**Think Again: Developing A Healthy Mind**

**Under Construction – Part 1**

March 7, 2022

Rev. Dr. Tony Soldano

# **SERMON DESCRIPTION**

Have you ever thought to yourself, “I wish I could renew my mind?” Well, the truth is, you can! God has made it possible, through Christ, to have a healthy, strong and vibrant mind. This is a powerful and precious promise provided to the children of God.

# **CENTRAL TRUTH**

When we stop to consider how much of our lives are impacted by our mind, is it any wonder that God has made provision in the new covenant? In fact, He provides His people with a new life that is based on a new and renovated mind. The new life that is found in Christ Jesus must also have a new mindset or attitudes to bring it to pass.

How can God change our lives unless He changes our mind first? What do we mean by this? Literally, God has changed our perspective, our knowledge, our understanding and ultimately our outcomes.

We must avail ourselves of this promise in Christ Jesus and put on the new mind. What is the new mind you may ask? It is literally the mind of Christ! Plain and simple the new life requires the new mind—these two are not separate from one another.

Paul communicated to the Ephesians that they needed to be renewed in the spirit of their mind and “put on” the new mind. The old way of thinking with its false paradigms must be renovated. In other words, God does not destroy the old mind but rather He reconstructs it with the mind of Christ. He, therefore, renews the spirit of the mind. By the spirit we mean the “life” of the mind.

**Our right mind -** to be healthy and strong in our mind would indicate that we are literally in our right mind for the first time in our lives.

# **SERMON QUESTIONS**

1. What do they need to know?

* It is possible to have a renewed mind in Christ Jesus. In fact, it is Gods will.

1. Why do they need to know it?

* People need to experience what a renovated mind is with all its attributes and abilities.

1. How should we apply it?

* A renewed mind is available to us, but we need to be part of the solution.

***When you consider the various parts of your life that your mind is involved in, is it any wonder that God has provided a new mindset for you?***

# **INTRODUCTION OF THE SERMON SERIES**

This sermon series will be three parts and we will cover the following as we focus on developing a healthy mind:

1. Putting on the renovated mind (Romans 12:1-2)
2. The mind of Christ/the promise of God - let this mind be in you/the mind of Christ.
3. Pulling down strongholds.

# **The Soul**

The soul consists of the:

* Mind
* Heart
* Emotions
* Will
* Intellect.

# **Statistics – Mental Health**

* 35% of Canadian adults of all ages say their mental health is worse now than it was in February 2020, before the pandemic began.
* People aged 18 to 34 were well above the national average in feeling like they are at a “breaking point” mentally:
* 40% of young people agreed with that statement, compared to 24% of Canadians generally.
* 27% of young people said they had suicidal ideas over the last three months, significantly higher than the national average of 15%, and a number that Wright calls “massive.”
* More than half of young people (53%) said they were worried about their future because the pandemic seemed relentless.
* The national average was 10 points lower, at 43%
* That age group was also the most likely to worry about the mental health of others: 49% said one of their friends or an immediate family member had suffered a mental health crisis (above the national average of 37%), and 51% knew of children or youth in their immediate family or circle of friends who had had significant mental health problems because of the pandemic.
* One of the most distressing statistics was related to the accessibility of mental health care: 17% of Canadians feel they need professional mental health care, but cannot access it. That’s a sobering 5.8 million Canadian adults.

~SOURCE: The survey, conducted by [**Maru Public Opinion**](https://www.marugroup.net/public-opinion-polls/canada)

# **MAIN PASSAGE**

**The New Life**

**Ephesians 4:17-24**

**17**This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, **18**having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; **19**who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

**20**But you have not so ***learned Christ***, **21**if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: **22**that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23**and be ***renewed in the spirit of your mind***, **24**and that you ***put on*** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

# **Definitions - Questions To Be Answered**

1. **What is the Spirit?**
2. We are spiritual beings with a body of flesh, bones, and blood
3. We are connected to God through the spirit

* Spirit speaks to spirit
* Our spirit comes alive when we are born-again

1. We are connected to God by the spirit

* But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1Corinthians 6:17)

1. Our spirit and part of our soul return to God
2. Jesus said, “My words are spirit and life”.

1. **What is the soul?**
2. The soul connects you with the world around you and with God Himself. In other words, the soul connects you both to the spirit and to the natural world

* It connects the natural and the spiritual
* The soul is the bridge for both worlds

1. Part of your soul connects with God and part with the world around you

* David – my soul….

