**BIBLE STUDY OUTLINE**

**OCTOBER 2013**

**SUBJECT: THE MIND**

**INTRODUCTION**

This Bible Study Outline has been developed for all leaders of the Cell Ministry, to serve as a guide for our Bible study meetings in the month of October. The subject is **‘The Mind’**,as taught by our Man of God during the Bible Study Preparatory Class, which held in the month of September.

This outline is in 4 parts. Part 1 defines the mind, throws light on the two-fold nature of man, and also gives us a clear distinction between the mind and the brain. In Part 2, we look through the Scriptures to find out what the Word says about the mind, and also discover that man is responsible for his thoughts; and, that our minds are under our control.

We’ll learn the importance of wholesome communication in Part 3, and also get enlightened on how the processes of the mind create our attitudes. In the final Part, we find out how our minds should function, with respect to our faith.

All Bible study class teachers and cell leaders are to ensure that their members have their Bibles, all the Scriptures in the outline are read during the meeting, and the members look into their Bibles while the Scriptures are read. Remember, the purpose of this class is to help the individual member understand God’s Word on the subject matter, and become acquainted with the Scriptures.

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**- PART 1 -**

At the end of this class, each member should have an understanding of

1. What the mind is and how it functions.
2. The two fold nature of man; and,
3. The difference between the mind and the brain.

This topic on the mind cannot be completed in one class, as there are 23 major points to elaborate on regarding the subject; this tells you how broad this topic is. This month, we will be looking into 6 of them, as taught by our man of God. They are:

1. The Mind.
2. Thought.
3. The Brain.
4. Attitude.
5. The Renewal of the Mind.
6. The Mind and your faith.

**A Short Exercise:**

If someone were to make a statement to you, for example, about your performance: which of these two statements would you prefer?

1. You get it right most of the time
2. You mess it up every once in a while.

These two statements are intended for the same purpose, except you think otherwise.

*(At this point the Bible study class teacher is to get a response from each member, on their preference, and the reason for the choice, before proceeding with the class).*

From the statements above, it’s clear that the first one is more positive and emphasizes the achievements of the individual, while the second tends to highlight his/her errors, which only occur once in a while. We would look further into this, later in our study.

**What is the Mind?**

The mind is not something that the best historians, scientists, or medical doctors of the world could give you the best light on. Only the Bible gives detailed and accurate information on the mind. The reason is because the mind is an intangible and spiritual facet. It can’t be discovered or made known by science, and the best you can get from the world on it, would be speculatory. Only the Word of God brings revelation of the spiritual. For example, the Bible says in **Hebrews 4:12-13***(English Standard Version)* “***12****For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow…”* The Word of God can distinguish between the soul and the spirit, an attribute, which the ordinary mind cannot give you. It takes the knowledge and revelation of the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit to make such things known. Let’s begin with a simple definition of the mind.

**The mind is the faculty of man’s reasoning and thoughts; it holds the power of imagination, recognition and appreciation. It’s responsible for processing feelings and emotions, resulting in attitudes.**

There are some key words in this definition that we’ll examine, to help us understand the mind. The first one is **Thoughts.**

**Thought is the creation, recalling, reviewing and processing of images for meaning, reason, language and expression.**

This means you create, recall, review and process the images that you get, for meaning, reason, language, and expression.

When you study Scriptures on the mind, you’ll discover that in the Old and New Testament, several words are interchangeably used to refer to the mind or its activities. Examples are the words: **thoughts** and **reason.** Sometimes whilst reading one translation the word **thought** is used;and then you read another translation, and it uses the word **reason**. Even in the case of the same translation, **thoughts** may be used in a verse in one section, and then another writer uses **reason** for what was previously used for or written as **thoughts.**

In addition**,** the words **mind** and **heart** are sometimesinterchangeably usedin Scripture, but the mind is not the heart and the heart is not the mind. These are generic expressions, and so you may find them synonymously used at different points.

The words **imagination, thinking, reasoning, inclination** are also used interchangeably in referring to activities of the mind, as you would find in Bible translations.

