

Renewing the Mind

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2). If we desire to live in heaven for eternity, then it is necessary for us to have the mind and heart of Christ, so we can relate to God who wants a close personal loving relationship with us. How can we have a relationship with a stranger?

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**Bringing God's love and truth to help people on
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References

1. Dr. Timothy Jennings, *Could It Be This Simple* (Chattanooga, TN: Lenox Publishing, 2012), 30.
2. Dr. Timothy Jennings, *Could It Be This Simple* (Chattanooga, TN: Lenox Publishing, 2012), 34.
3. Dr. Timothy Jennings, *The God Shaped Brain* (Chattanooga, TN: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 27.
4. Dr. Caroline Leaf, *Switch On Your Brain* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 2013), 130.

living in the image of the world. The image of the world reflects our fleshly desires, and image of God reflects the character of God.

Reflecting the World or God?

How do we change from the person who reflects the world, to one who reflects God, and live the way we are created? The Word tells us that once we accept Christ we are predestined to conform to the image of his Son. *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.* (Romans 8:29) Those who have accepted Christ and live in the Father's family, are molded to the likeness of Jesus. Everything we experience in life, God will use to make us more Christ-like, and he does this by changing the way we think. *Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.* (1 Corinthians 2:16) We are designed to think like our Lord, and this how we start renewing the mind.

To become a person who reflects God, we must change our thinking. We change our thoughts coming from Satan to thoughts coming from God. Our thoughts have two sources, from the world through the flesh, or from God through the Holy Spirit. It is important to realize that our thoughts are spiritual and it is necessary to have the power of the Holy Spirit to change our thoughts. Without the power of God within us, it is impossible to change our thoughts to the ways of God.

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The mind is spiritual and the brain is physical, and the mind and brain are connected by quantum physics. The mind normally reflects what is wired in our brains, however the mind can be controlled by the Holy Spirit, always giving us the power of choice over what our brain or

emotions are telling us. Spiritual thoughts supported by a spiritually wired brain, reveals the power of the Holy Spirit.

God has designed the human brain much like computer memory, meaning we can erase data and store new data. This is called neuroplasticity, which means we have the ability to reprogram our brains, and we do this by controlling our thoughts. However we cannot program our brains in milliseconds like a computer, because our brains are part of nature and reprograms at the rate nature changes. For example suppose we create a path through the woods. The first time through the woods is difficult because there is no path, we are creating a path. But if walk over this path for many days, the path gets worn down and becomes easier to walk over. This occurs roughly the same rate as wiring our brain, the more we walk on the path, the more we think the new thought, the faster the new thoughts are wired in our brain. Now if we stop walking on the path, then over time the path will disappear. The brain does the same. If we stop thinking thoughts from Satan, the associated wiring in our brain will disappear like the wooded path will disappear. The less we walk on the path, and the less we think sinful negative thoughts, the quicker they disappear from our brain.

Controlling our Emotions

Renewing the mind helps us to gain control of our emotions. If our emotions control us, then it is virtually impossible to renew the mind. God changes us by renewing our thinking and he also changes us by renewing our emotions. We are molded to have the mind and emotions of Jesus. Our thoughts, words, and actions, come from the Holy Spirit reflecting a Godly response in our emotional state.

Getting control of our emotions can be the most difficult part of renewing the mind because emotional responses are usually a lifelong

result is more love, peace, joy and security in our hearts. We grow in faith trusting the Lord which reduces our fear. This is freedom in Christ which means we are no longer slaves to the world. *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.* (Galatians 5:1) We are no longer slaves to the world which means we have overcome the world.

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4) Let God renew your mind, live in freedom from Christ and overcome the world.

they are promised a home in Heaven. The Lord says if we put him first he will provide our worldly needs. *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* (Matthew 6:33) A mind of Christ always believes God's promises and is someone that always trusts the Lord.

Summary

- **Renewing the mind requires we change from being self-centered to being God and others centered. This process takes close examination of our thoughts to determine if they are centered around self, or centered around God.**
- **Renewing the mind requires that we learn to control our thoughts because our thoughts are the software that reprograms our hardware, our brain. The more we control our thoughts, dismissing negative and sinful thoughts, the more we wire in new Godly thoughts and unwire sinful worldly thoughts.**
- **Controlling our emotions is required to control our thoughts and rewire our brain. Our emotions can throw us into sinful thoughts before we think about what we are saying or doing.**
- **If we learn to meditate and focus on God and his love, it will greatly help renew the mind, and help our brain to functions more efficiently. The ability to focus is essential to renewing the mind.**
- **It is important we maintain good health because the brain is physical. We need good food, adequate sleep, and aerobic exercise to maintain physical and mental health, in order to renew the mind.**

During the process of renewing our mind we develop the power to control our thoughts and our emotions through the power of God. The

pattern of behavior, often rooted in hurt and pain from the past. Overcoming a long-standing emotional reaction usually takes coming to peace with our past through forgiveness. For example trying to overcome an uncontrollable emotional response is like trying to pull out a tree stump with the roots still in ground. If we cut the roots we can now remove the stump. If we overcome the source that feeds our emotional state, the current day triggers of this state will have less power over us, meaning we are now overcoming a bad habit.

