in a physical world.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole

spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When a man is born again, his spirit is regenerated to life by the very presence of God (John 14:17-20). While his mind is then positionally (or legally) saved, conditionally it is not saved until it is renewed by the Word of God (James 1:21; Romans 12:2; Psalm 23:3). Therefore our soul (mind) is saved by the Blood of Jesus in a legal or positional sense. But in colloquial terms, to cash the cheque, our mind must be renewed in God's truth by His power in order for it to be conditionally (or experientially) saved (John 15:26, 16:13).

“ . . . We therefore need God's help (His grace) on a daily basis in order for our condition (our walk) to match our legal position in Christ. . . ”

As a Christian, therefore, our spirit is positionally and conditionally saved, washed clean by the Blood of the Lamb. As stated, however, after salvation, it is up to us, as Christians, each day, to “*receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls*” (James 1:21), i.e. to renew our minds. Renewal means that we seek and then embrace God's truth by His grace. As a result, our thinking becomes aligned with God's thinking. By this means we become “a work in progress,” as by God's grace, our mind progressively receives God's truth and so comes to line up with His mind and His thinking.

The last installment of our salvation concerns our physical body and will occur on the day that the Lord comes back for His Church. Called the “*blessed hope*” (Titus 2:13), this is the time of the Rapture. On that day, all who are in Christ will receive a glorified body, the same as Jesus received when He was raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:52-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

Our mind in the next life will be both positionally and conditionally saved. It will therefore merely expand in holy knowledge for the rest of eternity, continually progressing in regard to God and His truth. In other words, there will be no areas of darkness in our minds in heaven.

While on this earth in this dispensation, however, we may experience difficulties in regard to mind renewal. For instance, we may not be able to hear God properly, or alternatively, we may not want to. From whatever inherited genetic negatives we possess concerning memory function or the lack of it, to the dictates of whatever worldly connection we are plugged into, or whatever tries to influence us, physically or spiritually, all these factors will contribute to the problems we will have with mind renewal.

Chapter 6 in Romans tells us that we, as Christians, still have the sin nature to deal with. When we trust God, rely on Him and are led by the Spirit, then the sin nature will remain dormant or deactivated. This is when the Divine Nature is enthroned in our hearts.

At salvation the sin nature becomes legally dead to us. Conditionally or experientially, however, is another story. If we have accepted thinking in our mind that is contrary to God's truth, then we are, in actual fact, thinking without God's influence. Therefore, in that area (of sin), we are in spiritual darkness. This darkness will be, of course, in our mind and will not impact in any way upon our regenerated spirit.

So it is in this state that we have entered, in our minds, into spiritual darkness. This state provides us with what is known as "the sin nature" - which can be defined as man thinking (and embracing that thinking) in spiritual darkness, - without God's help or empowerment. For the unsaved, this state is perpetual. For the Christian, this is an optional state because we have an alternative.

The sin nature empowers man to sin when he does not seek to embrace God's Word of truth concerning the matters of life about which God has spoken.

The sin nature also contains a “gravitational factor” or spiritual weight which seemingly makes it easier to sin in the area of accepted thought or embraced thinking. The more one meditates on wrong thinking with the intent to embrace it, seemingly the greater the gravitational pull which is exerted. So with more meditation comes greater pull (gravity) toward sin and with less meditation comes less pull (gravity) towards sin. As has been said before, **the battleground regarding sin is always located in the mind.**

Man was originally created with a human nature, which is simply the sum of qualities and traits shared by all humans. To function properly and be complete, the human nature, contained in the spirit of man, needs to be energized by the energies and graces of God’s Divine Nature. This is how man was created to function at his optimum capacity. In other words, we always needed this spiritual influence to properly order our thinking and therefore our behaviour in relation to both God and our fellowman - the vertical and the horizontal.

***“...the sin nature . . . can be defined as
man thinking (and embracing that
thinking) in spiritual darkness, - without
God’s help or empowerment. . .”***

Only as we are yielded to God will we be allowing Him to energize us by the graces and energies of His Divine Nature. This is when the Divine Nature is enthroned in our hearts. Without this influence on our minds in a continual sense, we will be thinking in relation to accepted and embraced thought, by ourselves, in isolation from God.

