

Recoding The Brain – Part 17

(Becoming Spiritually Minded)

In Romans chapter eight the terms carnal minded and spiritually minded is primarily contrasting an unsaved person with a born again person. But it is also true that you can be a genuinely born again Christian and still be pretty carnal minded. If that was not the case, there would have been no need for the apostle Paul to write,

Romans 12:2 KJV And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

If you don't renew your mind, born again child of God, you will continue to walk pretty much like the world.

Rom 8:5-6 For they that are after the flesh do mind [phroneo] the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [new nature] the things of the Spirit [new nature]. (6) For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

The first week that Gary got born again at age 33, there was a new sheriff in town. I had a new spiritual mind within me that I did not have before. From within me, I suddenly know that pornography was wrong. There were instructions coming from this new mind to my natural, gray matter brain, that were new to me. "That pornography has to go." My natural mind yielded to that instruction and all the pornography left the house (girly magazines back in those days).

That first week, the process continued. I was instructed to quit cussing, stop telling dirty jokes, and so forth. There would be a "check" each time I started to say something dirty. Where was that coming from? From the spiritual mind of the new man that had been created on the inside of me. That new man is created, from the instant you are born again, in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians 4:24 KJV And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Hebrews 8:10 KJV For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

I am so thankful that my natural, gray matter brain bowed the knee to the instructions that were coming from my spiritual mind. There was some resistance from my gray matter brain, because I held back one or the music albums that my new nature wanted to get rid of. I hid it and threw away all the others. (Did I think God wouldn't see me hide it? Ha!) Later, I threw it away too.

The point is, when you are born again, you become a new person with a spiritual mind that has the very nature of Christ in it. The Bible refers to it as "the mind of Christ." (1 Cor 2:16) It comes with a righteous nature. It's voice is what we call the conscience. To obey that voice is to obey the voice of your King. When it comes to righteousness, that spiritual mind is the mind of Christ in you. Obeying that new nature is what empowers you to walk above sin.

That spiritual mind is giving righteous instruction to the natural, gray matter brain. Every time the natural brain obeys, it is being encoded with neural pathways it did not have before. When you obey something, the natural brain counts that as an experience, and that causes an encoding of neural pathways in it.

The foundational things of righteousness such as the knowledge; stealing is wrong, lying is wrong, adultery is wrong ... all of those things are written instantly in the heart and mind of the new man that is born again. But many other things do not come instantly that same way. For example, I did not know what my calling in the body of Christ was. I assumed I would be a pastor one day, but that was based on my experience growing up in a denominational church. I learned what my calling was many years later as I spent time in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

The King James version has a capital S in Romans 8:5-6, indicating it is the Holy Spirit, but it is not. That voice of the conscience that comes to us from our spiritual mind is coming from the new man within, not from the Holy Spirit. God said he would write His laws in "our" mind. It was always in the mind of the Holy Spirit. In today's lesson I am not so much contrasting the unsaved man with the born again person. We are discussing a born again person who is still pretty naturally minded. He still thinks pretty much according to the things of this world.

MIND - 5426. phroneo, fron-eh'-o; from G5424; to exercise the mind, i.e. entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by impl. to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intens. to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience):--set the affection on, (be) care (-ful), (be like-, + be of one, + be of the same, + let this) mind (-ed, regard, savour, think.

To "exercise" the mind means, it is something you have to do on purpose. Have you noticed that your physical body does not exercise accidentally? You have to exercise you body on purpose, and you have to exercise your mind on purpose.

"To set the affection on." What do you love? What is first place in your life?

Matthew 6:33 KJV But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

That's really hard to do if you don't love the king and his kingdom. Don't ever leave your first love. Love the king. What do you set your affection on? The king and His kingdom.

Again, to exercise the mind is something you have to do on purpose. Worry seems to come naturally to the gray matter brain. You don't have to try to worry. But you do have to exercise the mind ... on purpose ... to think on the Word of God instead of the circumstances that surround you.

Philippians 4:8 KJV Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure,

whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

"Think on these things" is a command. It is something you have to do on purpose. If we don't do something on purpose to recode that gray matter, it is going to continue to think that many things are impossible, when that is simply not true. The laws of the kingdom of God supersede all of the Newtonian laws of this fallen world.

Our spirit is the part of us that passed from death unto life at the new birth ... not our mind. Our mind must be renewed to agree with the new nature. Notice also "to interest oneself in." Again, this sounds like something a person does on purpose. A person might say, "I'd like to learn how to use a computer." No problem except the desire alone is not sufficient to renew his mind on HOW to use it. He must actively "interest himself" in learning how to use a computer. He must renew his mind as to how a computer works. He may purchase a perfectly good computer, but to him it will be a worthless ornament, just something to set on the desk, if he does not renew his mind on how to use it.

