

# *Ephesians 4:17-24*

## Our Minds

**Ephesians 4:17-24, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity [emptiness] of their mind, 18 having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that ye put off concerning the former conversation [conduct, lifestyle] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”** What a powerful thing to have your mind controlled by God, filled with the thoughts of God. In spiritual terms, we're as big as we think, through the might of Christ in us. Our thoughts can come from *his* understanding--the mind of Christ. Your mind influences your life. You are what you think. Your mind dictates your behavior. Psychologists say 10,000 thoughts go through your mind a day. Beware of what you are thinking, for you will become what you think. **Ephesians 4:17-19, “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity [emptiness] of their mind, 18 having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”** We're different because we think differently. The Gentiles--unconverted--walk in the futility of their minds--it's all emptiness, worthlessness. The boundaries of the human mind are limited. The non-Christian mind is out of touch with God--it is limited to the human physical plane. We as Christians have been given the mind of Christ, rather than the reasoning of the human mind. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:6-16. “We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.** [Time had a beginning, along with physical matter! Here it is, part of Einstein's equation, right in the

Bible! Steven Hawking take note!] **None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him. [Isaiah 64:4]' But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him?"** [We have a human spirit within each and every one of us. This spirit enables the human thought process, giving us human intelligence and comprehension far surpassing any thought process the animals possess. It is humans, not animals, that can comprehend the sciences, mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology--you name it--if it is part of the physical realm we can understand it and how it was made. Also, don't forget, humans can comprehend spoken languages, whereas animals only comprehend a limited rudimentary knowledge of language, and cannot write or transmit knowledge via language the way we can. Animals do not possess any of this level of understanding and thought process. This is all imparted into the human brain by the human spirit God puts in each human being, probably at the time of conception! This human spirit is not the man, not the person. It is viewed by some Christians as having consciousness and by other Christians as having no consciousness of and by itself, but being like the software which enables a computer to be more than the hardware it is made of, and being the repository for all the memories of events the human has been through. In Ecclesiastes Solomon says that when a human dies (and he makes no distinction between the good and evil of this world in this statement) his body turns to dust, but his human spirit **"goes upward--returns to God who gave it"** [Ecclesiastes 3:19-21; Ecclesiastes 12:5,7] Now let's see what happens when God's Holy Spirit is brought into union with our human spirit which resides in each and every one of us.] **"In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of this world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."** [Here is a point many sincere Christians fail to take note of. *The unconverted, unsaved people of this world, as Paul brings out, cannot understand the things of God--they lack the spiritual comprehension granted by God's Holy Spirit, because God's Holy Spirit does not reside in them. For it to*

*reside in them they have to accept Christ and then receive the Holy Spirit, who will then dwell in them and grant them spiritual understanding.] “The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: ‘For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?’ [Isaiah 40:13] But we have the mind of Christ.” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians verses 6-16)* So what are human minds like without God's precious Holy Spirit residing in them? Paul tells us in **Romans 1:22-25**, **“Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.”** And Paul goes on to tell of how God has blinded even his own people Israel for the present age of man they live in--then and now, till Christ comes again. **Romans 11:8-10**, **“As it is written: ‘God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day.’ And David says: ‘May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.’ Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.”** So we see here there has been a Godly purpose to the spiritual blinding of Israel throughout their history. Is there a Godly purpose for the spiritual blinding of the rest of humanity? We will have to wait and see, won't we? God is good. Paul does go on to say that all Israel will be re-grafted onto the olive tree (for a hint how and when this re-grafting takes place, read Ezekiel 37:1-14). So we see, a non-Christian is past spiritual feeling--very shameless--operating on the plane of the physical mind, as opposed to Philippians 4:8. Anger and wrath are attitudes of the world. Lowliness of mind, peace-loving, gentleness, humility are all attitudes of the Christian. You are different if you have learned Christ--taken on his nature. It's all about Christ, God.

*Put Off The Old Man And Put On The New Man, Be Renewed In The Spirit Of Your Mind*

**Verses 20-24, “But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that ye put off concerning the former conversation [conduct, lifestyle] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”** We're God's people. We should be wearing the garments of Christ. In Genesis 35 Jacob actually buried their old clothes and gods of the land. Verse 23 of Ephesians 4 in the new King James says, "**and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,**" How do we do that? Good question. **Phillipians 4:6-9. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”** We in Christ have weapons at our disposal to put down wrong thoughts, anxieties and attitudes. Nancy Missler in her book *Way of Agape* [chapter 14] and *Be Ye Transformed* [chapters 14 & 15] has a four step process for putting away thoughts of anger, wrath, hatred, anxieties and such. She calls it, “*See it, say it, send it back to God, supplant it.*” It is a spiritual process for handing your bad thoughts, angry thoughts back to Jesus so he can sacrifice them and renew your mind in true holiness. Take time to be holy, and it will affect your life. If you are a Christian but have bitterness and anger, you need to hand it to Christ and put off the old. Then he will put on the new, renewing your mind. Anxiety can lead to depression, but we should have the mind of Christ which will consume all this.