

The Mind of Christ

by Lance Lambert

The sermon emphasizes the importance of adopting the mind of Christ to transform our behavior and experience true joy and peace in our lives.

Scripture: Romans 8:1-5, Philippians 2:5, Philippians 2:7

Topics: "Mind of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the battle for the mind in today's society, where we are constantly influenced by various media sources. He uses the example of the Darwinian theory of evolution to illustrate how our concepts shape our behavior. The speaker highlights the importance of the mind and how our concepts govern our actions. He then transitions to discussing the concept of kingship, explaining that true kingship is a challenging responsibility. The sermon concludes with a reference to Romans 8:1-6, emphasizing the freedom and fulfillment found in Christ Jesus and the distinction between the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit.

Transcript

It's a real pleasure for me to be able to see you all again, and not in the very hot period of the year as normally. It's very nice to see you on this very sort of English kind of day. I'm going to read a passage that I think will be quite well known to most of you, if not all of you, in Philippians, and the second chapter, the Philippians letter and the second chapter.

If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, make full my joy that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, doing nothing through faction or through vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself, not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. We bow together in a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we are so thankful as we have been together in your

presence this morning and have, by your Spirit, been enabled to worship you and to glorify you.

And oh, Heavenly Father, as we come to your word now, we ask that you will grant to us all that enabling grace and power that will mean that both the speaking and the hearing will be in the Spirit. We pray, Father, that we may hear your voice and that you will enable me to speak your word, to communicate that which is on your heart. We need you, Lord, and we want to recognize very simply that when it comes to the ministry of your word, we, left to ourselves, can achieve nothing.

Whether it is in my speaking or whether it is in our hearing, we achieve nothing. But, Lord, if you are the power and the energy, the revelation, the illumination of this time, then, Lord, we shall remember this morning with praise and gratitude because we were not only enabled to worship you but we received from you something that, Lord, will, as it were, form us into that full-grown man in the Lord Jesus. Help us, then, Lord, as we together commit ourselves to you for the rest of our time this morning in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen. This very well-known little phrase here in Philippians 2 is what I just want to dwell on for a while this morning. Verse 5. Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

There are two things which the Bible speaks about a tremendous amount. You will find it everywhere, sometimes under different terms, especially in the Old Testament, but you will find it everywhere in the Bible from the beginning to the end. As far as the Word of God goes, these two constituents in our human personality or being are the most significant and the most important.

The heart and the mind. It was not for nothing that when the Lord appeared to Solomon, he said, Give me your heart. It was as if God was saying, If I have your heart, I have everything.

We believers, especially evangelicals, are very much given to talking about giving the heart to the Lord Jesus, but how few have really given their heart to the Lord Jesus. It has become a very trite phrase, giving our heart to the Lord. And what it means is that we get salvation.

That is what we really mean. We are getting heaven. We are getting an eternal bliss and joy.

We have forgotten that God wants your heart. When a person has given their heart to God, God has the focal point of their personality. He has, as it were, the center of their being.

And once God has your heart, He will begin to commit Himself to you. He will begin to reveal His secrets to you. He will begin to unveil something of Himself to you in an ever increasing way.

After all, in the end, it is the heart that matters. But the other part of our being that the Bible has a tremendous amount to say about is the mind. And the mind is vitally important.

In fact, I think it is of strategic importance. As a man thinks, so he is. In the final analysis, it is the way you think that determines your character.

It determines your behavior. It determines your conduct. It determines your way of life.

Thinking, thoughts, are very important. I have often used a little phrase that I believe very much it sums it all up. Concept governs behavior.

If you have a certain concept, whether you like it or not, your behavior will be the consequence. Your behavior is consequential of the concept. If you think certain people are inferior, you will treat them as inferior.

If you think certain areas of the world are unhealthy, you won't go there. If you consider that certain food, however full of vitamins it is, is somehow or other bad, you will never touch it. Your concepts govern your behavior.

Therefore, your mind is of tremendous importance and we are living in a generation in which the battle for the mind is paramount. Through the media, whether television, radio, or film, or whether through newspaper or books or magazines, the battle is on for the mind of the nation. We are being influenced all the time by things we hardly know, we hardly understand.

Take just one simple little illustration of this. Take the Darwinian theory of evolution. If really, as we are being bombarded from every corner, man has evolved, and of course some believers have always felt that the Bible has to be explained in whatever contemporary scientific theory happens to hold the field.