This goes to say that there are a broad number of synonyms that are used in expressing the phenomenon of the mind and its activities. Moreover, to better understand the **mind**, you’ll need to understand the scriptural description of the human person.

**The Two fold nature of Man:**

Man primarily has a twofold nature namely: **The Outward Man**, and **The Inward Man**.

According to the Bible, God created the inward man first, and then formed the outward man. T**he inward man is the human spirit, and his soul.** On the other hand, **the outward man is the human body and its senses**.

The Bible says **Hebrews 11:3b** *“…that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”.* **The spiritual realm gave birth to the physical realm**; therefore, to understand more clearly our description of the inward man as the human spirit and his soul, look at this: **what the nervous system is to the body, the soul is to the Spirit**. The soul functions for the human spirit. If you were to see the human spirit, you’re not going to see the soul standing outside of the spirit. But again in the scriptures, you’ll find generic expressions in which the soul is used in describing the whole human spirit - the inward man. Sometimes, even the word heart is used to describe the inward man. Words and statements like: the hidden man of the heart, the human spirit, the soul, are all sometimes used in describing the inward man. However, **there is the soul that belongs to the human spirit**, and that soul is the seat of the mind, the will and the emotions.

Going further, and it gets a little more complex here, note this: **in the central nervous system, what the brain is to the body, the mind is to the Spirit** (note that the mind is in the soul). The mind however is far more complex than the brain because it has power over the brain. It has more power, more influence than the brain because it’s spiritual; it belongs to the human spirit, which is the core of your nature, the real you. You are not a body; you are a spirit living in a physical body. Your body is your domicile, but the spirit is the real you.

**What is the Brain?**

Science defines the brain as the primary centre for the regulation and control of bodily activities, receiving and interpreting sensory impulses, and transmitting information to the muscles and body organs.

The brain is not the seat of consciousness, because a man’s brain could be working alright, even when he is not conscious of life or anything around him. The seat of consciousness and emotions don’t reside in the brain. The brain can process and recall information, but true memory is more than recalling information. There is much more to know about interpretation, meaning, language and expression (seen in our definition of thoughts), and these are not in the power of the brain.

In addition, the brain is neither the mind nor the soul. The brain is a physical organ of the body while the mind and soul are spiritual. The brain however works with the mind to give the character of a man.

Remember this: **The body’s central nervous system works in conjunction with the mind for human consciousness, conception, memory and expression.** This statement is very important. These two – **the central nervous system and the mind, are ultimately responsible for the character of a man**.

**- Part 2 -**

At the end of this part, each member should

1. Be acquainted with more scriptures on the mind.
2. Understand that man is responsible for his thoughts.
3. Understand that man’s mind is under his control.

### Let’s look through a few Scriptures that would be helpful in throwing more light on the mind.

### Matthew 15: 1- 15 (KJV)

***15****Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,* ***2****Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.* ***3****But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?* ***4****For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.* ***5****But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;* ***6****And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* ***7****Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,* ***8****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.* ***10****And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:* ***11****Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.*

Jesus is teaching here, and He’s explaining something to the crowd of people gathered. They are charging the disciples of wrongdoing. They say: you eat without washing your hands, referring to hygiene, ceremonial cleansing and religious purifications. So Jesus responds to them saying: It’s not that which goes through the mouth, into the human body, that defiles the man, it’s what comes out of his mouth that defiles him.

Then in verse 15 the Bible says **-*15****Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.* Jesus responded by saying in Verse 16*–* ***16****Are ye also yet without understanding?* ***17****Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?*

He was saying, when you eat something, it goes into the body and later on, it is passed out as waste. Verse 18 - ***18 “****But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.* ***19****For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts…”* The heart referred to in this Scripture, isn’t the physical heart beneath your breast pumping blood; he is talking about the human spirit and his soul, and particularly the mind from where he has those evil thoughts. He is saying in essence here, that evil thoughts don’t come from the physical body: ***19****For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:* ***20****These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.* Remarkable!

