

NEW YEARS CHARGE
Sunday, December 31, 2006

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us
from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**).

Men who know how to use this weapon of prayer are God's best soldiers, His mightiest leaders. E. M. Bounds, *Purpose in Prayer*

ONE of the crying things of our day is for men whose faith, prayers and study of the Word of God have been vitalized and a transcript of that Word is written on their hearts, and who will give it forth as the incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. Nothing more is needed to clear up the haze by which a critical unfaith has eclipsed the Word of God than the fidelity of the pulpit in its unwavering allegiance to the Bible and the fearless proclamation of its truth. Without this the standard-bearer fails, and wavering and confusion all along the ranks follow. The pulpit has wrought its mightiest work in the days of its unswerving loyalty to the Word of God.

In close connection with this, must we have men of prayer, men in high and low places who hold to and practice Scriptural praying. While the pulpit must hold to its unswerving loyalty to the Word of God, it must, at the same time, be loyal to the doctrine of prayer which that same Word illustrates and enforces upon mankind.

The Church, today, needs praying men to execute her solemn and pressing responsibility to meet the fearful crisis which is facing her. The crying need of the times is for men, in increased numbers-God-fearing men, praying men, Holy-Spirit men, men, who can endure hardness, who will count not their lives dear unto themselves, but count all things but dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Saviour. The men who are so greatly needed in this age of the Church are those who have learned the business of praying . . .

In doing God's work there is no substitute for praying. The men of prayer cannot be displaced with other kinds of men. Men of financial skill, men of education; men of worldly influence-none of these can possibly be put in substitution for the men of prayer.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that God needs, first of all, leaders in the Church who will be first in prayer, men with whom prayer is habitual and characteristic, men who know the primacy of prayer.

E. M. Bounds, *Weapon of Prayer*, pp. 383-384

1 Corinthians 2:16 [For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.](#)

Two Questions - -

1. What is the mind of Christ?
2. Do you have the mind of Christ?

“But we have the mind of Christ.”

“Mind of Christ” - νοûς + Χριστός

- ✓ **νοûς – NOUS** - “the mind as a faculty of thinking, a way of thinking, an attitude”

POD - The mind is a reference to the attitude or the thinking of our Savior.

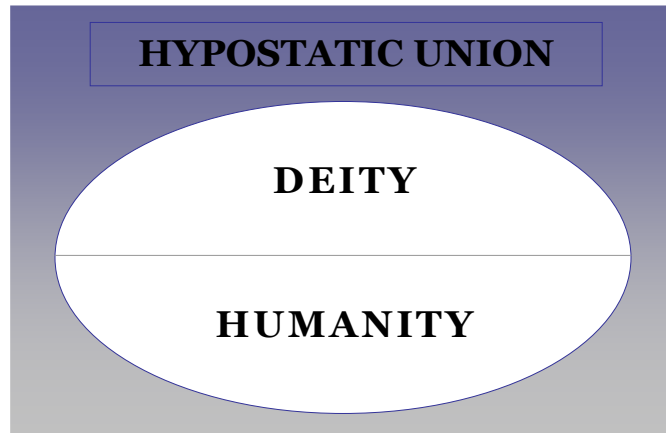
“But we **have** the mind of Christ.”

“**Have**” - ἔχω – ECHO – “To possess, to have or to hold”
“To keep on having.”

POD - The Christian is to think as his Savior thought.

Hebrews 12:2

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus [emphasizing the humanity of Christ]. . .”



Why do we *fix our eyes on* or *look to* someone? >>> To learn something from them.

We fix our eyes on ***the humanity of Christ*** to learn something from Him.

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith . . .”

τὸν . . . ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν

“The **author** and **perfecter**” -

ἀρχηγός – ARCHEGOS – “The Leader”

- ✓ One who begins something in the first of a series and thus supplies the **impetus** (Aristotle, IV BC)
- ✓ **Impetus** - stimulation or encouragement resulting in increased activity (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Τελειωτής – TELEIOTES – “One who executes, fulfills, completes something – perfecter”

τῆς πίστεως - TES PISTEOS – the *faith* that Jesus began and completed was first in a series and unique.

Corrected translation – “***The leader and executor of the faith . . .***”

A UNIQUE SPIRITUAL LIFE lived by our Lord!

POD - The Christian fixes his eyes upon the humanity of Christ to learn how his Savior executed the spiritual life.

As we *fix our eyes* on the humanity of Christ we follow the example that He set for us.

POD - Executing the *Unique Spiritual Life* is tantamount to doing the will of God.

- ✓ To do the will of God we must **think** how our Savior thought.
- ✓ We must have the **mind** or the **thinking** of Christ.

Questions #1 - What is the mind of Christ?

⇒ If you answered **Bible Doctrine** you are partially correct.

Luke 2:40

The Child continued to grow [*emphasis humanity*] and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke 2:52

And Jesus kept increasing in **wisdom** and **stature** [*spiritually and physically*], and in favor with God and men.

The Christ in the Gospels, J. W. Shepard, pp. 49-50

- ✓ Our Savior was taught the word of God.
- ✓ Our Savior studied the word of God.