So we have the most marvelous theories all the time. Christians, Aquatics, when they always remind me of Charles Haddon Spurgeon's marvelous comment about the Word of God, that it is a lion. And he said, you don't need to defend the lion, just open its cage and let it out.

But unfortunately many believers feel they've got to defend God's Word and explain it. So there are those who say, well, there may be a form of evolution, you see. We might have come from slime in the very beginning, or something else has slowly evolved up.

Oh, this may be possible. We can fit it in somehow with Genesis chapter one. After all, the six days are a thousand years each.

This is based on a word that, with the Lord, a day is as a thousand years, or a thousand years is as a day. But they all together forget that if those six days in Genesis one were of a thousand years, then everything that was created and lived during the five hundred days, the five hundred years of light would have died in the five hundred years of darkness. It is a theory people do not think through.

There are many of these kind of theories where we rush to try to explain the Word because we feel that somewhere or other there are fossils that have been discovered. I sometimes wonder whether Satan himself planted them there. And they've discovered these fossils which they say are millions and millions and millions of years old.

And we all quake before that there is something millions and millions and millions of years old. Personally, I believe the miracle is God. If you really believe that God is, then anything is possible.

And He could have created the whole lot in six days. In fact, I don't think it is beyond His power to have created it all in a second. He didn't even need six days.

He could have done it with one word and it was all there. I don't know if He did do it that way, but I noticed today that there is now a new theory called the Big Bang. The Big Bang theory.

The whole thing began with a big bang. At least it is a little nearer to Genesis one. And maybe in about thirty years' time universities and colleges will be teaching it.

It will have filtered through to our schools. Maybe the thing all began with a big bang. But I am only using that as an illustration.

You see, the Darwinian theory of evolution which has never actually been proved, which is a speculative thesis, but which nevertheless has now become such an integral part of our life that everything else follows. After all, of course you can abort living life if we have evolved from something. And not only abortion, but later on we shall come to the place of euthanasia.

The mercy killing of anyone who happens to be ill. And when we have taken that step, it may be that we shall feel certain ethnic groups ought to be wiped out. Like cockroaches.

Or like flies. It is not for nothing that the Nazis began by legalizing abortion in the middle of the 1930s, went on from there to euthanasia, mercy killing of the mentally ill, in which over a million Germans were put to sleep, and went from there to genocide. Not just the destruction of the Jews, but you must remember that over one and a half million gypsies were liquidated because they were an unwanted ethnic group.

And the Nazi plan was finally to take the Slav peoples, which is a very large section of humanity, and wipe out two thirds of them. But once you have adopted a certain theory, a certain concept, everything else begins to follow. Do you understand what I am trying to say? So I am trying to explain to you that even if there are some mysteries about the origin or the development of life, the fact of the matter is that our concepts govern our behavior.

And that is why it is of tremendous importance that we should give attention to this word of the apostle by the Holy Spirit, have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. There is a mind which leads to life, to health, and to glory. And there is a mind which leads to corruption, to barrenness, and to death.

And you and I need to understand that these two minds are at war with one another. They are diametrically opposite. There is no coexistence between the mind of the flesh and the mind of Christ.

For the mind of the flesh is at enmity with the mind of the Spirit. Most of us, having been saved, spend at least a number of years in trying to reconcile the mind of the flesh with the mind of the Spirit. We wear ourselves out.

No wonder Christians are, of all people, the most miserable. They spend their time trying somehow or other to live according to the principles of this world, according to the principles of the flesh, of the mind of the flesh. And at the same time, trying to grow in the Lord, develop in the Lord, know what it is to share with other believers, to see the building up of the body of Christ.

It is impossible! They are two different worlds. And it is impossible to live according to the mind of the flesh and at the same time have the mind of Christ or the mind of the Spirit. What is the mind of the flesh? Now, here I have great help in this matter because every one of us was born with the mind of the flesh.

So, in one sense, we all know this thing from the inside, even if we have never been able to define the thing. We live spontaneously according to the mind of the flesh. No one has to instruct us as to how to live by the mind of the flesh because we all spontaneously, from babyhood, live according to the mind of the flesh.

The mind of the flesh is simply this. I first, I second and I last. It is a very, very simple little thing.

We don't have to have an academic intelligence to understand this simple little principle. I first, I second and I last and if others come into the picture, so long as they do not disturb me. As long as they could be stepping stones to profit.

