

Transform the Mind Through Christ

Dear Lord, we want to come before You with hearts bowed in thanksgiving, just to say once again that we serve a wonderful Master. You have proven Yourself, Lord, over and over in each of our lives. And so, Lord, we are here today. We want to hear You speak that You would change hearts and minds today. We thank You, Lord, and we bless You. Amen.

Personal Reflection

Can I share a bit before I share a bit? I want to share a little something personal. I was reading recently, and a scripture caught me, and I have not been able to get away from it.

Fear Is Governing

We are familiar with this passage. In the third chapter of Mark's Gospel, it talks about Jesus, who had been healing, and He had been in a synagogue recently. And remember the story where He healed the man with a withered hand? I could somewhat identify with that, if you remember, when I had my hand healed. And in Mark chapter four He was preaching to the multitudes. And it says, then He and His disciples went from there, and they were going to cross the Sea of Galilee. And while He was there, He sat in a boat, and there was a multitude of people coming to hear Him, and He shared with them.

And then they put out into the sea, and a great storm arose. We all know that story. And the Lord was asleep in the boat, and they awoke Him, and they got up and said to Him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace, be still." And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

You see, they had no faith, but they did have fear. And He is saying to them, "You have seen Me, you have been alongside of Me. You have seen the healings, you have seen the compassion shown. You have seen the demons cast out. How is it that you do not have faith?"

And then Jesus says, "Oh, I will point this out, though." He says, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" I think each of us can identify with that. Sometimes there are circumstances in our life, sometimes within our own family, where there is estrangement. And you wonder, how is this thing ever going to work out? You are afraid that relationships could be broken and how devastating that might be. Or it may be that at work there is a big layoff coming, and you are consumed with the thought of not having a job to provide for your family. And you become within yourself, somewhat frantic. "What am I going to do to fix this thing? Should I start looking for a job?" All kinds of things going on, and fear is governing.

I Want to Know More of the Lord

We were here earlier, around the Lord's table, this table of remembrance. It is so important, my dear brothers and sisters, to remember every one of us has history with the Lord. Whether it be two days or fifty years, we all have history with the Lord that we can look back on, and see the Lord's compassion and faithfulness and promises fulfilled in each of our lives. When we look back and remember like that, it will stir faith in our hearts.

This scripture we have all read, I am sure, hundreds of times. But this day when I read it, this gripped me: "and they feared exceedingly," speaking of the disciples, "and said to one another, Who can this be that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" I have known the Lord for some time now. But boy, when I read that, I realized as much as I know Him, how little I know Him. He fills the universe. He is so much more than what I have known Him to be. And there should be something of a cry in my heart, and I hope there is a cry in your heart that says, "Lord, more of You. Lord, I just want more of You." "That is the only thing that is going to satisfy me. More of You Lord Jesus. I want to know You deeply, intimately. Oh, Lord, there is nothing more that I want than this." I hope there is something like that stirring in your heart, and in my heart. I have asked myself, "who is this One that is able to calm the sea and the winds?" He is so much more than I know, and I want to know Him more.

Transformation

Last time I shared, if I am not mistaken, I shared the first verse of the 12th chapter of Romans. And hopefully, as we look at this second verse, the Lord might bring some things to our heart and make decisions in our heart.

Romans 12:1 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Last time we shared on that first verse where it says, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." I believe what Paul was saying to them, "I want you to remember how merciful God has been to you. Recall His compassion, His kindness, His long suffering, His patience, the mercy that He has shown you. Present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Verse 2 says, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Now, when we first start out here, we are not going to even mention too much that second verse. Because I think to understand the second verse, we need to see something in the light of who Jesus is, and something of what Paul had gone through and experienced in this whole issue of our minds being changed, renewed.

Pressure to Conform

This word “conformed,” if you look it up, means “to behave according to the usual standards of behavior that are expected by a group or society.” Be not conformed! It implies there is pressure on you, there is resistance, there is conflict brought upon you to bring you into a system, a world system, its way of thinking, its priorities. Have you experienced some of that? I know I have. This pressure, this world system, that from the time you were birthed, that pressure has begun to be put upon you by the world system.