Bare in mind that here, Jesus introduced the difference between the human spirit and the physical body, and how a man is defiled. By classifying those things that come out of a man as evil thoughts, He was saying they had been processed and now can be categorized. Remember our definition of thought, which is **the creation, recalling, reviewing and processing of images for meaning, reason, language and expression.**

Let’s look at another portion of the Bible. **Luke 24:36 -** This was after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. He appeared in the midst of His disciples, who were not expecting him. They knew he was dead, but they had heard that He resurrected, and had appeared to some, but weren’t sure. Is he truly back to life? Has he resurrected? While they were together, talking to one another, the Bible says from Verse 36: ***36****And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* ***37****But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.* ***38****And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?* Did you notice that statement?

Let’s read this same Scripture from the NIV translation. We already established earlier that the words – thought, reason, mind, e.t.c, are used interchangeably in Scripture. From the NIV it says, ***36****While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”* ***37****They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.****38****He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?*This time, the translators used the word ‘mind’.

**Your thoughts are your responsibility:**

### Now, let’s go to Genesis 6:5-15 - This was many years ago, way back in the Old Testament. The Bible says God looked at man’s life, the way he lived and related with his fellow men, and here’s what He said: *5And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.*

Think about this! The Scriptures say, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination (some translations use the word inclination), of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. He was constantly inclined to thinking evil and imagining wickedness, and as a result, God said in verse 7 – ***“****…I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.* ***8****But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”*

From these Scriptures, its clear that **man is responsible for his thoughts**. If this were not so, God wouldn’t hold him responsible. But God said, the imagination of the thoughts in his heart, was continually wrong. So God said man was responsible for his thoughts. You can’t say therefore, that when the wrong thoughts come into your heart, you don’t know how they came. No! He holds you responsible for your thinking. Remember what we said about thoughts. Let’s go back again to our definition of thought.

**Thought** is the creation, recalling, reviewing and processing of images for meaning, reason, language and expression. So, you see, it’s up to you. You don’t have to process those images when they come. If you don’t process them to have meaning, they can’t have meaning of themselves. You’ve got to give them meaning.

It’s just like the disciples of Jesus who were scared when He appeared in their midst, after His resurrection, and called Him a ghost. Why were they afraid? Had they ever seen anyone attacked or destroyed by a ghost? No! They only heard stories, and their fears were based on stories they had heard. They were scared because of the previous information, so they gave meaning to the ghost. They saw Jesus, the healer of the broken hearted, the kindness of God, the expression of the love of God, and still they were afraid. Jesus had to intervene, and say, ‘be not afraid, I am the one.’

We give meaning and interpretation to the processed images that we receive. We can give reason, language and expression to whatever we have created, thereby conditioning ourselves to have an attitude, or be in a state resulting from those processed thoughts.

**Jeremiah 17:9** says - ***9****The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* Think about this. That’s why Jesus says man must be born again, because the natural man’s heart, his mind, is desperately wicked.

**Isaiah 55:7 -** ***7****Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Glory to God! This Scripture again shows that God holds man responsible for his thoughts based on righteousness. It says, let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous his *thoughts*. Man’s heart is desperately wicked, and the solution to this is found in Christ. Jesus gives eternal life to whoever would believe in Him and receive Him. Man has to have a new heart, or he will remain in the state described in Jeremiah 17:9. But what about his thoughts? Even though you are given a new heart in Christ, your thoughts are still your responsibility.

We said that the mind processes feelings and emotions; that was part of our definition of the mind, and this refers to different degrees of affection or disaffection. We can be more affectionate towards someone or something to one degree or the other. You can have passion for or against, and someone can be passionately for or against you. But these are all the product of the human mind.

**Deuteronomy 6:5 (KJV)** - ***5 “****And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” Love is an expression of emotion, and the Scripture says, love the Lord with all thine heart, soul and might. Some other translations use the word strength in the place of might. So it can be read thus, ‘*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength’*. How do you love God with all your strength? How does that work? How can you love God with all your might? Matthew 22:35 throws light on this.