Stepping stones to success. Stepping stones to popularity. Stepping stones to glory.

Well and good. Many marriages soldier on this, and the word is soldier, on this principle. Sometimes wives look upon their husbands simply as a means of having a family, building a nest and getting a name.

And husbands sometimes look upon their wives simply as a means of satisfaction. Someone to cook, someone to sew and now and again someone to show off to others. There is no self-sacrifice in the thing at all.

That is entirely unspontaneous. That is something that doesn't come from within the mind of the flesh. It's simply to glorify oneself and one's family, one's children and all that.

That's why there is so much juvenile delinquency because some parents use their children. Their children are little status symbols. My little whatever his name is, Soclep, poor little so-and-so Wally or whatever his name is, is sort of blasted all over the town.

He is a status symbol. And then parents want their children to go into certain areas where they feel they will achieve not just fame, but glory for the family. It is the all-mind of the flesh again.

It's self-first, self-second and self-worth. Others only come into it insofar as they help the progress of my self-life and the glory of my self-life. The mind of the flesh.

We all know it. If there is anybody here who doesn't know what I am talking about, I'd love to talk with you. Because everyone here ought to know from the inside something about this principle.

It is the natural principle from the moment we are born. It's gimme, gimme, gimme. It's all me.

Everybody is there for me. They are there to feed me, to cuddle me, to cozy me, to sort of generally provide for me, advance me. They are all there for me.

Self-first, self-second and self-last. The mind of the flesh. Because it all began in a mystery that we shall never, I think, understand.

Perhaps even in glory I am not sure that our finite minds will ever be able to grasp. Quite how it all began in a certain created being that the Bible calls Lucifer and Satan. He said, I will be like the Most High.

I will exalt my throne to the throne of God. That's where it all began and the poison is in us all. Now, my dear friends, you know, it is interesting what the Bible has to say about this matter, this mind of the flesh and the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ is something very different. Just look at it here in Philippians. It says, Who existing in the form of God sought not the being on an equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant and not just a hired servant.

You know, in the old days there were two forms of servants. There was the bond slave who had no rights and the hired servant who had certain rights. And the word here is bond slave.

It is not a hired servant. In other words, the Lord Jesus emptied Himself taking the form of a bond slave without rights and then it goes a further step being made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

This is another mind. Why did He do it? Why did He do it? It's a good question. Or someone says He did it for the glory that was set before Him.

You are quite incorrect. If you think that Jesus went through all of this simply for glory that was to be, He already had the glory. He didn't need to go through this.

No, no, my dear friends. He endured this for the joy that was set before Him because the joy that was set before Him was bringing many sons unto glory. In other words, to beget a whole new kind of man who was built on a new principle and this principle was the same principle that He operated on.

In other words, God first, God second, and God last. You put it another way, others first, others second, others last. And every single one who can help me to achieve this I will bless in the name of the Lord.

Oh, wouldn't that transform our fellowship if everyone who treads on our corns, everyone that rides rough shod over us, we saw them as a means. But they were helping us to put others first, others second, and others last. My dear friends, our whole problem in this matter, the mind of the flesh, is rights.

We've all got rights. We live in an age of rights. Human rights.

Men's rights. Well, not so much, but women's rights. I suppose, I suppose I'm young enough to live to the day when they'll start a movement for men's rights.

But anyway, it's all rights. Women's rights. The rights of this ethnic group, of that ethnic group, of the other ethnic group.

Everything is human rights. Rights, rights, rights. From early childhood we've all thought about rights.

How to stand up for our rights. How to fight for our rights. How to achieve our rights.

Rights, rights, and more rights. The trouble is, these rights never bring righteousness. Right.

I find it very interesting in Mark's Gospel, and in Matthew's, where it says, If any man come after me, let him deny himself. Take up his cross, and follow me. The word, deny himself, could also be translated, If any man come after me, let him give up, all right, to himself.

In other words, the heart of this whole question, is that you and I are prepared to sacrifice our rights for God, and for others. The mind of the flesh, and the mind of Christ. In Romans chapter 8, we have a very interesting commentary on this matter.

Listen to this. Well, verse 1, There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law, the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, made me free from the law of sin and of death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they that are after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For the mind of the flesh is

death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace.

Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God. For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

If so be that the spirit of God dwelleth in you. This is why Christians are so miserable. I mean, I travel all over the place, and it's always an unmitigated joy when I find Christians joyful.