We were thus created not with a defect, but with an inbuilt need to rely on God at all times. Even though we are free-willed beings, we cannot reach our potential in any way without our Creator’s influence on our thinking (Isaiah 55:7-9). We were

created to function in relationship with Him and dependence upon Him.

When man stepped away from the graces of God's influence, the sin nature - spiritual darkness - flooded into his life. This was not created by God because God does not create evil.

Without God's influence, we live with the sin nature, and as we operate in isolation from God, from this nature flows all manner of evil intent. When man remains in, or places himself into this dark place, then dark thoughts emerge. When man has no connection to God in his thinking, he is immersed in spiritual darkness. In this state the sin nature dominates his life as he follows after his flesh (Galatians 5:19-21).

Man is a free-willed being with ethical and moral accountability to his Creator. Without God's influence, however, he is unable to discern, in a true sense, his responsibilities to his God and his fellow man. He is unable to correct himself or self-regulate because he is engulfed by the darkness in his mind and cannot think at a Godly level.

The only possible answer to man's dilemma came through God's grace and mercy. God in His love sent a Saviour into this world for this world. In fact God Himself, the second member of the Trinity, entered this temporal world, becoming flesh (John 1:14) and dying as a man for us.

So it can be seen that man without the spiritual restraints of God's truths will be empowered to sin when the opportunity arises, and the sin nature will come alive in that opportunity.

When man enters into the dark cave of self, he becomes self-absorbed and self-centred. By himself, and according to whatever he may think, there are no moral restraints to obstruct or impede him. Sin's opportunity arises when man focuses on his own thoughts and desires to the point of accepting and embracing them so as to act upon them.

The power to sin comes from man's unrestrained mind - operating without God's influence. Sin is therefore the result of man thinking by himself so as to embrace thinking which is at odds with God.

***“. . .When man stepped away from the
graces of God’s influence, the sin nature
- spiritual darkness - flooded into
his life. . .”***

Man acts in accordance with the nature with which he was born, and when given opportunity to sin will do so. In the Word we find man described as a sinner by nature:

***ISAIAH 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing,
and all our righteousnesses (so-called good deeds)
are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and
our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.***

***PSALM 51:5 Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and
in sin (original sin) did my mother conceive me.***

***JEREMIAH 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all
things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?***

***JEREMIAH 16:12 And you have done worse than
your fathers; for, behold, you walk every one after the
imagination of his evil heart, that they may not
hearken unto Me:***

Indeed Jesus identified the source of man’s defilement as being his evil heart:

***MARK 7:20 And He (Jesus) said, “That which comes
out of the man, that defiles the man.***

***MARK 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men,
proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications,
murders,***

MARK 7:22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

MARK 7:23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man (the heart of man is not good but evil)."

Without the guiding moral light of God's truth and the grace that accompanies it, man is defenceless against the onslaught of the sin nature that ravages his character and lays waste to his soul.

THE RENEWING OF THE MIND THE EDUCATING OF THE SPIRIT

The Divine Nature of God will slowly be manifested in our lives as we live according to God's Word, and yield to the Spirit. This involves having our minds constantly renewed, and with the Spirit's empowerment, acting according to that renewal.

To be renewed in our minds is a commandment which applies to all Christians. When we accept Jesus Christ into our life, our spirit is regenerated and cleansed of sin, but our mind is not. Yes, positionally we are saved, but our condition does not always match our position. Ongoing daily sanctification is required if our condition is to progress towards our position - and the grace of the Divine Nature is needed for this process to take place. All this means is that when we are saved, and even after this immediate time, many of our attitudes, thoughts and beliefs will be at variance with the Word of God. Because of this, our unrenewed mind will often cause us, in the flesh, to oppose the desires of God. To change this situation, we must be committed to the renewing of our mind.

Note: The Believer is saved conditionally in the spirit, for the spirit is cleansed of all darkness at regeneration. Concerning spirit, soul and body, the Believer is saved in all aspects in a

positional sense. Indeed the Believer in Christ is dead to the law of sin and death (we no longer come under this law in a positional sense), but the law is not dead to the Believer - for we can choose to sin and bear the consequences of that sin. So where we are at positionally can be very different to where we are at conditionally (our day to day experience). Only as we abide in Christ and yield to the Spirit, so as to absorb the heavenly graces of the Divine Nature, can our condition be brought towards our legal position. Sin (or the sin nature) should no longer have any ascendancy over the Believer, because he or she is saved from “sin.” To walk in victory, however, faith in Christ and His finished work at the Cross must be our central focus. We also need a total dependency on Him, and the Spirit’s empowerment in our daily Christian walk if we are to experience ongoing sanctification. It is something we cannot achieve by the self-efforts of the flesh, otherwise called willpower.