And we can experience that in so many different ways, again, on the job, to perform in a certain way. And sometimes when they are asking you to do some things that are not just right with you, and the pressure is there that if you do not conform, you may lose your job. And sometimes that will cause some people to alter what they really believe, for fear of losing their job. And so, there is this pressure there, and sometimes it rises up in conflict. This world system will confront you and bring conflict into your life and its priorities. All we have to do is listen to the news, which I almost hate to do. But you see where the priorities of the world lie, and the pressure is to conform to those things. That is why we see when people are standing up and saying all sorts of evil things, we wonder, why is there not someone else standing up and saying, “No, that is wrong.” Because there is fear.

The pressure of the world brings fear into people's lives, and they will not stand up for what is right. They will not stand up for what the Lord Jesus is speaking of. And something of what we are going to see is when Jesus is sharing with people, He is bringing in contrast. “This is the way things are told, but these are the way things are.” And there is this contrast between light and darkness.

And it is quite evident today, do not be mistaken or even deceived, but there is someone behind all of this evil and darkness. It is the prince of the power of the air who is at work in the sons of disobedience. One of the things I pray daily is, “Lord, open up our eyes to see what is going on behind what we see in front of us.” So, when we look at things, we understand that there is a whole spiritual principle at work behind this evil. And it is the prince of the power of the air. He is the one who you might say heads up this world system and its evil.

The Meaning of Transformation

And so, what does it mean to be transformed? So that word “transform,” which most of us I am sure know, comes from the Greek word “metamorphose.” And it means, “to change in form or nature, to change strikingly in character.” Be not conformed to this world but be transformed. Do you know that word “metamorphosis”? We can think of the caterpillar that turns into a butterfly. It changes dramatically, strikingly so, from this caterpillar rolling around on the ground to this beautiful butterfly or moth. What a difference! There was a change, a striking change.

And if we are allowing the Spirit of God to work in our lives, He will make that kind of change in your life and my life. I have changed in these fifty-three years that I have

known the Lord. He has changed me. And if I did not attest to that fact, well, shame on me. But I think most everyone in this room can attest to the fact that the Lord has been faithful to be working with you, and on you, and through you. And He changes us.

No Transformation Without the Renewing of the Mind

When we are thinking about “be not conformed,” there is responsibility on your part and my part. When we read these little snippets of Scripture, I hope we see in these little snippets of scripture what the Lord is after in the people with whom He is sharing. There is no transformation without renewing. There is no transformation without the renewing of the mind.

You may pray really hard. You might be on your knees praying, and you may be saying to the Lord Jesus, “Jesus, please change my mind, change the way I think.” He is not going to do that. There is responsibility on our part. Just like in that first verse where it says, “You present your bodies a living sacrifice.” There is responsibility there on our part that we would obey what God puts before us. This is not a matter of emotion, this is a matter of the will.

So how can our minds be renewed? One of the things that struck me was, do we think? Do we do deep thinking anymore? Have we lost the art of deep thinking, of really considering, of meditating, of pondering on the word of God? When we think of the Lord Jesus and we converse with the Lord Jesus, are we inquiring of Him as to who He is in character, in what He is after, in what direction He is wanting to lead you and me? Do we think on these things, or are we always so busy that we have lost the art of deep thinking and meditating and pondering?

How many hours do we spend looking at this thing? What are we doing with our time? If the Lord wants to prioritize your life and my life, how else are we going to come into an intimate, abiding relationship with Him if we do not spend time with Him? And do you know what? We have twenty-four hours in a day. So do not say I do not have enough time. We all have enough time.