It is so rare. Most of them come in with faces, with their chins on the ground, which they sort of always scrub through the door, get into a seat, and try to pull it up different ways, to smile now and again at one another, and look a little bit happier. But of course Christians cannot be... Christians who of all people should be the most joyful people in the world, for after all the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

And it even speaks in times of trouble, when everything is against you, joy unspeakable and full of glory. But Christians very rarely ever get there. And the reason is that they are in the spirit that they are living according to the flesh.

They therefore have a kind of civil war. Now, my dear friends, there is nothing more tragic than a nation with a civil war. When brothers are fighting brothers, and when the whole economy and security of a nation are torn apart by a civil war within the midst, how can you be joyful with a civil war? But most believers have got a civil war going on right inside of them, because they are really in the spirit and not in the flesh.

But in actual fact, they are walking according to the flesh. If they would only be one thing or the other, it would be better. For the mind of the spirit is life and peace.

How important it is for our whole well-being to have peace as well as life. We believers are subjected to tremendous conflicts and great battles. Not the one that is inside, I mean the thing that is coming against us from outside.

What a tremendously important thing it is for us to have life and peace. But the marvellous thing is, God has provided for us. I think I have said to some of you before, only dead fish flow with the current.

Living fish have a capacity by the very life inside of them of using the current to swim against it. They use the current to go upstream. The whole thing is against them.

But they have a life which means that they can use the current to go up and up and up and up and achieve the end in spite of the fact that the whole force of the current is against them. And yet believers say, Oh dear, it is so hard, you know. It is so hard being a Christian.

I mean everything is against us. You should see my college. You should see my place of work.

You should see my family. Everything is against us. It is absolute hard work.

Everything is against you and everything will in fact bring you down if you are trying to live according to the mind of the flesh. But if you live according to the mind of the Spirit then you will find you are constituted for the very current flowing against you. And the very thing against you at college, at your place of work, in your business, at home is the means that God is using for you to overcome and overcome and overcome and overcome until finally you arrive at the throne of God.

You have a kind of life constituted by the Spirit of God to go against the current. So don't make an excuse anymore about the current being against you. Everything circumstances... Oh dear, dear, dear, poor little you.

As if God didn't know when He saved you that He was putting you into a situation where everything was against you. My dear friends, believers have been like this from the beginning. From the very beginning.

There has not been a single believer who hasn't been constituted to go against the current and finally overcome by the grace of God. That's the very nature of the world in which we are living. But we are not of the world, though we are in the world.

Thank God we are of Heaven. And we have been constituted in such a way that we can overcome the very things that are against us. Indeed, those very things are used to bring us forward.

For the very purpose of God to be fulfilled in our lives. My dear friends, therefore, you see what a tragedy it is when you become a child of God and do not live according to the mind of the Spirit. Something whispers in your ear, don't be extreme.

You don't want to become one of those little old wizard saints? You know, sort of, lifeless and joyless in somber colours? Do you? And something in it says, No! Please! Lord! I don't want to become one of those little wizard old saints. Now, just in case I misunderstood, there are some old saints here this morning and I want to say that I am not referring to anyone in this building. For this reason, you can get old and the life of God is in you.

And when the life of God is in you, you become an attraction to others. I know old saints that are the most attractive people in the world. And I know other old saints that are the most crashing boars in the whole world.

I'd rather run and fly over three continents to get away from them, if it would be possible. But when someone really has got this life in them, oh, what a joy it is to see that as a body grows old, the mind is renewed. The mind of the Spirit is renewed.

Day after day. And these people know what they are talking about. They have gone through it all.

They can help us. They know the things that have come against them and how by the grace of God, at wit's end corner, they overcame! Dear friends, it is a wonderful thing to know this mind of the Spirit. And the tragedy is that if you've been constituted a child of God, if you've been born of God's Spirit, if you succumb to that little voice that tells you, if you follow the Lord the whole way, you're going to become artificial, unnatural, abnormal, strange, alienated from life.

And so you say, oh, you succumb to it. And you say, yes, yes, yes. I'll try and get a balance.

And the balance is that we play with the mind of the flesh and at the same time recognize the mind of the Spirit. It doesn't work. There is no such thing as coexistence between these two worlds.

For one leads to corruption and death and the other to righteousness and life. And the two things cannot coexist. So you might as well settle it right at the beginning to be wholly one way.

And what do you think will happen? You will discover that you have life and peace and joy. And sometimes you will be surprised that you have life and peace and joy. You will actually be surprised.