“. . . Only as we abide in Christ and yield to the Spirit, so as to absorb the heavenly graces of the Divine Nature, can our condition be brought towards our legal position. . . ”

God’s Word tells us:

ROMANS 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed (changed) by the renewing of your mind (the way you think), that you may prove (and know for yourself) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

EPHESIANS 4:23 And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind - having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude (Amp.)

Once your mind is renewed in any area, this makes possible the next step:

EPHESIANS 4:24 And that you (through your actions of faith) put on the new man, which after God (in God's image) is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The renewing of the mind involves accepting God's truths wholeheartedly, grasping these truths aggressively or even violently (Matthew 11:12). A renewed mind involves commitment to a truth or principle, for the renewed mind is the mind which has learned to live by God's Word. Once the mind is renewed, it will see other points of view but it will consider only one course of action, that which is in accordance with the Word of God. The renewed mind puts all its trust in God's Word, for it has grasped knowledge which has been revealed by the Holy Spirit. The renewed mind does not even consider, in its analysis, anything else, no matter what others may say or do. This occurs to the point where one becomes dependent upon this renewal in any area so that we are able to "*prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*" (Romans 12:2).

The renewed mind gives us only one answer to a problem. It is after this renewal that we, through the Divine Nature, will have the strength to say "Yes" to God's will, thereby saying "No" to the world, the flesh, the devil and natural circumstances. If unrenewed, the mind will side with the flesh and natural circumstances. If renewed, the mind speaks forth God's Word and sides with the regenerated spirit which is empowered through the Divine Nature. This gives the voice of truth a strong means of expression. However, even with a mind which is renewed in any area, the Christian still needs to make a decision to act upon this renewal, and not to heed the dictates of the flesh or the natural realm. This action necessitates the person using their will. The will is the trigger, and the Divine Nature is the source of power needed to effect change.

“ . . If unrenewed, the mind will side with the flesh and natural circumstances. If renewed, the mind speaks forth God’s Word and sides with the regenerated spirit which is empowered through the Divine Nature. . . ”

As we have said, the renewing of the mind causes the regenerated spirit to be educated in the things of God - and thus allow it, in the power of the Divine Nature, to have a greater and stronger voice. Christians who do not bother to work on this renewal process will still have unrenewed minds and baby-like spirits, even after they have been saved for many years. We thus need to goal to harmonize our spirit and soul together with God’s Spirit, through the continual renewing of our mind. This, through the energies of the Divine Nature, will result in the continual process of “ongoing sanctification” in the Saint’s life - until the day they go home to be with the Lord.

As we have said, the regenerated spirit, also called “the legitimate self,” wants to please God. Man was originally created in God’s image, and before the Fall, man would originally have had an all-consuming desire to please God. When a Christian is empowered by the graces and energies of the Divine Nature, their spirit-man will again have the holy desire and power to do God’s will. This is a righteous and holy yearning (Romans 8:5-6).

“ . . Christians who do not bother to work on this renewal process will still have unrenewed minds and baby-like spirits, even after they have been saved for many years. . . ”

We can, however, ignore or reject the voice of the regenerated spirit until it is no longer heard. Sometimes this voice

is expressed through the conscience. If we act in opposition to our conscience for too long, it can become seared or hardened in that area so that it can no longer speak forth God's holy standard through conviction, being alienated from man's thinking processes. Also, the voice of the regenerated spirit may be small to begin with, but increases in strength as we nurture our spirit, educate it and listen to it rather than the dictates of the flesh, including self-desire.

Note: Sometimes our emotions which express strong wants can be mistaken for our conscience, when, for instance, we say, "Well, I feel this and this." What we feel may be nothing but our flesh speaking, as we operate under the government of self-rule. What God wants for us and what He says should be our primary desire and focus. But how can we know unless we first seek and discover God's will (Matthew 7:7-8).