**Matthew 22:35** - ***35****Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying* ***36****Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* Look at the answer Jesus gives: ***37****Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* Notice that Jesus brought in something there: where the word might was used in Deuteronomy, He used the word mind, thereby decoding that word for us. He says loving the Lord with your might means loving Him with your mind.

Your mind helps you direct your energy to bear on a particular direction or a particular thing or activity. So Jesus shows us how to love with all might and strength. He says, it’s your mind; you focus your mind.

***37****Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

Let’s learn something from David. When he had become an old man, he made his son Solomon, king, and because it was his final days on earth, he began to give Solomon the most important instructions for life. Let’s read what he says in **1 Chronicles 22:19**:

*19Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord.*

David told his son Solomon to set his heart and soul to seek the Lord. From this instruction, we find a way to obey God’s commandment to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, soul and mind. You seek God by setting your mind on Him, not because He is missing, or because you are trying to look for Him. Now let’s see how he puts it to Solomon in **1 Chronicles 28:9:**

*9And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father (That means acknowledge the God of thy father) and serve him with a perfect heart (meaning with whole hearted devotion) and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.*

**Your mind is under your control:**

One of the most important things you would ever hear for your life is that your mind is under your control. You’ll begin to realize the importance of this as we progress in our study. It sounds so simple, but it is so profound.

**Romans 8:5** says, *5For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*They that are after carnal things, set their mind on the things of the flesh, while those who are after the Spirit, set their mind, attention, and focus on the things of the Spirit. This means if you are after God, you’ll set your mind on God and the things of God. This is so important, and the Words ‘set your mind’ used here, tell us that our minds are under our control.

For example, look at what we’re doing now, we are studying the Word, focusing our attention on spiritual things; things about our heavenly Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God. These are the things that appeal to us, and we set our affection on them. That’s why we are in this Bible Study Class. You’ve got friends, colleagues, relatives or neighbors, who are into something else. They are not interested in things like this; they set their heart and their attention on other things.

**Romans 8:6** says, *6For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*  *7Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is the mind that only recognizes and appreciates earthly, worldly things; things that have no spiritual meaning and are temporal. So, those who set their minds on carnal things program themselves for death (spiritual death), but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.  Look at the conclusion in verse 8 - *8So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*Those who set their heart on earthly things cannot please God.

**- PART 3 -**

**At the end of this part, each member should**

1. Understand the importance of wholesome communication.
2. Understand how our attitudes are formed.
3. Understand how to manage the mind.

**Our Communication:**

Let’s go back to the questions asked at the beginning of this study. But this time, we’ll be looking inward on how we communicate, as though we were in the position to make these statements, and not necessarily having them made to us.

1. You get it right most of the time.
2. You mess it up every once in a while.

In life we have to make decisions as to what we want to be like, and how we want to communicate. Do you want to be a good communicator or a bad one? Remember something, communication really is the expression of your personality. How would you want to see things; this would be dependent on what results you want to get.

Let’s take an example here: you have a guy who has been doing whatever he’s been doing for a while, no matter how long that has been, and then he makes a mistake, and probably makes this mistake every once in a while. Now, I can see it this way - he makes this mistake every once in a while; meaning, just once in a while, he blows it. Therefore, I can decide to say to him, every once in a while you mess things up. If I decide to say this, I am turning his attention, as well as my attention, on the failure. The failure has been magnified and glorified, meanwhile it’s just once in a while he gets it wrong, and not all the time. If you say he messes it up once in a while, then this immediately lets us know that he probably gets it right most of the time. That’s what it sounds like, so why not give him the credit for getting it right most times, rather than glorify the failures that happen only once in a while.

When you choose to focus on the negatives this way, it says something about your personality, more than it does, the one you are speaking to. It shows you are not going to be a happy person, because your communication reveals your inner processes - the images and thoughts that you process within you. Your mind works on the failures of others more than their successes, and that’s going to affect your success. Even if you had been very successful, you’ll begin to bring some retardation to your speed of success; something is going to go wrong, if it’s not already gone wrong. So you need to stop in your tracks and say: ‘I’ve got control over the processes of my mind, and over my future. I want to take control; I want to make a change, and determine the quality of my personality.’ You’ll have to process something different in your mind. See how important but simple this is.

