

Twelve Lessons

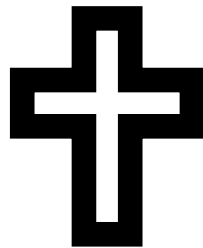
on

The Mind of Christ

Compiled and Written

by

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A handwritten signature or logo consisting of the Greek letters 'ΧΑΡΙΣ' (Charis) with a flourish underneath.

LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU – LESSON 1

Philippians 2:5 – *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”*

Introduction: God’s ultimate goal for the life of every believer is that he/she will be *“conformed to the image of His Son.”* (Romans 8:29) When you stop and observe the dominating characteristics of your life, what picture is being painted by your motives, attitudes and actions? Do you mirror the image of Christ?

1. Do you love your enemies? Do you bless people who curse you? If people hate you, do you continue to do them good? Is prayer your response to people who hurt you? Matthew 5:44 – *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”*
2. Are you fully submitted to the will of God? John 6:38 – *“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”*
3. Is your life marked by service? Mark 9:35 – *“And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.”*
4. What response arises when you see sin in others? Condemnation and judgment or understanding and forgiveness? Luke 23:34 – *“Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”*
5. Is your life characterized by steadfastness or lack of discipline? Luke 9:51 – *“And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,”*

There are numerous examples that could be given, but the basic concept being that Christ lived an extraordinary life and He calls us to the same!

Lesson Goals:

1. Examine various characteristics of the mind of Christ and compare them with the mindsets of the natural mind.
2. Explain the three-fold nature of man and the effect sin has on the spiritual and natural influences of the mind.
3. Compare aspects of the creation of the physical world with the new-creation of salvation.
4. Emphasize the role of choice and its consequences in developing the mind.

Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:

1. Discernment – The act of discerning; also, the power or faculty of the mind, by which it distinguishes one thing from another, as truth from falsehood, virtue from vice; acuteness of judgment; power of perceiving differences of things or ideas, and their relations and tendencies.
2. Savor – To attend to; to fix the thoughts on; to regard with attention.
3. Lusteth – To set the heart or mind upon; to long for; to covet; desire.

I. THE CAPACITY OF MAN – Created in the image of God, man possesses the capacity to have the mind of Christ.

A. The Three-fold Nature of Man

1. Man is a trinity. God created us in His own image. Notice the work of the Triune God in our creation. Genesis 1:26 – *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:”*
 - a. The Holy Trinity consists of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Likewise, man consists of three parts: body, soul and spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 – *“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.”*
2. Man has a spiritual aspect, a mental aspect and a physical aspect. The spiritual and physical natures of man meet in the mind. The mind is a mediating element in the nature of man by which his whole being is related to two worlds—the physical and the spiritual.
 - a. Man is not a slave to either the spiritual or physical worlds. He is a free agent. He may live in harmony with the two worlds around him, or break from them.
 - b. In the physical realm he may change his environment or move from one state to another.
 - c. In the spiritual realm he may obey either good or evil influences or break with one to accept another.

B. The Effect of Sin

1. Death entered the world as a result of Adam’s sin.
 - a. Genesis 2:16-17 – *“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”*

- b. Romans 5:12 – *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”*
- 2. Sin results in death, both physically and spiritually! As a result of Adam’s sin, all men will die physically and are already dead spiritually.
- 3. The physical death brought on by sin is easily understood. The graveyard reminds us of sin’s effect.
- 4. What about spiritual death? How does it affect the mind of man?
 - a. The spirit of man is dead. Just as physical death separates the soul from the body, so, spiritual death separates man from the influence of God.
 - b. Eph 2:5 – *“we were dead in sins”*
 - c. Eph 4:17-19 – *“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity 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.”*
 - d. 2 Cor 4:3-4a – *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not...”*
- 5. A natural man (without God) does not have the spiritual influence of God and therefore cannot perceive the things of God.
 - a. He is empty, void and without spiritual direction. 1 Cor 2:14 – *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”*
 - b. Being stimulated only by worldly wisdom his life spirals downward. Rom 1:21 – *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Read Romans 1:21-32.*
 - c. Phil 3:18-19 – *“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”*