A baby has a strong inbuilt desire for food. The baby does not know much about this food, but when it is fed, its desire will be satisfied. Our regenerated spirit can be likened to this baby. It has a desire to be fed on spiritual food - it does not know much about this food, but when it does receive spiritual food, the desire of the spirit-man is satisfied. As we then continue to feed our spirit on good food, it will grow and mature, and its voice will become stronger. With the Divine Nature giving us the spiritual energy and graces needed, our spirit will have a holy desire to do God's will.

***“ . . .the voice of the regenerated spirit
may be small to begin with, but increases
in strength as we nurture our spirit,
educate it and listen to it rather than the
dictates of the flesh, including
self-desire. . . ”***

Thus through the renewing of the mind, our spirit grows to maturity. Another way of looking at this is that the regenerated spirit contains the God-given desire to serve Him (even though this only becomes a holy desire through the Divine Nature energizing man's human nature). The Christian needs to allow this desire to come forth in his life, or else he is cheating himself out of his primary creative function. This desire must be channelled and harnessed by the Holy Spirit, and properly directed. The renewing of the mind is vital to this process, for it is in this way that we come to know the good and perfect will of our Heavenly Father. We then need to have the Divine Nature enthroned in our heart so that we receive the empowerment we need to act on this knowledge.

So we all need to study God's Word and accept its truths wholeheartedly if we want to renew our minds through the gaining of revelation knowledge. By this process we can have our spirit educated, so that it will have a strong voice. In this way we can channel the Godly desires of the spirit and be conformed to the perfect will of God. Therefore renewing the mind and educating the spirit will help us make decisions which side with God's will and not the dictates of the flesh, the world or the natural realm.

Thus: The renewing of the mind = Rejecting wrong ideas and beliefs by allowing the Spirit to replace them with the truth of God's Word (which we then believe and trust in).

As we have said, through renewing our minds and acting on this renewal in faith (through the Divine Nature of which we are partakers), we will come to discover and to walk in God's will for our lives.

Note: Sometimes in the simple acceptance of truth, repentance automatically takes place. At other times, we may need to mindfully and deliberately repent of wrong ideas and beliefs that have hindered our growth as Christians.

SALVATION OF THE SOUL

Background Reading: 1 Peter 1:13-23

Salvation of the soul at a conditional (experiential) level is obtained by acting according to the transformation that has taken place through accepting and relying on truth. This, as 1 Peter 1:22 tells us, is simply called “*obeying the truth*,” the truth found in God’s holy Word.

“. . .Therefore renewing the mind and educating the spirit will help us make decisions which side with God’s will and not the dictates of the flesh, the world or the natural realm. . .”

As we accept God’s truths wholeheartedly and reject our old carnal ways of thinking, then act upon this renewal in faith, thanking God for the empowerment provided by the Divine Nature, we can experience a type of deliverance called “the salvation of the soul.” This means that no evil can continue to oppress us because of wrong beliefs or wrong thinking. It entails complete freedom from oppression of the mind, e.g. freedom from fear, anxiety, worry, depression, anger, hatred, unforgiveness, resentment, etc. We must always remember, however, that it is the grace of God at work in us (having come to us because of Christ’s finished work) that brings about our victory and God’s pleasure.

Positionally, all this happened at the Cross and was legally imparted to us the day we were born again. Experientially, however, many do not live in the victory Christ won for us at Calvary. Once again, the condition of many Christians is, in many areas of their lives, far removed from their legal position.

In relation to the salvation of the soul, the Word therefore exhorts us:

JAMES 1:21 So get rid of all uncleanness and the rampant outgrowth of wickedness, and in a humble (gentle, modest) spirit receive and welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls. (Amp.)

JAMES 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

1 PETER 1:22 Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.

We can see from the scriptures that the salvation of the soul at a conditional or experiential level comes about firstly through receiving the Word of God into our hearts. In other words, we must not just chew and swallow the Word of God at an intellectual level. We must, with God's help, digest His Word into our heart, into our very being so that through spiritual digestion, it becomes part of us. The Word must be integrated into the thinking of our mind and heart. This constitutes true renewal - proper change that will last more than a day! Now acceptance generally comes before understanding. However it is with an open heart which yields to the Holy Spirit that man accepts God's truth. Then the Spirit will take man into the understanding of that which he has accepted - as a little child would do so. In this way, our mind is renewed.

