

The Mind of the Believer

Another
STUDY IN BIBLICAL ACCURACY
by
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The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within the Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

Among the renowned men who have had a decided indentation on modern society is Sigmund Freud. Although he is perhaps best remembered for his ideas on sexual and sensual human nature he is also well known as a psychologist who subdivided the parts of the human mind.

Whether or not Freud's divisions were accurate is not known, nor is it of vital importance. However, the right meaning of the Greek words dealing with the mind are most vital to biblical accuracy.

The three major words translated "mind" are *psuchē*, *nous* and *phronēma*. *Psuchē* means soul life, the real individual as opposed to his physical body and his spirit (*pneuma*). *Nous* is the mind, a part of the soul. It is the organ of mental perception, fed and influenced by the five senses, or by the spirit. The mind is that part of the soul which collects data, and through reasoning processes makes decisions. *Phronēma* is used of the thoughts, feelings and desires fed into and held by the mind (*nous*).

The verb form of *nous* is translated "understand" in Ephesians 3:4, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand [*noeō*] my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Paul says that you may know with your whole mind, not just apprehend the thoughts, what is the mystery of Christ. The mystery is revealed in verse 6, "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." The riches of the glory of the mystery is recorded in Colos-

sians 1:27, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." It is one thing to know these thoughts, since anyone can memorize or quote scripture. But to comprehend with the whole mind what is the mystery and its greatness, was God's desire for the believers.

The mind of an individual can be fed by the five senses or by the spirit. When it is fed by the five senses, it may eat the spiritual food found in the Bible, or it may eat secular food. Then through its reasoning processes it makes decisions. Depending upon the decisions it makes, the mind may become good or corrupt. Titus 1:15 says, "Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind [*nous*] and conscience is defiled." In Romans 14:5 we read, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind [*nous*]." The context speaks of many customs and beliefs that differ among the believers. But let each follow his own mind on these things. In verse one it says, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations."

In Hebrews 12:3 we read, "For consider him [Jesus] that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds[*psuchē*]." Here we have a different word for mind. It is the word usually used of soul life. Hence it says if you become faint in your entire being, not just your mind, think about the things Jesus endured. The pressures from society, your job, your friends, often bring a believer to his knees to the point that he considers God's Word no longer worth the effort and afflictions. When this happens, think about what Jesus suffered from His society so that we could live.

Another usage of the word "mind" (*nous*) is the mind of the Lord. Romans 11:34 says, "For who hath known

the mind [*nous*] of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" I Corinthians 2:16 says, "For who hath known the mind [*nous*] of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind [*nous*] of Christ." Scripturally we have the mind of Christ, but since spirit has no mind, it is a figure of speech, *condescensio*. We have Christ in us; we have His mind, not His thoughts, in us.

In Romans 8:27 we read again of the mind of the Spirit, only in a different light. The mind here is *phronēma*, thoughts. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind [*phronēma*] of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*." A more accurate translation is, "And He (God) that searcheth the hearts knoweth what are the thoughts of the spirit (the gift, holy spirit, that is in the Christian believer) because it (the spirit) maketh intercession for the saints according to God." Coupled with verse 26 you see that the intercession for the saints is made by praying in the spirit, "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." According to I Corinthians 14, praying in the spirit is speaking in tongues in your private prayer life. God knows what the thoughts and ideas of the spirit (not the mind of the spirit) are. Why does He know? Because the spirit makes intercession according to God. When Christ was foretelling of the spirit that was to come on Pentecost in John 16:13–15, he said "Howbeit when he [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, he [it] will guide you into all truth: for he [it] shall not speak of himself [itself]; but whatsoever he [it] shall hear, *that* shall he [it] speak: and he [it] will shew you things to come. He [it] shall glorify me: for he [it] shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he [it] shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you." Whatsoever the spirit hears, that it speaks. It is these thoughts (*phronēma*) that the spirit speaks, not the whole mind of God.

In Romans 7 it says there are two laws at work within us. Verses 23–25 says, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind [*nous*], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind [*nous*] I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Paul says with the entire mind, not just words or thoughts, he serves the law of God.

In order to be able to serve the law of God with the mind (*nous*), we must feed it with the proper food or thoughts. Romans 8:5 says, "For they that are after the flesh do mind [*phronēma*] the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." The verb form of *phronēma* is used in this verse. Therefore those that are after the flesh have the thoughts of the flesh. But those that are after the spirit have the thoughts "of the spirit. *Phronēma* is also used in verses 6 and 7. "For to be carnally minded [*phronēma*] is death; but to be spiritually minded [*phronēma*] is life and peace. Because the carnal mind [*phronēma*] is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." If you have carnal thoughts, you are dead; but if your thoughts are spiritual, you have life and peace.

In Romans 12:2 we read, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind [*nous*], that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This is the key to power for the Christian believer. Be transformed (completely changed) by the renewing of your mind. To renew or change the mind, you must feed it with the proper thoughts. In Ephesians 4:23 it also says, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind [*nous*]."