Just recently, the Lord had to address something in my life. I usually get up between 4:30 and 5:00 o'clock and hit the gym. Boom. About four days a week, you know, and for an old guy, that is not bad. But one morning I was in bed, just about ready to get up out of bed, and the Lord said to me, “I want you, before you go to the gym, to be spending time with Me.” If you can spend an hour and a half in the gym in the morning, He wanted me to change my routine and spend time with Him before I go to the gym. Now that seems so natural. But it was important to Him, and He brought it to my attention. And then I had a decision to make. Am I going to change my mind and do what I have been doing for some time now, change my routine? Was I willing to do that? Was I willing to change my mind and my way of thinking in that little scenario?

And so, by God's mercy and grace, I changed my schedule. And that does not seem like a lot, but it is a lot of those little things that mean a lot. And that is the way the Lord is going to transform me and you.

The Word of God

We have been given tools, you might say, to help us with this renewing of our mind. We have the Bible. What a wonderful gift that has been given to us. What a wonderful gift, this book. As the Spirit of God enlivens this word to us, this is a treasure. When He begins to open up that Word to us, even in that little example I read earlier, where this has just gripped me, “Who can this One be?” That question that was just words on a page until the Spirit of God, that moment, that day, opened that up to me and showed me something and brought something to me. Like I said, I cannot get away from it.

So, we have this book that we can read and trust that the Spirit of God will open it up to us, and bring life to us, His life. When He does that, He is able to change our mind and our way of thinking.

The Indwelling Presence of the Lord

And then we have the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Himself. One of the things I think is very, very important, that sometimes I think we may have lost in our thinking, is that we have the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Himself, dwelling within us. We have this indwelling presence of the Lord by His Spirit in us. Are we conscious of that indwelling during the day? He wants to bring us to that place where we walk in that kind of communion with Him, where we are consciously aware of His indwelling presence. It is a wonderful thing, and it is here for every one of us.

Because right now He is indwelling in you. And so, when we leave here and we start to drive home, do we have some consciousness of His indwelling spirit? Do we believe that He can lead and direct us throughout the day, every day, speaking to our heart, directing us? We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works that He has made for us to walk in. And He wants to show us that every single day.

And we can ask Him to make that real to us. And He will do that as we cast our hearts and our minds toward the Lord. I have used this example before. You may be at a party someplace with a bunch of people, you and your spouse or a couple of brothers are someplace. And because you know each other, and know each other intimately, you can look across the room at your wife as an example, and you catch her eye, and you know it is time to leave without a word spoken. Well, that is something we can do all throughout the day, we can cast our eyes upon the Lord Jesus. And we become aware now of His presence. It is a way of help. It is a way that He uses to change our mind and to rearrange our thinking.

The Teaching of Jesus

Turn to the 20th chapter of Matthew. When Jesus was sharing with people, with the multitudes, I find it very interesting that whenever they found out where He was, they went to Him. And they were coming because they had heard of Him and His good works, healing people. And the throngs of people came because they wanted to be touched. They wanted to touch Him. They wanted to be healed.

So, when Jesus was sharing with them, I think He had more in mind than just healing them. As wonderful as that was, there was something more than just a physical healing that He wanted them to experience and walk away from there healed. But that is all they had, physical healing. Or when He cast out demons from different ones, if they were left just there, how good would that have been if they could be overtaken once again by evil? So, when He was sharing with them, He was after much more than just that.

But His healings attracted people, and that is one of the reasons why He did what He did in the open spaces where they came, they were attracted. But now that they were there, being healed, they had the opportunity to hear of the truth. Because He was there not just for the physical healing, but He wanted to set them free. And He wants to set you and me free from everything that binds us, that holds us back, that restrains us from going on with the Lord. And from the Lord's purpose being fulfilled in your life and the life of an assembly.

He wanted to set them free from anything that bound them. The world system, Jewish tradition, religious traditions that turned into spiritual worldliness. He wanted to set them free from all of those things. He wanted to reveal to them the very heart and mind of God. They had a conception of God, but they did not come into that relationship with Him where they could be intimate and know His heart and know His mind. That is what He was after.