C. The New Creation of Man

- 1. God created man and because of his fall, the spirit of man is dead. What is the remedy? Just as God created light in the physical creation, so He does in the spiritual creation.
 - a. 2 Cor 5:17 – *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*
 - b. 2 Cor 4:6 – *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*
 - c. 1 Peter 2:9 – *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”*
 - d. Gal 6:15 – *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”*
 - e. Eph 2:10 – *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*
- 2. Salvation restores to man that which has been lost because of sin.
 - a. Spirit – Life is restored – We are reconciled to God.
 - 1) Col 2:12-13 – *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;”*
 - 2) Eph 2:1 – *“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;”*
 - 3) Eph 2:4-6 – *“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:”*
 - 4) 2 Peter 1:4 – *“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*
 - b. Mind (soul) – Light is restored – We are given spiritual direction and discernment
 - 1) 2 Cor 4:6 – *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*
 - 2) 1 Cor 2:10-12 – *“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man*

which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

- 3) Eph 1:17-19 – *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power..."*
- c. Body – We are promised a new body
 - 1) Phil 3:21 – *"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*
 - 2) 1 Cor 15:52-54 – *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."*

II. THE CHOICE OF MAN

A. The Conflict

1. Gal 5:16-17 – *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."*
2. The saved man has been made whole. His spirit has been quickened which now creates conflict with the flesh. The battleground of decision is in the mind!
3. Matt 26:41 – *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*
4. Rom 7:22-24 – *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*
5. Picture this conflict.
 - a. The Body – Through the senses, the mind is stimulated by the world, flesh and Satan.
 - b. The Spirit – Through the Spirit and the Scriptures, the mind is provoked unto godliness.
 - c. The Mind (soul) – The mind is the mediating element of man. Pulled from both sides, it must choose.

B. The Choice – Philipians 2:5 – *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"*

1. Man is free to choose his master.
 - a. Luke 16:13 – *"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."*
 - b. Rom 6:13 & 16 – *"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"*
2. Jesus Christ gave a powerful lesson on our minds when dealing with Peter in Matthew 16:23. He stated, *"Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."*
 - a. The word translated "savourest" is the exact Greek word translated "mind" in Phil 2:5. It refers to "setting the affections, to interest one's self in, to think upon."
 - b. Peter was worried about the establishment of an earthly kingdom and had no perception of Jesus Christ's true purpose in dying for the sins of man.
3. We must be careful in discerning the right influence on our mind. What you focus on will influence you!
 - a. Satan – 2 Cor 11:14 – *"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."*
 - b. Brethren – 2 Cor 10:12 – *"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."*
 - c. Commandments of Men – Matt 15:8-9 – *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*

- d. Dissimulation – Gal 2:11-13 – *“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. 12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. 13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”*

C. The Consequences

1. James commented on the influence of earthly wisdom versus wisdom that is from above.
 - a. James 3:14-18 – *“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”*
 - b. In light of these verses, what is your life characterized by?
2. The correct order for the right result – God influences our spirit, our spirit influences our mind, our mind chooses what is right for our body.
3. Examples of choosing wrongly:
 - a. Israel
 - 1) Rom 10:1-4 – *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”*
 - 2) God was removed from His rightful position and the result was a dead formalistic religion that focused on outward attributes instead of inward realities.
 - b. Ungodly
 - 1) Rom 1:21-32 – *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”*
 - 2) God was removed from their thinking and this resulted in gross idolatry and morality.
 - c. Apostasy of the Last Days
 - 1) 2 Tim 3:1-7 – *“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*
 - 2) Self becomes the dominate influence which leads to a form of godliness with no power.
4. Do you see the pattern?
 - a. Step 1 – The spirit of man denies the influence of God.
 - b. Step 2 – The mind seeks direction from a perverted source.
 - c. Step 3 – The body is either disciplined or turned loose to fulfill the misguided desires of the mind.