Why do I feel so good? Everything is against me. But this is the most marvelous thing to know the Lord. This is the key.

Now someone may say to me, well now look, this is all very wonderful. All these... I know from my own little experience. When I was first saved I sat under a preacher who preached victory morning, noon and night.

I only found out years later that the whole congregation were living defeated lives. A bar just two or three. And the preacher himself was.

He confessed it some years later to me. When I asked him, you know all those victory sermons you used to preach. Did you really have that victory? No, he said.

I didn't. I preached it by faith, he said. Now that to me is very interesting, you see, because you might sort of say, well now this is very wonderful what he is saying this morning.

But how does it work? We have it in Romans 8. The Spirit, the Law or the Principle of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus made me free from the Law of Sin and of Death. In other words, you never get free by fighting the Law of Sin and Death. Some believers get this terrific feeling they feel they have got to fight the good fight.

And this fighting the good fight means they wrestle with the Law of Sin and Death in their members and in their circumstances. And of course it will defeat you every time. It never told you to fight that kind of fight.

You fight the good fight of faith. Now let me give you an illustration. Some of you may have heard this before.

But sometimes when I travel I sometimes sit I never wish for this but I sometimes sit in a Boeing 747, a jumbo jet with 580 people on board. Some of them very large. I sit there I can't bear jumbo jets when they are full.

I don't know about any of you but I love them when they are half empty. Of course this isn't good for the airline but it's good for me. I love it when you've got a whole two or three seats on one side vacant and one or two on the other side and when you can move around and breathe.

But normally nowadays unfortunately due to the price competition the planes are full. And when they are full like the one I came over I look at the people coming in some of them are enormous how they get into one seat I don't think they need two seats. And then I think to myself how is this jumbo going to get off the ground? Why I can remember I can remember when I was younger that we used to go off in those little old-fashioned propeller planes and they used to go to the end of the runway and whoo whoo and then after a while when the whole place trembled and shook like this and your fins fell out of the rack then the propellers went down.

And then they went up again and then the next moment you were off. But I mean these were tiny little planes with about 30 people on board. There we sit at the end of a runway in a Boeing 747 with 580 people on board quite a few of them overweight.

And all the luggage and if you sense it like the luggage I sometimes take with me I think of all that luggage stowed in the holes underneath of me my goodness me this thing will never get off the ground. It's

impossible think the size of the thing it's like a small theatre. If you stand at the top and look right the way down you see right at the far end I mean you can hardly wave at someone right down the other end.

It's so long so big so many people and so much weight. Now when I was at school one which I didn't do very well I remember there was a law called the law of gravity. And simple people like me sometimes get hold of one thing which terrifies us.

And the law of gravity when you are sitting on a plane loaded like that would terrify anybody. You think now the law of gravity if this plane cannot get off the ground. There's no way! Am I right? There's a prophet in our midst.

That if you take to some cliff I don't know where the nearest cliff face round these parts are but if you got somewhere in West Virginia Virginia and you go to the cliff and you take one bucket of sand and drop it over there you know exactly what's going to happen. It's not going to float. It's going to go straight down.

How then does a 747 jumbo jet with 580 people on board and a full load in weight on every way perhaps more than perhaps it should. How is it going to get off the ground? Very simple. There's something to do with the thrust of the engines.

Now I'm not technical but what I do know having witnessed it again and again and again sometimes having seen some of these large people get on board where I've uttered a silent prayer to the Lord that somehow or other He will work a miracle and get us safely up over and to the destination. The fact is it always happens. It comes that they don't even wait at the end of the runway revving up the engines like they do in the old days.

They turn straight in and they're off. And the force of the engines the thrust of the engines and the thing soars up into the heavens. A superior law has taken over.

Dear friends coming back to this law of sin and death there's no way out of it. It's like the law of gravity. You can wrestle with it.

You can fight with it. You can do a thousand and one things with it but you'll never overcome it. The only way that you will ever overcome the law of gravity is by a superior law.

And thank God if you're a child of God you should be living according to a superior law. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. It is as if the great thrusts of that mighty resurrection life of the Lord Jesus lift us above what our old nature would command and determine.

There's no other way dear friend. You'll only become an artificial believer and the fellowship will be made up of artificial people all trying to look like good believers all trying to believe the right thing when in actual fact the inside story is very different. The only way you and I will ever be able to live this glorious life which is ours in the spirit of God is when we obey its principles.