**Attitude:**

Our next point is attitude. Remember that this is coming from the definition of the mind, which we already discussed. Let’s recap on what we said about the mind with respect to attitudes. In our definition of the mind, we said, **“The mind is the faculty of a man’s reasoning and thoughts; it holds the power of recognition, imagination and appreciation; it is responsible for processing feelings and emotions, resulting in attitudes”**. We already talked about the processing of feelings and emotions, but what about ‘the result in attitudes’?

First, it’s important for us to recognize that we are responsible for our attitudes; but what is attitude? **Attitude is the disposition to act in ways determined by the mental processes of our feelings, emotions, beliefs or reasoning**. This means the processes of our feelings, mind, emotions, beliefs, and our reasoning, determine our attitudes. What we process inside our minds come out in our attitudes, therefore we are responsible for our attitudes. We are responsible for the way we act and why we respond the way we do: these are all attitudes.

The mind is the information-processing center of the human person. Recall our definition of the brain and its similarities to this, but this is different because the mind is spiritual. The mind being the information-processing center of the human person, collects and processes all the information received through the nervous system of the outward man, and through the spiritual senses of the inward man – the human spirit. The interpretation and eventual dissemination of information from the mind, determines human behavior and attitude. The mind collects and processes information, and then disseminates information. This information goes through your nervous system, and through your body into action.

What do want to get out of what you have in your mind? You make a choice daily. **The exciting reality of the mind is that its content and processes can be managed.** This means the content and processes of the mind can be reorganized and reprogrammed. One who’s born again is born after God, and has the life and nature of God. Your spirit has received the very nature of its creator, and it means you have an excellent spirit. However, this doesn’t mean you will walk in that excellence; you have to make the choice to do so.

**The best things of our sprit are expressed through the mind**. The Bible says in **Nehemiah 8:10** ***10****Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.* Isn’t this wonderful; in effect, he says, enjoy the day and help others enjoy the day. That’s exactly what this means. Then he says*, ‘… for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.*’ Note that the Scripture says, ‘’’neither be sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. The expression, ‘neither be ye sorry’ is not properly rendered in English; the Hebrew is ‘âtsab’, and it means to make or process. So the Word is saying here is, don’t make or process pain, grief, displeasure or worry. Atsab also means to carve, or fabricate. So don’t carve out or fabricate pain. Don’t process pain or grief because the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Be strong and not weak; prosper and don’t be a failure; don’t manufacture or carve out pain or displeasure. Don’t let it happen because it will destroy you. The Joy of the Lord is your strength, and God wants you to be strong otherwise He won’t use you. Remember what He said to Joshua: ‘one thing I desire of you, be strong and very courageous’ **(Joshua 1:9)**. And now Nehemiah tells us that this strength is in the Joy of the Lord. So if Satan wants to make sure you displease God, he’ll go after your joy; he’ll stop you from being joyful and you’ll begin to blame everyone around you for your feelings and your emotions. You’ll have an attitude, and when you go on with this attitude, you’ll get weaker spiritually. The reason for your weakness is that you’ve let go of your joy, and the joy of the Lord is your strength. Refusing to process pain and grief does not mean you are denying their existence, it just means you don’t let them have dominion over you or take a hold of you.

God said to Joshua, I am with you, wherever you go, and I will not fail you. Glory to God! He said, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you, and no man shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life **(Joshua 1:5)**. Then He said, just one thing I require of you: be strong and very courageous. How was he going to be strong? - The joy of the Lord is your strength.

The Joy of the Lord is expressed in singing, laughter, and through expressing words of praise to God. It’s expressed in that loving harmony that you have with your brothers and sisters in Christ, speaking positive, encouraging and stirring words to them. That’s the joy of the Lord! Refuse to dwell on pain, displeasure, or worry; refuse all the negatives. The Bible says in **Philippians 4:6:** *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

We already established that the best things of our spirits are expressed through the mind. **Proverbs 4:23**says, ***23****Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*It means guard your heart with all diligence. The NIV says, ***23****Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*  This means you’ve got to guard your heart with everything you’ve got, because it is the wellspring of life.