1. The Bible uses the mind, soul, and heart interchangeably at times while at other times it makes a distinction.
2. **What is the mind?**
3. The organ or seat of consciousness: the faculty by which one is aware of surroundings, and by which one is able to experience emotions, remember, reason, and make decisions
4. The central think center of a human being
5. The mind can think and feel
6. The mind and the heart are closely connected – perhaps the heart is actually in the brain – the subconscious mind.

# Consider the various elements/function of your mind:

* Thoughts
* Wisdom
* Knowledge
* Revelation
* Understanding
* Memories
* Dreams and visions
* Discernment judgement and acumen
* Creativity
* Subconscious
* Conscious
* Reasoning
* Intellect
* Intuition
* Perspective
* Emotions, feelings
* Central nervous system
* The Intellect
* The faculties
* Attitude(s) and aptitude.

1. **What is the heart?**
2. The core of ones being
3. The seat of your beliefs - the central belief system
4. The container of your attitudes and core values/convictions
5. The subconscious mind:

* The heart is also able to think
* As a man thinks in his heart so is he (Proverbs 23:7)
* Beliefs must be established, not only, in the heart, but in the mind. The mind must reconcile what the individual believes is true and provide evidence, understanding and knowledge for that belief. Belief is not just a feeling. This is why Jesus said to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

***We are meant to love God with all our conscious and subconscious minds filled with the thoughts, words, nature, attributes, and characteristics of God. The Creator should be the “default mode” on our mental hard drives.”***

***~Miles Munroe: The Spirit of Leadership***

1. Learning versus knowing:

* Learning comes from educating the mind. Knowing is all about the heart.

# **MAIN POINTS**

To experience the new life in Christ we require a new mindset. Therefore, God is hard at work renewing your mind. The new mind is a renovated and regenerated. Consider:

There are two types of slavery in the Old Testament:

* Physical (Egypt)
* Mental (Babylon) – a system slavery.

1. **The new mind is learned and taught**
2. *Although somethings God does automatically at the rebirth process, when it comes to the mind of Christ, Paul clearly teaches that it needs to be learned, in other words it needs to be taught, it is a growth process. Although the mind of Christ is ready and available for us it is something that we grow into, it is like an inheritance.*
3. *Why do I need to be taught a new mindset? Because our mind governs us! And if we are to be governed it better be by godly thoughts and intentions.*
4. Your mind governs you:

* Governance
* The mind being renewed in that process in the place of governance
* Your world will always submit to the thoughts, ideas and beliefs that govern you
* This is where your will is – one will must bow – yours or His
* Jesus: “Your will be done.” (i.e., in the Garden of Gethsemane).

1. **The new mind is renewed:**
2. *The new mind that is provided for us in Christ is renewed, which literally means that it is renovated. In other words, it is under constant construction. God is always de-structing and reconstructing according to tears will and purpose in Christ Jesus. However, the destruction that God is involved in his old paradigms, sinful nature, destructive behavior, and satanic influences.*
3. When we take into consideration that God is renovating or doing construction on the mind, we can draw a parallel from a natural construction project. In fact, God operates within a philosophy of reverse engineering. In other words, He begins with the end in mind and works from there. What are the elements of a construction project and what is the parallel with God’s construction on our minds?