In other words we have to live by faith and not by sight or feeling. There are times when every single thing will scream at you that the law of gravity is going to overcome you the law of sin and death is going to get you in this situation but you can stand there and say I belong to the Lord Jesus and the life of the spirit within me is well able to overcome this law of sin and death in this situation. I'm going to trust the Lord and praise Him.

Then your worship becomes an act of faith it becomes a confession of trust it becomes the word of your testimony. Well I will just say a few more things about this mind of Christ. What about the mind of Christ and the will of God? What is wrong with many of us believers? We have the strangest idea about the will of God don't we? Most of us if we were really honest and we were asked what do you think is the will of God for you? You would say well and you would probably choose the thing you most don't want to do and sadly that's the will of God for me.

It's strange and this is how the devil sometimes gets us because I know some people who have gone to serve the Lord in parts of the earth where they have no business to be and they went there because they believed that if they chose the hardest and most dreadful so that must be the will of God for them. It's an idea about God that he is such a miser. Oh, he is like an old schoolmaster with no compassion or feeling of that to the schoolmaster of that.

Someone who hasn't got the slightest bit of feeling or compassion in his whole being and he loves to give his people bad times. I mean what did he save them for? He saved them for them to have bad times. And the more you are having a bad time the more you go so and so is having such a bad time it's just rejoicing my heart no end as if any ordinary father or mother when their child is being disciplined or having to learn the hard way as if they rejoicing it.

I don't think any real father or mother would rejoice in it but they know it's necessary. Now the marvelous thing is about the will of God is forgetting the little transient and mark that word transient details. The will of God for you is life peace joy and glory.

Nothing less. You don't think the Lord went to all that trouble to send his son into this world to save you that you might be a miserable little spectator always afflicted always down. What a witness God didn't go to all that trouble that you might just be an unhappy broken dismembered being God went to all that trouble that as it says in both the Hebrew and the Greek you might be made whole.

Saved is the word. Made horrible. Now the way that we come there is often for affliction and tribulation.

That's another matter. But the fact of the matter is the will of God for you is tremendous but there's something in us that distrusts the Lord. We all feel that if we're in charge of our own way and our own destiny well I know what's good for me.

Now I don't know if you can be honest with yourself I don't want you to answer out loud don't you think most of us when we have really come to it would say that we wouldn't say that it wouldn't sound pious or even right I mean we'd have to toe the party line if we made an outward statement but if you were really asking there was nobody else here and wouldn't you sort of say well I think if I'm in charge you don't mind but if I'm in charge of my own life I think you're a bit too busy with the universe and the kingdom and all that kind of thing you see I mean you've got such big things in your mind can't come down to small little things like me so if you don't mind I'd rather be in charge of the details of my life I feel that in my hands my own preservation and development will be safe now

I'm not saying any of you would say this out loud because I know Christians too well I've known them for 30 years so I mean since I became one I mean I know the inside I know myself I know that it would be stupid to ask any of you to say out loud you wouldn't say that you would say oh no I know the only way ahead is to trust the Lord but the interesting thing is the mess our lives are all in I mean if that's trusting the Lord there's something wrong somewhere now my dear friends the fact of the matter is very few of us

none of us unless we've been dealt with by God can ever come to the place where we can really surrender to the Lord now the will of God we see in the mind of Christ first he did not count an equality with God a thing to be grasped he didn't hold on to it that's the first

thing the second thing he emptied himself dear friends none of us can empty ourselves but there's a mind in us which can enable us by the grace of God to will to be nothing and having emptied himself he took the form of a bondsman who in the whole world would become a bondsman no rights and being found in that fashion as a man he humbled himself to the death of the cross to death yet even the death of the cross there was nothing more abominable to a Jew who was brought up in the Pharisee tradition to be crucified that is the mind of Christ you can't do it nor can I and I believe our Lord taught us to pray something very simple in the pattern prayer lead me not lead us not into temptation and the word is not just being tempted but lead us not into trial or testing but deliver us from the

evil one dear people of God this mind of Christ it's only when I really know the Lord and live according to the principle of that mind of the Spirit that I will ever be able to do the will of God now I must tell you I have not found the will of God to be so dreadful I don't know others of you here but I've discovered that the Lord is the most glorious person to serve and when it comes to the will of God it's perfectly true there are times when it looks dreadful but actually when you do it you have joy and you have peace and you have life there is victory for you in doing the will of God when you because of self preservation refuse to do the will of God you lose everything you become one of those pillars of salt like Lot's wife on a pilgrimage from a judged condition to a heavenly