Remember, your mind is the doorway to your human spirit, so if you are going to guard your heart, where are you going to stand? At your mind. Therefore, mount guard over your mind; guard your thoughts and your thinking. That’s what the Word says. **Verse 24- 25** of the same chapter says, *24Keep your mouth free from perversity; keep corrupt talk far from your lips.* *25Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you*. This means don’t deviate. Let your eyes look straight on.

God has spoken to your life, maybe about your work, or your family; it could be about your marriage, children, or finances; no matter what it is, don’t lose what God has given to you. Speak God’s Word and look straight ahead as the Word says. Refuse deviation and don’t speak perversity; don’t say the wrong things, which are outside of what God has said concerning you.

**- PART 3 -**

At the end of this part, each member should

1. Know how to use the mind; and
2. Understand how to sustain the change and transformation that comes from God.

**The Renewal of the Mind:**

**The first and most important step to preparing your mind to glorify God in your life is the renewal of the mind**. Remember what we read in **Isaiah 55:7:** *“Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord and to our God for he will have mercy upon him”.*

The Bible says in **Romans 12:2 (AMP):** *“do not be conformed to this world (this age) fashioned after and adapted to its external and superficial customs) but be transformed (be changed) by the entire renewal of your mind by its new ideals and its new attitude so that you may prove for yourselves what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect in his sight for you”*.

Don’t be fashioned after and adapted to the superficial customs of this world, but be transformed (be changed) by the entire renewal of your mind. Not just some areas of the mind, but the entire renewal of your mind. As stated earlier, the exciting thing about the mind is that its content and processes can be managed: reorganized and reprogrammed. That’s exactly what this Scripture is talking about here.

Write this down**: “The mind must be renewed in content and processes; this is a tasking but worthy exercise; the only potent instrument to effectively achieve this is the Word of God.”**

1. **Renewal in Content: Colossians 3:9-10:** *“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him”* You’ve put off the old man, and you have put on the new man. The Bible says if any man be in Christ he is a new creation, old things are passed away behold all things are become new. The concluding part of that Scripture says, *“…put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him”*

The mind must be renewed in content.This is referring to new knowledge and not the knowledge you used to have; not sense knowledge or the worldly wisdom you previously walked in. Now you have the epignosis of the spirit; you have new knowledge from God, so there's new content for your mind. With this new knowledge, you’ll know the things of the Spirit through the Word of God and the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Bible says let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom **(Colossians 3:16)**. You’ve deleted and discarded the old information, now you’ve received new information through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit; this is new knowledge.

1. **Renewal in Processes:** **Ephesians 4:21-23** - *“If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation (the former manner of life; the former way of doing things) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”* This means to be renewed in the character and attitude of your mind. The AMP version says, *“And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind, having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude.”* The NIV says *“to be made new in the attitude of your minds.”* This speaks of a new processing; a new way of looking at things, a new perspective. Remember the processing of feelings and emotions result in attitudes. Therefore, to have a new attitude, you need to have new processing of your feelings and emotions. It means you’re going to have to process feelings, emotions and thoughts differently, and this will result in new attitudes. Your attitude would then become consistent with your new way of processing things because you process things now through the power of the Holy Spirit and through the Word of God. You now see things from God’s perspective. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and that includes your mind.

**Sustaining Change through the Word:**

Any man can be changed or transformed by the Spirit of God, but that change can only be sustained by doing the Word. So it doesn’t matter what God has done in your life, or how long you’ve been a Christian; it doesn’t matter where you're coming from, or where your journey began. It’s a great testimony when we know what the Holy Spirit has done in our lives, but that change (transformation) can only be sustained by doing the Word. It’s your responsibility to do the Word.

Let’s take a look at the Scriptures to get a better picture of what we’re talking about. In 1 Samuel 10:5-6 and 9-11, the Prophet Samuel was talking to a man named Saul, the son of Kish. He revealed to him future events in his life.