* **THE PERMIT** – The idea that we must allow God permission to work in our mind
* **The PROJECT/PROCESS** – Renovation is a process and not a one-time event
* **THE PROVISION** – Renovations require raw materials and resources
* **THE FINAL PRODUCT** – The final realization of the vision.

1. You must sign the work permit with God for construction to begin. This happens when you become a born-again believer and submit your life to Christ. This is the work permit. However, you will need to continually submit your will to the work of Holy Spirit.

* It is a partnership with Holy Spirit
* It is a continuous process.

1. 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.

* **“Renewed”: G365 (Strong)** ἀνανεοω ananeoo
* *an-an-neh-o'-o*
* From G303 and a derivative of G3501, to *renovate*, that is, *reform:* - renew.

1. The world system is always working to conform us like a mould to take upon its thoughts, values, and priorities through persuasion, intimidation, and shame

* Paul calls a worldly mind carnality. It is:
* Darkened
* Useless
* Satanic: “you mind the things of men”.

**The Brain**



*The physical pathway for emotional intelligence starts in the brain, at the spinal cord. Your primary senses enter here and must travel to the front of your brain before you can think rationally about your experience. But first they travel through the limbic system, the place where emotions are experienced. Emotional intelligence requires effective communication between the rational and emotional centres of the brain.*

~*Emotional Intelligence 2.0: Travis Bradberry*

1. **The new mind is put on**
2. *The apostle Paul gives us the illustration of putting on clothes, figuratively speaking the old clothes which are the old mindsets are put off, and the new ones found in Christ are put on.*

* “Think on these things” – we must be active in what we set our thoughts on
* Speech, emotions – everything is triggered from the mind

1. The old mind is considered darkened and futile, the un-regenerated mind:

* Thinks about useless things
* Is hopeless
* Is focused on sin
* Only considers natural and carnal ways.

1. Consider some of biblical ways that we put on new clothing:

* Set your mind on the things which are above (Colossians 3:1)
* You fix your mind upon it, that means to be stayed on or to be constantly thinking about it
* You gird up the loins of your mind – this means the birthing process of your mental faculties, where life starts
* Do you wash your mind by the reading of the Word, the idea of cleansing from old thoughts and images?

***“Plasticity”*** *is the term neurologist used to describe the brain’s ability to change…. Your brain can’t swell like your biceps since it’s confined by your skull, so instead the brain cells develop new connections to speed the efficiency of thought without increasing its size.*

*A single cell can grow 15,000 connections with its neighbors. This chain reaction of growth ensures the pathway of thought responsible for the behaviour grows strong, making it easier to kick this new resource into action in the future.*

~*Emotional Intelligence 2.0: Travis Bradberry (Pages 51 – 52)*

# **QUOTES**

*“The un-regenerated mind is dark, useless, and blind!”*

*“Beliefs are more than just strong emotions; they must be grounded in the truth that is established in the mind.”*

*“When God begins to renovate your thinking, it is likely that things will get messy before they get better.”*

*“Literally, you can accomplish almost anything if you change your mindset.”*

*“Perhaps, God’s greatest challenge is changing our minds.”*

*“We have believed the wrong report…”*

*“God is the greatest thinker!”*

*“God can give you a new heart, but your mind must be renewed.”*

*“We are called to love God with our understanding as well as our heart.”*

*“The mind of Christ must be learned and taught.”*

# **QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION**

1. Describe three ways that your mind has been renewed.
2. Explain the difference between the heart and the mind.
3. When you die, what part of you goes to God and why?
4. Explain what a darkened mind is? What type of things belong to that kind of mind? How is an enlightened mind different?
5. Provide five examples of how Paul changed his mindset after he met God.
6. How does God renovate our mind? Give three examples.
7. How do we put on the renovated mind in Christ? Provide at least five best practises.
8. How did the ministry of Jesus impact people and their mind? For example, the demoniac was said to be in his right mind after encountering Jesus. List other people that you see within the Gospels and provide explanations as to how Jesus impacted them.