

## RENEWING THE MIND

### **Matthew 28:18-20**

*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

**Go** - Move, proceed, make one's way, advance, progress, walk and journey. This is a command for every believer not just for the 5 fold or cell leaders but to all believers.

### **Make disciples**

A disciple is a disciplined follower of Christ, you can come to Church but that doesn't necessarily make you a disciple Christ. You can wear a T-Shirt that says "I am a friend of God or Christ rocks"... that too don't make you a disciple of Christ. You can wear a wrist or arm band with the letters WWJD (What Would Jesus Do)...unfortunately that too is not necessarily evidence that you are a disciplined follower of Christ.

**Discipleship** is a function of receiving systematic teaching of the commands of Christ, obedience to that teaching and the forming and consistently residing in accountability networks that function as hedges of protection around as you grow in Christ.

**Making disciples** is fundamental to **Christ's message** and is about helping people to know, follow and become like Christ. That is Christ's heart.

### **Myth: That discipleship is just for new believers no not at all.**

Our relationship with Christ is dynamic, is living and so we continue to grow in Him each day. True disciples are those with a continued learning attitude, they never say "I have arrived". The moment you start to tell yourself that you now know all there is to know about God, you run the danger of becoming a complacent Christian.

## **STORIES**

The story of Jennifer who sat next to a friend on a plane. "She was over 60 from England and was friendly with twinkly eyes. She attended a mainline church and was an occasional teacher at a school. Her priest was a homosexual who lived with his boyfriend. She thought this was fine and considered other people intolerant for thinking otherwise. She did not believe in moral absolutes at all, considered abortion

to be “kind and responsible,” other religions to be legitimate alternatives, heaven and hell to be non-existent, the Bible to be fallible and not inspired, creation to be a myth and evolution to be true. In addition she was not sure if Jesus was the son of God or resurrected from the dead – and yet she considered herself a Christian!

A newly converted vice-president at NBC was asked how his new faith would affect the moral programming at NBC. He stated the following:

“All it does is give me peace of mind in my personal life. But whether it will affect my programming, it doesn’t. It just makes me think clearer, but that just means that I will probably think more commercially than I did before.”

Sometimes there appears to be a gap between what we say we are and what we do. It’s a discipleship gap.

Christianity in Africa is a mile wide and an inch deep. Africa has been widely evangelised but maybe not effectively disciplined.

**...of all the nations** it is for this reason that we as a Church are passionate about making disciples not just in Centurion or Joburg but of all nations. This is why our eyes are on other parts of Africa, Europe etc. A true discipleship process involves laying solid biblical foundations in our walk with God. And that is why our next couple of messages will be foundational messages...precept upon precept, line upon line in some of our Sunday messages for a season.

### **Isaiah 28: 13**

*But the word of the LORD was to them, “Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little,”*

### **1 Corinthians 3:9**

*For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building.*

It’s encouraging to know that we are not just an ordinary building but we are called “God’s building.” This means that God is very interested and involved in the process of ensuring that His building you and I has a solid foundation if we are to make a difference in this world.

## **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.*

## **Spirit - Man**

When a person surrenders their life to the Lord and becomes a believer they are totally and immediately transformed or regenerated in their spirit-man. The Holy Spirit takes up residence in the spirit of man and the person becomes a child of God.

## **Soul**

Mind, our will and our emotions, intellect, imagination. Unfortunately, man's mind or thinking processes are not changed so immediately.

**“Renewed” means to “make new again.”** In order for a person to become all that God has designed for them to be his or her mind must be **re-fashioned according to God's original design.**

Be “transformed” That word is used one time in all the gospels, namely, about Jesus on the mountain of transfiguration (the mountain of “transformation” — same word, metamorphōthē) Nonconformity to the world does not primarily mean the external avoidance of worldly behaviors. But you can avoid all kinds of worldly behaviors and *not* be transformed in the mind. The Christian alternative to immoral thinking or behaviors is the triumphant power and transformation by/of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ. So transformation of the mind a profound, blood-bought, Spirit-wrought change from the inside out. When you are transformed in your mind in Christ you love to think what you ought to think, you will love to do what you ought to do, that's freedom.

## **Ephesians 4:23-24;**

*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

The mind has got a spirit. In other words, our mind has what we call a “mindset.” It doesn't just have a view, it has a viewpoint. It doesn't just have the power to perceive and detect; it also has a posture, a demeanor, a bearing, an attitude, a

bent. One of the significant battlefields you will face as a believer in the area of your mind and your thinking.

### **WHY IS RENEWAL OF THE MIND SO IMPORTANT?**

- A. Renewal of the mind is important because our thinking to a large extent determines our behaviour. **(Pro. 23:7a). For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.** A lot of our behaviour is pre-meditated.
- B. Renewal of the mind is important because thoughts affect our motives which will ultimately be judged by God **(I Chr. 28:9b). ...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts.** God doesn't just judge our actions only but also our motives.
- C. Renewal of the mind is important because sin stems from evil thinking **(Mt. 15:18-19, NLT). But evil words come from an evil heart and defile the person who says them. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all other sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander.** Sin is first conceived in the mind.
- D. Renewal of the mind is important because our thoughts are exposed by God's Word. **(Heb. 4:12, NLT). For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are.** The word of God challenges and exposes our thoughts. It is the measure by which we should live by.

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT INFLUENCE THE WAY WE THINK?**

#### **Our thinking is influenced by:**

- Our upbringing
- Our past experiences both positive and negative.
- Our education and religious training.
- Our personal observations
- Our fleshly interests
- Our role-models, particularly those we respect
- The media

## **WHAT IS THE STATE OF MAN'S MIND APART FROM CHRIST?**

**Our mind apart from Christ is in an unrenewed state.**

### **A. The unrenewed mind is defiled**

**Tit. 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.*

### **B. The unrenewed mind is blinded**

**II Cor 4:3-4** *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

### **The unrenewed mind is alienated from and hostile to God**

**Col 1:21** *And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled.*

### **The unrenewed mind is futile**

**Ps. 94:11 NLT** *The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile. The LORD knows people's thoughts, that they are worthless!*

### **C. The unrenewed mind is set on the things of the flesh**

**Rom. 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, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*

### **D. The unrenewed mind is focused on earthly or temporal things**

**Phil. 3:18-19** *For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.*

## **WHAT IS THE GOAL OF A RENEWED MIND?**

### **A. Our goal is to think like God thinks about everything (Is. 55:7-9).**

*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.*

- B. Our goal is to have the mind of Christ** (1 Cor. 2:16).  
*For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*
- C. Our goal is to experience true knowledge from God’s perspective**  
(Col. 3:9-10).  
*Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him...*
- D. Our goal is to have a heart and mind that reflect God’s standards and laws** (Heb. 8:10).  
*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

## **HOW CAN WE EXPERIENCE A RENEWED MIND?**

- A. We must have a desire or hunger for a renewed mind** (Ps. 19:7-10).  
*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*
- B. We must approach the word of God with a spirit of humility** (Phil. 2:5-7).  
*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*
- C. We must yield to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives** (Tit. 3:4-6).  
*But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour...*

**D. We must commit ourselves to the reading of and meditation on the word of God (Ps. 1:1-3).**

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.*

**E. We must set our minds on things above (Col. 3:1-3).**

*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

**F. We must dwell on things that are true, right and pure (Phil. 4:8).**

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.*

**G. We must maintain a daily or continual commitment to the process of renewal (II Cor. 4:16).**

*Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*