The Nature of Greatness and Servanthood

Matthew 20, these two verses, these are the little snippets I just wanted to share. You remember James and John's mother went to the Lord Jesus and said, "When you come into your kingdom, I would like my sons to sit one on your right hand, one on your left." And Jesus said, "That is not for me to do, that is my Father's choice." But when the other disciples heard about that, they started bickering amongst themselves. And then, remember, Jesus stops them and says, "Wait a minute. That is not the way it should be amongst you. The Gentiles lorded over those who are under them. But no, not for you guys." He says, "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant."

Right now, I could just see their bodies trembling. What is this? He is saying that we need to be servants. "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave." This was completely against their thinking, completely against it. For the most part, I am sure most of them, those disciples, felt that "Look, Jesus has all this notoriety. We are around him. It will be helpful for us. We will be in a great place, you know, people look up to us." "Oh, he is one of these guys that follows Jesus. Look at this." And He is saying to them, "You need to learn how to be a slave." I mean, it just blew their minds. Mark 9:35 says, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Again, this is something which is completely against their thinking. Do you want to be successful? Then you need to push harder than everybody else. If necessary, you push people out of the way. And what Jesus is saying, "Now, you need to learn how to get

down on your knees and wash feet,” which He will later demonstrate physically. But are we willing to wash one another's feet? Do we really know what it means to be a slave, a bondservant?

Now, sometimes we serve. Maybe you are serving someone disabled in your family, your wife, your elderly parent. And we want to tell people about it. We want to tell people how much we are sacrificing. I want to let them know that, “Yep, I am laying down my life for my ailing relative.” Or, “I am laying down my life for someone who is out of work. And I am giving from my portion to them. Aren't I great? Look how holy I am.” We want people to know, we want applause, we want acclamation. We want to be recognized.

But that is not the way it was with the Lord Jesus. Because when He said this to the disciples, He also said to them that just as the Son of Man came, He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. Somehow God has to work that into your life and into my life, to be the kind of servant that wants to serve unnoticed, not applauded. I know who watches me, it is my heavenly Father. He watches me, He knows what is going on in my life, He knows what is in my heart. And that is the only thing that counts.

Service Unto the Lord

You know, I remember talking about the changing of the mind. This is what Jesus is talking about to them, this changing of the mind. You know, for many years I did Mr. Handyman work. Even when I was a cop, I did handyman work on the side. And I remember there were times when I was working on a job, and I came across something, and I am thinking to myself: “How can I cut corners here? How am I going to cut corners over here? And make this a little easier for me.” And conviction, conviction came. The Lord said to me, “You work unto Me. You know, you work unto Me.” And I could not cut that corner. Then I had to go that little extra and do it right, rather than just sort of slipshod. But that is the Lord that we serve. He wants to be involved in all these everyday things in life.

I think there was a time when I said we each have this circumference, and within that circumference where we live, God orders circumstances. He allows things to come into our life, but in our obedience is where He is glorified.

The Lord's Thinking Becomes Our Thinking

Matthew 16:21-33 is where Jesus is speaking to the disciples and telling them, warning them, that this is what is happening: “I am going to Jerusalem, and I am going to be crucified. And I will rise on the third day.” And then Peter gets Him on the side and rebukes the Lord and says, “May it never be, Lord. Do not go saying that anymore.” And Jesus says to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! because you are thinking the thoughts of men and not of God.” What is He saying? “You are thinking worldly thoughts. You are thinking thoughts that originate out of a system that I have nothing to do with. No, that is wrong thinking.”

That is what the Lord Jesus is doing with you and me. He wants to correct our wrong thinking and help us come to a place where my thoughts will be the Lord's thoughts. Or maybe put it this way, the Lord's thoughts will be my thoughts. I will have the mind of Christ Jesus. John 1:4 says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." In Christ's life, He brings us into the truth. Of course, the Lord Jesus Himself says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." And when He says, "I am the way," He is not going to give us a written-out plan, as it were. What He is saying is, "Look at Me."

Embodiment in the Lord Jesus

Because in the heart of God, this is what He intended from the beginning. This kind of man, a man who was made after the very image and likeness of God. This man that was filled with compassion and love and mercy and kindness and long suffering. That is the way God wants you to be. He wants me to be that man. It was embodied in the Lord Jesus, and He is saying, "I am the way that God has intended for every one of you to be."