Luke 4:17 – The Lord was familiar with the Scriptures - -

And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written.”

Luke 4:4, 8 & 12 – The Lord could apply the Scriptures (*in the midst of duress*) - -

vs. 4 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"

vs. 8 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

vs. 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

POD - Knowledge of the infallible word of God shaped the thinking of our Savior.

Bible doctrine was only *one* aspect of the *mind of Christ*.

POD - Just because one has Bible doctrine does not mean that he has the mind of Christ – or thinks as his Savior thought.

Matthew 26:39

And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

What does this passage reflect?

- ⇒ The Savior was **willing** to do the Father's will whatever that will entailed.
- ⇒ When someone is willing to do the will of another it is a demonstration of **humility**.

POD - The Savior was willing to do the will of the Father because He was humble.

Philippians 2:6-8

Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself [*Jesus Christ restricted the independent use of His divine attributes in accordance with the Father's will*], taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The *mind of Christ*, thus far, incorporates **Metabolized Bible Doctrine plus Genuine Humility**.

Matthew 26:39 (Continued) - -

And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and **prayed**, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”

- What was He doing? **Praying**
- The Savior **depended** upon the Father to reveal His will through prayer.

Luke 5:16 - But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and **pray**.

Luke 6:12 - It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent **the whole night in prayer** to God.

- Why did He pray so much? Because He was humble!

POD - The genuinely humble believer prays habitually in seeking the Father’s will and asking for help in fulfilling that will.

The *mind of Christ* incorporates three things - -

1. **Knowledge** - Metabolized Bible Doctrine in fellowship with the Father.
2. **Humility** -
 - a. The willingness to do the will of another.
 - b. Humility results in dependence.
3. **Dependence** - Dependence upon the Father to reveal His will through prayer.

There is one other aspect that completes the mind of Christ . . .

Luke 4:1 - Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness.

Matthew 4:1 - Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

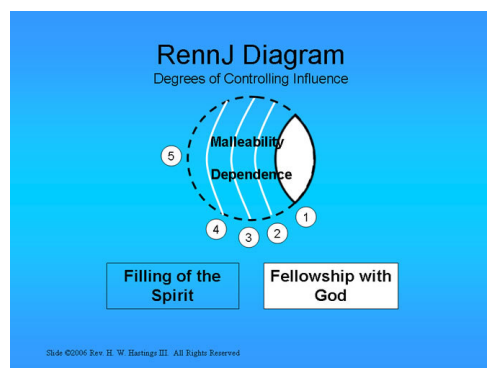
Bible Doctrine **minus** humility and dependence = “puffed up/arrogant knowledge”.

Just because you have Bible Doctrine does not mean that you have the *mind of Christ*.

Jesus Christ **depended** upon the Spirit to accomplish the Father’s will – and so should we!

- ✓ He was humble enough to seek that will through **prayer**.
- ✓ He was malleable enough to fulfill that will - **by the Spirit** - once that will was made apparent. And that is the execution of the Spiritual Life!

So, do you have the mind of Christ?



The pattern was established by the humanity of Christ as the author and perfecter of our spiritual life.

Hebrews 12:2 Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Chafer, L. S. *Systematic Theology* Volume 6, Page 294-297

Because so far this discussion has dealt primarily with the theory or doctrine of the spiritual life, the addition of a few practical suggestions may not be amiss. Since a life in the power of the Spirit depends upon a continuous attitude of reckoning and appropriation, it is important for most Christians to have a time of definite dealing with God in which they may examine their hearts in the matter of sin and their need of yieldedness, and in which they may acknowledge both their insufficiency and His sufficiency as revealed by the Spirit. Then, at that particular time, they may claim His power and strength to supplant their weakness. The Bible makes no rules about the time or conditions. It is a case of the individual child, in all the latitude of his own personality dealing with his Father.

Spirituality is not a future ideal; it is to be experienced *now*.

... the child of God should not mistake worn nerves, physical weakness, or depression for unspirituality. Many times sleep is more needed than prayer, and physical recreation then heart-searching.

Be it remembered, too, that His provisions are always perfect, but that the Christian's entrance into these provisions is often imperfect.

It will not do to *impersonate* ideals or to *imitate* others. Just here is the great danger in analyzing experiences. Some are so easily induced to try to imitate someone else. That which gives a believer priceless distinctiveness is his own personality, and he cannot please God more than by being what He designed him to be. Some Christians are disposed to traffic in un-lived truth, repeating pious phrases the truth of which they have never really experienced. This must always grieve the Spirit.

If one's kind of spirituality makes Christ unattractive to others, it needs some drastic changes. May God save His children from assuming a holy tone of voice, a holy somberness of spirit, a holy expression of face, or a holy garb (if by garb they wish to appear holy)! True spirituality is an inward adorning. It is most simple and natural and should be a delight and attraction to all.

True spirituality is a great reality. It is *all* of the manifestations of the Spirit in and through the one within whom He dwells. He manifests in the believer the life which is Christ.

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.