One of the best ways to overcome negative emotions is to create new Godly emotions. God changes our emotions as he changes our heart. *We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands.* (1 John 2:3) The Holy Spirit will guide our heart so it identifies with the heart of Jesus. When we experience the same emotions and feelings that Jesus did, our emotions will change and move toward the heart of Jesus.

We will look at the book of Hosea and see that God changes his heart by enabling him to experience the heart of God. God told Hosea to marry a promiscuous women, knowing she would leave him. Hosea married Gomer and had children, and later she left for another man. God told Hosea to go and bring her back and continue to love her. This enabled Hosea to understand God's heart, his emotions occurring with adulterous Israel. *When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD said to him, "Go, marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the LORD."* (Hosea1:2) God loved the people of Israel just as Hosea loved Gomer, but like Gomer Israel left God for other gods. Hosea's heart and emotions were changed to the heart and emotions of God, enabling him to minister to the Israelites with more love and compassion.

Our Health and Our Mind

**“The faculties of the mind function best when the body is healthy.”
“But we must remember that the body clearly affects the functioning of the mind. When physical sickness occurs, the mind becomes less efficient.”² The brain is physical and its function is dependent on our health, amount of sleep, and what we think about.**

Our mind is renewed by controlling our thoughts, and when we are not feeling healthy, or when we are tired, it is more difficult to control our thoughts and emotions. To renew the mind, we must eat right, get sleep, and exercise. Aerobic exercise has proven to greatly improve physical health of our brain as well as our body.

Science has found that our physical and psychological health depends greatly on how we think. Dr. Timothy Jennings in his book titled, *The God Shaped Brain*, states: “Recent brain research by Dr. Newburg at the University of Pennsylvania has documented that all forms of contemplative meditation were associated with brain changes – but the greatest improvements occurred when participants meditated on a God of love. Such meditation was associated with growth in the prefrontal cortex (the part of the brain right behind the forehead where we reason, make judgments, and experience Godlike love) and subsequent increased capacity for empathy, sympathy, compassion and altruism. But here’s the most astonishing part. Not only does other-centered love increase when we worship a God of love, but sharp thinking and memory improve as well. In other words, worshipping a God of love actually stimulates the brain to heal and grow.”³ From this quote we see how God is renewing our mind from the disease of self-centeredness, to a mind of love and compassion.

Meditation greatly helps to expedite the renewing of the mind, and focused concentration helps us to control our thoughts. Meditation

can also train us to overcome negative and sinful emotions by taking our mind into a level of thinking and reasoning. Meditation that focuses on God, his Word, and his perfect love, opens our heart to receive his divine power to renew our mind.

A quote from Dr Caroline Leaf from her book titled *Switch on Your Brain*, states: “When we distort love and truth we wire perversion into our brains and, in a sense, create brain damage. This is not an exaggeration, because our brains are wired for love, not fear, and therefore all the circuits – neurochemical, neurophysiological, neurobiological, electromagnetic, and quantum – are geared up for healthy, not toxic, thinking. If we allow ourselves to learn fear, it creates chaos in our brains.”⁴ Scientific evidence is showing that our thinking affects the efficiency of the brain and also affects our physical health. Therefore we can clearly see that God is rewiring our mind from the self-centered ways of Satan, to the original way he created us – a mind of love and hope.

The more God renews our mind, the more our physical brains are healed, and more cognitively efficient. When we are healthy and well rested, our brains rewire more efficiently. The more our minds rewire to the things of God, the more motivated we are to know God, further renewing our brain.

New Mind New Life

God is renewing our mind to the mind of Christ until our last breath, and then we will have the mind of Christ. But how does the mind of Christ affect our life? Our mind is continually renewing to the mind of Christ, which means our life gets better the longer we walk with the Lord. A mind of Christ is filled with love, peace, and joy, with an attitude of victory in Christ over the sinful world. People with the mind of Christ are fulfilled, secure, confident, and do not live in fear because