"I am the truth." And what we find in the Lord Jesus, is that when we are in connection with Him, He will bring us into truth in even the simplest ways. Oftentimes we can read scriptures, and the meaning is a bit foggy. If you have come across those times where the Word of God is a bit foggy to you, what does this really mean? And suddenly this light goes on inside of you, and you see something like you have never seen it before. And as I have shared with some people in the past, it is a wonderful thing. Suddenly you are reading, that light comes on, you say, "Wow, that is wonderful. I have never seen it like that before." And it is wonderful when that happens. And then sometimes you will be reading, maybe in a commentary or some book of some great man of God or some woman of God; and suddenly you are reading in this book and it is saying the same thing that the Lord showed you, the same thing. How can that happen? Because I know what a jerk I can be; I do not know very much, I am not that smart. And yet He is able to show you and me truth. And so, when you read it from someone else, some great man or woman of God, you say, "My goodness," because the truth is the truth. When God reveals the truth, you are able to recognize it, and others recognize it. And suddenly you say, "Wow, the truth."

And God changes our minds, the way we think, the way we see things. Jesus says, "You are the light of the world." He had first said, "I am the light of the world." But then later, which is amazing, He says, "You are the light of the world." Light, knowledge is brought into the world through your life and through my life. Or it can be, "You are the light in the world." In the midst of this darkness, you are the light of the world. That means I should be living my life in such a way that it is in contrast with the darkness that is all around us. It says in the Word of God, "We are priests of the living God." We are a kingdom of priests unto our God. II Corinthians 5 verses 18 and 20 say we are ministers of reconciliation, and ambassadors of the Lord. Now do we live our life and conduct our life so that our speech and conduct reflect that?

I literally remind myself that I am a priest of the living God. And so, my speech and my conduct should reflect that. And when it does not, I need to repent and say, “Lord, forgive me. That is not how you want your priest to speak or to do.”

Paul A Bondservant of Christ

These things, these words, that we read from this book, God wants to enliven to us, to cause us to have a change of mind. I cannot live out my priesthood the way I want to. No, I am a priest to the living God. Just like as a bondservant, a bondservant does not tell the Master what he would like to do or what he does not want to do, when called upon to do something. That is not the way servanthood works. If you are a servant, you serve. Whatever the Master calls you to do, you do it. You cannot bargain with Him and say, “Well, what about this, Lord? Maybe I can do it this way instead.” No. A real bondservant serves out of love for his Lord, period. Whatever he is called to do, wherever he is called to go.

In Philippians 3:3-8, Paul says, “For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church...” etc. We all know that Scripture. Paul was brilliant, he was brilliant. He is giving some of his credentials here. He was respected. He was called upon to do specific things. He had a reputation.

But he says, “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things.” So, before he knew the Lord, this was who he was. And then he comes to the Lord. And now suddenly, this man who was very intelligent in Judaism, also he was a Roman citizen, he knew the Greek language. Brilliant, brilliant man. Yet he counted all of that loss in comparison to the excellency of knowing Jesus Christ as Lord. And something of that should be in our heart.

The Wisdom of God in Choosing Paul

And we see the wisdom of God. I would not have chosen Paul. I saw what he was doing, running around and arresting people and putting them in jail and all sorts of things. I would not have picked him to do my work if I was God. What is going on here? But we see the wisdom of God. Here was a man who knew the Scriptures, who knew what the prophets spoke of the Messiah, the coming Christ. He knew it. And he could debate or share with different ones. And then because he was a Roman citizen, he was able to travel about the known world as it was the conquered world of the Romans. And the language of the Jews was Greek. And he was able to address people and speak to them and share with them about the Lord Jesus. God's wisdom at work in this life of Paul. And then we go on and see that now he no longer is sitting in that place of

superiority over people, but now he chooses to be a bond servant of the Lord Jesus. And we can read in II Corinthians all the sufferings he has gone through, everything he put up with. But do you know what? Because he knew the great love of Christ for him, he knew how greatly he was loved by the Lord Jesus.