condition but you've turned into a pillar of salt preserved you could almost say pickled that's what salt does you see in our part of the world it simply pickles a person you'll find something years and years later perfectly preserved but a monument I know many believers like that they went so far they got out of the cities of the plain and they journeyed a certain way but something happened somewhere and they became a monument to something God had done may God preserve you and me from being monuments we want to be witnesses for something marvelous not a witness living you're seeing something you're witnessing you are communicating something you're not just a statue and so my dear friend as matter of the will of God I don't know if I speak to anyone's heart there is something you know is

the will of God for you but you're teetering as it were on the brink of a decision you feel as if you go that way it'll mean everything will go wrong or whatever else my dear friend if God has shown you something and you know in your heart that he is directing you to do it by the grace of God do it for the mind of Christ will help you and the great thing is just remember if you're fighting for yourself and your own rights and your own preservation and development you will not be able to do the will of God but if you surrender all of that you will discover that in doing the will of God God will protect your rights and God will watch over your development and God will bring you to fullness and glory I do not know a single believer in my experience who has really done the will of God who is

not a happy person I met many who come to me for counsel and help because they have not done the will of God and they've gone out of the way and they've made their lives a mess and even then God can do something once it's confessed and we turn to the Lord so my dear friends that's another little thing I'd like to add and another thing too can I just say something about the mind of Christ and service there's no way we can serve one another there's no way we can serve God there's no way we can serve the world unless we have the mind of Christ you know a lot of Christian service is self-fulfillment there are many men in Christian service who are building empires this is not so abnormal viewed from one point of view because

the masculine ego is built on the success principle especially in the

United States I don't know of any society in the whole world that's built more on the success principle if you're not a success you're nothing whatever it is you've got to be a success and therefore there's a pressure especially on the men a tremendous pressure to be a success serving the Lord the service of God there's no way to serve the Lord if it's just a question of self-fulfillment some people go into it because they cannot build an empire any other way they are unable to build a business empire they are unable to build a scientific empire they are unable to build an actual political empire and so they go into the Lord's work and there they build an empire there are dozens of them I don't want to name any names but my word there are some empires of course it's not a modern

phenomenon Paul said some preached the gospel for gain that's what he meant in his day there were people going around building empires because it's only natural to us if we don't have the mind of Christ it's only natural for us to be those who sort of in some way believe that we've got to succeed I will finish if that's a if that's a message put nothing beyond the brothers here you know if you and I are out for self-fulfillment look here it's only natural for us to feel if God has given us gifts if God has given us talents if God has given us a calling it should be fulfilled but it's the way that those talents and gifts are to be used and the way that that calling is to be realized the way of the world is to tread down others in going up and the way of Christ is to sacrifice himself for

others so that God will lift him up it's interesting when you look at the book isn't it? it says humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he might exalt you in due time what a strange way of going up you go up by going down now their world doesn't say that it says if you go down you'll stay down once you're down they'll all tread on you and they'll see you'll never get up again so you must fight and fight and you must get on top that's the world's way and the world's way of service is very much the same thing think how most of you I know it's a little strange for you here in the United States but I mean think how most people view kings they look upon kings as sort of sitting there on a golden throne with a great big crown on top sort of they just manage to keep up

there with a scepter in one end and sort of a flick of an eyelid and someone runs off and has his head cut off and then another flicker and a whole tray of tea is brought and another little finger and something else happens that's magnificent magnificent and now the Biden says we've been made kings we're going to sit there with all our magnificent glory and wonderful hope you're admiring this glory of mine put our crown on right scepter in our hand flick a finger and some poor saints of the third category or fourth category rush round to bring tea or coffee and then another flick of a hand here and angels rush off to do something as we sit there in our glory kingship dear dear people real kingship is the hardest job in the world I've always felt so sorry for the Queen of Britain no person

in the whole of Great Britain works harder than Queen Elizabeth II if you've read her diary or you know just what she does it is incredible why? because kingship is service the real idea behind kingship is service we've got the idea that nobility means you are served peasantry means you serve but according to God kingship the very significance and meaning of kingship is you serve and you serve everybody and you're prepared to lay down your lives for everybody service it is a marvellous thing in the work of God when you meet people who are servants of God who have given up all right to themselves then it's not about their glory and their success and the expansion of their ministry and the right to attend their ministry some people go very spiritual they won't talk about their own