“ . . . We must, with God's help, digest His Word into our heart, into our very being so that through spiritual digestion, it becomes part of us . . . integrated into the thinking of our mind and heart. . . ”

We must then act upon this renewal in faith, or at least purpose to do so, relying on the graces of the Divine Nature to

energize us accordingly. This is the way in which the Word can “save our souls” (1 Peter 1:22). And when God’s Word refers to “the salvation of the soul,” it means that while we are here on earth, we can have total freedom from all forms of mental oppression - worry, fear and torment of any kind - and have the peace of God flooding our minds (Isaiah 26:3).

We can have heart-knowledge that something is true. However unless we act or purpose to act on that knowledge, nothing will be achieved. Similarly, salvation of the soul at a conditional level cannot take place unless we first renew our minds, then willingly act in faith on this renewal when an opportunity arises.

“. . .salvation of the soul at a conditional level cannot take place unless we first renew our minds, then willingly act in faith on this renewal when an opportunity arises. . .”

MAN’S INHERENT LAZINESS

Because of the Fall, our flesh (physical body) became subject to laziness. This was not a part of Adam’s original make-up but entered into Adam, and consequently all his descendants, because of his sin. And it is not something which can be erased from our lives. We can, however, exercise our wills to overcome this laziness through self-discipline.

We all need, for example, to exercise our physical body to some extent every day, and to eat a balanced diet. The mind may tell us this is right, but the body does not always want to do what is good for it. Some people allow the flesh (fleshly physical desire) to override and as a result, endanger their health.

It is the same with our service to the Lord. Our emotions (which are influenced by the flesh) will generally not want to do that which God is telling us to do. However we need, as we have

said, to study God's Word daily, to pray and to fellowship with the Lord, no matter how much we may not "feel" like it: Matthew 26:41. We need to exercise our wills as a trigger in accordance with God's will (His Word) in order to overcome this reluctance. In this way God's grace of empowerment will come so that we may live according to His will.

So firstly we need to know God's will. This can be achieved primarily through hearing and studying His Word. Then we need to act on this knowledge, for knowledge alone is not enough.

JAMES 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works (action) is dead also.

In Christ we can overcome all our weaknesses through exercising our will (as a trigger) in accordance with God's Word - this being the prescribed order for victory.

“...Christians who do not fellowship with faith-filled Christians are often stunted in their growth and lack motivation to progress in the Lord. . .”

God promises us the strength to overcome all things as we allow Him to be Lord of all. This strength comes through the Divine Nature energizing our human nature - as we, by our will, yield to the Holy Spirit.

JOHN 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, “If you continue in My Word (seeking, finding and embracing My precious truths), then are you My Disciples indeed;

JOHN 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:13 I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me (as I submit to His Word and will).

GOD'S DESIRE FOR ALL MANKIND

Background Reading: John 17:6-21

God is full of love, compassion, mercy and goodness, and has proven it constantly over time. Indeed God does not change (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17), and neither does He lie (Numbers 23:19). Jesus too is *“the same yesterday, today and forevermore”* (Hebrews 13:8). History has proven that God delivers, sets people free, and is faithful to His Word.

There are many doors which remain closed to God through people rejecting His truths in various areas of their lives. Usually these areas are those in which people do not want change. Thus many Christians have works of faith and love, yet block God from setting them free in particular areas of their lives. God wants to set them and other people free from every bondage, not only in the spirit, but also in the mind and the body. This is the full meaning of salvation - wholeness in spirit, soul and body. And this is what God desires for His people, wholeness in every area of their lives.

JOHN 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, “If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed;

JOHN 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

JOHN 10:10 The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

So receive the truths of God's Word, and allow the light to shine on any area of darkness in your life. As Hosea 4:6 tells us:

HOSEA 4:6 My people (Christians today) are destroyed for lack of knowledge . . .

Jesus came so we could have life and have it abundantly. There is therefore no reason for you to lack in any area because Jesus has paid the price for you to have total victory TODAY, in SPIRIT, SOUL and BODY. The price is consecration and submission to His will, His revealed word in our lives. We must seek so as to find and embrace all that He has for us to know and do. As He is given first place in our lives, then yes, we will understand fully the meaning of the scripture:

MATTHEW 6:33 But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

May you have the victory in Christ. Amen.

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

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