All Sufferings Are Providence of God

And all these things that were in his life: all these sufferings, all these trials, all these beatings, all these imprisonments; he saw them as the providence of God in his life. He did not run away from them, but he saw them as the providence of God. God was going to use all those things. Especially for the fact that he had been shown so much, God orchestrated or permitted things in his life to keep him humble. We all know the story when Paul speaks of how he had this thorn in his flesh. And he asked the Lord to remove it, to take this thorn from him, this messenger of Satan that was buffeting him. And what did the Lord say to him? We all know what the Lord said to him. What did the Lord say to him? He said to him, "My strength is perfected in your weakness." And then Paul goes on to say, "Therefore I will rather boast about my infirmities." What a change of thinking. Where before he was asking the Lord to take this out of his life, now it was not important whether it was there or not. What was important was that he recognized his weakness. But in that weakness, God's strength was able to be shown. And so, in all those things he was going through, the strength of the Lord was being demonstrated. He was able to stand in the midst of these difficulties, faithful to God. This is what He is calling us to do.

The World Is Crucified to Me, and I to the World

In Galatians 6:14 Paul says, "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." If you could put yourself in Paul's body, looking out through Paul's eyes right now, and it says, "God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me." We all know, as we said before, when someone has that crossbar on his shoulders and is walking to be crucified, he is a dead man walking. And Paul is saying, "When I look at the world, it is crucified to me. As far as I am concerned, it holds no value to me. It is as good as dead. It holds nothing for me. It is dead to me." And the verse also says, "and I am crucified to the world." And what they are saying is that when the world looked at Paul, they said, "Oh, what a waste of talent. What a waste of talent. What is he doing?" He had fame, he had prosperity, he had notoriety. He was famous in his circles. That is what the world was thinking of Paul, "what a waste of life."

Some of us have had an experience like that, where people said, "You are wasting your time. What are you doing, doing this? You could be doing this. You can be going here." We have had that kind of experience. And that is what Paul is saying here. Where at one time he was in that place of superiority over everybody else, now he sees, "I have no need for this world. It offers me nothing of any value." He saw this all as the

providence of God. All that was in his life was ordered or allowed by the Lord for his good, for God's glory, and for God's purpose to be fulfilled.

The Mind of Christ

And just one other scripture in Philippians 2:1-8, we are all very familiar with this.

“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” Being like-minded and of one accord. What it is saying is that we need to line up, as it were, each one of us with the Lord's heart and mind. It is not saying that you and I all have to agree on the same thing. That is not going to happen. But what should we be doing? We should be looking for the Lord, for Him to reveal His heart and His mind. And then we submit to the Lord's heart and mind.

Let Us Esteem Others Better Than Ourselves

Verse 3: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” You know, sometimes I have tried to make comparisons between me and other people. Sometimes I have thought about people being less than me. What a terrible thing. That is terrible. And it is the mercy of God to show us the error there and how awful that actually is. Instead of thinking less of people, I should be esteeming them, respecting them. For those who know the Lord, I need to respect the life of God in them. I may not always agree with them, but I need to respect them as I see the life of God in them, the whole person, and not just things about them that can just annoy the heck out of me. But we look at the whole person and say, “This is one that He died for.”

I know I have told this story before, but when I was living in Florida, we had the little assembly down there. And I remember one morning I got to the meeting room where we used to meet in this real estate office. And I am there setting up the chairs, getting the chairs all set up. And the Lord stopped me because I was busy getting it done, getting this stuff done. The Lord just stopped me, and He said, “You are setting up these chairs for those that I shed my blood for.” Oh, it just stopped me. It elevated this chair arranging to something heavenly. He allowed me to see to some extent the ones that were coming in to sit. The Lord that I love, He died for each one of them and shed His precious blood for them. I should be seeing them in the light of that.