**1 Samuel 10: 5-6:** “*After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy: And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.*”

He told him that there would be such an impact of the Spirit of God upon his life, that he’d be completely transformed, instantly transformed; he’d become another man.

**1 Samuel 10: 9-11:** *“And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day. And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”*

Can you imagine a man receiving another heart instantly, by the power of the Holy Spirit; a miracle happened and they were amazed; his life was changed instantly. The Bible says, he was given another heart and was prophesying, and the substance of that prophecy was that he was going to become king of Israel. And he did become king of Israel.

Let’s see what happened several years later. **1 Samuel 15:10-11** – “*Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.*” Did you see that? God said to the prophet Samuel “it repenteth me” – I'm grieved, He said. Do you know God can be grieved? The Bible says grieve not the Spirit **(Ephesians 4:30)**. The Holy Spirit of God can be grieved and the Holy Spirit is God; He manifests the character of the Father. Now He says here, I'm grieved that I have made Saul king because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.

How is your life? Are you grieving God or pleasing Him? You’re either grieving Him or pleasing Him. He said He was grieved at Saul because He said Saul had stopped following Him; Saul didn’t perform God’s instructions. But that was the man who was instantly turned into another man, and given a new heart. As already emphasized, **the Holy Spirit can instantly change (transform) a man’s life, but that transformation can only be sustained by doing the Word of God.** You can only sustain a miracle of God by living according to His Word. Whatever God does in your life is meant to stay and grow into greater glory, but that would only happen if you stay in the Word of God.

**1 Chronicles 10:13-14:** “*So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it*. *And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.*”

Do you see why Saul lost the kingdom? He lost it because he turned away from the Word of the Lord. He kept not the Word of the Lord, even though he had such a great and miraculous transformation in his life. The Holy Spirit changed his life, and that was a great testimony for him, but he didn’t sustain it because he didn’t keep the Word of God. And God turned the kingdom that was promised him over to David, the son of Jesse.

**- PART 4 -**

At the end of this chapter, each member should learn

1. How the mind functions with respect to faith.

**The Mind and Your Faith:**

Now we’re going be looking at where the mind comes in, with respect to faith. It’s really simple because it’s right there in the Word of God.

**Romans 4:17-19:** “*(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:* *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God*”

God calls inexistent things as though they already existed. He is the God who gives life to the dead. So God is a miracle God. In addition, God is a faith God, because He calls things that don’t exist as though they already did. That means He speaks of the future as though it were history. That’s wonderful; and it means your future is in history with God; it’s already passed. The Scripture also says of Abraham– *“Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be…”* Now here’s the big one - verse 19 – *“And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb.”* If he was not weak in faith, it means he was strong in faith.

Reading on, the Word says, *“he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God”* You could actually read verse 19 into 20 this way, leaving out the negatives: *“…being strong in faith he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb* – this is the first point, strong faith doesn’t consider the circumstances. What does it mean to consider not? It means that he pondered not on the circumstances; he wasn’t processing the information of the circumstances, rather he processed the information of God’s Word. He wasn’t setting his mind on the circumstances and trying to address himself by the circumstances, instead he addressed himself by the Word of promise (the Word of God that came to him). The Bible says he considered not the circumstances of his body, or the circumstances of his wife’s womb.

How are you going to use this for your life? In today’s world, people don’t stay in anything. If they are tired of their jobs, they get out. If they are tired of their marriage, they get out. If they are tired of their children, they leave them. Once they get tired of anything, they just check out of it. They just can’t stay, but something is wrong with that. They are not carrying out the will and purpose of God for their lives; they are just letting satan have his way.

Satan comes into your joy and destroys it; he gets into your business and you let it go. It’s amazing! Remember what Jesus said: when the son of man cometh shall he find faith in the earth? He posed a challenge to His disciples. Not many are living by faith today; they think faith is just something with which you get what you want from God. No! Faith is something with which you live for God and carry out the righteousness of God in the earth. That’s what your faith is for. Your faith is for producing the righteousness of God in the earth.