I remember those early days when I was learning how to use a computer. It was so frustrating to me. I wanted to give up so many times. But I would start again. I was recoding my natural brain with something new, and I sure had to do it on purpose. Wishful thinking would not get it done. Renewing the mind, recoding the brain, is work. It is something we do on purpose.

Our goal is to walk in the spirit, to train our natural gray matter brain to be that good servant that walks alongside, always available to serve, but never to take the position of being lord.

"To set the affection on." I can not help but remember what the apostle Paul wrote,

Col 3:2 Set your affection [phroneo] on things above, not on things on the earth.

"Things above." Kingdom things. The will of your Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. I have a little Kia car that I have great affection for. I like that car. I've had it six years now, and I still find excuses to go drive it. I don't think it's wrong for me to like that car. I have affection for my wife, my children, my grandchildren. But none of them died for me. None of them redeemed me from hell. I have affection for all those things, but I also have a first love. My first love is Him who bled for me.

One of the great secrets of living a successful Christian life is to set your affection on the King! I love the kingdom of God. But the King Himself is the object of my love. Never leave your first love. "Set" your affection means ... on purpose! There would be no reason to use such terminology if it were not possible for a Christian to "set" their affection on the things on the earth. Paul is telling us to do this "on purpose," using our will to force the exercise of the mind to think on "things above."

Years ago, the Lord took me through a purging season where He was asking me who I loved more, Him or my family. He was asking me if I would be willing to kiss my family goodbye and tell them I would not see them again in this life, but I would see them again when we all get to heaven. He was asking me; would I be willing to do that? I must admit, there was some warfare internally for a season while I wrestled with that question. Finally, I said, "Lord, that would not be pleasant for me. That is not what I want. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. If that is your will, I will do it." He never asked me to do it, but He wanted me to be willing to do it. All He wanted was that surrender.

Jesus wrestled with His will versus the will of the Father. He prayed and asked the Father to remove this cup from Him if possible. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. He wrestled with it to the point of sweating blood. It is not always easy to bring the natural mind into subjection to the will of God.

Love the king. Love the king. More than you love your own life. More than you love your family. More than you love the USA, or whatever country you are in. Love the king. Love the king. There is only One who bled and died for you.

In the same way, then, it is obvious that a person who wants to become “spiritually minded” is a person who “sets” the exercise of his mind on the things of the new nature rather than on the carnal things of this world. We are going to have to “force” our mind to think on these things, just as Paul told the church at Philippi,

Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Does that sound like a suggestion to you? That is a command. The point is this, becoming “spiritually minded” does not happen automatically just because a person is born again. If that were the case, there would be no reason to tell the believers to “set” their minds on things above, and to “think on these things.” Obviously ... it is their choice what they “set” their minds on.

We all have the same choices every day. We can "set" our minds on the circumstances of this world, or we can "set" our minds on that which is true, lovely, of a good report ... the Word of God! Everybody has "facts" to deal with. Ronald Reagan said, "Facts are stubborn things." But truth changes facts. God's Word is truth!

When we get a bad report regarding anything, the natural tendency is for the natural gray matter brain to worry. That is automatic. You have to set your mind on the Word of God ON PURPOSE!

To be spiritually minded is also to be kingdom minded. That's a mind that believes all things are possible. But what is the prerequisite? TO HIM THAT BELIEVES! Changing what we believe requires a recoding of the gray matter brain. That brings us back to,

Romans 12:2 KJV And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The Holy Spirit recently said to me, *"The kingdom works how the King says it does, not how you think it does."*

That means there has to be a recoding of our brain to think like the king thinks. The natural mind will never fully understand such things, but it can be brought in obedience to serve the kingdom. Recoding the brain is where we work on our "believing" until we believe what He believes. When I believe what the king believes ... that is called ... FAITH!

It is very interesting that the Greek word Paul chose to use in Romans 12:2 for "mind" is "nous." Again, from Strong's Dictionary:

MIND

3563. nous, nooce; prob. from the base of G1097; the intellect, i.e. mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will); by impl. meaning:--mind, understanding. Comp. G5590.

This is the intellect itself. This is akin to downloading new software into an old computer which must be "reprogrammed" if it is to function properly to do "new" things. The intellect was taught by our death nature and the fallen world system for years until the day we were born again. For many who do not ... on purpose ... choose to "set" their mental attention on the ways of the new nature, they are STILL being schooled in only the limited possibilities of this fallen world.

We are transformed by the renewing of the "intellect." Our database of knowledge must now be expanded to include the physics, the "possibilities" of another realm, another kingdom, the kingdom of God. Our intellect itself must be trained in the ways of the Spirit.

John 6:29 KJV Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

God first sent the WORD, Jesus Christ, into the world. But now, He has sent the WORD, Jesus Christ, into our hearts. Our job is to be like Peter and believe that the Word, the Messiah, Christ is in us ... and can do the same things today that He has always done.

John 14:12-14 KJV Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. [13] And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. [14] If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!