Have This Mind in You that was also in Christ Jesus

Verses 4-8: “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

“Have this mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus.” And so there needs to be, I believe, something in our heart that cries out to the Lord, saying, “Lord, yes, that is what I want. I want to have that heart as You had.” And so, when we read these scriptures, these different scriptures, these little snippets as I always call them; he is speaking and sharing with them that their thinking would be arranged. And then we grasp that, and we say, “Lord, yes, that is what I want. That is what I understand. I see what You are telling me.” And we embrace that. And by His grace, we make it our own, and it forms a different way of thinking.

As we just read, now I think as a bondservant thinks. Now, the things that are important to me are not what the world dictates, it is what the Spirit of God dictates. Because there is a law at work. There is a law at work, and it is the law of the Spirit of life. That is what needs to govern you and me, the law of the Spirit of life. The life of Christ being manifest to us, needs to be the law that we follow in everything that we do, in how we speak and how we conduct ourselves. There is that law at work, the law of the Spirit of His life, the life of Christ Jesus.

Conclusion

Conscious of His Indwelling Presence

I am going to end with this. But this issue of walking, walking with the Lord in an awareness of His presence, I encourage you to ask the Lord to make that real and practical in each one of our lives more and more. That throughout the day we start to become more and more conscious of His indwelling presence. It is a wonderful thing. Because in the midst of doing all sorts of work, chores, or home chores or whatever; when we are walking in that frame of mind, the Spirit of God just speaks. You will be able to hear the Spirit of God speaking within you. He lives there, and He is not shut up in some little space there. He wants liberty to move about and to speak and to do. And He is in you. He loves you. He wants more for you than you probably even know to want for yourself. But there is no transforming without renewing.

Prove that Good and Acceptable and Perfect Will of God

And although I said that was going to be the last thing I said, there is one more thing I am going to say. Because Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” If we are living in such a way that the Lord is governing your life and my life, we will prove to those around us that this way of life, this life that is governed by the Spirit of God, is good. It is good. The world needs contrast. The world needs light in the midst of the darkness. And so, your life can prove what is that good and acceptable perfect will of God. People will see it in your life. They will see that there is something different there. And that thing that is different is that within you is the very light of God. And that is so important. But it comes through those who are living the life and not just talking about it, or not just reading about it; but choose to live the life by the grace of God, by the mercy of God that is extended to us every single day.

He wants us to live in communion with Him, abiding, intimate, personal. That is what He is after. Because that is what He had and has with His son, the Lord Jesus, that intimacy. And in that your mind will be changed. Because you will be making that decision out of your will, out of your love for Him, out of appreciation for all that He has done for you and for me. Out of that will be the motivation for you to agree with Him, obey Him, follow Him, love Him, and be that light in the midst of this darkness.

Lord, we just want to tell You that apart from You there is no good thing, Lord. But You are a wonderful Master to serve. And we trust Lord, we trust that You will touch us in such a way and open up our hearts and minds to You. And that we would agree with You. And Lord, You will have Your way in each of our lives. Again, Lord, we love You, and we so appreciate Your great love for us. Amen.

<i>Transform the Mind Through Christ</i>	1
Personal Reflection	1
Fear Is Governing	1
I Want to Know More of the Lord	2
Transformation	2
Pressure to Conform	3
The Meaning of Transformation	3
No Transformation Without the Renewing of the Mind	4
The Word of God	5
The Indwelling Presence of the Lord	5
The Teaching of Jesus	5
The Nature of Greatness and Servanthood	6
Service Unto the Lord	7
The Lord's Thinking Becomes Our Thinking	7
Embodiment in the Lord Jesus	8
Paul A Bondservant of Christ	9
The Wisdom of God in Choosing Paul	9
All Sufferings Are Providence of God	10
The World Is Crucified to Me, and I to the World	10
The Mind of Christ	11
Let Us Esteem Others Better Than Ourselves	11
Have This Mind in You that was also in Christ Jesus	11
Conclusion	12
Conscious of His Indwelling Presence	12
Prove that Good and Acceptable and Perfect Will of God	12

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