In Philippians 2:5 it tells how to renew the mind, "Let

this mind [*phronēma*] be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Let those thoughts be in your mind which Christ Jesus had. To discover what His thoughts were, you must read the record of His words and thoughts, the Word of God. By constantly studying God's Word and believing what you read, you can put those thoughts into your mind. You feed your mind with the thoughts of Christ and renew your mind. Colossians 3:16,17 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and [even] the Father by him."

When believers in the fellowship renew their minds on the Word of God, they are like-minded and there are no divisions among them. Paul exhorted the Christians in I Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind [*nous*] and in the same judgment [opinion]." God wants all His children to be of the same mind. In other scriptures we are instructed to separate any followers that cause divisions among us.

Philippians 1:27 says, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind [*psuchē*] striving together for the faith of the gospel." God wants the entire being of every believer to be as one. He wants their soul lives to be knit together in the family of faith. In Philippians 2:20 we read, "For I have no man like-minded [*isopsuchos*], who will naturally care for your state." *Isopsuchos* is a combination of *isos* (equal) and *psuche*

(soul), hence, equal soul. Although God said we should be as one soul in Philippians 1:27, here Paul says he has no man with a soul equivalent to the extent that he would care for the state of the Philippians.

In Romans 12:16a we read, "*Be of the same [auto] mind [phroneō] one toward another.*" God wants us to have like thoughts, like minds and like souls. A part of having like souls is having like-renewed minds. In order to have like minds, we must feed on and retain the common thoughts of Christ.

The expression "the same mind," *to auto phroneō*, is used six times in the New Testament. *To* is the article "the"; *auto* means same; and *phroneō* is the verb form of *phronēma*, thoughts. Literally, the expression means to have the same thoughts, hence to be like-minded or to be of the same mind (thoughts). Philippians 2:2 says, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded [*to auto phroneō*], having the same love, *being* of one accord (*sumpsuchos*), of one mind [*phroneō*]." Notice that *sumpsuchos* is a combination of *sun* (together) and *psuchē* (soul). Therefore, it says we are to have the same thoughts, to have the same love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, to have souls joined together, and to have thoughts as one.

In Philippians 3:15,16 we read, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded [*phroneō*]: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded [*phroneō*], God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing [*to auto phroneō*]." We are perfect spiritually. Therefore we should also have perfect thoughts by putting on the perfect Word of God to renew our minds. If we do not have perfect thoughts, God by revelation will reveal even this to us. Let us have the same thoughts, by putting on the same Word.

In Philippians 4:2 Paul exhorts two believers to have the same thoughts, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind [*to auto phroneō*] in the Lord."

Romans 12:16a, which we read earlier, uses this same expression, "*Be of the same mind [to auto phroneō] one toward another.*"

Romans 15:5 says, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded [*to auto phroneō*] one toward another according to Christ Jesus."

II Corinthians 13:11 says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind [*to auto phroneō*], live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

A noun in the Greek that is equivalent to the verbal expression is *homophrōn*. It is a combination of *homos* (same) and *phronēma* (thoughts). It is used only once in the New Testament. I Peter 3:8, "Finally, *be ye* all of one mind [*homophrōn*], having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous."

One other word used of the mind is *sōphroneō*. It is a combination of *sōzō* (to make whole) and *phroneō* (to think or have thoughts). The word *sōzō* is usually translated "to save" in the New Testament, but more literally it means to make whole. Hence *sōphroneō* means to have whole thoughts, to have a sound mind (*phronēma*) or to have sober thoughts. Mark 5:15 says, "And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind [*sōphroneō*]: and they were afraid." The man had been possessed with a devil; but Jesus had cast the devil out and the man's thoughts became whole. He again had control of his own thoughts. A similar example is recorded in Luke 8:35.

I Peter 4:7 says, "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober [*sōphroneō*], and watch unto prayer." Therefore make sure your thoughts are whole. Make sure your thoughts concur with God's Word.

Titus 2:6 says, "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded [*sōphroneō*]."

II Corinthians 5:13 says, "For whether we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober [*sōphroneō*], *it is* for your cause."

In II Timothy 1:7 we find the noun form of this word used. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power [*dunamis*—inherent power], and of love [*agapē*—the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation], and of a sound mind [*sōphronismos*]." In verse 6 Paul had told Timothy to stir up the gift ministry God had given him. We have potential power within us. We have the love of God in the renewed mind, and we have thoughts that are whole. It says that God has given us these things. He has given us whole thoughts and ideas in His written Word. He continues to give us whole thoughts as we walk by His spirit. As we continue to feed upon these thoughts, our minds are renewed. If our minds are renewed, they are perfect, just as our spirit is perfect. Our souls are aligned with God. When each believer aligns himself in the same manner feeding on the Word of Life, he becomes a like-minded believer with all others having the same thoughts. That is certainly wonderful. In I Thessalonians 5:23 Paul prayed, "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.