personal rights but they start to talk about the rights of their status the rights of their ministry the rights of their calling and in the end it comes to the same thing the mind of Christ is that you are a slave now the thing about a bond slave is you're a second call 24 hours you didn't have rights you were owned what a position our Lord Jesus took that He might lead many sons to glory finally dear friend what about the question of fellowship what about the question of the building of the house of God what does the mind of Christ say in that matter He will never ever get two people working together in team work unless generally ideally both have sacrificed themselves for the other but if that cannot be you'll never get team work unless one has sacrificed himself or herself for the

other it takes two people to make a division it takes two people to create a faction when you have a person who has laid down their life given up all rights to themselves taken up their cross and followed the law you can't fight they're not there to fight Paul said we have the sentence of death within ourselves I've often thought about this what does it mean well it means this that if you've got a sentence of death all your little quibbles and queries about rights and about this that and the other that worried you have fallen away you've got just an hour or two to live you're under sentence of death what an extraordinary thing Paul said when he was speaking to the church at Corinth we have the sentence of death within ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises

the dead dear friends when you begin to grow as you're growing there's no way that real building can take place of stone with stone unless one after another we lay down our lives it is the mind of Christ now in this mind of Christ may I just say this it does not mean you lose your originality it does not mean you lose your personality it does not mean you lose your individuality that is very very important because in many of the cults we are seeing growing up in Christendom these are the things that have disappeared people are not original only one man at the top people don't have individuality only the man at the top it's a kind of hierarchy the hierarchy has the individuality originality and nobody else has anything but in the body of Christ every one of us has something to give that no

one else has got every one of us is so constituted that we have something unique to contribute but the mind of Christ is that we are wedded together we are built together we are related one to another we find our place in relationship to one another it's one thing to have a heap of stones it's another thing for the stones to have got related when the stones are related you have a house but then you haven't got a home you see how far we are from this building process of God when we really think about it here we are so many living stones every one of us who is born of God is a living stone what measure is there of the relatedness so that there can be a building together so that a house the house of God begins to be built and even then when we found our relationship to one another it's still

not a home a home requires not mere relatedness it requires love and it's only when the love of God is shed aboard in our hearts and increases yet more and more that a house is turned into a home and the place becomes a centre of compassion a focal point of love a focal point of health a focal point of care well we're all far away from that and thank God He knows our heart the mind of Christ dear friends this little passage ends with these wonderful words wherefore also God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every other name that is named that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father the way the Lord Jesus came to that position of supreme exaltation was by going down to the deck that is the

principle He went up by going down and if He's going to lead any of us as sons to glory we have to follow in His steps in other words the way up is by going down the way to be whole is by being broken the way to

fruit is by falling into the ground from dying the way to glory is by knowing what it is to die with Christ may God help every one of us in this for the Lord wants to lead us to His throne He wants that you and I should overcome as He says even as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in His throne He wants to bring us to His throne and there's no way that you and I can come there except through the mind of Christ may God open your eyes to see these two worlds and if there's a civil war in your life going on may He help you this day to settle the issue as far as you're

concerned you won't live according to the law of sin and death the principle of the mind of the flesh anymore you'll be for the Lord and you'll trust Him that as you let go He will preserve you and as you go down He will in His time lift you up and as you know what it is to decrease in His glorious time He may expand you to fullness and as you are broken you may know what it is to be a whole person in Christ and as you know His death you may in the end in His time come shall we pray Heavenly Father would you watch over your word to perform it as not one of us Lord that naturally would ever live according to the mind of Christ but Father we do want to thank you that we you say in your word we are not in the flesh but we are in the Spirit if so be the Spirit of Christ dwells in us and Lord

we just want to ask that you will help every one of us in whom there is any kind of civil war that we may cease fighting and may Lord live according to that superior law the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus open our eyes Lord you are the only one who can give us illumination help us Lord that every single one of us in this place may become a witness to you an overcomer by your grace that every one of us Lord may be involved in the fulfillment of your purpose in our day and generation and that this particular fellowship of your people may be built up and may become a center of light and a center of life and a center of love in this whole area they may become as it were that house in which you are found through which you are revealed in which others find and taste your salvation oh

Lord hear us for we ask it again in that name which is above every other name the name of our Lord Jesus Amen

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