When a fellow says I'm tired of this church, and leaves the Church, something is wrong. He doesn’t think or channel his thoughts towards being an agent of change, who would pray and fast for his Church, his Pastors, and leaders, so that there would be a change. He doesn’t think like that, but that’s what we are expected to do; we are to carry out the righteousness of God in the earth; that’s what you use your faith for. You use your faith to establish the Word of God. Almost anything that happens, he says, I’m tired of this and of that and so, the next thing he does is to leave or give it up. What kind of life is that? If you're tired of a situation, show it in your prayer. Don’t show it by walking away, show it in your prayer; show it in intercession.

Where are you going with your faith? Let your eyes look straight on; set your heart on the right course; that is, on what God has said concerning you. Let no perversity, deviation come through your mouth. Don’t deviate from the vision; don’t deviate from what God has said; stay in the right course. Don’t ponder the circumstances, ponder the Word of God. Abraham considered not the circumstances, but maintained his focus on God’s promise, by setting his mind on God’s Word. That’s how to use your mind to get your faith working.

Satan will try to attack your mind and bring all kinds of thoughts to you, but you must say no and reject his thoughts, because those thoughts don’t bring glory to God.

You’re responsible for your thoughts; Abraham set his mind and affections on God’s Word of blessing not on circumstances. We can love unconditionally, and live happily with excitement and fulfilment when we uphold the Word in our lives and not the circumstances. Only this way can we truly believe in the Lord. Hallelujah!

Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith. He held on to God’s picture. There's a picture given to you; hold on to God’s picture, process God’s picture, and every time the negative pictures seem to show up, take your attention away; say no! Process God’s picture only. When fear attacks you, say no! Choose the right image and picture; the one that glorifies God, not the one that glorifies your desires or answers your own mind.

What do you want out of life? Do you want God’s Name to be glorified in Christ Jesus, or do you just want the things that will make you happy? The choice is yours. “*Being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*.” God honoured Abraham and counted his faith for righteousness. Wonderful!

Take charge of your mind today and let it glorify God and cause His righteousness to be known.

**Some lessons learned from this study:**

1. The mind is the faculty of man’s reasoning and thoughts; it holds the power of imagination, recognition and appreciation. It’s responsible for processing feelings and emotions, resulting in attitudes.
2. The mind is an intangible and spiritual facet.
3. Man primarily has a twofold nature namely: The Outward Man, and The Inward Man. The outward man is the body and its senses, while the inward man is the spirit and his soul.
4. What the nervous system is to the body, the soul is to the Spirit.
5. In the central nervous system, what the brain is to the body, the mind is to the Spirit.
6. The mind is far more complex than the brain because it has spiritual power over the brain.
7. The Mind, and not the brain, is the seat of consciousness, thought, memory, and emotion.
8. The brain is a physical organ of the body while the mind and soul are intangible. The brain however works with the mind to give the character of a man.
9. The body’s central nervous system works in conjunction with the mind for human consciousness, conception, memory and expression.
10. Thought is the creation, recalling, reviewing and processing of images for meaning, reason, language and expression.
11. God holds man responsible for his thoughts.
12. One of the most important things to consider is that your mind is under your control.
13. Your communication is the expression of your personality.
14. Attitude is the disposition to act in ways determined by the mental processes of our feelings, emotions, beliefs or reasoning.
15. We are responsible for our attitudes
16. The mind is the information-processing center of the human person, which collects and processes all the information received through the nervous system of the outward man, and through the spiritual senses of the inward man – the human spirit. The interpretation and eventual dissemination of information from the mind, determines human behavior, and attitude.
17. The best things of our sprit are expressed through the mind.
18. The first and most important step to preparing your mind to glorify God in your life is the renewal of the mind.
19. The mind must be renewed in content and processes; this is a tasking but worthy exercise and the only potent instrument to effectively achieve this is the Word of God.
20. The Holy Spirit can instantly change (transform) a man’s life, but that transformation can only be sustained by doing the Word of God.